

LITERARY ENDEAVOUR

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

VOL. IX

NO. 3

JULY 2018

UGC Approved Under Arts and Humanities Journal No. 44728

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01
**FORMS OF ANTI-WAR PROTEST: A STUDY OF
 PICASSO'S WAR PAINTINGS (1925-1949)**

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Abstract:

This paper seeks to examine the pacifist stance in the war paintings of Pablo Picasso, focusing on the period between 1925-1949. The artist uses typically Cubist techniques, such as fragmented subjects, geometrical figures and multiple perspectives, to bring out subtly the horror and devastation of war. There is a subtle shift from the abstract nature of his Analytical and Synthetic Cubism phases, which carried on till about the first decade of the 20th century, to the period pre and post the World Wars. Art, in his conceptualisation, becomes very much a part of the public and political sphere, capable of change and fiery activism. The subjects of many of his paintings post 1925 are distorted and broken, riddled with symbols of death and despair. A sense of foreboding and disillusionment pervades the canvases, along with deeply philosophical representations of the futility of the human condition. The paper discusses Picasso's post war works vis-à-vis his controversial, sometimes unpopular political leanings.

Keywords: *Pablo Picasso, World War, Anti-War, Modern Art, Cubism.*

Pablo Picasso's career is so varied and immense that art historians have divided it into phases, both chronologically and thematically. His Early Years combined experiences from his native country with his adopted one, and thus there is a range of influences that can be seen. These include the new ideas of the Parisian art circle, such as those of Toulouse-Lautrec, Vincent Van Gogh, Renoir and so on, coupled with Spanish masters such as Velasquez. The Blue Period was his phase of social comment where he displayed compassion for the common masses, their poverty and harshness of condition. The subjects ranged from beggars in Madrid to prostitutes in Barcelona. This implies a move away from the early influence of Impressionism and its prioritisation of atmospheric effects towards an emotional, intense form of art. The Rose Period from 1904-06 is when Picasso moved to Paris. This was his encounter with new worlds, new realms of ideas and a heady atmosphere of flux, change and radicalism. The subjects shifted from the darker ones of the Blue Period to a lighter vein with instances from the streets of Paris, the boulevards and the theatres. The colours in the previous period were largely blues and greys; here, there is a shift to pink, peach and other brighter notes. The 1907-09 period is one where there is a tremendous influence of African art and culture. Called the Transition Phase, it was a more primitive style, very earthy and with a simplification of form and content. The subsequent phases, after his move to Paris, involved his foray into the ground-breaking art theory and movement known as Cubism, and the years following 1904 are experiments with various kinds of Cubist art. The 1910-12 years cover the phase of Analytical Cubism. This is marked for the extreme abstraction of the paintings. The Cubists', and Picasso's in particular, experimentations on how to present a highly personalised vision of reality led to more and more abstract forms, till a point where they became almost incomprehensible to the outsider. This then brought on the 1912-16 Synthetic Cubism Phase, where the artists decided that there was a little too much abstraction for comfort. It had become impossible to recognise and distinguish objects, and there was a need to create a little more 'reality'. Thus, the Cubists and Picasso began with a combination of nostalgia and progressiveness in their art, and then moved on to a fragmented view of the subject. Cooper remarks that Cubism has a "strong subjective trait...one that is centred on the visionary perception of the artist. In addition, underlying Cubism is a belief that artistic images are independent of reality." (Cooper, 2007, 9).

However, Picasso moves away from this in the period that follows, and his art becomes increasingly a means of social and political comment. This period (1925-1949) is the focal point of this paper, because the sudden shift in the artist's work from the geometrical and abstract to the political and grim marks the sinister, disillusioned mood surrounding the World Wars. These were pre and post war years. The idealism in Picasso's art had all but vanished, replaced by a disillusioned view of the world. The artist was deeply affected by the shattered state of humanity after the war, and the art was consequently darker, grimmer and more sombre. This seemed to be a harking back to the Blue Period, but the paintings of this phase take an even more active role in the changing world around them.

This brings us to Picasso's view of art as revolution; as very politically rooted and capable of effecting change. His paintings are revolutionary in that he profoundly challenges the accepted ideals of beauty. His figures, his objects and his landscapes are far from pleasing to the aesthetically-bent mind. The fractured images depict a point of view or a vision, rather than conveying anything beautiful. His nudes could not be further removed from the Greek, Renaissance, Victorian or Romantic ones. They can be oddly distorted, twisted and sometimes with grotesque aspects. The artist is also a revolutionary in that he explores an unknown, new style that is a complete breakaway from traditional acceptances. Not only is it new, it is also fearless. Like all freedom fighters and radicals, Picasso through his art does not hold back on his vision even if that vision shocks and scandalises the public. He suffered from critical backlash over much of his work, yet did not attempt to dilute the so-called shock value. His was a huge influence on a variety of movements despite the initial resistance. Symbolism, Imagism, Surrealism and so on all greatly borrow from the new style of art that Picasso pioneered. According to Penrose, "He was responsible for one of the major revolutions in the art of our time, a revolution which revised the relationship of painting to reality and widened the scope of our vision and our understanding of the world" (Penrose, 1998, 8). There is a keen inclination towards social comment and change, particularly in the compassion with which he paints humankind, sometimes empathising with his characters, at other times painting them in a different way to highlight the suffering of their condition. The strongest examples of his revolutionary leanings, however, come from his activities during the war period, both pre and post. In these paintings, the tremendous sense of anguish resonates throughout. They are expressive of his violence and frustration; especially in the period from the end of the war. The subjects are extremely fragmented, and the complete loss of idealism and hope is evident. *The Three Dancers* (1925) for instance, is the first to show violent distortions of the human body and a fractured spirit full of despair. In his paintings from 1925 to almost the end of his career, he shows complete destruction which, according to him, is a necessity in order to 'make it new' and to make room for an improved world order. A new type of anatomy shapes his characters, far removed from harmony and beauty. The subject matter shows the concern of the artist at the disaster that seems to have befallen humankind. There is a recurrent appearance of the sport of bullfighting, a Spanish borrowing from his origins that was indicative of the violence within the artist. This period of art is also highly intense, prioritising emotions, passions and agony. There lingers an ominous, foreboding mood in the compositions and some gory actions. Examples are *Cat Devouring a Bird* (1939) and the *Charnel House* (1945).

Even from an early period, Picasso's revolutionary, anti-war tendencies are clear. The collages of 1912-13 are intended to represent anarchy. The artists believed that a complete overturning of old power structures was in order, which could only mean a state of complete anarchy and chaos. Only then could a new world emerge, phoenix-like, from the ashes. He constantly raged against the futility of war, both verbally and pictorially. In this, he takes a position amongst modernist war writers and poets such as Rupert Brooke, W.H Auden and T.S. Eliot. Like them, much contemporary political debate is incorporated in his revolutionary art. For instance one can look at the ingenious use of newspaper clippings in his collages during the pre-war period. These are certainly not random, but have a purpose. They are records of the events leading to World War I, which sometimes present slyly anarchic political opinions and at other times

simply shout provocative slogans. Further, they do not just reflect front-page news but even financial pages, thus presenting a complete picture. According to Patricia Leighton, “a close look at many of the newspaper clippings incorporated into the collages shows them to be not arbitrary bits of printed matter, nor mere signs designating themselves, but reports and accounts meticulously cut...” (Leighton, 1985, 653). She further points out the witty use of newsprint that is often “tied to the Cubist images of the cafés, where such arguments and discussions about the threat of war took place [representing] an artistic and political bohemia” (653). During the period in Barcelona, Picasso became completely caught up in anarchic groups presenting an alternative stance towards the war. Artists and writers of Barcelona, particularly Picasso, simply refused to ignore social and political realities. Picasso was the “anarchist anti-hero” (Leighton, 1985, 656) whose works were savage, satirical and railed against the decadence and amoral aspects of human beings which had led to such a futile war. Those who had lived through the war had lost sight of the conventional interpretations of meaning and order. They were facing a new world, devoid of all stability and this existentialism is often reflected in Picasso. He engaged highly with current political affairs through a deep sense of involvement. For instance, he was a political activist during the Spanish Civil War (1936-39), during which he exhibited bold, avant-garde paintings.

Picasso's experiences with war profoundly raise the question which has been asked from centuries past- the role of the artist in society. If Picasso's influence is anything to go by, there is no escaping the fact that art can make a huge difference in viewpoints towards an issue such as war. The artists of this group represented anarchy through the outrageousness of their art that questioned the paradigms of order and decorum. Moreover, the violence in paintings such as *Demoiselles* reflects the horror and conveys it pictorially, which can be at times far more effective than even oral speeches and literature on the subject. If the role of the artist in society requires a stand, Picasso certainly took a courageous and in fact, highly unpopular one. He was a pacifist and stubbornly kept to his anti-war opinions, reflecting them through his Cubism, collages, newsprint bits and fragmented pictures. His activism was not limited only to the canvas or to the palette, as it were. In 1944 he joined the Communist Party, wrote political pamphlets, made speeches and in sum, displayed his “lifelong commitment to artistic revolution” (Leighton, 1985, 622). He also thematically used black humour, a sense of looming threat and virulent satire on the utter ridiculousness of the war via his compositions. That he was anti-war was never hidden from the viewing public, despite outraged, indignant criticism and attack. His artwork is highly complex, in keeping with Cubist styles which seamlessly weave into his themes and concerns. Some of his post 1925 war paintings are discussed below.

The Three Dancers (Figure 1.), one of Picasso's post war compositions, has become iconic of the artist's work. This is simply because it combines all possible Cubist themes, symbols and techniques. It is also progressive since it uses modern laws of optical illusion, to create a scientifically and visually baffling dual view of the same figure. Painted in 1925, the work is discussed by Penrose, who remarks, “Here it is evident that the Post-War hopes of a new Golden Age shared by so many had vanished, and yielded to a desperate, ecstatic violence, expressive of frustrations and foreboding” (Penrose, 1998, 17). As he further notices, this work is probably one of the first to so violently distort the human figure. It has multiple meanings in this light.



Figure 1: *The Three Dancers* (Picasso, 1925).

The violence of the war is subtly recognised in the menacing, underlying violence of this painting. It also implies a loss of belief in the serenity and coherence of humanity and instead, shows humankind as twisted and bestial, capable of incomprehensible cruelty and ridiculous violence. The figure on the left appears to be in a kind of frenzy, and the agitation and disturbing mood of the composition creates much unease on the part of the viewer. It seems to contrast the serenity of a former world to the chaos of the new. Penrose remarks that “the central figure adopts a crucifixion pose which certainly conveys a tragic, ritualistic air” (Penrose, 1998, p. 94). This is intermingled with the overall, inexplicable sadness emanating from the scene. As an undercutting of the tragedy, there is also a sense of community in the dancers, perhaps the artist's way of showing a ray of hope amidst the chaos. This can be inferred from the way their hands are interlinked and they appear to be in synchronisation with each other, if not with the world outside. Other than this is the use of music as a motif, a major, recurrent symbol in Cubist painting. Music, musical notations and instruments are used repeatedly in this kind of art. This is presumably because it is symbolic of a certain harmony and a soothing sensitivity, which challenges the disorder and grimness of the modern world. Further, the painting shows the modern as well as Cubist use of science, geometry and optical illusion. It is possible to identify triangular, conical shapes with points and corners shown in sharp relief. Added, the figure on the extreme right is shown in a dual capacity. There is the brown-tinged body which is surrounded by what appears to be the black shadow of another face. This could also be indicative, again, of the influence of Surrealism, which used the technique of recording one's unexplained, but spontaneous unconscious thought process. There is also the usual ambiguity regarding the gender of the characters. The only identifying mark that these could possibly be women is the feature of the breast in the figure at the centre. Otherwise, the composition retains the androgyny of the other works of art. The artist thus creates a loosely constructed, fluid scene that is open to various opinions and refuses to be pinned

down to a single rigid interpretation.

Many of the paintings post the 1930's continue along the theme of war representation. They are full of violence, distorted human figures and a sense of anger and disgust. *Guernica* (1937) and *The Charnel House* (1944-45) are often seen as companion pieces despite the gap in time period. The dates of both are significant, and clearly, if *Guernica* signals the beginning of World War II, *The Charnel House* shows the end in all its violence and horror. Rachel Wischnitzer discusses Picasso's own take on *Guernica* (Figure 2.); stating that in an interview "Picasso admitted that the bull represented the dark forces, while the horse stood for the Spanish people." (Wischnitzer, 1985, 153). It is one of the most iconic war paintings in history and represents a severe indictment against violence and war. Picasso's pacifist leanings are fairly evident because far from exhibiting the so-called heroism of war, *Guernica* represents its ugliness and horror. It was painted as a response to the bombing of Guernica, a small Spanish village, on 26th April 1937 by the German Nazis and was an important work depicting the Spanish Civil War. The canvas is chaotic with dismembered limbs, flames and panics everywhere. Most of the figures in the painting are of women and children; Picasso's way of showing that violence is indiscriminate and rips apart the innocent and the faultless as well. The open mouths of the figures are a recurring symbol in the artist's work, and the daggers emerging from them grant intensity to the wordless screams. To the extreme left is a woman weeping over her dead child, being watched by a helpless bull. The painting thus uses the most archetypal of Spanish symbols, the bullfight, to make its point. A wounded horse is in the centre and the suggestive violence of the bullfight is conflated with the violence of the bombing. At the extreme right is another figure, again female, with her hands raised in fear. Right next to her, a floating female head can be seen, dismembered from the body but with an extended arm holding a lighted candle. The flames of the candle and the light from the bulb next to it are a powerful symbol of hope amidst all the chaos. Significantly, both the floating woman and the figure below her dragging its leg gaze at the glow of the lights, searching for hope in all the darkness. Symbols of grief, horror and violence are intermingled with those of hope, strength and survival. Sombre grey, black and white colours dominate the canvas, adding to the grim atmosphere. The use of space, always significant in Cubist Art, emphasizes a sense of claustrophobia and inability to escape. A recurrent debate surrounding *Guernica*, and indeed, Picasso's other works, is a certain ambiguity vis-à-vis his political stance. This is brought out through the symbols of the bull and the horse in the painting. It is easy to read it as the two animals being representative of opposing forces, the Spanish nationalists and the Germans. However, Picasso's depiction of both the animals in a relatively sympathetic light lends uneasiness to the question of which side the artist has actually taken. The horse is in agony and automatically evokes compassion from the viewer. As for the bull, Carla Gottlieb remarks, "Even if we assume the bull is only a personification of the miasma of evil permeating the world, this does not satisfy. Under the circumstances, we would expect the mother to attack it, to fight it, to tear out its heart. Instead she howls into its face, seeking comfort from it in her pain!" (Gottlieb, 1964, 106). The paintings are thus not a particularly definitive proof of Picasso's stance.



Figure 2: *Guernica* (Picasso, 1937)



Figure 3: *The Charnel House* (Picasso, 1944-45)

The Charnel House (Figure 3.) also deals with similar themes of war and destruction. It is a significant work in war history because it was painted right after Picasso joined the French Communist party in 1944. It is seemingly a heap of corpses all piled on top of each other, suggestive of the mass murder of Jews by the Nazis during the Holocaust. Like in *Guernica*, the colours used in this painting are significant; the black-and-white palette is meant to resemble war photographs of the time. In particular, horrific photographs of the treatment of prisoners in the Nazi concentration camps were being released at the time. A contrast is created here- the Cubist questioning of reality and move away from capturing the same is juxtaposed with the factual nature of the photographic effect. It seems to be a subtle assertion by Picasso about the political and activist value of art, clearly as important as 'factual' news and history. The open mouth, an aforementioned recurring symbol in Picasso, is the focal point here, evocative of the lifeless nature of the bodies strewn around haphazardly. The dismembered limbs and body parts are again evident here, as is the innocent presence of women and children. It is clearly a family that has been massacred, reminiscent of Picasso's own grief over the loss of many of his friends and relatives during the Spanish Civil War. The pathos of the war is accentuated by the intermingling of the erstwhile domestic family scene with its violent massacre. The artists often uses symbols of domesticity, such as the cat in *Cat Devouring a Bird* (discussed later in this paper) and the family in *The Charnel House* to emphasize the destruction of the domestic and of stability and order in a war-torn world.

The Weeping Woman (Figure 4.), painted after *Guernica* in 1937, is a jarring picture of the utter inhumanity of war. It is a typically Cubist work and conflates the technique of the movement with the theme of the work. In other words, the artist breaks up his subject, Cubist-style, into fragments, thus showing the brokenness of the human spirit in a war-torn world. It is clearly a portrait of a distressed woman who utters a heart-rending shriek at the utter horror of war. To capture a situation that defies logic and reason, Picasso paints the face as almost inhuman and grotesque. He concentrates on every single detail of the face, including the open mouth, the fingers that attempt to drown the scream and the eyes that

are like blank, disbelieving holes. Like in *Guernica*, it is a distorted human figure, twisted beyond shape and form literally and metaphorically. The painting is particularly jarring because the colours clash and assault the eye with their cacophony. The use of non-harmonious colouring is a subtle way of bringing out the disharmony of warring humankind. The artist also indicates the polarisation of the barbaric and the civilised through certain symbols. The woman's sophisticated, elegant hat is visible, with ribbons and neatly combed long hair, implying her Parisian socialite background. The ravaged look of this Parisian beauty highlights the effects of the massacre going on.



Figure 4: *The Weeping Woman* (Picasso, 1937)

The singularly predatory quality of *Cat Devouring a Bird* (1939) (Figure 5.) assaults the viewer's eye. It was painted when the Germans invaded Poland. Abstract as they are, Picasso's works provide a parallel representation of so-called 'factual' history and *Cat* is one such example. A cat rips apart its victim with violence and aggression that is palpable on the canvas. Picasso's focal point is the face of the cat, which he makes disturbingly human. The eyes are blind and frenzied, possibly indicating the senseless violence of the World War that has no basis in sanity. A subtle juxtaposition can be seen here as well, between the civilised and the 'wild' as it were. The cat is generally a symbol of household domesticity but with the yellow and black stripes, it resembles the tiger, an untameable jungle beast, much like the perpetrators of the war. Added, the artist seems to be trying to say that the frightening aspect of violence is that it is deeply rooted in civilization, in ordinary human beings who become inhuman and unrecognizable when in the pursuit of power.



Figure 5: *Cat Devouring a Bird* (Picasso, 1939)

Picasso's war paintings are thus a record of an important moment in the 20th century, an alternative but equally relevant method of analysing history. They are not only reminiscent of early modern artistic styles, but also a strong social comment and an indictment against war.

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02

LANGSTON HUGHES' 'THE NEGRO SPEAKS OF RIVERS': A TRIBUTE TO AFRICAN HERITAGE

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Abstract:

“The Negro Speaks of Rivers” is probably the most anthologized of Langston Hughes' poems. Although Hughes brought rhythmic innovations from jazz and the blues to his future poetry, this classic poem, written when he was only 18 years old, stands at the gateway of his entire body of work. In the paper, an attempt has been made to interpret the poem as not only a black history lesson or protest, but as a deeply felt and dignified tribute to those of African heritage.

“The Negro Speaks of Rivers” was the first poem published in Langston Hughes's long writing career. The poem first appeared in the magazine *Crisis* in June of 1921 and was subsequently published in Hughes's first volume of poetry, *The Weary Blues*, in 1926. Written when he was only 18 or 19, “The Negro Speaks of Rivers” treats themes Hughes explored all his life: the experiences of African Americans in history and black identity and pride. Hughes claimed that 90 percent of his work attempted “to explain and illuminate the Negro condition in America.” Through images of rivers, African civilizations, and an “I” who speaks for the race, Hughes argues for the depth, wisdom, and endurance of the African soul. The form of the poem reinforces these themes. Using a collective, mythic “I,” long lines, and repeated phrases, Hughes invokes the poetry of Walt Whitman, another bard who “sang” America¹. Onwuchekwa Jemie notes in his book *Langston Hughes: An Introduction to the Poetry*, however, that unlike Whitman, Hughes “celebrates not the America that is but the America that is to come.”²

As Hughes's first published poem, critics view “The Negro Speaks of Rivers” as the first indication of the poet's lifelong themes and concerns. Although most critics now praise his ongoing dedication to racial struggle, when *The Weary Blues*, was published in 1926, critical reactions were mixed. A number of reviewers, including black intellectuals, questioned whether Hughes's colloquial language and racial themes constituted propaganda or “real art,” oversimplification or clear vision. Critics do not claim that “The Negro Speaks of Rivers” is particularly propagandistic, though it heralds a moralizing tendency in Hughes's poetry. This poem, moreover, is sometimes considered one of his lyrics, and lyrics are often considered nonpolitical.

Critics regard this poem as a lyric because it has a first person speaker who expresses a strongly felt emotion and appears to exist outside of time. These critics note, however, that the “I” in the poem represents less an individual persona or Hughes himself than a mythic, collective persona. Several critics suggest that the lyric speaker of this poem begins with personal memory but moves steadily toward collective memory. Raymond Smith, in his essay, “Hughes: Evolution of the Poetic Persona,” argues that in both early and later poems, Hughes “transforms personal experience and observations into distillations of the Black American condition.”³ In his essay, “The Origins of Poetry in Langston Hughes,” Arnold Rampersad similarly argues that “personal anguish has been alchemized by the poet into a gracious meditation on his race, whose despised (“muddy”) culture and history ... changes within the poem from mud into gold.”⁴ Rampersad also finds in the poem a traditional lyric concern with time and death. In *The Life of Langston Hughes, Vol. I*, Rampersad writes, “With its allusions to deep dusky rivers, the setting sun, sleep and the soul, “The Negro Speaks of Rivers” is suffused with the image of death and, simultaneously,

the idea of deathlessness.”⁵

Critics often attribute the personal anguish Rampersad mentions to Hughes's anxieties about his father. Hughes wrote the poem on a train he took to visit his estranged father in Mexico. Crossing the Mississippi outside St. Louis, Missouri, his birthplace, Hughes recalled, “I looked out the window ... [and] began to think what that [muddy] river, the old Mississippi, had meant to Negroes in the past - how to be sold down the river was the worst fate that could overtake a slave ... Then I remembered reading how Abraham Lincoln had made a trip down the Mississippi on a raft, ... seen slavery at its worst, and had decided within himself that it should be removed from American life. Then I began to think of other rivers in our past ... ” In this record of the poem's composition, Hughes reveals how a personal meditation was transformed through his associations into a meditation on collective racial identity and history, and how a lyric became an *ars poetica*, or artistic statement, for his career.

“The Negro Speaks of Rivers” is probably the most anthologized of Langston Hughes' poems. Although Hughes brought rhythmic innovations from jazz and the blues to his future poetry, this classic poem, written when he was only 18 or 19 years old, stands at the gateway of his entire body of work. In it is the beginning of his “affirmation of blackness,” as critic Raymond Smith states in “Hughes: Evolution of the Poetic Persona”⁶.

The black man had been brought to American shores as a slave and his presence preceded the birth of the United States, but in those years of forced illiteracy when a slave was forbidden to read and write, no work of note dealt with his history. After being freed by Abraham Lincoln in the Emancipation Proclamation of 1863, his rights were squashed in the South under the Jim Crow laws. These blatant injustices dealt with separate but unequal drinking fountains, blacks sitting at the back of the bus, not being allowed into hotels except through the back door as employees, and innumerable other humiliations. In particular, the act of voting was made into such an obstacle course for black voters, most were discouraged from the ordeal. Those that weren't found themselves physically threatened. The liberal North harbored less but subtler prejudices that stifled black initiative. When Langston Hughes began writing, he devised his own emancipation proclamation, quoted in “The Black Aesthetic in the Thirties, Forties, and Fifties” by Dudley Randall in *Modern Black Poets*:

We younger Negro artists who create now intend to express our individual dark-skinned selves without fear or shame. If white people are pleased, we are glad. If they are not, it doesn't matter. We know we are beautiful. And ugly too. If colored people are pleased we are glad. If they are not, their displeasure doesn't matter either. We build our temples for tomorrow, strong as we know how, and we stand on top of the mountain, free within ourselves⁷.

Despite this thrust toward individual black pride, pride of black heritage was a necessary element to “stand on top of the mountain.” Hughes knew this on a personal level, since his father, of mixed race but always identified as black, despised the Negro and left the United States to become highly successful in Mexico. In fact, Hughes was on his way there to ask his father for college tuition when he wrote this poem. Although Hughes would soon hate his father for his views, when he wrote this, his hatred had not surfaced yet. This poem was most likely an anticipated reply to his father's criticism. In that case, out of anxiety and suppressed anger, a positive and stately poem emerged.

“The Negro Speaks of Rivers” begins with the speaker's claim: “I've known rivers.”⁸ Rivers suggest to us places of travel, exploration, discovery, and even settling down beside one. Then he expands the idea: he has “known rivers ancient as the world and older than the flow of human / blood in human veins.” Now we are being transported back in time, not to man's ancient history, but to a time before man even existed, when the rivers alone existed. Yet these rivers mirror man because the water that flows in their channels is similar to the blood that flows in man's veins. Also, our speaker is giving us a sweeping

overview, suggesting possibly the beginnings of life by presenting a picture of water, one of the essentials for life. At this point, also, we understand the speaker is not only speaking for himself, but for all Negroes.

In the second stanza, which is only a line (“My soul has grown deep like the rivers”), Hughes compares his soul to the rivers, saying it has the depth of a river. Decades after this poem was published, during the 1960s, “soul” became a term used to describe black music and black food. The implications were that this music and food came from the deprivations the black man had to endure in an oppressive white society and, therefore, came from the soul.

In the third stanza, the speaker traces Negro history through rivers intimately connected with the evolution of those with African roots. He tells us he “bathed in the Euphrates when dawns were young.” The Euphrates and the Tigris in present day Iraq comprise a two-river system that creates what is known as the fertile crescent, land between these rivers that benefits from the waters overflowing their banks. Millennia ago, “when dawns were young,” and the country was called Mesopotamia, this fertile soil allowed its people not merely to survive, but to flourish, and western civilization began here along with western writing. Also, according to Muslims, Jews, and Christians, the Garden of Eden existed nearby, a beautiful spot believed to be the Al-Qurah of today. Although the Negro race did not begin in the Middle East, due to Africa's proximity, an African could have bathed in the Euphrates in ancient times. Besides, African slaves were sold to countries in the Americas populated by Judeo-Christian Europeans, products of this Mesopotamian-born, Western civilization. So, by force, this background became the Negroes' background.

The next river mentioned is the Congo, the second longest river in Africa, which runs through the center of the continent. Hughes states in *A Pictorial History of Black Americans*, “that Africa not only gave the world its earliest civilizations, it gave the world *man*.” Africa has long been considered the birthplace of man, since the human bones excavated there are the oldest found. Here the speaker “built [his] hut” and was “lulled ... to sleep,” suggesting the idealized beauty and peace the Negro enjoyed in this earliest of Edens. Here, too, rich civilizations rose up in a world where man lived beside the lion and the elephant. Ironically, though, in the more recent past, tribes living along the Congo, and the Kongo tribe in particular, helped feed the slave trade. This kind of betrayal can only happen to those who are “lulled ... to sleep” and unable to take action. The second interpretation does not contradict the first, but puts events into sequence and deepens the poetry.

The third river is the Nile, the longest river in Africa and one that flows through many African nations. But the speaker is referring to those places along the river where he “raised the pyramids above it.” Those Africans who helped build the pyramids were the Nubians who had a respected role in Egyptian society as soldiers and traders. More importantly, Hughes states in *A Pictorial History of Black Americans*, that “[b]lack Pharaohs ruled Egypt for centuries and black Queen Nefertete [was] one of the most beautiful women of all time.” Although Hughes might have wished to emphasize the Nile's glamour, the fact is, the whole of ancient Egyptian religion lauded death over life and focused on the pharaohs and their comfortable survival in the next world. Because of the pyramids, the Egyptians needed as much manpower as possible and enslaved those they captured to build their gigantic tombs. Still, this knowledge does little to detract from the glamour and, if anything, balances it with reality.

The last river mentioned is the Mississippi, the longest river in the United States, and one intimately connected to slavery. A slave sold down the river in Mark Twain's Missouri was doomed to an even worse fate than he was already living: Slavery was more entrenched in the deep South, escape to the free states was even farther away, and any slave sent down the river was not only leaving a familiar place, but family as well. However, the speaker “heard the singing of the Mississippi when Abe Lincoln/ went down to New Orleans”; the river was “singing” because, according to legend, when the future president saw the horrors of slavery, he vowed to eliminate that institution from the country.

In the last half of that line, the speaker has seen the Mississippi's “muddy bosom turn golden in the

sunset.” On a physical level, the speaker as Hughes most likely saw that phenomena as he wrote the poem on a train crossing the river from Illinois to St. Louis, Missouri. Its muddy bosom connects it to the Negro mother who nurtured her babies despite the fact that they could be taken away from her at any time and despite the fact that some of their fathers were the white masters. In the end, after a life of cruel hardship, the heavenly rewards come at death, at sunset. The black mother and her progeny, who never abandoned their spirituality but refined it into music, poetry and dance, are now seen for their true value, revealed in the light as golden.

In the fourth stanza the speaker repeats the phrase that he has “known rivers,” but now he broadens the image to include “[a]ncient, dusky rivers.” This concludes our history tour and ties these rivers to the color of dusk, the magical color of twilight, and the color of the Negro. The Negro encompasses the African in Africa or on any other continent, and especially the African-American, Hughes' first audience.

The last stanza repeats the second stanza: “My soul has grown deep like the rivers.” Now we understand more profoundly what the speaker means, for each of these rivers has nurtured the Negro and some have transported him as a slave. The final repetitions also add a rhythm to the poem, as if, after the flow of the first and third stanzas, like the river, this poem has arrived at its mouth, its place of proclamation to the world. These people, these Negroes, have come out of Africa, and later out of slavery, and they have flourished in the fertile crescent of their spirituality and contributed much to world civilization. Let them look back on a golden heritage, Hughes seems to say; let them speak of these rivers that are so much a part of that heritage.

“The Negro Speaks of Rivers” is spoken in first person point of view. However, the “I” represents neither a persona nor the author. Rather, the “I” speaks as and for people of African descent. “The Negro” of the title represents an archetype rather than an actual individual. There is a precedent for this collective “I” in the poetry of Walt Whitman, who spoke as and for America in his poem, “Song of Myself.” Hughes adopts two other elements in this poem that show the influence of Whitman: long lines and repetition of phrases. The long, free verse lines of this poem signal the speaker's attempt to encompass the world with his words. Hughes repeats several phrases (“I've known rivers,” “my soul has grown deep like rivers”), to make the poem sound like an incantation, or magical spell. Some critics remark that these repetitions echo the tone and rhythm of black spirituals. Hughes became famous for his use of other African American musical forms in his poetry, particularly jazz and blues.

In addition to repeating phrases, Hughes repeats syntactic units in a catalog or list: “I've known,” “I bathed,” “I built,” “I looked,” etc. The Bible catalogs who begot whom, and who boarded the ark; the poet Virgil cataloged all the ships and heroes going into the Trojan War. Catalogs, like the technique of long lines, represent vast numbers and magnitude. In “The Negro Speaks of Rivers,” the catalog of the speaker's actions testifies to his (and the race's) vast worldly experience and importance in human history.

“The Negro Speaks of Rivers,” Hughes' first published poem, introduces a theme which would recur in several other works throughout his career. Many critics have classified this group as the “heritage” poems. Amazingly, although it was composed very quickly when he was only 18 or 19, it is both polished and powerful. In fact, in *Langston Hughes: An Introduction to the Poetry*, Onwuchekwa Jemie labels it the most profound of this group.

The poem utilizes four of the world's largest and most historically prominent rivers as a metaphor to present a view, almost a timeline in miniature, of the African-American experience throughout history. The opening lines of the poem introduce the ancient and powerful cultural history of Africa and West Asia, with the mention of the Euphrates and the dawn of time. Next the Congo, mother to Central Africa, lulls the speaker, to sleep. The world's longest river, the powerful and complex Nile with its great pyramids, follows. Last, the poem moves to more recent times, with the introduction of the Mississippi. Even though the Mississippi and Congo both hold bitter connotations of the slave trade, each of the four has contributed to the depth of the speaker's soul. The poem stresses triumph over adversity as the “muddy bosom” of the

Mississippi turns golden.

The speaker clearly represents more than Langston Hughes, the individual. In fact, the “I” of the poem becomes even more than the embodiment of a racial identity. The poem describes, underlying that identity, an eternal spirit, existing before the dawn of time and present still in the twentieth century. The different sections of the poem emphasize this: the speaker actually functions on two levels. One is the human level. The first words of lines five through eight create a picture of the speaker's ancestors: bathing, building, looking, hearing. However, the poem also discusses a spiritual level where the soul of the speaker has been and continues to be enriched by the spirit of the river, even before the creation of humanity. Thus, the second and third lines of the poem develop an eternal, or cosmic, dimension in the poem.

Notes

1. In his poem, “I, Too,” Hughes both implicitly and explicitly responds to the great poet of freedom and democracy, Walt Whitman. Hughes' opening lines recalls Whitman's “I Hear America Singing,” “Still Though the One I Sing” and even *Song of Myself*. Hughes' poem suggests that he, the Negro, the “Other,” can also sing of and for America. A similar notion is at work in Hughes' famous poem, “The Negro Speaks of Rivers.” In this poem, Hughes invokes the technique and spirit of Whitman yet again in an attempt to write a lyric that carries both public and private significance. Like Whitman in “Song of Myself,” Hughes constructs a poem that not only connects the individual to the land, to particular geographical places but also to history and to a distinctive culture, making the poem, like the river itself, a vehicle by which one flows through one space into another.
2. Onwuchekwa Jemie, *Langston Hughes: An Introduction to the Poetry* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976).
3. Raymond Smith, “Hughes: Evolution of the Poetic Persona”, *Langston Hughes*, ed. Harold Bloom (New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 1989) 45-60.
4. Arnold Rampersad, “The Origins of Poetry in Langston Hughes”, *Langston Hughes*, ed. Harold Bloom (New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 1989) 179-189.
5. Arnold Rampersad, *The Life of Langston Hughes: I, Too, Sing America, Vol. I, 1902-1941* (Oxford: OUP, 2002) 468.
6. Smith. “Hughes: Evolution of the Poetic Persona”.
7. Dudley Randall, “The Black Aesthetic in the Thirties, Forties, and Fifties”, *Modern Black Poets*, ed. Donald B. Gibson (Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1973) 35.
8. Arnold Rampersad, Ed. *The Collected Poems of Langston Hughes*, New York: Vintage, 1995, 23.
9. Langston Hughes, Milton Meltzer, and C. Eric Lincoln, “First, We Were Africans,” in *A Pictorial History of Blackamericans* (New York: Crown Publishers, Inc., 1983) 7.

03
**ON SMALLER FORMS OF LIFE, LANDSCAPE AND
 THE SEASONS IN A. R. AMMONS'S POETRY**

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Abstract:

The paper attempts to analyze the presence of the animal world in AR Ammons' Collected Poems 1951-1971. Attention is given to explore the relation that Ammons' builds up between human beings and the world around and how this world is significantly determined by a vision that takes seriously the presence of the smaller forms of life. The world vision of Ammons is informed by the need to revise an anthropocentric definition of the world. Consequently, his poetry is noted for its rejection of a privileged view of human life. Collected Poems 1951-1971 with its focus on minute forms of life and its Thoreausque elements won for Ammons his first National Book Award for Poetry. With more two dozen volumes of poetry that spanned a writing career of nearly six decades Ammons celebrations of daily life brought him nearly all the important awards of the American literary scene including the Bollingen Prize, and National Book Critics Circle Award. Ammons's understanding of the forms of life other than the human and his descriptions of the same are firmly situated in landscapes subjected to the changes brought about by the weather and the seasons.

Keywords: *Animal world, Anthropocentric, Anthropomorphic, Post-Christian, Seasons, Weather.*

Archie Randolph Ammons grew up on a farm southwest of Whiteville, North Carolina, “full of grapes, peaches, pears, pecans, guinea fowl, peacocks, geese, and of course cattle and pigs” with no family around except for one quarter mile down the road” (Albright 47- 48) his early poetry bears sufficient impress of these images of animal life, a presence which persisted to the end of his writing. His poetry is characterised by a vision of existence where the relative insignificance of the animal world is questioned. He exhibits a growing awareness that is post-Christian in that he refuses to assign primary importance to man's endeavours and refuses to accept the intentions of the various projects undertaken by man. Man's egotistic stances are looked upon with suspicion in his poetry, and one of the early poems of Ammons to look into this aspect of existence is "I Broke a Sheaf of Light" where he builds up a number of domestic images. The poem with its images of the cows in pasture and the squealing pigs, and neighing that comes from the stables betrays some degree of self-centeredness with its repeated use of the first person singular pronoun but as his poetry matures, the subjective element comes to be more and more insignificant and the impression of a cool, naturalist mind recording as faithfully as possible the external world of life, becomes prominent in the later poems of *Collected Poems 1951-1971*.

“Some Months Ago” and “Doxology” continue with the preoccupation with the world of animals and the technique of placing them in a landscape bound by the weather and the seasons. Rain and mist mark this landscape where birds peck dew and the spider runs out of its tunnel. Doxology continues in the same vein when he writes of the rain in the morning and the robin pecking a lady bug in its beak. The early poems in *Collected Poems* show an anthropomorphic and anthropocentric imagination at work as in “I Went Out to the Sun” and “I came upon a plateau” with its images of sun and moon displaying human characteristics and the latter poem ends with an image of a snake in the landscape.

The peaks coughing bouldered

laughter shook to pieces
and the snake shed himself in ripples
across a lake of sand (CP, 32)

The receptive mind picks up the finer details of animal life and “Sumerian Vistas” is a case in point where he writes of the emotional impact that the world of animals creates:

on the southern salty
banks near the gulf the ducks
and flying vees of geese have
shunned me: the bouncing spider's net,
strung wet over narrows of reeds, has
broken terror dawn cold across my face:
rising . . . (CP, 32)

Ammons here speaks of the emotional impact that the world of animals has on him. As his poetry matures, the subjective response is replaced by the workings of a cool, naturalist mind recording as faithfully as possible the external world of life. Weather and seasons provide the frameworks for Ammons to view the world of animals, birds and insects. Return open with images of drought hit landscape with the vegetation wilting and poem moves on to record how the animal world responds to it.

dangling buzzards
drop to sleep
in ledge and
cactus shade to rock held
reservoirs of night (CP, 62)

Like life, death too, is part of the world of the world of animals that Ammons presents in his poetry and in “Hardweed Path Going” which begins with images of life in the form of Jo reet and the approaching winter moves to the experience of death of the animals in the closing lines of the poem, Ammons writes of Sparkle, the hog that will be killed the next day, and the experience is an integral part of weather and the seasons. He imagines Sparkle's carcass “hanging upside down / hardening through the mind and night of the first freeze” (CP, 68). For Ammons, the death of the domestic animals is a part of agrarian reality, and is linked to weather. In “Prodigal”, Ammons writes of a lonely figure in the landscape, a figure sensitive to the signs of animal life which sees “flotillas of wintering ducks weathering the night” (CP, 76). In these landscapes, where signs of human life are rare, Ammons allows signs of other forms of life to intensify the sense of loneliness. Josephine Miles's observes: “the peopled world or constructed world are not his chief substance”(23). This particular quality of his writing, Ammons himself traced to his life on the farm. Ammons told Nancy Koeber:

It was a time of tremendous economic and spiritual privation, even loneliness. But all this privation was compensated for by a sense of the eternal freshness of the land itself. So I substituted for normal human experience, which was unavailable to me much of the time, this sense of identity with the things around me. (12)

The things around him include the landscape in all its diverse forms and phases and include the teeming life in it. Concerns about the possibilities of identity appear making some poems abstract and cerebral but there is always a return to the concrete and the particular which is marked by the weather, seasons and forms of life other than the human as in “Risks and Possibilities” where life is observed in the context of weather:

Dry thunder in the locust weed!
 The supple willow -slip leafless in winter!
 The chill gibbers of the frog
 stilled in night snake's foraging thrust!

.....
 repeating midnight these songs for these divisions.

(CP, 83 - 84)

The idea of a return to the present amidst intellectual discussions suggests a return to the concrete and the particular and clearly conveys Ammons's preferences and priorities though the preferences are not as obvious as in his later writings where the frequency of such returns is forcefully presented by him that the ideology behind such a technique is less veiled.

The human figure in the landscape is seen in the company of snakes, frogs and birds, and it is the naturalist that is projected in most of the poems. The personal mode is sparingly used and often a review of the landscape is undertaken without any display of emotion as in "I Came upon the Plateau". The eye is deeply absorbed in the landscape trying to recapture all the possible experiences and the details and the finer points never cease to fascinate the poet.

Initially the animal world is evoked for the purpose of creating a subject in ways that may be related and defined in terms of those aspects of nature and life at large. This is one way of approaching the subject as understood by Ammons, but his later poetry is, in a way, the poetry of non-subject, and the subject is less and less dependent on the impressions that the world of animals creates in him. He records the animal life around, with minimal interruptions of the influence that this world brings about in his mind.

Ammons's interest in the minute and the insignificant (as seen from an anthropocentric perspective) begins early in his writing and the world of the smaller forms of life is a powerful presence in his early poetry. He believes that process, as he sees it, is more available to human figures surrounded by these small insects, and he entertains this thought in "Requiem". Every attempt is made by Ammons to absorb these into his writing and the involvement that his poetry conveys and demands is very high in a poem like "Sumerian". The insect world is observed mainly as a search into the process of life as how it is reflected in spheres other than the one of human beings. This interest in the smaller forms of life Ammons traced to some incidents in his life in his conversation with Nancy Koeber where he spoke of the shift from North Carolina to Millville, which precluded the possibility of distance vision. Of this shift Ammons says: "After readjusting my vision to look for small things, I found [Millville] very beautiful indeed and became very much attached to the shore and land there." (12)

The insect world offers the context for another more serious purpose, that is, the articulation of the themes of interrelatedness and a consequent idea of the perspective as a vital factor in the understanding of all reality. The theme of interrelatedness in his early poetry does not present itself as a fantasy or as an abstraction. The interrelatedness is suggested but never elaborated to convey the impression of a poem of interrelatedness in action in the widest possible sense. The scope is only suggested, the possibilities are never fully or even partially realized, and the scope is hinted at in the most skeletal form and the animal world as a part of the environment, attracts and affects Ammons strongly in his later writing that it becomes an obsessive theme only towards the later poems of *Collected Poems*.

Ammons often stretches the theme of interrelatedness to the selection of imagery with the result that one species of life is seen in terms of another. Interchangeability and interdependence are the watchwords in his writing and often land is defined as an animal and vice versa, and this rapid switching creates a fluid concept of reality which undermines the traditional quality central to the older notions of reality. Both "Risks and Possibilities" and "Interval" are based on the belief of the interchangeability of images, an idea that Ammons derives from the notion of sameness that is possible and logically defensible at the level of perception. Mere observation of the phenomenon itself is sometimes the theme of the poems

of Ammons where the judgment is withheld, and a condition with almost no trace of the poet's judgment and subjective impressions exists, a technique, which in itself becomes an implicit judgment of the landscape.

The poet's response to this world is relevant in that there is development or change in the attitude of the poet. Ammons's early poetry is marked by a tendency to present the self as greatly troubled at the personal level by the world of the smaller life. A more sensitive self is the impression Ammons communicates in the early poems. He acknowledges its emotional value and it is rendered as a very powerful experience having some lasting and transformative qualities. Ammons's interest in the animal world is also partly due to the innumerable patterns of reality that an observation of the animal world offers. These patterns are often visual patterns of change that the landscape accommodates due to the flight of birds from trees, of rabbits on the grass, squirrels swinging from branch to branch and the flight of bees from flowers in bloom. Motion fascinates Ammons, motion as transience, motion as form, motion as the manifestation of time and he uses these images of birds and insects sometimes as a context to discuss the forms of reality as in "Epiphany" which begins with a very concrete image of a wasp striking the window pane like a rain drop and swiftly moves to questions about the consolations offered by a sensuous understanding of reality to conclude with thoughts of "hard realizations, opaque as death" (CP, 98). The poem is significant in the general pattern of Ammons's poetry since Ammons here sees the wasp as a drop of rain suggesting the association between the life of animals and natural phenomena.

Ammons's poetry records and exploits the dialectics of tension between experience and abstraction, between that which is immediately visible and the abstract thoughts which are more clinical and disinterested, and the bifocal vision that Ammons so often displays, extends to the attitude towards the experience of the animal world, comparable to the attitudes to weather that he entertains.

Poems on weather fall into two categories, poems where weather is a reality felt through the senses and poems where weather is a reality placed against the notions of reality. "Motion for Motion", a case in point, begins with an image of the water beetle in the sandy stony bottom of the stream. This interest in the small and insignificant is part of Ammons's willingness to entertain the small and even the microscopic, and from this simple seeing Ammons proceeds to a more complex seeing that is possible with a greater knowledge of the scientific reality of which he writes:

If I knew the diameters
of oval and beetle the
depth of the stream, several
indices of refraction
and so forth
I might say why
The shadow out sizes the
beetle. (CP, 127)

Ammons proceeds from this 'lecture' to look into the possibilities of the reality presented and he expresses his preference of experience over abstraction. A transient self-reflexive tone is heard when Ammons declares, "I admit to mystery / in the obvious" (CP, 128) which is abruptly cut off by a return to the concrete: "but a blurred mind over exposed: / caught the sudden gust of a cat bird, selfshot" (CP, 128). Once again a disruption of the description of the theoretical possibilities takes place, and return to the world of the particular is accomplished by Ammons who calls himself "a person who would run to the defence of the particular practically as fast as his legs could go" (Haythe 189)

Ammons's poetry conveys the impression of an eye rapidly moving, picking up an image, discussing a thought associated with it for a while and then moving on to the initial or related image approached at the level of the senses and of resuming the thought over it. The final return is to the concrete

experience of animal life around with oblique references to the world of the little living things and weather as in the concluding lines: and then there were two beetles, and later three at / once swimming in the sun . . . (CP, 128).

This prioritizing of the concrete experience is evidenced in “W C W”, a poem dedicated to William Carlos Williams. The technique adopted by Ammons is very much similar to that of William Carlos Williams since the scope of the poem is consciously limited to the concrete sense of the landscape bound by elemental forces. Ammons sets the atmosphere of the poem in a “crosswind that hit him”, a context in which he fixes the experience of the poem:

. . .till
 a woman came
 and turned
 her red dog loose
 to sniff
 (and piss
 on)
 the dead horse shoe
 crabs. (CP, 147)

The experience is firmly located in time and place and no attempt is to resort to intellectual discussions. A powerful sense of the place in Ammons's poetry is due to the presence of the continuities of the forms of life around which is “outward continuities”(Bloom 14). Eudora Welty's definition of place is significant to Ammons: “Place is where he has roots, place where he stands; in his experience out of which he writes, it provides the base of reference, the point of view” (117). This place for Ammons is very much defined by the presence of animal life in it. What is focused is the experience as predominantly based on the senses resulting in a very concrete poetry in the manner of William Carlos Williams and the sense of the real, which runs through the poem, is partially the result of references to weather.

“Corsons Inlet”, a major poem of the 1961-1965 period, repeats the technique of placing the concrete world outside with its images of birds against the abstract thoughts and it continues the tendency of placing the animal life in the landscape in a context of weather. Ammons describes the tree swallows preparing for flight from winter locating the poem's action in nature with a sense of the concrete and the particular and they function as a counter point to certain questions of reality that Ammons poses in the same poem:

The possibility of a rule as the sum of rulelessness:
 the “field” of action
 with moving in calculable center:
 in the smaller view, order tight with shape . . . (CP, 150)

Ammons's poetry treats the minute aspects of the larger landscape with great precision. Small incidents are treated with seriousness, and extended dialogues and descriptions are attempted by the poet, so that the subject under discussion becomes a huge world which definition cannot exhaust. The close observation that Ammons brings to bear upon even insignificant things creates the impression of a mind in search of changes, a mind constantly recording the events, all of which are relevant to the poet for the complex connotations of process that they carry. It is this close observation that Ammons brings to bear on the minute that the reader experiences in “Mark”, a poem short enough to be reproduced in full where Ammons writes of a butterfly:

I hope I'm
 not right
 where the frost

strikes the butterfly:
 in the back
 between
 the wings. (CP, 200)

What one encounters here is the pattern of approaching animal life around, in a context of weather, recording the changes in climate. Ammons's strong interest in weather defines the way the animal world is treated and the moments of observation are linked to weather and animal behaviour is a part of the process that he is trying to analyse, and weather is the lens that filters the experience of life around.

Ammons graphically presents the reality of the insect and weather and Paul Zweig is right when he sees in the poetry of Ammons "a flood of perceptions which is visionary not because of any metaphysics, but because of sheer clarity of the poet's ability to recreate what he sees." (610). This ability to recreate what he sees is largely accomplished by a strict adherence to the concrete which produces a poetry, in Eudora Welty's words, bound up with the "local, the 'real', the present, the ordinary day-to day of human experience." (117)

Very rarely does Ammons write of animals in captivity. Most of the poems on animals centre on cats, dogs, bees, robins, crows, squirrels and "Rome Zoo" are an exception not in terms of technique, but in terms of theme. Ammons here writes of rhinoceroses and rabbits and he repeats the technique of placing them in a context of weather:

Subtract from that shower
 each leaves take
 and the oak's
 shadow is bright dust. . . (CP, 222)

It is with this sense reality of weather that he looks at the animals in the zoo:

Rabbits with blue tipped ears
 stick mist- weight
 rain and, from high
 tussling, yield
 all the way to the ground:
 the rhinoceros back darkens. (CP, 222)

Animal life everywhere, for Ammons, is inalienably fused with the influences of weather. For Ammons, the motions of the landscape are always motions influenced by weather, and the animal life trapped in it is no exception. The poet's interest in the small world of animals, as a possibility of realigning the larger world by attributing to the former, a definitive role in his vision of the world is central to his vision. Such changes in the perspective suggest a significant shift in the attitude of Ammons. From the anthropocentric view and the centrality of the ego which Ammons foregrounded in his early poetry he has matured to look at life from what Donald Reiman calls "the imagined vantage point of other creatures and processes of life" (24).

For Ammons, process cannot be separated from the weather; it is the most concrete manifestation of the process inducing a sharp sense of the particular. The animal world presented by Ammons is seen in the context of changing seasons and the energy of these poems is the energy of the animal world in a scene of rapid changes, and the attempt is to record how animals cope with the pressure of existence.

Ammons often incorporates animal world into his poems to convey the severity of weather. Severity of weather is often conveyed as a response of the animal life that Ammons sees around him as in "September Drift" where he directly plunges into the experience of weather which for him is a submission to the animal life around under the pressure of rapid changes of climate. The reality of the landscape is the reality of animal life in it, a thought stressed by Ammons:

Hardly any thing flies north these days

ajay occasionally makes the bleak
 decision: the robin, sitting on a high
 dead limb, looks melancholy with
 leisure . . . (CP, 262)

Ammons here falls into pathetic fallacy, one has to concede, but life in the landscape, life of the birds and other forms of life remain bound to weather. John Elder's observes "for Ammons world order is dynamic, with process rather than things providing primary reality" (196). Such an observation is largely conveyed by constant changes in the animal world caused by weather. The close observation is made possible in the context of weather and the sharpness of vision is not limited just to the animal life around but is extended to weather, which modifies and controls one's perception of the animal life in it.

The small and the insignificant figure in his poetry, and they come to be observed along with the changes that the seasons bring about on them and in "Spiel" Ammons writes:

. . . I try to think
 of what he eats
 so winter skinny ,such a bugless
 winter . . . (CP, 270)

One finds here an interest in the insignificant and a concern for its well-being and one senses here the widening vision of Ammons which comes to accept the concerns of life other than that of human beings. Such a concern is a part of an ecological consciousness which Glen Love sees as having the capacity to challenge "the notion that human beings are so special that the earth exists for our comfort and disposal alone" (205). Though not directly stated, Ammons here presents an image of man who is more sensitive to the issues of other forms of life and he satisfies one of the important qualities of ecological consciousness. Ammons poetry is fine evidence of what Robert Pack terms "a capacity for empathy towards nonhuman nature" (273). Later in the same poem Ammons constructs a landscape where weather is significant in a subtle way where the presence of the animal life is powerful: "the pheasant's tail, long / perfect for disappearance in / winter weeds, (CP, 271)

Not life alone, but death too, is part of the world of Ammons's poetry. The drama of death that he witnesses is firmly placed in an experience of weather. Death, too, is part of the process that rules the world of insects and small animals. This dependency on weather that characterizes animal life underlies "Lollapalooza 22 February" with its elaborate build-up of landscape in a particular weather before he introduces the theme of animal life in it. The poem is about the carcass of a pheasant that Ammons comes across when he removes the snow. The experience is also an experience of weather, a point that Ammons underscores when he writes:

ten weeks turning casually to water :the afternoon
 was lovely and constant (except, wing feathers in a
 ground melt, I shoved the mount aside to find, as if alive,
 a pheasant under snow) . . . (CP, 319 - 320)

And Ammons winds up the poem with are turn to a record of the changes in the landscape occasioned by weather:

. . . at dusk, a patch of white
 still centered on the roof, I went out to check
 and sure enough the motions had lessened: spiculeicicles lengthened into a lessening
 overflow. . . (CP, 320)

The reader here witnesses what John Elder sees as a major characteristic of Ammons, "the fuller integration of the particular terrain with underlying processes of creation that also includes mankind." (197)

The theme of death continues in "Lonesome Valley" though without overt references to weather.

Ammons writes of the end of a bumblebee where the only solution, which he writes of, is far away. The solution is the solution of weather, which he makes obvious when he writes that “frost's the solution still / distant” (CP, 345). From this oblique reference to weather, from which the present can be surmised, Ammons turns to present the touching image - the image of the carcass of the bee in this 'reality' of weather:

. . . being dragged down by ants,
the sucked dryness,
the glassy wings perfectly remnant
in their raggedness,
the body shell shellacked and complete,
the excessive hollowness and lightness. (CP, 346)

The dryness of the body, Ammons relates to the dryness of the landscape, which refers to the weather and the season. “Lonesome Valley” is the last poem in *Collected Poems* in which Ammons writes of animal life in a landscape defined by the weather and the seasons and the poem foreshadows Ammons's later poems on animal life in that life and death here, as in later poems, are so thoroughly fused with the cycles of the seasons. For Ammons, life and death in the world of animals are expressions and experiences mediated by the weather and the seasons.

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04
**PROTESTING THE APARTHEID: A READING OF
 DENNIS BRUTUS' POEMS**

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Abstract:

Dennis Brutus, a South African Poet who emerged as a major literary voice during the 1950s and the 1960s, was born in 1924 in Harare, Zimbabwe. As a creative writer, he is associated with the Literature of Protest against apartheid in South Africa. His poetry is so powerful in its appeal and effectiveness that he has been considered as the most appropriate model for the young writers of South Africa. He is primarily studied as a Prison Poet and as a Protest Poet. One of the most important features of this type of poetry is that it is concerned with the immediate social realities. Moreover, the basic purpose of such poet is to convince the people around him. That is to say, as opposed to the poems that deal with the remote subject matter, the poems in this category are concerned with the immediate social realities. In addition to Brutus' concern with the immediate social realities and the hardships of the blacks in apartheid South Africa, his poems vividly and excellently present the picture of inner (mental) working of the narrator or the persons presented in the poem. In so doing, the researcher thinks, Brutus has effectively employed the technique of 'presentation of inner/ psychological realities' in order to intensify the accounts of the reality. Accordingly, the present paper modestly tries to investigate the depiction of psychological realities in the poems of Dennis Brutus which form the very base of his techniques to protest against and to unveil the evil and inhuman workings of the apartheid government.

I

Developing his interest in politics during the 1950s, Brutus began the campaign against racial discrimination in sports. He is largely responsible for the exclusion of South Africa and Rhodesia from Olympic Games. He is kidnapped by the secret police of South Africa and was sentenced to eighteen months of imprisonment. With such famous personalities of South African politics as Nelson Mandela, Govan Beki and Walter Sisulu, he was imprisoned in the notorious prison called Robben Island.

Starting his career as a poet in the 1950s, his first collection of poems - *Sirens, Knuckles and Boots* was published in 1963 when he was in prison. The poems in this collection are influenced by the techniques of English poets like Donne, Tennyson, Browning, Hopkins and Eliot (Abraham). Commenting on this collection of poems, Simon Gikandi (2003: 114) writes that the poems in this collection:

[W]ere characterized by the poet's attempt to balance classical poetic forms with the political themes that interested him, to mesh public issues such as the destruction of landscape and his own deep sense of alienation with private reflections on feelings, including love and loss, which he considered to be an inevitable consequence of oppression.

His second collection of poems, perhaps the most influential of his collections, is *Letters to Martha* (1968) which represents a break from the ornamentation of the earlier poetry. It is the result of his decision during his imprisonment to write simple poetry for ordinary people. The poems in this collection are in the form of letters written to his sister-in-law, Martha, since he was banned to write poetry after his release from the prison. With regard to the poems in this collection, Gikandi (2003) writes:

In addition to being direct and simple, the poems in this collection are haunting expressions and description of prison life and the terror of confinement and political repression.

The other collections of his poems are - *Poems from Algiers* (1970) and *China Poems* (1975). Brutus' poetry is published in almost eleven collections. During the period of apartheid struggle in South Africa, these collections occupied a central place in politics and poetics.

II

Since Brutus is primarily represented as a Prison Poet and as a Protest Poet, it is essential to know what exactly the concerns of such poets are. A creative writer who is devoting himself to prison literature is primarily expected to narrate the prison experience: the warder-goaled relations, the plight of the prisoners, their deprivations and the relations of the prisoners among themselves. As such the human characters are to be included. Similarly, a Protest Poet is expected to describe the protest in the form of outward behavior of the people. Here as well the human characters are important to make the poem of its type. In both his concerns as a Prison and a Protest Poet, Brutus is concerned with human characters. It is also essential here to make a distinction between the romantic / utopian poems that largely deal with subject matters away from the realities of social life and the poems about prison and protest. In the case of the latter poems, the poet should be careful in creating life-like and convincing personalities to effectively make his point. It is here that the presentation of the psychological / inner realities helps the poet intensify the picture of the grim realities of prison life. The psychological / inner workings of the minds of the characters also signify their discontent and protest. Therefore, Brutus' poems are distinct in the sense that they manifest both outward and inner protest.

As Brutus' poems are concerned with protest and prison themes, they centre on the relation between the ruler, whose brutal government system of apartheid has deprived the ruled of many things, and those who are ruled by the system and also the relation between the warder and the goaled. In the apartheid system, the life of the ruled is controlled to such an extent that they are not permitted even to laugh, leading to inciting 'a smouldering flame' in the minds of these people. However, when the ruler increases the pressure to put out this flame, the mind of the ruled says:

Put out this flame, this heart, this laugh!
Never! The self at its secret hearth
nurses its smoulder, saves its heat
while oppressions' power is charred to dust.

Brutus here does not dwell on only the outward realities of the description of the oppression, but points to the psychological condition of the oppressed people. In the mind of their minds, these people are secretly nursing the smoulder which will overthrow the oppression's power. This is a typical technique employed in order to create the feeling of protest.

Brutus at times shows his power to metaphorically concretize the inner working of his mind. Talking about his grief for the fellow people, he writes:

Only the louse of loneliness
Siphons the interstitial marrows
of my brain: the inaccessible itch
mesmerizes hands, heart and flesh
Devouring all my scabrous desolate tomorrows.

However, he realizes that the heart cannot compute with the trajectory of the desire. Whatever have been the wish and desire, they cannot be logically explained. He wants his land and his people to be happy, but, in reality, he finds hunger 'mushrooming' in his land. Due to the contrast between the reality and his desires, the poet's heart:

... knows now such devastations;
Yarning, unworded explodes articulation:
Sound-swift, in silence, fall the rains of poison.

The reality is unbearable to such an extent that it causes 'rain of poison' in his mind.

Brutus has also quite vividly and excellently described the feelings of the prisoners. The first letter of *Letters to Martha* represents the first psychological reaction of the prisoner:

After the sentence
mingled feelings:
sick relief,
the load of approaching days
apprehension -
the hints of brutality
have a depth of personal meaning.

The 'mingled feelings' also include 'exultation, the sense of challenge and confrontation' and also of 'self-pity'.

Brutus has also referred to religious practice in prison and its possible reasons. For the weak, Brutus argues, the resort to god is meant to 'invoke divine revenge/ against a ramping injustice'. However, the general picture of prison life is:

... in the grey silence of empty afternoons
it is not uncommon
to find oneself talking to God.

Such references help the poet to convey the helplessness of the prisoners which make them suffer the brutalities. The only alternatives for them are either to seek 'divine revenge' or 'go lunatic'. Such is the outcome of the prison life under the apartheid rule.

The prison depicted in *Letters to Martha* is not a place for the sensitive mind. The prisoners are seen involved (either voluntarily or by force) in many sexual disorders: 'coprophilism, necrophilism, fellatio; penis-amputation'. Unable to bear the reality, the sensitive minds seek relief in lunacy - one of them:

... hedged his mind with romantic fantasies
of beautiful marriageable daughters
the other sought escape
in fainting fits and asthmas
and finally fled into insanity.

The depiction of these harsh situations that the prisoners have to bear is a kind of protest from humanity in general and South-African sensitive poet, in particular. However, Brutus is highly dissatisfied regarding the behavior of the people who are outside the prison. The agony of the poet is that the fellow people for whom he is fighting for do not seem to be aware of the hardships that the prisoners have to go through.

In order to ease the prison life the prisoners are seen 'cushioning' their minds with 'phrases, aphorisms and quotations' so that 'the cursing blow' of imprisonment may be bearable. However, the most important is the acceptance of the prisoners of themselves as 'prisoners', because once such an identity is accepted, it is really difficult to erase it; and it remains in the mind 'deep down'. Brutus seems to think that the basic root of all these things is 'fear'. Therefore, he calls it 'a deadly enemy'. He narrates the impact of this enemy:

How it seeks out the areas of our vulnerability'
and savages us
until we are so rent and battered
and desperate
that we resort to what revolts us
and wallow in the foulest treachery.

Brutus seems to be of the opinion that 'fear' is the root cause of the predicament of the native African and also of the prisoners. Therefore, one should avoid it. However, it is not possible for any African to eradicate it from their mind. As Brutus says "fear is immanent as sound in the wind-swung bell". The plight of the

apartheid affected people is that they cannot predict when they will be targeted, beaten and imprisoned:

The sounds begin again;
the siren in the night
the thunder at the door
the shriek of nerves in pain.

Then the keening crescendo
of faces split by pain
the wordless, endless wail
only the unfree know.

Importunate as rain
the wraiths exhale their woe
over the sirens, knuckles, boots;
my sounds begin again.

Tactfully, no human character is mentioned here; only the association: siren in the night, thunder at door and shriek of nerves in pain. Who these poor, affected people are, nobody knows. However, Brutus here refers to the universal condition of blacks in apartheid South Africa. If fear and violence is prevalent to this extent and without any discrimination, the innocents are constantly under pressure. The account of the unpredictable, hostile situation also makes the readers to protest against it.

III

To conclude, Brutus is seen employing the vivid and clear description of the psychological states of the characters/narrator in order to further intensify the sufferings of South African black people in general and prisoners in particular. Moreover, such techniques provide Brutus an option to unfold the possible feelings in the minds of these people. Generally, instead of using a detailed realistic and, at times, naturalistic description of prison realities, this technique creates the intense desired effect in the minds of the readers. One needs to be aware that during the period of struggle against apartheid, the poems of Brutus were very popular and influential. That is to say, one of the reasons of writing poetry for Brutus is to create a feeling of protest in the minds of peoples, and the depiction of the psychological workings in the mind of the persons has served the purpose.

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A KALEIDOSCOPIC STUDY OF ALI JAWEED MAQSOOD'S POETRY

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Abstract:

Ali Jaweed Maqsood a contemporary versifier depicted in his poetry the impediments faced by Hussain Ibne Ali (the youngest grandson of Prophet Mohammad, peace be upon him) and the Ahl Al Bayt (the family of Prophet Mohammad) in 'The Battle of Karbala'. He was conversant with the themes of nostalgia, deprivation, reality, righteousness. His various forms of poetry have knitted a wreath of flowery sentences in the Madi'h or praise and also in the grief of Ahl al Bayt (the family of Prophet Mohammad). He was a diver in the ocean of Praise of Ahle bait (the family of Prophet Mohammad, peace be upon him) hence he was called Jaweed or eternal. He has written many styles of poetry namely Ghazal's, Nazms, Rubais, Manqabat, Qasida, Noha's, Marsia's and Salaams. The names of his books are Asri Marsia: "Sultan e Wafa" "Shabab e Shahadat (2001)", Asri Marsia: "Adam Al e Aba" "Paighambar Nisswa" (2004), Asri Marsia: "Abd Mabood Numa" "Khuda Khada Hai Bashar Ke Libas Mein" (2007), Asri Marsia: "Sharikatul Hussain" "Biz a'tul Hussain" (2011), and Khiraje Qalam (2013). Some of his contemporaries are Akhtar Zaidi, Sayeed Shaheedi, Mohammad Ali Kirmani, Kaif Kirmani, Rasheed Shaheedi and Mohammad Ali Wafa. This article aims to express the grief and circumstances depicted in the poetry of Ali Jaweed Maqsood in 'The battle of Karbala'.

Keywords: *Ahle Bait (family of Prophet Mohammad), Noha (lyrical dirge), Marsia (elegiac poem in six-lined or Musaddas format), Mukhammas (five lined band or stanza in poems)*

Prolegomenon

Ali Jaweed Maqsood is a unique contemporary versifier in the history of Urdu literature. His real name was Syed Sajjad Akbar Razvi and his takhallus (pen name) was Jaweed. In modern Persian Jaweed means 'eternal'. He was a diver in the ocean of Praise of Ahle bait (the family of Prophet Mohammad, peace be upon him) hence he was called Jaweed or eternal. He wrote a Manqabat on Abbas Ibne Ali (The younger step-brother of Hussain Ibne Ali, the grandson of Prophet Mohammad) and thus he was bestowed with the laqab or title Shayar Saqqah e Haram i.e., Poet of Abbas Ibne Ali (the younger stepbrother of Hussain Ibne Ali, whose title was Saqqah e Haram, the distributor or provider of water).

He was born in Hyderabad on 17th December 1947 and expired on 10th March 2013 and he lived for 65 years. His father's name was Syed Hamid Hussain Razvi who worked as a History teacher in a Government School till 1964 and mothers name was Nadir Jahan Begum. He had four siblings: three brothers and one sister. He was a Razvi Syed which means he was a descendent of Holy Prophet Mohammad-e-Mustafa's (peace be upon him) eighth son in progeny. He completed his Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) degree from Osmania University in 1965. The main theme under discussion in his Marsias, Salam's and Noha's is 'The battle of Karbala'.

He has written many styles of poetry namely Ghazal's (odes), Nazm (descriptive poetry or rhymed verse in prose style), Rubai (Quatrain), Manqabat (is a Sufi devotional poem in praise of Ali Ibne Abi Talib, the cousin and son-in-law of Prophet Mohammad), Qasida (Poetry in praise of a noble personality), Noha (a lyrical dirge), Marsia (elegiac poem in six lined or Musaddas format) and Salaam (a lyrical salutation). He has written ten Marsia's, numerous Noha's and Salam's. His personality matched his outer posture. He

was kind, affectionate, and fair in his dealings and had human insight. The names of his books are *Asri Marsia: "Sultan e Wafa" "Shabab e Shahadat (2001)"*, *Asri Marsia: "Adam Al e Aba" "Paighambar Nisswa" (2004)*, *Asri Marsia: "Abd Mabood Numa" "Khuda Khada Hai Bashar Ke Libas Mein" (2007)*, *Asri Marsia: "Sharikatul Hussain" "Biz a'tul Hussain" (2011)*, and *Khiraje Qalam (2013)*. Jaweed has self-expression in his cantos and opulence in his words. Some of his contemporaries are Akhtar Zaidi, Sayeed Shaheedi, Mohammad Ali Kirmani, Kaif Kirmani, Rasheed Shaheedi and Mohammad Ali Wafa.

Ali Jaweed Maqsood was influenced in his initial days by the poetry of three prominent poets of Urdu Literature namely: Mir Baber Ali Anis, Josh Malihabadi and Faiz Ahmed Faiz. He read their poetry extensively. Anis and Malihabadi influenced him by their 'laasaani pasmanzar' or unequalled background and Faiz Ahmed Faiz influenced him by his 'Paikar tarashi' or striking imagery. He was a nature poet and was quite famous in his College for "Azad Nazm" (unrhymed or free verse) in the 1970's. After this he started portraying inspired poetry in the form of Noha's (Lyrical dirge). His friend and Advocate A.K Ahmed said "His Nohas still kindle deep pathos and it is impossible to restrain one's tears when one hears." (Khiraje Qalam, 112)

Exploration of Language

Ali Jaweed Maqsood in the following band or stanza of Noha portrays the grief of Hussain Ibne Ali (The younger grandson of Prophet Mohammad, peace be upon him) during the battle of Karbala when one by one his friends and relatives started to embrace death fighting gallantly with the troublesome military of Yazid Ibne Mawviya (The cruel Umayyad despot), 'who demanded oath of fealty from Hussain Ibne Ali, on pain of death.' (Mohani, 5) Hussain Ibne Ali (The younger grandson of Prophet Mohammad) preferred death to paying allegiance to an unprincipled and disorderly dictator.

To avoid having to swear allegiance to a man who was heathen at heart, and whose immorality had destabilized the foundations of religion and ethics. Hussain Ibne Ali (The younger grandson of Prophet Mohammad, peace be upon him) removed himself along with his family from Madina to Mecca. On reaching Mecca, he found himself in greater peril, he came to know that the tyrant soldiers of the Umayyad King, Yazid Ibne Mawviya have disguised themselves in the clothes of Pilgrims to kill him and fearing the desecration of the holy precincts of the Kabaa by bloodshed, he converted his Haj into Umra and set out to Kufa for inviting all that is good and forbidding what is wrong, in compliance with the invitations of the capricious and disloyal inhabitants of that town who have send him letters of allegiance.

But on his way there, he was intercepted by a large army sent by Yazid Ibne Mawviya, and Hussain Ibne Ali (the younger grandson of Prophet Mohammad, peace be upon him) himself, along with his kinsmen and followers, seventy two in all, died fighting bravely on the field of Karbala, after suffering severe thirst, pangs of hunger and insults for three days consecutively in succession (Hussain *Etemaad* 6). Ali Jaweed Maqsood at various places illustrated the power of relationships and the authority these relationships have on our life. The trauma underwent by one relative when the other relative, friend and loved one parted from him and embraced death. Let us now see the lines of the Noha (a lyrical dirge)

Transliteration

Bichde habeeb jeene ki lazzat chali gayii
 Qasim gaye toh zaph ki taaqat chali gayii
 Root 'hejo tum toh qalb ki quwat chali gayii
 Akbar ke saath meri basarat chali gayii
 Abbas humko laashe jawan mil nahin rahii (Jaweed, Karbalawale 14)

When Habeeb parted (died) the flavor to live has gone (i.e., Life has become meaningless)

When Qasim went (expired) then my energy of restrain (i.e., self-control) has gone

When you turned away (to death) then the strength of my heart has gone

Along with Akbar (his death) my eyesight has gone

Abbas I can't find the corpse of the young man. (Translated by Fatima, Farhat)

Aristotle says, 'Without friends no one would choose to live, though he possessed all the goods.' (Pangle, 16) A best friend is a person who you value above other friends in your life, someone you call when you get good or bad news. With whom you try to share the trifles of life and towards whom you turn for help in need. Habib Ibn Mazahir al-Asadi was the childhood best friend of Hussain Ibne Ali (the youngest grandson of Prophet Mohammad) and he was the only friend whom Hussain Ibne Ali has called for help in 'the battle of Karbala.' Habib Ibne Mazahir was in charge of the left wing of Hussain Ibne Ali's Army. He was not only the Ashabi or companion of Prophet Mohammad, (peace be upon him) but also he was the companion of Ali Ibne Abi Talib (the cousin and later son-in-law of Prophet Mohammad, peace be upon him). He was martyred at 75 years of age fighting valiantly with Hussain Ibne Ali against the forces of the tyrant king Yazid Ibne Mawviya led by his Governor Umr ibn Sa'ad.

Between Zuhr and Asr prayers, Habib Ibne Mazahir came to Hussain Ibne Ali and asked permission to go to the battlefield. He wanted to sacrifice his life for the cause of saving Islam. Hussain Ibne Ali tried to stop him by saying Habib your presence gives me comfort, stay back my friend. But as Habib persisted Hussain Ibne Ali eventually gave him permission to fight. He mounted Habib on his horse. Habib Ibne Mazahir rode towards the battlefield and fought bravely and killed many formidable adversaries. While fighting fiercely against a person from the tribe Banu Tamim named Badil Ibn Haraym Aqhfaai, who struck him by his sword and later on Hasin Ibne Tamim also struck Habib on his head. How much a single brave soldier could fight against many unethical soldiers? He was over-powered by cruel forces of Yazid Ibne Mawviya and he was wounded badly and fell to the ground. Later his head was severed from his body by sword by a member of Banu Tamim. (Hasan, 247)

It is significant to know that we all mourn in a different way. Our account of patience combined with our character, and the scale of investment in the camaraderie, all along with the existing stresses influence our reaction to loss. Hussain Ibne Ali rushed to the place where Habib was lying and cried, 'O my dear friend Habib!' I will take you back and all my companions from God on 'The Day of Judgement.' In the above lines of the Noha (A lyrical dirge) the versifier Jaweed depicts the stream of consciousness of Hussain Ibne Ali. He in his thoughts laments to his younger step-brother Abbas Ibne Ali (Son of Ali Ibne Abi Talib) that when his closest and truest friend Habib Ibne Mazahir parted with him to death his flavour to live life has gone. He doesn't have any taste in life anymore. In the second line of the stanza the poet has portrayed skillfully, Hussain Ibne Ali's lamentation on the martyrdom of his nephew Qasim Ibne Hasan, whom he has raised since the age of three years after the martyrdom of his elder brother Hasan Ibne Ali (the elder grandson of Prophet Mohammad) through poison. Hussain Ibne Ali (the youngest grandson of Prophet Mohammad) loved Qasim a lot and considered Qasim as the apple of his eye. In his thoughts he laments to his younger brother Abbas Ibne Ali (Son of Ali Ibne Abi Talib, who was the cousin and son in law of Prophet Mohammad) that after the death of Qasim his self-restraint has vanished and he is unable to control his emotions of loss.

In the third line of the band or stanza, Hussain Ibne Ali further speaks in his conscious thoughts and says to his Brother Abbas Ibne Ali (the younger step-brother of Hussain Ibne Ali) that by losing you to death Abbas I have lost the strength of heart i.e., the inclination to live has left me or the reason of all human instinctive actions have left me. And finally, in the fourth line he says after the martyrdom of his eighteen years young and chivalrous son Akbar his eyesight has weakened and he is unable to see. Jaweed further portrays in the last line of the stanza or band that Hussain Ibne Ali (the youngest grandson of Prophet Mohammad, peace be upon him) is imploring to his brother Abbas Ibne Ali in his conscious thoughts that 'he is unable find the corpse of his son'.

Jaweed has the talent of binding his words in the form of a beautiful rosary. The subsequent lines of the Noha or lyrical dirge are in Mukhammas format (five lines of poetry) and portray the scene of war and

the narration of the conscious thoughts of Hussain Ibne Ali (the youngest grandson of Prophet Mohammad) by the poet.

Transliteration

Asre Ashoor tha Shabbir thay tanhaaai thi

Mahe Zahra pe ghata zulm ki jab chaaii thi

Sheh ko jab nauke sinaa suaee zameen laaii thi

Ghirte ghirte lab e zakhmi pe sada aayii thi

Garm rethi pe mein girta hoon sambhalo Amma (Jaweed, Karbalawale 42)

They were the last hours of third prayer(Asr), on the tenth day of Moharram(Ashura)and Shabbir (also known as Hussain Ibne Ali) was alone

Whilst the moon of Zahra (i. e., Hussain Ibne Ali) was enveloped in the dense dark clouds of cruelty

When the point of sword brought the Sheh or King, Hussain Ibne Ali (from the horse) towards the earth

While falling came the cry on his wounded lips

I am falling on hot sand, hold me mother!(Translated by Fatima, Farhat).

The above lines of Noha are in Mukhammas format (five lines of poetry) and portray a gloomy sense of devastation. They portray melancholically the last hour of Hussain Ibne Ali's (the youngest grandson of Prophet Mohammad) martyrdom. The reader can perceive the intensity of loneliness of Hussain Ibne Ali through the lines of poetry. Everyone among the adversaries was striving for his death and among these tyrants was the moon of Zahra (Zahra is the daughter of Prophet Mohammad) alone. At this moment the point of a tyrant's sword pushed Sheh (also known as Hussain Ibne Ali, the youngest grandson of Prophet Mohammad) to the ground. Through parched and wounded lips he called his mother, Fatima Az-Zahra (the daughter of Prophet Mohammad) that he was falling from the horse on hot sand therefore come and hold me mother. It is human nature that at whatever age you are, the first thought which comes to a person in calamity is of mother. A person tries to seek the comfort of his/her mother and thus the poet superbly portrays the last wishes of Hussain Ibne Ali (The youngest grandson of Prophet Mohammad) who wants his mother to come and hold him in the last moments of his life.

Through his flowery and flowing words Jaweed sketches a scene in front of the eyes of the reader, full of magical realism as if the reader is present at the time of the calamity. The following lines of the Noha of Jaweed portray the lamentation of Fatima Az-Zahra (mother of Hussain Ibne Ali and daughter of Prophet Mohammad, peace be upon him) at the time before the martyrdom of Hussain Ibne Ali.

Transliteration

Narghe mein sitamgaron ke ghash hai mera dilbar

Khanjar liye aata hai idhar shimr e Sitamgar

Runn mein nikal aayii hai udhar Zainab e muztar

Qaimoa mein nabi zadiyon ki aah o fuga'n hai

Shabbir hai tanha mera Abbas kahan hai (Jaweed, Karbalawale 31)

My unconscious sweetheart has been besieged by the tyrants

The oppressor Shimr is bringing here a short curved sword (shaped as letter 'J')

Being restless, Zainab has come out into the battlefield

In the tents the cries and wails of the daughters of Prophet Mohammad can be heard

Shabbir (also known as Hussain Ibne Ali, youngest grandson of Prophet Mohammad) is alone, where is My Abbas?(Translated by Fatima, Farhat)

It is a Shia-Muslims belief that Fatima Az-Zahra (the daughter of Prophet Mohammad, peace be upon him) was present in the battle of Karbala when her son Hussain Ibne Ali has called her in the last hour

of his martyrdom. The poet portrays the grief and lamentation of a mother, Fatima Az-Zahra when she sees her son, Hussain Ibne Ali (The youngest grandson of Prophet Mohammad) circled and overwhelmed by the tyrants of Yazid Ibne Mawviya's (The cruel unethical despot of Umayyad Dynasty) army. It is her Soliloquy, my son is in the circle of tyrants and the cruelest Shimr e Dhi'l-Jawshan is bringing a short blunt sword of 'J' shape to behead him. Hussain Ibne Ali's sister Zainab has come out of her tent restlessly seeing her brother's plight and all the women folk of the family of Prophet Mohammad are crying and wailing. And in the last line of the Noha she questions and laments, My son Shabbir is all alone and at this moment where is his brave and chivalrous brother Abbas Ibne Ali (who was already martyred by the forces of Yazid Ibne Mawviya)

The next lines of verses of marsia depicted by Jaweed are in the Musaddas format i. e., genre of six lines (also known as sestain or Misra). Jaweed had a knack of portraying the happenings so realistically in his marsia's that a scene is sketched in front of the reader as if, the catastrophe is happening in front of the reader's eyes. In the following Misra or sestain of Musaddas Jaweed focuses mainly on the surprise of the sub-ordinates of Ubayd Allah Ibn e Ziad's (Umayyad Governor of Basra, Kufa and Khurasan under the reign of Yazid Ibne Mawviya) army. They were unable to fathom and understand as to how a man after being tortured so much could have so much confidence and will power and patience in him as was shown by Zain Ul Abedien. (The eldest son of Hussain Ibne Ali)

Transliteration

Hairan thi duniya ye wahi bol raha hai
 Woh Jiska pidar dasht mein be go'r pada hai
 Natiq hai wahi jis ke gale tauq gada hai
 Pairon se laho shaam talak jiska baha hai
 Be parda rasan basta harem jiske khade hain
 Faulad ke haaton mein kade jiske pade hain (Jaweed *Asri Marsia* 25)

*The world was surprised that he is the same one, who is saying this
 There in the desert whose father is lying down graveless?
 Is he the same spokesman in whose neck, Collar (Shackle) is lying?
 From whose feet till Sham (Syria) blood has been oozing all the way
 Whose women folk are standing unveiled and roped?
 Who has bracelets of steel (shackles) lying in his hands (Translated by Fatima, Farhat)*

After beheading the Prophet's youngest grandson, Hussain Ibne Ali and having trampled the sacred bodies of the martyrs under their horse's hooves, the brutal host, Umar Ibne Saad, Commander of Ubayd Allah Ibne Ziad's Army (Umayyad Governor of Basra, Kufa and Khurasan under the reign of Yazid Ibne Mawviya) and his tyrannous army burnt Hussain Ibne Ali's tents. Of the gallant band of martyrs, of Hussain Ibne Ali's Army the only individual that survived the massacre was his eldest son, Ali Ibne Hussain alias Zain Ul Abedien. His severe illness at the time, disabled him from combating, and his absolute obedience of his father's last word restrained him from attempting to do so. Thus his life was spared.

The vile soldiers of Umar Ibne Saad (the Commander of Ubayd Allah Ibne Ziad's Army) after pillaging the bereaved women and children of their few possessions made them captives, while the mangled corpses of the martyrs were left unburied on the burning sands. The captives were then mounted on the bare backs of camels, with Zain Ul Abedien (the eldest son of Hussain Ibne Ali, grandson of Prophet Mohammad) at their head, and accompanied by the severed heads of the martyrs mounted on spears; they were led through the crowded streets of Kufa, to the court of Yazid's Governor, Ubayd Allah Ibne Ziad. The latter, having expressed his satisfaction at the performance of his subordinates, ordered the prisoners to be

taken to Damascus. At length, subsequent to a toilsome journey, this caravan of widows, orphans and severed heads, pelted at and insulted by the decadent masses of the cities and townships through which they passed, and, forced onwards with the spears and whips of their merciless captors, finally arrived in the court of the hideous and brutal oppressor Yazid Ibne Mawviya.

The captives as well as the heads of the martyrs were then presented before the cruel despot Yazid Ibne Mawviya, who touched Hussain Ibne Ali's lips with a stick and heaped verbal abuses upon that honorable head. After that, turning towards the captives, he inquired the names of each of them, and absurdly voiced pleasure at what had befallen them. When Zain Ul Abedien (the eldest son of Hussain Ibne Ali, grandson of Prophet Mohammad) remonstrated with him, he threatened to put him to the sword. At which the latter, with his characteristic courage, challenged him, saying "I am not afraid of being killed; nay, in those that have been slain before me I have an example worthy of emulation. (Mohani, 6)

Here in the above Musaddas Jaweed portrays the surprise of the captors of Zain Ul Abedien. (the eldest son of Hussain Ibne Ali, grandson of Prophet Mohammad) They were surprised at his boldness. Was this the young man on whom we have heaped insults and treated him so badly. Was this the same person, whose father was lying brutally martyred on the plains of 'Karbala' shroudless and tomb less and we did not even allow him and gave him time to bury his father. He was all the way shackled with heavy steel collar and with heavy fetters in hands and feet, and blood was oozing from his feet as he has been made to walk several thousand miles on thorny desert. They wondered at the braveness and boldness of Zain Ul Abedien (the eldest son of Hussain Ibne Ali) and thought to themselves as to how bold was he that after so many traumas he could be so steady and firm in his wordings and thinking.

Conclusion

Jaweed's poetry is so intense, overwhelming and overpowering that it marks the page through his depiction of flowing words and poignant verses. The following are the lines of a profound and deep Noha.

Har nasl badal jayegi, badlega ye aalam
Insaan badal jayenge, badlenge ye mausam
Shayar na rahenge na qatiib aur na aalim
Har haal mein hoga shahe mazloom ka matam
Mausam kabhi badlega na pyaso ki aza ka
Gham Hazrat e Abbas ka Jaweed rahega (Jaweed *Asri Marsiye: Sultan e Wafa* 23)

*Every breed will be replaced, and this world will be transformed
Humans will be replaced, and the seasons will change
Poets, scribes and scholars will perish
At any rate the mourning of 'King of the Oppressed' or Hussain Ibne Ali will continue
Mourning season of the Thirsty people (of Karbala) will never change
Sorrow of His Eminence Abbas will be eternal. (Translated by Fatima, Farhat)*

In the above striking Musaddas (six lined verses) of Marsia, Jaweed says that generations will be replaced and the world might transform and change ethnically and culturally, people might die and seasons might change, versifiers, writers and researchers will expire. But the mourning season of Hussain Ibne Ali (The youngest grandson of Prophet Mohammad, peace be upon him) will carry on as it is destined to continue by the grace of Almighty Allah (God). This mourning season of the thirsty and parched people of Karbala, the loved ones of Hussain Ibne Ali, his Ansaar (friends) and Akhroba (family members) will never change and woe and bereavement of reverent Abbas Ibne Ali will be everlasting and incessant.

This artistic and most outstanding luminary, Ali Jaweed Maqsood left this world for eternal dwelling on 10th march 2013 and he has been rested in peace in a graveyard of Hyderabad known as *Daire*

Mir Momin. He is survived by his wives Sayyeda Razvi, Amina Marzia and one son Syed Anees Raza Razvi and two daughters Kounain Fatima and Samana Sughra and numerous admirers of his poetry. His poetry is considered as one of the most exceptional pieces of Urdu Literature and he is measured as one amid the finest modern versifiers.

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06

WALLACE STEVENS AS A NATURALIST: A STUDY OF SELECTED POEMS FROM HARMONIUM

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Abstract:

Wallace Stevens, since the publication of his first volume of poetry Harmonium in 1923, has always baffled the critics. As aloof a poet as he wanted himself to be and yet a successful insurance man of the mainstream of business culture-the combination itself is baffling. The criticism of his time was most often corrupted by the wonder or the annoyance at this not-so-agreeable dual role. Critics tried to fit this eccentric poet in various schools of poetry. Most of the later criticism was focused on what he himself called his 'reality-imagination' complex. The present paper is a humble attempt to locate the elements of naturalism in a few selected poems of Harmonium. The volume seems to be a queer composite of different styles and sensibilities-grand on one hand and humorous, dazzling, exotic, ironic and playful on the other.

Keywords: Puritanism, transcendentalism, genteel, existence, essence, physiological processes, reality, imagination, idealism.

Either everything in man can be traced as a development from below, or something must come from above. There is no avoiding that dilemma; you must be either a naturalist or a supernaturalist (Eliot, Second Thoughts about Humanism, 393-403)

Stevens' poetry doesn't seem to have any claim to supernaturalism. Nor does he search for essences or abstractions, so what remains is naturalism. Naturalism as a literary movement gained momentum at the turn of the century and had the influence till the outbreak of World War I. Naturalist writers gave an objective expression to the existence. Stevens also, in his poems, seems to assert that the world we live in exists as such with or without our awareness of it. He goes after no morality issues. Essences like God, heaven, rebirth etc. mislead us, but they are part of our conscious content and we take them to be self-evident. Influences of Transcendentalism and Puritanism turned the Americans other-worldly. Such 'genteel' Americans were not fit to face the factual world. Stevens' poetry poses a challenge to these essences. There is nothing fair or foul. We deal with the world of concrete objects; we have to do business with a world that does not owe its being and its nature to our awareness of it. "In the Carolinas", "the lilacs wither" and "the butterflies flutter above the cabin." Realism is given a naturalistic and materialistic interpretation here. The poet says:

Already the new-born children interpret love
In the voices of mothers (4).

The poet does not show any inclination for a better world than the one given to him. In the naturalistic strain, Stevens feels that the world itself is neither all beauty, nor all truth. Death, disease, poverty all are placed against pleasure and play. It's only that we prefer our sense of beauty or truth. But for him "poetry is not a personal matter." (903) Stevens accepts this world as it is, in all its beauty and ugliness. He asserts, "Poetry is a purging of the world's poverty and change and evil and death. It is a present perfecting, a satisfaction in the irremediable poverty of life." (906)

In the poem "The Paltry Nude Starts on a Spring Voyage", the sun is imagined as a female. For this nude woman, there is nothing so good as the sea and its weeds as these help her to cover her nudity. The language used in the poem is itself intended to hide the nudity of the woman. Stevens' naturalism again

comes to the fore in the next poem of *Harmonium*, “*The Plot Against the Giant*”, wherein a yokel comes maundering and the girls suggest their different ways to check him. The first girl suggests that she will check the giant by “diffusing the civilest odors out of geraniums and unsmelled flowers.”(5) The second girl proposes that she will shame the giant by sprinkling her clothes with colors. The third girl thinks of a different device that she will undo him altogether by whispering “heavenly labials in a world of gutturals.”(6) She chooses the device of religious utterances following her belief that some prayer will undo the giant and Stevens is critical of this particular attitude of going after the essences. The giant himself is not there, there are suppositions to encounter the terror. But the world of facts exists independently of our observations; it has its own terrible existence. In “*Domination of Black*”, the fallen leaves by the fire at night makes one remember the cry of the peacocks. The fallenness of the leaves and of the peacock tails, resemble each other; they are appearances of the same reality. Like Anita Desai's *Cry The Peacock*, the poet feels something terrible about the peacocks struggling for sexual satisfaction. It is a fight to the finish. The cry of the peacocks for sexual act is a part of the natural world, with no values attached to it. This world exists independent of the observer. The colors outside are reflected inside. The window in the room, like the window in the room of the head prostitute in *The Wasteland* facilitates the vision of both, the inside and the outside. In *The Wasteland*, Eliot makes us see through the window, the prostitution going on inside and the rape of Philomela outside. Here also, we have a window through which the color of the fallen leaves outside is reflected in the fire of the lamp inside. The peacocks outside tear each other's entrails in their sexual act bringing the darkness of death. The same darkness engulfs the inside of the room. The dying glory of the colors outside corresponds with the fire inside. Two divergent images of beauty and ugliness, life and death are correlated. Through these associated images, the mind is able to create a whole picture. This checks us from sticking to the hard reality and also our escape into the world of idealism. In “*The Ordinary Women*” the women suffering from dry cough move through the palace walls:

Then from their poverty they rose,
From dry catarrhs, and to guitars
They flitted
Through the palace walls (8).

While doing so, they flung their monotony behind and experience every aspect of knowledge and aesthetics. But, being parted from the real existence, these turn dry and the women have to turn to reality again, to the existence to fill the life sap;

Then from their poverty they rose,
From dry guitars, and to catarrhs
They flitted
Through the palace walls (9).

The material world and the world of ideals, both remain poor if dealt with for long. We have to allow ourselves a free play in both to escape the dryness and poverty lying therein. According to Stevens, we don't prefer things for they are good; they are good for they are preferred ones. The emphasis here is not on aesthetic as a sense of beauty rather aesthetic as perception. Stevens' aesthetic may be called naturalistic in the sense that unlike Berkeley, he doesn't believe human perception to be the ultimate. He does not claim that when we move away, things do not exist-*esse is percipi*. In “*Le Monocle de Mon Oncle*” Stevens conveys the idea that the life of imagination and mysticism is without substance, for;

The fops of fancy in their poems leave
Memorabilia of the mystic spouts,
Spontaneously watering their gritty soils (13).

The persona, as a worker of the soil knows “no magic trees, no balmy boughs, no silver-ruddy, gold vermilion fruits.”(13) He knows a tree to which birds come for shelter. The shelter remains where it was, even when the birds fly away. Like naturalists, Stevens shows that human beings can have but little control

over what happens. Rather various external and internal forces make the things happen to them. He looks at things not in terms of his own likes and dislikes. Pleasure is seen as a quality of the object not subjected to personal preferences. The observer cannot be a fop of fancy, rather he should see any object neutrally. While the lilies scudded fragrance around the two lovers sitting beside the pool of pink, a frog boomed from his belly “odious chords”. The two faces of reality are again brought together when “a blue pigeon... circles the blue sky”, and the white “flutters to the ground”. The persona now realizes that “fluttering things have so distinct a shade.”(14) Not all things are beautiful; it all depends on the glasses we wear. Things exist as they are, we are guided by our prejudices and biases, of which Stevens is here critical. In his prose piece, *Three Academic Pieces*, Stevens explains how in the process of creating poetry, nothing is left out of the perceptive field;

Take, for example, a beach extending as far as the eye can reach, bordered, on the one hand, by trees and, on the other, by the sea. The sky is cloudless and the sun is red. In what sense do the objects in this scene resemble each other? There is enough green in the sea to relate it to the palms. There is enough of the sky reflected in the water to create a resemblance, in some sense between them (113).

Nothing is dissociated in this field like Eliot's Tiresias in *The Wasteland*, who is one in all men and Women. In *Le Monocle de Mon Oncle*, the speaker mocks at the woman who finds it hard to accept the reality that she is growing old and ugly. She believes in a kind of transcendental world and wishes to be called “Mother of heaven, regina of the clouds”(10) and so on. The poet's naturalism is not beguiled by such beliefs and the fact is that she is growing aged. Critics touched this aspect but rarely. Most of Stevens' criticism is focused on what Stevens himself again and again talked about- his reality-imagination complex. Robert Rehder, in *The Poetry of Wallace Stevens*, observes that Stevens' world is a “total double-thing”, about reality-imagination complex. In the chapter “*My Reality-Imagination Complex*”, Rehder says; “There is a sense in which all of Stevens' poetry is about a single subject, and this is true of his work in a way that is not true of the poetry of Whitman, Yeats, Hardy, Eliot or Williams. His discovery of this subject- the relation between imagination and reality- was infinitely fruitful.” He even refers to “the obsessive, almost pathological quality of his interest.”(Rehder 133) Such views reflect the excessive enthusiasm of the critics to limit the scope of Stevens' work. Stevens' poetry is indeed a kind of critique of the human tendency to grab the essences without taking notice of the existences. He has no intention to provide any kind of providential plan of creation through his poetry. Rather his poetry simply attempts to interpret man's past in the light of his ideal development. While the transcendentalists like Emerson held the view that nature is essentially rational and is the guiding factor, Stevens is of the view that reason enters late in the process of evolution. Nature comes to us under the rich garb of sights and sounds. We are beguiled by the garb and start perceiving spirits in rivers and trees. The mechanical processes operating underneath are gradually analyzed through practical experiences. This enables us to strip off irrelevant qualities and we learn to prefer things to ideas.

The poet in “*The Snow man*” demands for the exclusion of any thought of human misery from the mind to “regard the frost and the boughs of the pine-trees crusted with snow.” The self has to be brought to nothing to behold “nothing that is not there and the nothing that is.”(8) The snow-covered scene has nothingness in it, it's sterile but that is to be perceived without interference, without the inclusion of the misery which is a part of the psyche of the observer. It exists as it is with its nothingness. The process of the world has no moral intent; it moves on mechanical lines. Still, the poet tries to give a sense of form, a sense of beauty to this vulgar existence. Stevens' naturalism provides the run way for the poetic flight. The bodies that survive sustain themselves by feeding on other bodies. In this way they regain their internal balance, repair themselves and reproduce their distinctive patterns in the new bodies being produced from them. The poem “*Frogs Eat Butterflies. Snakes Eat Frogs. Hogs Eat Snakes. Men Eat Hogs*”, brings out Stevens' naturalism in quite clear terms. The poet gives the image of rivers nosing like swines. Just as the swines eat

rubbish, the river eats its bank. It may be “not known” to the man “who erected this cabin, planted this field.” But the poet knows that bodies, organic or inorganic, are related to the rest of the world and interact through the powers of their own. Here he creates a psyche of rivers that suckle themselves;

As the swine-like rivers suckled themselves
While they went seaward to the sea-mouths (62).

This world of nature, the world of eating and being eaten, must stay where it is because it cannot be denied. Nor the poet attempts to do that. “A poem need not have a meaning and like most things in nature often does not have,” (914) says Stevens in one of his adages. Hence our original experience is quite chaotic. Out of this chaos, we start learning to discern the predictable realm of nature; and here most of the poets, be it romantics or the transcendentalists are tempted to attribute the mystical and the uncommon. Stevens here advises to stick to the common instead of taking a flight as he says; “Reality is the object seen in its greatest common sense” (*Opus Posthumous* 178).

Stevens' theoretical position, in his reaction against what Lionel Trilling called “residual pieties” of Puritanism on the one hand and the urge of the transcendentalists to transcend on the other, is most probably backed by that of Santayana. Santayana himself was a severe critic of the American pieties and wished Christianity to align with paganism. Nietzsche also holds somewhat similar views. He favors the infusion of vitality in Christianity as the twin forces of Puritanism and Transcendentalism turned it too soft to bear the burden of life. Stevens' naturalism is a mean to infuse that vitality, but his poetry finally moves to the comprehensive idea of combining naturalism and transcendentalism. In the poem, “*Peter Quince at the Clavier*,” Stevens does not negate the possibility of sexual passion flamed up in the elders by watching the naked beauty of Susanna. The poem clearly brings out Stevens' sense of beauty, the roots of which lie in his naturalism but the flowering occurs in the world of ideals. The poet here offers the physiological and psychological explanation of why certain objects seem beautiful, while others do not and thus provides a naturalistic account of an aesthetic experience by pointing out its sexual basis. Beauty here lies in the feeling of pleasure felt in seeing an object. It's projected as a quality of the object and not just our reaction to it. The poem has almost become Keatsian in the hands of Stevens who makes it a sacrament of praise of Susanna. She is made alive from the jaws of death. Stevens shows that ideals and nature are not paradoxical; rather all ideals are natural in their origin and all nature is ideal in its possibilities. Everything in nature is determined by mechanical laws. The elders cannot escape feeling as they watched Susanna bathing. When she sensed it, she cried. She was charged with her emotions over her sense of shame. The response on both sides was mechanical. They were not provided with the freedom of choice; it was but natural, an effect following a cause. The poet himself is not immune to desire. As he watches the red-eyed elders feeling “the basses of their beings throb”, he himself is desiring his beloved, thinking of her blue-shadowed silk. Therefore, he does not present a critique of the act, nor does he blame the elders. The poet touches the keys as he wishes to touch the body of his beloved. The body generates the same music in the heart of the poet as the fingers generate the music upon the keys. Instead of being a mere sound, music is feeling then. It's similar to the strain that waked the passions in the elders by the beauty of Susanna. “The basses of their beings throb” to create feeling. The music that the poet's fingers play on the keys is harmonizing his body and spirit. The spirit is reduced to the idea of body reflecting a physiological process. Knowing, feeling and willing- all become one. Nothing is felt in the mind without being felt in the body. The music created by Susanna in the elders may be momentary but it's immortal in the flesh. Here, Stevens seems akin to Santayana's animal faith when he says;

The body dies; the body's beauty lives.
So evenings die, in their green going,
A wave interminably flowing.
So gardens die, their meek breath scenting
The cowl of winter, done repenting

So maidens die, to the auroral
Celebration of a maiden's choral (74).

Stevens' criticism is directed against Puritans who make the avoidance of pleasure a virtue. Stevens follows Heraclitus' logos. Idealism, for him, is inherent in naturalism. Though evenings die, but in the eternal flux, nothing is lost. Old water gives place to the new. Thus we can conclude by saying that the poems contained in *Harmonium* are actually an attempt to harmonize his naturalism with his idealism and transcendentalism. Here the sinner and the saint enjoy equal rights. The moralistic and religious strains are rejected. The opposites, that seem to stay in a state of constant strife, are actually unified by virtue of their interdependence.

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07

EXPLORING THE DISTINCTIVE MOOD CHANGE OF THE ENGLISH SOLDIER POETS DURING THE GREAT WAR

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Abstract:

No conflict has ever been so closely linked and portrayed with the poetry and literature of its age than the First World War. The First World War or the Great War challenged existing conventions, morals, and ideals more than any war. Before the Great War, there was little or no anti-war art. The era of the First World War had seen a distinctive mood change among writers and poets. Inspired by first-hand experience of the trenches, poets such as Sassoon distinguished themselves from old Greek and Latin poets who had traditionally portrayed war in a lyrical, romantic way. The nature of war itself had changed dramatically and it was this gritty realism which Sassoon and Owen and their contemporaries embraced and which would directly influence future literature and poetry of the 20th century and afterwards. The First World War generated a plethora of anti-war reactions in the visual arts as well as other arts such as literature and poetry. War poetry accommodates binary oppositions, most notably life and death.

Key Words: *Great War, disillusion.*

The era of the First World War had seen a distinctive mood change among writers. The war poets of the Great War have three different major moods and reactions towards the war. Robert Brooke is the most famous representative of the initial reaction of to the war. He represented the first mood towards the war which was a patriotic promoting to drive the writer from school or college to join the colours; it has attained poetic form in stilted rhetoric and the radiant assurance of the untested ideals. Siegfried Sassoon is the most vigorous exponent of the anger and disillusion. He has represented the second mood towards the war where the poets began to find reasons for becoming tentative in their patriotism and with drawing into a more meditative position. The poets here looked into their hearts and write with greater honesty. However, by the end of war, during bloodshed and misery intensify, the outcome seems no more certain no more swiftly attained. Protest against the continuance of hostilities makes old romanticism both blind and morally objectionable. There emerges from all the experience a moment in which a poet ceases to be moralist and accepts the state of war as the inevitable condition against which the individual's struggle is fruitless. That was the last mood during war time. Wilfred Owen, who attempted to take these war themes into more generalized vein and to apply new techniques for his wider vision on war, has represented the third mood towards the war.

Introduction to War and Poetry:

Poets have written about the experience of war since the Greeks, but the young soldier poets of the First World War established war poetry as a literary genre. Their combined voice has become one of the defining texts of Twentieth Century Europe.

In 1914 hundreds of young men in uniform took to writing poetry as a way of striving to express extreme emotion at the very edge of experience. The work of a handful of these, such as Brooke, Owen, Rosenberg and Sassoon, has endured to become War Poetry. War poetry is not necessarily 'anti-war'. It is,

however, about the very large questions of life: identity, innocence, guilt, loyalty, courage, compassion, humanity, duty, desire, and death. Its response to these questions, and its relation of immediate personal experience to moments of national and international crisis, gives war poetry an extra-literary importance.

The aim of the research:

This research aims at studying how the poets of the Great War has reacted towards war in pre-war time and during war time and what are the moods which have been highlighted in the poems of the war poets under discussions. The researcher has observed three major moods of the poets towards the war which can be represented in the poems of the three war poets selected for this research (Robert Brooke, Siegfried Sassoon and Wilfred Owen).

Poets' Reaction to the Great War:

During World War I, soldiers were subjected to trench warfare and mustard gas. Many poets have written about wars of which they have had no direct experience; it is the "soldier-poet" who has the firsthand knowledge of what war can do, not only to the body but also to the psyche. For them, the experience was not an abstract concept, or a political exercise for the greater good. It was a terrifying every day event that the soldier-poet found a way to transform into poetry. In the heartbreaking poem "Dulce et Decorum Est," Owen speaks of his experience at the front; the opening stanza paints a grim picture of a soldier's dire situation:

*Bent double, like beggars under sacks,
Knock-kneed, coughing like hags, we cursed through sludge,
Till on the haunting flares we turned our backs
And towards our distant rest began to trudge.
Men marched asleep. Many had lost their boots
But limped on, blood-shod. All went lame; all blind;
Drunk with fatigue; deaf even to the hoots
Of tired, outstripped Five-Nines that dropped behind.*

The reality of the Western Front for the average soldier could not have been more different. Purposeful activity with a clear objective was replaced by confusion and apparent chaos, cowering in muddy trenches for no obvious reason other than to avoid death, with death itself seldom heroic but rather random and deeply unpleasant. Awakened by this first taste of trench warfare and affected by the appalling conditions and constant danger, Sassoon's poetry became much harder in both language and tone, with his earlier romantic verse forgotten in favour of the ugly reality he was now experiencing.

1) Mood of Initial Reaction to the War:

Robert Brooke is the most famous representative of the initial reaction to the war. He represented the first mood towards the war which was a patriotic promotion. The truth is that Robert Brooke actually saw little combat during the war; he contracted blood-poisoning from a small neglected injury and died in April, 1915. His war sonnets were written in the first flush of patriotism and enthusiasm as a generation unused to war rushed to defend king and country.

*If I should die, think only this of me:
That there's some corner of a foreign field
That is forever England. There shall be
In that rich earth a richer dust concealed;
A dust whom England bore, shaped, made aware....
(from war sonnets- sonnet V. The soldier).*

Rupert Brooke has written five war sonnets entitled "1914". These war sonnets enshrine more effectively the reaction to the war of Brooke and millions of others involved in the initial enthusiasm. These sonnets have been lauded as being "among the supreme expressions of English patriotism and

among the few notable poems produced by the Great War. "Probably no poems have been so acclaimed and so disparaged within the space of one generation as these five sonnets. Gregson J. M (1976:7)

According to Roberts David (2014:39) "The group of five sonnets called 1914 that Rupert Brooke wrote in December 1914 and finished in January 1915 became, within a few months, some of the most praised and widely read poems of their day". However, for Bergonzi, Bernard (1980:41) "The sonnets themselves are not very amenable to critical discussion. They are works of very great mythic power, since they formed a unique focus for what the English felt, or wanted to feel; in 1914-15: they crystallize the powerful archetype of Brooke, the young Apollo, in his sacrificial role of the hero-as-victim. Considered, too, as historical documents, they are of interest as an index to the popular state of mind in the early months of the war. But considered more narrowly and exactly as poems, their inadequacy is very patent."

A common element in all five of the war sonnets of Brooke is a preoccupation with death. It is disenchantment with life which makes him willingly embrace war as a heroic purposeful variant to his own rather aimless life, and a soldier's death as an honourable escape. Death is the theme of all five of the war sonnets and two of them are actually titled "The Dead". According to Sassoon "Rupert Brooke was miraculously right when he said 'Safe shall be my going. Secretly armed against all death's endeavour; Safe though all safety's lost'. He described the true soldier-spirit- saint and hero like Norman Donaldson and thousands of others who have been killed and died happier than they lived". Roberts David (2014:45)

*Now, God be thanked Who has watched us with His hour,
And caught our youth, and wakened us from sleeping,
With handmade sure, clear eye, and sharpened power,
To turn, as swimmers into cleanness leaping,
Glad from a world grown old and cold and weary,
Leave the sick hearts that honour could not move,
And half-men, and their dirty songs and dreary,
And all the little emptiness of love! (Peace .LL. 1-8).*

The second war sonnet, 'Safety', celebrates in sonorous bardic lines the notion that death in this honourable war is the surest guarantee of safety. It was an emotional time and the initial enthusiasm now looks like mass hysteria. The illustrations of the war sonnets reveals important deficiencies as well as virtues already remarked : both are well illustrated in the most famous of his 1914 sonnets, which are the only two not so far considered in details. The third and fourth ones are entitled "The Dead" and the fifth is "The Soldier".

"The Dead" reveals a considerable mastery of the sonnet form as well as usual melodic persuasion:

*Blow out, you bugles, over the rich Dead!
There's none of these so lonely and poor of old,
But, dying, has made us rarer gifts than gold.
These laid the world away; poured out the red
Sweet wine of youth; gave up the years to be
Of work and joy, and that un hoped serene,
That men call age; and those who would have been,
Their sons, they gave, their immortality.
Blow, bugles, blow! They brought us, for our dearth,
Holiness, lacked so long, and Love, and Pain.
Honour has come back, as a king, to earth,
And paid his subjects with a royal wage;
And Nobleness walks in our ways again;
And we have come into our heritage.*

The use of ever vaguer and grander abstractions - from the dead he moves to youth, age, immortality, holiness, honour and nobleness- give a consistency of effect which is typical of the most telling use of sonnet form. The idea of the bloodshed in war as "the sweet wine of youth" and the conceit of the dead giving up their tangible link with posterity because they died before siring offspring, "those who would have been" are perfectly clear, even if rather high flown. Brooke seems to have seized the opportunity of the war to project the private poetic preoccupation with death noted earlier into a generalized context.

2) Mood of Anger and Disillusion

Sassoon was the first English poet to rebel with vigor and passion against the old traditions of war poetry, and he was one of very few poets who expressed this mood continually and violently while the war was still in progress. For Daiches David (1978), Siegfried Sassoon was one of the first writers brave enough to use poetry to describe war as it really is: brutalizing, destructive, horrific, and an indefensible waste of human lives. Siegfried Sassoon who was to become a very bitter about the war as time went on, was the first of the well-known war poets to sign up in response to the actions of Germany. Moreover, in his *Memoirs of a Foxhunting Man*, he gives us a few clues showing his reactions towards the war. "The war was inevitable and justifiable. Courage remains a virtue ... I had serious aspiration to heroism ... My one idea was to be first in the field. In fact I made quite an impressive inward emotional experience of it. ... My gesture was so to speak an individual one, and I gloried in it". Quoted in Roberts David (2014:114)

He was thinking seriously about what the war mean. His first war poems, not surprisingly, are in keeping with the popular spirit of the times. His bitterness and hatred of the war did not begin until early 1916. The poem "*Absolution*" expresses his early reaction towards the war:

*The anguish of the earth absolves our eyes
Till beauty shines in all that we can see.
War is our scourge; yet war has made us wise,
And, fighting for our freedom, we are free.
Horror of wounds and anger at the foe,
And loss of things desired; all these must pass.
We are the happy legion, for we know
Time's but a golden wind that shakes the grass.
There was an hour when we were loth to part
From life we longed to share no less than others.
Now, having claimed this heritage of heart,
What need we more, my comrades and my brothers?*

Many young men like Siegfried Sassoon went into the First World War with this kind of idealism. The carnage they found there came as a tremendous shock: the way modern war was fought was different - and horrifying. His memoirs show how troubling and confusing it was to be in the midst of noise and devastation. What soldiers suffered knocked all the grand ideals and flowery language out of Sassoon's poetry. War, he wrote, 'had become undisguisedly mechanical and inhuman. What in earlier days had been drafts of volunteers were now droves of victims.' Now he had to express the inhumanity of war in his poems.

Siegfried Sassoon spoke out publicly against the war (and yet returned to it); he influenced and mentored the then unknown Wilfred Owen (shocking, realistic war poetry - he was also a soldier-) ; he spent thirty years reflecting on the war through his memoirs; and at last he found peace in his religious faith. Some critics found his later poetry lacking in comparison to his war poems. In July 1917 he made a written statement about his objection to the war and gave it to his commanding officer. He also refused to return to the front line, though he knew that he risked court martial and severe punishment. Here are some of the words of Siegfried Sassoon's 'Statement':

The poems of Sassoon express a mood of anti-heroic revolt with such fervour and harsh wit, strike a new and incisive note in the literature of war. Sometimes these poems 'rise to an unusual level of poetic intensity, as in *'On Passing the New Menin Gate'*:

*Here was the world's worst wound. And here with pride
Their name liveth for ever,' the Gateway claims.
Was ever an immolation so belied
As these intolerably nameless names?
Well might the Dead who struggled in the slime
Rise and deride this sepulchre of crime.*(*On Passing the New Menin Gate*, LL. 9-14)

Sassoon has illustrated clearly his attitude to the war. In the poem *"They"*, when the soldier boys come back they will not be the same; for they have fought in a just cause. Daiches David (1978: 63)

*'We're none of us the same!' the boys reply.
'For George lost both his legs; and Bill's stone blind;
Poor Jim's shot through the lungs and like to die;
And Bert's gone syphilitic; you'll not find
A chap who's served that hasn't found some change.'*(Sassoon's *'They'*. LL. 7-11)

Sassoon himself has commented on his own poetry and the purposes for writing poetry. He wrote: "Many of my shorter poems have been written with the sense of emotional release and then preferred by revision- often after being put away for a long time. Others have been produced by mental concentration and word seeking which lasted two or three hours. But there was usually a feeling of having said what I wanted to with directness and finality. Why can't they realize that the war poems were improvised by an impulsive, tolerant, immature young creature, under extreme stress of experience? I should say myself that the essential quality (of my poems) is that I have been true to what I experienced. All the best ones are truly experienced and therefore authentic in expression". Roberts David (2014:139)

When we consider the writers who emerged from the Great War Era, one of the most prominent is Siegfried Sassoon. His poetry is remembered for the satirical edge of its criticism of the military high command and disdain for unquestioning patriotism, with the anger and indignation present in much of his verse characteristic of many men who served in the trenches. He is a remarkable one of the World War I poets who transformed literature's landscape, portrayed the conflict with a gritty realism previously avoided by the romanticists.

3) The Mood of Wider Vision on War

Wilfred Owen has represented the third mood towards the war which is the wider vision of war. By the end of war, during bloodshed and misery intensify, the outcome seems no more certain no more swiftly attained. Protest against the continuance of hostilities makes old romanticism both blind and morally objectionable. There emerges from all the experience a moment in which a poet ceases to be moralist and accepts the state of war as the inevitable condition against which the individual's struggle is fruitless. That was the last mood during war time. Wilfred Owen attempted to take these war themes into more generalized vein and applied new techniques for his wider vision on war.

Perhaps the best of all the poetry produced as a result of the war was written by Wilfred Owen who was born in 1893 and was killed in November 4, 1918 exactly a week before Armistice. His war experience found him with no preconceived attitude; he was honest both as a man and as a poet, and he waited to see what the war was to mean for him and his poetry. He brought all his powers of poetic expression- still at the experimental stage- to his endeavor to find and to express the real meaning of the situation in which he found himself. He moved slowly from description to interpretation, his earlier war poetry being concerned with adequate expression of the fact and his later verse endeavoring to arrange the facts in some symbolic and significant pattern. Daiches David (1978)

Owen's first poetic treatment of the war is a sonnet called '1914' which is of interest both for its resemblances and its unlikeness to the state of mind expressed in Rupert Brooke's 1914:

*War broke: and now the Winter of the world
With perishing great darkness closes in.
The foul tornado, centred at Berlin,
Is over all the width of Europe whirled,
Rending the sails of progress. Rent or furled
Are all Art's ensigns. Verse wails. Now begin
Famines of thought and feeling. Love's wine's thin
The grain of human Autumn rots, down-hurled.
For after Spring had bloomed in early Greece,
And Summer blazed her glory out with Rome,
An Autumn softly fell, a harvest home,
A slow grand age, and rich with all increase.
But now, for us, wild Winter, and the need
Of sowings for new Spring, and blood for seed.*

In preparing a work for posterity, Owen wrote in his planned introduction to his war poems: "This book is not about heroes. English Poetry is not yet fit to speak of them. Nor is it about deeds, or lands, nor anything about glory, honour, might, majesty, dominion, or power, except War. Above all I am not concerned with Poetry.

Owen's progress was not, however, a simple one from satiric to contemplative war poems. The violent anger that breaks through the poems like "Mental Cases" and "Disabled" and other poems is that of a man who has not resigned himself to express merely the pity of war, but who is equally anxious to convey its terror, its horror and its cruelty. But in the midst of these we begin to find more disciplined verse sounding a profounder note, poems whose simple elegiac quality indicates Owen's progress towards the ideal indicated in the draft preface. Daiches David (1978:69) Owen was developing rapidly, seeking out new attitudes, mastering new subtleties of techniques, responding to experiences with that adaptability both as a man and as a poet which distinguishes the genuine artists from the talented pedant.

Many commentators have emphasized that Wilfred Owen exhibited more potential to continue and enlarge the craft of poetry than any of the soldier-poets of World War I. He was a technician, an innovator, a "poet's poet" long before he was a proud soldier, a horrified combatant, and a victim. The kinds of criticisms applied to Rupert Brooke (immature, too much style, and too little substance) or Siegfried Sassoon (limited, more propaganda than art) have little validity when it comes to Owen. Reisman, R. M. C. (2012: 138).

Owen was brought to a cruelly premature flowering in the hothouse of the Western Front, and his work shows something of the fragility as well as the brilliance of the forced product. It was Owen who revealed how, out of realistic horror and scorn, poetry might be made. War was no longer the same; modern technology had seen to that; and Owen ensured that it could no longer be seen as the same. In theory, no doubt, to die in agony from a gas attack was no different from dying 'cleanly' by the sword or a bullet in the traditional manner; in practice, however, the discrepancy between ends and means became too great, and the horror of the means discredited the end:

*If you could hear, at every jolt, the blood
Come gargling from the froth-corrupted lungs,
Obscene as cancer, bitter as the cud(12)
Of vile, incurable sores on innocent tongues,
My friend, you would not tell with such high zest(13)
To children ardent(14) for some desperate glory,*

The old Lie; Dulce et Decorum est.

Pro patria mori. (Owen's Dulce et Decorum est. LL. 21-28)

Impact of the Great War on English Poetry

At the beginning of the war, many of the war poets had an almost exultant attitude to 'doing good' in this 'Great War' as though it was a crusade. Many of them were elegant well-educated young men from England's shires and as such were happy to fight for its preservation. Rupert Brooke actually saw little combat during the war; he contracted blood-poisoning from a small neglected injury and died in April, 1915. His war sonnets were written in the first flush of patriotism and enthusiasm as a generation unused to war rushed to defend king and country.

*If I should die, think only this of me:
That there's some corner of a foreign field
That is forever England. There shall be
In that rich earth a richer dust concealed;
A dust whom England bore, shaped, made aware....*

(from Rupert Brooke 's War Sonnets- sonnet V.The soldier)

Later in the war, many soldiers and influential people would become embittered by the sacrifice of the flower of England's youth to a hopeless and incompetent campaign. World War I broke out on a largely innocent world, a world that still associated warfare with glorious cavalry charges and noble pursuit of heroic ideals. People were wholly unprepared for the horrors of modern trench warfare, and the Great War wiped out virtually a whole generation of young men and shattered so many illusions and ideals. Mahmud M. R. (2007:25)

Both Sassoon and Owen wrote war poetry to inform people of the realities of war. Sassoon's efforts to publicly decry the war were stunted when the military announced he suffered from shell-shock and sent him to a hospital to recover. His poetry became the means of sharing his opinion that the war had "become a war of aggression and conquest,". He wanted to share with the public the true cost of war.His bitterness against the war is made clear through his poetry, which is filled with his resentment against war, the futility of it and the high price that had to be paid. He uses many different ways to convey his feelings, and particularly his bitterness and resentment towards the war and the officers, but in all his poems, his true meanings are clear and he writes in such a way that shows us clearly what he thinks and feels about the war.

During the Great War the most recognized and admired poets, including those who had served on the western front and knew first hand of the slaughter and horrors of trench warfare, not only supported the war effort but also encouraged its continuation. These admired war poets hid the horrible truth of modern mechanical warfare using archaic language and lofty phrases. Lyric rejection of the war during the war itself was rare. For the majority, the rejection of the war was a postwar phenomenon. None of the soldier poets who wrote during the war ever questioned Britain's right to be at war, not even the minority of the British soldier poets who wrote vivid and telling poems critical of the war and its continuation. The prevailing voices during the war were those who wanted to continue the struggle.

The Great War / World War I became an occasion for a crusade that saw the mobilization of an extraordinary language filled with abstract euphemistic spiritualized words and phrases under which were buried the longer the war lasted, the more ridiculous such elegant words and asinine language sounded to the majority of the common soldiers in the trenches. What the great war of 1914-18 did to English poetry is very difficult to determine. Of course it produced "War Poetry" a poetry which changed its characteristics as the realities of war became better known. Daiches David (1978)

The best war poets always know that they involve themselves in a monstrous negotiation between artistic pleasure and human suffering, and that there is readable enjoyment to be elicited from a choking gas-victim or a three-week-dead enemy corpse. War poetry is attracted to pain, and makes artistic capital out of it. Until the First World War, there was little or no anti-war art. The First World War generated a

plethora of anti-war reactions in the visual arts as well as other arts such as literature and poetry. Artists, writers and poets conscripted into the war powerfully and graphically captured the senseless slaughter which took the lives of millions.

No other war challenged existing conventions, morals, and ideals in the same way as World War I did. World War I saw the mechanization of weapons (heavy artillery, tanks), the use of poison gas, the long stalemate on the Western Front, and trench warfare, all of which resulted in the massive loss of human life. 'Shocking the war poems are. Certainly among the most descriptive and horrifying of their era, they continue to penetrate minds supposedly benumbed by exposure to the twentieth century'. Reisman, R. M. C. (2012: 139).

Many young men shared the sentimental view of war, which found its expression in the poetry. Having poets put their experiences into poetry helped to educate the public about war and added a powerful voice to the public discourse. These poets served as representatives of what could happen to all soldiers. Reisman, R. M. C. (2012: 2).

Summary:

During the Great War the most recognized and admired poets, including those who had served on the western front and knew first hand of the slaughter and horrors of trench warfare, not only supported the war effort but also encouraged its continuation. These admired war poets hid the horrible truth of modern mechanical warfare using archaic language and lofty phrases. Lyric rejection of the war during the war itself was rare. For the majority, the rejection of the war was a postwar phenomenon. None of the soldier poets who wrote during the war ever questioned Britain's right to be at war, not even the minority of the British soldier poets who wrote vivid and telling poems critical of the war and its continuation. The prevailing voices during the war were those who wanted to continue the struggle.

The Great War / World War I became an occasion for a crusade that saw the mobilization of an extraordinary language filled with abstract euphemistic spiritualized words and phrases under which were buried the longer the war lasted, the more ridiculous such elegant words and asinine language sounded to the majority of the common soldiers in the trenches.

The impact of the Great War's brutality was magnified by its contrast to the material comfort and pleasantness of the decades that preceded it. After the war, fatalism and cynicism became hallmarks of literature, art, music and politics. Progress, which had been deified even as liberalism fell into disrepute, was "finally unmasked" as an "illusion."

The Great War reflects not only the personal tragedy which attends all war, but the debacle of the West discarding the principles and values which had made it great by engaging in a senseless, fratricidal conflict, the effects of which we are only now escaping. Reading the poetry of that period, one grieves not only for the individual soldier, but for the world he represented, a liberal realm of reason beset by forces which would bring about the death of that world as surely as the trench bomb would take the life of a number of soldiers.

The personal tragedies of the men in the trenches mirrored the larger disaster of the end of the world of the mind. Moreover, while the trench-poet saw only the death of his civilization, we see two things he could not: the greater tragedies that followed in the wake of the war, and, in many cases, the death of the poet himself, like Owen who died one week before war end and Rupert Brooke, who made his reputation as a poet before the war, died of blood poisoning April 17, 1915.

The war poets of the Great War have represented three different major moods and reactions towards the war. Robert Brooke is the most famous representative of the initial reaction of to the war. He represented the first mood towards the war which was a patriotic promotion. Siegfried Sassoon is the most vigorous exponent of the anger and disillusion. He has represented the second mood towards the war where the poets began to find reasons for becoming tentative in their patriotism and with drawing into a more meditative position. By the end of war, during bloodshed and misery intensify, the outcome seems no

more certain no more swiftly attained. Protest against the continuance of hostilities makes old romanticism both blind and morally objectionable. Wilfred Owen has represented the third mood towards the war in which there emerges from all the experience a moment in which a poet ceases to be moralist and accepts the state of war as the inevitable condition against which the individual's struggle is fruitless. These were the three moods represented in the poetry of the Great war and this research has observed and has given examples to illustrate.

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MAPPINGS: A REFLECTION OF VIKRAM SETH'S DIASPORIC IDENTITY*Tabinda Shamim, Research Scholar, Department of Languages, Integral University, Lucknow, India***Abstract:**

Vikram Seth is an Indian diasporic writer who belongs to the generation of the writers of the 1980s. He is a postmodern poet who loves to write in the classical style. His style of writing outclasses him from other litterateurs of his generation. This paper is a modest attempt to place Vikram Seth as one of the most important and prominent Indian diasporic poets of the post-modern era. The paper presents a critical analysis of the most prominent poems of his first collection of poetry, Mappings, which highlights Vikram Seth's diasporic identity.

Key Words: *Diaspora, nostalgia, multiculturalism, hybridity, transnationalism, exile, rootlessness, displacement.*

Diasporic Literature is a vast field of study, which covers a major part of literature produced in any language. It is an umbrella term for all the literary works written by the authors living outside their native country. It is a collection of writings by all the dislocated writers who come under one roof and create an archive of their own. They are connected to one another in terms of experiences and share the opportunity to express them at one common platform. Diasporic writers despite being away from their native lands write about their homelands and native culture. The diasporic literature deals with the themes of alienation, nostalgia, exile, rootlessness, displacement and search for identity. Some of the basic characteristics of diasporic writers are multiculturalism, transnationalism, hybridity and globalisation. Diasporic literature can also be seen as a collection of pollinated seeds from a native land. The pollination in terms of displacement of homogeneous characters of a particular culture or society may be voluntary or forced. The migration from homeland for any reason causes pain and sense of alienation. Scriptotherapy provides some relief to the diasporic and post-colonial writers but the painful experiences and their memories are never gone completely. In diasporic literature the imagination of the writer is painted with the glimpses of the reality and personal experiences. The memories and nostalgia play the most important role in the creation of a diasporic work.

Vikram Seth is a post-modern, Indian diasporic writer. He has expressed his expatriate feelings of loss and displacement in his works. *Mappings* is his first collection of poems. It was published in 1981, with which Seth introduced himself to the world as a writer. This collection deals with the juvenile experiences and feelings of the poet. The collection is a direct expression of the writer's experiences and feelings. Autobiographical elements and nostalgia form the base of all diasporic and post-colonial writings. Seth is an expatriate Indian writer who comes under the generation of poets writing after 1980s. He is a poet and novelist who has since 1980, produced a variety of works. He has experimented with the traditional style of poetry throughout his poetry collection but the themes are purely diasporic. *Mappings* features his love for metre and rhyme. It is a collection of poetry depicting love, sorrow, relationships, family, failures and his keen interest in traditional forms and rhymes. Nostalgia and alienation are the central themes of many of his poems. The memories of the family and the contradictions of the present and the past situations are seen in this collection.

The opening poem, 'Panipat' is an autobiographical poem with the central theme of cultural and psychological conflict between his native country, India, and the foreign country Seth has been living in

since years. The setting is modern and the poet uses the first-person narrative to sketch out a domestic scene. He refers in the first quatrain to his aunts who are shelling peas and gossiping while a parrot is cackling in the neem trees. From the very first stanza the author is describing an environment which is typically Indian:

My aunts sit in the courtyard,
Gossiping, shelling peas,
While around them parrots
Cackle in the neem trees. (1-4)

The poet is sitting with his flute gliding from one stop to another on the scales of Lalit, a raag in Indian Classical music which, being serene and devotional, leads the poet into a separate world. He is home during a break from his studies. The use of Indian words like pandits, paneer, pan, etc. adds to his experimental style of writing. One finds alliteration in these lines: “Punjab, pandits, panir, / Panipat and pan” (19-20). The family, music, faces, food, land and surroundings drew him back home. Next he is seen associating the singing of the koel with the birds of the west like nightingale, wren and blackbird. While staring at neem, he is thinking of the elms. A conflict of feeling is evident here. He is simultaneously nostalgic for two places. Later in the poem he is offered a mango slice from his cousin and he chooses the slice with the seed. While tasting the sweetness of the mango, the poet becomes nostalgic and makes up his mind to go back home. The selection of the slice with the seed is representative of his selection of India over a foreign place.

The next major poem reflecting Seth's diasporic identity is 'Departure Lounge'. The poem describes the father-son relationship. It is a long poem depicting the nostalgic feelings of the poet while he draws the scene of his father and himself at an airport. The setting is the Departure Lounge of the Boston Airport where father and son are present. The son would be leaving and staying away for years. The poet recalls one of his early memories where he was scolded and beaten by his father because he had given a 50 paise coin to some rag girl. He says that he could never forget that day. In the following stanzas he recounts that he was just sixteen back then and took his beatings and words as 'unneeded cruelty'. He has a few memories of his kindness too. After expressing his contempt towards the not-so-happy childhood days, he says that he loves his father. He expresses his gratitude towards him by saying: “You gave us food and comforts, were obsessed / With 'Nothing but the best / Will do for my kids,'...” (59-61).

Then the narration moves to the biography of the father. The poet narrates one of the *scenes* from his father's childhood who was orphaned at two and ran away from his Baoji at fifteen. His father had screened his sorrows from his family and given them shelter. Then a brief description of how his father survived the rain while he was away from home is given. The poet realises that his father had hidden his love but he cried when Baoji died.

The poet again starts describing how he did not understand his father earlier but how his eyes are now open to reality. Then he becomes nostalgic and gives a brief description of the time and memories they have shared together with the family at home.

Thread of light rain, the reflected church,
Talk of the family;
Your work and mine; your paradigm
For paradise-greenery
And a small river; Delhi politics;
Aradhana's latest tricks- (97-102)

The memory plays an important role in the life of a diasporic writer. As expressed by Salman Rushdie:

The shards of memory acquired greater status, greater resonance, because they were remains; fragmentation made trivial things seem like symbols, and the mundane acquired

numinous qualities. There is an obvious parallel here with archaeology. The broken pots of antiquity, from which the past can sometimes, but always provisionally, be reconstructed, are exciting to discover, even if they are pieces of the most quotidian objects. (Rushdie 215)

Then there is an expression of how athletics and diseases teach us to bear pain but cannot teach a person to live happily.

In the next few stanzas the poet elucidates how he has moved on with his life and left the parental strife, judgement and love behind. However he is still appreciative of his father's love and upbringing and emphasises this with the words: "I'll miss you. If I could / Have had a better father years ago / I could not now, I know" (136-138).

Another poem depicting the nostalgic feelings of the poet about her sister is '*Rakhi for Aradhana*'. The poem comprises of six quatrains with the rhyme scheme of a b c b. The poem expresses the changing behaviour of human beings with time and how custom and tradition helps people to connect with each other. Seth has addressed this poem to his sister Aradhana. The poem starts with the poet expressing how the rakhi sent by his sister reminds him of how time changes but relationships and blood-ties remain intact. The nostalgia is evident here. Seth calls rakhi as a contract of trust. Her *rakhi* reminds him of how long he has been away from home:

It was a contract of trust
With more than you. I know
I left home too many
Years ago. (5-8)

In the next stanza he mentions how he has struggled to tie that rakhi with his left hand. He wishes that his sister would have been with him to tie it on his wrist. Then he expresses that like her, he has also lost the half right of a brother. He promises her a gift in '78. In the next two stanzas he explains how they have changed with time but these customs have kept their memories alive. Circumstances change with the changing time but the relationship between a brother and sister will always remain.

The poem '*Home Thoughts from the Bay*' is one of the most prominent poem elucidating Seth's diasporic feelings and pain. The poem depicts the pain and struggle of a person who is away from home. The poem starts with a reference of 'Down Highway 101', a north-south U.S. highway used for taking travellers and commuters on road trips. This route also gives a glimpse of the scenic views, taking the passengers through the coastal line, the wine country, Redwood forests and more. Like most of Seth's poems this poem also has the setting of a foreign place, California. The theme is of alienation and homesickness. The poem is written in first person narrative wherein the poet describes his journey through the Down Highway 101.

The poet is on the highway route towards the Bay. He mentions that he is in a van along with other passengers and the van is moving at a high speed. The sights throughout the journey seem 'apocalyptic' to him:

The sun
Strikes long apocalyptic lines
Of corrugated sheds, the tines
Of Sutro Tower, billboards, wires
The airport, scrap, discarded tyres; (4-8)

In the next lines the poet refers to himself as 'Dizzied'. He is in a confused state of mind and is unable to decide where to go. He wishes to visit the Bay area regularly as he is tired of his work and has no interest in anything anymore. One finds the use of epithet and hyperbolic expression in his poetry when he calls the Bay '*grimy-margined Bay*' and expresses that he is 'bored to death'. He is homesick and questions himself: "Should I fly home? / Why am I here? / And yield to what? To whom? Fate? Fear?" (17-18). The poem has a depressing tone with the theme of alienation and homesickness. In the final lines the poet compares

himself to the moon which loiters in the sky without aim or purpose. The pain of an expatriate and his mixed feelings are explained throughout this poem.

'Mappings' is the title-poem of the collection and is one of the most prominent. The poem is about self-revelation and self-realisation. The poet's identity and his development as an individual is highlighted in the poem. It is a composition of five octets written in near rhyme.

The setting is of a beach alongside lake-pier in U.K. The windsurfers are gone and it is the time of sunset. The poet is sitting with wine, loquats and his manuscript. The breeze subsides and the sea birds pause and plummet. The wild ducks are manoeuvring in the weed clogged creek. The first stanza is beautified with the use of imagery. The hill turns blue during the time of sunset. The poet reads the lines he once wrote here but finds them bitter.

In the next stanza he states that he wrote these lines at a younger age and wishes to teach his younger self the ability to bear and recover with the pain of love. He wants to teach a young self the quality of healing the heart is capable of. An epithet is used to give meaning to the pain of love: 'the limb-trapped hurt of love'. It is asserted that search of true happiness and knowledge would take place after we no longer search about the geography of cells which is an incomparable strong desire.

In the third stanza an analogy is created between the poet and the mockingbird. The mocking bird could also mimic five different birds likewise the poet also is a polyglot. Then he realises that what he wrote at a younger age was no younger counterpart but a sense of self-importance and self-esteem. He finds his mappings of selves which may be despondent, witty, calm and uncalm but all belongs to him and is present in him. His memories are all alive in their true sense.

The last stanza sums up depicting him as a developed soul. The swim in the cool water of the lake has combined him with everything he was and he is. He compares his new self as a combination of a bright star which is large and is a wanderer. His poetry exists in him like one. He calls himself as seamless. The poem ends on a note that the poet is still open for future experiences of life and development of self:

The wine, my breathing, the recovering stars,
Venus, bright as a plane, Jupiter, Mars,
My pulse, my vagrant selves, my poetry,
Seem here to inhere in a seamless me. (25-27)

Seth's diasporic identity is highlighted in the above lines. A migrant faces many challenging situations while trying to adjust in a new place or environment. Seth bearing a strong personality takes it as a challenge and is open to future experiences of life. He finds himself seamless and is ready like a wanderer to explore beyond the geographical borders.

One finds abundance of allusions and autobiographical elements in this poem. The poem elucidates the diasporic characteristics of the poet. The poet is home on the occasion of Diwali after three long years. There is a description of the festival which is beautified with the use of imagery:

Home. These walls, this sky
Splintered with wakes of light,
These mud-lamps beaded round
The eaves, this festive night, (5-8)

The streets and the voices in the surrounding remind him of the memories he had there. The insensate fear and the love which was in abeyance comes to life, making him nostalgic.

In the next few stanzas it is said that how generations before, his father's family used to work as farmers and had a small shop. A contrast is created between generations, how the same family sent him to pursue studies abroad to gain the authoritarian seal of the Britishers who once ruled our country. He describes how learning a foreign language has become so important to get good jobs, good life and attain an elite status. He calls English the language of Ben Jonson and Wordsworth and calls them as his 'meridian names'.

In the next stanza the advent of the Mughals and the Britishers is mentioned. Mughals were the lover of musk-melon, rose, peach and nightingale. After them came the British rule who made us Indians, 'Orient'. He questions how an Englishman could refer to *divan-e-khasthe* the way Mughals used to refer. Then he mentions an Amir Khusro's Persian couplet in English: "If there is heaven on Earth / It is this; it is this; it is this" (39-40). Jahangir, one of the major rulers of the Mughal dynasty had repeated this couplet of Khusro when he saw Kashmir for the first time.

The poet talks about the Indians who got attracted to the English language and accepted a foreign language over hindi. The famous Indian writers are compared to the Shakespeare:

And Kalidas, Shankaracharya,
Panini, Bhaskar, Kabir,
Surdas sank, and we welcomed
The reign of Shakespeare, (45-48)

The poet mentions Thomas Hobbes, an English political philosopher, to whom the poet calls 'undigested' and moves to John Stuart Mill who also was an English philosopher well known for his theory of Utilitarianism and liberalism and whose talks about liberty and global happiness marks the ending of the British rule. To quote U.R. Anantha Murthy here: "Between any two literatures there can be roughly three kinds of relations: first, the relation of the master and the slave; second, the relation of the equals; third, the relation between a developed country like Europe or America and a developing nation like ours." (Murthy 153)

In the following lines poet designates Mill with 'babu' and says that now he will follow him and bring development in the country: "I march on with your purpose; / We will have railways, common law / And a good postal service-" (54-56).

In the next stanza the poet is thinking about America, the elm-trees, swan, pork-pie, gable and scrimmage. And realises how even if we write in a foreign language we are never completely uprooted from India:

And as we title our memoirs

'Roses in December'
Though we well know that here
Roses grow in December. (61-64)

Then he moves on to state that how when we mourn for Vietnam our own local horrors never grip us. We are so much involved in our foreign selves. In the very next stanza the poet mentions that while he was drinking gin at a club he noticed that people start to show off and become arrogant when they are with the foreigners. Then there is stanza expressing the diasporic state of the poet. He realises that the breed of the expatriates are in exile everywhere. They have no home:

I know that the whole world
Means exile for our breed
Who are not home at home
And are abroad abroad, (73-76).

The poet considers his tongue as being warped in English language but he says that he needs no words to gauge the beauty of the Ajanta caves and the tomb of Mumtaz. He also mentions his love for the Indian music Marwa. When he listens to the Marwa flute-notes coming from the neighbourhood, it holds him until the pain of exile fills his heart with fear and agony.

In the very next stanza the poet realises that he is on parole but is comfortable with the thought of being home. It is Diwali and he must enjoy with all his soul. He wants to absorb the peace and joy of his homecoming. He calls this visit as an anodyne, a painkiller. In the last stanza he mentions the famous Islamic inscription written on the gate of the Buland Darwaza at Fatehpursikri: "The world is a bridge. Pass over it, / Building no house upon it" (33-34). This inscription was also an advice given by Jesus to his

followers. He advised them not to consider this world a permanent home. The poem ends on a note that one should consider world a bridge and not get attached to it but one could only accept this fact with time. Time is considered as the healer of the heart.

The poem, 'A Morning Walk' also has the feeling of exile, alienation and search for identity as its theme. The poem is a dramatic monologue. One finds pessimistic tone in the poem. The poem starts with the description of a spider hung in the web. The poet finds it while he was on his morning walk. He says that the spider might be waiting for the visitors. He calls himself a visitor who is neither a Californian nor a fly. The poet considers himself a foreigner for the spider. He says that they both are unknown to each other with reference to their physical appearances. He is a foreigner for the Californian spider likewise the spider, too, appears to the poet very different from the Indian spiders. He describes the spider as: "...bloated, yellow, with some / Sepia blotches not like those at home" (11-12).

In the next line he mentions the Indian spiders: "Our spiders are much blacker and much thinner, / Patrol their webs with greater frequency / And seem perpetually anxious about dinner;" (13-15). Suddenly the famous Indian writer Suryakant Tripathi 'Nirala' and his poem 'Bhikshuk' comes to his mind, the plight of the beggar, their hunger and pain.

The next two stanzas talk about the reality of the poor in India, the starving children, staring with white eyes. The poet says he is away from home, away from pain he used to feel while wandering in the Calcutta streets. He is away from the sight of begging children. He says that he is wandering among the affluent tress and is thinking how fair it is to share the world and not their pain. In a pessimistic tone he refers to the condition of the hungry children: "Their children's limbs will atrophy, brain rot / Swollen for lack of it..." (33-34). He is unhappy about them and confesses that living abroad has kept him away from the sight of home. He considers himself locked in the web of the foreign world. He says that he is blind in his happiness. He is blind to the reality of life. He questions himself: "A clod is washed away; the world is less; / But why disturb my quest for happiness?"

He feels for the people who are deprived of their basic needs and happiness. He finds that there is no one who could help them. There is no justice for these poor souls. In the last stanza he finishes with a comparison of his life with the other deprived souls. He says that he finds his life sweet, spends his time in writing poetry and take his meals on time. He is happy in life, is not starving of food and welcoming death like the poor farmers. He compares his life with people who are afraid of death, live in quietude and spend their life in the little relief from 'want' and 'grief'. The experience of an immigrant is reflected throughout the poem.

The poet's diasporic identity and its features are highlighted throughout the collection. The themes of alienation, exile, rootlessness, loss, nostalgia and other experiences of the poet are expressed in many poems. As an expatriate writer he has infused his work with the application and experiences of multiculturalism, hybridity and search for identity. The autobiographical elements play a significant role in the diasporic writings. The anxiety and fear is expressed in many of the poems. One finds a strong sense of loneliness and isolation in Seth's poetry. The pain of migration is evident in many of the poems. The quest for identity and self-realisation is present in the collection. Self-recognition and development of the soul of an expatriate forms the base of many of the works of the diasporic literature. Displacement or dislocation from homeland for any reason causes pain and agony in the migrant. There is always an adverse effect of migration. The expression of pain through writing also provides some relief to the writers but the longing for the homeland and the memory of the past keeps haunting the diasporic writers. The feeling of alienation always prevails in the diasporic community. Salman Rushdie who is also an expatriate expresses his feelings as:

Our identity is at once plural and partial. Sometimes we feel that we straddle two cultures; at other times, that we fall between two stools. But however ambiguous and shifting this ground may be, it is not an infertile territory for a writer to occupy. If literature is in part the

business of finding new angles at which to enter reality, then once again our distance, our long geographical perspective, may provide us with such angles. Or it may be that that is simply what we must think in order to do our work. (Rushdie 219)

No matter how much they are accepted in the new society, a sense of isolation and alienation creeps in. One finds theme of alienation in the poems like 'Home Thoughts from the Bay', 'Mappings' and 'A Morning Walk'. The diaporic writers represent an amalgamation of cultures and hybridity. Seth's multiculturalism is evident in most of the poems of the collection like 'Panipat' and 'Divali'. One finds a variety of themes in this collection. There are poems of romance like 'Sea and Desert' and 'Aubade', as well as poems with the themes of lost love and relationships like 'At Evening' and 'Six Octets'. There are poems questioning the identity of the poet and his sexual preferences like 'Dubious' and 'Guest'. Most of the poems are in the form of sonnets written in traditional rhyme scheme. He adds beauty to his poems with the use of poetic devices like alliteration, allusions, analogy, imagery, irony, epithets, repetition, monologue, apostrophe, hyperbole and metaphor etc.

Seth's use of colloquial language, abundant use of allusions and brevity of expressions in his very first piece of writing distinguishes him as an exceptionally gifted poet and presents him as one of the most erudite writers of the Indian diaspora.

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**WORDSWORTH'S ODE ON INTIMATIONS OF IMMORTALITY FROM
RECOLLECTIONS OF EARLY CHILDHOOD: AN ANALYSIS**

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Abstract:

This article takes up the analysis of Wordsworth's poem Ode on Intimation of Immortality from Recollections of early childhood. In his awe inspiring poetic career, this chosen poem remains very significant. This is an Ode which etymologically means a song. For the Greeks, the Ode was originally a poem written to be sung to an instrumental accompaniment, supported by a chorus. In the fifth and sixth centuries before Christ, it was developed as a stately and elaborate measure in lyrical poetry by Pindar. The Ode naturally falls into three divisions. Through this poetic form of Ode the poet paints a picture of his currents of thoughts. His delights with the recollections of past glory of nature and its loss of charm in the present times are illustrated by the poet.

Key Words: *Meadows, Woods, Mountains, Rainbow, Dream, Immortality, Child, New Born Blisser*

It has been pointed out by Prof. Garrod that the ode naturally falls into three divisions. The first four stanzas recount a grievous loss to poet. Once Wordsworth used to find every common sight appeared in celestial light with the glory and freshness of a dream. But now he cannot see what he used to. He feels that the glory has passed away from the earth. But all round there is joy. Even land and sea give themselves up to jollity and every bird and beast keep holiday.

The poet feels and understands the widespread happiness around him. His heart is at the festival. However he may try to participate in the joy around him, there can be no doubt about the loss of his vision. The visionary gleam is gone; the poet asks in apparent bewilderment and dismay, how could they have gone?

In the next four stanzas, the poet tries to answer this question. He suggests that the lost vision of childhood is an inheritance from a prenatal stage of existence. Our birth is only a sleep and a forgetting. Our soul comes from afar. It comes, trailing clouds of glory from God who is our home. In our infancy our forgetfulness of our prenatal past is not complete. We still remember where we came from. But the vision fades gradually as the child grows into a boy, the boy into a youth into a man.

Mother Earth then tries to make him forget the unearthly glories he has known by showering on him her own pleasures. Look at a boy six years old caressed by his mother and lovingly watched over by his father. He is blissfully happy in his games and his imitating all stages and conditions of life as he conceives them. His tiny form belies the greatness of his soul. He knows what we are all striving to find though he may not be able to express his knowledge. He is haunted for every External Mind and the sense of immortality is his perpetual possession. But his advancing years will make war on his happiness and very soon customs will lie heavy upon his soul.

In the next three stanzas, Wordsworth tries to vindicate a life from which vision is fled. The memory of the past is a perpetual blessing, not because it recalls the delight, liberty and simple faith of childhood, but because of the glimpses seen of a world beyond the sense and of the recollections of our prenatal existence. These recollections, however vague, and the moral affections with which they are associated constitute the fountain-light of all our seeing. They cherish us and nothing can completely destroy them. Often in stray moods of tranquility and spiritual insight, we still catch sight of the immortal sea which

brought us hither, however far we may have travelled from the visionary gleams of our childhood. Not that our loss is temporary or insignificant. We have certainly lost much and nothing can bring back the hour which saw the whole world in the glory of celestial light. But we must console ourselves with what remains behind. We still retain the primal sympathy which cannot be extinguished. We have the faith that looks through and beyond death. We realize and discover a redeeming value in human suffering, an old age which dims our vision and at the same time cultivates a philosophic outlook. Love of nature, of fountains, meadows, hills and grooves, still continues in the poet. It is true that he no longer discovers in them delight arising from mystical visions. But in the radiant childhood he has knit the beauty of nature to his moral affections by the feels redeemed. The meanest flower that blossoms can give him thoughts that lie too deep for tears.

The Ode reveals to us the central tragedy of Wordsworth's life. In his childhood, he experienced mystical visions and felt the world to be at the same time both radiant and unreal. As he grew older the flashes of vision became more and more faint and intermittent. He ceased to be a mystic. In the Ode he seeks an explanation for his loss of vision and endeavors to persuade himself that some compensating factors mitigate his loss. The freshness of the impressions left by the visions of his childhood, suggest to him a life earlier than birth in which the state of vision is a permanent one. In Later years, when the vision is lost, creative recollection of the mystical experience of his childhood adequately supplies its place. The main theme of the Ode is thus more or less an autobiography of the poet's soul. It is only incidentally an essay on the immortality of the soul.

In the 'Ode on Intimations of immortality' Wordsworth suggests a theory about the prenatal existence of the soul and looks upon it as supporting his faith in the immortality of the soul. It is the theory of reminiscence. According to the poet the beauty of nature often induces mystical visions in children in which they see the whole world clothed in a heavenly light. But these grow dimmer and as we grow old. Wordsworth seeks to account for it by suggesting that memories of Heaven, our original home, still hang about the child. The experiences of childhood are, therefore, intimations of the immortality of the soul.

The ultimate source of this theory is Plato's doctrine of anamnesis. In the *phaedo*, Plato argues that if there is an absolute beauty and goodness and an absolute essence of all things, and if to this, which is now discovered to have existed in our former state, we refer all our sensations and with this compare them, finding these ideas to be pre-existent and our inborn possession' then our souls must have had a prior existence. Our parental existence is derived, by Plato, from the fact that we can form class conceptions and can reason and discern the logical meaning of things. By escaping from the contamination of senses we can delve into the truth of things. Acquisition of truth, therefore, is something like an act of memory, and the doctrine of reminiscence is more or less a theory of knowledge for Plato.

In all probability there is a nearer source than Plato for the ideas of Wordsworth in this poem. Wordsworth got most of his philosophy from Coleridge. Prof. Garrod points out that Coleridge stayed with Wordsworth from the 18th to 20th of March 1802, while the first mention of the Ode appears in the journals of Dorothy Wordsworth on the 27th of March. It is not difficult to surmise that the two friends might have discussed many things from marbles to metaphysics when they met. Coleridge had long been playing with the notion of prenatal existence. In 1796, on receiving news of the birth of his son, Coleridge wrote a sonnet, which the opening lines are:

Oft o'er my brain does that strong fancy roll,
Which makes the present (While the flesh doth last).
Seem a more semblance of some unknown past,
Mixed with such feelings as perplex the soul,
Self-questioned in her sleep; and some have said,
We lived ere yet this robe of flesh we wore.

Though Coleridge mentions in a note to the sonnet in a letter to Poole he describes Fenelon as his nearest source. "Almost all the followers of Fenelon", he writes. "Believe that men are degraded intelligences, who had all lived once together in a paradisiacal or perhaps heavenly state. The first four lines (of the sonnet) express a feeling which I have often had - the present has appeared like a vivid dream or exact similitude of some past circumstances".

Probably under the influence of this sonnet, Wordsworth addressed some verses to Hartley, when he was six years old and began them with the line:
On thou. Whose fancies from afar are brought"

Both Coleridge and Wordsworth, however, at a later date, disclaimed any robust faith in pre-existence. In *Biographia Literaria*, Coleridge wrote: "The ode was intended for such readers only as had been accustomed to watch the flux and reflux of their inmost natures to venture at times into the twilight realms of consciousness and to feel a deep interest in modes of inmost being, to which they know that attributes of time and space are inapplicable and alien, but which can yet not be conveyed save in symbols of time and space. For such readers the sense is sufficiently plain and they will be as little disposed to charge Mr. Wordsworth with believing the platonic pre-existence in the ordinary interpretation of the words, as I am to believe that Plato himself ever meant or taught it," In other words, Coleridge seeks to get away from the plain meaning of the Ode by inviting us to enter into twilight realms of consciousness.

Wordsworth himself declared that he took hold of the idea as having sufficient foundation in humanity for authorizing him to make the best use of it he could as a poet. But though he disavowed any intention to inculcate a belief in pre-existence, he pointed out that the idea, which was merely an element in our instincts of immortality, was not contradicted by Revelation. All that he was afraid of was that the doctrine might be felt to be intrusive, and not being a part of the teaching of the church, might be misconceived as superseding or qualifying that teaching.

However Wordsworth got his doctrine, there are some features of it which are distinctly his own. Though he was a mystic, his mysticism was in some respects distinctive. Most mystics tend to distrust the senses whose report of the world as solid and matter-of-fact, they are unwilling to accept. But the fact nevertheless remains that the knowledge given by the mystical experience is more akin to sensation than thought, more like immediate feelings than ratiocination. And our immediate feelings seldom have any content except what the sense supply. Wordsworth's mysticism rested fundamentally on the senses. Prof. Garrod describes it as a mysticism of the eyes and the ears. Wordsworth's most uplifting experiences came to him from sensations of sight or hearing. He certainly believed that they revealed to him a supersensual reality, but the doorway to it lay through the senses, acting freely, instinctively and unclogged by custom and reason. We see the truth Wordsworth felt, when seem like a child or one on whom the weight of custom and sophistication weights least -- a peasant, a shepherd, an idiot, or a lunatic. Wordsworth thus differed from Plato in reaching truth by passively responding to sense-impressions. The freshness of this impression in childhood suggests to him a life earlier than birth, in which the state of vision is a permanent possession.

The sincerity of expression in the Ode makes it extremely doubtful that Wordsworth was merely playing at a fancy for poetical effect. He must have entertained the faith more or less seriously. What is even more important, the Ode reveals Wordsworth's gift for remaining an artist while stating a philosophic or moral idea. Prof. Elton says that it is Wordsworth's single but supreme triumph in the highest kind of lyrical architecture.

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10

**TRADITION, TRANSITION AND TRANSFORMATION:
A STUDY OF WOMEN MYTHICAL CHARACTERS
IN SELECT PLAYS OF INDIAN WOMEN PLAYWRIGHTS**

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Abstract:

Delineation of women in the socio-cultural sphere remains a contentious argument owing to the dominant patriarchal discourse that seeks to undermine and suppress such expressions in order to maintain their hegemony. The feminist recasting of iconic mythical characters in contemporary times, bridges the polarities of past with present, silence with words, divine with human, and in the end from deification to the emancipation of a woman with the sense of her own will. A number of Indian women playwrights have sought to redefine the iconic mythical characters such as Sita, Draupadi and Mandodari in order to challenge, counter and subvert the stereotypes that seek to demean and devalue women's identity and agency. It is an attempt on the part of these playwrights to revisit the myths from feminist perspective and represent the profane, express the unspeakable and portray the unthinkable by foregrounding the repressed and subverting the male perspective by appropriating and supplying them with agency and ideas. The present paper attempts to study selected works by Indian women playwrights to present the perspective of the suffering subaltern and thereby voicing their concerns that remain unsaid for over centuries now.

Key words: *Myth, subvert, stereotype, agency.*

In both Eastern and Western world the voice of women in the dramatic sphere has remained submerged for long due to the subversive practices that are usually perpetrated under the guise of convention, custom and/or tradition. With the rise in gender consciousness coupled with wide spread anti-establishment sentiments women have sought to redefine and reframe the sexual equation and devise ways and means of resistance against patriarchy. The patriarchal discourse both trivialize and marginalize the experience of women and therefore spaces like theatre are necessitated wherein women may voice their own experience, joy, sorrow and exploitation. Theatre gives these dramatists the space and agency to at once question, challenge and subvert the persisting female stereotypes, to reassert their presence and to demand equal, if not elevated, status. This is a crucial intervention in cultural practice because it presents the spectacle through gendered lenses.

A number of Indian women playwrights have sought to reframe myth and thereby redefine mythical women characters who have been objectified in the patriarchal discourse. It is an attempt, on their part, to create a counter-culture by reworking the frames between the genders. At the same time it marks their partaking in the historical process of identity creation. Playwrights such as Mallika Sarabhai, Ambai, Varsha Adalja and Kamalani Mehta have chosen dramatic oeuvre to re-read, re-interpret, re-write and thereby re-define the age old myths by devoiding them from their redundant and oppressive frames. In the plays under consideration the women playwrights have re-presented the mythical female characters from female perspective thereby contravening vilifying socio-cultural myths that depreciate womanhood. In the hands of these women playwrights' myth becomes a potent tool for resistance because here they can represent the profane, express the unspeakable and portray the unthinkable by foregrounding the repressed

and subverting the male perspective by appropriating and supplying them with the agency and ideas. Their works challenge the canonical texts by presenting the archetypal women in a manner that questions the hegemonic value system. Their protagonists shatter the stereotypes and reconstruct the image that resonate vigour, vitality and vision distinct and opposed to the suppressed subaltern. Without altering the basic outline, the mythical figures have been revived by the playwrights to reverse the interpretations and judgments of their actions.

It is noteworthy that in Indian context epics like Ramayan and Mahabharat are not mere epics but are more than that. They are the living embodiments of the socio-cultural values and practices still valid and popular with the masses. The women playwrights have chosen Sita, Mandodari and Draupadi to provide them voice and visibility that have been denied to them by the myth and deification. Mallika Sarabhai in her play titled *Sita's Daughters* brings to the fore the fractured identity of a woman who is violated in the names of sex determination, female foeticide, domestic violence and rape. She has transformed the suffering protagonist of the epic into a speaking subject full of anger and agency. Sarabhai's Sita questions Ram that if he is God then how could he not distinguish between a real and fake golden deer? Further she challenges the mythical hero by declining his offer to go back to Ayodhya by countering him if the latter believed she was pure then why did he not convince the dhobi at the time the latter maligned her. By transforming monologic performance into dialogic exchanges with the spectator, Sarabhai has chosen to break free drama from being a luminal and limiting experience. The play begins with the Ramayan story and extends to include the collage of newspaper stories of sexual abuse and violence to portray that each one of those females who have experienced power-struggle, deprivation and violence in the patriarchal world are Sita's daughters. But in contrast to the olden times, Sarabhai asserts that the women of today don't have to retract back to mother earth and vanish rather they should question and challenge the perpetrators of atrocities and misery. In an interview for the *The Hindu* Sarabhai has asserted,

Patriarchy has a language which makes woman weak. I realized my vulnerability and started writing, creating and performing....I read one thousand testimonies of rape victims and visited police stations to understand how rape victims were treated. The title was puzzling. Many wondered whether Sita had daughters. I believe that any woman who questions the status quo is daughter of Sita (*The Hindu*, October 29, 2015).

The Tamil playwright C.S. Lakshmi, popularly known as Ambai, has experimented with form and structure while relating the anguish and frustration of Sita in her play titled *Crossing the River*. The poetic play revisits the mythical Sita and evaluates her angst from the contemporary feminist standpoint. 'Her feminism permeates but does not restrict the subject matter of her work, which investigates the ways gender is constructed in society, explores communication between human beings and celebrates ordinary women's courage and resourcefulness'.(Miller 115) By juxtaposing the past over the present the playwright depicts the constant expectations from epic age to the present times from women to be subdued and suppressed. It extends to showcase the different faces of women's resistance that help her survive in the hostile patriarchal world. The play text has elaborate stage directions while having only a single actor-performer who calls herself Sita. In the background there is a shadow that questions her identity. Sita of Ambai's *Crossing the River* is not a mute, patient victim lacking agency and voice. She is a speaking subject who chooses to speak not just for herself but also for all other contemporary women who have been wronged at any point of time,

I am the oppressed Sita
I am Sita of a kind
Sita with many faces
living through many faces

living through
 many times
 many spaces
 I am
 Another Sita
 Another Sita (Lakshmi 436)

This way the play transposes the mythical Sita to the contemporary times through feminist recasting. She critiques the hegemonic supremacy of men by choosing to cross the river in order to reclaim her identity and re-form the 'new Rajya'. She points out the objectification of woman as a painter's model or as a statue in a temple or a church. She is everything - a goddess, a demon, an idol - but a human being having emotion and esteem. Sita shouts aloud, as if everything making an announcement, that she has suffered due to love, lust and politics of men. Thus, Sita becomes everywoman who is 'made up with words/ bound in words/ imprisoned in words.'(455) Frustrated with men's prescriptive commands and angry with her plight she declares, 'I am/ another Sita/ another Sita' - the evolved, emancipated and energetic (436). She is the one who questions, 'Who are you' and decrees, 'I shall cross the river/ to see the new world/ to assume a new form/ to create a new Rajya'(436). She is the modern woman who has decided to follow her will uninhibited. It is a brilliant attempt by the playwright to subtly topple the misplaced deification and resurrect the new emancipated woman from the pyres of age-long suffering and suppression.

Kamalani Mehta's *Sita* is a one-act play that recasts the age-old myth in a new light. Criticizing the valorization of Rama the playwright presents an alternative reading of the myth. Sita, true to her compassionate frame, agrees to partake the sons in the care of the father, king Ram, but refuses to join them. She rejects the king's offer to join them and instead questions his altered decision,

So now I question the king, is the King not under the compulsion of his subjects now as he offers me to accompany him to Ayodhya? Am I not the same Sita towards whom your subjects had raised their accusing fingers? (Mehta 374)

Mehta's play deconstructs the emasculating framework of ancient legends and presents an alternative structure wherein women are allowed to question, refute and decry at their will. Here Sita has dignity, pride and esteem that should be salvaged at all costs. If others are not ready to support and honour her self-pride she will very well decide her own course of action.

Gujarati playwright Varsha Adalja has sought to debunk the ancient myth in favour of epic Ramayana's lesser highlighted character, Mandodari - the wife of Ravana and the queen of Lanka. The play titled after the central figure, Mandodari, shows the tribulations of the Maharani as she is split between her duties towards herself, her husband and her kingdom. She writhes in agony of her husband's wanton ways and knows well that his ego and misplaced pride will lead to his nemesis yet she tries her level best to counter the moves of Kaaldevta - the God of Death - in the metaphorical game of chess. Resisting and thereby refuting to be a mute victim to unsurpassable circumstances, Mandodari of Adalja uses all her wisdom and power to save her own pride, her husband's salvation and the lives of her kingdom's citizens. By giving a peek into the innermost recesses of Mandodari's heart and soul, Adalja deconstructs the myth by recreating the past with focus on women. Partaking her self-esteem, Mandodari first beseeches Ravana to return Seeta back to her husband Rama and ask for the latter's forgiveness and thus avoid war but on being ignored she decides to take recourse to other ways instead of sitting back and moaning over her misfortune. She advises Seeta to surrender to Ravana, to save the lives of millions of innocents in the ensuing war, knowing fully well that if Seeta accepts her plea then she (Mandodari) will be relegated from her supreme office of the queen. Keeping her own insecurities at bay she continues relentlessly to convince Seeta,

With the hope for humanity. All these people scattered in different fractions, forever

fighting each other, could be united and could at last live happily in one kingdom under one emperor. This is the dream I had, Seeta, that I hoped to see reflected in your eyes. We have a great opportunity to serve humanity and prevent further hatred and bloodshed (Adalja 111).

Even kaaldevta bows before her demeanor and self-less courage, 'I am touched by your love for your country. I bow to you and bless you. May you always be honored as a great Sati.'(114) Mandodari, 'well versed in Saam, Daam, Danda and Bheda,'(107) tries to save the soul of her egoistic and myopic husband who sans his sense and sensibility, is adamant to lose his life, family, honour and kingdom due to his hubris - excessive pride. She resists defeat till the last and is praised by Kaaldevta himself for her grit and determination. Her chief concern is not to interiorize Seeta or a woman's identity but to save the lives of millions of innocents of her kingdom who stand at the margins of power praxis and tend to suffer at the hands of hegemonic patriarchal forces. She laughs scornfully at Kaaldevta and declares her own victory, 'You have lost the game and I have won,' thereby defying the myth and emancipating women mythical figures from stereotypical roles that deny them voice, power and agency to act and alter the situation (114). Her last laugh, '..I have succeeded in what I set out to do. Ha ha ha,' stuns both Kaaldevta and Adalja's readers/spectators who are reminded of Brecht's *Mother Courage* who continues in different theatres of war and decides to go on even after the loss of her children (114). Resisting and thereby subverting the normative gender roles, Mandodari exercises her wisdom and takes independent decisions undeterred by challenges offered by Kaaldevta and stubbornness of Ravana. The play highlights the bias inherent in dominantly patriarchal discourse offered by the canonical epics that willfully and knowingly silence and mute women's sacrifice, courage and contribution.

Through their dramatic oeuvre the women playwrights have attempted to present a counter mythology by displacing and deconstructing the traditional myths and giving voice and agency to the under-valued and side-lined women mythical figures such as Sita, Draupadi, Mandodari and Ahilya etc. In the hands of these playwrights the women mythical characters become an archetype to criticize the unreasonable and vacuous patriarchal values. The study illustrates how the playwrights have reconfigured the myths to re-define mythical women characters from women's perspective and seek to neutralize the effect of vilifying and denigrating socio-cultural myths that depreciate womanhood. It recovers women's voice and gives her space and agency to act and thereby resist the contravening and oppressive frameworks by foregrounding their experience within the hegemonic value system. It is a revisionist act on the part of these playwrights to provide mythical women an arena beyond the stereotypical frameworks.

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11

CONVALESCENCE OF INDIAN CULTURE AND TRADITION IN GIRISH KARNAD'S *THE FIRE AND THE RAIN*

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Abstract:

Drama being an audiovisual medium of expression has been a very effective and powerful genre in the world literature. Indian Drama has development of drama from Greece, Roman, England and India give special importance upon the fact that it has always been an included as part of a whole culture, highlighting and value of moral commitments, religious convictions, philosophical approaches, and social and political changes in various countries. The origin of Indian drama can thus be traced back to the Vedic period. The long history of thousand years, Indian drama is a unique phenomenon in the literary world. It is also multicultural in character in that it has a strong presence of indigenous traditions, culture and ethos which are unfortunately submerged and dominated by the imported culture of Europe.

Keywords: *Indian Drama, Colonial Histories, Freedom*

Introduction

Girish Karnad is the well-known appreciated media personality in the contemporary India, leading playwright and very skillful fractioned of the performing arts. The English translations of his plays are his own. They have brought him international appreciation as the pre-eminent contemporary playwright. He has value of the Indian Literary scene by his contribution to art, culture, theatre and drama. But the most important provide something which he has made to Indian English drama is his attempt to get the cultural and mythological rich tradition of the Indian past. The argument of this paper would be to highlight Karnad's involvement in this direction.

In his plays we find that he go back to the roots and make an efforts to sturdy again the local culture and tradition. India is a post-colonial country having its own different culture and colonial movement. It is also multi-cultural character in that it has make an occurrence of native traditions, culture, philosophy which are regrettably push and triumph over and bring under control by the imported culture of Europe. Girish Karnad is one such playwright who makes an effort to get an extremely important object of culture and tradition. Culture and social colonization of the native culture by the leading foreign influence has not only resulted in never done modify in social and cultural ethos of India, but it has also be present by a fluctuation of the economic development of our nation. And worst affected are the traditional arts and crafts. Because of this that writers like Girish Karnad make a challenge in their writing to convey about a 'cultural renaissance' on the Indian fictional scene. He has been exactly called the "Renaissance Man", whose famous person is based on decades of creative and consistence output on inhabitant soil.

He belongs to a generation that has produced Dharma veer Bharati, Mohan Rakes and Vijay Tendulkar who have formed a nation theatre for contemporary India which is an amount of money on his generation. Hence their "return to and discovery of tradition" was stimulated by a search for roots and seek individuality. This was part of the entire process of decolonization of our life-style, morals, social institutions, creative forms and culture moods". In other words, like Bertolt Brecht, Karnad makes the

listeners to respond intellectually rather than sensitively to the act of the play, with his artistic skill, he unites myth realism, past and present and show the linked parts of the modern life. Karnad's literature is extremely influenced by the renaissance in western literature. During his formative years, Karnad went through various actions that went long way into determining his dramatic taste and genius. One of the actions on him was that he was exposed to literary scene where there was a straight conflict between western and native tradition. Karnad has exploited Indian mythology with a definite purpose in his mind. Indian mythology is based on a written textual tradition that has nonstop to live time and foreign influences and attempts at institution. The folk tales and traditions that reflect the social and cultural ethos of the nation are ingrained in oral tradition that requires immediate attention and preservation from to save them extinction. Much of these folk traditions and culture have survived into the contemporary period through the efficient average of folk theatre. But strong action of the dominant colonial culture and later the current modes of entertainment from the west are in cinema or the modern theatre pressed the provincial forms of literature to the object. Girish Karnad is one such contemporary dramatist who has contributed immensely to the genre.

Belonging to the post-colonial group of writers, his plays are rich in Indian sensibility and tradition, drawing inspiration heavily from the classical Indian dramatic tradition, myth, legends and folktales. He has always taken his enthusiasm from the Indian mythology, history and folklore. In his plays, he has hard work to maintain the Indian spirit and culture damage from side to side the use of a wide choice of techniques and procedure adopted from the folk theatre. Exploring his great involvement to the revival of folk theatre, Tutun Mukherjee commentary that Karnad has "Made available thee rich resources of the great and little tradition, the classical and the folk elements of Indian literature".

In his a variety of plays Karnad has tried to show not only the contemporary society and its predicament but has also extensively employed the various predictable folktales and techniques and devices of the folk theatre: Masks, dolls, curtains, chorus, commentators-narrator, story-within -a-story, supernatural elements, etc... In fact, Karnad's involvement to the revitalization of the art of folk theatre by bringing it out of regional context into the mainstream of national theatre is great inheritance and noteworthy. He has used native theatre modes like Yakshaganga, the Parsee Natak models and other folk theatre forms based on a rich dramatic heritage pattern its lineage to the days of Natyashastra, Karnad has honestly given a new life to the art of theatre as is evident from an analysis of some famous plays.

Karnad's drama focuses on the hurdle of human relationship and contains an indirect vital assessment of contemporary Indian society. In each of his plays, a renowned / mythical or historical story, we notice "subtle and constant juxtaposition of the past and present" honestly which has been "a common feature of Karnad's dramatic art". Karnad began his literary career as a dramatist with the publication of his play *Yayati* (1961). Drawing his source from the Mythological character of *Yayati* in *Mahabharata*, Karnad depicts the contemporary dilemma of everyman caught between the contrary pulls of delight and responsibility, materialism and possession.

Apart from the Mythology upon which the play is based, Karnad has employed the person of Sutradhara modeled on the narrator- commentator of folk theatre. The Sutradhara notify the audience about the Mythological origin of the play as well as the idea of the play which highlights the importance of supplied up to one's accountability in life. Karnad has given traditional tale a new meaning and significance highly applicable in the context of life today. The figurative theme of *Yayati's* attachment to life and its pleasures, as also his finishing possession, is continued. Karnad's originality lies in working out the inspiration behind *Yayati's* ultimate choice. Karnad's reading of Jean Paul Sartre and other existentialists helped him vastly to give a shape and meaning to his play.

The play Fire and the Rain is a play based on the myth of Yavakri taken from "Vana Parva" of the *Mahabharata*. The myth whose source can be finding back to *Rig Veda* presents the play its structure all along with ceremony which forms a significant part of the narrative structure. The play begins with a

prologue and ends with an Epilogue, and is separated in three acts. In its structure the play look like Samavakarna, a type of drama as mentioned in Bharatmuni's *Natyashastra*. Through the use of myth Karnad gives a modern viewpoint to the story. He uses the brother disloyalty issues of the play myth and adds to it the ritual of the fire sacrifice to represent the web of shine and gender politics in our society. Karnad's *The Fire and the Rain* transports the audience to the imaginary world of the *Mahabharata*, but without dissociating them from day-to-day realities.

The Mahabharata myth of Yavakri has been beautifully presented along with the Rig Vedic myth of the slaying of the demon Vritra by Indra in this play, with certain digression the playwright has made the play all the more interesting, impressive and relevant to the contemporary audience and theatre. Here, Karnad makes use of myth for the purpose of social change and amelioration of the low-caste people. Girish Karnad not only sources his themes and narratives from folk tales and mythologies but also employs the various devices and techniques from India's rich tradition of folk theatre.

Karnad's use of techniques and devices used from Sanskrit play, company Natakas, Parsi theatre, Yakshagana, Bayalala, have helped him to bridge the gap between the actor and the audience as is typical of traditional performances. The possibility is one of the reasons of the wide global acceptance and application of Karnad's plays. These devices help him to transform the written word into action and life into the text. "Theatre leads to the unsatisfactory of the usual limitation of man and man's power.

Karnad provided something to a great extent the part of the native culture and tradition through the use of folk tales, myths and legends and the form of folk theatre. He has proved helpful in re-affirming and establishing the national identity firmly on the contemporary ground of foreign culture influences and invasion. Extensive use of folk techniques and crafts have generated newer interests in elements of arts and crafts, their life, tradition and culture there by contemporary drama has helped generated a new scope for livelihood for the various artisans and folk artists.

In his dramatic movement he instrumentalists India's myths, folklores and history to propagate India's cultural heritage, philosophical beliefs, religious thinking, political understanding, social values and customs among the people of the west. His creative imagination is originally Indian. His evolution as a dramatist is based on the rich and varied Indian tradition and with the use of rich and elements of Indian traditions and which the use of rich or excessive amount of something of Indian myths, folk elements and historical facts.

As an actor, director and scriptwriter, Karnad is very much artistic to weave Indian tradition, culture and social settings in his plays.

In dramatization of mythical, folklore and historical varied his projects man women relationship and Indian's cultural plurality with women sensibilities. Karnad takes myth as a faith builder for individual's spiritual evolution. He uses folklore to connect the magic and reality and history as a positive concept to analyse life and society. The past is not always dead for Karnad.

Karnad uses myth in his plays to express meaning for the contemporary life. He believes that the significance of myth never dies. In an age of post modernism and globalization, he observes people's craze for materialism and their simulation of western civilization. So as conscious dramatists, he valorized myths, parables, legends and folktales in his plays. He rewrites them in his plays as they provide immense scope for living. While he uses mythical episodes in his plays he significantly aims at using them for social, religious and philosophical purpose. He presents certain episodes of myth from the *Mahabharata* and contextualizes them in contemporary human situations. It is observed that his plays on myth are rooted in the ancient Indian dramatic tradition of "dharma, artha, karma and moksha". In the mythical imagination of his plays he revives the ancient dramatic tradition in the celebration of the human and humane. Presenting myths in human condition he links the present with the eternal and the contemporary with the archetypal.

Karnad links the past with the present, the archetype with the real. Issues of the present world find

their parallel in the myths and fables of the past which lend new meaning and insights through analogy, reinforcing the theme. By transcending the limits of time and space, myths provide flashes of insight into life and its mystery. They form an integral part of the cultural consciousness of the land, with their associative layers of meaning, their timelessness and relevance to contemporary issues. Karnad deals with mythical incident in his plays and interprets them in contemporary reality. Linking the ancient and the modern dramatic tradition in his plays he links the natural and supernatural phenomena in human conditions. He takes refuge in Indian myths and makes them a medium for new vision. In the use of myths he presents the absurdity of life with all its elemental, conflicts and individual's eternal struggle to achieve perfection. While dealing with ancient myths he aims at reducing us into the sentiment of devotion because our suffering in this world is that we have forsaken our faith in gods. In terms of forms and content his plays focus on new discourses on Indian myths. Investing bits of myth, Karnad introduces us with India's ancient tradition and culture which provides us hope and consolation.

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**MOTHERLY WOMEN OF TWO FACES IN
 RABINDRANATH TAGORE'S *CHOKHER BALI***

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Abstract:

*Rabindranath Tagore, a great writer of special interest on women. As an exquisite writer of all themes and talents he is very good at handling the emotions of women in a rare way of astonishment. Besides male characters in his novels he has beautifully organized the women characters with enlightenment. All his women characters playing both major and minor roles are like designs on a finely woven fabric. There are two main divisions of women in every novel they are young women both married and unmarried and motherly women as aunts, mothers, mothers-in-law. Like the female protagonists, the motherly women characters are also important for the perfection of a novel. In **Chokher Bali**, the two motherly characters Rajlakshmi and Annapurna are presented like the two sides of a coin with distinct characteristic features, one is for disapproval and the other one is for applause. The woman of disapproval (Rajlakshmi) is an indication of how a motherly woman should not be and the women of applause (Annapurna) pose herself as a role model to the female society.*

Key Words: *Motherly women, formidable woman.*

Rabindranath Tagore was born on 7th May 1861 to Debendranath Tagore and Sarada Devi as a thirteenth child in the family of Jorasanko. Since his child hood days Tagore spent most of his times in contemplating about the persons in and around him and also about the society. He nourished his mind in reading many Bengali books and periodicals and also Vaishnav lyrics. He was also influenced by Sanskrit literature and Western literature. He is a man with different and multiple talents. He is called first of all as a poet and secondly as a novelist, a short story writer, a dramatist, a musician and a painter. All his works are the reflection of his own society of his time in an admirable way of excellence. Apart from all his recognition of other issues which were prevalent during his days he showed a greater interest on women generally. His acknowledgement for women in the society started from his family, accommodating larger outwitting female inmates. He comprehended the vitalities of women and assured his confidence over them for the betterment of the society. In all his major novels, women are given with different interesting roles.

His notable women characters playing the role of protagonists are Binodini and Asha (**Chokher Bali**), Bimala (**The Home and the World**), Sucharita and Lolita (**Gora**), Kamala and Hemamalini (**The Wreck**), Labanya (**Farewell, My Friend**) and Damini (**Chaturanga**). Simultaneously there are also motherly women characters to be intended for analysis. Of all the motherly characters of Tagore Anandamoyi of **Gora**, Kshemankari of **The Wreck** and Annapurna of **Chokher Bali** are worthy of notice.

On August 1941, the great legend and an erudite, Tagore passed away leaving behind his foot prints immortal Srinivasa Iyengar states:

He belongs unquestionably to Bengali literature but he belongs to Indo - Anglian literature too - indeed, he belongs to all India and the whole world. He was a poet, dramatist, an actor, producer; he was a musician and a painter: he was an educationalist, a practical idealist who turned his dreams

into reality at Shanthiniketan; he was a reformer, philosopher, prophet; he was a novelist and short-story writer and a critic of life and literature; he even made occasional incursions into nationalist politics, although he was essentially an internationalist. He was thus many persons, he was a darling of versatility and still he was the same man; he was an integral whole, the Rishi, the Gurudev (99).

Since her birth every woman has to through many stages such as “a daughter”, “a lass”, “a wife”, “a mother” and “a gran”. Normally a man couldn't lead a complete life under the bond of marriage or love. Every woman is bestowed with the blessings of multiplying her generation with joy and not as a burden. Woman of all nature is a carrier of “love” and “devotion”. At many places and numerous instances she is made silent for no meaning but for bearing the name as “a woman”. A powerful woman is able to create or to destroy whatever she wishes. Each male is directed either right away or obliquely by a formidable woman. Usually a woman takes over the responsibility of a family in a better way than a man. What is impossible for a man in his family is possible by a woman; either in the form of a wife or as a mother.

It is blessed to be related with others. Each relation stands for its own prestige. Especially being in a motherly state is a divine boon to all women whether she has given birth or not. Every woman imbibes mother hood and mothering from her within, after her marriage. Mother is the best parent and first friend to all children of both the sexes. She is the paradigm of various abstract qualities which is certainly gifted to her by God specially. Every Mother of all homes is “An Archangel” of her own family in preventing her members from all calamities. She is an embodiment of positive vibration embracing all her inmates. It is a mother's love starts shaping an individual of her family and extends to her relatives and still lengthens to the society where she lives and finally dies. On a surface level the duty of a mother might be simple but her duty is emotionally, mentally and sentimentally intact which also has to be dealt delicately with proper care.

This article aims to interpret the two motherly characters of the novel (*Binodini*) *Chokher Bali*. It clearly mirrors their feature, principles and attitude in their respective roles. It also brings out the contrast between two characters.

The novel *Chokher Bali* is a great psychological novel which beats any other novel of its time in its standard of scrutinizing the mentality of the women characters peculiarly. Not only the female protagonists Binodini and Asha presented carefully but also the other two women Rajlakshmi playing the role as a “Mother” and “Mother - in - law” and Annapurna playing the role as an “Aunt” are also scrutinized with care by Tagore. Tagore is a forerunner of introducing a new genre in Indian Fiction. It is with Binodini (*Chokher Bali*) Indian Fiction has taken a new pace in characterization and portrayal of characters. Niharanjan Ray praises it as “the first all-round psychological novel devoted to study of social problems. Besides being a psychological novel, the novel also probes deep into the plight of young widows in Hindu society through the larger perspective of their self - actualization” (165). Premature marriages of many young girls resulted in losing many of their husbands at an early life and struggled to rear their children without support. Apart from other ladies many widows underwent a great turmoil and led their lives lacking patronage. It is only few widows intellectually accepted their pathetic situation and proceeded their lives with strong faith on themselves. Tagore also brilliantly pictured many of the widows in his novels successfully in imparting a new sphere of life to other women and widows who travel in tougher situation.

Rajlakshmi: A Reckless Mother

Rajlakshmi is the mother of the fatherless Mahendra. Being a widow she showers all her love and affection on her only son Mahendra, a medico. She lacks the aim of bringing up her son morally and intellectually. She is a self - centered woman without the motherly quality. She is similar to the nature of Harimohini of *Gora* and Bara - Rani of *the Home and the World*. She is very liberal in handling her words which is known for its stinging on whomsoever like Asha, Binodini or Annapurna. Like a Mother bird, she

caresses Mahendra by pampering.

Having lost his father very early in his childhood the affinity between Mahendra and his mother was deeper than the normal mother and son kinship (*Chokher Bali* 1-2).

When Rajlakshmi finds Binodini a beautiful and intelligent girl for her son's marriage, her words gets no importance from her son, Mahendra and remains vain. Rajlakshmi has brought up her son only with her inordinate love and not by feeding her motherly love of divinely nature. Bihari, Mahendra's friend is also insisted by Rajlakshmi in making him to marry the rejected girl, Binodini. In case of Rajlakshmi, which is beyond the acceptance of anyone. She views everything in a plain and simple manner without the awareness of the importance of the matter.

Bihari feels the reckless nature of Rajlakshmi and says,

Ma, I am afraid, this I cannot do. On many occasion in the past you offered me sweets declined by your son, which I had happily consumed, but marriage is altogether a far more serious issue. In any case, I find it most inappropriate to accept a bride whom you had intended for Mahendra (*Chokher Bali* 3).

Annapurna's cautioning Rajlakshmi about the marriage of her son Mahendra at the right time provokes Rajlakshmi to be on the wrong notion as "Nothing but a childless widow's envy for a mother blessed with a son." Rajlakshmi's rearing and caring Mahendra has made him to be imprudent and unfair at most of his times which is clear when he marries Asha at the last moment where the proposal has been basically made only for Bihari. She devised her own evil plans in separating her own son from her daughter in law, Asha which is very silly to her own age and experience. It is very frivolous for a mother to bring a young widow with her after returning from her home town. Binodini is a young widow and also proposed girl to marry her son, Mahendra, which unfortunately did not happen.

She does not think that a young widow would ruin the marital life of her son, Mahendra instead she wishes for a non-related person to fulfil all her requirements and not her daughter - in - law, Asha. Rajlakshmi does not notice the transformation of her daughter - in - law after returning from her native village. She discouraged Asha who almost like Rajlakshmi shadow helping her all time in kitchen and all house hold chores. Her words of barbs are, "Leave that alone. Why try to do something that you know nothing about? You will only spoil it" (*Chokher Bali* 45).

Rajlakshmi shows a very least respect on others if anyone advises her on morality.

As a mother of Mahendra she herself the instrument in spoiling her son's mind by creating an opportunity for another lady(Binodini) in no way related to him to take care of him, even it is reminded as a misdeed by the opportunist. Her malignant words against Binodini are, "What is bothering you Binodini. There is no harm in doing what I am asking you to do. You are not a stranger in our home, whatever others may say" (*Chokher Bali* 133).

Rajlakshmi mind is often known for the instability. Binodini whom she wished as her care taker once, after guessing the changed behavior of her son Mahendra she daringly calls Binodini as a "temptress" without realizing that she is the cause in using the same temptress to divert her son from his wife, Asha. When she is being pointed out for her own mistake she accuses Binodini as "a wretched woman, how can you accuse a mother scheming against her own son, your tongue will shrivel for such blasphemy" (*Chokher Bali* 180).

It is only when the situation becomes worse with the desertion of her home by Mahendra going away with Binodini she recognizes her mistake and whole heartedly confesses her wrong doing of not authorizing Asha as her daughter - in - law. She admits her misdeed as, "It is my misfortune that I have no recognition for a long time to such a fine daughter- in - law that I have" (*Chokher Bali* 208). When Rajlakshmi finds that her son has stopped loving her and has gone astray she starts thinking about Mahendra's good friend, Bihari whom she thought as a person of less importance.

During the last stage of her life her confidence on Bihari is like a rising sun and expects his presence

to attend her on her illness. Her faithful words on Bihari:

I am sure if Bihari were here he would have looked after us in these sad times. He would not have allowed the situation to go out of hand. I am confident if Bihari gets to know about my illness, he would rush here to help me (*Chokher Bali* 234).

Annapurna: A Graceful Mother

Annapurna in *Chokher Bali* is a refined and the finest character of all. She is soft and benevolent in nature. Like Rajlakshmi, Annapurna is also a widow since her childhood with no issue. She assumes Mahendra as her own son even he too finds true love of a motherly care from Annapurna more than his mother. Her love on everyone is equal and she is a pious and a spiritual woman. She engages herself in thinking of God and leads her remaining life with the name of God. Annapurna encounters all her situations with her conscience and tolerance when Mahendra suggests an idea of arranging Annapurna's niece for marriage with Bihari she delicately says Bihari, "If you do not find her suitable, you will be under no obligation to marry her. I give you my word" (*Chokher Bali* 8).

After becoming the daughter - in -law of Rajlakshmi, Asha undergoes silent suffering inexpressively. When Annapurna finds a rift is setting out between Mahendra and his mother she subtly tries to resolves the anger of Mahendra with her objective words as:

She is a young, immature girl, an orphan **who had no mother to instruct** her about her obligations.

How would she know what is right or wrong? (*Chokher Bali* 22).

It is who Rajlakshmi accuses Annapurna for being the cause of disruption in the mind of her son, Mahendra. Before making the situation worse she plans for a holy journey to Kashi to find peace for the rest of her life and stay divine further. Irrespective of Rajlakshmi's attitude towards her, Annapurna meets her at her parental home to seek elderly blessings as a token of showing respect before departing to Kashi.

She bids her farewell as a lady of saintly concern for all the inmates of her home. She leaves her care and regards for all, as for Asha; 'As for your daughter - in - law '. She said, "she is just a child who has no mother she may have been delinquent, but she is still yours and yours only" (*Chokher Bali* 38), like your daughter; as for Bihari she gave him a pair of gold bangles as a property for his future wife, as for Mahendra, her words of caring, 'please keep an eye on my Mohin and Asha', as a deed of gift she has inherited her share on Mahendra's favour. In all his trouble, Mahendra seeks the feet of Annapurna as his source of his solace. Her mind is always filled with good thoughts and philosophical too. Her estimations are always real and practical. She energizes Asha with her fond words by the name of God. She shares her life experience to Asha and teaches her the wants of life of a woman. She preaches her the unknown of a universal life:

Look it is not possible for any individual to please everyone. If a wife devotedly and sincerely attends to her husband, then **God** himself will reward the wife, even if the husband disdains her care (*Chokher Bali* 165).

From the above two motherly women characters, the one Rajlakshmi playing the role of a mother and the other Annapurna playing the role of an aunt are very notable and distinctive motherly women characters of Tagore. Rajlakshmi stands for the pessimistic option of life while Annapurna looks everything in an optimistic manner. For Rajlakshmi all the characters are unimportant except her only son Mahendra. In case of Annapurna she values everyone with great care. Rajlakshmi is narrow - minded and peevish in nature. Annapurna is gracious and gentle in disposition with appealing attitude. She is the energy - giver to Asha, Mahendra and Bihari during their miserable situation. It is Rajlakshmi who changes the situation miserable. Rajlakshmi is a self - willed but embodying wrong notions to abide it and spoils her inner happiness and also others. To the contrary, Annapurna is the source of happiness and comfort seeking her salvation under the feet of God. Tagore points out clearly that mothers like Rajlakshmi, due to lack of education, wisdom and unawareness towards the changing they nurture misery to their family by their senseless love. It is Annapurna, whom Tagore portrayed as an altruistic woman living for the service of

other people by self - effacing.

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BLURRED LINES: C.G. JUNG'S THEORY OF ANIMA AND ANIMUS IN WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE'S *MACBETH*

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Abstract:

The androgynous nature of human beings always arouses our interest. This paper is an exploration on the androgynous nature of human beings in the light of C.G Jung's theory of anima and animus in Macbeth and Antony and Cleopatra. In Macbeth we see anima as a personification of feminine element in Macbeth and animus as the personification of the masculine element in Lady Macbeth and both stands as a finest illustration for the bisexual and androgynous nature of human beings. We can find a trapped man inside the female body of Lady Macbeth and a trapped woman inside Macbeth. Where as in Antony and Cleopatra, Antony experienced the power of his soul, anima, as only through projection onto Cleopatra, and as a consequence she enjoyed enormous power and influence over him which resulted in his destruction.

Keywords: *anima, animus, personality, inner conflict, androgynous*

Men used to think of themselves only as men, and women think of themselves as women, but the reality is every human being is androgynous. Within every man there is a Woman, and within every woman a Man. C.G. Jung is the first psychologist to observe this psychological fact of human nature, and he called the opposites in man and woman the anima and the animus. By anima he meant the feminine component in a man's personality, and by the animus he designated the masculine component in a woman's personality. Men, identified with their masculinity, typically project their feminine side-anima onto woman, and woman, identified with their feminine nature, typically project their masculine side, animus onto men. Where ever projection occur the person who carries the projected image is either greatly overvalued or undervalued.

In the play *Macbeth*, Macbeth and Lady Macbeth are the epitome of an interesting parallelization. At the beginning of the play, the two characters are complete opposites. Macbeth takes the feminine role, while Lady Macbeth takes masculine role. If we examine the characteristics of the hero and the heroine; Macbeth and Lady Macbeth, we can see Jung's concept of anima and animus as a personification of the opposites in them. There is something of the woman in Macbeth and something of man in Lady Macbeth.

In Private Macbeth finds himself battling with his feminine qualities and wants desperately to exhibit his masculine characteristics, but his inherent feminine qualities become dominant. His emotions and conscience did not allow him to portray the manly role which he feels he should. In public his masculinity is something which is not questioned. Within that domain he is a warrior, a man of honour and courage, a husband and a leader. However, there are some instances where Macbeth's feminine characteristics, anima shows through by no fault of his own. Privately Macbeth is constantly subjected to his wife's attacks on his manhood which further weakens his stability. Seeing that her husband is unable to fulfill the duty with which he is charged, Lady Macbeth takes the reins. She completes the horrid action which her husband started. She has taken on the masculine role making her husband the epitome of femininity. There are frequent references in the text to the idea of manhood, to what being a man means.

Macbeth is a warrior and a poet. He is sensitive. He has a conscience and a rich poetic imagination. Lady Macbeth famously asks the spirits to 'unsex me here' and accuses Macbeth of not being man enough for the task in hand. She fears his "nature" and says he is "too full o'the milk of human-kindness"(1.5.14-15).

Lady Macbeth is a man trapped within a female body. Her persona is filled with greediness, envy and abhorrence, and she will utilize any person or anything as a tool to accomplish her evil goals. Lady Macbeth continually ignores her true sentiments and masquerades as normal female. Initially Macbeth is not naturally inclined to commit such an evil deed. However, Lady Macbeth follows her goal with greater strength of mind as she psychologically forces her husband to ruthlessly kill King Duncan. The violence illustrated by Lady Macbeth completely diminishes the stereotypical prevailing expectations of how a woman should perform. Within certain parts of the play, it is clearly evident that there is role reversal between Lady Macbeth and Macbeth himself. This is evident when Lady Macbeth states, "unsex me here, / And fill me, from the crown to the toe, top-full/ Of direst cruelty"(1.5.30). She says that she wishes to not be a woman, but instead to possess the characteristics of a male.

In the fifth scene of first act we witness the first meeting between Macbeth and his lady. The contrast between the hero and heroine of the play becomes apparent, the moment they are brought together. They are a well-matched pair in everything except strength of will. Lady Macbeth is the master spirit in all that requires a nature 'bloody, bold and resolute'. In the partnership in crime about to be launched, she has already assumed the leadership. Lady Macbeth is addressed as 'my dearest partner in greatness' in Macbeth's letter. For Macbeth, Lady Macbeth is more than a wife, she is his soul mate. He finds his animus projected to Lady Macbeth. John A Sanford says:

Men, identified with their masculinity typically project their feminine side onto women, and women, identified their feminine nature, typically project their masculine side onto men. These projected psychic images are the invisible partners in every man - woman relationship, and greatly influence the relationship, for where ever projection occurs the person who carries the projected image is either greatly overvalued or greatly undervalued (19).

While reading her husband's letter, she determines on the course to be pursued and nothing turns her from that course till the goal is reached. Her first words after reading the letter show clearly her strength of will: "Glamis thou art, and Cawdor; and shalt be what thou art promis'd" (1.5.15). She is perfectly aware of her own strength and of the influence, she possessed over the weak will of her husband. The woman who carries the projected psychic image, anima of a man, enjoys enormous power over him.

In lady Macbeth's first soliloquy she reflects on the feminine elements, anima in Macbeth and her second soliloquy, her masculine elements, her animus is clearly presented. Lady Macbeth finds Macbeth as a personification of feminine virtues. She fears Macbeth's nature, not because it is cruel, but on the contrary because it is full of kindness, tender feelings and compassion:

...I fear thy nature;
It is too full o' th milk of human kindness,
To catch the nearest way, Thou woudst be great;
Art not without ambition, but without
The illness should attend it; what thou wouldst highly,
That wouldst thou holily; (1.5. 5 - 21)

The phrase milk of human kindness suggests absence of hardness and the presence of natural, motherly feelings. Lady Macbeth implies that her husband is squeamish and sentimental. She feels that she can inspire Macbeth with her passion and courage in order to drive away all that prevents Macbeth from getting the golden crown. In Lady Macbeth, her unconscious masculine characteristics, animus is prominent than her conscious feminine characteristics. She finds herself as a man trapped in a woman's body. She wants the spirits to unsex her so that she can shed off her remaining feminine qualities:

Come, you sprits
 That tends on mortal thoughts, unsex me here
 And fill me, from the crown to the toe, top- full
 Of direst cruelty; make thick my blood;
Come to my women's breasts,
 And take my milk for gall (1.5.40-48)

Lady Macbeth wants to become cruel, which is a so-called masculine trait. "But in order to become cruel, she must close off the flow of blood from having access and passage to the heart, which is the seat of love, the source of remorse, pity and compassion" (Kimbrough 6). Lady Macbeth is ambitious. She takes decisions quickly. She is strong where her husband is weak. She is firm when he hesitates. She is bent on making him a king. She wants to be unsexed and be filled from the crown to the toe with the direst cruelty. She wants her blood to be made thick so that remorse does not enter.

Lady Macbeth chides Macbeth for wasting the time when the opportunity comes. She advises Macbeth to "look like the innocent flower /but be the serpent under't" (1.5.65). She advises her husband to put "This night's great business into my dispatch." (1.5.66) Lady Macbeth has great power over Macbeth she asks him: "Only look up clear; /To alter favour ever is to fear/Leave all the rest to me" (1.5.72).

In the last scene of first act, Macbeth overcome by his thoughts, has left the banquet hall before the ceremonial supper for Duncan is over. He thinks of the pros and cons of the murder. He has not made up his mind. He imagines that he cannot escape the consequences of the murder either in this world or next. Macbeth is a coward, even though his "Vaulting ambition" forces him to become a King. The culmination of Macbeth's speech is a visualization of the entire world weeping for its victim. While he is thus pondering, Lady Macbeth comes into the room. Macbeth tells her that they must drop the idea of murdering Duncan:

We will proceed no further in this business:
 Golden opinions from all sorts of people,
 Which would be worn now in their newest gloss,
 Not cast aside so soon. (1.7.30-34)

Macbeth's opinions are easily brushed aside by Lady Macbeth. Lady Macbeth then begins to rebuke him for his unmanly cowardice and infirmity of purpose. She completes the temptation begun by the three witches. Macbeth can only yield to her superior will power and "bend up each corporal agent to this terrible feat" (1.7.80). Jung comments on what it is like for a man to carry an animus projection. A real animus projection is murderous, because one becomes a place where the animus is buried; and he is buried exactly like the eggs of a wasp in the body of a caterpillar, and when the young ones hatch out, they began to eat one from within, which is very obnoxious.

Lady Macbeth questions the manliness of Macbeth. She says if Macbeth had the courage to kill Duncan, then she will consider him as a man. It is her will power and firmness of determination that we see in her words about plucking her nipple from the boneless gums of her child. She will then dash its brains if she had sworn to do it. This proves that she has strong determination:

How tender 'tis to love the babe that milks me:
 I would, while it was smiling in my face,
 Have pluck'd my nipple from his boneless gums,
 And dash'd the brains out, had I so sworn
 As you have done to this (1.7.55-59)

Stung by Lady Macbeth's taunting words Macbeth asks her what would happen if they fail. Lady Macbeth emphatically assures him that they will not fail, her arrangements are so perfect that there is no possibility of their failing. Duncan, tired by the day's journey, will surely be fast asleep. She will make the two chamberlains fully drunk. The drunken officers can be held responsible for the crime. A.C Bradley

says, "...through sheer force of will, that she impels him to the deed. Her eyes are fixed upon the crown and she means to it; she does not attend to the consequences" (367). Macbeth has total admiration towards the fearless manly spirit of his wife which made them to say: "Bring forth men-children only! /For thy undaunted mettle should compose/Nothing but males" (1.7.73-75) Harold Bloom says "He urges her to bring forth men children only, in admiration of her manly resolve" (522). The words of Lady Macbeth fill him with courage and hope which results him saying: "I am settled, and bend up each /Each corporal agent to this terrible feat" (1.7.80).

In the opening scene of the second act Macbeth awaits the sound of the bell which is to be the signal that the preparations for the murder of Duncan have been completed. His heat-oppressed brain sees a dagger in the air, dripping blood. Soon he realizes that it is only a creation of the brain: "A dagger of the mind, a false creation/Proceeding from the heat-oppressed brain?" (2.1.40). This hallucination is a clear indication of the inherent feminine genes within Macbeth. Jung says the anima is an archetypal form, expressing the fact that a man has a minority of female genes, and that is something that does not disappear in him.

After the murder Macbeth and Lady Macbeth respond in two opposing ways. It seemed to Macbeth that he heard a voice proclaiming that, since he had murdered sleep, he would sleep no more: "Glamis hath murder'd sleep, and therefore Cawdor/Shall sleep no more, Macbeth shall sleep no more!" (2.2.40). Lady Macbeth urges him to come to himself and to wash the blood of his hands: "Go, get some water, /And wash this filthy witness from your hand" (2.2.45). Noticing the daggers in his hands, she asks him why has he brought them and tells him to take them back and smear the faces of the drugged grooms with blood. Lady Macbeth shows extreme courage and strength, the virtues associated with man, whereas Macbeth displays its opposite. Lady Macbeth shows remarkable presence of mind on all occasions where that quality is needed. When Macbeth returns trembling and terror-stricken from the murder, she maintains her balance of mind. She is not afraid to go back to plant the daggers by the drugged grooms and the dead Duncan: "The sleeping, and the dead, /Are but as pictures: 't is the eye of childhood, /That fears a painted devil" (2.2.53-54). After the deed the weakness and remorse of Macbeth are clearly seen in the lines:

Will all great Neptune's ocean wash this blood
Clean from my hand? No, this my hand will rather
The multitudinous seas incarnadine
Making the green one red (2.2.57-60)

Lady Macbeth displays good self-control she is ashamed of Macbeth's inherent feminine nature:

My hands are of your colour, but I shame
To wear a heart so white...
A little water clears us of this deed
How easy is it then! Your constancy
Hath left you unattended (2.2.62-68)

Through skepticism of Macbeth's manhood Lady Macbeth entices him to murder the King. Not only was she able to successfully assist in the murder, but she was able to hold in her emotion and feelings towards the situation unlike Macbeth. Macbeth is so profoundly dependent on Lady Macbeth, until she goes mad, she seems as much Macbeth's mother as his wife.

Macbeth's inherent weakness is revealed again in the Banquet scene. When Banquo's ghost comes and sits in his seat he becomes frightened and behaves strangely. Lady Macbeth rises up to the situation and requests the guests to ignore the momentary passion of her husband. She is still very clear and resourceful. She chides Macbeth by asking him "Are you a man?" (3.4.56). She tells him the ghost is only a "painting of your fear" (3.4.60). "In the presence of overwhelming horror and danger, in the murder scene and the Banquet scene her self-control is perfect... She helps him, but never asks his help. She leans on nothing but herself" (Bradley 368).

Nearing the end of the story, Lady Macbeth and Macbeth switch roles. Lady Macbeth becomes feminine and Macbeth becomes masculine. Lady Macbeth becomes weak and pitiful while Macbeth, carry out his plans to help him remain king which finally results in his total destruction. There is no doubt to say especially the first two acts of the play display a fierce war between gender concepts of manhood and womanhood which clearly exhibit Jung's concept of anima and animus.

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UNTOLD RESEASONS FOR GENDER DISCRIMINATION: A STUDY OF MAHESH DATTANI'S SELECTED PLAYS

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Abstract:

The entitled research article is based on the explanation of the untold issues behind the gender discrimination from the Indian perspective with the explicit references from the selected plays of Mahesh Dattani who is one of the most renowned contemporary Indian dramatists who has won the Sahitya Akademi award for his book of plays in 1998, entitled Final Solutions and Other Plays. His first full length play is Where There's a Will and Playpen is his theatre group, formed in 1984. The discrimination is found in the relation between man and woman and eunuch, and there are many reasons to establish this discrimination. And every play of Mahesh Dattani has pointed out some specific reasons that work for the formation of the discrimination and inequality between man, woman and eunuch. The selected plays of Mahesh Dattani, Dance Like a Man, Tara, Bravely Fought the Queen, and Seven Steps Around the Fire etc. represent the discrimination and inequality from different perspective angles in the Indian society. In the play Dance Like a Man, the discrimination is found through the cultural practice of dance in the Hindu patriarch society; in the play Tara, it is presented throughout the conducts of parents towards their children according to gender and sex. And in the play Bravely Fought the Queen Dattani shows the relation between commercialism and gender or the Marxist gender issue. Seven Steps Around the Fire has been known for the study of the Indian third gender.

Keywords: *patriarch, Oedipus complex, masculine, feminine etc.*

In the society, the term gender stands for the cultural practices. In a society, there are three types of genders according to the cultural practices. They are male, female and the third gender. Male and female are the first and second genders. These three genders are distinguished from each other according to their cultural practices. As the society is a structure of power, and every structural element of the society is connected with the other elements with the hidden thread of power. The society is divided into many sections with the inequality of power. And such inequality of power is found among these three sections of genders. Men are the first genders, hold all the power and enjoy the power system by exercising the power over others. Women belong to the second gender and the power is exercised over them by the men and they also exercise power over the third genders. Gay, eunuch, hijra, lesbian are known as the third gender; and they have nothing to exercise but the power is being exercised over them by the first and the second genders. The people of the third gender are doubly dominated at a time. Mahesh Dattani in his plays very explicitly delineates the domination of one gender by another gender, the exercise of power. The plays contain the multiple reasons which are responsible for the discrimination and inequality between genders.

There are many reasons behind the discrimination between the genders in the society. The first and foremost reason for the discrimination and domination of one gender by another gender is the patriarchal structure of the society. It is a concept for the structure of the society that suggests the male centered formation of the society. It means that the males are the masters. They hold all the power system, push other into a subservient position. Patriarchal norms in the society suggest all controlling powers in every field like domestic, politics, economic etc. should be centered around the world of men where the positions for

women and for the third genders are nothing. The patriarchal philosophy is found in the Indian society and families. Mahesh Dattani is an Indian dramatist and he very cleverly has used his skill to portray this patriarchal society and its dominating power over other genders. The power of man is the main reason behind the gender discrimination in every society, and India is not an exception, and in the plays of Mahesh Dattani for the gender discrimination or domination of genders, the patriarchal concept plays the leading role. Mahesh Dattani in his plays shows how the patriarchal concept works for creating the subservient position for the women and the third gender. Each play delineates a new side of the patriarchal domination. In the play *Bravely Fought the Queen*, Mahesh Dattani has used the background of Trivedi family. The Trivedi brothers, in the play *Bravely Fought the Queen* are typical middle class Indian capitalist patriarchal figures. They are more conscious to launch a new design nightwear for the 'Re Va Tee Company' but they have no a little conscious for their wives, Doli and Alka and for their feelings. In the family, the reputation for both Alka and Doli is nothing. They live like other in the family or are the subaltern creatures in the family. They are puppets at the hands of Jiten and Nitin. At the beginning of the play, Doli is preparing herself for the visit to Kapoors, but this visit is postponed because of the masked ball party in order to launch a new range of colour- coordinated nightwear and underwear for women in favor of the Re Va Tee company. And this information is send to Doli via Lalitha by her husband Jiten and brother in law Nitin. Besides this, the deformity of their daughter Daksha is the result of the domestic violence in that patriarchal family. At the time of pregnancy, Doli has been brutally beaten by Jiten and the result is the deformity of Daksha: "*Dolly. And you hit me! Jitu you beat me up! I was carrying Daksha and you beat me up!*"(Dattani 311)

Before the conjugal life, both Doli and Alka had to face the patriarchal domestic domination by their brother Praful who controlled all the activities of his sisters. He did not allow his sisters to make friendly relation with the neighbor boy: "*Alka... Praful saw. He didn't say a word to me. He just dragged me into the kitchen. He lit the stove and pushed my face in front of it! I thought he was going to burn my face!*"(Dattani 257)

In the play *Bravely Fought the Queen*, Mahesh Dattani shows the inequality between husbands and wives, and this inequality is found for the domestic rights, economical rights.

In the play *Dance Like a Man* Mahesh Dattani has created the conflict between father and son for the cultural practice of dance. In the Hindu culture dance is regarded as a feminine cultural practice and according to the Hindu myth the dance has been practiced by the temple dancers and it belongs to the lower class of people especially to the prostitutes. But lord Shiva is the idol figure and the god of dance in the Hindu myth. Amritlal Parekh is a liberalist and he is the supporter of the equality in the society. But in the case of his family the situation is different. Jairaj, his only son has the fantasy for the Indian classical dance and his practice of the classical dance is the blame to the reputation for the family of Amritlal Parekh. He supports the liberty of common people, but he denies the liberty of his son Jairaj because of his practice of this feminine art form 'dance'. He wishes to control the life style of his son Jairaj. He doesn't accept his son Jairaj as a dancer because it is disreputable for his family background. On the other hand Jairaj decides to be a dancer. Dance is a feminine art for Amritlal and he wants to make his son to be a man. He mocks Jairaj thus: "Well, most boys are interested in cricket; my son is interested in dance" (Dattani 415). The play *Dance Like a Man* also highlights that a woman may easily succeed in the world of men, but a man can't succeed in the world of women. The play shows the position of a man in the feminine culture.

The play *Tara* shows the parental treatment for their children on the basis of sex. Sex is the biological difference whereas the gender is the cultural differences between men and women. The inequality of the parental treatment for their children on the basis of sex is not a new incident in the Indian society, even such incident is found in the western society. The western parents provide all the facilities to their sons whereas their daughters are brought up under restrictions. In the early twentieth century, the British feminist Virginia Woolf has attacked this psychology of the parents. She has created the imaginary sister of William Shakespeare, Judith Shakespeare in her *The Room of One's Own*. Judith Shakespeare is

the representative of all the intelligent daughters whose talents and intellectual lives are spoiled by their own parents. The daughters in the families are not provided the sufficient atmosphere for their development. They are restricted. Such differences are clearly attacked by Virginia Woolf in *The Room of One's Own*. She says: "...Meanwhile his extraordinary gifted sister, let us suppose, remained at home. She was an adventurous, as imaginative, and as agog to see the world as he was. But she was not sent to school. She had no chance of learning grammar and logic, let alone of reading Horace and Virgil..." (Leitch 896).

Like William, Judith Shakespeare is so talented; but her talent is restricted or prevented by her parents. She has been educated only on fine arts, painting, needle, music whereas William has been provided all the facilities to develop his intellectual power. And as a result, the world has received only one Shakespeare not two, that is male. The same subject has also been highlighted by Judith Butler in her theoretical text *Gender Trouble* where the conducts of parents towards their daughters have been criticized. Mahesh Dattani, in the play *Tara has pointed out the same issue*. The Patel's family is standing for all the families where both son and daughter have received different treatments from their parents according to their sexes and genders. Both Patel and Bharati are the representatives of all the parents who prefer their sons to their daughters. And Tara is the Judith Shakespeare in the Patel's family. Both Tara and Chandan are Siamese twins with three legs and the extra leg medically belongs to Tara and the gender discrimination has been practiced here during the surgery. It is Bharati who does not want a deformed son and she decides to give this extra leg to Chandan. But the surgery is not a successful one: "...As planned by them, Chandan had two legs- for two days. It didn't take them very long time to realize what a grave mistake they had made. The leg was amputated" (Dattani 378).

There are many of reasons behind this injustice against Tara, done by her mother Bharati. Bharati thinks that Chandan as a man can be a perfect supporter in future for Bharati at the last phase of her life and Tara can't do so in future because she is the daughter of the family. Besides this in the patriarchal society, the value of a son is higher than a daughter and this value of son indirectly enforces Bharati to take a wrong decision for Tara. Tara is also haunted by her father Patel. She is the excellent and brilliant daughter of the family, but like Judith Shakespeare, her talent is restricted by her father Patel who doesn't offer higher education to Tara, whereas for Chandan, he has planned much, his education at abroad. Chandan is also asked for help to the office work by Patel but for Tara that is the beyond of the scope:

Patel: You will come with me to the office until your college starts.

Chandan: I don't want to go to college! (Fighting his tears.) Not without Tara!.....

Patel: You will not. I won't allow it (Dattani 351).

The patriarchal concept in the society and in the family is not only the reason for the subservient position for the second or third genders or inequality between genders or not only men dominate women. In the play *Bravely Fought the Queen Mahesh Dattani identifies the other issues besides the male power, which are responsible for the wretched condition for women. The prime example in that regard is Baa*. Through her, Mahesh Dattani presents how Baa becomes a masculine figure from feminine. During her married life Baa was a victim of the brutality of her drunken husband then she had all the feminine qualities. But after the death of her husband, there is found lot of changes. She is inherited the family property. She has not shown a little sympathy for her daughter-in-laws, Dolly and Alka. Baa is charged by Alka that it is she who prevents Nitin to have a physical relation with her and as a result that they have no a child: "Alka. You know why I can't have children. You won't let me. That's why!" (Dattani 284)

Perhaps Baa finds some pleasure by giving the mental torture to Doli and Alka and it gives her some solace for her past life. Beside this explanation, it is also noticed that Baa has an immoral fantasy with Nitin because Nitin possesses a different face from his father. As Baa has the economic power, she has lost the capability to understand the plights of her daughter-in-laws. She dominates every one of the family. Here Mahesh Dattani identifies that sex and money are responsible for the creation of discrimination between genders.

Jiten: She will have to change her will.

Nitin: She won't. She will never give it to you.

Jiten: But she will give it to you.

Nitin: No. She won't.

Jiten : I tell you she will.

Nitin: She has never forgiven me!

Jiten: Make her forgive you!

Nitin: How?

Jiten: Get rid of Alka!(Dattani 290)

The sex plays another significant role for the conflict among the characters of the play. And in every case of the sexual domination, it is Alka who has been victimized always. At first she has been betrayed by her own brother Praful who married off her with Nitin in order to hide his immoral relation with Nitin. Both Praful and Nitin have homosexual relation. Secondly Alka is dominated by her mother in law Baa who prevents Nitin to have a sexual relation with Alka. Thus being a female, Alka is dominated from every sexual ground. So here Mahesh Dattani presents sex is another reason to create the discrimination. The capitalism or power of money is also responsible for the subservient position for Alka and Doli. They have nothing about money they have to depend on their husbands.

In the dramas *Dance Like a Man*, *Tara*, *Bravely Fought the Queen*, Mahesh Dattani presents the discrimination between men and women, but the situation for gender in the play *Seven Steps Around the Fire* is totally different. Here he focuses on the Indian third gender and their plight in the Indian community rather than man-woman relation. Anarkali is a hijra and is imprisoned on the charge of the murder of the fellow hijra Kamla but who is actually victimized by the Indian patriarchal political society, represented by M.L.A Mr. Sharma. In the police station, Anarkali is put in the cell which is already full with male prisoners. This marks the lack of Indian administrative facilities for the hijras or eunuchs. The play shows the exact position of the Indian third genders in society, in the police systems in India: "*Uma- She is being beaten by all the male prisoners*".(Dattani 9)

Besides this, Munswamy is the representative of all the official persons who think the hijras are not human beings, they are animals in the society: Munswamy (hits the bars again). Back! Beat it! Kick the hijra!/*The other inmates begin to beat Anarkali up*" (Dattani 9).

If the hijra is regarded as the third gender then men are the first and the women are the second genders. Men, being the first, possess all the facilities and for women the facilities are limited, but for the hijra, these are totally blocked. And they are dominated in two ways at a time, the first by men and then by the woman. Mr. Sharma presents the first category and Uma Rao is for the second. Through the research work of Uma on the hijra, Mahesh Dattani discloses the mystery of the murder of Kamla. Uma is a teacher of sociology at Bangalore University and doing a research on the Indian third gender. She has come to know the injustice against the Kamla and Anarkali but she is not active to punish the culprits. She does only those things which are informative for her thesis: "Uma. I think this particular one is of interest to me at this time (Dattani 7).

Dattani very carefully has pointed out this speechless condition of the Indian third gender: "Anarkali. They will kill me also if I tell you the truth. If I don't tell the truth, I will die in jail (Dattani 14). Uma knows the actual incident of the murder, the system also knows the actual culprit behind the murder of Kamla, all hijras are also known with the truth; it is the power of inequality and lack of power for the Indian third genders that all are silent.

Uma (voice-over): They knew. Anarkali, Champa and all the hijra people knew who was behind the killing of Kamla. They have no voice. The case was hushed up and was not even reported in the newspapers. Champa was right. The police made no arrest.(Dattani 42)

The gender discrimination has presented also in the radio play *Uma and The Fairy Queen* by Mahesh Dattani with the background of Islam. It is a detective play on the murder of Michael. But it also focuses on the women and their sexual rights in the Muslim world. Before the relation with Michael, Nila was a

famous Pakistani T. V actress and every household in Pakistan knew her as Ruksana, the ideal housewife. But Nila has been charged that she had immoral sexual relation during her glamorous career and there was restriction, like fatwa by the authority of the Muslim society. On the other hand her first husband Malik is capable to have two wives, Nila and Sohaila at a time. This marks the sexual freedom for the men and the restriction for women on the basis of gender in that society according to religion. Feroz is the son of Nila and Malik. Both of his parents have multiple sex relations in their lives. But the life of Feroz becomes critical for his mother's immoral relations, not for his father Malik. And it is that society that forces Feroz to intend to murder his mother: "Feroz... She was an immoral woman and that is something we do not forgive! She slept with her actor friends! For money, for pleasure, or just to please the Devil. And I was born out of her cesspool of lust" (Dattani 465).

These are all the situations by which Mahesh Dattani presents the gender discrimination. But at the same time, he tries to create some situations where the discrimination marks its impact very little. Mahesh Dattani introduces some good couples who lead very successful marital lives. He has used same names of his characters in many plays but there are some little differences behind the backgrounds, for example Uma and Suresh in both of Dattani's plays *Seven Steps Around the Fire* and *Uma and The Fairy Queen*. In both cases, they prove themselves good companions for each other. In *Seven Steps Around the Fire*, Suresh has applauded the importance of the dream of his wife Uma and after the marriage, Suresh allows his wife to continue her study and the research work on the Indian third gender. Besides this, in the play *Uma and The Fairy Queen*, Uma has been introduced as a detective and her journey to disclose the mystery of the murder of Michael is appreciated by her husband Suresh. And it is she who solves the case of the murder rather than her husband Suresh. Lalitha and Sridhar is another good couple by Mahesh Dattani in the play *Bravely Fought the Queen*. Lalitha is not helping her husband in the domestic field but also in his office work. She has gone to the Trivedi family as the representative of her husband to Dolly and Alka for the preparation of the mask ball for the 'Re Va Tee company' that is going to launch a new range of colour- coordinated nightwear and underwear for women, as Dolly has some experience of the mask ball arrangement. Besides that part of Lalitha, Sridhar knows how to maintain the dignity of his wife. He involves in fighting with the Trivedi brothers while Lalitha is insulted. He quarrels with Jiten when he insults her: "Sridhar. Be more polite! It's my wife you are talking to! / Jiten. Screw your wife" (Dattani 306).

Sridhar later leaves the job for the dignity of his wife. Mahesh Dattani has created some situations where for women have no value, for examples in the cases of Baa and her dead husband, Dolly and Jiten, Alka and Nitin; but in the cases of Lalitha and Sridhar, Uma and Suresh, but at the same time Dattani has created a different position of man-woman relation where man and woman are equal.

Mahesh Dattani is the greatest Indian playwright. His dramatic works are closely related with the present issues of India or the present India is the theme of his writings. It has already explained that his dramas reflect the conflict of gender. Mahesh Dattani has shown that the women in India and their plight in India are not satisfactory. They are humiliated, pushed into the subservient positions in life. At the same time he also suggests to increase the position of women in the Indian society. In short, his plays talk about lot of themes about life and its multiple relations in society. But the discrimination and inequality for men, women and the third gender in the society are the basic angles of his works. He explains the untold reasons behind the gender discrimination and inequality through his playwritings. Mahesh Dattani remarks about his plays 'I (Mahesh Dattani) write for my plays to be performed and appreciated by as wide as section of the society that my plays speak to and are about' (Dattani, Preface).

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**MAHESH DATTANI'S *FINAL SOLUTIONS*: A COUNTER DISCOURSE
 TO THE ISSUE OF COMMUNALISM**

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Abstract:

Throughout the play Dattani objectively shows that fundamentalism has no special colour or religion and it is same everywhere. Whether be it Hindu mob or Muslim they act in same gesture in their frenzy. Through the use of horse-shoe shaped ramp, common mob of Hindu or Muslim, their masks, black dresses cross-fading of light and so many other theatrical devices Dattani has hinted at the universality of fundamentalism throughout the play. And the playwright thinks that only the common sense, spirit of toleration, understanding and the spirit of accommodating the “other” can pave the way towards “final solutions” of such recurrent problem of communalism in India in particular and the world in general.

Key words: *Postcolonial, communalism, secularism, gender discrimination, fundamentalism.*

In his magnum opus *FinalSolutions* (1994), which won the Sahitya Akademi Award in 1998, Mahesh Dattani probes deep into the complicated issue of communalism and fundamentalism in a multicultural, multilingual, multi-religious, multiracial country like India in particular and the world in general. In the backdrop of the Indian scenario Dattani here wants to highlight the fundamental problem of Fundamentalism, which does not change in the course of time or place and remains same in its ugly appearance whether be it the anti-Semitism and holocaust in Germany or the Hindu-Muslim clash in India. Mahesh Dattani wrote :

...my plays are a true reflection of my time, place and socio-economic background...in a country that has a myriad challenges to face politically, socially, artistically and culturally.
 (Dattani, 2000: xiv)

Asha Kuthari Chaudhuri thinks that at the backdrop of *FinalSolutions* the national agitation in the post-Babri Masjid demolition period is captured. Asha Kuthari Chaudhuri has written about *FinalSolutions* :

In confronting and negotiating responses to the post- Babri Masjid demolition and the post-Godhra Hindu-Muslim communal violence in Gujrat, through varied discursive frames of history and theatre, Dattani subsequently explores issues of identity, memory, suffering and loss, and the resulting “other”- bashing, either/or terms of reference within the larger political context through the various productions of this play. (78)

And Mahesh Dattani ultimately succeeds to show that this national problem of communalism is part of the International problem of Fundamentalism and Racism. Alyque Padamsee compares this Hindu-Muslim clash in *FinalSolutions* : to the anti-Jewish attitude in Germany after World War I. Alyque Padamsee comments about *FinalSolutions*:

As I see it, this is a play about transferred resentments. About looking for a scapegoat to hit out at when we feel let down, humiliated... Who was responsible for the humiliating state in Germany after World War I? Blame it on the Jews. They had siphoned off all the money! Who is responsible for us becoming a third-rate nation ? Get rid of the minorities and Ram Rajya will return! ...Can we shake off our prejudices or are they in our psyche like our genes? Will we ever be free or ever-locked in combat... Arabs against Jews, whites against blacks, Hindus against Muslims? Are they any final solutions? (Dattani, 2000:161)

And Dattani here like a typical humanist searches for an end, a solution to this continuing problem of accommodating the “other” by focusing on the dialectics of a few people on the microcosmic level of the family, which stands for the macrocosmic form of the community, nation as well as humanity at large.

By focusing on the incidents and conversation within the house of Ramnik Gandhi with the sudden arrival of the two Muslim “outsiders” Javed and Bobby, Dattani brings the problem of Communalism and Fundamentalism in the individual as well as the national level to the limelight. Here Dattani almost historicizes the issue of Communalism by the flashback of Hardika or the memory of young Daksha about the pre-independence history of India. So many times in this play Daksha refers to partition and the hardships, that the Hindu refugees had to face. She recalls the bitter experience of her leaving of Hussainabad with her family due to partition. Then they were beaten up on the streets and her father was killed. And now Hardika accuses Bobby and Javed as the representative of the Muslim community for the death of her father fifty years ago. Hardika's personal loss during the communal riot of Partition led her to bear hatred and prejudice against the Muslim community. Dattani here does not confine himself to the politics of the subcontinent. Dattani takes up the topic from international stance. Partition generates the problem of accommodation and later on it takes the problematic form of accommodating “other” in the psyche of a community. The problem of communalism, rising out of the religious difference in India, takes another form of the problem of Racism in U.K. and U.S.A. . Dattani highlights that this problem of Fundamentalism is universal. Hence Ramnik Gandhi, as the symbolic voice of the secular as well as sensible common man, objects to the wrong charge of Hardika against the Muslims. He suspects the personal version of History of Hardika as she intentionally highlights certain parts of it and suppresses some portion of it. Ramnik rejects her personal version of the History of Partition as biased. But Aruna tells him that yet this partial version of History by Hardika is true and it cannot be rejected as it is a segment of the holistic History of a Nation.

Dattani emphasizes on the role of rumor in spreading riot and communal hatred in this play. When Tasneem, being panic stricken, says that during the Communal riot, the Muslim girls' hostel was bombed, Ramnik tells her to keep patience and apply common sense against such rumor. Ramnik says if Tasneem's hostel was bombed everyone would be hurt. It was probably some hooligan, teasing the girls by making any sounds like bomb and the girls got scared. Now Ramnik shows that from such rumours riots start and communal violence is spread. Such rumour can damage the unity of the semi-educated, semi-social and semi-feudal India.

Again in this play Dattani shows that religion plays an important role in spreading Communalism in India. Through the character of Javed, Dattani shows how religious fanaticism can make a man blind, who unconsciously goes on to create riot out of his religious zeal. Dattani shows here how one's extreme religious enthusiasm can lead one to attack the believers in other religion. Again through the character of Aruna it is revealed that sometimes even pious and religious- minded people, who are not fanatics, can ultimately hurt the feelings of the people of other religion. Aruna too very often says that she does not hate others' religion, but she wants to keep her God pure. Though Aruna is innocent in her way, her many gestures, actions and words too often unintentionally hurt Bobby and Javed, making them always feel as “other” as well as minorities. When in the first act Javed and Bobby asks for water, the behavior of Aruna is symbolic:

Ramnik: I think we should at least try and be civilized.

Aruna: Yes, of course.

Ramnik: So bring them a glass of water.

Aruna stares at him as if he has asked her to go and kill someone.

Bobby: It's okay, we are not thirsty. . .

Javed (sarcastically); I am not thirsty.

Aruna goes to the matka and quickly pours out water into two glasses and places them very

delicately in front of the two men. They both quickly gulp down the water. Obviously they were thirsty. Aruna is aghast. She was sure they wouldn't drink. ...Aruna holds the glasses with her thumbs and index fingers, on the sides which have not been touched by their lips. She takes them away and keeps them separate from the other glasses. (184-85)

This gesture of Aruna makes Javed and Bobby feel ashamed as the “other”.

Dattani shows that religion which is misinterpreted and used as a basis of Fundamentalism, can be used as a weapon against Fundamentalism through their proper interpretation. Every religion speaks for unity and harmony. If religious fanatics like Javed can be taught the words of unity through the proper interpretation of scriptures, then only they can hit at the false base of fundamentalism. At one point Javed says that Bobby tried to dissuade him from being swayed over by the hypnotic voice of the Fundamentalists but Javed could not believe Bobby as Bobby had no faith in religion. Javed could be taught only through the proper interpretation of religion by a religious-minded person.

Again through the example of Javed, Dattani shows that religious violence and communal hatred are calculatedly organized by the political parties. In order to fulfill their personal interest political parties try to keep alive the spirit of dissent among the members of different religious sects by hiring men to make riots. Javed acted as such hired-riot-maker, who spreads communal discord intentionally. Javed was an innocent, sensitive man in his heart of hearts. But being swayed over by the hypnotic words of fundamentalists and being hired as a riot-maker by the political parties, Javed unconsciously went on to throw the first stone on the chariot during the “rathyatra” to create the riot and stab the Hindu priest. But before stabbing the priest the consciousness of his innocent, sensitive mind comes back. So he drops the knife and controls himself from committing such inhuman crime. It clearly shows that such young people like Javed are not really corrupt at heart, but they are initiated to such communal violence by different master-minds.

In this play Dattani also wants to show that our communal hatred is often an outcome of what Alyque Padamsee calls “transferred resentments”. Dattani here latently shows that we very often like to transfer our resentment on “others”. Whenever we are unhappy, we like to blame some “scapegoat” figure and transfer our resentment on him. When young Daksha was beaten up by her husband and his family, she transferred her anger on Zarine and her Muslim community as she could not stand up against her own in-laws. Again Javed's anger against the fanatic Hindu who thought that his letter was contaminated by the touch of a Muslim boy like Javed was transferred on the symbolic sound of the Hindu prayer bell in particular, and the Hindu community in general.

Dattani also shows that sometimes people try to fish in the troubled water of communal riot. During the commotion of communal riots some persons try to fulfill their personal interest. As the father of Ramnik Gandhi needed a shop, he burnt out the shop of Zarine's father in the name of communal hatred and then they easily bought the burnt shop at the half of its original value. The burden of this dark truth creates a permanent scar in the mind of Ramnik Gandhi and Hardika.

Finally, by making Bobby to play the “final deed” of liberation through his tender handling and caressing the Hindu God, Dattani almost shatters and subverts all the stifling structures of his given social identity. Placing the idol of the Hindu God in his palm Bobby says about the “final solution” to this problem of communal discord:

See! See! I am touching God... Your God! My flesh is holding him! Look, Javed! And He does not mind! ...He does not burn me to ashes! He does not cry out from the heavens saying He has been contaminated! ...Look how he rests on my hands! He knows I cannot harm Him...I don't believe in Him but He believes in me...because it belongs to human being who believes, and tolerates, and respects what other human beings believe. That is the strongest fragrance in the world. . . And if you are willing to forget, I am willing to tolerate.(224-25)

Thus, Bobby, as the mouthpiece of the playwright, hints that only the spirit of tolerance, co-operation and accommodating the “other” is the “final solution” to this problem of communal discord. Throughout the play Dattani objectively shows that fundamentalism has no special colour or religion and it is same everywhere. Whether be it Hindu mob or Muslim they act in same gesture in their frenzy. Through the use of horse-shoe shaped ramp, common mob of Hindu or Muslim, their masks, black dresses cross-fading of light and so many other theatrical devices Dattani has hinted at the universality of fundamentalism throughout the play. And the playwright thinks that only the common sense, spirit of toleration, understanding and the spirit of accommodating the “other” can pave the way towards “final solutions” of such recurrent problem of communalism in India in particular and the world in general. For such objective assessment of such sensitive issue in this play, Dattani's work was acclaimed in Sahitya Akademy Award citation (1998) for probing deep into “tangled attitudes in contemporary India towards communal differences, consumerism and gender...”

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16

**MAHESH DATTANI'S *ON A MUGGY NIGHT IN MUMBAI*:
A CRITIQUE OF (HETERO)SEXISM**

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Abstract:

The present paper tries to explore the plights of homosexuals and females in the garb of heterosexism and sexism respectively from the perspective of present scenario of queer world in reference to Dattani's well-known play 'On a Muggy Night in Mumbai'. The paper makes a parallelism of study taking into consideration the characters of the play with real life characters. The paper also tries to make a theoretical discussion over the problem of division as regards sex and gender on the social surface in reference to Butler's queer theory. Dattani has not left any stone unturned to deal with the problems and issues of queer people. There are hardly any action in the play, instead it starts and develops in a flat which is also self-identical with the identical world of queers. The play is discussion like and it covers a varied number of homosexuals who are involved into many glaring issues and sub-issues related to their life. In order to bring light to the marginal life of non-normative sexualities including women as a subaltern identity in hetero-normative system of patriarchy, the paper also tries to bring into surface almost every issue, from subtle to major related to queer identities generally overlooked in the present hetero-normative social set up.)

The term 'Sexism' and 'Heterosexism' come in contrast not by kind but by degree as both of them appear as suppressive as well as repressive power as regards gender and sexuality. As a term 'Sexism' defines prejudices and discrimination based on one's sex and gender and women are the most victim of it. On the other hand, heterosexism stands for a system, bias and discrimination that establish the superiority of opposite sex sexuality over same sex sexuality and for this, homosexuals are made victimization of it. In post-colonial theory, both sexism and heterosexism play the hegemonial role of power and 'self' over subaltern sexual identities defined by 'other'. The problems and issues confronted by the present world given rise by the politics of sexism and heterosexism are becoming major issues in post-colonial literature. Patriarchy is in the root of both sexism and heterosexism. Just as females are discouraged, violated and exploited by the ambiguous norms and practices of sexism, likewise heterosexism, though refers to the sexual attraction to opposite sex with the co-participation of both male and female, is in reality, regulated by the will of patriarchy. As a matter of fact, patriarchy is the all dominating force behind both sexism and heterosexism. Sustaining sexism and heterosexism, patriarchy glorifies the institution of marriage and motherhood and clings to them. Heterosexism calls itself normative and defines other sexual identities as non-normative and as a result of this, division of sexualities arises. Outside heterosexuality, there are a wide range of sexual practices in the form of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender which are also another part of sexual instincts commonly seen among human beings have become unidentified and invisible due to the division of sexualities. In order to bring about erotic justice to sexual subalterns from the hegemony of heterosexism, queer theory arose. Contrary to conventional idea of sexual binary that defines two kinds of sexual identities- hetero-normative sexualities and homo-non-normative sexualities and asserts importance of one more than the other, queer theory that emerges in the 1990s, neither gives the privilege to one sexuality against the other nor considers the traditional idea of sexual binary as fixed and absolute, instead it claims that heterosexual and homosexual are not the only ways to think about sexual identity besides of which there are many other non-normative sexual identities which also need attention. Queer theory covers whole range of humanities, be it hetero-normative sexualities or homo-non-normative

sexualities and claims the sexual freedom of both. As regards sexism, the queer theory seeks the gender equality between male and female instead of judging superiority of male over female keeping the former inside the Derridean circle and the later outside of it as per gender binary. Drawing all non-normative sexualities (lesbian, gay and bisexual) and non-primal genders (female and transgender) on the same plane of equality which hetero-normative sexuality and primal masculine gender already have attained, Butler, the father of queer theory in her seminal book *Gender Trouble* gives the idea of gender and sexuality a new turn. Following the footsteps of Butler, many queer theorists at the end of last century and in the beginning of present century appear who are trying to win the case for non-normative sexualities and non-primal genders. Their reaction against the essentialists that sexual gender and identities are, “natural, fixed and innate,” (Jagose 8) and their assumption of the idea that identity is rather “fluid, the effect of social conditioning and available cultural models of understanding oneself” (Jagose 8) gives a new dimension to the idea of gender and sexuality. Opposite to Marxian ideal society which would be the outcome of ultimate overthrow of classless society, queer theorists believe that a true ideal world would be created only after the end of gender and sexual divisions as defined by sexism and heterosexism respectively.

Queer theory which is the result of western philosophy has exerted a tremendous influence upon the Indian writers and critics. Ratna Kapur finds queer as one of the subgroups of sexual subalterns. She has applied queer insights in postcolonial perspective. To her, the term queer is identitarian despite its largely anti-identitarian practices and claims. Her “sexual subalterns” include varied non-heteronormative sexualities and identities:

[G]ay, lesbian, bi-sexual, transgendered, khush, queer, hijra, kothis, panthis and many more. They have also included sexual practices and behaviours such as adult and consensual pre-marital, extra-marital, non-marital, auto-erotic/ masturbatory, promiscuous, and paid-for sex, as well as MSM (men who have sex with men). It is this diversity of identities and range of practices that cannot be captured within the acronym 'LGBT,' and why there is a need to articulate the politics of sexual subgroups from within a postcolonial context rather than to borrow theories or politics from elsewhere, a move that is both decontextualized and dehistoricised. (Kapur 385).

Envisaging a world, free from any oppressive idea of normalcy that divides humanity into normative and non-normative sexualities and again, masculine and feminine genders based on the matrix of heterosexism and sexism respectively Nivedita Menon raises her voice of protest against present system of gender and sexuality:

[O]nce we give up on the idea that only heterosexuality is normal and that all human bodies are clearly either male or female, more and more kinds of bodies and desires will come into view. Perhaps also, one body may, in one lifetime, move through many identities and desires. The use of 'queer' then, is a deliberate political move, which underscores the fluidity (potential and actual) of sexual identity and sexual desire. The term suggests that all kinds of sexual desire and identifications are possible, and all these have socio-cultural and historical co-ordinates. (Menon 98).

Mahesh Dattani in the play *On a Muggy Night in Mumbai* makes a socio-psychological study of his queer gay and lesbian characters from the perspectives of heterosexism along with a single non-queer straight female character Kiran who becomes the victim of sexism. The play is set in a flat inhabited by some friends Prakash, Kamlesh, Sharad, Bunny, Dipali and others who later appear as queer identities. In same building, a marriage ceremony is going on. The flat crowded with attending people in wedding, symbolic of hetero-normative world divides the flat of these queer identities standing for homo-non-normative world. The play presents a contrast between onstage discussions of these homosexuals and offstage noise and music of hetero-normative people attending the wedding party. The sound and music of wedding indicates the intrusion of the outer world into the personal lives of the characters. The poor

description of the flat assembled by these queers is also identical with their personal plights and anguishes, as observed by A.K. Chaudhuri: "The spaces within the home are 'muggy' too hot to be comfortable, the air-conditioning breaking down, even as the interior spaces of the psyche have to be confronted. Meanwhile the exteriors keep exerting pressure, intruding into the 'other' spaces occupied by the characters in the play perpetually reminding them of their isolation." (Chaudhuri 43) The initial description of the flat gathered by queer gays which stands for the opposite to non-queer people in another flat of same building shows how queers are invisible and unidentified as social beings co-existing with non-queers in the same society. Drawing this initial description of this division of two flats in same building representing two worlds of queers and non-queers, Dattani intends to present the thematic design of the play. Jaspal Singh rightly says, "Dattani, within the framework of dramatic structure tries to investigate the identity crisis of the gays who occupy no honourable space in social order." (Singh 1)

The play is a fine commentary over the problems and issues of gay characters. Prakash and Kamlesh fell in love to each other but their relationship couldn't last long on the face of societal hetero-normative pressure, and they were forced to get separated. The pang of separation was so high that Kamlesh sought relationship with Sharad in order to forget Prakash but he could not obliterate his past memories with Prakash and as a result of this he could not make a new relationship possible with Sharad. Kamlesh came in great shock and surprise when he learnt that Prakash had changed his name from Prakash to Ed and wished to marry his divorcee sister Kiran. Finding himself at the critical juncture, Kamlesh invited all his homosexual friends in order to find a solution for his problem. It is from the discussion of these gay people in the meeting that takes place in Kamlesh's flat that Dattani helps us probe into the mental conflicts of these queer people.

Prakash and Kamlesh were very happy couple together but their relationship suffered on the face of societal pressure. An unreal and strange thought suddenly crept into the mind of Prakash or Ed that he was wrong in keeping up a homosexual relationship. He blamed himself a sinner according to religious values. As Kamlesh says, "he (Prakash) goes to church every week now. They put him on to a psychiatrist. He believes his love for me was the work of the devil. Now the devil has left him." (Dattani 85) Being ignorant of reality that homosexuality is rooted to biological and psychological factors, Prakash wrongly alleged the devil to be responsible for his perversion of being a homosexual. However, Kamlesh is different in nature and temperament from Prakash. Unlike Prakash, Kamlesh does not feel ashamed of being a homosexual and is very honest about his relationship. His involvement with Prakash was so high that he could never forget him. He could not adjust with Sharad and felt guilty of his present relationship to which he was never honest. He had sought only escape from the pangs of his past relationship in coming in touch with Sharad. As Kamlesh himself confesses, "I did a cruel thing... Sharad. I hope you will find it in you to forgive me... I did a cruel thing by loving Sharad to forget Prakash. I have not succeeded. And I have hurt someone as wonderful as Sharad. I made Sharad go through the same pain and suffering that I was trying to get over." (Dattani 68)

The deep and intensive love of the homosexuals is highlighted by Dattani through the relationship of Kamlesh and Prakash. They share a deep and strong bond of relationship like that of the heterosexuals. That their relationship is not only limited to satisfying carnal pleasures becomes evident through the failure of Kamlesh-Sharad relationship. In our society, the homosexuals are not able to maintain their relationships for long in the face of societal pressure. Most of them have to pass through the pangs of separation. But their cries of affliction remain unheard by the hetero-normative public. They remain as an invisible and unidentified community in the society. As Kamlesh says, "We have all been through the pain of separation... As gay men and women, we have all been through that, I suppose... some of us several times." (Dattani 68)

In the play Bunny Singh and Ed lead a double life. Their appearance is one thing and the reality is different. Both appearance and reality never come to be matched in their life. Both of them try to throw dust into the eyes of others by their hetero sexual appearance. Through their pretending role of heterosexuality,

they secretly wish to continue their homosexuality. In order to gain acceptance and proper identity in hetero-normative society, they are forced to hide their homo-sexual identity on the social surface. Ed plans to kill two birds with one stone. With his idea of marriage with Kamlesh's sister he will be able to continue his relationship with Kamlesh and no one will suspect him. As Ed says to Kamlesh, "Nobody would know. Nobody would care... I'll take care of Kiran. And you take care of me." (Dattani 105) Bunny Singh, a TV actor who has gained immense popularity by acting in a hetero-normative T.V. serial 'Yeh Hai Hamara Parivaar' is apparently a family man is the traveller of same road on which Ed intends to travel in future. Bunny Singh secretly keeps on his gay relationship under the mask of ideal husband and father but he is always haunted with the fear that if his reality is exposed, he will be turned down from professional, familial and social circles at a time. His fearful mental set up gets revelation in his speech to Sharad: "Do you think I will be accepted by the millions if I screamed from the rooftops that I am gay?" (Dattani 70) Bunny Singh and Ed are the representatives of millions of homosexual identities whose self has divided into two halves- heterosexual in the social life and homosexual in the real life and the irony is that they prove failure and imperfect in both these life due to their half existential identity. The vast gap between reality and appearance hardly seems to be filled up in the present social set up. Bunny Singh frankly admits the pang of split identity:

BUNNY: I know. Just as the man whom my wife loves does not exist, I have denied a lot of things. The only people who know me- the real me- are present here in this room, And you all hate me for being such a hypocrite. The people who know me are the people who hate me. That is not such a nice feeling. I have tried to survive. In both worlds. And it seems I do not exist in either. ... Everyone believes me to be the model middle-class Indian man. I was chosen for the part in the serial because I fit into common perceptions of what a family man ought to look like. I believed in it myself. I lied - to myself first. And I continue to lie to millions of people every week on Thursday nights. There's no such person... (Dattani 102-103)

Besides showing queer characters forced to live false life in order to get some social identity and recognition in hetero-normative society, Dattani also presents homosexuals of different outlook. Ranjit, instead of maintaining a double standard of life, remains static in his conviction and commitment. He is a true rebel to hetero-normative society which he thinks better to leave up in order to seek an ideal place where both hetero-normative and homo-normative sexualities co-exist together with equal freedom in life. This is evident in his speech to Sharad:

RANJIT: Call me what you will. My English lover and I have been together for twelve years now. You lot will never be able to find a lover in this wretched country!(Dattani 71)

Ranjit's words are reflections of his aversion towards the social set up of India. It is a tactic verbal rebellion against the wretched customs of the country. In India homosexuality is considered a taboo. So, gay people and the lesbians have to suppress their true selves in order to survive in the society.

Another aspect that the playwright brings to light is that our society unjustly concentrates more on the homosexuality of unmarried men and women and married men and women are often overlooked if they continue their homo-sexual relationship in the garb of matrimonial relationship. That is why the homo sexual relationships of Prakash, Ranjit and others do not get sustenance for long. But the grave fact is that married men and women also engage in homosexuality in large numbers. But most of the time it remains unnoticed. In the play Bunny Singh is such a character who is able to befool the hetero-normative people skillfully keeping them under illusion that he is heterosexual under the cover of hetero-normative system of marriage.

True to the spirit of Kamlesh and Ranjit, Sharad is antithetical to Ed and Bunny. He is vocal of his gay identity. His protest against camouflaging identity is evident in his ironic statement to Kiran:

SHARAD: We-ell let me see how I can put it. You see, being a heterosexual man- a real man, as Ed

put it- I get everything. I get to be accepted-accepted by whom? Well, that marriage lot down there for instance. I can have a wife, I can have children who will all adore me simply because I am a hetero - I beg your pardon- a real man. Now why would I want to give it all up? So what if I have to change a little? If I can be a real man, I can be king. (Dattani 101)

Like him Deepali, the only lesbian in the play is also odd enough to accept her true self. She is faithful and seems content with her lesbian relationship with Tina. When she says, "Tina and I can tell all of you to go jump!" (Dattani 71)

Marriage that validates the relationship of heterosexual male and female is beyond the concept of homosexual world. Kiran is presented as having sympathy for the gay people as her brother Kamlesh is homosexual. She is in the opinion of marriage between two homosexuals: "I really wish they would allow gay people to marry," (Dattani 98) to which Ranjit replies with full of cynicism, "Oh, they do. Only not to the same sex." (Dattani 98) The conversation between Kamlesh and Deepali also shows how homosexuals suffer from identity crisis due to non-validation of marriage in their life:

Deepali: If you were a woman, we would be in love.

Kamlesh: If you were a man, we would be in love.

Deepali: If you were heterosexual we would be married.(Dattani 65)

Another crucial observation in the play is the victimization of the women by the power of sexism, a term applied for gender discrimination. As per sexism, masculine gender enjoys superiority over feminine gender and in most cases the later becomes the victim of exploitation, subjugation and even negation of identity in public sphere. The oppression received by Bunny and Ed at the hands of the society is translated into victimization of their wives by them. They don't pay a heed to the emotional harm they are involved to as regards women. Ed fixes his mind to marry Kiran, Kamlesh's sister but when Ed's real identity comes to light, he rather takes the discovery normally in the garb of sexism showing no sympathy over Kiran's present state of mind on which Kiran's reply gives rise to question over the validity of sexism on the societal surface:

ED: Sweetheart, that is such a Pardon me, but you are behaving like a typical woman again.

KIRAN: Isn't that what you want?

ED: No! Now let's get out of here!

KIRAN: That's why you want to marry me. And that's what I tried to be all the time. Look what it gave me. . . . Do you know? When my husband beat me up, I truly believed and felt that he loved me. I felt he loved me enough to want to hurt me. Kamlesh helped me get out of that. But I continued being the same. . . woman. I wanted to feel loved by a man. In whichever way he wanted to love me. And I met you. And you did show love. And you continue being the same Man Typical, you said. You are right. If there any stereotypes around here, they are you and me. Because we don't know any better, do we? We just don't know what else to be!"(Dattani 107)

Dipali, the only lesbian in the play also challenges sexism. Dipali's conversation with Ranjit brings into light that she is in against of sexism.

DEEPALI: You are a real dickhead.

RANJIT: Are you jealous?

DEEPALI: Why should I be jealous of you?

RANJIT: Because I have a dick. Would you want one? Of course you would.

DEEPALI (*with great dignity*): I thank God. Every time I menstruate, I thank God I am a woman. (Dattani 66)

Sharad-Dipali conversation presents another scene of Dipali's protest against sexism:

SHARAD: If I had a lover, would I be such a bitch?

DIPALI: Don't- don't use that word. (Clenches her fist at him.) You can call yourself a dog, call yourself a pig, but never insult a female. (Dattani 59)

Dattani in the play very subtly brings into focus that the gender war not only exists among hetero-normative sexualities but it is also intact among homo-non-normative sexualities. Through the words of Kiran and Dipali, Dattani wages war against sexism that unjustly creates a line of separation between male and female giving the former more privilege than the other on the basis of gender discrimination. Dattani's *On a Muggy Night in Mumbai* makes a psycho-critical study over diversified images of homosexuals. In the words of John Mac Rae in the introduction to the play:

Of the characters, Sharad and Deepali are comfortable with their sexuality, and have different ways of being gay. Sharad is camp, flaunting; Deepali more restrained, perhaps more stable. Kamlesh is anguished, and Ed the most obvious victim of his own insecurities. Bunny, the T.V. actor, is a rather more traditional Indian gay man - married (he would say happily) while publicly denying his own nature, and Ranjit has taken an easy way out by moving to Europe where he can 'be himself' more openly. (McRae 46)

Drawing nearly all types of diversified images of homosexual identities, Dattani perhaps has tried to hold all queer identities in order to discuss the pain and suffering of homosexuals on a vast scale. Nearly all characters in the play are victims of heterosexism and sexism in some or other form. Homosexual male characters are victim of heterosexism, whereas lesbian female character Dipali and only heterosexual character Kiran are the victims of both heterosexism and sexism. On a certain occasion in the play Bunny remarks on the categorization of gender and sex and his remark truly serves the purpose of the play as well as the playwright:

All I am saying is that we would all forget about categorizing people as gay or straight or bi or whatever, and let them do what they want to do! (Dattani 88)

Criticizing over present social set up where queer identities along with females are subject to fragmentation of identity due to hegemony of heterosexism and sexism, John McRae's opinion truly stands on the ground of reality that present society, "not only condones but encourages hypocrisy, which demands deceit and negation, rather than allowing self-expression, responsibility and dignity." (McRae 46)

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AN ECOCRITICAL APPROACH ON THE SELECTED PLAYS OF WOLE SOYINKA

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Abstract:

Ecocriticism, having emerged over a few decades, stated as “the study of relationship between literature and physical environmental. William Rueckert (born 1865), an Ecocritic, has coined this term Ecocriticism in 1978 in his essay Literature and Ecology: An application of ecology and ecological concepts to the study of literature. Ecocriticism takes an earth-centred approach to the study of literature. Yoruban society has the importance of ecology in their everyday life. Presence of non-human environment in literature is an important aspect of ecocritical theory which is evident from the life of Yoruba also. Soyinka portrays the close relationship between Yoruba people and their environment. This paper would be a study of ecoconsciousness of Soyinka based on the fact that Nature plays a vital role in Yoruban cosmology. Two plays are taken for illustrations: The Swamp Dwellers and A Dance of the Forests.

Key Words: Eco-criticism, Yoruban cosmology.

Wole Soyinka is one of the famous Nigerian playwrights. His first play *Invention* proves that he is a political activist. His second play *The Swamp Dwellers* (1958) shows the predicaments of some folks who have been oppressed by the federal thoughts and despotism. His plays, *A Dance of Forests* (1960) and *The Strong Breed* (1964) picture the culture and rituals of Yoruba. The play *A Dance of Forests* has dedicated to celebrate the independence of Nigeria in 1960. It represents the essence of African past and warns the people for better future. He satirizes the evils of European culture and its influence in Nigerian culture. Soyinka, having exposed his efficacy in writing, has been awarded noble prize for literature in the year 1986.

The Swamp Dwellers (1958) examines the sufferings of Yoruba people caused of the federal system. The play depicts the hardships of the people who live in swamp land and the unfavourable nature which destroys the land. A swamp is a wetland that is covered by woody plants, near rivers or streams. Hence, the villagers are the Swamp dwellers who are mentioned in the title. Soyinka states the setting as “*A village in the swamps. Frogs, rain and other swamp noises*” (Soyinka 81).

Ecocriticism analyses and promotes the work of art which raise moral question about human interactions with nature, while also motivating audiences to live within a limit that will be binding over generation. Reuckert, an Ecocritic, says in *Ecology*, man's tragic flaw is his anthropocentric, of the being at the centre surrounded by environment, vision and his compulsion to conquer, humanizes, domesticate, violate and exploit every natural thing. The disgusting fact may be man's denial of being bio centric that ruins the man-nature relationship. As man leads an anthropocentric life, he extinguishes himself from nature.

Ecologists have believed that environmental degradation and human suffering may result from human disconnection with nature. Soyinka's “*The Swamp Dwellers*” pictures the land “the Swamp” where People of old generation love the ecological setting of the land and refuse to go out of the village. But the younger generation of the village who wants to make money moves to city. They think that the city is a

place for money-making. Makuri, a swamp dweller, stated how Yoruba's present generation disconnected with nature as,

Ah well . . . Those were the days . . . those days were really good. Even when times were harsh and the swamp overran the land, we were able to laugh with the Serpent . . . [*continues to work.*] . . . but these young people . . . They are no sooner born than they want to get out of the village as if it carried a plague . . . [*Looks up silently.*] I bet none of them has ever taken his woman into the swamps. (Soyinka 87)

Kenneth Burkes (1897-1993), North American critic of 20th century, has proposed many ecological theories. Three modes of Burkean ecocriticism are Ecological Holism, Technological De-terminism and Rueckert's Ecocriticism. Holism is a belief that everything in nature is connected in some way. Among the sciences, Burke stresses people to pay more attention on ecology. It teaches the total economy of this planet. The exploitation part must itself eventually suffer if it too greatly disturbs the balance of the whole. The ecological balance is very important. It does not violate by the human actions. Makuri says Alu that Igwezu returned to the village to visit his farm land which is spoiled by floods. It disappointed Igwezu. Kadiye is a corrupted priest who bought cattle and other offering from the villagers in the name of priest. He tells that people appease the serpent of the swamp by offerings. He makes a vow that the floods are over and after the river recede they plant again. Thus, he uses the unfavourable situation of nature for his selfishness.

An ecological crisis occurs when the environment of a species or a population changes in a way that destabilizes its continued survival. There are many possible causes of such crisis like population and depletion of natural sources. It may be that the environment quality degrades compared to the species' needs. It may that the situation being unfavourable for the species. Natural changes like increase of temperature, less significant rain falling, floods are the important causes for ecological crisis. Human world does not control non-human world. Flood is the symbol of Cleansing or rebirth for man. It's also a punishment for human wickedness.

In *The Swamp Dwellers*, the nature plays an unfavourable role against the human race. Unable to fight with nature and tracked by the physical charm of the city leaves the village. To be an agriculturalist, one has to extend friends with nature. The love for nature should be eternal that floods and droughts cannot evade it. But, Makuri says Alu that his son is not able fight with nature, will move to the city as his crops were destroyed. This is stated by Makuri as "He came for his crops. Now that he knows they've been ruined by the floods, he'll be running back to the city." (Soyinka 87)

Ecocriticism is a study of analysing the text and find the representation of nature in the text. The fact is that the human being is first and foremost an animal, sharing living place with other animal species in an environment on which they are mutually dependant. Wole Soyinka's *A Dance of the Forests* has many representation of nature. It emphasises the importance of nature in the Yoruba community. Yoruba community believes nature as their god. It is similar to Tamilan's, a community of people who lives in the country called India, Pagan worship. Pagan worship is a belief and activity of worshipping the nature. Whatever human beings do to the ecosystem have the reflections back. If a man does not harm the nature, the nature keeps him safe.

The play has a celebration and anti-celebration of gathering of tribes. The Vedic school of thought believed that trees to be a sacred and primary from of living beings, possessing great knowledge and having witnessed the rise of the civilization. People of Yoruba planned to call two statesmen for the festival to glorify their race. Yoruba people also believed that tress are witnessing the good and wrong of the community. They request groves to send the statesman for the gathering of tribes as they respect the Groves as one of their deities.

Present human interference with the non-human world is excessive and the interaction is rapidly worsening. People misuse the weather for violation. Weather plays a role of tool in the future violation.

Geo engineering is about reducing carbon dioxide from air for good environment. High Frequency Active Auroral Research Program (HFAARP) doing research work by misusing nature. They do research to prevent the sun light by the artificial clouds. These activities exploits both human and non-human world.

In the play *A Dance of the Forest*, people obey the nature. But when they struggle to escape from the spirits, they act against the gathering of tribes. Old man, who fears for the spirits, wants to drive it out from the forest. So, he pours the petrol in the forest which pollutes the air of the forest. Thus, humans' selfishness drives to the destruction of environment. It is stated by Eshuro, a wayward cult spirit as “. . . Have you seen how they celebrate the gathering of the tribes? In our own destruction. Today they even dared to chase out the forest spirits by poisoned the air with petrol fumes.” (Soyinka 41). By this act of human race, dwellers of forest affected and smoked to death. It is stated by Eshuro as “Four hundred million of their dead will crush the humans in a load of guilt. Four hundred million callously smoked to death. Since when was the forest so weak that human could smoke out the owners and sleep after?” (Soyinka 42)

Eshuro, a spirit which observes that the forest polluted by the human activities. The old generation Yoruba people give due respect to the Bush or Groves of the forest. But in present, people misuse the bush as a place to throw the garbage and a place to left their excrement. Eshuro says, “Where the humans preserve a little bush behind their homes, it is only because they want somewhere for their garbage. Dead dogs and human excrement are all you'll find in it. The whole forest stinks. Stinks of human obscenities.” (Soyinka 41)

Kenneth Burke in his theory of Technological De-terminism says technology plays the role of separating humans from their natural conditions. He calls man as 'tool-using-animal'. Technology leads to destruction of nature. The human race knows that their ancestors who know the crimes of human race have arrived to take revenge in the gathering of tribes. So the old man pours the petrol in the forest to escape from the spirits, which is an Ecological crisis from which the beauty of the forest destroyed. It also affects the dwellers of the forest. Old man orders that “Get him to drive it is back on the road in the forest that is get him to drive it right through here and he can let it smoke as much as he likes...” (Soyinka 29)

The visible emission of smoke from the vehicle affects the environment. Ozone layer helps the earth from the sun preventing the violent rays from the sun. Vehicle smoke plays a vital role in destruction of ozone layer. Ecologist advises the people to create a smoke-free world as much as possible. In the play *A Dance of the Forest* human community let the lorry to smoke the forest for their selfishness. This shows the Ecological crisis of the forest in the play.

In the gathering of tribes, the forest head asks the spirits of the nature to share their complaints against human race. The palm tree, symbol of peace, calls humans as blackened hearts which filled up with westernisation. The palm tree predicts that their race will be destroyed as they did not give importance to nature. It uses the word red which is the symbol of anger and disorder. It explains the disorder of Yoruba as

White skins wove me, I, Spirit of the Palm
Now course I red. I who suckle blackened hearts, know
Heads will fall down, Crimson in their red!” (Soyinka 64)

Human beings hunting the animals for its flesh, skin and ivory also considered as an act of against Ecology. The spirit of the Pachyderms complaints that their ivories were stolen by the wanton raiders, persons who stole ivory from elephants. It is stated by the spirit of the Pachyderms as,

“Blood that rules the sunset, bathe
This, our ivory red
Broken is the sleep of giants
Wanton raiders, ivory has a point
Thus, thus we bled. (Soyinka 65)

The spirit of the volcanoes which disappointed with human's unfaithful nature is planned to

explode and destroy the whole Yoruba people. But it did not leave the heat for last twenty hours. Because, the gathering of the tribes taking place in the forest for what the ancestors of Yoruba attended. Volcanoes anger stated as,

Nipples I engender, scattered
Through the broad breast of the earth,
I, Spirit of erupting mountains
But I am nor now winded. I have not belched
These twenty hours or more. I have spat
No hot ashes in the air.” (Soyinka 67)

In African cosmology, ants play a vital role that the world created from the excrement of ants. Yoruba people give due respect to ants. But in this play, Ant leader who disappointed with human race says

“I thought, staying this low,
They would ignore me. I am the one
That tried to be forgotten.” (Soyinka 68).

Ants are complaint that they were forgotten by the Yoruba people. Another ant says “I am the path of the carless stride” (Soyinka 68). The ant tells that ants are dead by the careless march of the human race. Thus, the spirits of the nature warn the Yoruba community.

Conclusion:

The objectives of ecocriticism are an understanding of man through literature as man is an inseparable part of the environment and enhance the relationship with nature. The role of ecocriticism is to understand the environmental problems. Ecological concerns have become the centre of today's discussion. Ecoconscious shares concern for the environment. It displays the growing awareness of environmental issues. In this twenty-first-century, people try to understand the environment and save it. The present generation should prevent the pollution for the future generation. As ecology is the heart of the world human race should save it. Harward Gardner (b 1943), American developmental psychologist, is proposed the Theory of Multiple Intelligence in his book *Frames of Mind, The theory of multiple intelligence* (1983). People who have intelligence towards nature easily find elements of nature. They easily recognize the sounds of the animals. He finds that the intelligence about nature is naturally embedded in the mind of the people. Hence, understand the nature is the solution for people to avoid the ecological problems.

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MYTH AND FOLKLORE IN KARNAD'S YAYATI

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Abstract:

The aim of this research paper is to explore the myth and folklore in Karnad's Yayati. It highlights the beliefs, rites and rituals, customs and traditions in light of myth and folklore of Indian culture. Every culture, community or country has its own unique mythology and folklore. Indian myths and folklore are an integral part of the Indian culture.

Key words: *Myth, Folklore, Culture, Rituals, Tradition. Decrepitude.*

Introduction

In general myth is a story concerning with religious or cultural tradition of a community and folklore is traditions and stories of the country or community. The Oral tradition was the basis of Indian culture. It consisted of history, religious practices, cosmology, rituals, folktales, proverbs, riddles, games, songs, dance, magic, epic tales, myths and narratives.

Girish Karnad uses myth not merely as ritual or a structural device. It is a means of exploring the modern outcome of a traditional situation. Karnad tries to establish a 'dialectical relationship between tradition and modernity' which is a central theme in contemporary Indian society. Karnad does not employ the myths in their entirety. He picks up threads of legends and folk tales that he finds useful. He uses his imagination to construct the plot to suit these tales.

Yayati is a famous play of Karnad which is known as best play writer of Kannada literature. He is a playwright, poet, actor, director, and translator. He is a recipient of prestigious Jnyanapith Award in 1998. His contribution to literature is a unique one because he reformed the theatrical arts and skills.

Indian myths give us an idea of how they lead their life and their views about this world, their faiths and religious rituals. It is awesome that the world of his myths and folklore is so vast that it needs a separate treatment in the form of a research work. Indian mythology and folklore is like an ocean owing to the fact that it has thousands of languages, cultures, tribes, communities and traditions. *Yayati* is the first play of Girish Karnad published in 1961. Karnad was just twenty-two years old when he presented his own interpretation of the play *Yayati*. This play established Karnad's reputation as a dramatist in Kannada literature and launched him on his celebrated career in the Indian theatre. *Yayati* has been translated into many Indian languages and has continued to be performed all over country.

The story of Yayati is originally taken from Mahabharata's 'Adiparva'. Most of character of *Yayati* is taken from original story. *Yayati* is the central character of the play and an Indian mythological king and Pooru's character is from mythology but the character of Chitrlekha and Swarnalata is created by Karnad himself. *Yayati* is based on mythology and folktales with the intention of focusing on the present social, emotional, political and psychological problems of the modern man.

Karnad *Yayati* begins with Swarnalatha complaining Devayani against Sharmishtha. Story takes turn after the entry of Sharmishtha. They recollect how they passed through and became queen of Bharath pedigree. The story line is very clear that Yayati was Bharath pedigree. Once he went to forest for hunting while returning from forest he heard a voice of a girl shouting for help whose face was covered with mud. It so happened one day that Devayani, the daughter of demons' guru Shukracharya and Sharmishtha, the

daughter of the Demon King Vrishparva goes for swimming. God Indra took the incarnation of wind and changed their clothes. With the result, Sharmishta put on Davayani's blouse. The situation grew wild as Devayani's fury knew no bounds. She admonished her saying that she should not have worn the costume of an Aryan. At this, Sharmishta was infuriated and the quarrel went to the pinnacle of abuses. She scolded her by using abusive words like "You poor people. You only have to get into a piece of Arya attire" (Karnad 20). In wrath, Sharmishta drew her to a nearby well to push her into it. It was *Yayati* who saved her. This gesture of his fascinated her. She wished to marry him. As a matter of tradition and custom, the marriage between a Kshatriya and a Brahmin was a taboo. This was the barrier for their matrimonial alliance.

There was no other way for her. She was turbulent with fury. The complaint reached her father, Shukracharya who conveyed this undesirable event to the king. His determination was that he would go away from the kingdom if Devayani was not pacified. The condition and punishment that Devayani proclaimed was that Sharmishta had to be her maid when she would get married. She agreed to her proposal.

Sharmishta is shown as her slave. Yayati was carried away with a wave of emotion to find the miserable plight of Sharmishta, a princess, in fact, and secretly married her in spite of the warning by his Father-in-Law that he should never let Sharmishta share his bed. When Shukracharya came to know this, he uttered his curse on Yayati to become an old man in the prime stage of his life. Shukracharya was so divine that he also said the only way to restore his youth that he could give his old age to someone and take their youth from him.

Yayati feels impatient and dissatisfied even after having much pleasures of life. Yayati takes the youth of Pooru, his youngest son who came to palace by marrying Chitrlekha. He doesn't understand the plight of newly wedded girl but Yayati soon realizes after the death of Chitrlekha who died by taking vial of poison because Yayati refuses to return her youthful husband and he not ready to accept her. This action made Yayati furious and alienated.

After this action of Chitrlekha, he feels cataclysmic disillusionment and loss of faith in life. His torment and burden for Pooru's youth is revealed in the following words; "Please help me, Pooru. Take back your youth. Let me turn my decrepitude into a beginning" (Karnad 69). In the end renouncing all worldly pleasures, Yayati retires to the forest for performing penance. Lastly Puru asks: "What does all this mean, O God? What does it mean?" (Karnad 69)

In fact, the mythical story of *Yayati* ends with Puru's accepting his father's curse as an obedient son. But the playwright, being an excellent craftsman, heightens the dramatic effect by introducing a remarkable character of Chitrlekha. Karnad has portrayed her so realistically that her role becomes inevitable in the play.

In this way, by using the *Yayati*-myth, Karnad has succeeded in dealing with the contemporary issues like patriarchy, man-woman relationship, caste class and gender and pervasive sense of alienation and different manifestation of human passions like love, hatred, anger, sex, sacrifice etc. Really speaking, the play succeeds in exploring the complexities of responsibilities and expectations within the Indian family. A celebrated Marathi playwright, Vijay Tendulkar's impression of the play is worth mentioning. He writes: "When I first read *Yayati*, I was amazed. Those characters, those minds, so alive and true!" (Karnad coverage)

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**CONSCIENCE - A FOCAL CONCERN IN
SHAW'S MRS. WARREN'S PROFESSION**

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Abstract:

It is an obvious fact that George Bernard Shaw is a keen observer of society. He is known for his creative ability and critical sensibility. He ventures to find solutions to common social issues through his criticism and logical thinking. His exuberant intellect lies in presenting facts creatively to convince the audience with his wit and humor. The main object of this paper is to deal with the theme of conscience which is the prime concern of the play, Mrs. Warren's Profession. To illustrate this point, the conflict between a mother and daughter is discussed at length, as well, his idea of the reason for prostitution is justified by stating that prostitution is not chosen due to female depravity or male licentiousness, but it is only to eke out one's livelihood. However, his aim is to awaken the dormant conscience of the people by driving home the awful truth that it is not the woman but the society at large which is responsible for the social evil of prostitution.

Key words: *observer, issues, solutions, criticism, wit and humor, conscience, conflict, prostitution, society.*

Introduction

Of the social problems in Shaw's plays, the problem of prostitution is, perhaps, the most potent. It has received greater attention of Shaw than many other problems of the contemporary society. Though prostitution has raised its ugly head in all ages, it had grown more and more virulent during Shaw's time with increase of wealth and population. As G.M. Trevelyan, the social historian, points out, "The harshness of the world's ethical code which many parents endorsed too often drove a girl once seduced to prostitution. And the economic condition of single women forced many of them to adopt a trade they abhorred. Low wages in unregulated sweated industries made temptation strong". On the top of that Shaw's own bitter experience in a London street drove him to attack the social evil through a play, *Mrs. Warren's Profession*. Furthermore, Shaw "Was in full of reformatory mood, very indignant about almost everything and deliberately challenging all the conventions of his age".

Shaw's sole purpose in writing *Mrs. Warren's Profession* is to discuss "The problem of sexual prostitution and its economic roots". Besides, he endeavors to sensitize the dormant conscience of the people saying that it is not solely woman but the society as a whole is accountable for the social evil of prostitution. He makes this clear in his 'preface' to *Mrs. Warren's Profession*:

Prostitution is caused, not by female depravity and male licentiousness, but simply by underpaying, under valuing and over working women so shamefully that the poorest of them are forced to resort to prostitution to keep body and soul together.

Shaw deals with problem of prostitution artistically through the theme of conscience which creates conflict between "A coarse mother, Mrs. Warren, and a cold daughter, Miss Vivie Warren".

Theme of Conscience

Mrs. Warren, a woman with a past, who runs a chain of brothels on the continent, educates her daughter Vivie Warren in good schools and at Cambridge by concealing the secret of her profession. Later,

when Mrs. Warren asks her daughter for protection, Vivie, who has been enlightened about her mother's source of income, mercilessly refuses to stay with her mother, since her conscience does not allow her to continue her life with a woman branded as a prostitute.

Right from the first Act, Shaw introduces discussion on various aspects of complications that arise in a prostitute's family life. As the play opens, Mr. Praed, an artist, meets Mrs. Warren's daughter, Vivie Warren, and enquiringly asks several questions relating to her tastes and inclinations. Vivie, who is ignorant of her mother's profession, talks casually with Praed, who poses doubts on her way of living:

Praed: I'm so glad your mother hasn't spoilt you....
I'm a born anarchist. I hate authority.
It spoils the relations between parent and child,
Even between mother and daughter.
Now I was always afraid that your mother
would strain her authority to make you very conventional.

Vivie: Oh! Have I been behaving unconventionally?

Praed:At least not conventionally un-conventionally.

The artist inquisitively drags Vivie to some unknown facts that have been kept secret by her mother. However, she ignorantly expresses her penchant views:

Praed: I am afraid your mother will be a little disappointed.
Not for any short coming on your part,
...But you are so different from her ideal.

Vivie: Her What?

Praed: Her ideal.

Vivie: Do you mean her ideal of ME ?

Praed: Yes.

Vivie: What on earth is it like?

Praed: People who dissatisfied with their own bringing up generally think that the world would be alright if everybody were to be brought up quite differently. Now your mother's life has been - I suppose you know -

Vivie: Don't suppose anything, Mr. Praed. I hardly know my mother. Since I was a child I have lived in England, at school or college or with people paid to take charge of me. I have been boarded out all my life. My mother has lived in Brussels or Vienna and never let me go to her. I only see her when she visits England for a few days... But don't imagine I know anything about my mother. I know far less than you do.

Praed: Of course you and your mother will get on capitally (Act I, P.279).

Vivie, who has slightly felt unpleasant to think about her mother's life, says:

Why won't my mother's life bear being talked about (Act I, P.280).

Praed, who knows the unpleasant life of Mrs. Warren, cannot reveal the fact as his delicacy impedes him to do so. Praed says:

Isn't it natural that I should have a certain delicacy in talking to my old friend's daughter about her behind her back? (Act I, P.280)

Since Vivie smells the bad life of her mother, she feels that Praed is trying to hide something in this regard. In the mean time, Mrs. Warren's old friends meet together and involve in deep conversation on men and matters. In course of their formal conversation, Mrs. Warren proposes matrimonial alliance to her daughter with Mr. Frank, son of Rev. S. Gardner. Since Mr. Gardner holds a respectable position as a Rector, he refuses the proposal:

Mrs. Warren : ... If the girl wants to get married no good can come of keeping her unmarried.

Rev.S.Gardner: But married to him! Your daughter to my son! Only think: It's impossible (Act II, P.296).

After listening to the conversation between Crofts and Mrs. Warren, Vivie senses the lecherous nature of Mr. Crofts and hates him. Further, when Mrs. Warren asks Vivie about her marriage, she expresses her desire to choose a different path without clinging on to her mother any longer. Vivie says:

Do you think my way of life would suit you? I doubt it.

(Act II, P.306)

Vivie becomes very inquisitive and drags her mother to a discussion through which we can clearly discern the independent and advanced qualities of an educated girl:

Mrs. Warren : ... Do you know who you are speaking to, Miss?

Vivie : No, who are you? What are you? Everybody knows my reputation, my social standing, and the profession I intend to pursue. I know nothing about you. What is that way of life which you invite me to share with you and Sir George Crofts? (Act II, P.307)

Vivie Warren remonstrates and compels her mother to reveal her identity. Not with standing Vivie's persistent questioning, Mrs. Warren discloses her pathetic condition which has led her to embrace a profession which is abominable. Of course, Vivie demonstrates her empathy towards her mother, but heart of hearts her conscience pinches her to show indifference towards her mother's attitude. It is further intensified when she comes to know that Frank and she are half-brother and half-sister. She bluntly rejects the proposal of Frank to marry him and declines to go with Praed to Italy. In a fit of emotional outrage, she says to Praed:

... Once for all, there is no beauty and no romance in life for me. Life is what it is, and I am prepared to take it as it is (Act IV, P.340)

Their conversation goes much deeper and it touches the striking note of Mrs. Warren's filthy profession. Praed again insists Vivie on visiting Italy. Yet, she dismisses his proposal due to over preoccupation of her mind with her mother's ignominious style of living.

The real dramatic conflict between mother and daughter reaches crescendo when either of them gets into a heated debate about their future course of action. Vivie piquantly attacks her mother when she likes to double the amount that she gives regularly to meet her daughter's expenses. She refuses and says:

From this time I go my own way in my own business and among my friends. And you will go your. Good bye (Act IV, P.349)

Though Mrs. Warren assures to meet Vivie's needs, Vivie cuts her mother with her darts like words. It is clear from her version, that Vivie's independent nature is apparently pinpointed by Shaw, to make her an advanced woman choosing her own way of life apart from her mother's influence. "Shaw's *Mrs. Warren's Profession* best shows the conflict between individualism and social forces. Vivie cuts herself off from her own mother when she discovers the source of her income. Vivie settles down to work out her destiny alone, unaided by her family friends".

However, Mrs. Warren cunningly tries to convince her daughter by telling about the hypocritical way of life of people and society. She also threatens her daughter about her existence without any financial support. Besides, she asserts that the society is only after persons like her setting aside virtuosity and integrity. She tries at best to make her daughter seek her refuge to enjoy a comfortable life. But, Vivie who is obsessed with her conscience to become an independent woman categorically observes in jarring terms:

...I don't object to Crafts more than to any coarsely built man of his class. To tell you the truth, I rather admire him for being strong-minded enough to enjoy himself in his own

way and make plenty of money instead of living the usual shooting hunting, dining out, tailoring loafing life of his set merely because all the rest do it. ... I don't think I am more prejudiced or straitlaced than you: I'm certain I'm less sentimental. I know very well that fashionable morality is all a pretence, and that if I took your money and devoted the rest of my life to spending it fashionably, I might be as worthless and vicious as the silliest woman could possibly want to be without having a word said to me about it (Act IV, P.352).

Softened by Vivie's words of dagger, Mrs. Warren promises that she would give up the company of Crofts, but she cannot give up the business, because she may grow melancholic as the business suits her for her survival. Even then, Vivie emphatically gives vent to her feelings with conviction and utters:

No: I am my mother's daughter. I am like you: I must have works, and must make more money than I spend. But my work is not your work, and my way not your way. We must part. It will not make much difference to us: instead of meeting one another for perhaps a few months in twenty years, we shall never meet (Act IV, P.353).

Mrs. Warren pleads and asks her daughter to take care of her in her old age by reminding of her duty to mother. Contradicting her view Vivie says:

.... Now once for all, mother, you want a daughter, and Frank wants a wife. I don't want a mother, and I don't want a husband (Act IV, P.354).

Reacting to Vivie's strong conscience, Mrs. Warren bursts out ruthlessly with dejection:

I always wanted to be a good woman. I tried honest work, and I was slave-driven until I cursed the day I ever heard of honest work. I was a good mother, and because I made my daughter a good woman she turns me out as if I was a leper ... From this time forth, so help me Heaven in my last hour, I'll do wrong and nothing but wrong. And I'll prosper on it (Act IV, P.355).

In spite of her ceaseless argument, she could not gain the sympathy of her daughter and accepts her inevitability in perpetuating her contaminated profession, even though it might bring a curse upon her life, yet, at the end she becomes penitent and submits her conscience in a rueful vein of expression. Nevertheless, Vivie dismantles sentiments and endearment that she has to show towards Mrs. Warren and appeals strongly in lacerating terms. She says:

... You are a conventional woman at heart.

That is why I am bidding you good bye now (Act IV, P.353).

As everything becomes obscure and hopeless in persuading her daughter, Mrs. Warren bids farewell once for all. The theme of the play, conscience develops tension between the two characters Mrs. Warren and Vivie. As Sahai observes, "In his attempt to put in tenseness and suspense in the conflict between the capitalist and the individualist in Act I, Shaw soon turns it as one revolving around domestic conflict of sentiment between mother and daughter".

Conclusion

As far as the theme is concerned, Shaw, adroitly deals with Vivie's steadfastness in refusing her mother's way of living by choosing her own path without being swayed by her mother's impeccable moral teaching that she imparts to her daughter, in order to justify her contaminated profession. Thus, it is a proven fact that Shaw has ably succeeded in putting into practice in the play what he has professed in theory in his 'preface':

I have spared no pains to make known that my plays are built to induce, not voluptuous reverie, but intellectual interest, not romantic rhapsody but humane concern.

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ECO-CRITICAL FABRICS IN MARIAMA BA'S *SO LONG A LETTER*

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Abstract:

*This paper aims to bestow a panoramic view of Ecocriticism as a literary critical theory and its implications in the form of the human relationship with nature. Ecocriticism is a new critical approach, which is primarily concerned with the current political scenario to reestablish and reconfigure the human interactions with environment. It is a consciousness-raising phenomenon about environment, which excavates the literary culture to scrutinize how literary texts engage with facets of the environment such as landscapes, plants, animals, and natural resources. It unravels a cameo, which poses a moral question about human behaviour towards nature. The focal point of this new critical approach is also to probe the environment that ruminates the cultural, political, and spiritual ethos. In addition to that, it analyzes the prominent role played by ecology in the life cycle of human beings. Thus, the researcher attempts to trace the prevalence of ecocritical fabrics in Mariama Ba's *So Long A Letter*.*

Keywords: *Ecology, Environment, Ecocriticism, spiritual ethos.*

As a fast growing literary movement, Ecocriticism requires greater attention and emphasis in the twenty first century. Cheryll Glotfelty defines that Ecocriticism is a study of the relationship between literature and physical environment. Ecological imperialism is the main reason for the destruction of ecology. Most of the ecological crises arise due to the effects of the advancement of science, technology, and industrialization. In this regard, Glotfelty accentuates his plea for the conservation of ecology through the following lines:

We have reached the environmental limits, a time when the consequences of human actions are damaging the planet's life supporting system. We are there either we change our ways or we face global catastrophe, destroying much beauty and exterminating countless fellow species in our head long race to apocalypse (Intro VIII).

Ecocriticism is a study that amalgamates environment and literature together. It attempts to provide a solution for the present environmental crisis from the theoretical perspective. Ecocriticism is a broad realm comprising the other facets like 'Green Studies', 'Ecopoetics' and 'Environmental Literary Criticism'. Ecocritics prudently scrutinize the ecological values and the ethics from the human perception. They also attempt to probe, how humanity plays a dominant role in protecting as well as deteriorating the wilderness. Ecocritics try to create awareness among the people regarding the impending danger that is yet to attack them because of their coarse attitude towards Nature.

After the era of colonization, the people of Africa began to eulogize about the glory of their ancestral land and nature through their writings. As a result, the cameos, which came out of Africa during that time, had been endowed with ecocentric ideas. However, in due course of time, there was a drastic shift from nature oriented writing to one that is politically and socially committed. The same idea is further

revealed by Iheka in the following lines: "Despite the shift in focus, critics have argued that postcolonial states, especially in Africa, deserve a non-western ecocritical paradigm that accommodates the dynamics of developing postcolonial societies" (29). Thus, ecocritical cameos belonging to that period, had mainly discussed regarding problems of poverty, underdevelopment, and politics of exploitation, which hinder the developing countries to appreciate and conserve the environment. The dire social responsibility of the Africans for preserving nature has become a recurring theme in the works of Mariama Ba. Charles Sarvan, famous critic observes the unique writing of Ba as: "Mariama Ba does not write from a clear and categorical standpoint; her novels are questioning and explorative rather than radical and imperative" (464).

The ecocritical fabrics are tightly interwoven in Mariama Ba's *So Long A Letter*. The entire novel is set in the land of Senegal, which is known for its geographical prosperity in Africa. Ba says: "Sangalkam remains the refuge of people from Dakar, those who want a break from the frenzy of the city. . . .these green, open spaces are conducive to rest, meditation and letting off of steam by children" (22). Thus, the cognate relation of the presented characters is further enhanced with the succor of nature. Ba says: "under the wondering gaze of the kids, the live fish would flip up as the long sea snakes would curve themselves inwards. There is nothing more beautiful than a fish just out of water, its eyes clear and fresh, with golden or silvery scales and beautiful bluish glints" (22). Hence, Ba eloquently elucidates the irreplaceable bond between men and nature.

As an epistolary novel, the plot of the novel construes the friendship between Ramatoulaye and Aissatou with the exchange of the letters. Nature becomes an external source, ameliorating the relationship between the two friends. When Ramatoulaye shares her experience of friendship with Aissatou through her letter, she recalls how they both spent much time, having been comforted with the presence of nature. She recalls: "And we stuffed ourselves with fruits within easy reach. And we drank the milk from coconuts. And we told 'juicy stories'! And we danced about. . . .And the lamb, seasoned with white pepper, garlic, butter, hot pepper, would be roasting over the wood fire" (23). In the similar way, Ba shows the kaleidoscopic image of the pastoral beauty of the Africa:

Coconut trees, with their interlacing leaves, gave protection from the sun. Succulent sapodilla stood next to sweet-smelling pomegranates. Heavy mangoes weighed down the branches. Pawpaws resembling breasts of different shapes hung tempting and inaccessible from the tops of elongated trunks. Green leaves and browned leaves, new grass and withered grass were strewn all over the ground. (22)

In this context, nature is serving as a mode of link to discuss the familial, social and cultural issues among the two friends. Ba describes the familial relationship between the two friends in the following lines: "we walked the same paths from adolescence to maturity, where the past begets the present. My friend, my friend, my friend. I call on you three times"(01). Most of the Africans live as family in the suburbs of Africa and they are closely associated with nature. The land of Africa in turn, gives them compassion and solace to their hearts which have been afflicted by rapid urbanization. Ba scintillatingly expresses this concept through the following lines: "What a crowd on public holidays! Numerous families would stroll about, thirsty for space and fresh air. People would undress, without embarrassment, tempted by the benevolent caress of the iodized breeze and the warmth from the sun's rays"(21). Thus, the nature takes plethora of positions like Mother, Mentor and Guru in the life of individuals who have been afflicted with the unexpressed pain of modern world, because of social discrimination.

The rural background described in this novel eloquently elucidates the oneness of the people with nature. Most of the times, Ramatoulaye sojourns in Dakar and its outskirts. When she imagines as an aged noblewoman going home to the countryside to carry out a scheme of revenge by matchmaking, there is a conjectural portrayal of the hinterland, she says:

The baobab trees held out the giant knots of their branches toward the skies; slowly, the cows moved across the road, their mournful stare defying the vehicles; shepherds in baggy trousers, their sticks on their hands, guided the animals. Men and animals blended, as in a picture risen from the depths of time. (27)

Africans have very close proximity with their land, which is like their invisible family member, having taken part in all the aspects of their personal life. In addition to the pastoral land system, Ba is also discussing the life-associated sea, which is also an important aspect of nature giving the revenue to the people for their survival. She says: "At first simple points of horizon, the boats would become more distinct from one another as they drew nearer. They would dance in the hollows of the waves, then would lazily let themselves be dragged along" (21). The life and land of Africans are embroidered with their familial system. In this context, Ba has scintillatingly tailored the familial and geographical knots. She describes how people give much care and concern towards nature in the following lines: "Mawdo's mother had looked after the farm before her son's marriage. The memory of her husband had made her attached to this plot of land, where their joint and patient hands had disciplined the vegetation that filled our eyes with admiration" (22). When Ba explains the rustic rural life of Africa, she elucidates the early childhood life of Modou, the husband of Ramatoulaye: "they are there, his childhood playmates on the football ground, or during bird hunts, when they used catapults" (05). Thus, it is understood that the Africans are being reared up in the lap of nature and nature in turn is also having equal contribution in every facets of their life.

Ba has also discussed the unexposed story of African continent through this novel. Due to the geographical instability, the entire African land is of dust and grit. However, the people never take this disadvantage to their heart rather they feel that having different identity crisis itself as their uniqueness. Ba says: "He shook his left leg, crossed over his folded right leg. His shoes, white Turkish slippers, were covered with a thin layer of red dust, the colour of the earth in which they had walked. The same dust covered Mawdo's and the Imam's shoes" (37). In the same way, she also connects the economical status of Africa with the geographical connectivity. She says: "the grey dust from the road covers his denim outfit. Mauled by the children for whom he has become the target, a red wound on his leg, he is visibly taken aback by so much hospitality" (78). Thus, the abject status of the geographical connectivity enumerates the real social milieu prevailing in Africa. In this context, Ba underlines a strong message that the ecological status of a country will have a strong impact on the credibility and the livelihood of the people. However, they were very hyper active and always indulging themselves in doing something "... first to up in the morning, and last to go to bed, always working" (20). As their life is closely associated with nature, most of the people are depending on agriculture and fishing as the source of their income. It is well proved by the sharing of Ramatoulaye to her friend. She says: "Our favourite spot was Ngor beach, situated near the village of the same name, where old bearded fishermen repaired their nets under the silk-cotton trees. Naked and snotty children played in complete freedom when they were not frolicking about in the sea" (21).

Ba describes how nature, which is the part of geography, assists to strengthen the familial, societal, and cultural relationship among people. She also natters that nature is a guiding force to ameliorate the alliance between men and nature. Ramatoulaye's friendship is always bloomed in the cortex of nature:

We would walk along the Dakar Corniche, one of the most beautiful in West Africa, a sheer work of art wrought by nature. Rounded or pointed rocks, black or ochre- cloured, overlooking the ocean. Greenery, sometimes a veritable hanging garden spread out under the clear sky... our favorite spot was Ngor beach situated near the village of the same name, where old bearded fishermen repaired their nets under the silk-cotton trees. (21)

The akin relation of life with nature has also been well represented by Ba. As Africa is known as the

land of misfortune by the West, they do not give any importance to the culture and customs of them. Thus, though Ba unambiguously projects the other part of Africa in a negative way, she also portrays the placid and the serene part of Africa. She enumerates with the experience of Ramatoulaye words of sharing with her friend:

Do you remember the morning train that took us for the first to Ponty-Ville, the teachers' training college in Sebikotane? Ponty-Ville is the countryside still green from the last rains, a celebration of youth right in the middle of nature, banjo music in dormitories transformed into dance floors, conversations held along the rows of geraniums or under the thick mango trees. (13)

Hence, Ba punctuates a strong message that even though the world looks down at the people of Africa, they have never underestimated themselves rather they are highly motivated to show their uniqueness in terms of colour, customs and culture to the rest of the world. In addition to that, nature is offering the ceaseless succor and courage to uplift their standard of living. The entire life cycle of the Africans revolves around nature and they are fully contented with their presence at their homeland. Though there is an imbalance in the geography itself, nature in turn cajoles them giving all the sources of their personal life.

Thus, the chosen magnum opus cameo, *So Long A Letter* vivaciously elucidates the fabrics of ecocritical aspects by examining the relationship between man and his environment. This novel depicts the natural sights and landscapes along with people's attitudes and attention towards nature. This paper also excavates the other dimension of ecocriticism stating how the characters presented in this novel have contributed towards conservation of the ecosystem for the betterment of the world.

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THE 'NEW' INDIAN MIDDLE CLASSES AND THE PACKAGED TOUR: COMPARATIVE PARADIGMS

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Abstract:

*The paper attempts to trace the complexities of the socio-political, economic and cultural changes in the 'new' Indian middle classes in the post-independence period of Indian history, in relation to the dynamics of liberalization and globalization, focusing on the area of travel in particular. While taking stock of the enormous and deep difficulties in classifying and delineating the boundaries of the 'middle class' as a category, the paper seeks to locate travel as one of the important elements in the conspicuous consumption that has, to a large extent, come to characterize this complex social group. The middle classes' "aspirational consumerism" of today includes foreign and domestic travel, made convenient and accessible in the form of packaged tours. The paper draws on theoretical definitions of travel that conceptualize it as a conscious enactment of individual and collective identity (including that of class), socio-cultural boundaries and applies these notions to the 'new' Indian middle classes of today, illustrating from Srinath Perur's travelogue *If It's Monday, It Must be Madurai*, examining the varied ways in which the packaged tour has become a signifier of, and for, the new Indian middle classes.*

Keywords: *Indian Middle Classes, Packaged Travel, Aspirational Class Identity, Consumerism.*

The rise and growth of the 'new' middle classes in post-independence India has arguably been one of the most prominent phenomena in the last seventy-odd years of Indian history. Their predecessors, products of the late colonial period, were identifiable as a social group through their access to English education and modern forms of employment such as the civil service. They had political assertiveness which rested its claim on their ability to represent public interests, often against colonial state power (Fernandes 2). The post-independence generations (upto the early 1980s) of this societal group, when the newly-independent nation was grappling with issues of development and economic enterprise, were largely characterized and influenced by the austerity of the nationalist-struggle era, with its legacy of unselfish patriotism and nationalistic optimism and a corresponding participatory identity in the public sphere, made possible by lingering Gandhian ideology and the Nehruvian socialist welfare state. The attitudes, values, lifestyles and consumption practices of the middle classes of these decades (as Leftist critics like Harsh Mander and Pavan Varma have highlighted in their works) had an enduring emphasis on the avoidance of waste, 'vulgar' extravagance and public display of money wealth, and an ever-present consciousness of the living conditions of those less fortunate than themselves. Somewhat in contradistinction to these near-Habermasian values was also a vestigial colonial elite legacy, that of a notional construct of the West as 'superior' (Brosius 12) and a self-conscious measuring of non-Western categories against Western models (Fernandes xxvii).

With increased opportunities for education and employment in the 1980s Rajiv Gandhi government-led liberalisation phase, the middle classes became identifiable more as a consumer-based group rather than a state-managed one (Fernandes 2-3). With India's entry in the 1990s globalisation era as a significant player in the global market, the middle classes (an estimated 300 million and growing) which form a large segment of India's burgeoning population, have been the beneficiaries of a quantum leap in opportunities for education, employment and consequently a steep increase in economic status and spending power. This in turn has led to a culture of consumerism among the new Indian middle classes,

which has manifested itself in the form of conspicuous consumption of myriad goods and services hitherto unavailable in the domestic sphere. 'Typical' middle class lifestyles dependent on modest family incomes of an earlier time have changed, to become unrecognisably opulent and aspirational in their display of wealth. Leela Fernandes, in her analysis of the changing socio-economic-political dynamics of this new manifestation of the middle classes, observes that there are conflicting perceptions of the so-called middle class image of today: one which derives its genealogy from the socialist public-oriented welfare model, and its opposite, which valorises capitalism by arguing that the relative success of liberalised economic reforms in India is largely due to the participation of the largest segment of its population, the middle classes. The most important point here, as Fernandes notes, is that both these views, while polarised in relation to the middle class ethos of today, conceptualise the middle classes as a "self-evident force of consumption and as the prime recipients of the benefits of liberalisation" (xvii). The difficulties of a realistic definition of the exact composition of the 'new' Indian middle classes of today are many, not the least of which is that the economic, and socio-cultural boundaries are constantly shifting and enlarging, to include aspirational sections of society, which is to be understood in terms of an inclusivity dependent on many other variables such as gender, religion and caste.

While there are important differentiations to be made within the various strata of the new Indian middle classes, it is possible to notice a general shift in terms of their lifestyle expenditure and a corresponding shift in ethos, which is more noticeably predicated on a materialistic value system, composed of global-standardised-use-and-throw-consumable templates. Foreign and domestic travel, which has always been an inexorable marker of the Indian middle classes, has now joined the bewildering array of consumables. The particular form in which international and local travel have become accessible to the middle-class consumer is that of the packaged tour. The paper argues that through participation in the packaged tour culture, the hypothesized 'typical' middle class emerges as a socio-political construct, by constituting and enacting its own perceived identities, class boundaries, and socio-cultural prejudices. The paper illustrates from Srinath Perur's travelogue *If It's Monday, It Must be Madurai*, the varied ways in which the packaged tour has become a signifier of, and for, the new Indian middle classes.

It has been observed that the 'new' Indian middle classes, like other social groups, have a range of classificatory practices which produce boundaries, not necessarily restricted to class, but also in terms of cultural distinctions, which often form a central part of middle class identity (Fernandes xxix, 14). These practices, mainly in the arena of consumption, have linked themselves coincidentally and strategically with late nationalistic narratives which seek to manage India's relationship with Westernisation and globalisation and led to the emergence of a hegemonic identity (Fernandes xxxii-xxxiii). Studies have traditionally identified four categories of the middle classes, i.e. as income-based groups, structurally defined groups, aspirational-cultural groups, and most importantly as products of discourse and the social imagination (Fernandes xxiv). I would argue that as a form of consumption, the site of travel via the packaged tour makes it possible for all four of the abovementioned categories to be construed as coexistent within the larger term 'middle classes'. Sightseeing and pilgrimage were two dominant motifs of older notions of domestic travel for the pre-globalisation era middle-classes, usually undertaken as a family activity, and international travel was often within the template of the once-in-a-lifetime concept with which the expense of travel, like other costly commodities (cars, houses) would be borne. The development of the tourism industry has been largely in tandem with the 'rise' of the new Indian middle classes. The conducted tour as practised in India today, as Srinath Perur points out in his Introduction, offers a conveniently packaged affordable form of both traditional as well as newer ideas of travel, in which the individual will be part of a cross-section of the various middle classes represented in the travel group. Thus, through travel, the texture of individual experience of the unfamiliar can be controlled within that which is relatively familiar, i.e. a group of fellow-travellers with similar and varying economic socio-cultural locations. It follows therefore that the experience of travel in a packaged conducted tour, and its articulation in travel writing, offer rich sites for the enactment of identity, both individually and

collectively. In the words of Tim Youngs:

Travel writing, one may argue, is the most socially important of all literary genres. It records our temporal and spatial progress. It throws light on how we define ourselves “and on how we identify others. Its construction of our sense of 'me' and 'you', 'us' and 'them', operates on individual and national levels and in the realms of psychology, society and economics. The processes of affiliation and differentiation at play within it can work to forge alliances, precipitate crises and provoke wars. Travelling is something we all do, on different scales, in one form or another. We all have stories of travel and they are of more than personal consequence (*CCTW*1).

The argument that consumerist culture has been construed by many global cultural forms as constituting a standard of progress, typified by the affluence and lifestyles of the middle class in general, is eminently applicable to the Indian middle classes of today. Although class is not, as Fernandes points out, a foundational category for defining the 'new' Indian middle classes (xxxiii), the expense of travel when undertaken by the middle classes, makes it possible to view the packaged tour as yet another globally available commodity on the one hand, and as a performance of class status through its consumption, on the other. The conducted packaged tour has emerged as a cultural motif in the discursive practices of travel, in which the middle class consumer is seen (and sees himself) as a participant not only in a 'new' India, but in the global cultural sphere as well. The rhetoric of global economic enterprise has metamorphosed the erstwhile humble packaged tour/trip into flamboyantly advertised 'products', which are developed by executives with regard to price, itinerary and comfort-levels to attract the “package-touring public”; Perur draws our attention to the readiness with which the attitudes of participants in the packaged product imbibe this corporate vocabulary (91) to fit into the new nationalistic narrative of 'progress'. Packaged travel therefore emerges as a representational practice in which “the urban middle class is delineated as consumers not just of the newly available commodities in liberalizing India but consumers of a new India that has been produced through the meanings attached to these commodities” (Fernandes 65).

William Mazzarella has identified a shift of concepts in middle class ethos from the duty of progress (associable with the Indian middle class of the post-independence pre-globalisation era) to the idea of progress through the pleasure of consumption, which he terms “aspirational consumerism” (Brosius 262). In Perur's travelogue, the packaged tours to Uzbekistan and Europe form examples of this particular aspect of middle classes' consumption of travel-as-commodity. The first mentioned tour is a specialised men-only 'product', in which Perur (as traveller-writer) finds himself with 30-odd other Indian middle class men ranging in ages of the twenties to the seventies, from Delhi, UP, MP, Uttarakhand, Haryana, Gujarat and Karnataka, in various occupations such as doctors, saree distributors, real estate dealers, government contractors for road and construction projects, a defence supplier, a transport company-owner. All of them (excepting Perur) have in common undeclared money to finance the trip, as also the assumption that the trip is solely for opportunities for sex in a foreign country, and near-total oblivion to a land so rich in cultural heritage and history. The double standards and hypocrisies of the conventional patriarchy which characterises most of the middle class family men in the group become evident in their criticism of corrupt politicians back home, while actively pursuing their determination to have illicit sex in a foreign country to which they have toured on black money, and “to enjoy”; Perur opines that this attitude extends to all such tours, in which a consumer can “enjoy absolutely and without object” (98). In the Europe tour, Perur is part of an all-Indian middle class middle aged/retired group, with a tight itinerary of not less than eight countries in fifteen days, that does not allow one to “sit in a bus for an hour without finding yourself in a different country” (23). The atmosphere inside their bus is a replica of a mini-India, replete with Bollywood songs, North and South Indian foods and sweets, not to mention regional antagonisms manifested in the North/South cultural divide and tourists dozing off while being shown the Louvre and the Vatican. This familiar atmosphere grows so much on Perur that he begins to wonder why the tourists have come at all; he realises that they

are on this tour not for discovery or exploration, but because it is a symbol of leisure and economic sufficiency. A trip such as this signals to others - and ourselves - that we are the kind of people who go to Europe on vacation. It has become a rite of passage for the middle-aged middle class, and like other rites of passage, it must be ruthlessly documented. The purpose of this tour is to generate evidence that we have been to Europe (29).

The representative power of the tour in terms of creating class status and identity for the middle class group in Perur's travelogue reflects the new Indian middle classes' aspirational consumerism which tries simultaneously to integrate itself into the fabric of new nationalism on the one hand and the global cultural ethic on the other. As Perur puts it:

It is the iconic monuments - the Eiffel Tower, the Leaning Tower of Pisa, the Colosseum - that give us the greatest joy since they offer the most compelling evidence of where we have been. We go not so much to see them as to confirm their existence, to reassure ourselves that "we are after all in the place we aspired to be. We see nothing in Europe. We come here with pictures in our heads, and we leave with our heads in those pictures (29).

This conscious buying into the class/status image has deep links, as Fernandes has identified, with the 'respectability' factor commonly associated with upper caste/class sections of the middle classes, in which earlier middle class identities (derived from caste distinctive- legacies of cultural capital, elements of self-reliance through education, employment and social conscience) are now reworked through a culture of commodity consumption, so much so that the thing consumed itself becomes respectable, and a marker of class status (67). Further applying this idea to middle class travel, it becomes possible to argue that the earlier legacies, with tropes of foreign travel derived from the genealogy of the colonial elites' European Grand Tour (with its connotations of world cultural educative experience), have been significantly replaced by the "aesthetic of the commodity form" (Fernandes 59), in which the more-readily-accepted notion of immediate enjoyment and pleasure at the unfamiliar, can be conveniently documented and then projected back home as a class-marker and cultural standard. This in turn leads to an understanding of domestic and foreign travel packages as simultaneously a classificatory practice that creates class boundaries, cultural distinctions and establishes "the performance of 'taste' as a cultural resource" (Brosius 14) amongst the middle classes. Since travel happens in the public sphere, it becomes part of "the politics of visibility" (Fernandes 74) that is crucial to marking out lifestyle-defined boundaries of class. Perur's humorous projection of this aspect of the packaged tour is embodied in the Bengali couple he meets on a temple tour, who he says are "hardened veterans of conducted tourism ... (who) have the air of conquest that habitués of conducted tours seem to acquire: 'We've done the North East. We've finished Rajasthan'" (18).

Cosmopolitanism as an aspirational value and identity-image among the new Indian middle classes, as Brosius points out, means not so much being part of a posited global citizenry, as having access to a globally legitimised five-star lifestyle, while being distinctly Indian at the same time (28). One of the dilemmas of the present-day new Indian middle classes, Fernandes observes, is the challenge of claiming national representativeness and cultural 'authenticity' while being simultaneously part of a globalised Western culture through consumption patterns (71). If, as Fernandes' study reveals, national icons (which used to represent the pre-globalised middle classes of yore, like the Ambassador car, or the *Times of India* newspaper) have been reimagined for the middle classes now through commodity consumption (59), then today's tourism industries' travel-packages are eminent examples. Perur's trip to Kerala's backwaters, in which he is the lone Indian in the multi-national tour group, illustrates this particular aspect; while on the beach, he is accosted by small local boys who cannot believe he is an Indian simply because he is in the company of a white fellow-tourist; he ends up an uneasy participant in the foreigners' enthusiasm for the spice walk which markets 'exotic' Indian spices which to him are part of his daily food; he relates it to the way this packaged tour has been programmed to construct and deliver "a tropical idyll" (87) for foreign tourists, but which Indian middle class tourists end up consuming in much the same ways. This form of

mimicry especially in domestic travel that constructs and projects Indian tourist destinations for Western consumption, epitomises the conflicts between the secular and the nationalistic images that have converged within the new Indian middle classes' identities. Another example is Perur's participation in a packaged walking tour to the famous Dharavi slum in Mumbai, in which he realises that the concept of "slum tourism" (139) which holds considerable fascination for Western tourists from the developed world, in which perceived squalor is actively marketed as a saleable commodity by the tourism industry in developing countries like India. As he observes slumming foreign fellow- tourists, he realises that people's homes in Dharavi are familiar to his own middle class childhood home, and that the differences are only a matter of degree:

These are middle-class homes, a world I know well: the steel vessels, the televisions, the clutter of odds and ends hoarded because they might come in use one day; the sounds of pressure cookers going off, pans being scraped with a piece of brick, clothes being rinsed by hand. These are part of my consciousness. In a sense that the foreigners on the tour cannot possibly share, I am among my own (150).

This self-realisation comes in the wake of awareness that he in his turn has been construed as a foreigner by the Dharavi inhabitants simply by the fact of his being with a tour group consisting of them. The defamiliarised gaze of the foreign tourists, which he senses, helps him locate himself as a member of a pre-globalisation Indian middle class structure.

A common element, Perur observes, to all the ten tours described in his travelogue, is a concern with preserving 'identity', "one's own" (279) in the midst of the unfamiliar and different scenes afforded by travel. This concern, I argue, is really part of larger and deeper anxieties about the complexities of middle class identities in India today, especially as these identities are increasingly linked to fundamentalist and rightwing nationalistic discourses. For the new Indian middle classes of today, consumption patterns and practices, including travel, have become significant markers through which class/caste identities, status distinctions and cultural productions are consciously and deliberately enacted. In Brosius's discussion of the condition of "middle-classness" (24), attention is drawn to Arjun Appadurai's definition of the "imagination as a key resource 'for experiments with self-making'" (23). She invokes his idea of the "imaginary as a fluid 'constructed landscape of collective aspirations'" :

"The image, the imagined, the imaginary - these are all terms that direct us to something critical and new in global cultural processes: the *imagination as a social practice*. No longer mere fantasy, no longer simple escape, no longer elite pastime, and "no longer mere contemplation, the imagination has become an organized field of social practices, a form of work, and a form of negotiation between sites of agency (individuals) and globally defined fields of possibility" (qtd. in Brosius 23-24).

If consumption of the packaged-tour-as-commodity can be construed as a performative act of 'imagined identities' by the new Indian middle classes, then the above-quoted definition holds particular significance for self-making through travel by the middle classes of today's India.

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THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCT OF AN IDEAL WIFE ACCORDING TO THE BIBLE

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Abstract:

*The study of the picture of an ideal wife as prescribed by social structures also relates to the broader field of discourse of the study of the institution of marriage and the role of the patriarchy, religion and capitalism in creating idealistic roles for individuals in the society. In this paper, there will be the study of the idea of a noble and virtuous wife and what constitutes her qualities and characteristics according to the Holy Bible. The pursuit of an ideal spouse in marriage for an ideal married life has always been given a lot of importance and this leads to certain social constructs of the ideal nature of a wife as seen in the Bible. Primary sources will be Proverbs 31:10-31, (Old Testament, Holy Bible), Ephesians 5:22-33, Colossians 3:18, 1 Peter 3 (New Testament, Holy Bible). To critically analyze the study the secondary sources will be Theodor Adorno's *Minima Moralia: Reflections from a damaged Life* (1951), J.S. Mill & Harriet Taylor's *Early Essays on Marriage and Divorce*, (1951) Genesis 24 (Old Testament, Holy Bible) Thomas Hardy's *Far From the Madding Crowd* (1874). The description of the virtuous wife in the Bible doesn't necessarily restrict women in their dignity, importance and socio-economic contributions to society but in the family structure, women are to be second to the man to maintain the hierarchical structure for the semblance of order.*

By all means marry; if you get a good wife, you'll be happy. If you get a bad one, you'll become a philosopher.

The study of the picture of an ideal wife as prescribed by social structures also relates to the broader field of discourse of the study of the institution of marriage and the role of the patriarchy, religion and capitalism in creating idealistic roles for individuals in the society. The institution of marriage has been one of the most important social pillars that has been fundamental to the fabric of any society. The social system has prescribed the rules for marriage and has also defined ideal roles for the husband and the wife in the confines of marriage and the family, mainly for the purpose of order and smooth functioning of the society. The pursuit of an ideal spouse in marriage for an ideal married life has always been given a lot of importance and this leads to certain social constructs of the ideal nature of a wife.

A marriage is not a concrete reality that necessarily reveals itself to husband and wife in the same form. It is a history of actions and interactions, combined with mutual expectations based on that history and on broader cultural norms and values (Ross, Catherine E., 281).

These broader cultural norms and values go a long way in determining the mutual expectations one has in marriage and form the construct of the institution of marriage. The wife and the husband perform roles in the marriage and these roles are fixed by the broader societal spectrum, roles that have been gradually formulated since the time when humans started the family structures.

In order to understand the position of a wife in society at the present times and to fully grasp the changes that have come about in our worldviews regarding marriage we would have to look at how the position of a wife was constructed from ancient times in the sphere of authority and religion. It is important to examine and analyze the concept of an ideal wife as found in the Bible and critique it in the light of the position and situation of the woman in the hierarchy of the society.

An excellent wife *is* the crown of her husband,
 But she who causes shame *is* like rotteness in his bones (Holy Bible, NKJV, Proverbs 12: 4)

A wife of noble character is praised profusely in the Bible; a woman who is excellent to the husband is like a reward to him, while the wife who brings shame is like a disease to her husband. The Biblical society has constructed the wife to be someone who should adhere to the moral latitudes laid down by the Bible and also to be a woman who lives by society's standards of an honourable woman. In this way, the wife is like a 'crown', that is, like a reward or a trophy that he wins, in front of the people and as the wife is noticed by all to be noble, the praises for her character flows to the husband in being fortunate to be the spouse of such a noble wife.

The same exaltation is of an excellent wife right from the Biblical is still carried over to this 21st century in certain urban terms such as 'wife material'. 'Wifey material' is described as "a phrase often used to describe a girl whom you feel possesses certain qualities that qualifies her to be a model wife for you" (urbandictionary.com) and the qualities that such a woman is supposed to be kind, caring, sweet, compassionate etc.. Thus, the social construct of an ideal wife has been prevalent in society from the earliest times till the present day.

We can further find what an excellent or noble wife is like in the Bible's description of the virtuous wife and in its instructions to the wife and husband. The description of the virtuous wife in the Bible doesn't necessarily restrict women in their dignity, importance and socioeconomic contributions to society but in the family structure, women are to be submissive to the man to maintain the hierarchical structure for the semblance of order.

The description of the virtuous wife is found in the book of Proverbs in the Bible in chapter 31 from the verses 10 to 31 and it begins with these lines:

Who can find a virtuous wife?
 For her worth is far above rubies.
 The heart of her husband safely trusts her;
 So he will have no lack of gain
 (Holy Bible, NKJV, Proverbs 31: 10-11).

These lines extol the worth of finding a virtuous wife, lifting her above the average woman. The virtuous wife is a woman who brings 'gain' to her husband, her worth seems to be 'far above rubies'. Thus, the ideal wife would be someone who would bring gain to the husband and the family at all areas, be it economically, emotionally and socially. It is to be considered extremely fortunate and a blessing from God if one were to be married to a woman who fits the bill of the virtuous wife in Proverbs 31. She is supposed to be a rare breed, treasured and valued way above the average and the search for her is supposed to be elusive. As we go through Proverbs 31, we find the example of a virtuous wife being described. She is not only a diligent caretaker of the house, taking care of the domestic needs of everyone in the house and excelling in womanly work like weaving, cooking etc., but she is also a clever businesswoman who earns through her intelligent dealings with merchants and in the fields. She is also wise and hardworking, "strength and honour are her clothing", she is a God-fearing woman who helps the poor and the needy; she is praised by everyone and her husband becomes a very respectable man. The verses end with the famous lines:

Charm is deceitful and beauty is passing,
 But a woman who fears the Lord, she shall be praised.
 Give her of the fruit of her hands,
 And let her own works praise her in the gates.
 (Holy Bible, NKJV, Proverbs 31:30-31)

Thus, the qualities and the great advantages that the virtuous wife brings, make someone like her as

a very prized catch and she is sought after by every eligible bachelor. Every marriageable man would dream of finding someone who comes as close to her likeness. This concept of a finding a virtuous wife could be because of the need for self-preservation and satisfaction of the man in having an able partner to help him to a better life and catapult his family above the social ladder. Theodor Adorno, in his *Minima Moralia*, reflects on the concept of modern day marriage and says, "Marriage, living on as an abject parody in a time that has removed the basis of its human justification, usually serves today as a trick of self-preservation" (Adorno, Theodor, 30).

Adorno could never have been truer in echoing the real reason of a man to be in the pursuit of an ideal wife- the so called virtuous wife of Proverbs 31, the reason being mainly the 'trick of self-preservation' that compels the patriarchy to define the social construct of an ideal wife and to aspire to get her for himself. The extolling of the quality of a virtuous wife can be understood in diametrically opposite directions. In one, like Adorno says, it can be a trick of self-preservation where the ideal wife is created and sought after for selfish motives by the patriarchy. In this direction, there is no freedom for the wife, no equality or elevation of position over the husband in the family, but it is just a business transaction where having the qualities of an ideal wife will land her in a good marriage that will give her some amount of respect in society and free her from the taboo of being an unmarried woman. The social construct of an ideal wife can be a means of subjugating women by pressurizing them to fulfil certain criteria to get a groom for herself, failing which she has to face the social stigma of being rejected for marriage and crossing the marriageable age without being hitched, thus facing shame and being stigmatized in the eyes of the society. J.S. Mill in his essay on marriage says,

A single woman therefore is felt both by herself and others as a kind of excrescence on the surface of society, having no use or function or office there (Mill, J.S. Mill, Harriet Taylor, 4).

Thus, the social construct of the ideal wife can be used as a means of creating a profitable capital of women by forcing them to conform to the ideals set up for them and failing which, they are left in a position of disgrace. The ideals set up in such a system where failure meant stigmatization, would only be achieved by women to appease the patriarchy and will not in any way help in their individual growth as a person who is free to take their own courses in life and choose their own dreams of being happy and shake off the shackles of the patriarchy.

Thus, there could be a gradual degradation of the situation and position of women as their individual liberties stand to be curbed through the impositions of a patriarchal society and the virtuous wife would no longer be the independent woman who stood on an equal footing with her husband, but would be someone who stands to fulfill only her husband's wishes and the standards set by a judgmental society. This direction would also gradually lead to the removal of the amount of independence of the virtuous wife and would lower her standards after the equal footing is removed. The stigmatization of independent women who aren't married would naturally lead to the inferiority of the wife in the realms of marriage and the subsequent domination of the husband over the wife.

The same ideal of the virtuous wife, when taken in the opposite direction, in a positively women-centric way, would mean a whole world of good for the woman in the society. Proper ideals are always a good thing to strive for through one's own desire, without being forced upon by a powerful extra entity. The ideals of the virtuous wife can also be the ideal of a virtuous husband. The description of the virtuous wife in Proverbs 31 gives a lot of power to the woman as she is seen not only as an able manager of the household but also as a clever manager of the estate that she buys with her own money; furthermore, she becomes a wealthy merchant outside the confines of her house. Thus, she is very progressive in the socioeconomic sphere and this virtuous wife can be a great role model to empower girls to stand on her own feet, on equal footing with men and then continue to do so even after marriage. As a praise to this amazing woman the Bible says, "strength and honour are her clothing" (Holy Bible, NKJV, Proverbs 31: 25), giving her the

qualities that normally would be ascribed to a man, that of having the stereo-typically masculine possession of 'strength' and also the 'honour' that comes from the people due to her extraordinary feats. She can be seen as an independent woman who has free reign of her works and she might be more admired than her husband for her virtue that is praised all over the town. The picture of the virtuous wife would also help men to see that women do not lack behind in any qualities and skills but that they can do better than men when they are given the right environment to bloom and that they are to be treasured invaluable for their virtues in the house as well as the outside world. In a world where women are seen as the 'weaker' sex, it is important to remove the inequality that has prevailed and it can only be done by realizing that women are equal before God, having equal dignity and honour and abilities, not lagging behind in any good work and are not just child-bearers and domestic helps. It is important for the patriarchy to realize that women can possess all the virtues that any man can possess that of strength, honour, wisdom and many others and should be given free rein in order for their virtues to come forth. Adorno in his *Minima Moralia* says,

The only decent marriage would be one allowing each partner to lead an independent life, in which, instead of a fusion derived from an enforced community of economic interests, both freely accepted mutual responsibility (Adorno, Theodor, 31).

Adorno is signifying the importance of independence for an ideal marriage, which respects the interests of both the husband and the wife. However, the Biblical view of the ideal wife as seen in the New Testament calls for the submission of the wife to the husband. It can be seen in Ephesians 5:22-24

Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body. Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives like Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her (Holy Bible, NKJV)

Also in Colossians 3:18-19,

Wives, submit to your own husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives and do not be bitter toward them (Holy Bible, NKJV, Col 3:18-19)

And in 1 Peter 3: 1-4,

“Wives, likewise, be submissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives, when they observe your chaste conduct accompanied by fear. Do not let your adornment be merely outward-arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on fine apparel- rather let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God (Holy Bible, NKJV, 1 Peter 3:1-4).

It can be seen in all these verses that submission to the headship of the husband is the quality of an ideal wife. The Bible equates the submitting of the wife to the husband as the church being subject to Christ. Does it contradict the freedom and the position of the woman that can be seen in the Old Testament in the Proverbs 31 example of a virtuous wife? One cannot say that these views contradict, that the man and woman are unequal beings, but that in the family, for the semblance of order, the husband is supposed to be the head of the family by default. This cannot be construed to the fact that it demeans the worth of the woman in any means. Of course this command for submission can be taken to its illogical ends, that of dominating the woman and considering her as being of lesser worth and being inferior to the man. But the text in no way justifies that. The succeeding verses ask the husband to love the wife as Christ has loved the church, and in Ephesians 5:24 its written “So husbands are to love their wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself”, the analogy of submission is as the submission and love of the church for Christ and the sacrifice of Christ in His love for the church to be His bride. The question of why the husband is supposed to be in headship and not the wife is going to be a fiercely debatable topic with a long drawn battle to topple the patriarchy and feminists would take the fight to remove the instruction for submission,

arguing that making the woman second to the man in the question of authority and headship as a tyrannical order and violates the position of equality of the woman. The critics on the other side of the camp would argue that this was given so that there be order in the family leading to order in the society if this was followed with proper context; they would argue that submission is necessary for love to exist and for anarchy to be contained.

In speaking of marriage, it is easy to fall into the habit of thinking of it as a concrete entity with features as readily observable as any three-dimensional object with volume, density and a visible surface. However, a marriage is actually a relationship between two people, not a concrete object. It is a dynamic system that emerges from the actions and interactions of people (Ross, Catherine E., 282).

Marriage is not just a concretely observable entity, it is a relationship between two people and their interactions and in this abstract nature of marriage lies the individual personal values, emotions and personalities that are a large part of the psychological nature of the family. A mutual respect and love between spouses would lead to a happy marriage full of happy individuals, while a marriage without those equations is likely to be an unsuccessful one.

J.S. Mill and Harriet Taylor in their essay on marriage writes, "It may be assumed, as one of those presuppositions which would almost be made weaker by anything so ridiculous as attempting to prove them, that men and women ought to be perfectly coequal: that a woman ought not to be dependent on a man, more than a man on a woman, except so far as their affections make them so, by a voluntary surrender, renewed and renewing at each instant by free and spontaneous choice. But this perfect independence of each other for all save affection, cannot be, if there be dependence in pecuniary circumstances; a dependence which in the immense majority of cases must exist, if the woman be not capable, as well as the man, of gaining her own subsistence." (Mill, J.S. Mill, Harriet Taylor, 5)

Here, Mill and Taylor acknowledge the need for independence as well as mutual submission for the marriage. The Biblical virtuous wife does not in any way lack in this regard, she is not dependent on her husband for her subsistence, however she is submissive due to her affection. There is no diminishing of her worth but she is second to the man in terms of the hierarchy of the family order for the semblance of order. The quality of submission in the virtuous wife will always be questioned by people from the sceptical brigade, but the other camp would point out that if love humility are virtues to be sought after, then submission is also a good virtue.

The social construct of an ideal wife according to the Bible, lays down some ideals for women to aspire to in the realms of marriage and it definitely gives worth and value to the woman in all spheres. However, the Biblical virtuous wife is supposed to be submissive to her husband in the context of marriage and she is under the husband in the hierarchy of the family, but this position in no way diminishes her individual worth, respect and importance in the wider society.

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FLYING HOME: A JOURNEY TOWARDS FREEDOM

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Abstract:

"Flying Home" is one of the most successful short stories by Ralph Ellison. It is the story that calls attention of all concerned with the essence of human freedom. "Flying Home" is a story about the effects of racism with Todd as a lead character. Todd, a young pilot, is found injured on the white man's land while flying a plane. The narrative soon unfolds through the flashbacks about Todd's ultimate desire to prove himself by his exultation in flight before the whites. He is rescued by an old black farmer, Jefferson who finally helps him win his inner combat by way of self-elevation instead of seeing through whites' eyes. Ellison has based the story on several of his themes, images, and techniques: themes of racial strife, initiation, and search for identity; bird, wing, and flying imagery, judgmental men and framing, myth, folklore, and distorted, surreal-or magical realism passages. In this story Ellison successfully maneuvers the delicate subject of racism and offers solution to resolve the inner conflict.

Keywords: *identity, racism, flying home, straitjacket.*

The present article offers an insight into an ambivalent character who measures himself through the white's eyes and to find the solution to the agony that passes when he confronts racism problems and inner conflicts. It is newsworthy that Ellison has taken the content for his story from an historical event during World War II when Judge William H. Hastie who served as a civilian aide to Henry L. Stimson, the Secretary of War, resigned in 1943 in protest over what he called "the reactionary policies and discriminatory 'practices'" of the army Air Forces. Judge Hastie commented, "The simple fact is that the air command does not want Negro pilots flying in and out of various fields, eating, sleeping and mingling with other personnel, as a service pilot must do in carrying out his missions"

In the present story, Todd, a black pilot, a northerner, trained at Tuskegee, is attempting to correct a dangerous maneuver when he hits a buzzard, crash lands in a field, and breaks his ankle. He falls to earth on rural Alabama, a white man's land; a southern soil, that is associated with the long history of his ancestors who had toiled under slavery in the plantations for the whites. Seeing Todd lying on ground, an old black sharecropper, Jefferson, comes to his rescue. He sends away his son, Teddy for help and then tells the pilot two folktales. The first is a story about seeing two buzzards arising from a horse's corpse, and the second, cataloged by folklorists as early as 1919 as the "Colored Man in Heaven" tale, which is about a black angel who was expelled from heaven because of his pride. The second story offends Todd, who thinks Jefferson is mocking him and "making a screen between them upon which his humiliation glowed like fire." (160). During this time Todd recalls his childhood fascination with flying.

When Dabney Graves, the white man who owns the farm arrives, he has Todd straitjacketed because "you all know you caint let the nigguh git up that high without his going crazy. The nigguh brain ain't built for high altitudes..." (170). When he is being taken away, he suddenly realizes that his own pride has estranged him from his roots. And it was as though he had been lifted out of his isolation, back into the world of men

Although Todd is from "up north," the title refers to his perceived return to his racial history. Earlier he had thought condescendingly how different he was from all that Jefferson represents: "He felt cut off

from them by age, by understanding, by sensibility, by technology and by his need to measure himself against the mirror of other men's appreciation" (152). He mistakenly identifies himself with the machines of airplane, "I'm naked without it. Not a machine, a suit of clothes you wear. And with a sudden embarrassment and wonder, he whispered, "It's the only dignity I have...." (151). He is in the illusion that he can prove his worth by flying high in the sky around the white world. Looking glass theory, a concept developed by Charles Horton Cooley, aptly applies here. The idea is that a person looks himself through the notion of the people who surround him. In other sense the surrounding people act as a mirror. For Todd wings are the certificate to prove him before the eyes of the whites, "Now for him, any real appreciation lay with his white officers" (152). He believes if he flies the plane successfully, he would be elevated in the whites' world. He does not want to be a part of the black community and wrongly tries to escape blackness. He feels humiliated that he is identified racially with Jefferson: "Humiliation was when you could never be simply yourself, when you were always a part of this old black ignorant man" (150).

Jefferson's stories make him one of Ellison's wise fools, like Jim Trueblood, Peter Wheatstraw, and the narrator's grandfather in *Invisible Man*. Todd mistakenly thinks that Jefferson tells his stories naively, just to pass the time (195), but the old sharecropper understands the political consequences of Todd's position. When Jefferson asks Todd why he wants to fly, Todd replies to himself, "Because it makes me less like you," and aloud, "It's as good a way to fight and die as I know" (153). Todd feels inferior in being a part of the community where they are treated akin to prehistoric man. Jefferson responds knowingly, "But how long you think before they gonna let you all fight?" Then Jefferson subtly communicates to Todd that he sees him as a "Jim Crow" black man, by telling him that his son calls buzzards 'Jim Crows'. Like the Jim Crow laws that institutionalized segregation and forced black people to accept separate and unequal treatment, Todd is a 'Jim Crow' pilot, allowed only to fly an "advanced trainer" in a separate and unequal air force. He is a buzzard feeding on the dead horse of bigotry by "allowing himself to be a symbol."

Susan L. Blake, in an article critical of Ellison's use of African American folklore, points to implications of the buzzard imagery:

The buzzard is a common figure in black folklore, representing sometimes the black person scrounging for survival, sometimes his predators, and always the precariousness of life in a predatory society. . . . Representing not only the black man, Todd, but the Jim Crow society, they symbolize the destructiveness of both. Todd thinks of himself as a buzzard. . . . But there is also a clear analogy between him and the horse's carcass. . . . He is being devoured by both the Jim Crow society and his own shame at blackness. Todd {*Tod* "death") is, in trying to destroy old Jefferson, also feeding on his own dead self (124).

Jefferson's second folktale is more critical. He tells how he once went to heaven and flew so well that he was given a "parachute and a map of the state of Alabama" and expelled because he violated the rule, but while he was there, "I was the fly-inset sonofabitch what ever hit heaven!" (262). It is a story of pride, and Todd recognizes its import, feeling "such an intense humiliation that only great violence would wash it away" (262).

Todd's alienation from Jefferson disappears after Graves, who represents "all the unnamed horror and obscenities that he had ever imagined, "kicks him in the chest and straitjackets him. At that moment, a "hot, hysterical laughter rose from his chest" (269). Sensing that Graves, who "done killed enough of us," (267) might kill Todd, Jefferson and his son side track the white man into concern for the plane and take Todd away.

As they leave, the story ends with a powerfully affirmative image of transformation, one that consolidates the story's themes and images from myth and folklore. Todd looks up at a flying buzzard and "like a song within his head he heard the boy's soft humming and saw the dark bird glide into the sun and glow like a bird of flaming gold" (270). Joseph Trimmer alludes the characters to Greek mythology such as

buzzards transforming into “bird of flaming gold”, Todd to Icarus, a symbol of human folly who flies symbol of human folly. The fate of Icarus-flying too close to the Sun-proliferated into Western culture as a warning against excessive ambition and a tale of its consequences. And Jefferson is compared to Daedalus who teaches Todd the political and racial consequences of his flying too high.

The mythic comparisons-Todd /Icarus, Jefferson/Daedalus, Buzzard/ Phoenix - combined with African American folklore presented in the style of magical realism all mark the mature Ralph Ellison. Laughter by Jefferson which Todd took earlier as being humiliated was substituted by his deep understanding within. Todd could get his real identity and he finally comes 'home'. He finds his inner conflict being resolved and achieves a sense of freedom.

“Flying Home” also demonstrates a sophisticated attitude toward black characters who have had to live with racism. With Todd and Jefferson, however, Ellison achieves the balance between affirmation and denial. Jefferson, like Louis Armstrong and Jim Trueblood in *Invisible Man*, has learned to use his creative powers to assert self in the face of forces that deny it. Thus Jefferson brings 'home' Todd, who reinforced himself on false belief based on supremacy of whites' world and materialistic achievement. Ralph Ellison beautifully conveys the importance of folklore and brings out a new definition of Negro culture to survive in the harsh and uncontrolled society.

In this sense, the title "Flying Home" resonates with meaning for both author and character.

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A PRESIDENT AND THE NATION - MAPPING OF SYMBIOTIC DISCOURSE OF INTROSPECTION AND OUTLOOK

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Abstract:

V. V. Giri, the fourth President of India, through his autobiography braces the virtuous and courageous embodiment by practice of his life. In this paper, the lively discourse of introspection and ideation, by entwining the life of a talented and morally committed lawyer to a cause of Indian trade union movement, freedom struggle and strong legislation, is mapped. The mapping of a president's life and the course of the nation in pre and post-Independence phases gets harmoniously juxtaposed painting all that good in the public and private life and simultaneously exposing the intricacies and intrigue of the political dialogue. The memoirs offer a lyrical portrayal of vibrant family values on the way to the destination of a sound nation consisting of strong moral foundation. The introspection of the President presents a window on the national transformation through the life and time symbiotically synthesised.

Key Words: *President, memoirs, discourse, introspection, outlook nation, family, moral transformation.*

Introduction

V.V. Giri was the fourth President of India from 1969 to 1974. Coming from a rich Andhra Niyogi family known for its social service, culture, integrity and legal erudition, Giri started as an eminent lawyer and later abandoned his lucrative practice for the cause of workers and pioneered the working class movement in India and became the architect of Indian trade union movement. V.V. Giri actively took part in the freedom struggle, worked as a member of the Central Legislative Assembly and as Minister for Labour and Industry in Rajaji's and Prakasam's ministries (Chief Ministers) of Madras Province before Independence. His services as India's High Commissioner in Ceylon, Member of Parliament, Labour Minister in Nehru's cabinet, Governor of Uttar Pradesh, Kerala and Mysore states, Vice President and finally President of India enriched the nation in its formative years. He was regarded as the first President of the people because of his status as the leader of the working masses.

V.V. Giri's election as President of India was unique in the sense that he was the first unofficial candidate to have won the election. When President Zakir Husain died in office, V.V. Giri, the then Vice President of India, expected the ruling Congress Party to nominate him to the post as it was the unwritten convention for the Vice President to get the promotion since the days of S. Radhakrishnan. On the contrary, the Congress Party fielded N. Sanjiva Reddy as its official candidate for the election. Then V.V.Giri resigned as Vice President and contested the election as an independent candidate. Due to some serious, internal developments which took place in the Congress Party leading to a conflict between the Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi and the Syndicate faction led by Nijalingappa and others, Mrs. Indira Gandhi announced that the Congress members were at liberty to vote as per their 'conscience'. As the Syndicate was in favour of Sanjiva Reddy, through this announcement, Mrs. Indira Gandhi indirectly hinted about her choice. A majority of the Congress members of Mrs. Indira Gandhi's group voted for V.V.Giri thus leading to the defeat of the official candidate. During the campaign, Giri stated: "The Head of the State is a symbol of the unity of the Nation and, therefore, it is necessary that the office of the President should be kept above party consideration. I am an Indian first, last and always before, I belong to this party or that

party, this group or that group. I stand for the fundamental rights adumbrated in the Constitution of India, especially the right to work and the right to live and for other amenities which will make the common man's life reasonably happy." [Pruthi 61] Thus his election, unwittingly, acted as a catalyst in the first major split of the Congress party and stood testimony to the free will of the legislation.

The Works

V.V. Giri was a learned lawyer who participated actively in the freedom struggle, trade union movement, legislative affairs and administration. This varied experience and his wisdom made him author many books of import such as *Industrial Relations* (1955), *Labour Problems in Indian Industry* (1958), *Problems of Public Administration* (1967), *National Regeneration - Problems and Prospects* (1969), *Civilization at the Cross Roads of Destiny* (1969) and *Jobs for our Millions* (1970) in the fields of Labour, Industrial Relations and Public Administration. V.V.Giri's contribution towards the growth, organization and progress of Indian trade union movement was remarkable. He was greatly influenced by the Irish revolutionary movement and International Labour Organization. The impact and the thoughts find mention in the books, which serve as authoritative sources for the students of Labour and Industry. The Indian Labour Research Institute was named after him as a tribute to his services. Apart from books on labour, he wrote a lucid autobiography, *My Life and Times* (1976), laced with lyrical emotion and empathy.

My Life and Times

V.V.Giri's autobiography, *My Life and Times*, published in 1976, four years before his death in 1980, had its germination dating back to September 1954 when he demitted the office of Minister of Labour in Nehru's cabinet. At that time, he thought that he would be free from responsibilities of office and wanted to concentrate on writing two books: one on labour and the other on his memories of sixty years from 1894 to 1954. However, destiny willed the other way, after barely three years of respite, in 1957 he was called upon to don the mantle of Governorship of three states for about a decade and then two years of Vice Presidentship and five years of Presidentship ending in 1974. V.V.Giri always considered the various posts that he had occupied as opportunities of service to his fellowmen. He made it clear in his preface that the motive behind his memoirs was to present a view of the happenings, which he was privileged, to witness and participate. He adds, "It has been an age-old practice for individuals who have been in the limelight of the public life of a country to write their memoirs, so that the period in which they figured and played a part could be recorded for posterity. Historians deal not only with personalities and events but with policies and their interaction, in a broader national and international context. In our country the practice of writing autobiographies is fairly recent. It is only in the last few decades that eminent men have attempted to present to the world some of the 'inside' stories of many crucial events which influenced and shaped the social, economic and political policies and programmes of the country. These accounts are perforce subjective; nevertheless, they shed considerable light on many vital issues of historic importance and help in getting a better perspective against the historical background." [Giri ix] He is not interested in claiming superiority for his achievements and humbly ascribes his positions to the will of the fate. He desires that "if my account can be of some value in shaping the younger generation and helping them to contribute their share of service to the nation, this work will have attained its purpose." [Giri xii] In the memoirs, his hopes and aspirations are entwined with the unfolding historical narrative with the objective of shaping the nation into a viable socialist state, which V.V.Giri hopes, is destined to occupy its rightful place among the great nations of the world. He terms the attainment of freedom neither as an end nor as a beginning of an end but as "the end of a beginning" [Giri xi] and deems it his proud privilege to be associated with great leaders like Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru.

My Life and Times is divided into thirteen chapters. In the beginning, V.V.Giri sketches his family background and early life in Berhampur, his education in Ireland, his entry and success at the Ganjam Bar and the subsequent entry into politics. Then in the middle part of the memoirs, he describes his dynamic role in the stabilization of trade union movement especially his outstanding work in Bengal Nagpur (B N)

Railway and other Railways. His assignments as a member of the Central Legislative Assembly and minister in Rajaji and Prakasam ministries and as representative in Ceylon find detailed mention in the final part of the autobiography. A small comparative note on history of Irish Independence is appended to the volume.

Family and early life

V.V. Giri talks of his maternal grandfather, D.V. Ramaiah Pantulu, in glowing terms. Ramaiah Pantulu was an undisputed legal luminary of Ganjam District Bar and was greatly respected for his legal acumen and practicality. Giri brings the portrait of his grandfather to the reader's attention in simple phrases: "He upheld truth as the guiding force of his life. He never took up a case which he felt was not a just one, so much so that the contesting parties in many a dispute, instead of putting the whole case to the proverbial 'laws' delays' approached him in the court itself to arbitrate and give judgement, even though he might have been engaged by one of the parties. His decisions were accepted without question and further litigation was invariably dropped...He believed that older people should not block the advancement of the younger generation by clinging on to office. Consequently, he gave up original suits in 1900 when he was about 55 and finally retired from the Bar at the age of 60. He inculcated in us a sense of mental and physical discipline, advising us to learn to sit still and concentrate till the work was done. We benefited greatly from his training." [Giri 1-2]

V.V.Giri's paternal grandfather was engaged in trade and commerce and later worked as translator in a bank, *Dewan* (Minister) of Mandasa Zamindari Estate and as Manager of one of the oldest sugar factories - Aska Sugars. Giri's father, V.V. Jogiah Pantulu, a highly educated teacher turned lawyer and a devout Gandhian, was known for his outspokenness, courage of conviction, honesty, democratic principles and legal knowledge. He never cared for power or status and always followed his conscience. When T. Prakasam, famous lawyer, freedom fighter and Chief Minister of Andhra, was ostracised by the caste Hindus for crossing the seas, a taboo in those days, Giri's father, in defiance of the society's blind belief, invited him to be his guest and offered the seat of honour close to the place of worship in the dining hall. This incident naturally attracted the attention and wrath of the orthodox Brahmins who threatened to ostracise Giri's family also. V.V.Giri learnt from his father the spirit of relentless fight for the cause of conscience against heavy odds and the tenets of disinterested duty. He recalls an event fresh from his memory: "My elder brother died in 1907 at the age of sixteen. The funeral took place at about 9 in the morning and at 11 my father attended the court as usual. He appeared for his client without any reference to the calamity, which had befallen him. When the presiding judge and some of his colleagues suggested that he could have absented himself and asked for an adjournment, he told them 'what is lost cannot be retrieved'. He had done his duty to his son who was no more and it was now his duty to look after the interest of his client." [Giri 3]

V.V.Giri's mother, Subhadramma, was a lovable, noble woman who had groomed the children with inborn purity and impartial affection. The family values that Giri followed in his life were inculcated in him by his parents and other members of the family. He evocatively presents the family atmosphere: "My mother made no distinction between her own children and her various nieces and nephews. They brought us up simply and did not allow us any expensive indulgences. The family was fairly affluent and could have afforded any comforts but it was the conviction of my parents that we should go through the mill and come up in life by our own efforts. We practice complete equality in the family. While children, though immature, we were given full liberty to express our views on many matters. When we committed a mistake, it was pointed out to us without any rebuke or admonition, so that we could realise the mistake and correct ourselves. As long as we realised and repented our errors, he used to say, we deserved every consideration, for then we would commit fewer and fewer. He taught us to acquire the spirit of humility combined with a sense of self-respect. He also stressed on all of us the need to inculcate a habit of introspection, to review our actions before retiring to bed each night, and to resolve to continue the good

acts and avoid the bad one. One must do this diligently and thus steadily become purer in thought, word and deed... My loving mother, Subhadramma, was the embodiment of the ideal Indian woman. She had the good fortune to receive ideal training from her father who, even in the early nineteenth century, believed in the education of women at a time when there were hardly a handful of educated women and the cause of the education of women had made little progress. She was generous to a fault and never uttered a harsh word in her life. She appreciated others' viewpoints. Even the worst sinner, she used to say, had his good points and while one may at best deprecate the act, the individual should not be condemned. In spite of having been born in a highly orthodox Hindu family, she had no prejudices - her religion was humanism embracing all living beings...She retained her unruffled temperament and equanimity through the tragedies she suffered in the course of her life. Of the twelve children she gave birth to, seven died during her lifetime and four of her children were imprisoned for their participation in the Non-cooperation Movement of 1921. The wayward course of destiny never left a scar on either of my parents.”[Giri 5-6] He admits that this background ably equipped the young minds to take a plunge into the freedom struggle.

Irish Days

In 1913, V.V.Giri went to Ireland to join the National University of Ireland at the King's Inn, Dublin to become a Barrister in pursuance of the family tradition of legal profession in which both his grandfather and father had made a name and built up a massive practice throughout the district. The initial hurdles he faced were the table manners, foreign dishes and dress code. In an alien environment, he confidently learnt how to handle a knife or fork. On the issue of dress, he mentions about an interesting meeting with Mr. Gandhi: “While I was in London, Gandhiji came on a visit on his way to India from South Africa, and stayed in the house just across the road. At that time, he was merely Mr. Gandhi, better known as a brilliant lawyer defending the rights of the Indians in South Africa. I paid my respects to him and later called on him frequently to discuss matters of common interest. I asked him at my first meeting why he was wearing a foreign suit and a bowler hat, while I was wearing a Lal-I-Mli suit and fez cap. He replied, “Giri, when you are in Rome, be a Roman.” I must admit I was already regretting the trouble and expense my father had gone to in getting my wardrobe tailored in Calcutta. Very soon, I had to replace it with more suitable English clothes. Eighteen years later I attended the Second Round Table Conference in London as a delegate and Gandhiji's principal Adviser on Labour matters; we were invited to meet Their Majesties at Buckingham Palace and he wore a loin cloth - which prompted British journalist to call him a 'half naked fakir'.”[Giri 13-14]

At the National University of Ireland, Professors of repute taught him Jurisprudence, International Law, Personal Property, Law of Contracts, Law of Equity and Law of Torts as a part of Constitutional Law Course. In this context, his observations on why Indian students preferred to study in Ireland are worth noting: “Indian students preferred to study in Ireland in preference to England because there was neither a colour bar nor racial prejudice of any kind among the Irish, probably due to the adverse circumstances of their history. They felt a great affinity for the Irish who were also chafing under British rule, suffering from very similar problems as Indians, both economic and political, largely due to the exploitation through British imperialism.”[Giri 14]

Although V.V.Giri came to Ireland to pursue legal studies, he was drawn deeply into the Irish freedom struggle during his three-year stay. He made an intensive study of Irish history and found political, economic, religious and cultural causes besides patriotic urges for their continued struggle for self-determination. In *My Life and Times*, he extensively wrote on Irish history and pointed out the similarities between Ireland and India. He was particularly impressed by the working class movement and their solidarity with their national movement. His deep study of stories of sacrifice of martyrs like Wolfe Tone, Emmet and others strengthened his resolve and reaction to assist the Irish against the British. Giri along with Unnava Lakshminarayana (famous Andhra social reformer and writer) formed a little group called Anarchical Society, which advocated the adoption of violent methods to achieve freedom and he in fact

learnt the techniques bomb making. He also organized the Indian Students' Association in Dublin and worked as its Secretary for three years. They published and circulated a pamphlet entitled 'Horrors in South Africa' describing the struggle of Indians in South Africa. About 100,000 copies were despatched to various schools and colleges in India. The British authorities grew suspicious of the contents of the consignments and started an investigation into the matter. They zeroed in on the Irish printer who alerted Giri about the ongoing enquiry. He vividly describes the thrilling experience: "I destroyed all evidence of my connection with the pamphlet and when the police raided my rooms they found no incriminating evidence and I escaped arrest and deportation to India. This was perhaps one of my earliest experiences of a threat of prosecution for direct involvement in the cause of India's freedom." [Giri 15] In later years also he narrowly escaped prosecution during a couple of raids. Hence, he resolved to avoid the habit of writing a diary, however commendable the habit might be, to escape the threat of prosecution based on written evidence.

V.V.Giri was greatly fascinated by the experiences of the Irish sojourn. The Irish people, history, politics, culture, environment and freedom struggle made an indelible impression on his mind and shaped his adult outlook. He was impressed by the economic philosophy of Griffith and Connolly who advocated the concepts of economic conscription for development. He strongly believed in their concept that a judicious interaction for the mutual benefit of the growth of the economy and that of the population was the only way a developing country could be transformed. Giri admits, "My Irish experience made me aware of the binding nature of duty and the overwhelming importance of character. The moral rigours of my upbringing as a child and vows I made to my parents when I sailed from my country confirmed my determination to adopt right thinking, speech and conduct under all manner of conditions, whatever the provocation. My Irish contacts and observances strengthened these convictions. The passion for the political freedom of my country, and the economic emancipation of the working class and all those exploited, were the twin ideas richly painted before me in bright colours, though on a dim canvas. As I looked at this vision which constantly enthralled and fascinated me, my path was set and the goal was only to rapidly rush towards reaching and realising it." [Giri 34] Thus in the 'other' he saw his fully realised self as the Sanskrit word *parikrama* for travel includes the connotation of self-discovery in the other's territory. He sets out to return to Indian shores with the object burning brightly in his heart.

Practice at the Bar and political entry

On his return, V.V.Giri was enrolled as an advocate of Madras High Court. Eminent lawyer, T. Prakasam, (later Chief Minister of Madras Presidency and Andhra State) moved his enrolment before the Chief Justice who upon a perusal of his antecedents and education background, immediately offered the post of District Munsif at Ramachandrapuram of East Godavari District. It was an attractive offer for a young man fresh from the completion of education. V.V.Giri refused it and revealed his determination he had taken in Ireland to work for the country and free it from the clutches of foreign power. He had selected the "rough and tumble path of political struggle rather than one of personal comfort and material security." [Giri 36] The English judge was shocked at the resolve of young man.

V.V.Giri started practice as a lawyer under his father's guidance and soon became successful in several adoption suits and other cases. He became a much sought after legal authority across the nation. It was a profitable profession and in a short time, he earned more than what his father had spent on him. Yet he gave up full time practice much to the disappointment of the family, which had over half a century practice. In response to the call of Gandhiji, he joined the Non-cooperation Movement of 1921. He says, "Personally I have never had any regrets because my only determination in life was to serve my country and help it to secure *Swaraj* (self rule)." [Giri 37] During his teens, V.V.Giri had a liking for Gokhale, the moderate leader of Congress, and his policies of conciliation. In school days, he used to memorize and repeat great speeches of great orators like Surendranath Banerji, Bhupendra Nath Basu, Ambika Charan Mazumdar, Ras Behari Ghosh and L.A. Govindaraghava Iyer. The childhood wishes coupled with his

resolve of Irish days made him plunge into the freedom struggle.

V.V.Giri used to interact with several stalwarts of freedom struggle and attend Congress sessions wherever they were held. He was present at one such significant session, the Lucknow session of 1916. At this session the moderates, the extremists, the home rulers and the Muslims were brought on to one single platform. Influenced by Gandhiji's revolutionary concept of passive resistance and the unity that had been achieved at the Lucknow session, he joined the Congress and Home Rule Movement of Mrs. Besant. He terms Gandhiji's *Satyagraha* as a 'many sided sword.' Gandhiji's revolutionary leadership energised people as there was an all-round resentment and unhappiness at the British policies. V.V.Giri courted arrest along with thousands of persons and in those days going to jail as a form of resistance and protest was indeed a new and exciting experience. In jail, Giri and others staged a hunger strike demanding better amenities and food for the prisoners which resulted in the improvement of the conditions. During his imprisonment in 1922, he had a peculiar dream, which was the direct fallout of the prevailing situation of the times. He narrates the dream thus: "I was under sentence of death for a political offence. My parents, my wife and children came day after day in sorrow, to comfort me and to take their leave of me. I, in turn, consoled my mother in my dream, that the dread of death was something like the aversion young children have towards a dose of castor oil. They take it after being coaxed and cajoled, but once they drink it the fear of it vanishes. This dream, however, had a happy ending. While I was being taken to the gallows, a reprieve was received by the Superintendent of the Jail who came rushing to say that, under orders of the Government, I was not to be hanged but was to be awarded only life imprisonment. This dream made a deep impression on my mind and must have been the result of my awareness of the impending execution of a condemned prisoner - the days of anguish and suffering, the helplessness of his parents, wife and children in the face of his doom as the day drew nearer and nearer." [Giri 44]

The Trade Union Movement finds a leader

The rise of V.V.Giri as an unquestioned leader of the working classes was described comprehensively in the middle part of the autobiography. He nursed an ambition from his student days in Ireland to bring order into the unorganized trade union movement and rally the forces of workers against the British imperialism. Until 1920, the working class movement in India was wayward and leaderless. The dynamic leaders of the society concentrated their attention on the nationalist movement and thus trade union movement was a much-neglected sector in need of a vigorous leadership on the lines of freedom struggle.

After his release from imprisonment in 1922, V.V.Giri was extended invitation to take up the leadership of Bengal Nagpur Railway Union (B.N. Railway) which was accepted by him. Thus a leader was found for the B.N. Railway workers and consequently for the Indian Trade Union Movement. During that time, Railways were controlled either by the Governments of the local provinces or by the Company, which was represented by the Agent from England. Under V.V.Giri's effective leadership, the Union grew quickly into numerous branches and got recognition too. He fiercely fought with the managements over issues like unjustified retrenchment of workers, death benefit fund, minimum wages and other welfare measures. He was instrumental in the establishment of Employees' Urban Bank with the objective of promoting thrift among the workers. He expounds the role of trade union in unequivocal terms: "It was my conviction that while the Union should present the grievances of the workers to the management; it also had to play a positive and constructive role in running the Railways efficiently. The reasonable approach made the management extend its support to the Union." [Giri 47]

Retrenchment of workers was an issue on which V.V.Giri fought fierce battles with the management of B.N. Railway by applying many methods like petitions, persuasion, consultations, negotiations, strikes and direct action. He achieved remarkable successes by uniting the workers on several ticklish issues and made the workers realize the power of the union. The B.N.Railway strike of 1927 was the biggest successful strike organized by the union under the leadership of V.V.Giri. The

situation is described vividly: “The workers had made many sacrifices for achieving success and for the fulfilment of their legitimate demands. We collected grain, *atta* (wheat flour) and other essential articles from individuals and institutions to maintain the workers. Every morning volunteers would take these throughout the colony and the women would take only as much as was needed by them. The British Trade Union Congress and the Transport Workers' Federation of Amsterdam and other international Trade Unions contributed large sums of money for attending to the needs of the men on lockout at Kharagpur... The strike was called off. It was the first time in the world that full lockout wages were paid for a period of nearly three months. It was a great moral victory for the workers in India. ...The International Transport Workers' Federation said that the payment of three months lockout wages to so many thousands of men was unknown in the world. It was truly a feather in the cap of the B.N. Railway Union.”[Giri 63-64] V.V.Giri played a key role in shaping the All India Railwaymen's Federation consisting of all Railway Unions of different provinces and zones. His work in the unification of A.I.T.U.C. and N.T.U.F. was arduous and epoch making. His proposals were christened as 'Giri Proposals' which helped the Trade Union Movement in India to take firm root. He represented the workers at II Round Table Conference in 1931 and argued for the inclusion of labour under Concurrent list instead of Provincial list.

On the issue of strikes, V.V.Giri's comments are worth relevant: “I have always held that merely getting more emoluments and material advantages would not constitute success in a strike, and that the moral victory of a strike was most important. Even if all the demands of the union were not conceded, so long as the workers could get back to their work without victimisation and with a general assurance that their grievance would be looked into it was enough.”[Giri 75] He avers that on the subject of negotiations nothing is the last word and cautions, “In dealing with problems of industrial relations neither of the parties can afford to take an unalterable stand. No doubt one is tempted to do so, but any rigid or inflexible approach, however reasonable the demands be, would make the other party equally rigid and this would not be conducive, in the long run, to arrive at a reasonable settlement of the differences. While trade union leaders may pitch their demands very high, it is equally necessary for them to see the viewpoint of the management. This will not only help in securing a settlement of some of the basic issues but, also, make the employers realise that the Union is not an agitational one but one which adopts a constructive approach to problems.”[Giri 79]

Speaking at the fifty fourth session of the International Labour Conference in Geneva on 10th June 1970 V.V.Giri made the following comments which carry contemporary relevance in the context of globalization: “No longer can the 'isolationist' policy of competing nationalism be considered as an ideal. Political or economic disturbances in one area are bound to create far-reaching repercussions in other parts of the world. The developed countries have realised that if they are to enjoy the fruits of progress, it is essential for the world to unite and work in close cooperation with one another. It has now been recognized that nations do not and cannot live along by themselves but only as parts of 'One World'...The labour movement is a world movement. It is more international than national in character. ...National governments should accept the rule of morality and the stronger ones should give up all attempts to dominate and exploit weaker nations. Equality among human beings should be fully recognised and no special privileges or superiority should be assumed by or attached to any race or nation.”[Giri 96]

Member of Central Legislative Assembly

When Congress decided to contest elections in the pre independence India, V.V.Giri contested from Ganjam-Visakhapatnam non-Muslim constituency in the elections to the Fifth Central Legislative Assembly in 1934 and won the election. Owing to his association with the trade union movement, he used to concentrate on legislative matters relating to labour. He was nominated to the Select Committee appointed to amend the Indian Mines Act of 1923. He suggested that a forty-hour week should be introduced to solve the problem of unemployment and further suggested that the age of those employed in mines be raised to fifteen, or preferably sixteen. It was his conviction that child labour should be abolished.

V.V.Giri acted as the member of Standing Finance Committee for the Railways. He recommended that a civilized state should provide employment to all those who were able-bodied and who were willing to work. He advanced his argument by saying that if committing suicide was punishable under law, then the law should see that the right to live and right to work were enforceable. The welfare economist in Giri can be seen in the narration of his experiences and speeches as a Member of the Central Legislative Assembly.

Ministership in Madras Province

Under the Government of India Act of 1935, elections were held to the provinces of India in 1937. After much dithering and discussion, V.V.Giri contested the election for a seat in Madras State Assembly from Bobbili against a formidable candidate, the Maharaja of Bobbili and emerged victorious. He was allotted the portfolio of Labour and Industries, which included Co-operation, Commerce, Fisheries, Electricity and Harijan Uplift. He used to deftly handle the British officers and prevent them from dominating the new Ministers. Once on a certain administrative issue of convening of labour officers' meeting by the Ministers, one senior officer, Sir John Hall got V.V.Giri's order cancelled by directly going to the Prime Minister, Rajaji. V.V.Giri strongly objected to this and wrote a letter of protest to Rajaji. He felt it was discourteous on the part of one Minister, even if he was the Prime Minister, to countermand the order of another Minister. Further, he added that it would create a feeling in the minds of the Civil Servants that they could approach the Prime Minister directly and upset the decisions of other Ministers, which would lead to an incongruous situation. Rajaji immediately expressed his apologies for the inconvenience caused to him. Later, V.V.Giri admonished the officer concerned. This incident evoked a comment from another officer that in nearly thirty years of his service he had never seen a senior Englishman trembling in his shoes as on that occasion. In spite of this desire for strictness, V.V.Giri admits that no one is infallible and narrates an incident wherein he erred in his judgement of an official and expressed his apologies to Rajaji. He hastens to add, "Perhaps many of the conflicts that arose were merely a result of misunderstandings, but hypersensitivity also accounted for a few." [Giri 117] He was of the firm opinion that the English officers were in no way superior to Indian officers and he differed greatly with Rajaji who preferred soft treatment of English officers as 'crotons and roses'. During his tenure, he became famous for his uncompromising stand on numerous administrative matters and for his courage of conviction with which he surmounted the problems.

As Minister of Labour, V.V.Giri formulated a labour policy for the Madras Province, which envisaged measures like employment insurance, holidays with pay, housing of labour, dispute-settling machinery etc. He always recommended rapid industrial development and planning for the prosperity of the nation and had taken active part in the discussions of National Planning Committee in 1938. He opined that the political events that led to the making of Indian history in the present century could not be disassociated from the economic factors. It had been his conviction that scientific planning for harnessing the country's resources in an effort to transform the social and economic life of the population is essential.

V.V.Giri was a champion of Harijan cause. Soon after he became Minister, he declared that he would not visit any temple, which would deny their entry to its precincts. Incidentally, his parliamentary secretary, B.S.Murty, was a Harijan. V.V.Giri narrates an incident: "When my younger sister Sarojini got married in 1938, I invited Murty also to the wedding. He was given a prominent place at lunch, which was attended, by the most orthodox Hindus and Brahmins. By that time people knew my forthright views on the subject and they accepted him without a murmur." [Giri 153]

Ceylon Days

V.V.Giri was appointed as High Commissioner to Ceylon in 1947 and he worked there until 1950. He accepted the position because of several reasons: "The most important among them was the fact that I was disgusted with petty local quarrels. All along in my public career I had functioned on an all-India level on behalf of the working class. Undoubtedly, I had been drawn into provincial politics in 1937-39 but even

then, I was more interested in questions relating to planning or to evolving a national labour policy. Another reason was that both in 1937-39 and in 1946-47 I was in charge of emigration. I was aware of the problems of the South Indian labourers who had gone to Burma, Malaya and Ceylon and I felt I would be able to contribute to the solution of the problems of the Indian settlers in Ceylon.” [Giri 193]

In the book, *My Life and Times*, while tracing the history of emigrant workers in Ceylon, V.V.Giri demanded that the Ceylon government should guarantee decent living and working conditions and should not treat them as second-rate citizens. He further said that Ceylon Indians should feel that their interests - political, economic and cultural - were identical with those of the Ceylonese. He added that important matters relating to the status of Indians in Ceylon have to be carefully handled by both the Ceylon and Indian Governments and settled satisfactorily. He hoped that it would be a notable page in the history of both these countries if they succeed in settling this issue. Giri's words sound prophetic in the light of agitation for human rights and the consequent mayhem that happened in the histories of modern Sri Lanka and India. Middle path was the path that Giri had selected to tread without upsetting the fine balance and in that process; he endeared himself to the high and low.

Conclusion

V.V.Giri's autobiography is a significant contribution towards the enrichment of the genre. In the restricted area of political memoirs, the book has carved a place of its own. In the book he reaches out to the major facets of his life through the window of movements and agitations for a cause. The broad thematic presentation of memories instead of following a strict chronological structure lends a charming interface of past, present and future to the book. While narrating the incidents and sketching the people, V.V.Giri adopts a mixed approach of utilizing his observations and written exchanges transacted among the people in question. This method added an authoritative canopy to the descriptions. The perceptions of V.V.Giri are carefully painted through simple expressions and clear structured sentences. His elaborate exploration of the Irish history, growth of Trade Union policies, progress of pre independence legislative functioning, fall of Prakasam Ministry and the problems of Indian immigrants in Sri Lanka is a reliable method of communication which will prepare the reader for a clear understanding of the events and people.

Giri's account of Irish history, growth of Trade Union movement and the policies of government, progress of pre independence legislation, fall of Prakasam Ministry and the problems of Indian immigrants in Sri Lanka in *My Life and Times* offer an insight into the issues of those times. His legislative and administrative experience in planning and labour and how several socialist ideas have been morphed into policy making makes interesting reading owing to the touch of personal reflection. Giri describes the incidents of his life in a level tone and in graphic detail. As K. Chandrasekharan says, “In an autobiography incidents associated with such high-class-men as Gandhiji and Rajaji are likely to raise much public curiosity and interest. Still, how Giri in his narration has not betrayed any self-consciousness or a spirit of bravado is what makes the reading highly edifying. Maybe there is not much of art in this writing but a clean mind and a healthy outlook are evident in every page of a none-too-prosaic narration.” (Chandrasekharan). Giri's prose in his autobiography is lyrical and innocently candid. His description of his childhood, the upbringing and short sketches of his parents and grandparents are picturesque. The cherishing of his childhood is felt in the initial chapters. He describes the passing away of his father in these words: “As we were talking, my father suddenly collapsed and fell sideways onto my lap. A physician was called immediately - but it was too late. He was moved to the hospital but could not be revived. His death was a great blow to all of us and it was only because of his training that I was able to maintain some semblance of poise and equanimity in the face of this calamity. [Giri -8]

Concern for issues, disinterested action and exercise of moderation were the principles that guided V.V.Giri's life. Courage of conviction and adherence to the conscience made his life remarkable. The portrayal of his patriotic zeal and integrity is original that speaks of the learning of the mind. The memoirs of V.V. Giri serve to exemplify the graphic morale of the life that life can not only be a dream, vision but

also the joyful realization of the ideals too. *My Life and Times* is truly about a life of class and a time of mass movement.

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STANDING AT THE CROSS-ROADS: SHASHI DESHPANDE'S HEROINES

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Abstract:

*Shashi Deshpande's novels represent the modern Indian women trying to redefine their roles and rediscovering their social positions and social relationships. Her young heroines rebel against the traditional way of life characterized by joint family, rigid caste system, patriarchal domination to name a few. However, no matter how modern they try to be in their ways of thinking, yet they cling to their past bringing into forefront their tendency to negotiate with modernity. This study aims at analyzing negotiation with modernity on the part of Shashi Deshpande's protagonists through a close analysis of her novels *Small Remedies*, *Roots and Shadows*, *The Dark Holds No Terrors*, *That Long Silence*, *A Matter of Time*, *Moving On* and *The Binding Vine*. Shashi Deshpande has taken on herself the vocation to record the unique struggle of her women characters to document their heightened sensitivity in their agonized perception of their new social roles in times of a historical rupture within the traditional ethos. Their social, individual and functional roles have been explained by having recourse to the philosophical speculations of Bourdieu and Habermas.*

Keywords: *philosophical speculations, traditional ethos, negotiation.*

Modern society is the creation of human beings, the experience of which heralds a sense of freedom and endless possibilities for a brighter future. This new idea of freedom brought in with modernity involves time consciousness. The time span upholding rational thinking and secular approach is unique to modernity. Time here means a duration which is ever changing and looks towards the future than the past. The individual of this modern society considers himself/herself not only as a creator of this society but also as a person with a vision for the future. Unlike traditional society bound by rigidity and static structures, modernity symbolizes flexibility in social relations. Rejection of tradition; importance and emphasis on individualism are unique traits of modernity. Modernity lies in discovering oneself; defining identity, not following a dictate.

Women have been under subjugation of authority in the form of man, community and religion from time immemorial. These forms of authority consider themselves moral watchdogs of women, trying to keep a control of their lives as well. Women have always been denied individual identity; their actions, their thoughts are all dictated upon by society. They have no choice but to submit, to accept. Shashi Deshpande's novels represent the modern Indian women trying to redefine their roles and rediscovering their social positions and social relationships. Her young heroines rebel against the traditional way of life characterized by joint family, rigid caste system, patriarchal domination to name a few. Owing to their rebellious tendency, the protagonists raise their voice against the patriarchal setup and start their journey in search of individuality. They have an inner strength that is little known of. However, no matter how modern they try to be in their ways of thinking, yet they cling to their past bringing into forefront their tendency to negotiate with modernity.

This study aims at analyzing negotiation with modernity on the part of Shashi Deshpande's protagonists through a close analysis of her novels *Small Remedies*, *Roots and Shadows*, *The Dark Holds No Terrors*, *That Long Silence*, *A Matter of Time*, *Moving On* and *The Binding Vine*. The term negotiation connotes a dialogue between various interlocutors over the ensemble of particular socio - cultural norms,

attitudes and practices that was prevalent in India during late 1980s to early 21st century. Shashi Deshpande has taken on herself the vocation to record the unique struggle of her women characters to document their heightened sensitivity in their agonized perception of their new social roles in times of a historical rupture within the traditional ethos. Their social, individual and functional roles have been explained by having recourse to the philosophical speculations of Bourdieu and Habermas.

Essence of modernity lies in portrayal of women and men in Shashi Deshpande's novels. Her novels depict a psychological journey into the minds of urban middle - class educated Indian women standing at the cross - roads of tradition. Shashi Deshpande's protagonists present a contradictory picture of being in 'ennui' yet lively; trying to assert their freedom while holding on to their past. This particular aspect of her novels show how the protagonists want to come out of their shell bound by traditional norms and custom but they cannot completely let go off their past. They are negotiating with their lives at every point while trying to assert themselves yet taking care of the social structure. Shashi Deshpande's women are strong characters who can take care of themselves. They do not want any support from men to lead their lives. In the words of Urmi of *The Binding Vine* (1998)

“Or do they think it's a sign of a breakdown? Yes, that's right, that's what they are afraid of, that's why they all watch me so carefully, so anxiously. That's why they want Kishore to be here - to pick up the bits and pieces. And put them together again? What's broken can't be mended. But I'm not broken. I'm not going to break.” (BV 19)

While negotiating with modernity, Deshpande's characters reveal a close affinity with existentialist view of life. Deshpande borrows Kierkegaard's words to understand one's position, “Life must be lived forwards, but it can only be understood backwards.” (MT 98)

Shashi Deshpande shows how Sumi accepts her fate and moves ahead with her life confidently; however she has the desire to question Gopal. She questions tradition and the role of men in society but does not ignore her social responsibility.

“... if I meet Gopal I will ask him one question, just one, the question no one has thought of. What is it, Gopal, I will ask him, that makes a man in this age of acquisition and possession walk out on his family and all that he owns? Because, and I remember this so clearly, it was you who said that we are shaped by the age we live in, by the society we are part of. How then can you, in this age, a part of this society, turn your back on everything in your life? Will you be able to give me an answer to this?” (MT 27)

Indian modernism can be interpreted solely in terms of her fundamentals, fundamentals which predominantly have a social bias. Unlike the presuppositions of Western feminism, where focus is on individualism, Indian feminist notion emphasizes on the collective self rather than the individual self. Modernism in Indian perspective can be considered significant only if social norms, traditions, dogmas and beliefs are affected and transformed. In Shashi Deshpande's novels, daughters are found to rebel against their mother.

According to Shalmalee Palekar,

“The conflict between mother and daughter is presented by the author as a conflict between tradition and modernity, a clash between freedom and dependence, of the assertion of selfhood and the need for love in relationships.” (Palekar 2005:60)

The protagonists of the novels of Shashi Deshpande clamor for change but within the accepted social structure. The protagonists do not want to tread into the path of reinterpreting their roles. Their only desire is to lead a life of dignity and self-respect within their anchorage in married lives. Like, Jaya in *That Long Silence* is symbolic of sacrifice motivated by her desire to establish her dignity and identity approved by a patriarchal social set up. Jaya negotiates with modernity by accepting her role as an apparently satisfied housewife. She gives up her writing career and her feelings for Kamat. In a way she suppresses her individuality in spite of not being happy in her marriage.

scared of hurting Mohan, scared of jeopardizing the only career I had, my marriage (TLS 144).

Jaya's words explain her condition of being trapped in an unhappy marriage yet not having the courage to come out of it. Urban middle class women are typically represented by Jaya who is not ignorant of liberal Western ideas, yet she cannot escape from the claws of chauvinist notions. These notions are dictated to her as having social and cultural sanction by those around her. Inspire of her efforts to portray herself as a perfect woman and mother she finds herself lonely and estranged.

In the words of Habermas,

“In their cooperative interactions each must ascribe rationality to the other, at least provisionally. In certain circumstances, it may turn out that such a presupposition was unwarranted. Contrary to expectation, it might happen that the other person cannot account for her actions and utterances and that we cannot see how she could justify her behavior. . . . This supposition states that a subject who is acting intentionally is capable, in the right circumstances, of providing a more or less plausible reason for why she did or did not behave or express herself this way rather than some other way. Unintelligible, odd, bizarres, or enigmatic expressions prompt follow - up questions because they implicitly contradict an unavoidable presupposition of communication and therefore trigger puzzled or irritated reactions.” (BNR: 36)

Instances of such examples are widespread in Shashi Deshpande's novels. In fact it is interaction at the individual level but within the social framework which make her novels stand apart. Such examples can be drawn from interaction between various characters in *Roots and Shadows*. When Akka took care of her paralyzed husband it marked her adherence to social norms and her moral obligation to marriage. However, her reluctance to let him meet his mistress asserted her sense of individuality and self - esteem. Her remark, “Listen to me. It's my turn now. I have listened to you long enough.” (RS 71) shows her level of interaction with her husband. On the other hand, Sunanda's sole motive to please Akka, representative of patriarchy in the family, was for material benefit. Adopting herself to her circumstances and environment, she became “cunning, greedy, devious and unscrupulous.” (RS 32)

The kind of individual interaction within social network in Shashi Deshpande's novels is reflective also of Bourdieu's habitus which “links the social and the individual because the experiences may be unique in their particular contents, but are shared in terms of their structure with other of the same social class, gender, ethnicity, sexuality, occupation, nationality, region and so forth.” (Maton 2012: 53)

Shashi Deshpande's novels emphasize Habermas's remark that conventional norms functioned uncontestably and with ease in a traditional society. The “post conventional” social order has led to a gradual loss of unquestioned authority of customs and traditions. They can play the motivating role only when they are considered legitimate. Being a staunch supporter of caste system, Akka disapproved of Indu's inter - caste marriage. However, in spite of this disapproval she left all her wealth for Indu. She showed her faith and confidence in Indu regarding matters of wealth and property. This action of Akka is representative of her 'modernist perspective' in spite of her rigid religious bias.

Habermas finds the question of individual choices as restricted by the reality of our social tendency of holding one another responsible, taking each other to be worthy of appreciation or reprimand, and believing in other's capability of justifying their actions. All action according to Habermas, is teleological in the sense that it is goal oriented. However, depending on what the goal is and how an actor believes it to be attainable, different action types emerge.

Therefore, from Habermas's point of view, “The basic aspiration is a desire to be recognized for who one is; not for some rational, idealized version of who one ought to be, and certainly not for being what others want one to be.” (Anderson 2012: 106)

In *That Long Silence*, Shashi Deshpande portrays Mukta as an educated woman whose knowledge and experience have given her a sane view of human relations. She does not think it scandalous

on the part of a married woman to attend a lonely man who is already dead or about to die. That is why she rebukes Jaya for leaving Kamat alone at the final moment. Mukta's action emphasizes Habermas's point of view.

Bourdieu's idea of habitus also points out a similar viewpoint when it refers to one's notion of being free, yet being ruled by assumptions about other's conduct, behavior and attitude while taking everyday decisions.

As Bourdieu states, "all of my thinking started from this point: how can behavior be regulated without being the product of obedience to rules?" (1994d: 65)

"We are faced at any moment with a variety of possible forks in that path, or choices of actions and beliefs. This range of choices depends on our current context (the position we occupy in a particular social field), but at the same time which of these choices are visible to us and which we do not see as possible are the result of our past journey, for our experiences have helped shape our vision. Which choices we choose to make, therefore, depends on the range of options visible to us, and on our dispositions (habitus), the embodied experiences of our journey. Our choices will then in turn shape our future possibilities, for any choice involves foregoing alternatives and sets us on a particular path that further shapes our understanding of ourselves and of the world." (Maton 2012: 52-53)

Bourdieu's Habitus concentrates on human actions, feelings, thoughts, emotions and their existence. It focuses on our past, how it influences our present and consequently affects our future. Shashi Deshpande's representation of Mira in *Binding Vine* highlights how past experiences play a part in shaping one's present and one's future. Mira, a victim of marital rape, develops an intense dislike for sex. She writes poems but her bitterness for love stops her from writing poems on love. Before her marriage, her poems dealt with topics like the road builders, singers, etc. and after marriage those expressed her feelings aroused by the traumatic experiences of her own life. Mira's transformation is reflective of Bourdieu's habitus which aims to transform one's way of seeing the world. In *Dark Holds No Terrors* Sarita's mother's childhood experience of being treated as unwanted affected her personality and developed in her preference for a male child and bitterness for her daughter Sarita. Sarita's maternal grandmother, deserted by her husband, had to bring up her two daughters at her parental home. Sarita's mother was one of them. She grew into a silent and docile woman with "eyes joyless arid, the expression one of indifference." (DHNT 143) Her childhood feelings of insecurity and unwantedness have affected her personality and motivated her to seek power and cling to it. On the other hand Sarita's experience of being rejected by her mother in a way influences her decisions in future and leads her to negotiate with modernity in spite of her modern outlook.

Habitus is the link not only between past, present and future, but also between the social and the individual. Bourdieu further stresses the importance of one's idea about one's history, and how that idea plays a major role in shaping our future choices actions.

Shashi Deshpande reiterates Bourdieu's ideas when she says, "The truth, perhaps, is that whatever we do, we are always giving the past a place in our lives." (MT 100)

The present day lifestyle with its endless demands leaves modern man entangled in an anxious state of mind. A never ending choice is always at his fingertip leading him towards an alienated position. Habermas links autonomy to the development of social structures. He believes "Personal autonomy initially has its value and function in the context of navigating choices, the more complex a society becomes and the more choices individuals must face, the richer and more developed their autonomy has to be in order to be able to fulfill that function successfully."

Bourdieu defines habitus as a property of social agents that comprises a "structured and structuring structure" (1994d: 170). It is "structured by one's past and present circumstances, such as family upbringing and educational experiences. It is "structuring" in that one's habitus helps to shape one's

present and future practices. It is a “structure” in that it is systematically ordered rather than random or unpatterned. This “structure” comprises a system of dispositions which generate perceptions, appreciations and practices (1990c: 53). (Maton 2008: 51)

Bourdieu argues that in order to understand interaction between people or to explain social phenomenon, it is insufficient to look at what is said, or what happened. It is necessary to examine the social space in which interactions, transactions and events occurred. (Bourdieu 2005: 148)

Actions are termed traditional when their ends and means are fixed by customs and social norms. Being habitual it is taken for granted. In his four fold classification of social action, the last one is traditional action which is fixed by customs and traditions. Such action is habitual in nature. The typical problem of Deshpande's protagonists remains the inner conflict between surrendering attitude to tradition and rebellion against social set up. Habermas rightly pointed out that for most people the moral life primarily concerns judgments of right and wrong either prospectively or retrospectively. (P 129)

Indu, the heroine of *Roots and Shadows* (1992) left her home at the age of eighteen to get married according to her choice. This action represented her as a harbinger of new generation who reviews everything with reason and new vision. She explains the ideals of detachment and liberation and tries to achieve them. However, unfortunately enough she fails. Inspire of Jayant, her husband, failing to live up to her expectation and betraying her hopes for harmony, peace and happiness she fails in her attempts of liberation. Inability to enfranchise the traditional background in which she is reared forces Indu to negotiate with her modern outlook to the extent that she starts believing that she cannot be complete without her husband.

“Now I dress the way I want. As I please.’ As I please? No, that's not true. When I look in the mirror, I think of Jayant. When I dress, I think of Jayant. When I undress, I think of him. Always what he wants. What he would like. What would please him? And I can't blame him.... It's the way I want it to be.” (RS 49)

As Habermas puts it the basic (modern) aspiration at issue here is a desire to be recognized for one who is; not for some national, idealized version of who one ought to be, and certainly not for being what others want one to be. (p 106)

Shashi Deshpande's novels record strivings for adjustments for three or four generations. Change is inevitable in any society. New rulers with new set of rules and regulations have come. More and more educational institutions have come into being. Increasing rate of literacy and education are enlightening women too. Industrialization has caused concentration of a lot of people into urban centres while the pressure of rising population as well as the land reforms (even if limited ones) are stirring to rural life. Unemployment has appeared as a big problem and the competition for jobs. People living under these conditions are trying somehow to make life possible for themselves.

Modern Indian women of the new era felt the need of changing the patriarchal structure at last and as a result they refused to be within the sheltered cage any more. They attempt to redefine their relationship with tradition while reevaluating their roles within the family gradually realizing that “new bonds replace old, that's all.” (RS 14) This interrogating the traditional social set up has given a new dimension to modernity. The problem of being a female has always been highlighted by Shashi Deshpande in her novels. Indu in *Roots and Shadows* brings out the pain of being a 'female':

“As a child they had told me I must be obedient and unquestioning. As a girl, they had told me I must be meek and submissive. Why? I had asked. Because you are a female. You must accept everything, even defeat, with grace because you are a girl, they had said. It is the only way, they said, for a female to live and survive.” (RS 158)

All of Deshpande's characters are rebel in this sense. They are born to fight - both with the society at large and within the family in particular. Also they redefine their own roles in the society. The long

nurtured role of daughter, wife or mother is not accepted at its face value by them; rather they add new meaning to the lives of new women.

The advent of modernity in the recent past has witnessed a complete change in the traditional pattern of parent child relationship. Indian society has some specific problems in this sphere and naturally some unwanted incidents occur due to generation gap. The novels of Shashi Deshpande accord due importance to this aspect.

Shashi Deshpande's women challenge their victimization and look for a new balance of power between the two sexes; however their concept of liberty is not borrowed from the West. They prefer to conform to their filial demands to ensure domestic harmony. They advocate compromise over revolt to avoid discord in their family relationship. Modernity, in terms of their new position in the society has been highlighted by Shashi Deshpande. Shashi Deshpande is in the quest of creating a 'new woman' out of her protagonists who belong to different culture, religious and linguistic backgrounds. The novelist is against the patriarchal establishment which cripples the innate creativity of women.

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AN ECOCRITICAL ANALYSES OF COETZEE'S *LIFE & TIMES OF MICHAEL K*

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Abstract:

All living things are interconnected to each other. All should be treated equally. This relation between human and nature is beyond explanation. The entire living creature in this world has their own importance, when humans start to forget this natural destruction occurs. But when nature is being hampered by humans by considering themselves above it, nature plays silent upon this treatment. This study aims to prove that Michael K is a representative of the colonized who can be equated with the environment which is thought to be inferior to humans. The treatment of both the nature and a colonized subject are parallel. Coetzee in a broader way states that every organism in the universe should be treated equally and no other living thing are lesser to anyone. This article also analyses Michael K as the representation of the deeds that humans do to nature.

Keywords: *parallel b/w nature and colonized subject, colonial prejudice, eco criticism*

J. M. Coetzee's *Life and Times of Michael K* is informed by a rich and early ecological vision that has not been sufficiently well thought-out so far. It is said that Coetzee shows an interest in all living organisms and pays attention to their environment and interaction. It is noted that Coetzee's vision is not limited to humans and that he also talked that minor forms of life like plants and animals are as significant as human life on earth. The result is that the "non-human other" is never ignored in Coetzee, which testifies to the importance of a broad philosophical vision that acknowledges rather than counts difference. This paper, hence, makes a connection between Coetzee's ecological vision and his attention to otherness. Also explores and defends an often underplayed theme in Coetzee's fiction, namely gardening. In Coetzee's vision, plants and landscapes are unjustifiably ignored and exploited in times of political rivalry, which accounts for Coetzee's eco critical relevance.

Life and Times of Michael K, an extremely bleak novel characterized by its semi-anonymous protagonist' dim and unprofitable knowledge of the apartheid and the war-riven landscape in which he lives. In the novel we came close to one of Coetzee's most singular and controversial characters, Michael K, who in the middle of a civil war badly affecting South Africa retires to an abandoned farm in Prince Albert and tries to live a lonely existence as a gardener. His non-appropriative and non-penetrative relation to the land, his idle lifestyle and his refusal to become a servant, together with his continuous escapes from the confinements and control can be read as the inherent rebellious nature of the South African pastoral tradition.

The camps of *Life & Times of Michael K* clearly stand for its disciplinary distribution and enclosure of individual in space, reminding the 'homeland' created by the National Party government in the apartheid period. The world of this novel is full of homeless and wandering people who are assigned a place to live suggesting to the South African government policy of resettlement during the 1960s, 1970s and early 1980s and in the novel it is said like "There were already scores of people queuing under the sign HERVESTING- RELOCATION"(Coetzee 19). Michael realizes that no one is allowed to stand aside from what he been trying to escape, the disciplinary confinement:

Now they have camps for children whose parents run away, camps for people who kick and

foam at the mouth, camps for people with big heads, camps for people with no visible means of support, camps for people chased off the land, camps for people they find living in storm-water drains, camps for street girls, camps for people who can't add two and two, camps for people who forget their papers at home, camps for people who live in mountains and blow up bridges in the night. (182)

K, however was able to resist this control of the territory, enforced through the camps and fences spreading through the South African geography.

K has a physical deformity that is his harelip. This gives him difficulty in articulation it strongly suggests that he is part of the black race. “[F]unctional inarticulacy, in the South African context, is a readymade mark of racial identification” (Wright 442). Moreover, while growing up, he was surrounded by troubled, unhealthy children and often laughed at because of his handicap. Also, “because of his face, he did not have women friends” (Coetzee 4). In general, K is part of a marginal group in society, through his racial identity, or otherwise through his physical deformity. K is a particularly interesting character because he is part of a marginal group of people, and has a strong desire for nature and connection to the idea of living life as a cultivator of the earth. This life as a cultivator begins, when he discover a deserted farm. “In the space of a week he cleared the land near the dam and restored the system of furrows that irrigated it. Then he planted a small patch of pumpkins and a small patch of mealies; and some...he planted his bean, so that if it grew it could climb into the thorn trees” (59). He also buries the ashes of his mother in the ground and feels his mother has reached where she will not be discriminated anymore. In fact, he associates his mother with the earth. Coetzee uses the idea of mother earth to connect the idea of caring for something, namely K's mother by burying the ashes of his natural mother, to caring for a “cosmic one”, namely mother earth (Rao 7).

In fact, throughout the book, K attends the earth. He trusts that gardening is an inborn talent in him. When K stays on the farm, it becomes his earnest wish to re-establish natural resources. He repairs the dam, for example, in order to restore “the flow of water from the earth” (Coetzee 60) also, he takes pleasure in gardening. However, the organic life that he lives is disturbed by the interference of other people on the ground that he cultivates. In reality, Michael is driven off the farmland, but he maintains his sense of freedom by fleeing to the mountains. Thus, K suffers from the movement and rule of the powerful, those that invade the farm he lives on. Without any doubt, he develops feelings of resistance against the colonization of the space he lives in. In many ways this parallels how the government, during apartheid, managed land in South Africa, and they determined where people could live and where not. K needs official papers, permits, to move from place to place and because he was coloured he had to wait eternally to gain these permits which forced him to travel without any of the legal documents. K must negotiate police barricades, forcible assignment as a part of railway labour gang, and detention in various government camps and hospitals. These experiences of confinement and discrimination allow for the interrogation of the right to land-ownership and division. This again parallels how the government in South Africa during apartheid controlled inferiors. The government's land management often stood in the way of the blacks' sense of freedom.

K's sense of freedom is threatened when the grandson of Visagie, the owner, appears on the farm, in which he was living peacefully emerged with nature. The grandson himself as “boss Visagie's grandson” (60), and suddenly shows up and reclaims the farm, as it were. He also tries to make Michael a servant and confine him in his laws of living. Michael has to now share the land he thought “belonged to no one yet” (47). Thus this piece of land is not without a “claim of ownership” (Rao 3). However both K and Visagie's grandson has a particular ancestral connection to the land. Since K is considered black, his ancestors probably lived on the land before colonizers took over land of blacks in South Africa, if *The Life & Times of Michael K* is compared to the situation in South Africa. At the same, Visagie, the grandfather and owner of the farm bought it, so also the grandfather has right to the farm. Because both men have a particular right to

the land, or so it seems, essentially it is difficult to determine who has *more* right to the land. In South Africa, in fact, before the advent of the majority rule, pieces of land were not accessible to all races, or all people in South Africa. Who could lay claim to land often had to do with the position one held in society. Some did not have opportunity to a particular piece of land because of their race or ethnicity. Racist zoning laws were particular for the South African context during the apartheid. As a result black and coloured communities couldn't own land.

The direct problem lies in the encounter between the two men. They relate differently to the land. Though the grandson says that "the two of us will manage" (Coetzee 63), Michael is unable to trust him, because of the grandson's way of relating to the farmland. Michael thought the farm for the Visagie boy might be "A soldier without a gun. A boy on an adventure. To him the farm is just a place of adventure" (63). K greatly values the piece of land and finds joy in cultivating it, though he cultivates the land out of the necessity of feeding himself. The Visagie grandson, on the other hand, expresses rather depreciative words when he comments the farmland to be a wasteful "adventure".

In fact, the grandson does not recognize the value of K's care for the land. K with all his heart and effort has made the dry, infertile soil fertile again. However, it is as if the grandson interrupts Michael's agricultural efforts, in a way. He eagerly eats of Michael's crop, "like a hungry boy", but as a result, "there was not enough for both of them" (61). It seems to be suggested that the grandson eats more than K, leaving one of them with less food, or hungry even. K is portrayed as a person who loves earth more than himself. For him everyone will become one with nature now or then. He feels more connected with nature and extracts pleasure from it. It is more visible in these lines in which the love for nature and his consideration of nature as his home;

He emerged into sunlight and took the track across the veld to the dam and the field where once he had scattered his mother's ashes. Every stone, every bush along the way he recognized. He felt at home at the dam as he had never felt in the house. (98-99)

More often, the needs or desires of K are not taken into consideration or not even cared and completely neglected. In fact, as seen above, besides K's agricultural efforts served the grandson of Visagie, K also has to work on land for the benefit of the powerful whom we can assume to be the whites in the camp. More specifically, when K is placed in a labor camp, which is described as a "stone-hard veld" (95), a piece of land hardly fit for agriculture, he needs to work. Initially, K strongly refuses to comply the demands that the soldiers make on him. They are unable to exploit the services of Michael as he is a gardening man not a stone worker. Michael rather desires to escape and live and work in open space. The countryside promises freedom to Michael K. When K finally complies and joins other laborers in fencing around fields of a white farmer in the countryside, the farmer (the employer) commends K's fencing skills. He even suggests that K should become a professional fencer. This is highly ironic. "[D]riving stakes in the ground, erecting fences [and] dividing up the land" (97) completely goes against K's idea of freedom. K continually wants to escape control of others. Fencing, in fact, may very well signify "the political stratification and social divisions" (17) in the apartheid system. Thus, K is resistant to work on the land the way the authorities want him to. It goes against his sense of freedom, and he is against "such negative forms of relating to the land necessitated by the political situation in the county" (Neimneh 17)

As a man interconnected with nature K is unaware of those what happens outside him and he even spends time without eating. From the house of Visagie he shifted his resting place closer to the dam because he felt at home when he is with nature;

His first step was to hollow out the sides of the crevice till it was wider at the bottom than the top, and to flatten the gravel bed. The narrower end he blocked with a heap of stones. Then he laid the three fence posts across the crevice, and upon them the iron sheet, with slabs of stone to hold it down. He now had a cave or burrow five feet deep. When he backed away towards the dam to inspect it, however his eyes at once picked out the dark hole of the

entrance. So he spent the rest of the afternoon looking for ways to disguise it. When dusk fell he realized with surprise that he had spent a second day without eating. (Coetzee 100)

Michael effortlessly works on land as if he is the favourite child of mother earth. He does not feel tiredness nor he feel hunger, all he feels is the urge to cultivate his pumpkins and to hide them from the eyes of the colonizers, “ In his burrow he lay thinking of these poor second children of his beginning their struggle upward through the dark earth toward the sun. His one misgiving was that by planting them in the latter days of summer he had not provided well” (101). The colonizers who colonize people along with their land, destroys and shatters the continuum of ecology by planting explosives on the land. They never gave importance to the land or to the minority people. For them they are mere obstacles on their way of pursuing power and so they destroy them without any consideration.

Being the son of earth K spread his mother's ashes to field in which he started cultivating vegetables and by doing that he gave new birth to his mother. All must leave home and all the marks will be washed away like “Every grain of this earth will be washed clean by the rain, he told himself, and dried by the sun and scoured by the wind, before the seasons turn again” (124). K being a part of the coloured race faces many a number of difficulties throughout his life. Along with that his physical deformity also contributes to the situation. He considers himself as weak he is neglected by both his mother and society. But Michael finds serenity through gardening. Being a black neither Michael nor his mother can own any lands. Throughout their lives they remained servants to their colonial masters. These colonial masters not only sabotage the lives of the discriminated coloured people but also the lands they invade. For these whites the minorities are those from whom they can extract benefits and they don't have any personal feelings for them. They don't care if it is the blacks who are suffering or the land which is being destroyed by the explosives they implant.

K the protagonist of the novel finds solace in nature, both are being taken advantage by the overpowering whites so the treatment of both in the novel are alike. Michael trespasses to Prince Albert without any permits because he was denied or pushed away from his right of having it. During this time of civil war this trespassing of Michael K is a very offensive crime so Michael K travels through the forest hiding from the soldiers so that he could fulfill his mother's last wish of dying in her hometown. This wish of dying person is also left incomplete because of the apartheid. When Michael travels through the forest we can see that the dead branches of trees foreshadows the upcoming events in K's life. K is a child of mother earth and an instance to prove it is “When he was brought in he had a brown paper packet which he put away under his pillow. Now he has taken to holding the packet against his chest. I asked him whether it contained his *muti*. No, he said, and showed me dried pumpkin seeds” (135). He carried his mother's ashes like this which clearly shows his affection towards the children of earth. For him there is no discrimination between races nor between the living things on land “What grows is for all of us. We are all the children of the earth.” (130)

The race and other means of discrimination are all unnecessary to live in this world. Through the life of Michael K, Coetzee puts forward a model for everyone on treating Mother Nature. Because if nature turns its silence as a rebellion like that of Michael K what happens next will be much worse than anyone ever imagined. Along with that one can also see that K is as tormented as nature. Through Michael K one can see the victimization of nature. Also if humans lead a life with no care and concern for the environment he will end up in having nothing in life. No organism is lesser than any and no race is superior to any, in a broader sense the author advises to consider nature as it was for Michael K.

Ecocriticism explores the way of representing the relationship between humans and nature. Current literary critics give much importance to the ecological aspects in both literary and artistic reproductions. J. M Coetzee's *Life and Times of Michael K* is a brilliant work which explores the intricacies in the relationship between the protagonist Michael K and the nature in which he exists. The analysis of *Life & Times of Michael K* showcases the conflict of who possesses the land is experienced by the

protagonist. Being a black person, his right to land is undermined because of his race and other characteristics which make him part of a deprived group in society. Even though Michael K cultivated the abandoned land out of nowhere the Visagie boy comes and claims it and takes him as a servant only on the basis of his complexion.

Thus, it becomes clear how unfair it is that blacks are not allowed to own land, which is represented through Michael K who is threatened with losing his garden, while he does not even lay claim to it as he always says its "God's earth" and we all are children of the mother nature. Thus, Coetzee in his book makes an argument for how life in nature, freedom from governmental control is to be desired. The widespread environmental racism can be seen clearly in this work.

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ROOTS AND SHADOWS: A STRUGGLE FOR DIGNITY, CONFIDENCE AND RESPONSIBILITY

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Abstract:

*In **Roots and Shadows** Shashi Deshpande says that women do have a right to live on her own but not under the shadow of essentialism and biologism. The novel is a symbolic representation of man and women who always strive for power struggle. Indu plays a central role and her inner self is explored through this novel. Indu represents the new woman who is educated and who lives in close association with narrow-minded society. She is a creative writer who works in a women's magazine. Indu writes a book according to her taste. She thinks and dreams of winning acclaim and appreciation for her work but she re-writes her story according to the wishes of the editor which is a kind of self-flagellation. Indu lives in an ancestral home where a woman's life had no choices but to accept and submit. In order to show her resent she leaves the house and marries Jayanth but slowly she realizes that her decision is wrong. Deshpande's women protagonists revolt against the traditions and values and there is always a search for identity.*

Key Words: *Essentialism, Biologism, Power struggle, Self-flagellation, Search for identity*

*In **Roots and Shadows** Deshpande says that women do have right to live on her own but not under the shadow of Essentialism and Biologism. The novel is a symbolic representation of man and woman who always strive for power struggle. In this novel, Roots stands for tradition and shadows signify the marginal culture. Deshpande wrote this novel in 1983 and received Thirumathi Rangammal prize for the year 1982-1983. The inner self of Indu, the protagonist is explored through this novel. She is free to do whatever she likes and has freedom to talk about personal life, politics, and corruptions but things change accordingly.*

Indu is a motherless child. Her father leaves her in his ancestral home where a woman's life had no choices but to submit and accept. Indu lives in this suffocative house for 18 years. She wants to lead a life of her own. In order to show her resent she leaves the house and marries Jayanth but slowly she realizes that her decision is wrong. Both of them stand on different planes, belong to different levels and think in different ways. While Indu is sympathetic to the ills of society, Jayanth is without any excitement towards the social maladies. While Indu is a writer who is in search of artistic satisfaction, Jayanth's interest lies in material happiness. She lives a dependent life with a man who is merely generous. She is like a beggar who is grateful to her benefits. All her deeds are based on sympathy and sacrifice. In a patriarchal society a man always expects his wife to be obedient, unquestioning meek and submissive. Indu realizes this soon but, her total submissiveness is not for love. She does not want a conflict and she wants to show her family and the world that her marriage is a success. Indu suffers from isolation and she always refers to her loneliness. Indu does not express her feelings freely. She neither loves nor hates anybody but suppresses her anger in silence

Indu is interested in creative writing. She works for a women's magazine and strives for its benefit. Women not only face problems at home but also at work place. In a male dominated society women's creative and professional success is not recognized. She has to face lot of hardships in search of her identity. This is well portrayed through Indu by Shashi Deshpande. Indu's professional career is not successful. She once interview's a woman who receives an award for her services in the field of empowerment of women. When she wants to publish the editor says "Don't tell me Indu, you really believed all that you wrote? I thought you had got over it long back. Did you truly think that woman was all

this? (18) She could not fight against him because the editor thought her as a foolish girl rather than a brave person. So, she rewrites the story according to the wishes of the editor. Indu writes a book according to her taste. She thinks and dreams of winning acclaim and appreciation for her work but in reality it becomes vain. A writer always goes under the pressure and has to compromise to write the kind of things that are acceptable, popular and easily sold. Notwithstanding with all these pressures she takes a decision to resign but her husband says “That's life: what can one person do against the whole system! No point making yourself ridiculous with futile gestures. We need money, don't we? Don't forget, we have a long way to go (19)

Jayanth does not behave to the expectations of Indu. He is not a sheltering tree to her; instead she surrenders before him and yields to the demands of marriage willingly. Indu plays the role of an ideal housewife which has restrictions like freedom of thought and expression and progress in her career. She has rejected the family and tried to draw a magic circle round Jayanth and herself but she becomes alienated. Indu gets attracted towards Naren who is three or four years older than her, Naren is her old uncle's grandson. After twelve years, when Indu returns to her ancestral home she gets a chance to meet Naren. Indu opens with Naren about Jayanth and her unsuccessful marriage. She sees a friend, lover, admirer and well-wisher in the eyes of Naren. She moves freely with Naren. She does not feel sorry for her relation with him. She feels that it is not infatuation and there are no lingering feelings which made them uncomfortable. Slowly she realizes that she has been chasing shadows leaving her roots far behind in the family. Naren with whom she develops an adulterous relationship is nothing more than a mere shadow to her. He has no permanent place in her memory. She has created a hell out of a heaven. She has locked herself in a cage and has thrown away the keys. She realizes that marriage has suppressed her individuality because she has regarded marriage as a 'trap' but not as a bond. Deshpande's heroines realize their mistakes at the end and with a compromise note they return to their homes. Indu is not an exception as she does the same. Thus Indu who longed for her self-expression finally finds the roots in the home and with her husband. Shadows disappear from her vision and she sees a clear light of day with the realization that “freedom lies in having the courage to do what one believes is the right thing to do and the determination and the tenacity to adhere to it. That alone can bring harmony in life”. (203)

The meek, docile and humble Indu of the early days finally emerges as a bold, challenging, conscious and rebellious woman. She resigns her job thus protesting the male authority, hierarchy and woman's masked existence. Her self-discovery is the frightening visions of the feminine self's struggle for harmony. She comes out of her emotional upheaval and decides to live a meaningful life with her husband. The home which she leaves to prove her individuality becomes the place of refuge, of solace and consolation. Indu now feels a sense of hope for existence forgetting the idea of non-existence. The novel ends with a note of affirmation. Indu strives and struggles for her individuality as a woman and also as a caretaker in the endless cycle of life. Through the character of Indu, Deshpande talks about the women whose development is arrested though they have economic independence. They lead mechanical life and their happiness is only a materialistic one. The patriarchal family and the male dominated society also control the development of women. Women are expected to perform the role of a wife and a mother. Female child is brought up in these circumstances and a grown up child wants to prove herself as a good woman by following traditional values. This feeling obstructs the growth of a woman. During the recent times women started raising their voice against the suppression. Women should be united to achieve self-reliance, self-sufficiency and self-respect.

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BETWEEN THE WORLDS: GENDER DISCRIMINATION AND FEMINISM IN ARUNDHATI ROY'S *THE GOD OF SMALL THINGS*

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Abstract:

Gender discrimination is very prevalent in India since the time immemorial. Women are subjugated and deprived by the male members. The women of earlier generation were merely the onlookers of all pervading patriarchy. Rather the women of contemporary period have launched a severe attack against patriarchy. Arundhati Roy's novel The God of Small Things exposes the history of struggle on the behalf of small things against someone Big. The women of older generation like Mammachi and her mother-in-law are oppressed but bear it up without resentment. Baby Kochamma exerts but becomes a helpless victim of it. The women of modern generation like Ammu and Rahel invalidate the courage to break the threads of patriarchy off but finally they become debunked.

Key Words: *Subjugation, Patriarchy, Oppression, Struggle of Women, Deprivation.*

Gender discrimination or the stereotypical representation of the women through art, literature and culture is quite prevalent in the history of human civilization since the age of the *Bible*. It is essentially a make-belief world of the patriarchal society that places women as the other, the surrogate, the negative. All the branches of knowledge like history, biology and cultural study define woman in terms of her body and womb but the feminists believe that “her body is not enough to define her; it has a lived reality only as taken on by consciousness through actions and within a society; biology alone cannot provide an answer to the question that concerns us: why is woman the *Other*” (Beauvoir 71). Feminism through its long history has sought to collapse the complacent certainties of patriarchal culture to eradicate sexist domination and to create a transformed universe. Arundhati Roy as a feminist exposes in novel *The God of Small Things* the exploitation and subjugation of three women characters like Mammachi, Ammu and Rahel succeeding three generations by their male counterparts.

Arundhati Roy in her Booker Prize winning novel *The God of Small Things* (1997) enacts the hopes, aspiration, ambition, moral dilemmas, anxiety and fear of women when they search for self-expression, individuality, independence within the rigid structure of marital and inter-gender relationship. While Mammachi and Baby Kochamma relinquish to patriarchal domination, Ammu and Rahel demur against it by breaking the love laws in Syrian Christian community and plunging in incestuous relationship respectively. The novel *The God of Small Things* proves itself to be a feminine narrative-written about females from feminine perspective in a discursive and diffusive language. The phonological, morphological and syntactic structures of the novel are not a unified entity that substantiates the claim of Luce Irigaray about a feminine narrative - the preoccupation with correct meanings and a unified subject or struggle for unity is a male characteristic while the feminine characteristics are marked by plurality and diversity. The story of oppression continues through the sufferings of Mammachi, Baby Kochamma, Ammu and her daughter Rahel.

The old house in Ayemenem has become the fulcrum through which patriarchy operates. Mammachi clemently bears the vehemence of Pappachi in every aspect of her life. She hurts the wounded pride of her Imperial Entomologist husband because of her excellent skill in violin. All the lessons of

learning violin were abruptly discontinued and her violin was broken down “when Mammachi's teacher, Launsky-Tieffenthal, made the mistake of telling Pappachi that his wife was exceptionally talented and, in his opinion, potentially concert class” (Roy 50). He is jealous of his wife's charm and beauty. While he is old, Mammachi is still in her prime youth and vigour. After his retirement from government job in Delhi they came back to Ayemenem where Mammachi thrives in comparison with her male-counterpart with her dexterity and perseverance in making pickles and jam. Consequently, in Kottayam Bible society fair Mammachi is ordered to prepare pickle and jam that sell well transforming her small kitchen into a pickle factory for good. But Pappachi never puts forward his hand to assist his mistress because “he did not consider pickle-making a suitable job for a high-ranking ex-Government official” (47). Rather he slouches around the compound “watching Mammachi supervises the buying, the weighting, the salting and drying, of limes and tender mangoes” (47). In his frenzy he beats his mistress and “the beatings were not new. What was new was only the frequency with which they took place” (48). The ego comes in between the couples and their marital life is at stake. To Pappachi women are “only the wanton solace of men, when they become so weak in mind and body that they cannot exert themselves unless to pursue some frothy pleasure, or to invent some frivolous fashion” (Wollstonecraft 14).

The history of oppression is going on since time immemorial; only the mode of oppression changes with the passage of time. Mammachi moulds herself to perfectly suit this purpose. Being rescued by Chacko, “Mammachi packed her wifely luggage and committed it to Chacko's care. From then onwards he became the repository of all her womanly feelings. Her Man. Her only Love” (168). But she could not put up with Chacko's wife Margaret. Owing to her snobbish nature she execrates Margaret's working class background and intends during Margaret's visit to India at Christmas not to resuscitate her sexual relationship with Chacko. It affects her pride and apprehension for her son. She is aware of Chacko's libertine relationship with women of the factory and simply terms it as a 'Man's Need'. In spite of being herself a victim of sexual exploitation she never makes any effort to desist it, rather encourages it having “a separate entrance built for Chacko's room... so that the objects of his Needs wouldn't have to go traipsing through the house” (169). Moreover, she bequeaths money to the working class women to dis sever lust from love and needs from feelings. The women also took the money under compulsion to survive their children and family. Mammachi foolishly takes Margaret for granted as the same working class whore who willingly takes money for her body. She imprudently puts the money in Margaret's pockets with the intention of adjoining her status to that of a demimondaine. She bears up her son's 'Need' but could not keep the same patience of the mind coming to know of her daughter's sexual relationship with the black Paravan. Her tolerance of 'Men's Need' on the part of her son becomes the fuel for her connoption at her daughter. Very consciously as a parent Mammachi cooperates in the oppressive socialization that “makes women suppress the greater part of their human potential” (Singh 20).

Like Mammachi Baby Kochamma proves to be a hapless victim of patriarchy and later herself becomes an archetype of it. In her younger days she falls in love with Father Mulligan, the Irish monk, who “was more than merely flattered by the emotion he aroused in the attractive young girl who stood before him with a tremble, kissable mouth and blazing coal- black eyes” (23). Being frustrated in love she goes restless and unhappy in a Father Mulligan less world and subverts the totalitarian state of patriarchy, “displaying a stubborn single- mindedness (which in a young girl in those days was considered as bad as a physical deformity- a harelip perhaps, or a club foot), Baby Kochamma defied her father's wishes and became a Roman Catholic” (24). Man-made society does not accede to a young woman's religious conversion in such an abrupt way. Thus Baby Kochamma's father, Reverend Ipe, soon discerns that his daughter's love has so stigmatized her honour that she fails to find a suitable husband in Syrian Christian community. Apart from marriage the only druthers for a girl is education. Hence, he decides that “since she couldn't have a husband there was no harm in her having an education” (26).

Later like a patriarch Baby Kochamma herself turns out as a tool of afflict upon the twins of Ammu,

a divorced daughter from an intercommunity marriage. She looks down on Rahel and Estha because they are doomed, father-less waifs. Baby Kochamma resents Ammu, a woman of independence and spirit, “because she saw her quarreling with a fate that she, Baby Kochamma herself, felt she had graciously accepted. The fate of the wretched Man-less woman” (45). She has intrigued to murder Velutha in the Police Custody because of her extreme hatred to the flourishing Paravan. This countenance of her character is explicitly limned by Amitabh Roy in the following terms:

It's pity that she submits in the name of decency and honour to the very sexist, casteist and communal prejudices that have stood in her way and denied fulfillment to her. (62)

Unlike Baby Kochamma Ammu, the protagonist of the novel suffers intolerably from the childhood to maturity within the shackles of all pervasive patriarchy and struggles against it. The inward psychological void transforms her into an oppressed who suffers from the duality- “They discover that without freedom they cannot exist authentically. Yet, although they desire authentic existence, they fear it” (Freire 5). The story of her tragic life has started from early childhood being beaten and bullied by her father who turns out a philanthropic apparently. Growing up with this cold calculating cruelty she has “developed a lofty sense of injustice and the mulish, reckless streak that develops in Someone Small who has been bullied all their lives by Someone Big” (182). Tattered and battered she anticipates a marriage proposal only to evade the raw deal. But very unfortunately the institution of marriage appears as an organization of infliction and torture to her as she is beaten and insinuated by the drunken and brutal husband who works in a tea-estate. In spite of her utmost endeavours she backs the wrong horse. Patriarchy operates even through the institution of marriage, “the destiny, traditionally offered to women by society. It is still true that most women are married, or have been, or plan to be, or suffer from not being” (Beauvoir 444).

Ammu suffers from both for not being married and also for being married. In her premarital life after Pappachi's retirement she is not sent to the college because college education for girls is always thought to be an extravagance but her brother Chacko is sent to Oxford to continue further course of study. Thus “the patriarchal tradition imposed certain social ideals and standards on women” (Moi 209). Like a 'New woman' Ammu grows desperate to get rid of her bitter father and long suffering mother and ties a knot with an assistant manager of a tea estate who later emerges as a violently drunken bully and even ready to sell his wife to his employer in exchange of money. Ammu here again transgresses the moral law code of a *pativrata* and defies both her husband and the sexual addiction of Mr. Hollick, finally coming back to Ayemenem with her twins “to everything that she had fled from only a few years ago” (42). Though Estha and Rahel were at times 'millstones', but Ammu with her utmost power of affection brings them up as a single mother; she becomes their *Baba* and loves them “more than double” (149).

Ammu as well as her twins has to live on the sufferance of Ayemenem house, the house of her father, where a married daughter has no claim. In India women have “very limited freedom... Either society, religion or traditions control them and more often than not religion, traditional morality is used to exclude women from power and knowledge and reinforce patriarchal authority” (Jain 84). In case of Ammu it is traditional morality interdicting her. Baby Kochamma often asserts the condition of a divorced daughter in her parental home in this vulgar and repulsive manner:

A married daughter had no position in her parents' home. As for a divorced daughter ...she had no position anywhere at all. And for a divorced daughter from a love marriage, well, words could not describe Baby Kochamma's outrage. As for a divorced daughter from an intercommunity love marriage-Baby Kochamma chose to remain quaveringly silent on the subject (45-46).

Though Ammu and Chacko share the same burden of work in the factory, she as a daughter has no claim over the property. Only Chacko, a male member of the society, can say, “What is yours is mine and what's mine is also mine” (57). Chacko's outspoken words 'my factory', 'my pineapples', 'my pickles' epitomize his arrogance and pride solely. Chacko thus stands for the masculine force, Ammu the opposite. The

watershed between the two opposite forces can aptly be described through Simon de Beauvoir's words:

The terms masculine and feminine are used symmetrically only as a matter of form, as on legal papers. In actuality the relation of the two sexes is not quite like that of two electrical poles, for man represents both the positive and the neutral, as is indicated by the common use of man to designate human beings in general; whereas woman represents only the negative, defined by limiting criteria, without reciprocity... A man is in the right in being a man; it is the woman who is in the wrong. (15)

Ammu appears as the epitome of 'New Women' having the spirit and courage "to strive, to seek, to find and not to yield" (Tennyson 69) confronting the dominant ideology of the existing power-structure. Like a ubiquitous person Ammu responds to her sexual urge and makes love with Velutha, the untouchable. She stands beside him against the entire world and does not leave him at stake up to the moment of Velutha's death. When Velutha was in the Police custody being falsely alleged of the murder of Sophie Moll, Ammu runs to the Kottayam police station to save him. But all her earnest efforts are bound to be failure as it is the custom of the Police not to "take statements from veshyas or their illegitimate children" (8). Atrocities on women are increasing day by day even by the Police. Inspector Thomas Mathew dares to continuously tap Ammu's breasts with his baton as if he is choosing mangoes from a basket. Thus she is physically assaulted in the Police station but still courageously fights against all sorts of insinuations. Ammu-Velutha relationship evinces a protest against the ideologies of marriage, family, society, religion and above all love- laws that dictate "who should be loved, and how. And how much" (33). But she is bowed down in her spirit by her own kith and kins like Mammachi and Baby Kochamma. Mammachi's empathy to her son and antipathy to the daughter is evident through her conducts. While Chacko was in England and fell in jeopardy due to lack of money, the mother secretly pawns the jewellery and arranges money for him. Chacko returns from England without taking the intended degree; she joyfully welcomes him back but the mother leaves no stone unturned to insinuate her daughter coming to home being divorced. Baby Kochamma intrigues to make her own niece homeless and places her as the culprit in the death of Sophie Mol, the dearest daughter of a male counterpart of the household. Chacko immediately orders her, "pack your things and leave" (302) which Ammu has to obey as "the courage of man is shown in commanding of a woman in obeying" (Lerner 11). Consequently the outcome of this order is severe- the separation of a mother from her own children, the estrangement of a daughter from her own parental home. In her days of depression Ammu who has never crossed the boundary of school, thinks of becoming a school teacher, the only respectable job for a woman in Indian society. She thinks of earning money only being in a daily hubbub of current crises. Thus the subordination continues because "in this system women's labour power, women's reproduction, women's sexuality, women's mobility and property and other economic sources - are under patriarchal control"(Walby 20). The story of her struggle continues through her work as a receptionist in a dingy hotel which eventually results in her death at the age of thirty-one; "not old; not young; but a viable die-able age" (3).

The politics of power runs even after her death as the church refuses to bury her dead body. In this vulnerable, make-believe world of women the exploitation continues "through the institutions such as the academy, the church and the family, each of which justifies and reinforces women's subordination to men" (Millett 35). Ammu is never concerned to eliminate the differences between the two sexes that is very deep rooted in conventional Indian society nor she is concerned with the equal opportunity of both the sexes; She wants "the individual right to find out the kind of person...she is and to strive to become that person" (Carden 2).

Though the world of religion advocates equal right for both men and women but religion as an ideology is sometimes affected by the meanings, symbols and behaviours within society- a complex cultural system. The world of religion today maintains male social dominance within social structures. As Rahel and Estha have a Keralite mother and a Bengali father, they are half Hindu hybrids whom, to quote

Baby Kochamma, “no self-respecting Syrian Christian would ever marry” (45). Mammachi segregates them as they are offspring of divorced parents. Not only in the house but also in the school Rahel is quarantined as she “didn't know how to be a girl” (17). She has been expelled from school three times; the first being Nazareth Convent from which she is driven out for decorating a knob of fresh cow dung with small flowers and then after repeated complaints from the senior girls against whom she collides to perceive the sensation of breasts; the second cause of expulsion is due to smoking and the third for setting fire to her housemistress's false hair bun. All these 'perverted quality or moral perversion' within Rahel is a replica of internal struggle against moral law codes of man-made society where “the state has a systematic bias towards patriarchal interests in its policies and actions” (Walby 21).

Rahel grows up without any reinforcement; there is nobody to arrange a marriage paying dowry for her. She lacks affection and predilection of a family. Her father leaves her; her mother has died prematurely; she is estranged from the other zygotic twin; the maternal uncle has emigrated to Canada; Baby Kochamma leads an essentially self-concerned life. So the mental suffering on her part is the natural outcome as patriarchy tears her apart. After finishing the school she enters into a college of Architecture in Delhi and spends long eight years without taking her degree being avoided by her professors and friends who never invite her “to their nice homes or noisy parties” (18). Though she occasionally writes to her home but she never comes back to Ayemenem on such occasions like death of Mammachi or emigration of Chacko to Canada. Things happen to change in her life when Larry McCaslin finds a 'jazz tune' in her and marries. She marries without any ambition of wifehood and motherhood; she “drifted into marriage like a passenger drifts towards an unoccupied chair in an airport lounge” (18). She could not find solace in the institution of marriage as it considers women's bodies as repositories of history and memory, as performative of gender, as the object of regulation and control, as victims of sexual exploitation and murder. Whenever Larry McCaslin cuddles her, he is disgusted by the passivity of her sexual organ and her empty, hollow looks but fails to realize “that the emptiness in one twin was only a version of the quietness in the other” (20).

It is Estha only with whom Rahel can be in perfect unison because of their disturbed childhood suffocating within the shackles of patriarchy. So Rahel hearing the news of Estha returning to Ayemenem, she gives up the job at the gas station and leaves America. When she sees Estha in Ayemenem house after long twenty three years later, she watches him as “a mother watching her wet child. A sister a brother. A woman a man. A twin a twin” (93). She searches for Estha's nakedness. Estha's body has the power to snatch its senses into deeper more inaccessible recess which is connected to Rahel's body and mind. It is the trauma psychology that leads Rahel to develop incestuous relationship, thus making her transgressor of moral codes like Ammu. To quote Dr. Amarnath Prasad:

And it is trauma psychology that makes Rahel, a girl of taciturnity, who always wants to lead a life far from the din and bustle of crowded city. It is this psychology that engraves a permanent imprint in the innocent mind of Rahel who, later on, develops an incestuous relation. (123)

Arundhati Roy in this novel has disintegrated the myth about female sexuality by a long chalk. In Indian myths female bodies are seen passive, subjected only to please male sexual organs. Manu, the first man in Hindu mythology and the legendary author of *Manu Smriti*, altercates in favour of bondage on women's part as her life ought to be ruled by the father, husband and her son at three different phases having no freedom at all of her own. In this phallocentric world penis stands for domination, power, authority and control. But in the world of Arundhati Roy it is the female body enjoying sexual pleasure as much as her male partner, thus establishing herself as a feminist writer and thinker. About the exposition of female sexuality Fetterley rightly asserts, “It is by writing about their sexuality that woman writers can begin the process of exorcising the male mind that has been implanted in us” (Preface xxii).

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HOMELAND HOODWINKS VIS-À-VIS HOME HOLDS BACK IN ALI SETHI'S *THE WISH MAKER*: NEGOTIATING MOURNING AND MELANCHOLIA

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Abstract:

Ali Sethi's The Wish Maker stands alone in the realm of South Asian novel, for it exquisitely brings out the sharp and sheer slugfest between homeland and home, which inflicts torment in the psyche of the protagonist of the novel thereby leading him to scramble in between ontological trepidation and cultural conviction. Having landed down in Lahore, the veritable homeland of Zaki Shirazi- the protagonist of the novel, Shirazi stands stunned and stupefied looking at the drastic changes occurred to his homeland. Now he finds it hard to connect himself with this veritable homeland that he had left behind while shipping to America. The dynamic homeland comes in conflict with his static notion of home and it triggers a number of maladies in his mind. The more Shirazi recounts his growing up days spent in Lahore, the more he gets stuck in limbo and fails to settle the ongoing dispute between homeland and home in his psyche. He can neither stay indifferent to the pricks of his memory nor can resist himself from delving deep into it. The roles of memory, mourning and melancholia are intended to be taken into cognizance in this context to account for the relentless and rigorous attempts of Shirazi to get rid of this poignant faceoff.

Key Words: *Homeland; Home; Memory; Mourning; Melancholia.*

I

Happy families are all alike. Every unhappy family is unhappy in its own way. (Tolstoy qtd. in Sethi 391)

Sometimes we feel we straddle two cultures; at other times, that we fall between two stools. (Rushdie 432)

Ali Sethi's *The Wish Maker* turns out to be an engaging *tour de force* in the realm of Diaspora Studies in that unlike other contemporary Pakistani diaspora novels, *The Wish Maker* meticulously brings out the long standing faceoff between homeland and home conditioned by mourning and melancholia, and subsequently the poignant striving of the protagonist to get disposed of this agonizing conflict. The conflict between homeland and home seems unsettling and disconcerting to the protagonist who has to take a plunge into his memory to settle the dispute. He is compelled by exotic experiences in America, to intervene into his childhood days in order to understand why he has to scramble in between homeland and home while staying away from his veritable homeland. This novel problematizes the notion of homeland by pitting it against the notion, i.e. home. The protagonist at times thinks that his homeland is a stationary entity and will not be subject to physical alterations, and at once this realization is deflated by the onslaughts of reality. Mourning and melancholia play crucial roles in leading the protagonist to get stuck in limbo as far as the conflict is concerned. In one hand, it helps him recount his old days and on the other hand, it confuses him regarding the "truth" associated with homeland. This account is thus designed to delve deep into the fictionalized documentation of this never-ending and putative faceoff between homeland and home in order to assess the significance of mourning and melancholia in forging the identity

of the protagonist in the novel.

II

Ali Sethi's *The Wish Maker* unravels the irrepressible and irreversible yearnings of the protagonist of the narrative, Zaki Shirazi, to walk down the memory lane to explore his veritable homeland. Zaki left his homeland when he was young and has been recounting his unforgettable memories associated with his childhood. While staying in America, he contemplates upon the homeland and goes back to those early days in his life by free association of thoughts thereby intending to explore his homeland. As the narrative unfolds, readers are introduced with Zaki Shirazi who has landed down in Lahore to attend Samar Api's wedding. Immediately after the introduction, one may trace an explicit shift in narration from third person to first person, which implies that the author of the narrative allows the protagonist to spell out his subjective interventions and interpretations of the faceoff between homeland and home so that his poignant striving seems credible and worth exploring to readers. Zaki expatiates on his growing up days and meticulously recounts all his memories right up to present day in order to find out ease and comfort in homeland. He recalls all the old familiar faces in his extended family and explores his relations with each of them. While recalling childhood days, he refers to the then dynamic socio-cultural scenario time and again thereby implying that homeland has been passing through changes of different sorts since long. Zaki remembers that along with other cousins, he was born and brought up in a joint family in Lahore. Right from his childhood, Zaki has been reticent and had a limited number of friends. He used to spend time with Samar Api who one day fell in love with a person whose identity was kept secret to everybody except to Zaki.

Having spent early days in his life, Zaki left for America for higher studies leaving all his eventful memories behind. In America, he has to willy-nilly settle down making a number of compromises to comfort and ease and has to find out a job to bear his expenses. While staying in America, Zaki has been in constant touch with his family living in Lahore through Internet. His memories start pricking his psyche and pushing him to remember his childhood days. Zaki can neither resist himself from delving deep into his memories nor can stay indifferent to the appeals of memory. When he lands down in Lahore, he is disillusioned finding it out that his homeland has worn a number of changes that he cannot recognize. He feels that his homeland has disappeared into the snares of time and will not come back to him. Towards the end of the narrative, Zaki even comes to this realization that he had trusted deceptive and misleading memory which has actually debunked all his expectations and wishes.

In Diaspora Studies, the notions of homeland and home bear tellingly important significance in that theoretical insights pertaining to these terms are time and again resorted to account for the wretchedness and woe of people dwelling in liminal space. For instance, Salman Rushdie in his seminal collection of essays, i.e. *Imaginary Homeland: Essays and Criticism (1981-1991)* has pertinently observed: "We are. We are here.' And we are not willing to be excluded from any part of our heritage" (Rushdie 15). What he meant to say is that people prefer to remain rooted to his veritable homeland and once he is excluded from it, he can never return homeland. It is at best that homeland can only be imagined from an exotic location. In other words, homeland can be revisited in terms of memory and can never be physically met in reality. Rushdie's approach to homeland bears flaws in it in that though he had advised people to re-explore their homelands on the basis of memory, memory cannot always be trusted because memory does not always provide flawless information and it tends to get twisted with one's imagination and thus homeland cannot be exactly grasped in that way. As homeland goes through changes over a period of time, the physical appearance of homeland is bound to be altered. Consequently, it becomes difficult for people to come to terms with the alterations that have occurred to homeland.

The notion of home is problematic too in that critics have debated on the nature of it. One may here pertinently ask whether there is any dichotomy between homeland and home. It needs to be made quite

clear that the concept of homeland incorporates the constitutive components of home but the reverse is not true. Whereas homeland refers to a spatio-temporal concept, home is essentially held as a distinctly subjective orientation of mind that an individual possesses. Thus home can be borne in mind from one place to another. Uma Parameswaran has rightly said: "Home is where your feet are, and may your heart be there too ..." (Parameswaran qtd. in Paranjape 291) and following this pertinent observation one may argue that concept of home is fluid and entirely subjective.

Memory turns out to be a very important theoretical tool by means of which homeland can be remembered. Femke Stock said: "Memories of home are no factual reproductions of a fixed past" (Stock qtd. in Knott 24) and it reveals that memory is not at all trustworthy. It is through memory one explores his own identity. Sometimes, distorted memory becomes an impediment for one to know his identity. In other words, incoherent memory problematizes identity formation and makes one's survival all the more miserable. But it is through memory, an individual seeks to intervene into his past that has been on a deferral since he left it for some reason, inasmuch as he can neither rewind the time past nor can physically get reconciled with it. Thus it is an important tool for the exploration of both homeland and home.

The ideas of mourning and melancholia seem worth exploring in this regard to figure out miserable and wretched survival of an individual living in between the beaconing of homeland and the impetus of home. Freud in his seminal essay "Mourning and Melancholia" pertinently observes the subtle discrepancy between mourning and melancholia:

Mourning is regularly the reaction to the loss of a loved person, or to the loss of some abstraction which has taken the place of one, such as one's country, liberty, an ideal, and so on ... The distinguishing mental features of melancholia are a profoundly painful dejection, cessation of interest in the outside world, loss of the capacity to love, inhibition of all activity, and a lowering of the self-reproaches and self-revilings and culminates in a delusional expectation of punishment (244).

What Freud meant to say is that whereas mourning is a plaintive reaction to amnesia at large and particularly to permanent disappearance of homeland in this regard, melancholia can be understood as the inevitable consequence of mourning in that melancholia reveals the "truth" in mourning, i.e. absence. Melancholia can be interpreted in this way that it is essentially a psychological disposition that enables an individual to see through mourning conditioned by memory. Melancholia bears "ambivalence" within itself and serves to accentuate the pangs of one's poignant existence in a liminal space. Vijay Mishra in his influential work *The Literature of the Indian Diaspora: Theorizing the Diasporic Imaginary* has brilliantly worked out Freud's thoughts on mourning and melancholia and cogently remarked:

True mourning, then, can only dictate a tendency to accept incomprehension, which means leaving it as an absence. In other words, the truth of mourning in literature, as figurative language, effectively implies that true mourning can never be defined, except as an absence. (8)

In the case of melancholia, it seems difficult to draw a contour and consequently melancholia tends to transgress the veritable boundary of mourning and becomes "unpresentable". Taking cue from Mishra, one may tenably argue that melancholia serves to exacerbate one's pining for the loss of his homeland in this regard by divulging the limitations of mourning and is necessarily a state of mind that tempers one's rational attitude towards homeland.

III

Zaki Shirazi begins to recollect his old childhood days in Lahore while staying in America and wonders how his homeland will be looking when he will return homeland. He is anxious and apprehensive

of the fact that he might not be able to get back at his homeland because a long passage of time has already passed since his departure from Lahore. One may here reasonably suppose that Zaki might have been smitten by homing desire- a kind of desire that is absolutely distinct from one's craving for his homeland and resembles to one's constant longing for homely ambience even in abroad. His constant search for homely locale in exotic land might have led him to revisit his memory to get back at his original homeland. He recalls his strong bonds with people around him in Lahore and it is through remembering his homely bonds, he actually tries to embrace his homeland. The more he recounts his past days, the quicker he gets stuck in bewilderment. One after another, memories crowd in his mind and he gets lost in the exploration of his homeland, as it were. When he tries to check out the correspondence between his recollections and actual realities having landed down in Lahore, he gets disillusioned and immediately realizes:

That was there and I was here now, at home. But home too was changed. The airport was new, and the roads were new; the hoardings and building on the way from the airport, many have come up in these last two years alone and pointed again and again to the ongoing nature of things. There was an added estrangement from the known: the drive home was too short, the bridge too small The veranda was no longer an avenue, and all day the kitchen has a smell. (Sethi 8)

The deceptive nature of memory is exposed to Zaki when he witnesses that his homeland has worn a different look altogether and it seems unrecognizable now to him. He witnessed:

I returned to Lahore in late December, to unshed leaves that were silver in the daytime and thickened with shadow as the light withdrew into evening. Bombs had begun to go off in the north of the country. And they said it would come to the roads of Lahore, where there were more bicycles now, more rickshas, more cars hastened by bridges and underpasses where once walls had stood. The house had aged. The tree was stooping in the garden, the walls bulging behind the paint. My mother's hair was threaded white, and Daadi descended the steps of the veranda with caution, lifting her salwar at the ankles as if preparing to step into water. (Sethi 403-404)

Zaki feels that his homeland has hoodwinked him in that on one hand, it draws him towards its bosom and on the other hand, memories have made him realize that homeland is a distant and elusive reality and the face of which is constantly altering with time. When he left for America for higher studies, he could only carry home along with him and the memories pertaining to home have been persuading him to retain adherence to homeland. He falls in the tension between homeland and home, and cannot find a way out this brawl. While exploring his old familiar relations, he realizes that he has lost his homeland as it were and his original homeland has already been altered by social, political, cultural, and economic changes. Zaki felt:

Words are vacant, adrift, waiting for contact with life, for moments that will come to cause the unmistakable throb of recognition. At home there was no recourse to hollow wisdoms. There was only the loss, and it took the place of life, of habitual arrivals and departures and of sounds from behind doors that now stayed shut. (Sethi 281)

The title of this novel is very significant in the sense that Zaki assumes “the wisher maker” in the narrative, who gives vent to his latent wishes incited by memories, to meet his homeland but towards the end of the narrative, he comes to this comprehension that it is along with the regression of his homeland into perpetual deferral, his indigenous identity has become vulnerable and can be subjected to subversion. Zaki has to take recourse to memory to try to grasp receding homeland as he finds no option left in his hand but all his overtures simply fall flat at the end.

It is through his fervent recollection of childhood days spent in Lahore, Zaki unconsciously mourns for homeland which is conspicuous by its absence in actuality. On one hand, Zaki thinks that his memory drags him to catch hold of his homeland and on the other, home keeps on persuading him to approach it. Memory at times seems to have come at Zaki's disposal and at once have triggered distress and discomfort in his mind. Zaki's mourning ends in his being stuck in melancholia and he realizes:

News from home makes you aware that the flow of memory has stopped. A life you no longer live is a life you no longer know. But you rely on memory to inhabit, however falsely, what now lies outside your experience; and every homecoming involves the puncture of memory's airy bubbles. (Sethi 400)

Zaki cannot get back at his homeland not only because it has been receding but also because he cannot find correspondence between the original homeland and his subjective understanding of home that he has been carrying with him. Zaki's misery knows no bound when he understands the gulf between homeland and home, and subsequently the tension between the two.

Thus at the close of this discussion, it can be plausibly put forward that the conflict between homeland and home is undeniably psychological and it arises out of Zaki's inability to anticipate the consequences of leaving homeland behind at certain stage of his life. Had Zaki recognized the elusive nature of homeland in advance, he could have averted this dilemma that has been perturbing his psychological equanimity. It is Zaki's subjective "wish" to meet homeland powered by the impetus of home, which happens to be the prime cause of his psychological trepidations and concerns for the inscrutable onslaughts of time as far as his identity is concerned.

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D. H. LAWRENCE AS A CRITIC

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Today Lawrence is treated as one of the modern English critics. He is better known as a novelist, short story writer and poet. His critical and psychological insights are too well-known. There is what we can call Lawrence's philosophy too. By no means all this 'philosophy' got published in the writer's time. His important book *A Study of Thomas Hardy* (1914), for example, did not appear until 1936, when *Phoenix*, a collection of Lawrence's papers, was brought out. *The Study*, like several of its successors, lacks coherent shape. Indeed, the most cogent remark that can be made about it is that its title seems a misnomer. Nisbet and Co. had commissioned a little book on Hardy for a series intended for students, and they must have been sorely puzzled by what they received. At any rate, they refused to publish it. One must say that, when the *Study* condescends to discuss Hardy, it does so to some effect; picking out the central figures of his books with sharp particularity. This, however, was not the line that Lawrence's criticism was to take; it contrasts greatly with the theoretic overtones that lend resonance to most of the later critical writing.

One of Lawrence's early book was *Movements in European History* (1921). The conceptual works of the First World War and its aftermath are a kind of crypto-fiction: a criticism without texts, a series of disquisitions starved of concrete reference. It is this that makes one prefer the decent pot-boiling of Lawrence's schoolbook, *Movements in European History* (1918-19, published in 1921), to the effervescing rhetoric of 'Love', 'Life' and 'The Reality of Peace' (1916-17). One can find indications of specific experience in certain of these works, and this it is that gives them what being they have. In *The Education of the People* (1918, 1920) Lawrence's practical knowledge as a teacher powers his shrewder observations. One particularly warms to his remarks upon the position of the schoolteacher crushed between the educational theorists above him and the doggedly resisting pupils below. Yet the problem is given to us far more graphically in the narrative of Ursula's conflict with both her headmaster and her classes in Chapter XIII of *The Rainbow*.

Then Lawrence in the Foreword to his book *Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious* (1921, published along with *Fantasia of the Unconscious*) in 1923 speaks of these things:

Only let me say, that to my mind there is a great field of science which is as yet quite closed to us. I refer to the science which proceeds in terms of life and is established on data of living experience and of sure intuition. Call it subjective science if you like. Our objective science of modern knowledge concerns itself only with phenomena, and with phenomena as regarded in their cause-and-effect relationship. I have nothing to say against our science. It is perfect as far as it goes. But to regard it as exhausting the whole scope of human possibility in knowledge seems to me just puerile. Our science is a science of the dead World. Even biology never considers life, but only mechanistic functioning and apparatus of life.

Critic Beal Anthony says, "Mr. D. H. Lawrence is the outlaw of English literature, and he is the most interesting figure in it.' The cultivated people who wagged their heads and called him 'mad,' now nod their heads and murmur 'genius.' Their real feeling is, of course, unchanged." (Anthony 213)

Lawrence is primarily a novelist and poet. He has written two books of psychological criticism-- *Fantasia of the Unconscious* and *Psychoanalysis of the Unconscious*. These represent a reaction against the psychology of Freud with its emphasis on sex and the incest-motive. Lawrence tried to counter Freud by propounding a psychology of his own based upon an equally individual view of physiology. He argued

that there were four major nerve centres in the body. The thoracic ganglion related to the spine and shoulders and was associated with matters intellectual. The lumbar ganglion related to the spine and buttocks and was concerned with excretion and rejection. The cardiac plexus related to the nipples and was associated with breathing, eyesight and, by extension, concern for others. The solar plexus was the basis of the sensual life of man and was the seat of instinct. Philip Robinson thinks *Fantasia of the Unconscious* philosophizes this physio-psychological theory and takes it to extremes. It is the conclusion of the great minds of modern times-of Dostoevsky, of Tolstoy, of Nietzsche, of Whitman. But how? In *Fantasia of the Unconscious* Lawrence gives, with a joyful spontaneity of language which is itself an augury of the newness of life he proclaims, his answer to the question. D. H. Lawrence is the only writer of modern England who has something profoundly new to say; and finally that he must inevitably become a figure of European significance.

Likewise, D. H. Lawrence's *Studies in Classic American Literature* (1923), at first glance a puzzling book, survives nonetheless for its powerful insights into American literature. It is puzzling because of its style, so informal, so impulsive, and so seemingly self-contradictory. It is full of exclamations, words all in capital letters, choppy sentences. The different extant versions of this opening essay are described in Armin Arnold's *D. H. Lawrence and America*. The general argument of the essay, developed in the book, is typically an exhortation to Americans to become Americans by responding to the spirit of the place, America. Lawrence said in letters that this work was a kind of psychoanalysis of literature, and he spent much time polishing the essay but not rereading his texts-before publication in *The English Review* in 1918-1919 and before their appearance as a book.

Barren Roberts writes, "Lawrence's physiological mysticism runs straight up against scientific fact, but he is a poet and succeeds." (Robert 34) Lawrence thinks that the religious state of mind is disappearing from Western Europe, as a result of the progress of scientific knowledge. Without God, without some sort of immortality, not necessarily life-everlasting, but without something absolute, we are nothing. Yet now, in our spitefulness of self-frustration, we would rather be nothing than listen to our own being. Edward Sackville West thinks the remaining essays in the book, all much shorter, belong to more recent years and exhibit the inequalities already referred to. We cannot but admire the intensity of the writer's conviction and the occasional brilliance of the language in which he expresses it, but he too frequently takes the step which lies between the sublime and the ridiculous. On the subject of the novel he has much to say that is both interesting and original; but, unfortunately, here as elsewhere, strength of feeling leads him, as it often led Swinburne, into vociferation and our prejudice is aroused at the outset by having our ears assaulted by prose resembling the back-chat of a guttersnipe.

Messrs. Faber and Faber published a remarkable pair of pamphlets. One is called *Pornography and Obscenity* (1929) and is written by Mr. D. H. Lawrence; the other is called *Do We Need a Censor?* and is written by the late Home Secretary, Lord Brentford. Mr. Lawrence's pamphlet is profound and original in a very high degree. Lord Brentford's contains an exceedingly competent and complete exposition of the attitude of those who cultivate the very common human desire to enforce their own ideas of morality upon their fellowmen. Mr. Lawrence in our opinion is abnormally obsessed with all those questions which centre round the crude facts of sex. His definition of pornography, though not comprehensive, is admirably simple and convincing. He says in effect that pornography is that sort of writing or painting which tends to stimulate or encourage the practice by either sex of private masturbation. His definition explains succinctly what has puzzled many people, namely, why Rabelais and Boccaccio and Ovid and all the other great indecent writers are somehow not pornographic.

A hypothetical text gave rise to the other great positive myth in this last stage of Lawrence's life. In 1924 he had reviewed an ingenious reconstruction by John Oman of the Book of Revelation. Dr. Oman's edition attempted to clarify the text in terms of Christianity, but it suggested to Lawrence that other inferences were possible. His interest was also quickened through his association with Frederick Carter

from 1923 onwards. Carter's manuscript on the subject of Revelation resulted in Lawrence writing two introductions to what eventually became Carter's book, *The Dragon of Revelation*. But neither introduction was used for its original purpose. One (January 1930) was published as an independent essay in *The London Mercury*; the other (December 1929) became a separate book, *Apocalypse*. Lawrence wrote *Apocalypse*, a piece of spiritual writing, as a sick man about four months before his death.

It is true Lawrence wrote a lot of work, fiction, plays, poetry, travels and letters. His essays are vast and fertile with his tastes and temperament. Richard Aldington thinks the term 'essays' is a poor word for Lawrence's brilliantly-varied writings, since an essay unhappily implies - something formal and academic and highbrow, whereas Lawrence was always intensely personal and spontaneous, with such a horror of pedantry and the university manner that he vastly preferred to be slangy and jaunty. 'Non-fictional prose' is worse than 'essay,' so until somebody coins a better word we must stick to essays, though in Lawrence's case the word is more like a reference number than a description of literary form. The following is a brief analysis of Lawrence's essays.

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THOMAS HARDY'S SHORT STORIES

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Thomas Hardy was a great Victorian novelist. He was also a short story writer, and poet. Thomas Hardy wrote four books of short stories *Wessex Tales* (1888), *A Group of Noble Dames* (1891), *Life's Little Ironies* (1894) and *A Changed Man and Other Tales* (1913). He wrote more than fifty short stories. A brief yet critical review of the same is what follows now.

Wessex Tales: Strange, Lively and Commonplace (1888) was published in two volumes by Macmillan in 1888. The five stories are "The Three Strangers," "The Withered Arm," "Fellow-Townsmen," "Interlopers at the Knap" and "The Distracted Preacher." The first short story "The Three Strangers" was first published in *Logman's Magazine* in 1803. The story opens on a cold March night in the 1820s at a lonely place Higher Crowstairs. Shepherd Fennel and his family are the tenants. His second daughter's christening is a celebration. Nineteen folks have gathered there. A 40 year old man, a wheelwright enters the carnival. Another stranger, a hangman enters there. Both enjoy the celebration. Still later, one more enters there as if running away. He seems to be Timothy Summers, the man who stole a sheep, for his family was starving and now he faces hanging by the second man which he does not know. The people hear the alarm gun from Casterbridge, and one of the men, a constable looks for the escapee. He catches Johnny Pitcher. Actually the first stranger is the criminal to be arrested. Yet he escapes. The story of the three strangers is memorable for its depiction of rural life. "The Three Wayfarers" is dramatization of the theme. "The Distracted Preacher," first published in *New Quarterly Magazine* in 1879, is about Stockdale, a young Wesleyan minister on business in Nether Moynton. He falls ill and neighbourly young widow Lizzy Newberry nurses him. Lizzy and other villagers are involved in smuggling goods. Later Stockdale marries Lizzy. "Fellow Townsmen" first appeared in *Harpers Magazine* in 1880. Charles Drowne's devoted wife Emily is envied by his friend George Barnet, a wealthy man in Port-Bredy. Wife Xantippe's indifference forces her husband George to meet an old lover Lucy Savile. Later Emily and Xantippe befriend each other and make trips to seaside. Lucy becomes a governess at Charles' house for his four children. Barnet hears the news that his wife Xantippe died in London, and at the same time, Charles announces his marriage to Lucy. Thus unhappy, Barnet leaves the town. He returns years later quite aged. He finds that Charles has died. Now Barnet proposes to Lucy and she refuses. He leaves again. She changes her mind, and waits for him. "Interlopers at the Knap" deals with tradesmen. Charles Darton journeys to marry Sally Hall. Meanwhile, Sally's brother Philip and his wife Helen return from Australia. Sally learns that Charles must have seen Helen earlier. Suddenly Philip dies.

Hardy's *A Group of Noble Dames* (1891) is a collection of 10 short stories. Most of the tales turn on the cleverness of women in using feminine stratagems to outwit men. The tales reveal a whimsical use of history and are set for the most part in the 17th century. Hardy appropriated John Hutchins's *The History and Antiquities of the County of Dorset*. In Hardy's structure, various gentlemen have gathered in a local museum; most are staying overnight for the meeting and are housed in local inns and hotels. Four tales are told before dinner and six after. As in Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, each narrator is given a descriptive epithet indicating his place and profession. There is little within the tales that tie them to a particular teller, although sometimes the diction differentiates the teller from Hardy as narrator.

The Part First: Before Dinner contains the first four tales. "Dame the First - The First Countess of Wessex" appeared in *Harper's* in 1889. The local historian tells the story. Squire Thomas Dornell and

Susan, the parent of Betty quarrel over the girl's future. Susan wants to betroth Betty to rich Stephen Reynard, a man of 30 (Betty is 13). Father wants her marry his friend's son just 15. He learns that Susan finished Betty's marriage according to her choice. So Dornell falls ill. Later Betty, now 17, as per Dornell's advice, elopes with Phelipson Raynard. Dornell dies meanwhile. Indeed, Betty lives with Reynard and becomes the first countess of Wessex, as he becomes the Earl of Wessex.

The tale "Barbara of the House of Grebe" was published in *Graphic* in 1890. A surgeon narrates it. It is concerned with a young Lord Uplandtowers' pursuit of Barbara Grebe, the daughter of Sir John and Lady Grebe. At the time, Uplandtowers is 19 and Barbara is 17. Uplandtowers loves her, but she runs to love Edmond. But her father John Grebe has to rain Edmond in societal manners, and sends him to the continent, where Edmond burns his limbs. She marries Uplandtowers now preserving Edmond's marble statue.

"Dame the third - The Marchioness of Stonehenge" appeared in *Graphic* in 1890. The "Rural Dean" narrates this story. Lady Caroline lives in Melchester (Salisbury). She is an earl's daughter. But she marries a simple man secretly. But he dies of heart attack. Caroline asks a servant Milly to bear the responsibility of the young man's death. But Caroline is pregnant, and both Caroline and Milly go to London. Caroline delivers a child, and as she expects, Milly says it is hers. Both return to Melchester.

The story "*Dame the Fourth-Lady Mottisfont*" was published in the *Graphic* in December 1890. Told by the "Sentimental Member," the story takes place in Wintoncester. The town is described as the most convenient in Wessex "for meditative people to live in," as the cathedral has a long nave and chapels. Sir Ashley Mottisfont marries Philippa, his second wife, in the cathedral. When he proposed, he told Philippa that he had a ward, a small girl 15 months old whom he had found "in a patch of wild oats." Philippa promises to do all she can for Dorothy. She is suspicious of her origins, thinking the child must be his, but Dorothy becomes attached to her, and Philippa asks if they may rear her in their home. Mottisfont is pleased and assents. Philippa becomes devoted to the child.

"*Dame the Fifth-The Lady Icenway*" was published in the *Graphic* in December, 1890. The story opens in the reign of George III. A young lady, Miss Maria Heymere, an orphan, lives with her uncle Dr. Heymere, between Bristol and the city of Exonbury. The story "*Dame the Eighth-The Lady Penelope*" was published in *Longman's Magazine*, January 1890. Told by the Man of Family, the story begins in a manor house on the road between Casterbridge and Ivell. It is the seat of the Drengghards. Near here, in the reign of the first King James, Lady Penelope, a beautiful lady of a noble family, is visiting. Her three leading suitors include Sir George Drengghard, a member of the ancient noble family; Sir John Gale; and Sir William Hervy. They are avid in intercepting her in rides and walks, and their attention sometimes leads to bitter rivalry. A duel is threatened, but she tells them she will not speak to any of the three responsible for breaking the peace. She tells them to have patience and jokes that she will marry them all in turn. This is yet strange.

"*Dame the Ninth-The Duchess of Hamptonshire*" was published under the title Told by the Quiet Gentleman, the tale begins with a description of the rather unfeeling duke of Hamptonshire. Spart's story "Dame the Tenth the Honourable Laura" (as published in the *Boltwon Weekly Journal*, in 1881) is set in Lower Wessex.

Life's Little Ironies (1994): These stories take place in the present, revealing Hardy's unhappiness about Victorian society's morality. "A Tradition of Eighteen Hundred and Four" appeared in *Harpers* in 1882. First it appeared in *Life's Little Ironies* and then in *Wessex Tales*. First it was called "Napoleon's Invasion." "A Tragedy of Two Ambitions" first appeared in the *Universal Review* in 1888 and then in *Life's Little Ironies*. The story is about two brothers Joshua and Cornelius Halborough who cannot get university education. "The Withered Arm" appeared in *Blcakwood's Edinburgh Magazine* in 1888. This is written in nine parts. The story is set in an 80 cows dairy. "The Melancholy Hussar of the German Legion" appeared in 1890. The story relates to the year 1804. This is about Phyllis Grove. "For Conscience' Sake" appeared

in *Fortnightly Review* in 1891. The story concerns a retired middle-aged banker. "On the Western Circuit" appeared in the *English Illustrated Magazine* and in *Harpers* in 1891. The story begins with the young London attorney Charles Raye. According to Richard Purdy the story "The Son's Veto" first appeared in the *Illustrated London News*. It is about a woman in wheel chair with her son, attending a concert in London. She worked as a maid in Parson Twycott's house, and married him on his wife's death. She bore the child Randolph. She meets Sam Herold, an old lover in London. Her son Randolph does not permit her marry Sam. Randolph becomes ordained and she passes away. Sam witnesses her funeral with a wet eye. Shigeru Fujita, a Japanese scholar, considers that 'Randolph represents urban sophistication, Sam is aligned with ruralism, and Sophy is "a child of nature at the mercy of these two sets of values." (Fujita 123)

Hardy's last book A Changed Man and Other Tales was published in 1913. Michael Millgate states that Hardy named the collection for his story "A Changed Man," which he considered the "best of a rather poor bunch." He adds that Hardy would not have collected the stories at all except that they had been frequently reprinted in inexpensive American editions. It related to the copyright issue. The short stories of this volume are "A Changed Man," "A Committee-Man of "The Terror," "The Duke's Reappearance," "Eater at Dragon," "The Grave by the Handpost," "Knight Master John Horseleigh," "A Mere Interlude," "A Tryst at an Ancient Earthwork," "The Waiting Supper," "What the Shepherd Saw" and others.

Hardy could not categorize some of his stories in any of his four books, and they saw publication later after his death. For example, "An Indiscretion in the Life of an Heiress" appeared in *New Quarterly* in 1878, and it is made out of the first yet unpublished novel *The Poor Man and the Lady*.

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DOMESTIC PERCEPTION IN AMITCHAUDHURI'S *A STRANGE AND SUBLIME ADDRESS*

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Abstract:

*Indian Writing English is matured from a sapling to deep rooted tree where it shelters over millions of people by exploring the writers in various branches. Among explored writers, Amit Chaudhuri is a writer in versatile. He is a poet, novelist, critic, essayist, singer and also a good musician. Amit Chaudhuri belongs to Calcutta, his works excessively explicit the impact of a particular perspective of own domain, Calcutta. Chaudhuri's first novel *A Strange and Sublime Address* explores the domestic values of middle class family in the city of Calcutta where the family gives more importance to traditional and cultural values of ancestral home. Chaudhuri has described the city of Calcutta in parallel fashions as *City of Joy* and *City of Chaos*. The protagonist of the novel is twelve years old boy, Sandeep and Chaudhuri has portrayed the distinct instances of domestic obsession of the characters can be observed in the novel. Hence, the present paper focuses on domestic perception of Calcutta city conceived by Amit Chaudhuri in his *A Strange and Sublime Address*.*

Keywords: *Domain, Chaos, Family, Calcutta and Perspective.*

Amit Chaudhuri's novels depict the fictional representation of home and share the common focus on domestic themes and issues. The domestic settings of his novels illustrate the material history of the Indian home and it is associated with religious, social and cultural practices. His first novel, *A Strange and Sublime Address* which was published in 1991. This novel is about the events of ordinary life and expresses the importance of ancestral home and relatives especially when it lay on home town. It also revolves around own childhood days through the portrayal of protagonist Sandeep who deliberately enjoys his childhood days as well as the difficulties of loneliness he has faced in Mumbai where he has studied. Chaudhuri would travel to his uncle's home in Calcutta to spend his holidays.

In *A Strange and Sublime Address* Calcutta is figured as a city of sound, site of outer space and also a middle class city, industrial and economic stagnation with its culture. People of Calcutta enjoy their life in number of ways. Chottomama's family enjoys every Sunday evening by visiting various places of Calcutta. The whole novel captures the city of Calcutta. In the opening scene, the city is beautifully portrayed with the description of the setting and also discusses typical middle class society and Bengali households.

The novel opens with a boy's perception of his uncle's house in Calcutta lane where he dwells in small house, unlovely and unremarkable place. Calcutta and Bombay give him two kinds of lives with imaginatively like two worlds. The domestic space, traditionally explores the complete impact of Calcutta culture in Chottomama house's pooja rooms, cleanliness of the home.

Amit Chaudhuri points out the life of Bengali especially through their food and eating habits. Different varieties of foods they prepare like Bengali cuisine is known for its flavours and have variety of desserts. A significant feature of the cuisine is variety of sweets made up of milk and sugar as part of the

tradition. People live to eat; especially Bengalis spend most of their income for food and they have regular habit of going to market in every morning. Traditionally, people used to sit on the floor to eat, with their right hand. Here, the little boy, Sandeep observes everything about the food of Calcutta in the Chhotomama's house. Sandeep feels that his life in the city of Bombay is more mechanical and lonely, but in Calcutta, he observes livelihood, sensible of culture and the joyous in human life.

As a born Bengali, Chaudhuri writes about the various places of Calcutta, where people used to visit and spend their weekend time. Chhotomama's family visits Howrah Bridge with their family and it is a bridge with a suspended span over the Hooghly River in West Bengal, India. It is located by linking the two cities, Howrah and Calcutta. Originally named as New Howrah bridge and it is known as Howrah Bridge. It is a symbol of both Calcutta and West Bengal.

The picture of Chhotomama's household is 'unbearably hot' in the afternoon. All the family members put great effort to beat the heat when the sudden power cut. It is an unbearable one to the people and it is the major problem in the city. The afternoons of Calcutta become the mixture of cool and heat, light and shade to the environment. Mamima and Sandeep's mother used to sleep and talk together and shared their cooking recipes. The boys, Sandeep and Abhi watch the pigeons through window, and it becomes a rare and unenergetic moment to the boys.

On one evening, Chhotomama brings Sandeep, Abhi, and Babla to a near maidan, when power cut. The big maidan is fully engulfed in darkness but also filled with all sorts of people, college boys, school boys, couples, unemployed men, families, hawkers and group of girls. The power cut is an irritating one to the people, but the city of Calcutta makes something beautiful in the environment.

Jams are very famous in Calcutta, especially in the month of May. It is one of the remarkable things which the Bengali people keep at their houses, particularly in the season. Amit Chaudhuri depicts even about the delicious Jams, the people serve in various ways. The strong perception of domestic and domain values can be observed through the Chaudhuri's depiction of Jams in Calcutta. In Chhotomama's house, Sandeep's aunt comes with a tray full of black Jams. She puts them into a pan with mustard oil and sugar, and shakes it well. It turns into pulp, soft, purplish in colour and both sweet and tangy. They used to eat after lunch. Like the other fruits from other cities, different types of Jams are famous in Calcutta.

Thus, Chaudhuri seems to take delight in the delineation of opposites, famously called juxtaposition. In the novel, he discusses the construction of the ordinary and the extraordinary, the familiar and the unfamiliar comes up, at least partially, as a matter of cultural portrayal. Familiarity which especially breeds in domestic and daily spaces is seen to be a detractor of grandeur as bestowed by cultural canons. The irony acquires a sharper edge when this crucial character, the breadwinner of the family is presented as bereft of this grandeur. This is not mainly due to his peripheral position, but on account of Chaudhuri's economic status. However Sandeep's imagination reverses such over determinations. There is something disoriented the way he imagines the people, things and situations. He looks at his uncle's business from an altogether different perspective, investing it with a mythical grandeur.

Sandeep likes to listen his uncle's business. He watches while his uncle is talking with his friend in dining table. He likes it because his uncle's account of the small business world always seemed like a suspense story, myth or fairy tale, full of evocative characters work themselves slowly in his imagination; cheats, sophisticated two-timers, astringent moralists, clever strategists, new military onslaught, each new product like a never-before weapon capable of conquering the world added to a nameless arsenal.

Chaudhuri engages with the trivial details of local life in a way that reminds one of Joyce's uses of epiphany. In Calcutta, the routine acts of the houses and the terrace where the clothes hanging is a common feature of the local middle-class households. It denotes the focus on the environmental spaces in *A Strange and Sublime Address*.

A year and half passed, Sandeep is in Mumbai, where he lives in a twenty-third stored building. His father gets promoted and they have shifted to twenty-fifth stored building. He stands in balcony and thinks

about the life of Calcutta and the environment which differs from Mumbai. Chaudhuri firms the theme of domestic perception by standing in balcony where the boy can see all the surroundings of the city and remembers the peaceful life with joy and companion of two cousins. Sandeep watches the swarms of light in the evening, cars, vanishing and shining sunlight. But it is a quite unreal than what he has experienced in Calcutta.

For the second time, Sandeep and his parents visit Calcutta during the winter. They visit museum and there little cold. People wear heavy clothes like shawls, mufflers, sweaters and coats. Chaudhuri thus feels delight on December. As usual, people's life is changed for the season. The environment gives changes to human life. The ordinary people of Calcutta do everything to excess and the streets are available with all types of woolen garments. People sell them as for the season and they earn money from it. In night, people who stays in roadside, lit fire to rubber tires to take warm.

In chapter seven, Chaudhuri describes about the Sundays of Calcutta. The weekend, the city becomes vacant and the shops, offices, are closed. And there are some shops with the large sign board in which mentioned as DATTA BROS., K. SINGH AND SONS, reflects the sunlight. In Sundays, the houses are filled with familiar voices, the people stay in Chhotomama's house and they argue about several things. Chaudhuri has stated:

Much of the talk concerned relatives scattered all over India and all over the world. Much of it was about money and the cost of living. Chhotomama's business ran in fits and stars like his car. It had to be pushed before it worked; it was unreliable. (ASA58)

Saturday surprises them in the morning with cool breeze in the ninth chapter. The earth becomes wet and it is rained in some villages. The breeze travels through the lane, bridges as rain. Breeze gives an erotic to the monsoons. Sandeep's mother and Mamima feel the smell of earth and they feel it deeply. Chhotomama breaths in deeply and he never feels the same before. It becomes the most natural and unpretentious fragrance. Few days later, Calcutta is affected by Kal-Baisakhi storm for the first time and it has affected the city little by the force of air. The wind blows silent and straight. Kal-Baisakhi showers in Bengal during the April and May and sometimes in March too. It is a powerful and dangerous phenomenon. It is a strange atmosphere to the city. There, lightning and thunder, the moment heavy silence speaks that Chaudhuri says:

In obedience, the leaves began to tremble, and the branches moved uniformly, disciplined as a battalion doing exercises- Bend! Rise! Bend! Rise! And, slam! a door or a window banged shut without warnings; ghosts and spirits were abroad, making mischief, distracting the servants, knocking at the windows. (ASA, 84-85)

At end of January the people are celebrating the festival for goddess Saraswati. A natural image in *A Strange and Sublime Address*, there is a garden in the hospital where the patients are taken by wheelchairs. Sandeep watched everything. In the hospital garden, there is a tree called Sajanatree is broken into white blossoms. The gulmohur trees explode into fierce of orange flowers. Sandeep experiences them in every evening that he has in the hospital while Chhotomama is admitted. There are small green and unripe mangoes hang from the trees and the bees were flying. Kokil begins to sing, the sound like, ku-wu, ku-wu. Sandeep listens the voice of two Kokils, busy with their mating cries. He enjoys the moment by seeing them.

Sandeep is ready to go back to his home, before he watches the lanes and alleys. He watches around Calcutta which makes him to forget own life and gives pleasurable environment. By contrasting the world of children with that of adults, Chaudhuri seeks to assert the routine life of the local culture. When Chhotomama suffers with heart-attack, the humdrum details of life reassert themselves, pointing to a new beginning:

At night, after they said goodbye to Chhotomama, they returned homeward through the lit lanes and alleys of Calcutta. Watching the lanes, they temporarily forgot their own lives,

and, temporarily their minds flowed outward into the images of the city, and become indistinguishable from them and become indistinguishable from them. (ASA,149)

This new beginning is related to rebirth in nature. The novel ends with final affirmation of life passes by the fleeting glimpse of the Kokil which gives an overall impression of shapeliness and stateliness of life. As it disappears from the material world, it seems to draw a veil over the children's eyes. Chaudhuri's lyrical prose is particularly well suited to evoking this enigmatic city itself.

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TRANSCREATING THE HISTORY: SALMAN RUSHDIE'S *MIDNIGHT'S CHILDREN* AS A CINEMATIC NARRATIVE

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Abstract:

*Film adaptation of literary texts has been persistent and popular rewriting throughout the ages. Literature and films have created a fusion ever since the earliest days of cinema and films are considered to be the most dominant art form of twentieth century. The aim of the study is to critically analyze film adaptation of classics which assist in generating the interest of younger generation in literature and help in developing analytical thinking skills. The main interest lies in analyzing how Deepa Mehta's *Midnight's Children* (2012) reflects the volatile trial of past independent era vis-à-vis Salman Rushdie's breakthrough novel *Midnight's Children* (1981). Likewise, an exploration of the struggle for identity and the relation of personal life to that of nation's history have been examined through the comparative analysis of cinematic and original text. The study also examines cinematic techniques adapted by the writer himself, thereby assisting in its transformation. Adaptation theory has been employed highlighting whether cinema is the reinvention and rebirth of the original creativity or not. The result will be based on whether this tendency of adaptation assist in blurring the hierarchy that exists between two art forms and in negating the critical opinion which disregards film as inferior.*

Keywords: *Adaptation, cinematic text, history, narrative technique.*

Introduction

Adaptation as the process of transcreating original text into target text has been done since centuries; it has become a need for younger generation to know about value of Literature classics in the contemporary decade. When one delves into adaptations of original or source text, the pertinent question that strikes is how well the incident has been justified through its adaptation. One must look deeper into the relationship between the text and the film while analyzing adaptation process. Novels, being written form of narrative, use language to influence society whereas, films, being visual medium relies on descriptions to perform the significant actions. Academic criticism and journalistic survey call adaptations as unoriginal, subsidiary, derivative, “belated, middlebrow, or culturally inferior” (Naremore,p.6). In a similar manner some think that adaptation does not provide the real essence of the original text and moves towards a new path, deriving from what has been said in the books, as “The debate on the cinematic adaptations of literary works...dominated by the question of fidelity to the source...prioritize the literary originals over their film versions” (The contemporary dilemmas, p.3-19). Adaptations marks its beginning transformed from Shakespeare in the 1600s film adaptation towards the present decades when page has been transformed into screen. Many critics like Aeschylus, Goethe and Da Ponte adapted various texts into the new form of work of Literature with visual references. Although most of criticism has been going on film adaptation prevails in our contemporary scenario. “Adaptations were seen by most critics as inferior to adapted texts, as “minor,” “subsidiary,” “derivative,” missing the emblematic richness of the books and lost their spirit” (*A Theory of Adaptation*, pp12-13). Despite the fact that most of work has been adapted from classics are not faithfully provides all information that has been portray in the text still adaptation exist. *Midnight's Children* as a “Booker of Bookers” it has been adapted thrice adaptations impinge upon the fact

that it is a significant source text that needs to be adapted. "Cinematic as well as theatrical adaptations have proved to be an effective media of transposing meaning across historical times and cultures...making it a more inclusive enquiry". (Simran Preet Kaur, 1). Adaptation makes a streak of unity between techno world and literary world. The scenes in film help to improve understanding of the thoughts of adaptation of work in cinematic description. Earlier folk tales and story tales were ideal method of storytelling. But these days with the arrival of technology the simplicity of accesses to stories is only a mode of retold the story. Adaptation as genre are now being analyzed as product of imaginative creativity trapped up in the ongoing rotate of inter-textual transformation, with no clear point of origin. Adaptation as new art form followed everywhere that is why these days in schools visual classes are introduced so that the students will develop the tendency of reading the text right from beginning onwards. Adaptation are so much a part of western culture but still recognize the epical as well as Classics literature which is the need of present generation.

The adaptation theory is employed to examine four significant scenes both from the Cinematic text and to project how the movie reflects the reinvention and the rebirth of the Nation, thereby shaping it into something new. The research paper is analyzed from the perspective of Linda Hutcheon's *A Theory of Adaptation* (2006) which claims that all genres provide some significant information in their own domain be it verbal, written or visual one. The adaptation of a literary text is significant effort at studying, understanding and interpreting the contemporary events and situation. While undertaking the task of adaptation of a text to film or one art form to another art form "Transposing to another medium, or even moving within the same one, always means change or, in the language of the new medium, reformatting... And there will be always to be both gains and losses" (Stam 62). Theatrical and Cinematic adaptations have proved to be a powerful medium of transporting meaning which gives effective side of historical times and culture. Adaptation helps to make text alive during translation and translation is not giving one meaning, repetition or paraphrased, moderately "it is an engagement with original text that makes us to see in different ways (Walter Benjamin, 77)". Both Theatrical and Cinematic adaptation of classics and epics prove to be well-versed mirroring the image of culture and society. Adaptation of Classics is rooted in all cultures, be it ancient or modern. Even when the plot sets up, the characters, the dialogues are modified to suit a diverse mass culture, the human consciousness imitate exactly. Double definition of adaptation "as product and as a process is... to address the various dimensions of the broader phenomenon of adaptation (Linda Hutcheon's, 24)". There have been various events which admired adaptation of classics subverts the original work with altered edition. The text is attracted to carry on important theme of the book, while adding the elements that do not provide the objective of adaptation. It is because of these accepted venues that film adaptation have rewrite that gives the classics ground of popular culture. But still strong and serious words hit "film adaptation of literature "tampering", "interfering", "violation"(McFarlane, 12)". It is required to consider whether the adaptation manifests as distortion of the literary classic or makes a new addition. An adaptation as interpretation does not have to capture all the nuances of the books difficulty but it has to remain a work of art, an independent, coherent, and credible creation with its own subtitles of meanings. The decline of the reading of the original work of art has been common but adaptation moves people to new route.

Research Objectives

The present study has following objectives:

- a. To assess how text acts as a mediocre assisting the younger generation to absorb the complexities of narrative.
- b. To explore various incidents that has been adapted from novel to film and also to justify both the art forms as significant.
- c. To analyze how far the struggle for identity and relation of personal life to that of nation has been constructed in film adaptation of the novel.
- d. To examine how far the cinematic text is an emblem of original text truly reflecting the art of

characterization.

Critical Analysis

Creation of cinematic techniques makes Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* as one of the favorite texts of the twentieth century. Although it has been adapted three times, firstly in television, next in theatre and finally as film adaptation in 2012 proving to be most recurring way of transcreating nation's history. The impact of cinema on established genre of the literature has become much more prevalent in the present scenario keeping in consideration the narrative techniques employed by the cinematic text. *Midnight's Children* as a magic realistic novel contains diverse elements which make it a cinematic text from the beginning till the end. The novel begins with autobiographical elements infused within the text. Saleem Sinai, the protagonist born at midnight on India's independence with telepathic power, massive and drenched nose having sensitive sense of smell. The novel contains characteristic features of both Bollywood and Hollywood with western concoct in Saleem's characterization suggesting assistance for cinematic text. The narrative consists of historical events in sequence and their connection with Saleem's life, all portrayed in a dramatic and exotic way. *Midnight's Children* as text functions as equivalent to the film as it traces significance and reality of his life. Further, the narrator describes it in a fast paced manner which is equivalent to theatrical effect, reflecting the uniqueness of cinematic text. As the novel moves there is an incident when Saleem comments on his mother's adulterous relationship with Nadir Qasim, which is similar to intricate codes of behaviors between lovers in a cinematic creation. The language of Saleem's narrative also makes it a cinematic text as playfulness in postmodern Literature containing conversational film language is used in the novel through the use of local Indian words. By using local Indian words like Gunda, Chup Amma, Takht etc. the narrator also shows that despite the fact he is living in western community, he is connected to Indian culture and the roots of his forefathers. On the other hand, if one traces the tone of films it is generally escapist and melodramatic which is also present in the novel like corrupt politician, exchange of rich and poor children at the time of birth, dramatic reversals of fortune etc. which have also been a recurring phenomenon in the typical commercial Hindi films. In addition to this, narrating history of nation with the help of a life of a single person also makes narrative technique cinematic which fulfills the desire of encouraging adaptation in the contemporary scenario. *Midnight's Children* as postcolonial text lies between two culture and two different communities. It investigates relationship between reality and imagination and uncovers the true identity of India.

“Modern translation theory argues that translation involves a transaction...an act of both intercultural and inter-temporal communication” (Bassnett, 9). Keeping in cue with the aforesaid, *Midnight's Children* (1981) as postcolonial novel provides accessibility to reader by showing cinematic techniques in novel which strikingly catch the attention of the audience and develops creative thinking amongst the spectators. By portraying his autobiography, Rushdie moves towards nation's history and makes it lifelike with the help of cinematic techniques. The skillful blending of narrator's life and public events are well versified in both the art forms. Both novel and film highlights the important events of nation's history and negate the fact that the adaptation blurs the binaries between the texts. *Midnight's Children* as a historical tale of India revisualizes the catastrophic experiences of the partition in both film and the novel. The cinematic and the original text as a mixture of deep seated visual imagery and political discourse, its power of enlightening the English language with allegory, fable and absolute legalities of Indian writing prepares a striking interference. Salman Rushdie explores lives of three generations: his grandfather, father, and himself with overtly visualizing the history of nation that has been extremely diverse and moves the curiosity of audience towards Literature classics. The novel reconstructs Rushdie's passion for writing his autobiography, re-visiting the nation's past, which allows for the never-ending variety of experiences, cultures and perspectives that create a chronological sequence of the ever concealed and quiet voices of history. Holding a new western concept of film adaptation to Literature classics has increased the strength of the younger generation to know about historical past that has been

earlier found only in books. Likewise, D. Rombes in his essay "The Satanic Verses" (1988) also highlights cinematic techniques of Rushdie which he uses not only to "visual images... but also to shape the narrative" (Rombes, 47). In similar manner Rushdie himself as screenplay writer along with director Deepa Mehta, assisted in the adaptation of the novel into film which has become a recurring theme in Literature and provides a connection between a work of Literature and a work of art. Rushdie himself as a screenplay writer throws a positive light on adaptation. According to him, adapting a work of Literature to film "Everyone accepts that stories and films are different things...source material must be modified, even radically modified, to be effective in the new medium. The only interesting question is how? and how much?" (Rushdie). Because of these reasons Rushdie makes the narrative technique cinematic from beginning till the end of the novel. Writing or constructing India's past that has been somewhere found in history books with his autobiography, Rushdie uses cinematic technique to convince reader to know what had happened in our past. One significant anecdote that reflects Rushdie's narrative technique is when riots quiver the country in the earlier days of independence, he claims, "Close-up of my grandfather's right hand: nails knuckles finger...Clumps of red hair on the exterior edges. Thumb and forefinger pressed together...In short my grandfather was holding a pamphlet" (MC, 36). The use of cinematic technique like close-up in describing his grandfather as a young man trace the elements of Rushdie's style of writing found in the novel. Another important element which is based on structuralism ideology is that of Jallianwala Bagh massacre, "Leaflet newspaper mosque and wall are crying: Hartal! Which is to say, literally speaking, a day of mourning...But this is India in the heyday of the Mahatma, when even language obeys the instructions of Gandhiji, and the word has acquired...Hartal-April 7...Gandhiji has decreed that the whole of India, on that day, come to a halt" (MC, 37) Rushdie employs the cinematic techniques in the massacre to influence and have a long lasting impact on the audience through visual images. Another prominent instance in the novel is the depiction of coincident wanderings of Saleem's parents in Delhi; "One journey began at a fort: one should have ended at a fort... One foretold the future; the other settled its geographical location...and here is Amain Sinai beneath the high walls of the Red For... (MC, 104)" Also, the novel vividly portrays the moment when Saleem's mother meets Nadir-Qasim, her lover after many years of her marriage and the similar incident is uttered in extremely romantic way where couples cannot kiss but they accomplish it representatively by kissing the items, "Two strangers, each bearing a screen-name...hands raising a half-empty glass of lovely Lassi... lips pressing gently, nostalgically against the mottled glass; my mother's hands handling the glass to her Nadir-Qasim;... to the opposite side of the glass..."(MC, 301). Another incident portrayed towards the end of the novel also contains cinematic feature by showing parallelism between the watching of a film and narrating the story, "Reality is a question of perspective; the further you get from the past... it inevitably seems more and more incredible..."(MC, 229)"

The four incidents both from film and novel lay emphasis upon the fact that the literary essence, thematic matter, characters and conflicts in creative recitation of filmmakers opens a new route that reaches a wide range of audience. If one looks at the plot structure of the book and the film, the cinematic form faithfully visualizes all scenes that are relevant. Beginning from 'perforated sheet' till 'Abracadabra', all adhere at establishing that film acts a simulacra of the novel in requisites of scene order and insertion of all to facilitate what happened "once upon a time"(MC, 3). Further, the novel depicts the occurrence of different wars concurrently with the life of Saleem Sinai which serves as a great source of cinematic fodder. Rushdie's narration of Nation's history and Saleem's quest for identity run parallel in both text and movie. Both the art forms began with the narration by the protagonist as, "I was born in city of Bombay once upon a time... At the arrival of India's independence, on the stroke of midnight, I trembled forth into the world". (MCF 00: 33.MC,3) Next the scene gives description of Kashmir in 1917 and reveals that "my life began on the shore of Dal Lake in Kashmir" (MCF1:04). The link among the author and spectators is to know well and unbreakable throughout authorial vanity. Moreover, the bottom character of the novel

Boatman Tai gives first priority to Indian language than using English in order to accomplish the outcome of linguistics societal practice. Rushdie himself writes an autobiography that is related to post independent era and has been divided into three books: "Perforated Sheet", "The fisherman's pointing finger" and "The Buddha" respectively. As the story begins with perforated sheet and ends with Buddha's description, it provides a newness that gives knowledge of nation's history, man quest for his identity and religious awareness. The novel and film both represents the similar struggle for identity and relation of personal life to Nation history. Adaptation of such type of novel which is an allegory of India assembles people to know about their history through the life of a single person. Another important scene in the film that gives an exceptional information when his physiognomy is compared the "Indian Deccan peninsula hanging down" and on both side of face birthmark stains to geographic contours of Western and Eastern Pakistan by his teacher while he utter "In the face of ugly ape you don't see the whole map of India?..See! The Deccan peninsula hanging down...the birth mark on the right is East Pakistan and this horrible stain is West." (MCF 1:01:00)

One of the most dramatic scene in the movie is the exchange of babies at the time of birth when Mary is immersed in the feelings of her lover who proceeds a task declares, "Let the rich be poor and the poor, rich". The film highlights, "Two babies in her hands. Two lives in her power. She did it for Joe. For her own private revolutionary act. Love me Joe..." (MCF 38:36).

One of the most significant events in the film and the novel is the death of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru followed by the succession of Indira Gandhi. The scene in the text as well as movie portrays the grief and seriousness of the incident quite vividly. The scene is not only self explanatory but also depicts the grim reality of Indian politics. Rushdie and Mehta remain successful in projecting the dark reality with utmost grace and conviction. "The emergency, everyone called it... four hundred and twenty of us stood blinking in the sunlight and then dispersed into the healing privacy of the crowd..." (MCF 2:05:00, MC, 167)

The novel and the film both moves in parallel direction, even the prominent characters like Saleem and Shiva continue remains uniformed the whole time. The discussion between them at the end of the film attests to this information:

Saleem: I stole your life.

Shiva: Bastard! Rich Boy...I am leaving to get your life away. Bit by bit. Similar to you took mine.(MCF 2:04:53)

Even though the character of Padma in the film is not the part of the novel, it still maintains uniformity between the novel and the film. Padma's surprised voice is restored into declarative sentences by the narration of storyteller which damned by various critics as of gender perception, claiming it to be because of the authorial self-image. The original text has an open end where Padma is doubtful about what happens to Shiva, "To tell the truth, I lied about Shiva's death...I'm still terrified of him"(MC, 510). On the other hand, in the film, he dies at the last part, portraying the truth that films are seldom release for interpretation.

Saleem/ Shiva vis-à-vis Shiva/Saleem: Changed Identities

The main characters of the novel Saleem and Shiva both remain constant with film and novel from beginning to the end. One of the nurses Mary exchanged the children for the sake pleasing her lover Joseph D'Costa. Although Shiva is too born at the same point in time as Saleem, the latter is significantly honored than the previous because of his family rank. Saleem, an Anglo-Indian novelist, essayist and protagonist of the novel born at the moment of Britishers' departure from India was sanctified with the telepathic powers having drenched nose with responsive sense of smell. He comes across as a highly aware narrator who aims to modify self-image and is a vital part of the allegorical depiction of India's Independence. He is born, along with one other child, at the accurate minute of India's Independence. His individuality, however, is switched at confinement. As a result, he is raised by wealthy family in Bombay, at the same time as his counterpart and future opponent, Shiva, is raised in scarcity. "He is referred to variously as The

Snotnose, Stainface, Badly, Sniffer, Buddha...” (MC, 3) Being born at midnight hour of independence, he was subsequently engaged in the recreation of momentous part in the history of India. His sufferings begin from the time of his birth when one of the nurse namely, Mary alters his nametag with Shiva, another midnight child. This action leads to various changes in his life. He is associated with the Indian past by diverse means of relation, through several relationships, both accurate as well as allegorical. Saleem does not give any impression to require individuality; rather various identities force down upon him and represent the disintegration and diversity of the country and the intermingling of societal, spiritual, local and regional identities which mirrors Indian experience.

The 'ignored' character of Padma

Padma, as an excited listener and one of the significant character in the novel acts as a narrator as well as Saleem's beloved. Despite the fact she is nowhere found in the film, she plays crucial role in the novel to fulfill her role as a confidante. Serving as a key for the way the reader response to Saleem's tale, Padma behaves in a similar manner as King Sharyar does to Scherherazade's tales in *A Thousand and One Nights*. Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* explore the leading female character Padma, a listener of Saleem Sinai's autobiographical recitation which is not found in the cinematic narrative. She loves Saleem from the core of heart and performs all kinds of actions for the sake of gaining love. But Saleem on the other hand is not aware of her feelings towards him and is not even thankful for sacrificing her life for him. Padma is accessible as a stereotype, active and confidante for Saleem. Padma as a character is distant from reading and writing and publicized as an uneducated woman in the novel who is in love with a man who berates her. Occasionally Saleem is also seen insulting her and she utters her pain by saying “So then I thought how to go back to this man who does not know love...only does foolish writerty?” (MC: 267). However, in the literary text her character becomes important to unleash Saleem's character traits and adds layer to Saleem's thoughts and actions, which is absent in the cinematic version of the text.

Conclusion

Concise glances at the scenes analyzed above showcase that *Midnight's Children* negates hierarchical divisions and establish distinctions between art forms by applying both literary and cinematic devices. The language of Saleem Sinai resound what Rushdie as a *sui generis* aims at which is a ground-breaking similarity between the text and its tailored description. The novel and film contains similar events which are parallel to each other and both are significant in their own domain but still films easily imbibe the spectators. Adaptation as “reading, reconstructing, translation, transmutation, dialogization...” (Stam). Film as mediocre assisting younger generations to absorb the complexities of narrative also compares and contrasts in order to give an idea of memory scape. Emphasizing upon various incidents that has been adapted from novel to film makes it easy to experience the hidden history of a place by listening to the memories of inhabitants with the help of visual images. Although, the transition in adaptation process takes place from recent years, it imitates the already existing material “what happens therefore, when the filmiest undertakes the adaptation of novel, given the inevitable mutation, is...is a kind of paraphrase of the novel” (*Novels into Films*, p.62). Therefore adaptation of *Midnight's Children* tends to emotive individuals that the Cinematic narrative in the novel negates the idea that there exists hierarchy between two different medium and thus makes it open handed for cinematic adaptation.

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A SAGA OF COMPASSION AND CONFLICT: AN ANALYSIS OF THE JOINT FAMILY SYSTEM IN MANJU KAPUR'S *HOME*

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Abstract:

*Manju Kapur's works belong to the Postmodern Indian English fiction. Indian English women novelists have begun to talk boldly about extramarital affairs, lesbian relationships, etc. It is in this situation that Manju Kapur goes back to history. Even though her other novels, *A Married Woman* and *The Immigrant* are essentially postmodern in character, *Home* talks about an out-dated theme - the joint family system. Kapur's handling of the theme suggests that though the joint family system has vanished from postmodern novels, its relevance has not fully diminished in the Indian society. This paper attempts an analysis of the joint family system reflected in the third novel of Manju Kapur, *Home* and how it acts as a means of suppression of women. It also seeks to analyse how women adjust themselves to all the circumstances in order to have a safe and secure family life. The central objective of the paper is to analyse how far Manju Kapur has succeeded in portraying the joint family system in the postmodern era and how women are shaped according to the patriarchal system prevailing in India.*

Key words: *Indian society, joint family system, patriarchy, suppression, marriage, adjustments.*

Literature is the medium through which the quintessence of our living is made supreme by linking it to imaginative experience. "Literature reflects accepted patterns of thought, feeling and action, including patterns of expressions and society's unconscious assumptions" (Rose 186). In fact, for almost all the historical details of the ancient past, our most reliable sources have been the great works of literature. The modern writer also does not write in isolation, he/she is involved in social reality. Indian novelists have risen to the occasion and adequately reflected the various aspects of society. Manju Kapur is of particular interest in this area because her novels reflect Indian society in general, a macrocosm in a microcosm.

Home is one of the best works of Manju Kapur which gives a clear picture of what life in a joint family is. With answering affection Manju Kapur follows the members of the traditional family of three generations into the uneasy world, they come to inhabit. The patriarch, Banwari Lal, a textile shop owner in the middle class New Delhi neighbourhood was a believer in the old ways. Men worked out of the home, women within, men carried forward the family line, and women enabled their mission.

Banwari Lal had three children - Yashpal, Pyare Lal and Sunita. According to Karve, "a joint family is a group of people who generally live under one roof, who eat food cooked at one hearth, who hold property in common and who participate in common worship and are related to each other as some particular type of kindred" (Kumar 158). Banwari Lal made use of the family property for the welfare of the family members. Yashpal and Pyare Lal helped their father in the shop. "The two sons had been brought up to consider their interests synonymous with those of the family ... This was not a democracy, in which freewheeling individualism could be allowed to wreck what was being so carefully built. United we stand, divided energy, time and money are squandered" (*Home* 6).

The seemingly tranquil world of the patriarchal joint family is fraught with tension when Yashpal fell in love with Sona. The joint families are against love marriages. Also Sona was not financially sound.

Yashpal remained firm in his decision; finally the family yielded. In all Hindu marriages horoscope is the most important thing. Here also an astrologer, 'Babaji' is consulted. Yashpal's love for Sona was over whelming. "The mother's eagle eye noted [the] variations in her son's behaviour" (10). In a joint family one's mother is prior to one's wife. Naturally when one gets married his love shifts from his mother to his wife and the mother starts ill-treating her daughter-in-law. But Yashpal consoled Sona, "once we have children, you will see how she changes." (11).

Even after long years of marriage, Sona remained childless. Sona had a sister named Rupa, who was also childless. "Sona hid this fact as long as she could from her in-laws" (15).

To a traditional woman matrimony is incomplete without motherhood. Motherhood is regarded as the 'biological destiny' and the greatest ambition of a woman. A child is considered to be a woman's happiness and her justification, through which she is supposed to find self-fulfillment and self-realisation. Even a delayed motherhood is a cause of anxiety. In Indian society, it is only the woman who is subjected to humiliation because of this. (Suneel 10)

Yashpal's brother Pyare Lal's marriage with Sushila made the life of Sona more miserable. "Silently Sona watched as Pyare Lal's father-in-law gifted a scooter to his future son-in-law and furnished the four rooms of the second storey with a fully stoked kitchen, fridge, ... [etc.,] She realised ... how poor in gifts her own marriage had been" (*Home* 12). This shows how important dowry is. Dowry is "the property which a man receives from his wife or her family at the time of his marriage" (Ahuja 51). Dowry system has become a part and parcel of Indian society. A girl who does not bring enough dowry to the family's expectation is ill-treated in her in-law's house. Within a year after marriage Sushila gave birth to two boys and this increased Sona's sufferings. Jealousy ran up and down Sona's veins and she "wished she did not have to live in a joint family! If she and her husband lived separately, she too could be happy ..." (*Home* 15).

Sunita, Banwari Lal's daughter was ill-treated by her husband Murli. According to him her dowry had been small and he demanded more. The joint families share the general belief that once a daughter is married off she is no longer their responsibility. Fourteen years after her marriage, Sunita died of burns in an accident, which can be regarded as an instance of dowry death. At home the mother cried non-stop and Sona tried to console her. "The old woman glared at Sona and spat out... What can you know of a mother's feelings? All you do is enjoy life, no children, no sorrow" (18). Sunita's death made her son, Vicky, Sona's responsibility. She took care of the boy in order to please Yashpal and his family. After ten years of marriage, Sona was blessed with a child, Nisha. Joint families share the belief that a woman's prime function is to serve as the vessel that will bring forth the next generation. When she finally did conceive, her mother-in-law - known only as 'Maji', never by name, an indication of her status as nothing more significant than the patriarch's wife - promptly started doting on her. Preference to a boy child is evident in such remarks as "And now the womb has opened, a baby brother will come". The traditional Indian belief that "births and deaths bring their own pollution" (36), is given room in this novel. For ten days after the birth of Nisha no god figure was touched, no meals cooked. Food was provided by the relatives. After a week when Nisha's horoscope was examined it was found that she was a 'mangli'. It was said that 'manglis' were horribly difficult to marry off. "Sona silently hoped the family would not blame her too much for a mangli girl" (39).

Nisha's birth meant certain neglect to Vicky. Meanwhile Sona was blessed with a second pregnancy. Vicky, by now seventeen, confused and uncared for, was destined to become the family's black sheep, and he took his first steps in this direction by sexually abusing his little cousin Nisha. Kapur's handling of this incident is stunningly matter-of-fact. One minute Vicky and Nisha, brother and sister, were playing together and bantering on the terrace; the next minute he was touching her private parts and then using her little fist to aid in jerking himself off. But what is even scarier than the actual incident is its

aftermath. Some of the elders figured out what might have happened, but bringing it into the open was so unthinkable that the possibility was not even discussed; instead they decided to let the traumatised Nisha live with her aunt. Family honour must be preserved at all costs. Situations like this will no doubt sound improbable to those who have no insider's knowledge of what can happen behind the veil of the joint family system.

As Nisha grew, Rupa bestowed careful love on her. From time to time Nisha's mother insisted her daughter come home to be groomed in the traditions of the Banwari Lal household. Sona wanted Nisha to keep fasts as she was a 'mangli'. When Nisha refused to keep fast Sona asked, "How are you going to get married, madam, if you do not make sacrifices?" (92). The traditional superstitious beliefs and customs prevalent in the Indian society are well portrayed here. Every female member of the Banwari Lal family observed 'karva chauth', they fasted the whole day. All the married women observed this ritual for the welfare of their husbands and Nisha was forced to do so for her would-be husband. The joint family does not allow anyone to develop in independent lines. When Vicky expressed his desire to start a part-time business, his wish was denied. Any attempt at modernity was not welcomed by the patriarch. When the patriarch passed away, Maji had become a widow. "They smashed the glass bangles on her wrists... They pulled off her toe rings, they unclasped her mangla sutra, they removed all the coloured saris from her wardrobe and left the white" (125). This is the kind of treatment meted out to a Hindu widow.

When Nisha returned home her mother discovered to her horror that, at sixteen Nisha's cooking skills were a big zero. Nisha discovered in turn to her horror that her mother's idea of a daughter was one who helped her every time in the kitchen. Sona blamed Rupa, "that Masi of yours has ruined your head. What does a girl need with studying? Cooking will be useful her entire life ... This is the life of a woman: to look after her home, her husband, her children, and give them food she has cooked with her own hands" (125-26). In the traditional Indian society a girl's cooking skills are also taken into account for marriage. Along with attention to her culinary skills, Sona took special care to include Nisha in all her 'pujas'.

As Nisha was a 'mangli' and as such it would take time to get her married off, the family thought of educating her further. Sona did not like this. According to her "people are suspicious of brides that are very educated" (139). Finally after many discussions it was decided to send Nisha to a women's college which "would do nicely for a girl waiting to get married" (140). Eventually she fell in love with a boy named Suresh. With the addition of new members the traditional family house became unable to contain everyone. It was suggested that the house should be pulled down and a modern one built in its stead. Yashpal could not tolerate this - "pull down their whole house, just because of a few adjustment problems" (168). Finally Yashpal yielded and kept quiet for "in a joint family, compromise is of the essence" (169).

Nisha continued to meet Suresh and they got intimate too. Nisha wanted Suresh to meet her father. Tensed about the outcome of the meeting Nisha talked with Rupa. "Masi, what do you think of love marriages? ... They are a very bad thing. Too much adjustment. Look at your mother. She spent ten years in sacrifice before her situation improved" (195). On enquiry it was found that Suresh was financially and caste wise lower than the Banwari Lals. Even though Yashpal and Sona married for love, they were completely against their daughter marrying the boy she loved. Financial background and caste are taken into account while arranging a marriage. Eventually Suresh abandoned Nisha and left the town. Nisha felt depressed after this incident. What had been buried all these years in the recesses of her mind now came back to haunt her. Gradually she developed skin problems. Doctors told that the skin problem was purely psychological and it would be cured after her marriage. An advertisement inviting proposals for Nisha was placed in the 'mangli' section of a newspaper. How important financial background, caste and horoscope of the bridegroom are in an arranged marriage is clear in the following passage. "Wanted own business, graduate, manglik boy... from kaiyasth community, own property for only mangli daughter, UP kaiyasth ... Horoscope a must. Send details..." (225).

Nisha wanted to study further after she finished her B.A. This was too much for a traditional joint family which was not in favour of women's education and job. "Your in-laws will not like the idea of your working... I certainly won't let my wife work. Who is going to look after the house?" (243) was the reaction of Nisha's younger brother Raju. When a proposal came for Raju from a very rich family, Yashpal could not reject it, but he was a bit hesitant because in a joint family younger brothers should not marry before elder sisters. In joint families one cannot take individual decisions. Everything is decided by the elders. A boy is allowed to see the girl only after everything, including dowry is settled among the elders. "Raju was allowed a glimpse of the girl, though his opinion was the least important" (250). Raju's wife was not a domesticated girl. She hardly came out of her room and never helped Sona in the house work. Raju began to neglect his duties as a son and as a brother. This created strife in the family because in a joint family man is closer to his mother than to his wife.

Nisha, now working as a primary school teacher got tired of the job and pleaded with Yashpal to give permission to start a business. Sona was not pleased at this new development in Nisha's life. "Families wanted a daughter-in-law, wife, and mother; husbands were not looking for business women" (296). After a lot of controversies, Nisha started her business which became very famous. Meanwhile the marriage mill went on. At last a proposal came for Nisha from a widower - Arvind. Nisha had only one concern - "She would only consent to a match with a family who let her work" (296). The marriage took place and Nisha was taken to Arvind's house. Arvind was very much attached to his mother as is appropriate in the Indian patriarchal society. Nisha could not continue her business as both her husband and her mother-in-law did not favour it. The novel ends with Nisha giving birth to twins - a boy and a girl. Now she had completely forgotten what had happened to her in the past and she even forgot her skin problems. She became a complete woman with motherly feelings sprouting out.

Home is a realistic and compassionate account of an extended family based in a teeming suburb of New Delhi. It reflects the Indian social set up and values. Spanning three generations, the novel engages with the lives and dreams of the various family members, intertwining their compelling stories with that of the cloth-selling business of their own. In this novel we can see Yashpal, Pyare Lal and their families staying in the same house along with their parents. This kind of largeness of size is one of the basic characteristics of a joint family. In the joint family set up the work load is shared among the members, often unequally. The women are often house wives and cook for the entire family. The patriarch of the family lays down the rules and arbitrates disputes. The house often has a large reception area and a common kitchen. Each family has its own bedroom. Here in *Home* also each family has its own bedroom. But they all dine together consuming the food cooked in the same kitchen. In a joint family any disgrace to any member is not considered as a personal disgrace but it is a disgrace to the whole family. Therefore family members are not allowed to do anything disgraceful to the family. In a joint family individual freedom is not given importance. Anything done should be for the collective good of the family. Elder's support and protection are two other characteristics of the joint families. Whatever conflicts, petty jealousies and strifes are there, the 'we' feeling always exists among the members of the joint family. In a joint family the adjustments that a woman has to do are really high. Nisha failed in her love. Although she succeeded in her business, she had to give it up for her husband's family. It was not just Nisha who suffered all through her life, Sona, Sushila, Maji, all suffered in different ways.

The traditional Hindu joint family portrayed in this novel has not disintegrated completely but attempts at modernisation and industrialisation have shattered some of its values. Prof. Kapadia has rightly said, "Hindu sentiments are even today in favour of the joint family. Disruption of the joint family by legislation is therefore, rightly considered to be non-Hindu, because it ignores Hindu family history and sentiments" (Singh 158). Manju Kapur's works belong to the Postmodern Indian English fiction. The broadening of the thematic range is a peculiarity of Postmodern Indian English fiction. Indian English women novelists have begun to talk boldly about extramarital affairs, lesbian relationships, etc. It is in this

situation that Manju Kapur goes back to history. *Home* talks about an out-dated theme - the joint family system and how it acts as a means of suppression of women. Kapur's handling of the theme suggests that though the joint family system has vanished from postmodern novels, its relevance has not fully diminished in the Indian society. Another important fact is that even though women in the postmodern novels are independent there is no considerable change in their condition.

It could be argued that Manju Kapur's novels portray India of the forties and fifties, a conservative period, when women could not assert their individuality. But at the same time we cannot argue that the novels do not have any of the characteristics of a postmodern novel. The two factors which enable the modern woman to assert herself are education and economic independence. Therefore, Nisha can be considered as modern woman, being educated and having a job before marriage. At the same time Kapur never permits Nisha any assertion of power or freedom. Therefore, it can be said that Manju Kapur, the noteworthy story teller, presents the postmodern novels in a traditional narrative thread. She comes to represent the uneasy co-existence of tradition and modernity in her novels. Kapur's fellow novelist Kiran Nargarkar declared: "Manju Kapur is one of the most perceptive chroniclers of that microcosm of the nation: the joint family. The narrative voice is deceptively soft, for Kapur lays it all bare - conflicting loyalties, intrigues, triumphs, and tragedies" (Das, B. K. 93).

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A RE-VIEW INTO THE GENESIS OF DETECTIVE FICTION

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Abstract:

The present study encompasses the spasmodic origin of detective fiction and its subsequent evolution and involution to become more complicated from stories of 'armchair detection' to psychosocial novel. But this did not happen in a few hundred years, instead the concept of detective fiction is as old as the global civilization itself, since it deals with crime or infringement of law in a broader sense of the term, which is the arcane and pre-historic preoccupation in human nature that had been most curiously cultivated by the first man and woman. Because of this susceptibility of human nature to crime and since art mirrors life, detective fiction came into being much earlier than many other genres but some factors were there which helped its emergence. In this study I have tried to situate those factors that I think have played premier role in the growth and development of detective fiction, into a chronological paradigm to facilitate understanding its complex history.

Keywords: *Crime, Detection, Development, Golden Age, Growth, Hard Boiled.*

I. Introduction

The history of detective fiction is much more complicated and longer as it may seem. The general consensus is that detective story began with Edgar Allan Poe with his short story “*Murder in the Rue Morgue*” in 1841. But, a much careful study shows that this genre has a much earlier provenance. Before 19th century detective fiction has appeared throughout the world in a very random fashion. It has appeared spasmodically throughout the ages in different countries, which posits the main difficulty to get to its origin. As such, before trying to get to its root, it would be more sensible to detect those factors or influences which triggered its emanation. In so doing, I would consider three principle influences that led to the emergence of this popular genre and continued its evolution through ages.

Among these three influences the ancient, I am of the opinion, is theological influence. By theological I refer to 'sacred' such as The Old Testament where the first tale as to detection of a criminal act is written in the story of “*Susanna and the Elders*” in the book of prophet Daniel. Here Daniel with his divine insights and dialectic reasoning absolves Susanna of adultery. Besides the Old Testament Ranjit Chattopadhyaya and Siddhartha Ghosh identify, in the 10th Mandala of *RigVeda* written in 1500 BC, the parable of Sarama, the dog that helps gods to track down the poni -group of cattle snatching dacoits as the first detective story of the world.

The second influence that paved the way for this genre is establishment of formal police force, which I entitle here as historical influence. Dorothy L. Sayers, a noted critic and detective fiction writer in the introduction of her “*Great Stories of Detection, Mystery and Horror*” said “The detective story had to wait for its full development for the establishment of an effective police organization in the Anglo Saxon countries”. In 1812 establishment of world's first formal police force Surete in Paris with Eugene Francois Vidocq, a former convicted bandit as its first chief (1812-1827) and publication of his “*Memoiers*” in 1828 bears out Sayers claim. Soon Britain followed France and established first municipal constabulary in the world organized by Sir Robert Peel by Metropolitan Police Act in 1828. In 1856 Britain founded Calcutta

Police in its imperial colony of India. The United States could not build its own force before 1856. Vidocq's "*Memoirs*" inspired French writers in fictionalizing their own detectives like Honore de Balzac's Vautrin, Emile Gaboriau's Monseur Lecoq, American writer Edgar Allan Poe's C. Auguste Dupin. It also influenced many police officers to put down their real life experiences in the following century. Priyanath Mukhopadhyay's "Darogar Daptar" ("The Journal of the Officer- in-Charge") may be cited as an example. The police force of Britain inspired its own breed of detective heroes. Jonathan Whicher, one of the detectives of London Police force (1842) became involved in 1860 with a murder case at Road Hill House. This real life experiences of him influenced Henry James' "*The Turn of the Screw*", Charles Dickens' "*The Mystery of the Edwin Drood*", and Wilkie Collins' "the Moonstone" (1868) though loosely based on the plot.

I entitle the third and the last one as canonical influence. Though officially detective fiction is around two hundred years old, its instance, although not in the modern sense of the term, can be traced back in some of the world's ancient books. This genre inspired the writers centuries after century to try their hands at it. It was only in 19th century, the genre got its name as a distinguished literary style. So numerous writers without knowing what they were creating enormously contributed to the evolution of detective fiction. For convention of discussion I will cite them chronologically.

Dorothy L. Sayers in her 1928 introduction to "*Great Short Stories of Detection, Mystery and Horror*" apart from two Old Testament Stories from the Book of Daniel points out two other stories, one from Herodotus (5th Century BC), and the other from Hercules myths. John Scaggs in his book "*Crime Fiction*" writes "In the story of Hercules and Caucis the thief, Caucis is one of the first criminals to falsify evidence by forging footprints in order to mislead his pursuer. Herodotus' story of King Rhampsinitus and the thief is often identified as the first 'locked room mystery', in which a crime (usually a murder) is committed in a room which it seems is physically impossible for the criminal to have either entered or existed. In Herodotus' story, as in the story of Hercules and Caucis, the thief also tampers with the evidence of the crime to evade capture". The story of "*Oedipus the King*" (430 BC) by Sophocles subsumes all the characteristic attributes to detective fiction.

After a lapse of around two thousand years traces of detective fiction is found in the 16th century in Shakespeare's "*Hamlet*" where Hamlet's revenge of his father's murder is postponed and the detection of the crime is foregrounded: "Hamlet accepts his filial obligation, but before killing Claudius he takes the precaution of first proving his uncle's guilt and his investigations". Although there are several disputes among the critic for "*Hamlet*" being in the line of detective genre.

In the 19th century detective fiction is firmly established as a literary canon but its prelude may be traced back in the 18th century Gothic fiction. Themes such as mystery, crime and death which are common in detective fiction are integral elements in Gothic fiction too. Moreover there is a strong affinity in the narrative technique between the two genres. In Gothic fiction behind the present crisis lies some hidden past incident, which must be discovered as to unravel the cause behind the present calamity and bring it to solution. Similarly detective fiction starts generally with a murder or some gruesome criminal acts. Then the detective starts probe, immerses into the past of the victim and finally with the knowledge of the new findings unravels the present mystery. Gothic fiction began in Horace Walpole's "*The Castle Of Otranto*" (1794) followed by Anne Radcliff's "*The Mysteries of Udolpho*" (1796), William Godwin's "Caleb Williams" (1794) etc. Godwin in his "Caleb Williams" distracted the attention of his readers from pure Gothic terror to pure detection of crime featuring his protagonist Caleb detecting his master's commission of a murder. Edgar Allan Poe, who is a significant contributor to Gothic fiction is credited to be the father of detective fiction for creating first standard detective story in its pure form in "*The Murder in the Rue Morgue*" (1841) featuring C. Auguste Dupin who makes an appearance twice more in the "*Mysterie of Marie Roget*" and "*The Purloined Letter*". Poe coined the term 'ratiocination' to describe the style of reasoning and intuition which his detective uses to unfold a mystery. His 'tales of ratiocination' inspired

Conan Doyle and Agatha Christie Immensely. In the 1880s in Victorian age popularity of Gothic fiction returned and was termed 'Gothic Revival' in the writings of Robert Louis Stevenson's "*Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mister Hyde*" Oscar Wilde's "*Dorian Gray*" Bam Stroker's "*Dracula*". These novels are not stories of detection in formal sense, but they share certain characteristics of the mystery genre and often feature a hero whose challenge is to unravel a central mystery.

Detective fiction rose to prominence in the 19th century. Poe's contribution to detective fiction is the most significant and considered to be the first milestone in the development of the genre. French novelist Emile Gaboriau enlarged Poe's model of short story into first full length detective novel with a greater character insights and psychological introspection. He fictionalized two detectives, Mister Tabaret and Monsieur Lecoq who appear together in "*L'affaire Lerouge*" in 1866. Although Wilkie Collins' "*The Moonstone*" (1868) is considered to be the first detective novel in English language, a careful chronological study will show that his contemporary Charles Dickens much before him remarkably contributed to the development of this genre in "*Martin Chuzzlewit*", "*Bleak House*" and "*The Mystery of Edwin Drood*". All these novels of him are imbued with realistic representation of truth and injustice persevering by detective hero for the sake of justice. In the 1890s most influential of the 19th century detective fiction Sir Arthur Conan Doyle featured Sherlock Holmes in his short story collection "*The Adventure of Sherlock Holmes*" (1892). Though Holmes appeared twice before this in "A Study in Scarlet" and "*The Sign of the Four*" but, failed to leave a lasting impression on the audience. It was in the short stories, Doyle succeeded in epitomizing his detective hero Holmes with his less intelligent friend and omnipresent narrator, Watson who would serve as the prototype for both literature and cinema for more than a century. G.K. Chesterton in his Father Brown stories first published in 1911 as "*The Innocence of Father Brown*" invented a new type of detective protagonist featuring Father Brown who is a priest by profession but detective by hobby, and who sympathises with the convict more than that of the victim and unlike the other detectives he relies heavily on moral justice than the legal one.

Detective fiction since its inception most prosperously flourished in between the two world wars, which has been demarcated as the 'Golden age'. Detective fiction of this era is different from its precursors in respect of style and technique. During this period novels instead of short stories became the main form of detective fiction. Stories of this era mostly 'country house murder' with range of suspects, equipped with range of motives, demonstrating rare romance. The narrative style is simple and lucid. Tales of this age are termed as 'Whodunnit'. Notable authors of this period are Agatha Christie, Dorothy L. Sayers, Margery Allingham, Nagao Marsh and Ellery Queen. Among them Christie deserves to be especially mentioned. She is the most significant representative of this age. In 1920 she published her first book "*The Mysterious Affairs at Style*" in which she introduces one of many of her fictional detectives Hercule Poirot. Her another famous detective is Miss Jane Marple who is featured in "*Murder in the Vicarage* (1930)". She was a prolific writer and produced around eighty books of detective fiction during her life time. She remains the most influential detective writer and all-time best seller. Many of her stories were dramatized, filmed and serialized in T.V. Dorothy Sayers is another notable detective writer of this age. She introduced Lord Peter Wimsey in her thirteenth full length detective novels and several short stories.

After 'whodunnit' of Golden age the most current sub-genre in detective fiction is 'hardboiled' novels. After the 2nd world war detective story writers started to show certain dissimilarities from their immediate predecessors. Hardboiled novel typifies less intellectual challenge than 'whodunnit'. Growing demoralization of the society, violence, bloodshed, love and hate are some of the typical characteristics of 'hardboiled' novels. Here the plot focuses less on the mystery of crime and more on the investigation and action sequences. The detectives of 'hardboiled' novels rely more on the physical strength than on the reasoning power of observation and logical deduction. Dashiell Hammet and Raymond Chandler are two of the famous writers of this genre.

II. Conclusion

The literary scholars have a tendency to look down upon detective fiction as being the content of mere stories of detection and lacking the philosophical and linguistic over-preoccupation, which has reduced it to be complacent with the status of a subsuming category of popular fiction only. But we should not forget it has become a strong suit for authors like Arthur Conan Doyle to assert colonial imperialism by projecting a 'white male private eye' and G.K. Chesterton to promote evangelism transposed to a different cultural milieu. Saradindu Bandyopadhyay has subverted the same trajectory to put up a vitriolic anticolonial resistance. Present day decline of detective fiction stems from it being disparaged and looked inferior to canonical literature by the authoritative institutions as lacking felicity of philosophical speculations and potential of linguistic niceties. Decades ago America has included detective fiction in university curricula. This paper of mine, I hope, would augment a renewed interest in the rich literary heritage of detective fiction and help it find a decent place in the Indian university curricula as a medium of much broader and heavier thoughts, if not as mere stories of intellectual challenges.

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WILLIAM GIBSON'S *BRIDGE TRILOGY* AS CYBERPUNK SCIENCE FICTION

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Abstract:

One of the best known North American science fiction authors, William Gibson is praised as probably the most important novelist of the past two decades. Being the author of more than twenty short stories and eight novels, William Gibson has credited as the father of Cyberpunk Science Fiction. He is the first novelist to write about cyberspace, virtual reality, cyborgs, posthuman life and post-industrial society where information plays vital role. His stories and novels are about the influence of cybernetics and cyberspace technology on the human race. He combined the high-tech and low life in his early short stories and novels. Besides Sprawl Trilogy, he wrote Bridge Trilogy that composed of Virtual Light (1993), Idoru (1996), and All Tomorrow's Parties (1999). Like his first trilogy, Gibson's second trilogy is also about the technological, physical and spiritual transcendence. The present research paper attempts to study his Bridge Trilogy as postmodern novels.

Key Words: *cyberspace, virtual reality, cyborgs, posthuman life, post-industrial society.*

William Gibson's 'Bridge Trilogy' comprises of *Virtual Light* (1993), *Idoru* (1996) and *All Tomorrow's Parties* (1999). The trilogy explores such notions as simulation, virtuality, presence and pattern, tracking their impact upon the on-going emergence of the posthuman. The Bridge trilogy is cyberpunk science fiction in its interest in the aesthetic of postmodernism and the philosophy of punk: their style was dense, fast, and parodic; its favourite characters are punks, rockers and youth subcultural groups in general. In short cyberpunk science fiction articulates the status of science and technology in contemporary society. Gibson's outlook in the trilogy is morbid, cynical and dark.

William Gibson chose to set his novels in the immediate future, identified as the beginning of the twentieth first century. Gibson's *Virtual Light* is set in near future that is in 2005 in a postmodern, dystopian world peopled with electronically marginal in society. William Gibson has summed up his stand in San Francisco Bay Guardian in 1993, "It's a kind of a tragic artefact of science fiction that some people are naive enough to think that science fiction writers are predicting the future" (William Gibson 1993, 25). The novel depicts the future of the society on a global scale. There is a shift in Gibson's approach in the Bridge trilogy, the writer moves from the artificial realm of information technology to the geographical landscape of observed reality. The mystical cyberspace is replaced by the universe completely rooted in the meat world, post-industrial San Francisco. The novelist has depicted the near future universe looked way too much like the present one for comfort. Thus the novel is not about the future but about the present.

The novel is set in San Francisco, US where there is a ban on the manufacturing of the cigarettes. The government of US banned manufacturing of the cigarettes for its contribution to the high incidence of skin cancer. The massive inflation has given opportunities to foreign companies to enter in local law making and policy decision. As a result a privatized law-enforcement companies cruises LA in tanks designed by Ralph Lauren. Countries like Canada and Brazil have exploded into nation states. TV becomes essential commodity. People start to believe that the God resides everywhere even in old movie. Thus the novelist has created a dystopian atmosphere in the very beginning of the novel. The novelist has

presented an urban crazy-quilt, an emblem of contemporary America.

The term Bridge in 'Bridge Trilogy' is symbolical in the novel. Due to megalithic earthquake, the people from San Francisco have abandoned the Oakland Bay Bridge. However, the homeless have started to use the Bridge as shelter and the Japanese scholar named Yamaski's topic of research is the same Bridge. The Bridge becomes optimistic for the dwellers of the San Francisco. The young scholar, Yamaski tries to understand the American culture through the study of Bridge. Another instance of Gibson's optimism is seen in *Bike*. One of the employees of San Francisco Bike messenger service named Chevette Washington steals a pair of virtual light glasses from a gross guy at a party. Being a homeless and living on the Bay Bridge, Chevette Washington is a bicycle messenger in a unit called virtual light. The glasses produce images in the brain by stimulating the optic nerves without employing photos. Virtual light glasses provide pale simulacra of the cyberspace. Thus, the novel *Virtual Light* is described as a novel full of contradictions. The bikes are emblematic of environmentally conscious no-fuel freedom, intense energy, exhilarating speed, and sexy fashion. They are the embodiment of the techno hip.

The Bridge was collapsed and destroyed due to earthquake. The collapse of Bridge is symbolical of unstable geography of cyberspace. The whole city of San Francisco grows relentlessly around the destroyed Bridge and the dispossessed and homeless Chevette and many others reside on the Bridge. The Bridge has post-modern connotations such as illusory, floating and fanciful. Like the matrix of *Sprawl Trilogy*, the Bridge is an ever-proliferating construct without any obvious shape or clearly identifiable boundaries. It is described as an aesthetically paradoxically construct, an architectural and anthropological bricolage: "The integrity of its [the Bridge] span was rigorous as the modern program itself, yet around this had grown another reality, intent upon its own agenda. This had occurred piecemeal, to no set plan, employing technique and material. The result was something amorphous, startlingly organic....Its steel bones, in stranded tendons, were lost within an accretion of dreams: Tatto parlors, gaming arcades, dimly lit stalls, stacked with decaying magazines, sellers of fireworks, of cut bait, betting shops, sushi bars, unlicensed pawnbrokers, herbalists, barbers, bars. Dreams of commerce, their locations generally corresponding with the decks that had once carried vehicular traffic; while above them, rising to the very peaks of the cable towers, lifted the intricately suspended barrio, with its unnumbered population and its zones of more private....Everything ran together, blurring, melting in the fog" (*Virtual Light* 58-59).

These lines refer to a postmodern discourse of destruction and deformation of shape and form. Thus the Bridge becomes a pivotal location. William Gibson has used the Bridge as a metaphor for the nascent technologies bridging contemporaneous life and the highly advanced future.

In cyberpunk science fiction, architecture also receives important role. The data of the world and construct of the programmers are represented in the architectural quality. William Gibson has introduced various architectural patterns and textures of topological, spatial and bodily constructs, and suggested human being to escape from. In this novel, Gibson explores marginal and luminal architectural spaces and in doing so translates contemporary architecture into a collage of past forms and practices which give rise to uncanny sensations and interpretations.

The stolen glasses have unlikely importance. The police Loveless, Svobodov and Orlovsky two Russian immigrants begin to find out Chevette and glasses. Certain plans are implanted in the glasses. A powerful corporation implants plan of rebuilding San Francisco in the glasses. That is why glasses become pivotal and danger to the person who possesses them. Lucius Warbaby has recruited a former cop-turned private security agent called Berry Rydell to recover the pair of glasses. However, Berry Rydell is ignorant about the importance of glasses. He is unknown about the information the glasses contain. In cyberpunk science fiction, information plays most important role. The multinational companies have appointed cops and other to find out the glasses. Redyll meets Chevette Washington and falls in love of her. When he realizes the inherent danger of the glasses, Redyll is forced to take the side of Orlovsky and Svobodov and break his agreement with Warbaby. He along with Chevette runs away from enemies. Warbaby belongs to

elite class whereas Redyll and Chevette are the poor dwellers of Bridge. The elite class wants to wield the power with the help of information in the form of glasses. The information, in this case, is the plans to rebuild an entire city completely without taking into account what its inhabitants think.

According to the critics, the novel is not a cyberpunk but about the cops involved in the trouble. Redyll's an online computer is hacked to indicate an emergency in a residential apartment in order to catch the wife of the owner of the apartment. Redyll accepts the work of finding a pair of glasses. His search leads to the eventual discovery of the plan that will lead to San Francisco being under a computer network-based dictatorship. His discovery leads him in a terminable position. However, his newly acquired knowledge and the hackers' aid help him to sic Death Star, a riot control super-machine.

Thus the novel contains post-apocalyptic anarchy, protagonists immersed in and dealing with this anarchy, shadowy evil power structures that threaten to wreck them at every turn. Although the novel deals with the newest achievements of electronic and information technology, it is less than conventional cyberpunk novel. The standard cyberpunk element, 'something stolen from a courier that everyone wants to get their hands on' makes the novel cyberpunk science fiction. There is the decline of cyberpunk science fiction genre because cyberpunk authors are concerned with the dark visions of future. Besides this the writers are varied in their use of style and portrait of technology. In this connection Bruce Sterling writes, "However, I don't worry much about the future of razor's edge techno-punk. It will be bowdlerized and parodied and reduced to a formula, just as all other SF innovations have been. It scarcely matters much, because as a 'movement,' 'Punk SF' is a joke. Gibson's litterateur who happens to have an unrivalled grasp of the modern pop aesthetic....By '95 we'll all have something else cooking" (2007: vii).

William Gibson's *Idoru* is the second novel in Bridge Trilogy published in 1999. The novel is, like cyberpunk science fiction, set in near future that is in the post-earthquake world of San Francisco of the early 21st century. The novel tells the story of Computer hacker Laney, marriage of human and artificial intelligence construct, and other parties interested in finding out nanodevice used for the union of human and AI construct. The novel has all gritty icons of postmodern cyberculture: cool cyber hangouts, rock stars, Russian Mafia, virtual reality, nanotechnology etc. William Gibson presents pop culture and our obsession with it in the novel. The author uses the Japanese cult phenomenon as a starting point and crafts excellent and engaging tale of future world. He explores the nature of celebrity in the information age, a phenomenon not fully explained by either reality or illusion. He continues to meld society and technology.

The novel tells two parallel stories: one of Chia's journey and second is the story of Colin Laney, a data miner. Chia's story is associated with Rez's proposal to marry an AI construct, idoru whereas Laney's story is associated with investigation of the world of Rei Toei that is Idroru. The title of the novel is the name of "personality-construct, a categories of software agents the creation of information-designers: a synthespian" (*Idoru* 92). Idroru is a media star who exists in virtual reality. Rei Toei is an Idroru, the Japanese idol. Idroru is a synthetic pop singer, created by a team of software engineers. One of the mega-rock stars of the musical group and Pop singer, Rez decides to marry Rei Toei (Idoru), which is apparently not possible. His master has raised questions over the impossibility of the marriage of Rez and Tei. Hence, the central character, Colin Laney is entrusted the task of finding out manipulators of Rez for marring virtual construct called Rei Toei. Laney is presented as an intuitive fisher of patterns of information. There is another group called the Seattle Chapter of the Rez Fan Club wants to investigate the impossible marriage of human and AI construct. Hence Tolyo chapter of Rez Fan Club appoints fourteen year old Chia Pet McKenzie to find out what is happening. Chia meets a woman called Maryalice in Tokyo. Meryalice makes Chia to carry a contraband item through customs in Tokyo.

William Gibson has given more space to the past life of Laney who was previously working for a powerful information organization called 'Slitscan', an organisation involves in destruction of media personalities by exposing the secrets. Slitscan is a kind of corporate gossip-monger on the Net. Growing up in the Gainesville Federal Orphanage, Laney inadvertently restricted control over his future identity.

Only considering the program's rewards, he voluntarily has participated in a series of experimental drug tests. Laney was working for a company with no scruples and suddenly found that he couldn't just watch someone's life implode without doing something. He tried to expose them, but his own background threatened his credibility. He felt guilty for becoming responsible for the suicide of a woman. As a result he has taken a job in Japan to escape the revenge of his former employer. Though wounded by the mistakes he made during his tenure at Slitscan, Laney is nevertheless intrigued by the offer. Laney is asked to attempt to predict the uncontrollable Rez's future behaviour: "The relevant data, in terms of his current employability, was that he was an intuitive fisher of patterns of information: of the sort of signature a particular individual inadvertently created in the net as he or she went about the mundane yet endlessly multiplex business of life in a digital society. Laney's concentration-deficit, too slight to register on some scales, made him a natural channel-zapper, shifting from program to program, from database to database, from platform to platform, in a way that was, well, intuitive" (*Idoru* 125). Laney's employers view him as an instrument to do research. Nominally a "research assistant on a project" (*Idoru* 31) at Dat America, a group of French scientists teaches Laney to detect nodal points within masses of unorganised data. He is treated as merely a better piece of software. Laney is hired by scarred, giant Blackwell, Rez's fiercely protective security chief. Blackwell is concerned that someone may be trying to manipulate his boss, Rez having expressed his determination to marry Rei Toei, a computer personality construct. Laney cannot work with insufficient and impersonal data and insists on meeting Rez. As a result he is captivated by Rei Toei.

Another organization uses Laney's story to expose Slitscan's involvement in illegal spying. The war between media organizations forms the central concern of the novel. Laney is not happy with his new job and hence leaves both organizations and is left dry, high and alone like cyberpunk heroes. The controller of Slitscan organization attempts to blackmail Laney with false evidence into betraying his current employers Lo/Rez.

Chia McKenzie is another active member of Fan Clubs for Lo/Rez. She is disappointed to see her organization's indifference to the marriage of Rei Toei and Rez. However, Chia decides to investigate on her own and seeks the help of host Mitsuko's brother Masahiko, an Otaku who is a member of the hacker community called 'Walled City.' When she is on her way to Tokyo, another passenger inserts some contraband into her luggage. She finds herself on the run from smugglers and the Russian mob, her only protection a band of computer-savvy teenage boys with access to a virtual reality space of unimaginable complexity. Consequently, her path crosses Laney's, and the nature of Rez's romantic interest in the *Idoru* is revealed. Eddie's Russian gangster friends demand contraband. When they come to know that Chia, Rez and Laney are connected, they start to hunt Chia.

The novel *Idoru* is set in an electronic architecture of the 'City of darkness' that constitutes a simulation of the dense and multi-layered architectural structure of the Walled City in China. William Gibson has given beautiful description of the Walled City as cyberspatial city of darkness: "They (Chia and Mahasika) were inside now, smoothly accelerating, and the squirming density of the thing was continual visual impact, an optimal drumming...And they were not alone: Others there, ghost-figures, whipping past, and everywhere the sense of eyes...Fractal filth, bit-rot, the corridor of their passage tented with crazy swoops of faintly flickering lines of some kind...Then they were ascending a maze of twisting stairwells, still ascending, and Chia took a deep breath and closed her eyes" (*Idoru* 182).

Tatiani G. Rapatzikou writes about the cyberspatial nature of the Walled City, "The Digitally complex infrastructure of the Cyberspatial City of Darkness, caused by the technological manipulation and advanced processing of the accumulated data, inscribes itself within the recognisable mechanical and urban pattern of the Walled City" (2004: 190). The novel interlinks the physical space with the virtual or imaginary and creates something new space: "The walls alive with shifting messages in the characters of every written language, doorways flipping past, each one hinting at its own secret world. And this time she (Chia) was more aware of the countless watching ghosts. That must be how people presented here, when

you weren't in direct communication with them. A city of ghost shadows" (*Idoru* 283).

The movement of Chia and her brother Masahiko are watched and observed by other denizens of the Walled City. Chia unconsciously takes with her the contraband and the denizens are in search of contraband. The contraband is a highly illegal nanotech assembler, a device used for high-speed material fabrication. While visiting Japan to investigate some new rumours about the group, she is used to smuggle illegal nanoware to the Russian criminal underground. Both Laney and Chia get caught up in the intrigues swirling about the plans of Rez, one half of the band, to marry Rei Toei, an *Idoru* who exists only in virtual reality. Gibson excels here in creating a warped but comprehensible future saturated with logical yet unexpected technologies. Maryalice's boyfriend, Eddie has smuggled in on behalf of the Russian Mafia. Both Chia and Masahiko hide in a hotel where all parties come and converge. In the hotel toilet everything is high-tech, controlled by buttons marked in Japanese, which Chia cannot understand. *Idoru* (Rei) manifests herself on Chia's computer screen. Eddie wants to reclaim the nanotech device. Chia's friend Zona Rosa views events over the Net. She saves Chia. Rez and Blackwell also enter the hotel. Even Laney also rushes towards hotel. Both Rei and Rez use nanotechnology device to marry. However, the novelist leaves the ending of the novel open to readers to see whether the marriage is possible. The mystery of the marriage of human and AI construct still remains at the end of the novel.

The novel *Idoru* is linked with the previous novel *Virtual Light* as it shares incidental characters. William Gibson who has added cyberspace to the lexicon seems somewhat fatigued by the future. The author has shifted the action of the novel from street and cybernetic byways of 21st century to post-quake Tokyo. The main concern of Gibson in *Idoru* is human's reaction to technology. Laney and Chia are afraid of a union between the authentic rock band and the synthetic *Idoru* and the physical security of Rez. Gibson seems to suggest that human being uses technology to transform everything into the new world where everything is manufactured.

All Tomorrow's Parties is the last novel in 'Bridge Trilogy'. The novel once again takes place in a future ruined California. Many of the characters from the previous two novels are appeared in the present novel. All three novels in Bridge Trilogy have many common motifs and themes without being sequential. When interviewed, Gibson reviews the intension of writing the novel: "Without my having intended it, it seemed that both *Virtual Light* and *Idoru* emerged with more than the usual number of inexplicable connectors having off them. They were clearly connected to each other, but there was something that suggested that both of them were connected even more profoundly to some non-existent third. There is sort of triangulated on a non-existent book-*All Tomorrow's Parties* in it" (Therese Littleton 2). Thus the novel is loosely connected with *Virtual Light* and *Idoru*. The novel is cyberpunk science fiction in that it has portrayed the effect of emerging technology on the society. Set around the decaying San Francisco Bay Bridge, the novel tells the story of a youth involved in finding out the nodal points that changes the course of human history.

Laney of *Idoru* reappears as a protagonist of *All Tomorrow's Parties*. When child Laney was subjected to research study and certain investigations are made on him. He was given a drug that allows him to enter cyberspace and have access to endless streams of internet data. The use of drugs is one of characteristic features of cyberpunk. Due of research on Laney, he has ability to see nodal points in history. A sociological researcher, Yamazaki is interested in the study of non-established marginal urban realm. Cardboard City is the ruined underground space of Tokyo where Yamazaki starts searching something hidden. Cardboard City remains hidden and undiscovered. It has something fascinating and hence Yamazaki is bent on doing research on the city. He has done a research on the boy called Laney by using nanotechnology and the result is the ability given to Laney to see nodal points in history-times and places where important changes are occurring.

When Laney grows up, he decides to see what is beneath the surface of Bridge. He is convinced that something big is going to happen in San Francisco. He is not certain about what is going to happen but he

knows that the happening will bring changes in the world. Laney travels through a cyberspace as if it is a place any one can go to. Laney is described as a tortured master computer-hacker and one of the few humans with rare gift of being able to recognize the true patterns that exist behind the shimmering data flood from cyberspace. Laney has been gifted almost prophetic powers because he is dosed with something called SB-5. This drug allows Laney to see the world as data which he can interpret with relative ease. As a result he senses a gathering of possibilities in San Francisco. The drug SB-5 has also left Laney obsessed with a man named Cody Harwood. Laney's world is composed of computer bits. He has schooled Rei Toei to interact with the crude, sensual characters who are people in the ordinary world. He suspects that his interpretation of the data streams are being tampered with by an outside agent named Harwood. He is not suspicious about the nature of Harwood but he does not believe him also. Laney is not able to get to the Bridge, hence he appoints Rydell, a California rent-a-cop to investigate. Redyll has also the habit of travelling through cyberspace. Redyll is happy with the low wages job at the Lucky Dragon store. He leaves the job accepts the one assigned by Laney. His new job is also challenging one as he is being followed by the bunch of thugs. Redyll is accompanied by his girl-friend Chevette. Laney has given Redyll the device that contains Rei Toi, a computer generated idol-singer.

When Redyll is introduced to a biotechnologically new bodily defined subject, he is confused: "Did being a hologram feel like anything? (He doubted it.) Or did the programs that generated her [the idoru which is a personality construct] somehow provide some greater illusion of being there? But if you weren't real in the first place, what did you have to compare not being there to?" (*All Tomorrow's Parties* 202) Redyll is not able to distinguish between what is natural and artificial; the boundaries between the organic and inorganic have become blurred. The statement challenges the stability and rationality of the human body and a non-existent object. This marks a transition from mere physicality to more transient and elusive forms of being a hologram. When an electronic human being surrogate emerges, it embodies horror as an alien self-invaded and taken over by some strange mechanical power. Thus cyborg is another feature of cyberpunk as reflected in the novel. Both Redyll and Chevette have released Idoru (Rei Toi) like a genie from a computer in an upstairs apartment in downtown San Francisco. The novel ends with the destruction of the Bridge. William Gibson does not necessarily suggest the annihilation but possibly announce the dilution and dispersion of the shapes and patterns presented into weightless forms of being. The writer does not necessarily wish to control the data. What is being invoked is the new world rising above the architectural debris: "The bridge, behind him now, perhaps forever, is a medium of transport become a destination: salt air, scavenged neon, the sliding cries of gulls. He has glimpsed the edges of a life there that he feels is somehow ancient and eternal. Apparent disorder arranged in some deeper, some unthinkable fashion" (*All Tomorrow's Parties* 273).

William Gibson has lost interest in cyberpunk science fiction as his novels in 'Bridge Trilogy' have less amount of cyberpunk features. By 1980s, cyberpunk is on the decline. By the late 1980's critics and authors alike are questioning the relevance of cyberpunk's by-now tired motifs. Brooks Landon argued that Gibson "turned out the lights" on cyberpunk in 1988, with the publication of *Mona Lisa Overdrive* (240). The futuristic and predictive science fictional content of the writing was also increasingly in doubt: "The real message of cyberpunk was inevitability...not speculation or extrapolation [but an]...unhysterical, unsentimental understanding of the profound technological and epistemological implications of accomplished and near-accomplished cultural fact" (Landon, Brooks 1991: 239). Gibson's personal skepticism towards science fiction's claim to...a predictive function places his writing in this border zone. His novels help to provide what he terms the 'science fiction tool kit' increasingly necessary to 'describe the world we live in' (McIntyre, Tom 52).

The decline of cyberpunk and cyberspace into marketing device and hyper-reality requires Gibson's abandonment of digital tectonics for analogue information structures-a device through which to explore the retro-futuristic posthuman. By refiguring the Bridge community of *Virtual Light* as an organic

hive-like entity, Gibson transposes metaphor into architectural meta-form, refurbishing the recurrent theme in his work of the effect of place, space and architecture on posthuman form and ontology. This new neo-tribal heterotopian space lays the foundation for the mediation of the posthuman coded as information topology in *Idoru*. The disruption of the subject/object dichotomy in *Virtual Light* prefigures the boundary transgressions of flesh, data, and biologic nanotechnology in *Idoru* and *All Tomorrow's Parties*, enabling the inversion of inner and outer through body, landscape, and cyborgian architecture. In the latter novel, the idoru Rei inverts the science fiction trope of transcendence-she escapes the binary digital confines of data for rhizomatic analogue complexity-achieving a metaphorical symbiotic union with the corporeality of the rock star Rez. The iconic mapping of their converging data creates an unstable assemblage, an involution where differences are replaced by diffractions. For Gibson, then, the posthuman becomes an eruption within the human.

Like 'Sprawl Trilogy', Gibson's the 'Bridge Trilogy' explores the dehumanizing effect of technology on society. Gibson's 'Bridge Trilogy' explores notions of simulacra, virtuality and the effect of nanotechnology on the society. The author depicts the evolution of the digital figure into the post-human, a growth from simulation to virtuality. Rei Toei of *All Tomorrow's Parties* emerges as a post-human figuration of information theory. However, this trilogy lacks the classic style and brilliant ideas and dazzling scenes of cyberspace of 'Sprawl Trilogy.' There is the lack of cyberspace and virtuality in 'Bridge Trilogy.' William Gibson is criticised for his praising of technology in *Sprawl* and *Bridge* Trilogies. However, Gibson remains indisputably the finest of the cyberpunk writer; it is because of his poetic style and physical and erotic presentation. William Gibson's novels speak of population comprised of genetically engineered wetware wonders, electrically addicted buttonheads, fragmented post-human enclaves, and terminal cyborgs giving rise to new state of being. The author portrays how the Western culture is suffering a crisis brought on by advanced electronic technologies. William Gibson attempts to identify and narrate the ambiguities that mark the technological contours of contemporary culture. William Gibson presents an aspiration of human being to transcendence and the reconfiguration of the machine as mythical entity. Gibson's vision of the technological outlaw zone affirms the premise that the field of changing and growing technologies will always be a site of contentious power struggles and irrepressible creative energies. Gibson's later fiction, notably the San Francisco trilogy, is more hopeful about the possibility of positive change resulting from such battles.

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INTRODUCTION TO ECOFEMINISM: AN INDIAN PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract:

Ecofeminism as a critical theory emerged in the West. The term Ecofeminism is coined by a prominent French critic and the proponent of the theory of western ecofeminism Francoise d' Eaubonne. In western thought the ideas of environment and gender and how they are connected is explored on rather ideological terms. But when it comes to India the connections between Women and Ecology can be explained on practical terms as we have a rich history of women's struggle against environmental degradation and exploitation. Chipko movement, Narmada Bachao andolan and in numerous other events we see women playing a significant role. Women take a central position in these struggles as their lives are intimately connected to nature. In Indian context theorists as well as literary figures explore many shades of this nature/women connection. In theory we find spiritual ecofeminism and material ecofeminism: one (spiritual) focuses on regenerating the idea of nature as Goddess and the other (material) stresses on the fact that women's material reality is such that when nature is harmed their lives also are altered. These strands of ecofeminist theory help to create an outline on Indian ecofeminism. In literature specially by the women authors we further delve into the intricacies of nature/women connections which sometimes are overlooked by the theorists themselves. Issues such as gender, class and race are raised, city life or urbanity is presented with both the positive and negative aspects, and most importantly these authors present us an alternative idea of modernity that does not necessarily subjugate the "other". As we go through these texts by Indian women authors we begin to realise that it is not possible to define Indian Ecofeminism in simple, monolithic terms. This is a field of diverse and intricate relationships within which man, woman, animals, plants and every other entity are entangled. One cannot be separated from the other. The idea of oneness comes vividly alive when we start to form an essentially Indian Ecofeminist theory. The contribution of these women authors in shaping the theory is undeniable. It is these texts which are set in Indian villages from 1940's to 2000's portray women protagonists of different background and how they connect to nature and it also shows how the relationship has evolved with time. That is how we get more or less a complete picture of ecofeminism which is essentially Indian.

Keywords: *Ecofeminism, women, nature, third world, theory, fiction.*

Ecofeminism is a relatively new method of critical thinking that aims to explore the various ways in which nature and women are connected. Traditionally both were seen as similar in terms of caring, nurturing, giving entities. But there is another connection: their shared history of oppression. Both nature and women have been oppressed for time immemorial as both are seen as resources. They have been conquered, possessed, dominated and exploited. The reason, ecofeminists believe is the male patriarchal capitalist attitude that sees both nature and women as inferior "other". From here the dualisms of culture and nature, man and woman arise. Ecofeminism not only points at these dichotomies that are predominant in our lives but also seeks to know from where these dichotomies arise in history. In this search ecofeminists come face to face with questions, some fundamental questions of which they aim to provide answers too. These are:

Why do we see women and nature are connected?

What are the unique ways that they share a common platform?

How systems of traditional knowledge create dichotomies?

How does the dominant power structure create the divide between man and nature?

To begin with we have to look at the western ideas of what they thought of Enlightenment. The modern world and its very basic theories have emerged out of the enlightenment movement which speaks of a uniformity, universality, aims to constitute a definite world order where there would be no place for multiple cultural spaces, faiths and religions. The enlightenment project was only focused on the so called development that is fundamentally based on science, technology and industry. In such schemes of development man begins to see himself as a separate independent entity from nature. The whole point of progress, and development was to have power over nature and all the other whom he thought as inferior: the land and its people whom they began to colonize. Adorno and Horkheimer in their essay *Dialectic of Enlightenment* writes: “Enlightenment, understood in the widest sense as the advance of thought, has always aimed at liberating human beings from fear and installing them as masters. Yet the wholly enlightened earth is radiant with triumphant calamity. Enlightenment program was the disenchantment of the world... The 'happy match' between human understanding and the nature of things that he (Francis Bacon) envisaged is a patriarchal one: the mind conquering superstitions is to rule over disenchanted nature. Knowledge, which is power, knows no limit, either in its enslavement of creation or in its defence of worldly masters.” (22)

Thus in his attempt to rid himself of fear of nature which arises out of ignorance man conquers nature, starts to dominate it, projects himself as independent from it. From here the division between master (man) and its slave (nature) begins to form and with it the dualism of culture and nature. In our ambition to reach feats of development and progress we have started to view nature as inert, as a resource which has to be exploited in order to progress. A dominant system of world order begins to take shape; a system that establishes a definite idea of progress and development. This idea is mainly a western capitalist product. Vandana Shiva writes in her article “Reduction and Regeneration: A Crisis in Science” (Ecofeminism by Maria Mies and Vandana Shive): “Third World and feminist scholarship has begun to recognize that the dominant system emerged as a liberating force not for humanity as a whole (though it legitimized itself in terms of universal benefit for all), but as a western male oriented and patriarchal projection which necessarily entailed the subjugation of both nature and women” (22)

The disenchantment of nature and life forms within it also begins to take place. We no longer see nature as a living body, we fail to understand that we are not separate from nature; when nature is violated we are affected too and the worst wound is suffered by women and children, animals and plants. All these life forms are in the dominant equation of dualisms are the 'other' and share a common ground of being the inferior, being the provider, being the oppressed- here lies a connection.

Ecofeminism in an important way is a reaction against western ideas of development and what the West thinks as knowledge. On the one hand ecofeminism believes that all are connected- it disrupts the dualisms of self and other. On the other hand it tries to retain the elements of enchantment within nature by considering nature as sacred. Western ecofeminists such as prominent French critic and the proponent of the theory of western ecofeminism Francoise d' Eaubonne, American activist and writer Hazel Handerson, British critic Starhawk and Indian activist Vandana Shiva they all agree that there is a sacredness in nature and that's why they all see Eastern cultures as something that stands opposed to western cultures that see nature as a resource. These ecofeminists come together in reemphasizing on this inherent spirituality related to nature: Hazel Handerson thinks that ecofeminism actually restores the primitive cultures that worship nature, cultures that are predominantly matriarchal. She also thinks that the whole natural order, its functions are not fully knowable. Humans are an integral part of the order and that's why it is impossible for him to understand the workings of nature. Starhawk defines this idea of goddess worship as a part of spiritual ecofeminism and stresses on the goddess tradition, nature theology, and indigenous spirituality. What these thinkers believe is that when we start to see earth as alive, we act to preserve it. Vandana Shiva

also has similar viewpoints regarding this. She writes in her book *Staying Alive*: “Women in India are an intimate part of nature, both in imagination and in practice. At one level nature is symbolized as the embodiment of the feminine principle and at another she is nurtured by the feminine to produce life and provide sustenance...Prakriti is worshipped as Aditi, the primordial vastness, the inexplicable, the source of abundance, she is worshipped as Adi Shakti, the primordial power. All forms of nature and life in nature are the forms, the children of the Mother Nature who is nature itself born of the creative play of her thought.” (38)

Vijaya Rettakundi Nagarajan, in her article “Soil as the Goddess Bhudevi in a Tamil Women's Ritual: The Kolam in India” shares a similar view with the other spiritual ecofeminists of both western and nonwestern background. She in her article tries to explain many Indian rituals done by women and which are thought as part of their religion (Hindu Religion mostly) as expressions of the innate sense of sacredness within nature. This is part of nature worship. This rituals which are religious in nature and develops as a part of culture is termed by her as “embedded ecologies”. She emphasises on the element of “sacrality” in nature and shows how an assumed sacredness within natural objects or nature itself can give rise to a sense of responsibility to protect and preserve nature. “...underlying our thought and understanding of religion and environment is the proposition that “sacrality” when attached to a natural object makes that object a bounded religiously endowed entity and that object is automatically, therefore assumed to become more protected. The 'sacrality' itself creates a context a context where people surrounding that natural object are more careful, more resource conscious, and more ecologically sensitive to the consequences of using that natural resource.” (162)

When we talk about connectedness in the context of India we have to mention another perspective of ecofeminism and that is more material than spiritual. Many argue that spiritual ecofeminism has the risk of being essentialist; instead of dismantling the existing power equations it can reassert the stereotypical gender equations and roles. Vijaya Rettakudi Nagarajan in the same article mentioned above is critical about Shiva's understanding of the sacred connectedness of nature and women. She is critical of Shiva's ideas of “ecological virtueness” that Indian women naturally have as they water tulsi plant every day. It is also left unexplained in Shiva's argument that how following a ritual can make one aware of and active towards ecological conservation. Bina Agarwal's 'Feminist Environmentalism' perspective follows a similar route. She is also critical of spiritual ecofeminism and advocates material ecofeminism. She concerns herself with the social positioning of women and nature. She argues that as marginalized entities both share a common ground it is not a sacred thread that binds them together rather their material reality that connects them. And this relationship depends on materiality, material production and distribution and that's why it is variable. And to say that this connection is always a positive one would be an exaggeration. Bina Agarwal refuses to accept an unquestioning acceptance of Nature/ woman connection. Political and social issues have to be considered while we talk of Indian Ecofeminism: “What is women's relationship with the environment? Is it distinct from that of man? An intensifying struggle for survival in the developing world, however, highlights the material basis for this link and sets the background for an alternative formulation to ecofeminism, which I term “feminist environmentalism” (199)

Shiva along with other ecofeminist thinkers also project the western world as responsible for a false construction of nature, a perspective that sees nature as inert, passive, uniform, inferior and thereby a subject of domination. This formation or rather false formation of nature as inferior to man and on the other hand woman as inferior to man connects both nature and women. This is a direct result of western model of development which Shiva terms as “maldevelopment”. This maldevelopment arises from the imposition of western ideas of development and progress onto others. Shiva writes “ maldevelopment is the death of feminine principle”. She shows that the common ground of being inferior shared by both nature and women is the result of devaluation of what is being provided by both nature and women by the western world. They devalue what satisfies need and ensures sustenance. Ecofeminists such as Shiva and Mies are

critical of industrialization as a strategy for development. Shiva feels it is necessary to reestablish the notion of the feminine principle in nature, the revival of Prakriti, the resource of all life. This idea of “Prakriti”, the nature Goddess is the preserver and sustainer of each and every element in nature: animals, plants even the inanimate. And thus women's struggle for liberation necessarily entails a struggle for preservation of all life forms in this planet.

And there is the systematic exploitation of the third world by the west in taking over its market. And these market strategies disrupt the lives of people and specially of women and children. The lives of these women and children depend directly on the land. The industries change the economy and the market strategies. We need to understand here how the new economy do that in order to profit from the market and within these systems the poor villagers, the farmers are remain deprived of better livelihood. Chhaya Datar in her book *Ecofeminism Revisited* writes: “Global markets allow the interior of the Third World to produce for the market and enter the cash economy. However, these people lack bargaining power and thus earn lesser. / The terms of trade (i.e., the price at which poor countries sell to buy from the rich) are pitted against the poor. Rich countries form a “buyers' market” to dictate prices. Even though poor people from the majority they do not enjoy absolute control over their products.

The productivity of the Third World has been molded to suit the demands of developed countries...It promises modern amenities but destroys their self-sufficiency. Development dismantles and disintegrates while promising to reconstitute - a hollow assurance which is never realized in the Third World.” (66)

All these theoretical approaches make it clear that ecofeminism is definitely such an emerging critical thinking which we need to adapt to see and understand all the subtle power politics that are being played out around us in every possible way. When we talk about ecofeminism in the Third World countries like India, it presents a rather different picture. India is a land of diversities; diversities in cultures, economic positions, faiths and propagandas. Thus it becomes difficult to measure or define Indian Ecofeminism from a fixed theoretical point of view that speaks of Third world in general. We tend to generalize and include the question of India within the parameters of Ecofeminism in third world. What we ignore is that India can offer a very different scenario when we talk about Ecofeminism in the third worlds. As a theoretical frame work ecofeminism emerged in the west. And all the contemporary discussions on Indian ecofeminism is done on the frameworks laid by the west. Not only that ecofeminism has given a new direction to feminism. Feminism emphasizes on equality in an already existing system. Ecofeminism strives to dismantle the predominant power structure, for ecofeminists equality is not emancipation. They explain it in the following way: with the power of reason and rationality, the very weapons of enlightenment, man has made it clear that emancipation can happen only by dominating nature, being free from nature; progress comes from using and exploiting nature. Feminism never questions this, rather they demand equal power to dominate and there lies a problem. The idea of “catching up” with the men in this very power dominated society, within the existing paradigms will help to strengthen clutches of false, manipulative development processes. The system will remain the same. I quote from *Ecofeminism* by Shiva and Mies : “ So the question is can the concept of emancipation be compatible with a concept of preserving the earth as our life base?” (7) This is not the objective of ecofeminism : not to equate equality to emancipation but to seek emancipation of all through preservation. True emancipation does not lie in having equal rights in already existing order rather it lies in a change of that order which sees nature as inferior to culture and woman to man, animals to humans.

These theoretical approaches give us some ideas of what ecofeminism is and how it fits within the context of the third word. But this is not enough to have a comprehensive idea of how women relate to nature. This relationship is a complicated one and its many complexities are explored by Indian women authors. Many of these writers were writing long before ecofeminism as a theoretical approach emerged in the west. For example the works of Kamala Markandya were writing in the 1950s. But her works reflect an

acute sense of eco-consciousness. Her women characters are portrayed as an integral part of nature. The world of Markandya is a rural world where industries are making its presence felt very subtly. The issues that Markandya brings forward are very similar with many approaches discussed in western eco-feminism as well as in contemporary Indian attitudes. This happens because there has always been an eco-consciousness in Indian psyche as our cultures have always given importance to nature, seen nature as something divine, worshipped it as a goddess. Thus what western eco-feminism terms as spiritual ecofeminism comes very naturally to the Indian women authors who have portrayed human characters within the circle of nature. These women authors wrote in the 1950s, 1970-80s and very recent 2000s. They all share a common thing and that is eco-consciousness. They explore in their works the many faceted, multi-dimensional Indian ecofeminism and make us stand face to face to this extraordinary world where women and nature connect in so many diverse ways. The literary texts of these writers become sites of resistance that question and critique the dualisms such as man/woman, culture/nature. Markandya's *Nectar in a Sieve* is a classic example of what happened in postcolonial India as it moves from agriculture to industry. Through the life and struggle of the central character Rukmini we witness a world that is ravaged by industry. Exploitation of land invariably entangles with exploitation of women. We see that when the local and self-sustaining economy collapses the women and the children suffer the most. Many women characters in the novel that include Rukmini's elder daughter Ira turn to prostitution to survive and provide for the family members. With no way left for them to earn they are compelled to sell their bodies. We encounter many deaths of little children in the village. And finally they have to leave their land, the last ray of hope vanishes with them. Rukminin rightfully explains the expansion of the factory as the growth of an untended weed that destroys the lives of every other life-form that comes in its way.

“It had changed the face of our village beyond recognition and altered the lives of the inhabitants in a myriad way. Some- a few- had been raised up; many others cast down, lost in its clutches.”(136)

Nature too is not left unaffected. The tannery not only changed the lives of the villagers it has also left its mark in many damages it caused in nature. Rukmini reminisces: “At one time there had been kingfishers here, flashing between the young shoots of our fish; and paddy birds; and sometimes, in the shallower reaches of the river, flamingos, striding with plumage of a glory not of the earth. Now birds came no more, for the tannery lay close- except crows and kites and such scavenging birds.” (71)

They move now to the city. Ecofeminists view urbanity not as a space of opportunity but as one of the reasons of environmental pollution and an inhabitable place for poor villagers. But in the novel the city space emerges as a multi-dimensional world that is unforgiving and yet offers enough for Rukmini to return to her roots and begin afresh. Rukmini returns and sees a different kind of modernity that is being set up in the village, the hospital for the poor. This idea of an alternative modernity is offered by the women writers and thereby it helps to broaden the scope of ecofeminist theory as a whole.

In Anita Desai's *Fire on the Mountain* the connection is explored in a private space; her world is a domestic world where women from different background relate to nature differently. This novel touches upon issues of gender, urbanity, and along with very subtly industry and exploitation. Nanda, Raka and Ila they all relate to nature in indifferent ways. Thus to say that this connection is a uniform one as they all are women from third world is a wrong assumption. Nanda Kaul the protagonist of the novel finds the stark, rugged mountain village as welcoming because she searches for a place that is devoid of human interaction and relationship. We come to know that she has been a wife of a vice chancellor and spent much of her life in the closed doors of a mansion. She is disillusioned with the urban, high society life that may seem as a place for the privileged but in actuality she is frustrated with its double standard that subjugates women and forces them to play roles dictated by the society. And when the news arrives of the coming of Raka, her grand-daughter she is visibly depressed as she no longer wants human company. Raka on the other hand connects to nature differently. She is lost within the wilderness and loves the company of every entity within nature. Desai writes : “ She would return with her brown legs scorched, her knees bruised, sucking a

finger stung by nettles, her hair brown under a layer of dust, her eyes very still and thoughtful as though she had visited strange lands and seen fantastic improbable things that lingered in the mind.” (50)

It is through the eyes of Raka that we also see that nature in the high altitude is also being harmed by so called development. Raka in spite of being one from the city realises the importance of saving nature and each of its inhabitant. Desai successfully adds to the existing paradigm of ecofeminist theory the fact that to consider that women's connection to nature is monolithic specially in the third world is wrong.

Anuradha Roy on the other hand has chosen to explore the connection in an urban setting in her novel *Folded Earth*. She voices her concerns on globalization and growing industrialization in India and its impact on gender, family relations, animals and birds and the environment understood in its broadest sense. Here the most significant character other than the protagonist Maya is Diwan Sahib and a social outcaste Puran. These male characters are extremely conscious of ecology and the importance of maintaining balance and harmony within nature. Puran shows a remarkable capacity to love and care for animals. His bond with nature is almost spiritual. He loves an orphan fawn with such care and gentleness that we instantly recognize that Puran has deep connection with nature. And Diwan Saheb understands all the nuances of this connection shared by man and nature. He has seen a lot of change taking place in the area and could also foresee what fate has in store for the people and the place. Female characters are portrayed within nature too. Charu, a village girl and a friend of Maya also is able to have a deep connection with nature. Both Charu and Puran are people whose connection to nature cannot be explained only in terms of materialist aspect. Roy explains: “he could not talk to people, but he could talk to animals. Animals trusted him. Foxes came to him if he called them. Injured birds arrive on his doorstep to be cured. Dogs with broken legs found their way to his cowshed.” (170)

When her cow that she names Gauri is lost in the woods she spends sleepless nights. She even stays with her wounded cow till its death. On the other hand Charu's mother is completely unable to have a bond with nature though she too belongs to the same place that Charu inhabits. Thus the ecofeminist assumption specially of materialist ecofeminists that women of working class background has a connection with nature as they work within it can also be questioned. Roy refuses to accept that there is a simplistic and monolithic connection between women and nature. She recognizes that women's position in different cultures and societies can alter or change the modes of this connection. She touches upon issues of corruption, class struggle and shows that an ecofeminist concern encompasses all struggles against domination. It also shows that in the study of ecofeminism ecology is not always an external environment, a big outside that we go into. It's a study of interrelationship. And in here she contributes to the whole gamut of ecofeminist theory.

The literary texts end up questioning some of the standpoints of theory itself. Those are

1. An essentialist connection between women and nature,
2. An unquestioning acceptance of the connection as monolithic and simplistic without recognizing that women's position in different cultures and societies can alter or change the modes of this connection.
3. The “purity and authenticity” of third world cultures that celebrate the connection. it doesn't take into account the social hierarchies inherent in such cultures and issues of class, race or gender.
4. Absence of the male voice.
5. Modernity and its negative impact on nature and human behaviour.

These women writers sometimes go along with the established theoretical framework, sometimes deviate from it and in this deviation the function of these women writers as contributors to the formation of a definite Indian ecofeminism becomes important. There has been a progress since independence, in terms of industry, economy and technology. These process influences lives of different people differently. There is an accepted notion within ecofeminist theory of third world which is seen as unaffected by outward changes has remained unchanged and has been able to preserve the culture that worships nature. This idea

of third world is a western projection that do not take into account that India is a land of many diverse cultures and women have different social positions and thereby one synchronized connection with nature is not possible. There is no one synchronized development, there are many. These effects are varied in nature as the subject or the characters of a text speak from urban as well as rural positions, public and personal spheres, spiritual along with material perspectives. These are all different angles from where Indian Ecofeminism can be approached. Thus what we get from the study of the works of these women writers is a picture of Indian Ecofeminism complete with its many dimensions, perspectives and diversities.

Along with ecofeminist approaches we find that their works raise issues such as gender, race, class etc. They present an image of India which is different from dominant cultural representations. It shows a land besides mystery, a real world of struggle, sufferings, economic imbalance, material inequality, sexual discrimination, and survival. Indian ecofeminism thus becomes one such distinct approach that not only explores many bonds between nature and women but also connects all, all marginal entities together. This aspect of ecofeminism also broadens the peripheries of feminism itself. It forces us to see that emancipation doesn't mean having equal rights in already existing social system which today is a capitalist and patriarchal system. True emancipation will come from a radical change in that very structure that subverts all marginal subjects. Ecofeminism encompasses all those issues that are in this establishment marginal, inferior, less valuable.

Indian women writers both in theory and literature of post-independence era have been dealing with connection that man shares with nature. These writers are looking at things a bit differently. They have been able to reflect on a definite eco-consciousness in their works. This consciousness sees human lives as a part of a larger nature and realizes that when this nature is exploited human lives are affected. These writers have gone against the norm; when growing industrialism was looked upon as an optimistic change in the lives of poor Indians these writers showed the worse effects industrialism, development projects of free India. This eco-consciousness of the writers of both 1940s as well as of 2000s is uniquely Indian that can't be compared with any other forms of eco-critical writings. Whereas this eco-consciousness is uniquely Indian and can also be analyzed in terms of the very recently developed theories of eco-criticism and ecofeminism. The aim is to find out the ways in which the works of these Indian women writers can be in some ways categorized as ecofeminist as the theory dictates and at the same time deviate from many aspects of ecofeminism. And through this process of finding similarities and dissimilarities one can see how Indian women writers have managed to create a unique form of eco-critical writing which is definitely Indian in nature.

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A SAGA OF REDEMPTION AND RESURRECTION: SAGACIOUS SANGUINITY IN HOSSEINI'S *A THOUSAND SPLENDID SUNS*

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Abstract:

Dilemmas arise in the universe when a person deem himself superior to his fellow beings. Khaled Hosseini's second novel, A Thousand Splendid Suns, offers a poignant portrayal of the women in Afganistan. According to Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, the subaltern women are more at risk of tyranny and pressure than subaltern men because they are the second sex fated to remain hushed. It is a protest against male hegemony over female subalternity. The present paper titled "A Saga of Redemption and Resurrection: Sagacious Sanguinity in Hosseini's A Thousand Splendid Suns" investigates how Hosseini has thrown light on the way in which the bona fide equation of power overturns the destiny of the victimizers and the victims. With stunning heroism, the subalterns come out victorious - one could witness a narrative of salvation and renaissance with reference to Afghanistan, though many paid their lives in the heinous attacks of the war.

Keywords: *Subaltern, Afghanistan, patriarchy, subjugation, women, power.*

Most of the societies in the world are unbreakably bound to many rigidly formed norms and traditions. All constraints associated with such tenets are strongly affixed to the female community, thereby fastening them to the hardest part of life. Simone de Beauvoir expresses her state in *The Second Sex* - "A free and autonomous creature like all others, a woman finds herself living in a world where men compel her to assume the status of the 'other' and reduce her to the status of the 'second sex'" (391). They become the worst sufferers as the social norms and moral codes are disadvantageous to them in particular. Their minds often and always grapple with trauma and psychic conflicts. However, they are persuaded to live in complete darkness, enchained to the brutally powerful triad, father-husband-son, throughout their lives.

Bell Hooks in the article entitled, "Understanding Patriarchy," define patriarchy as, "a political-social system that insists that males are inherently dominating, superior to everything and everyone deemed weak, especially females, and endowed with the right to dominate and rule over the weak and to maintain that dominance through various forms of psychological terrorism and violence" (18). It is an accepted norm in the society to dominate women in every way.

Antonio Gramsci, an Italian Marxist philosopher and politician, employed the term 'subaltern' (which was applied to lower ranks in military, around 18th century) to denote those which are socially, politically and geographically outside the hegemonies of power. From him, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, an Indian scholar, literary theorist, and feminist critic, has borrowed the term. By "subaltern", Spivak means the unrepresented and underprivileged subjects or more generally those "of inferior rank" (Spivak 283). She came to the forefront of literary circle with her celebrated essay "Can the Subaltern Speak?" in which she proposes a theory of subalternity. But here, Spivak does not negate the attempts to speak of and about the subaltern. Instead she invites the conscious self-reflexivity of those intending to raise their voice for the subalterns. Also, she prompts the subalterns to voice their protests against their condition of being subalterns. In stating that the subaltern cannot speak what Spivak meant is that "if the subaltern were able to make herself heard - as has happened when certain subaltern emerged, in Antonio Gramsci's terms, as

organic intellectuals and be spokespeople for their communities - her status as a subaltern would be changed utterly; she would cease to be subaltern” (Landry and Maclean 5-6).

“The essence of repression lies simply in turning something away and keeping it at a distance, from the conscious” (Freud 147). The condition of the female subaltern is the most dreadful of all oppressive states. They own a lack of awareness about their rights as individuals and often submit submissively to being victims of the superior authority and lead a life of subjugated service “Learn this now and learn this well, my daughter: Like a compass needle that points north, a man's accusing finger always finds a woman” (7). These are the words of the mother character terribly concerned about the future life of her daughter, in Khaled Hosseini's *A Thousand Splendid Suns*.

Khaled Hosseini was born on March 4, 1965 in Kabul, Afghanistan and moved to the United States in 1980. Though he earned a bachelor's degree in medicine, he retired from his job to write full-time. His works include the best sellers like *The Kite Runner* (2003), *A Thousand Splendid Suns* (2007) and *And The Mountains Echoed* (2013). Having set his novels in Afghanistan, Hosseini's devotion to his homeland extends beyond his writings. His thought for a better Afghanistan discussed in his works is proof of his love for the country. Hosseini is accomplished as a story teller who could portray events like aggression, discontent and agony that may seem unbearable yet explicable and readable. His descriptive style and the redemptive sense he develops towards the end make the whole narrative, for all its tragic incidents, slip down rather easily. Hosseini never challenges the typical western view of Afghanistan, but he often enhances it; he attaches greater awareness and understanding to it, and makes the Afghans come alive as affectionate and emotional individuals.

A Thousand Splendid Suns is set in Afghanistan from the 1960s to the 1990s, spanning from Soviet occupation to the Taliban control. It draws crystal clear pictures of the fretful conditions of women in all phases of their lives as daughters, sisters, wives and mothers. In the book which consists of four parts, Hosseini demonstrates the interior lives of anonymous women who lack identity of any kind. He blends the experiences of the central characters of the novel -Mariam and Laila- with the religious, cultural and political ambiances that detrimentally affect an Afghan family life. Born a generation apart, both Mariam and Laila are brought up by their families with entirely different notions regarding the life of a woman in a patriarchal society.

Mariam is the illegitimate seed implanted in the womb of a meager housemaid by the rich householder, Jalil. The *harami* child Mariam, through her narrator voice explains her predicament as “an illegitimate person who would never have legitimate claim to the things other people had, things such as love, family, home and acceptance” (4). Whatever the condition that exists, she is contented with the love and affection her father showers upon her which her mother, Nana mocks as “rich lies” (5). As far as Nana is concerned, education is a forbidden fruit for women; and in her own words, “there is only one, only one skill a woman like you and me needs in life, and they don't teach it in school . . . Only one skill. And it's this: *tahamul*. Endure. . . It's our lot in life, Mariam. Women like us. We endure. It's all we have” (18).

Discarded by her suitor, humiliated as a temptress by her lover Jalil and his family and neglected by her father, Nana becomes a hard and resentful woman who wants her daughter to expect nothing but violence and mistreatment from men. She always warns Mariam,

A man's heart is a wretched, wretched thing, Mariam. It isn't like a mother's womb. It won't bleed; it won't stretch to make room for you. I'm the only one who loves you. I'm all you have in this world, Mariam, and when I'm gone you'll have nothing. You'll have nothing. You are nothing! (27)

Sooner, Mariam becomes conscious of this fact from the conduct of Jalil and the others upon her arrival at his home. Out of shame and humiliation, Nana commits suicide, leaving Mariam all alone in a

world of misfortune and hardships. As a matter of fact, Mariam becomes the sole responsibility of her father and Jalil wholeheartedly takes her home. But ever since Nana's death, Mariam “could hear so clearly now the insincerity that had always lurked beneath, the hollow false assurances [of Jalil]” (38).

In no time, to free off himself from the liabilities of a father, Jalil gives the 15 year old Mariam's hand in marriage to Rasheed, a shoemaker from Kabul aged 45, against all her pleas and protests. Though she represents all girl children who are exempted from demanding any right in an inconsiderate, dispiriting world, she could not help herself from expressing her feeling of disgust and abhorrence towards Jalil.

I used to worship you... On Thursdays I sat for hours waiting for you. I worried myself sick that you wouldn't show up... I thought about you all time. I used to pray that you'd live to be a hundred years old. I didn't know that you were ashamed of me... It ends here for you and me. Say your good-byes.
(54-55)

This episode in Mariam's life highlights the fate of women of having no choice in marriage. They are like mere puppets destined to obey the verdict of the family.

Afterwards, she reluctantly enters into a new world with her husband. The sight of Kabul makes Mariam feels “uprooted [and] displaced, like an intruder on someone else's life” (62). Feeling completely lost in a ditch of darkness, she leads a life similar to that of a trapped animal, awaiting everything unwanted every moment. After a short break, she is forced to perform all the duties of a wife. Sooner, Rasheed creates in her mind the impression of a well-mannered and caring husband in every way. She is not allowed to mingle either with others, be it men or women; and as he thinks that “a woman's face is her husband's business only” (69), he gives her a *burqa* to wear whenever she leaves home, after much philosophizing about the shameful ways of modern men and women. Mariam considers herself privileged by his “protectiveness” (85). Though to her great disappointment Mariam realizes how addicted Rasheed is to pornographic pictures, she makes up her mind even to accept the truth that he is a man “all those years without a woman” (82).

Shockingly, happiness comes to a close and things become worse with the seven miscarriages she had. Mariam finds, “...each loss, each collapse, each trip to the doctor more crushing” as Rasheed too becomes “more remote and resentful” considering her “a burden” (98). In everything she does for him, he finds faults without pity, although she tried to execute his demands. The culmination of his brutality towards her can be seen when “he shoved two fingers in her mouth and pried it open, then forced the cold, hard pebbles into it. Mariam struggled against him, mumbling, but he kept pushing the pebbles in her upper lip curled in a sneer” (102). Her mouth is filled with blood, pebbles and the fragments of two broken molars. Rasheed behaves as though he is licensed to inflict harm upon her in return for not giving him a son. According to him, in marriage, she has given him “bad food, and nothing else” (103). Even destiny plays its part as she could not become a mother.

Now, the storyline turns towards the second female protagonist, Laila, the only daughter of Hakim and Fariba, neighbours of Rasheed. She is a high-spirited young girl filled with a sense of purpose. Though her mother pays little or no attention to her, it is her father, whom she calls *Babi*, who often motivates her. He is a devout believer in the importance of education, especially that of women. He often reminds her that the most essential thing in his life after her safety and wellbeing is her learning. She always finds herself surprised when her friends' discussions carry over to the subject of marriage and suitors at this very young age. However she knows that they are pressured by their families to get married before they reach the age twenty. According to her Babi,

Marriage can wait, education cannot. You're a very, very bright girl. Truly you are. You can be anything you want, Laila. I know this about you. And I

also know that when this war is over, Afganistan is going to need you as much as its men, may be even more. Because a society has no chance at success if its women are uneducated, Laila. No chance". (114)

She considers herself fortunate enough to have Babi as her father who always inculcates into her mind several forward-thinking modern ideas.

Very close to her heart, Laila has a friend named Tariq, her next door neighbour and a few years older than her. Tariq lost a leg during a war, yet, he has a strong heart, and he stands up for Laila when she is tyrannized by anyone around. Laila is proud to have a friend like Tariq and in no time, they realise that they are passionately in love, though they do not reveal it to each other. Unfortunately for them all, conditions in Kabul become worse as the conflict turns to war there. Kabul is bombarded by rocket attacks leading to the fleeing of several natives to safer areas. Tariq's family also decides to leave the city and the touching parting between Laila and Tariq culminates with them consummating their love. Though Tariq pleads Laila to marry him and leave with them she refuses as she is quite aware that she could not marry Tariq and leave her father alone with her mother.

Soon afterwards, tragedy strikes Laila's family. She loses her parents in a bomb attack; and she barely survives. Rasheed and Mariam nurse the totally devastated Laila.

FOR THE FIRST WEEK, the girl did little but sleep, with help from the pink pills Rasheed paid for at the hospital. She murmured in her sleep. Sometimes she spoke gibberish, cried out, called out names Mariam did not recognize. She wept in her sleep, grew agitated, kicked the blankets off, and then Mariam had to hold her down. Sometimes she retched and retched, threw up everything Mariam fed her...Some days she was childlike, whipped her head side to side...but she submitted eventually...Long bouts of weeping followed surrender. (193-194)

Her life takes a new turn then on as she comes into the malevolent hands of Rasheed who entraps her by making her believe that she is left without any kith and kin in the whole world. He even weaves a false story about her beloved Tariq's death. All these heart breaking revelations freeze her body and mind. "She sat on the chair, hands limp in her lap, eyes staring at nothing" (204) and she lets her mind wander away to seek out safety and peacefulness.

Sooner, Mariam could easily recognize the willfully selfish eye her husband has on the fourteen year old Laila. Though Mariam tries to change his mind in her own way, he stands firm in his decision. He convinces Mariam, and Laila in no time is convinced about her helplessness. On realizing that she has got impregnated with the baby of her love, she is left with no other option other than accepting the lustful Rasheed's marriage proposal.

I knew you wouldn't take it well. I don't really blame you. But this is for the best. You'll see. Think of it this way, Mariam. I'm giving *you* help around the house and *her* a sanctuary. A home and a husband. These days, times being what they are, a woman needs a husband...Well, I'd say this is downright charitable of me...The way I see it, I deserve a medal.

LATER, in the dark, Mariam told the girl.

For a long time, the girl said nothing. "He wants an answer by this morning," Mariam said.

"He can have it now," the girl said. "My answer is yes." (209-210)

To save herself and her baby from the "gaze of vultures", Laila succumbs to Rasheed's will,

though she knows that her choice is “dishonourable, disingenuous, and shameful, and spectacularly unfair to Mariam” (213). Rasheed reveals to Laila that Mariam is a harami and equates her to a Volga. However, Rasheed associates Laila to a Benz that requires special attention. Rasheed tells Laila not to leave the house without him and to wear a burqa when she does leave with him. Every such comment angers Mariam and thus her relation with Laila gets much more shattered. The news about the baby in Laila's womb further worsened the state of Mariam that she could not tolerate “such cheerful cruelty” (222), as Rasheed's concern for the former has risen to an unexpected level. She reveals her thoughts without hesitation to Laila,

I won't be your servant... You can complain to him and he can slit my throat, but I won't take orders from you... I have no use for your company. I don't want it. What I want is to be alone... That's how we will get on. Those are the rules. (219-220)

But as Laila delivers her beautiful kid into the world, things turn upside down as it is a girl child and not a boy as Rasheed expected and wanted. Women are expected to give birth to boy children and if unable to do so, they are in every possible way mistreated. As a result, every single chuckle of the child Aziza, begins to irritate him in every way but Laila becomes all the more enthusiastic. Whatever be the adverse circumstances, Laila is delighted that she is blessed with Tariq's baby. She enjoys every gesture of Aziza.

Of all earthly pleasures, Laila's favourite was lying next to Aziza, her baby's face so close that she could watch her big pupils dilate and shrink. Laila loved running her finger over Aziza's pleasing, soft skin, over the dimpled knuckles, the folds of fat at her elbows. Sometimes she lay Aziza down on her chest and whispered into the soft crown of her head things about Tariq, the father who would always be a stranger to Aziza, whose face Aziza would never know. (239)

The presence of the child strengthens Laila that she is capable of opposing Rasheed and he takes it the result of the bad influence Mariam imposes upon his new wife. But years and years of knowledge have taught Mariam “to harden herself against his scorn and reproach, his ridiculing and reprimanding” (234). Problems reach its highpoint the night Laila defends Mariam from the sound thrashings he lets loose on her. “The girl lunged at him she grabbed his arm with both hands and tried to drag him down... She did succeed in slowing Rasheed's progress toward Mariam” (235). This results in an added stressed relationship between Rasheed and Laila that she and Aziza get thrown out of his room to lay on the floor on the top of a quilt. But, the same incident forms an emotional bond between the two women and they begin to enjoy each other's company. By the time, Laila sees in Mariam “a face of grievances unspoken, burdens gone unprotected, a destiny submitted to and endured” (243). Both dream to escape from the brutalities of their husband at the right time possible for “a new life” (250); though unfortunately, several of their attempts met with abject failures. This makes the two women further victimize Rasheed's hardhearted admonitions and assaults.

[Laila] You try this again and I will find you. I swear on the Prophet's name that I will find you. And when I do there isn't a court in this godforsaken country that will hold me accountable for what I will do. To Mariam first, then to her, and you last. I'll make you watch. You understand me? *I'll make you watch.* (265)

The brutal subjugation of women is not only limited within the four walls of the house; instead it

gets further and further extended to the nook and corner of Afganistan. Several rules and regulations to be pursued by women are formulated by the Taliban government. They are forbidden from walking through the streets without the accompaniment of a male relative, from titivating themselves, from attending schools, from working and are not even supposed to talk or laugh. Without a pinch of humaneness, every single right is denied for them. Their only duty is to “Listen. Listen well. Obey” (271).

Rasheed's zealous desire for a son and the immense and never-ending love and affection he shower when he got one, whom he named Zalmai, clearly depict how he hates Aziza and how he devalues women. Though Zalmai loves his mother, he admires and respects more, his father. Both father and son “took turns poking each other on the chest, giggling, pelting each other with bread crumbs, whispering things the others couldn't hear” (289). Laila loves her children and realizes that it is Aziza who requires her protection more than Zalmai. Thus, she always stands firm in any issue that would affect Aziza. She even punches Rasheed on hearing his demand of sending Aziza for begging in the streets for extra money.

Nothing went well anywhere, making Rasheed mad with anger and “Death from starvation became a distinct possibility” (298). Out of extreme necessity, Laila agrees to send Aziza to an orphanage, though it was unthinkable for all except Rasheed. One or the other way Aziza accepts the situation however difficult it may be, more like Mariam.

A sudden unexpected twist happens when Laila discovers that Tariq is not dead as he shows up at her home. Though years have passed while they were apart, his return suggests that their genuine affection for each other has not faded. Tariq, being loyal and compassionate understands Laila's marital and child-bearing situations. The amount of forbearance and endurance they have for each other displays how unconditional their love is. But unfortunately for them, Zalmai tells his father about Tariq's visit, which infuriated Rasheed. He retaliates with his brutal attacks.

He caught her, threw her up against the wall, and struck her with the belt again and again, the buckle slamming against her chest, her shoulder, her raised arms, her fingers, drawing blood wherever it struck...his hands wrapped around Laila's neck...Laila's face was turning blue now, and her eyes had rolled back. (302)

Soon, Mariam realizes how dangerous the situation is. Fed up and terrified, she hits Rasheed with a shovel, killing him. As she is aware of the further happenings that would definitely tear both of them to pieces, Mariam forcefully sends Laila and her children along with Tariq.

Sooner, Mariam turns herself into authorities and gets imprisoned where she is looked upon with reverence by the fellow prisoners for her courageous crime. Each and every other woman is behind bars for eloping from homes. The plight of one such woman named Naghma shows the graveness of the circumstances. She did nothing but tried to escape with the man she loved when her father forced her to marry a tailor some thirty years older than her. Unfortunately they got caught and to her great awe she understood that her companion has deceived her putting all blames upon her head without regret.

Listening to Naghma, Mariam remembered the dim glimmer of gold stars and the stringy pink clouds streaking over the Safid-koh mountains that long-ago morning when Nana had said to her, *Like a compass needle that points north, a man's accusing finger always finds a woman. Always. You remember that, Mariam.* (354)

The same accusing fingers of the patriarchal community again lay blame on Mariam for what she did to Rasheed, without even paying heed to the atrocious ways in which he treated his wives; and she is sentenced to death. However, she considers her own death as “a legitimate end to a life of illegitimate beginnings” (361).

By the time, Laila gets settled in Murree with her family. They lead a blessed and peaceful life in spite of the complexities encountered. When they come to know that conditions in Kabul are improving,

they return wholeheartedly. On the way back to their native, Laila visits Mariam's childhood mentor Mullah Faizullah's house where she met his son. From him she receives a box containing a letter, cash in American dollars and a copy of Pinocchio on video that Jalil left for Mariam. Laila realizes how remorseful Jalil was towards the end of his life, for sending away Mariam.

The novel ends on a happy note where Laila works as a teacher at an orphanage and Tariq for a non-governmental organization. Also, Laila is pregnant with her third child whom if a girl is to be named after Mariam, as a suitable tribute to her. Though at first men and culture have put the women characters into a subaltern state silencing their voice, they resurrect with the strong force that arises within them. Thereby, they strengthen themselves to articulate and even destroy the oppressor. The novel also implies that men do not always become the overriding group. Women should seek their own efforts to progress their lives, which was demoralized by the hegemony of the patriarchy.

Khaled Hosseini has not only depicted the sufferings, pain, physical and sexual violence against women but has also recovered women's voice in replicating alternative history by conflicting the multiple confrontations faced by them. He has delivered the shift in women's individuality. He points out that the 'second sex' is no longer ready to tolerate such discrimination in any society through the responses of some of the characters in the novels. Hosseini's female protagonists rise above their subjected self thereby laying the base of a commanding feminine consciousness. Thus, Hosseini carves up a common perspective that "a woman is a being. She is not an appendage of man. A woman is not the other. She is not an addition to man. She is an autonomous being, capable of, through trial and error, finding her own way to salvation" (Ramamoorthy 115).

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**BRITISH IMPERIAL POLICY IN KENYA AND ITS EFFECTS:
A STUDY OF NGUGI WA THIONG'O'S *WEEP NOT, CHILD***

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Abstract:

Ngugi Wa Thiong'o's novel, Weep Not, Child, is set in Kenya in the mid-twentieth century. The story documents the tribulations and sufferings of the family of Ngotho, a black Kenyan working in the farm of a white settler. The land which he works in originally belonged to his ancestors and was forcefully grabbed by the Europeans as Kenya was turned into a British colony. Ngotho's participation in a strike demanding the return of the land and the end of humiliation of the blacks in their own country leads to his losing his job. Moreover, three of his sons get either involved or are suspected to be involved in the Mau Mau, an armed rebellion against the colonisers and their black allies. What follows is extreme torture of Ngotho by the whites and his subsequent death; also, three of Ngotho's sons are either jailed or awaiting execution when the novel ends. What was a happy family at the beginning is totally broken and destroyed at the end. The family of Ngotho, in fact, symbolically stands for contemporary Kenya and the sufferings of Ngotho, his sons and his wives are the sufferings that every native Kenyan is subjected to during this turbulent period of Kenyan history.

Key Words: *British Colony, Kenya, Exploitation, Rebellion, Destruction.*

One significant aspect of the compositions of Ngugi Wa Thiong'o, one of the most prominent African writers of the modern times, is a sharp focus on the damaging impact of colonial rule on native Africans and their indigenous cultures. His protest against the colonial enterprise and its lingering effects, even after the attainment of independence, on the African psyche reached its climax when he denounced English as his medium of literary expression and instead adopted native African languages, Gikuyu and Swahili. Even his earlier name, James Thiong'o, was changed to Ngugi Wa Thiong'o, thus underscoring his detestation of everything that signifies colonial 'hangover' in the minds of the colonised and also declaring his allegiance to the Gikuyu tribal tradition. His ideological stand against the colonial viewpoint is reflected in one of his remarks in his revolutionary work, *Decolonising the Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literature*, "The present predicaments of Africa are often not a matter of personal choice: they arise from a historical situation. Their solutions are not so much a matter of personal decision as that of a fundamental social transformation of the structures of our societies starting with a real break with imperialism and its internal ruling allies. Imperialism and its comprador alliances in Africa can never develop the continent." Thiong'o's debut novel, *Weep Not, Child* (1964), already reveals traces of the traits which were to dominate his future and more mature writings- a graphic description of how the colonisers gain control over an alien land and over its inhabitants, using the force of the obedient, submissive natives against the resisting ones, thus practicing an effective 'Divide and Rule' policy, and an explication of the irreparable damage done to the native tribal, cultural tradition by the imprinting of the white, Occidental beliefs on the black psyche. Even there can be noted an underlying appeal to break free from colonial customs and to embrace the age-old tribal customs and beliefs in the face of rampage. Interestingly, the Indian reader will find an added interest in the novel as (s)he cannot but find a striking similarity in the respective histories of colonisation and its continuation in India and Kenya, Thiong'o's native country and

the setting of *Weep Not, Child*.

The novel, *Weep Not, Child* is divided into two sections- “The Waning Light” and “Darkness Falls”. As the names of the two sections suggest, the atmosphere gradually turns gloomier as the story progresses until at the very end total destruction engulfs the land of Kenya. As can be assumed from the events described, the tale begins in the late 1940s or the early 1950s, immediately after the Second World War. In the initial chapters, the readers are presented with the principal characters around whom the story will revolve. Ngotho is the patriarchal head of a family that resides in the village of Mahua which is situated close to the town of Kipanga in Kikuyuland. As was common custom among the Gikuyus, he has two wives- Njeri and Nyokabi- living with him in the same household. Interestingly, the two wives share a friendly relationship and there is no apparent discord within the family. Njeri's three sons- Boro, Kori and Kamau- and Nyokabi's only son, Njoroge, spend their time merrily together. The youngest son, Njoroge, harbours the hope of getting educated and thereby playing a vital role in the future in the upliftment of the native black community. None of the other children has ever attended school and it is made clear that sending a child to school is a luxury to the poor family. Yet, all the family members value education and feel, as Njoroge feels strongly, that only education, precisely western education, can put an end to their misery and even the misery of their country. So, each of them helps in their own ways, and looks to the matter that Njoroge can continue with his dream of attaining education. In the very first chapter, during a conversation with Kamau, Njoroge reveals why he is so much interested in being educated.

...And you know, I think Jacobo is as rich as Mr. Howlands because he got education. And that's why each takes his children to school because of course they have learnt the value of it (Chapter 1).

Mr. Howlands is the white settler in whose farm Ngotho works. Farming is his passion and he considers it a great achievement on his part to have tamed the wild land. However, he is indifferent to the blacks and values them only as 'cheap labour'. And Jacobo represents that class within Kenyan society who helped the British in their imperial mission. In return, he has been helped by the British, and he is allowed to grow certain cash crops which the native Africans have been barred from growing. Jacobo is rich, but is not respected by his fellow black men, as is revealed in Kamau's observation on that societal class which Jacobo stands for,

...A white man is a white man. But a black man trying to be a white man is bad and harsh (Chapter 2).

However, in spite of the presence of potentially harmful people like Mr.Howlands and Jacobo, the village, particularly the family of Ngotho, apparently seems to be a happy and peaceful one. Discontent lies just below the surface, it is true, as is revealed during the discussions and story-telling that are a regular affair in the household of Ngotho. But, on the other hand, those very sessions of story-telling and vigorous discussions in which all youths from the village participate reveal that healthy aspect of tribal culture which encourages unity and warm relationships among the villagers. As the story progresses this peace is lost and is replaced by fear- fear of death and in the case of Njoroge, even fear of living.

Despite the outward calmness, an underlying tension can be felt from the very beginning. The two World Wars are revealed to have had tremendous impact on the lives of the main protagonists, both white and black. But, the grievance of the blacks stems from the fact that the black Africans had nothing to do with either of the wars; the wars were, instead, fought in the interest of the whites, and the blacks were forced to participate in them. Both the World Wars brought about loss for Ngotho and his fellow black Kenyans. In the first one, they were forcefully used as labourers. The British colony in Kenya was in its initial stage then. In Ngotho's version,

Then came the war. It was the first big war. I was then young, a mere boy, although circumcised. All of us were taken by force. We made roads and cleared the forest to make it possible for the warring white man to move more quickly (Chapter 2).

But the effect was more profound than the mere psychological impact of participation and risking of lives in a meaningless, bloody battle. The absence of the Gikuyu males for a considerable period of time from their homeland meant that the land that earlier belonged to them was no longer theirs; the British imperialist government has taken this opportunity to confiscate and distribute their lands among the white settlers. Ngotho is a witness to this tragic outcome.

The war ended. We were all tired...we wanted to go back to the soil and court it to yield, to create, not to destroy. But Ng'o! The land was gone. My father and many others had been moved from our ancestral lands. He died lonely, a poor man waiting for the white man to go (Chapter 2).

In the Second World War, the blacks were forced to participate not merely as labourers but also as soldiers. As a consequence, the casualties were naturally higher. Ngotho has lost one of his sons, Mwangi, in this war. Another of his sons, Boro, has returned, but the war has left a permanent scar in his psyche- he has changed and is always withdrawn and never really recovers from the shock of having witnessed the death of his closest brother in the battlefield.

...But the thing he could not forget was the death of his step-brother, Mwangi. For whom or for what had he died? (Chapter 2).

Interestingly, the white settler, Mr. Howlands, has also suffered due to the two wars. In the first one, he himself fought and at the end of it, was disillusioned; all the ideals he believed in prior to the war seemed meaningless. In an attempt to flee from his motherland which only symbolised disillusionment for him, he settled in the Kenyan Highlands. In the Second World War, Mr.Howlands's elder son, Peter, on whom his all hopes lay, died. The brutality with which Howlands tries to handle the black rebellion later in the novel can be attributed to this loss of a son; he is simply shattered and devoid of emotion from then on. Though Ngotho and Mr.Howlands both have lost their sons in the Second World War Ngotho does not consider their fates as similar. The difference lies in the fact that he has lost his son in the war of the whites; it was not a war which Mwangi should have been involved in. When, in a moment of weakness, Mr.Howlands informs Ngotho about the death of Peter in the war, Ngotho experiences an inner struggle.

Ngotho had never known where the other son had gone to. Now he understood. He wanted to tell of his own son: he longed to say, 'You took him away from me'. But he kept quiet. Only he thought Mr.Howlands should not complain. It had been his war. (Chapter 3)

As can be gauged from the emotional outbursts of the black characters throughout the novel, land is of supreme value to the people belonging to the Gikuyu tribe. Historically, the white settlers were mostly allowed to settle in the Kenyan Highlands where soil was the most fertile and the weather was also suitable for the inhabitation of the Europeans. The Gikuyus traditionally lived in the Highlands and, thus, suffered the most due to the white settlement in Kenya. From being proud land-owners they were turned into manual labourers working in the lands of the Whites which actually belonged to them. The pain is all the more because they believe that the land was gifted by their god, Murungu to Gikuyu and Mumbi, the first man and the first woman from whom the Gikuyus descend. Ngotho says to his sons and to many other young men of the village,

...But he had shown them all the land- yes, children, God showed Gikuyu and Mumbi all the land and told them,
'This land I hand over to you. O Man and woman/ It's yours to rule...'(Chapter 2).

A prophecy by a tribal seer, Mugo Wa Kibiro, that the whites will one day return to their country has motivated Ngotho to cling to the land of his ancestors, albeit as a labourer, though he despises working for a white man.

Ngotho rarely complained. He had all his life lived under the belief that something big would happen. That was why he did not want to be away from the land that belonged to his ancestors (Chapter 4).

The younger generation, however, is not as patient and as subservient as the older one. Boro does not believe that the prophecy will be fulfilled; he accuses his father and his forefathers of a coward-like acceptance of their fate without putting up a fight, "How can you continue working for a man who has taken your land? How can you go on serving him?" (Chapter 2). Other than this awareness of deprivation of ancestral land, other factors also contribute to the widespread anger among the blacks. When Kori and Boro go to Nairobi in search of work they realise that employment opportunities for the blacks are scarce. Moreover, the 'colour bar' practised all over the country relegates the blacks to the position of second class citizens. The British allies within the black community, represented by Jacobo, have been given some extra privileges, like the growing of some 'cash crops' which other Africans are barred from growing, thus creating a sort of division within the black colonised class. It is, thus, clear that there is enough motivation for the young black men to rebel against the whites and the 'Serikali', the name for the local Kenyan government acting as an ally of the colonisers. The protests indeed begin and, though non-violent at first, do not take much time to turn violent as armed rebellion, termed the Mau Mau, breaks out.

The first sign of any attempt at united protest comes in the form of a strike, called by Kenya African Union (K.A.U.), led by Jomo, a black, Kenyan leader looked up to by many Africans as the 'Black Moses' or 'the Saviour of the black community'. 'Jomo' is a reference to the actual historical figure of Jomo Kenyatta who will later act as free Kenya's first President from 1964 to 1978. However, though there are multiple references to Jomo in the text he never appears physically. It is the rise of the well-educated Jomo to the status of a sort of messiah that instills in Njoroge the desire to get quality education and take active part in the social transformation of his country. The blacks pin their hopes on the success of the strike. They hope that it will put an end to all their miseries. Ngotho hopes that there will be an increase in salary; others believe that the strike will compel the British to abolish colour-bar and to end all inequality. While speaking in a meeting held on the first day of the strike, Kiarie, a friend of Boro and a young leader of K.A.U., even demands that the land be given back to the natives,

...Today, we, with one voice, we must rise and shout: "The time has come. Let my people go. Let my people go! We want back our land! Now!" (Chapter 7)

The protest in Kipanga, however, turns violent as Ngotho, in a fit of anger, tries to attack Jacobo, brought by the administration to pacify the black protesters, and the police fire into the crowd, thereby killing two men. In the face of threats and torture throughout the country, the strike also fails. The first part of the novel, "The Waning Light", ends with the news that Jomo and other competent leaders representing the blacks have been arrested and a state of emergency has been declared all over the country. To Ngotho's family, the failure of the strike spells disaster as he loses his job in Mr. Howlands's farm for his participation in the strike; he has also made an enemy of the powerful Jacobo, now appointed the 'Chief' of that area, and this enmity is to cost Ngotho and his family dearly.

In the second part of the novel, "Darkness Falls", the author describes how the situation darkens all over Kenya as the colonisers come down heavily upon the armed rebellion of the blacks which follows the failure of the strike, the declaration of the emergency, and the subsequent tortures by the whites and their black allies. There are direct references in the text to the Mau Mau (1952-1964), one of the most significant armed rebellions against the British regime in Africa which posed a serious threat to the British rule in Kenya. A quotation from the book, *Mau Mau from Within*, will reveal the fact that the motivating factors behind the rebellion were the same as those behind the peaceful strike called by the K.A.U. "The freedom movement was the result of ills of colonisation affecting almost all tribes in Kenya. Their lands were taken away from them by the Europeans. Their education cut, their freedom curtailed through forced labour, their wages made miserably low and their pride and dignity trampled through disallowance of observance of tribal customs and rituals and finally through the practice of obnoxious colour bar." (p. 74). The Mau Mau rebels, mostly belonging to the Gikuyu tribe as the Gikuyus were the worst sufferers due to the white settlement, took shelter in the forests and practised guerrilla warfare. It is a historical truth that a number of

white settlers were brutally killed in the heyday of the rebellion; the blacks who worked for the British were not spared either. In Thiong'o's novel, the first reference to these killings by the black militants can be found during a conversation between the native blacks,

...Now, the chief was a big man with much land. The Governor had given it all to him, so he might sell the black people. The men were in a car. The chief was also in a car. The two men followed him all the way from Nairobi. When they reached the countryside, the men drove ahead and waved the chief to stop. He stopped. "Who's the chief?" I am. "Then take that and that. And that too." They shot him dead and drove away-. (Interlude)

The retaliation of the 'Serikali' is swift and immediate. Black people suspected to be Mau Mau sympathizers are tortured, put in 'detention camps', and executed; some of them are even killed in fake encounters. A number of people known to Njoroge are killed by the police. The casualties include, among others, Kiarie, the firebrand leader of K.A.U., and the barber, a very popular story-teller of Kipanga. Njoroge even witnesses the fake encounter of Isaka, his teacher when he attended the local primary school and later a priest, by the white soldiers. The family of Njoroge gets directly affected after Jacobo, the chief, is murdered. Kamau, suspected to have helped the murderers, is arrested and taken to the police post. Ngotho, hoping to save his son, confesses to the murder. He is taken to the local home guard post, popularly known as the 'House of Pain', and faces extreme torture there. Mr.Howlands, now the District Officer, leads the torture and the extremity of it can only be guessed from the reaction of the home guards.

...Even the homeguards who worked with him feared to be present when the D.O. was eliciting information from this man. (Chapter 15)

However, the exercise is a failure and other than his confession of the murder, Ngotho says nothing. This leads to torture of Njoroge who is brought to the homeguard post from Siriana where he is now studying in a reputed secondary school and does not have the slightest information about Jacobo's killing. Howlands again is the main culprit.

Mr.Howlands rose and came to Njoroge. He was terrible to look at. He said, 'I'll show you.' He held Njoroge's private parts with a pair of pincers and started to press tentatively. 'You'll be castrated like your father.'

Njoroge screamed (Chapter 15).

After the sudden discovery of a notebook with Boro's name behind the lavatory from where apparently Jacobo was shot, it is understood that Boro, and not Ngotho, has killed Jacobo. This realisation leads to the release of Njoroge and a half-dead Ngotho from the homeguard post. Ngotho dies a few days later in his own home. His death is followed by the killing of Mr.Howlands himself in the hands of Boro who, after having exacted his revenge, surrenders to the police. The family which was a very happy one at the beginning of the story is, thus, totally destroyed- Ngotho, the centre around whom the family revolved, is dead, Boro is awaiting execution, Kamau has been sentenced to life imprisonment, and Kori is supposedly held in a detention camp and he may even be dead already. Only Nyokabi, Njeri and Njoroge are left at home. To all of them, life has become unbearable after having suffered one shock after another. Njoroge's hope of rising up the social ladder after getting educated is completely shattered and the scene of him selling goods in the shop of an Indian businessman is one of the most tragic scenes of the novel. The shattered family, in a way, symbolises the waste land that Kenya has become as a direct result of the insensitive British rule.

In spite of these multiple killings that affect the families of the blacks, the only ray of hope is that the tribal values that kept the families together before have not been killed. When Njoroge, suffering from deep depression, offers Mwihaki, the daughter of Jacobo and his ladylove, to escape from the Kenyan scene together leaving their mothers behind, Mwihaki declines and asks him to wait until the good times come as both have their duties to their families. When the upset Njoroge tries to commit suicide he is saved by his mother who, apprehending something wrong, defies the night curfew and appears at the right

moment to stop his son, their only hope left now, from hanging himself. And, most importantly, the story ends with Njoroge's acceptance of his responsibility towards his family.

And he ran home and opened the door for his two mothers. (Chapter 18)

An interesting comparison can be drawn between the family values of the white settlers and the black natives. Whereas the family of Ngotho is strongly knit together, the relationships between the members of Mr.Howlands's family are loose. The only passion for the 'rational' Mr.Howlands is his farm and he considers his wife and children as valuable only in so far as they contribute to the farming. Likewise, his wife, his son and his daughter leave the country and go back to England after the emergency is declared, leaving Mr.Howlands in such a moment of crisis alone. In contrast, Njoroge and his brothers always think about the upliftment of their family and never think of only their personal benefits; even Njoroge's dream of attaining education is based on his desire to uplift his family and even the black community from their present suffering.

The author has, indeed, mingled history and fiction successfully to draw a potent picture of the sufferings of the Kenyan public in the 1950s and the early 1960s. However, it will be oversimplification to term his position as anti-white. Thiong'o, indeed, openly blames the British misrule for the precarious situation in Kenya. But the target of attack is more the policy of the colonisers than the individual white characters themselves. Thiong'o also never says that the whites and the blacks cannot stay together within the same society. Rather, a short conversation between Njoroge and Stephen, the younger son of Mr.Howlands, reveals that Stephen is as much a son of Kenya as Njoroge is. Stephen even expresses his unwillingness to go to England,

...I was born here and I have never been to England. I don't even want to go there

(Chapter 14)

What Thiong'o, therefore, demands for are an equal distribution of resources and a stopping of the exploitation of the blacks by the colonisers. The imperial policy of the British is the main object of attack. And the novel faithfully portrays how the colonialist enterprise, in the name of uplifting the 'savages', has turned an African nation rich in heritage into a complete waste land.

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THE HERMIT OF THE WOODS

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Abstract:

American Transcendentalism was a cult which encouraged people to find their true selves. It was a movement which took people towards liberation of the soul urging them to abandon established traditions, customs and norms. The harbingers of the movement themselves were iconoclasts in the sense that they broke form established religion and carved out their own niche. They knew exactly what they were looking for and sought to help the spiritually starved humanity. This paper talks about Henry David Thoreau who was one of the pioneers of the Transcendentalists Movement. His is a striking personality as he was the essence of all that the Movement stood for. He was one person who actually practiced the tenets of this liberating philosophy by living in the woods amidst nature. His was a way of deliberate withdrawal and asceticism. He was a seer who walked alone even among the Transcendentalists. He was a hermit who was deeply inspired by Oriental Literature. This paper is about Henry David Thoreau and the influences that shaped his thinking and his attitude. The paper primarily talks about his interest in Oriental texts and literature and its effect on him.

Keywords: *American, Transcendentalism, Cult, Religion, Iconoclasts.*

Every time we think of Solitude, identity and Nature, the name of Henry David Thoreau comes up in our minds. Apart from Emerson & other Transcendentalists, if there is one person whose name deserves mention, it is Henry David Thoreau. One of the pioneers of the Transcendental Movement, which connected humans to their God, he reflected all that the Movement stood for, namely, simplicity, freedom and love for nature.

The origins of the transcendentalist movement date back roughly to the 1830s. Geographically, the movement was mostly situated in the New England region of the United States. The foundations for the transcendentalist movement are considered to have been set by Ralph Waldo Emerson's essay *Nature*, published in 1836. In this essay, Emerson claims that man can only understand reality through studying nature. In order to know himself fully, and get answers to all his questions, man should be in the company of nature, for this is where he will find his true self. Emerson believes that solitude is the only way man can fully adhere to what nature has to offer. "To go into solitude, a man needs to retire as much from his chamber as from society." As a senior Harvard scholar, Henry David Thoreau took Emerson's essay to heart and it is clear and evident that it essentially influenced his life and literary career.

American Transcendentalism was a confluence of many disciplines, major among them being Eastern Thought and Oriental writings. In the words of Dale Riepe, "They found Indian wisdom attractive because it was profound without being gloomy." (qtd. in Bharadwaj 45). Thoreau was no exception to this and he far surpassed his fellow Transcendentalists in his fondness for Oriental texts and Eastern literature. His familiarity with Hindu Texts began in his Harvard years and continued throughout his life. Gradually his fondness started turning into a deep passion and profounder understanding of the Indian scriptures.

Henry David Thoreau came in contact with India through Emerson's library of books. Emerson influenced Thoreau with a certain enthusiasm for the Wisdom of India. During his stay in 1838 with Emerson's brother, Thoreau had unrestricted access to Emerson's library which contained the great works

of India such as The *Vedas*, The Laws of Manu, and the *Hitopadesha* of Vishnu Sharma, the *Bhagavad Gita* and the *Upanishads*. Thoreau read the Hindu scriptures with delight and with each reading, he was raised into an untouched and pristine region of thought.

When Thoreau began his intensive study of Hindu scriptures, he wrote in his journal:

I cannot read a sentence in the book of the Hindu's without being elevated upon the table land of the Ghauts...It has such a rhythm as the winds of the desert, such a tide as the Ganges and seems as superior to criticism as the *Himmaleh* mounts. (Bharadwaj 51)

Thoreau sought throughout his life to live a life of meaning - a life in which he would understand the truths of his own nature, his relationship with other men and his relationship with Nature and with the Universe. In the *Bhagavad Gita*, Thoreau found clues for his quest which he transposed into his Journals: "The man who, having abandoned all lusts of the flesh, walked without inordinate desires, unassuming, and free from pride, obtaineth happiness. The wise man . . . seeketh for that which is homogenous to his own nature". (qtd. In Meenakumari 2)

Thoreau calls The *Bhagavad Gita* "one of the noblest and most sacred scriptures which have come down to us". For Thoreau, the *Gita* is more colossal than any other masterpiece of the East. Thoreau speaks of "the sanity and sublimity" of the *Gita*, which has impressed the minds even of soldiers and merchants and tells American contemporaries to study it with reverence, for it is a part of man's common heritage:

I would say to the readers of scriptures, if they wish for a good book to read the *Bhagavad Gita*..... known to have been written more than four thousand years ago it matters not whether three or four or when it deserves to be read with reverence even by Yankees, as a part of the sacred writings of a devout people".(Meenakumari 5)

Thoreau's reading led him to an interest in *Yoga*. '*Yoga*' is the effort of a man to unite him with the deeper element. It is the union of the human with the divine within him. The underlying idea of all these terms is 'linking'. *Yoga* is getting to the Supreme, touching the Absolute. It is 'yoking' all the forces of heart, mind and will to the Supreme or God. We must discipline the emotions and realize the Supreme. Renunciation of worldly affairs is a prerequisite to self-discipline. Self-discipline is essential to all activities of a yogi, if complete identity is to be sought with the object desired. Thoreau was a yogi, a yogi who represented not an escape from life but an escape into it, who, both by example and precept, told a nation that what matters is not the impressiveness of the external trappings or the outward show that one covers oneself with; it is the individual that is invaluable, that it shall be a terrible bargain if he possesses the whole world, but loses his own soul (Meenakumari 7). He wrote in a letter to a friend:

Free in this world as the buds in the air, disengaged from every kind of chains, those who have practiced the *Yoga* gather in Brahma the certain fruit of their works. . . . The yogi, absorbed in contemplation, contributes in his degree to creation . . . Divine forms traverse him . . . and united to the nature which is proper to him, he goes, he acts as animating original.(qtd. in Meenakumari 2)

Thoreau was also influenced by the reading of *Laws of Manu*. He had read the *Manu Dhramasastra* translated by Sir William Jones and it greatly affected him. The book and its teachings remained with him for the rest of his life. He referred to it time and again as a gospel and made mention of it in his essay *Walden*:

Nothing was too trivial for the *Hindoo* lawgiver, however offensive it may be to modern taste. He teaches how to eat, drink, cohabit, void excrement and urine, and the like, elevating what is mean and does not falsely excuse himself by calling these things trifles". (qtd. in Bharadwaj 52)

Transmigration was another theme that interested Thoreau. According to Dombrowski, "Thoreau's views on the after-life owe more to Classical or Oriental sources than to Christian ones" (Bharadwaj 55). These references reflect Thoreau's debt to India. He developed great warmth for India from his early years. In one of his poems, "To a Stray Fowl", he personified himself as a bird, and identified himself with the ancient race of India and expressed his grief on being cut off from his natural roots and being forced to live in a

hostile region. Throughout his life, Thoreau had an intuitive feeling that he might have been born in India in his previous births. (Bharadwaj 60)

Thoreau advocates the life of simplicity, a lesson which he had taught himself at Walden Pond and which he tried to teach others. Simplify - Simplify the outward circumstances of your life, simplify your needs, your ambition and learn to delight in the simple pleasure which the world of Nature affords. It also meant scorn public opinion, refuse to accept the common definitions of success and refuse to be moved by the judgment of others. Thoreau not only advocated simplicity, but also put them into practice. He says in Walden "Instead of three meals a day, if it be necessary eat but one; instead of a hundred dishes, five and reduce other things in proportion"

For nearly two years, Thoreau lived the life of a hermit at the shores of the Walden Pond near Concord, Massachusetts. Thoreau chose to undergo this experiment to find answers to questions he could not answer living in the cosmopolitan society. He also hoped to find a way to connect his inner self with nature. Thoreau's concept of "civil disobedience" inspired many intellectuals and renowned figures, whose actions altered the flow of history - most notably Mahatma Gandhi and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. On his return to Concord toward the end of 1843, he surrendered himself completely to the allure of the woods and fields and waters of the vicinity. He minimized all his material needs and comforts. He began to wear corduroy clothes, eat simply and frugally, and deny himself the things which cost money. Indeed, he soon went after poverty as others go after wealth. Thus ridding himself of all his material possessions gave him what he desired most-leisure, peace of mind, freedom. Reversing the biblical stricture of six days work and one day rest, he worked one day a week and turned the other six into a long-lasting Sabbath (Madison 111).

Thoreau not only preached but practiced simplicity and voluntary poverty and was impressed by the ideal of the philosopher. He was not in favour of over indulgence in pleasure and comforts. Thus he says in Walden: "Most of the luxuries, and many of the so called comforts of life, are not only not indispensable, but positive hindrance to the elevation of mankind" (qtd. in Meenakumari 8). He adds that with respect to luxuries and comforts, the wisest have ever lived a more simple and meagre life than the poor. Thoreau says further, in Walden that the ancient philosophers, Chinese, Hindoo, Persian and Greek were a class among whom "none has been poorer in outward riches, none so rich in inward" (Meenakumari 9). Much like Swami Vivekananda, Thoreau was fascinated by the ideal of the Indian Monk. The *yogi* or the *Sannyasi* of India appealed to Thoreau. He states:

I lay down the book and go to my well for water and lo! There I meet the *Brahmin*, priest of *Brahma* and *Vishnu* and *Indra*, who still sits in his temple on the Ganges reading the Vedas, or dwells at the root of a tree with his crust and water jug. I meet his servant come to draw water for his master and our buckets as it were get together in the same well (Meenakumari 10)

According to the Indian scripture, the body is the temple of God and should be looked upon as such. Thoreau too speaks of the body in a similar thought. He says:

Every man is the builder of a temple, called his body, to the God he worships, after a style purely his own, nor can he get off by hammering marble instead. We are all sculptors and painters, and our material is our own flesh and blood and bones. Any boldness begins at once to refine a man's features, any meanness or sexuality to imbrue them. (Meenakumari 9)

Thoreau not only talks of the presence of God in man but also of the consciousness of an animal instinct in us, He says:

We are conscious of an animal in us which awakens in proportion as our higher nature slumbers. It is reptile and sexual and perhaps cannot be wholly expelled, like the worms which even in life and health occupy our bodies. Possibly we may withdraw from it, but never change its nature. I fear that

it may enjoy a certain health of its own that we maybe well, but not pure. (Meenakumari 9)

Thoreau says, "From exertion come wisdom and purity: from sloth ignorance and sexuality." (Meenakumari 9) In these words, one can discern the influence of Indian thought. Thoreau's life was a quest for self-realization. He was a seer who endeavoured to teach humanity the virtues of non-attachment, non-conformity and self-discipline. His relentless search for truth made him person true to his work. He was a *Karma Yogi* who believed in a life of action. His name would be remembered as long as there are individuals who see God in nature and the divine in humans.

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SOCIAL PERSPECTIVES OF INDIAN WOMAN IN KAMALA MARKANDAYA'S *NECTAR IN A SIEVE*

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Indian writing in English since Toru Dutt deserves to be better understood rather than condemned as suffering from superiority complex. To Indian writers English served the purpose of an intellectual means of expression. The Indian novelist in English had attained a dignified stature. Those Indians who settled on the foreign language for creative literature had an uphill task ahead, that of projecting their country's heritage in an alien idiom. Apart from the big three - Mulk Raj Anand, R.K. Narayan and Raja Rao, a host of other writers such as Bhabhani Bhattacharya, Manohar Malgonkar, Kamala Markandaya, Anita Desai, Ruth Pravar Jhabwala, Nayantara Sahgal, Arun Joshi, Chaman Nahal, Salman Rushdie, Namita Gokhale and Amitav Ghosh are Indian novelists writing in English relentlessly exploring Indian themes. Their significant contribution demands a serious reckoning.

Cultural conditioning does affect the literary expression of women. Intellectually fed on literary models by men, women writers till recently have been creating a literature of 'imitation' despite the vast leadership they have enjoyed. Universally applicable to women writers everywhere, this factor of cultural conditioning acquires an important dimension in any discussion of Indian women novelists also. Put in the historical perspective of Indian writing in English, analysis of novels by Indian women writers in English reveals new dimensions of their contribution to the mainstream of Indian literature. Kamala Markandaya, Nayantara Sahgal, Attia Hosain, Anita Desai and Ruth Pravar Jhabwala are some of the important names. Kamala Markandaya occupies a special position among these writers. A brief analysis of her novels would reveal her South Indian identity and expatriate existence. Markandaya's writings are a reflection of her close observation and understanding of Indian life. In her artistic creation and portrayal of Indian life, her western education has stood her in good stead. Kamala Markandaya stands apart from these novelists because of her depiction of reality in a natural way. She allows her characters to follow their own minds and face life as a natural man should do. There is no exaggeration in presenting the sufferings of the people.

Markandaya's *Nectar in a Sieve* is set in a village and examines the hard agricultural life of the Indian peasant; *Some Inner Fury*, which includes highly educated woman and her English lover who are torn apart by the Quit India campaign of the time, has to do with the quarrel between Western and Indian influences, as they are focused in a marriage; *A Silence of Desire* deals with the middle class, and *A Handful of Rice* with the city poor; *Possession* moves from the West End of London to a South Indian village, and is centred on the conflict of Eastern spirituality with Western materialism.

Markandaya has not the same intimacy and familiarity with all these areas of life, and she has indeed been criticized by Indian critics for a certain lack of inwardness with the life of the Indian poor. Her particular strength lies in the powerful social realism that she analyses through various interpersonal relationships of her characters. She has, too, the genuine novelist's gift for fixing the individuality of the character within the given sociological milieu in a reasonably convincing social context. She has been most successful and at her best, in dealing with the problems of the educated middle class, and she has a gift in particular for delineating the self-imposed laceration of the dissatisfied, which is partially the direct extension of the social realism and partially of their own mental complex. Her works have received critical acclaim for their themes, and a rich social realism, and with each successive novel she seems to have achieved distinction as an important social realist and a visionary.

All of Markandaya's novels reveal her deep preoccupation with the changing Indian social and

political scene, her careful conscious craftsmanship and her skillful use of the English Language for creative purpose. She excels in recording the inner workings of the minds of her characters, their personal perplexities and social confrontations. She has highlighted the suffering of ordinary Indians. In this connection S.K.Krishna Swamy observes: Her concerns being, predominantly socio-economic, her novels offer us a savage tale of brutality, ignorance, mental and physical bludgeoning that the ordinary Indian, man and woman is subjected to.(86)

Her presentation is quite authentic because of her having a personal experience of both the cultures. She gradually advances the domain of her novels from the joys and sorrows of simple folks, always interpreting the clash in terms of emotional follies and foibles of individual characters. Such portrayal gave tone and direction to her mind by awakening her to the realities of society, particularly the plight of Indian Women. Writing about Markandaya, Stephen Ignatetus Hemeway remarks: Markandaya is definitely one of the most productive, popular and skilled Indo-Anglian novelists and a superb representative of the growing number of Indian Women writing serious literature in English.(52)

Markandaya is gifted with artistic perfection and simple expression. The realistic approach to life is the hallmark of her social vision. She presents life as she sees it. She neither idealises it nor denounces it. She sees life with her own stark naked eyes and portrays it without any bias or colour. In fact, she never takes sides with any of her protagonists. Her portrayal of village life in transitional state is simply superb. She describes urban squalor with equal mastery: With her impeccable representational realism and innovative description of the Indian arcadia, Markandaya achieves a perfect poise between the rural reality and the disciplined urbanity of Art.(190)

Markandaya has deftly described all the social customs, traditions and conventions in rural areas of India. She has first-hand knowledge of South Indian villages, the real conditions of the villagers, their miseries, their sufferings and their real ways of life. She has depicted all the hardships faced by the poor peasants in her novels. Like Mulk Raj Anand, she wants to bring reforms in Indian society. Her fiction rooted in the Indian Soil and ethos, has a subtle social purpose. In a sense she fictionalizes the sociology of India. Her intention is to awaken the polite society to the real problem.

Markandaya started writing her novels at a time when India was in the vicious grip of many problems like racial differences, poverty, starvation emanating from natural calamities like famine and draught. Markandaya treats fiction as a medium to teach humanity the real meaning of life. To her life is a mixture of happiness and sadness. Both these aspects of life have been realistically depicted by her. All racial conflicts, cultural differences, temperamental disparities and sexual perversions find true portrayal in her novels. She has drawn a realistic picture of rural India contrasted with the glamorous westernized world of England. Her stay in South villages before marriage and her settlement in England after marriage enabled her to draw a realistic picture of east and west.

Markandaya loves to portray man-woman relationship. Her characters are strong and daring. They are strong-willed and face all the odds of life with courage. Her protagonists are not idealists but are flawed with common weaknesses of mortals. They believe that despair, despondency, disappointment, conflict, frustration and struggle are the integral part of life.

Markandaya's literary debut, *Nectar in a Sieve* dramatizes the tragedy and trauma of a traditional Indian village and a peasant family whose livelihood depends on rain, rice and land. Rukmani and Nathan, who knit and knot the tapestry of the novel, have become the prey of the two evils-Zamindari system and capitalist economy. The novel portrays the narrator heroine Rukmani who earns the prominent position in the novel and she too embodies the central consciousness. On the thematic plane the novel becomes the saga of a peasant woman Rukmani, the soul of the story

She won name and fame all over the world after the publication of her first novel *Nectar in a Sieve*. She is blessed with an extraordinary vision of life. As a novelist she has a practical feel of life in rural areas as well as in urban centres. Initially she lived in a south Indian village and closely observed the rustic life with a sense to get basic knowledge of village life in India. In her novels realistically depict the life of

villages, cities, husband-wife relations, social conflicts and attraction for modernism. In her novel *Nectar in a Sieve* she attempts to portray the true vision of life through her protagonists.

Nectar in a Sieve is a fictional epic on Indian life, revealing a rich gamut of human experience. This novel is a graphic portrayal of the peasants' life, their toil, torture, anguish, suffering, and above all, their tragedy. It has been compared with Pearl S. Buck's *The Good Earth* and with Bhabani Bhattacharya's *'So Many Hungers'*; it may even be compared with Prem Chand's *Godan* and Rang Bhoomi. The comparison is true in terms of hunger and human debasement. It is a realistic portrayal of the surroundings and sufferings of human life. It is an epic of the Indian life at the grass-roots, a full view of the village world where peasants grow and live, suffer and endure and emerge more dignified, more human in their elements with their tattered rags, their dying moans and their obstinate clinging to the soil like the stump withered all over but its roots delved in the earth, which make Markandaya a social visionary par excellence. Rukmani and Nathan are individuals; they are also symbols of teeming millions, archetypal figures like Adam and Eve. Rukmani is the daughter of a village headman whose power gradually dwindles and pales into insignificance and she is married to a tenant farmer: "Who was poor in everything but in love and care for me." (NIS-49)

She is both sensible and sensitive. The mud hut, thatched, small, set near a paddy field which almost frightened her at the first look, gives her a sense of pride when she learns that it was Nathan who made every bit of it. She spends her days watching the seeds split, the shoots breaking through and the fruit ripening. And then things changed and the change came blasting its ways into their life in the form of tannery, the symbol of industrialization, in the form of flood and drought, Nature 'red in tooth and claw.' Hunger raises its head. Hunger appears like an Octopus in the story. It is the real evil, stronger than the original Satan that disturbed the bliss of Eden Garden. The eldest son Arjun joined the tannery against their wish, silencing them with the thunder of reality: "The important thing is to eat." (NIS- 185)

Awe, starvation and frustration are the characteristic feelings which dominate the villages. It is "fear of the dark future; fear of the sharpness of hunger, fear of the blackness of death" (NIS-79). Rukmani says, 'hope and fear' are the twin faces in the villages that drag the people first in one direction and then in another: "Fear, constant companion of the peasant, hunger, ever at hand to joy his elbow should he relax. Despair, ready to engulf him should he falter." (79). Rukmani and her family bear the physical and spiritual pangs of indigence and degradation poignantly and they move back and forth in life. Rukmani, who loses her husband at the end of the novel, contemplates that he will come back to her life again: Sometimes at night I think that my husband is with me again, coming gently through the mists, and we are tranquil together. Then morning comes, the wavering grey turns to gold, there is a stirring within as the sleepers awake, and he softly departs. (NIS-7)

The story begins where it ends. Madhusudan Prasad says: *Nectar in a Sieve* has a neat circular structure. The beginning and end of the novel are closely connected, creating a circular structure." The subtitle of the novel, "A Novel of Rural India" lays stress on rural setting and its characters. Nageswara Rao rightly says:

The novel deals with the peasants, their activities, problems and anxieties, hopes and expectations, and joys and sorrows. It is therefore natural to find in it an emphasis on rural ethos and rural value system. (7)

Echoing similar views about Markandaya's realistic portrayal of rural problems faced by Rukmani, R.K. Srivastava comments: "*Nectar in a Sieve* deals mainly with the tragic issue of life-hunger, pain and separation-the tone throughout the novel is reflective and philosophical as if Rukmani were indirectly accusing the heavenly powers on her Karma for ill-plight" (74).

Markandaya succeeds in presenting a woman's self in unadventurous social milieu. The role of Rukmani as an unsplit self is not a gesture of civility extended to tradition by the novelist, but the reality made potential by the nature of the culture in which she lives. She presents the paradigm that while playing the conventional role of mother and wife she does not forget her other role as a human being. A profound

self-knowledge can be attained not through separation and divided-self but through expansion and association.

Thus Markandaya uses fiction as a vehicle for communicating her vision of life. As a writer, she has clear perception of life in rural areas as well as in urban centres. She differs from other Indo-Anglian novelists in many ways. She focuses on the family structure to establish her themes in different novels. She is different from her contemporaries in that she vividly and with a rare understanding depicts the hard harsh realities of Indian life in all their horrifying and inhuman shapes and shades that makes Markandaya a social visionary.

Markandaya is against the oppression and exploitation in any form-political, economic, cultural or racial. It is, in fact, Rukmani's strength, an all-out human effort that sustains the novel. Nathan advises Rukmani to bend like the grass so that she would not break. Rukmani helps Kunti to deliver her child fathered by Nathan. Ira conceives an illegitimate child who is previously abandoned by her husband because of her infertility. The most ironic situation is that Rukmani who despises Kunti for her immorality has to accept Ira's prostitution and the illegitimate son too. Other important aspect of Markandaya social vision is her portrayal of man-woman relationship. Her characters are strong and courageous. They are not idealists but they possess the general weakness of the mortals. They know how to bend like grass and how to face the reality of life. The novel portrays its positive woman characters as ideal sufferers and nurturers. The cause of her suffering springs mainly from poverty and natural calamity. The women are from the rural sections of society.

Social relationships remain incomplete without understanding of Markandaya's depiction of women characters in various shades. Markandaya has presented the life and travails of a peasant woman, Rukmani. She faces so many odds of life like famine, death, adultery and prostitution in the condition of bone chilling poverty and fights against them constantly. She has been able to win the sympathy of the readers by her astonishing will-power that endures a life without hope. Her plight resembles that of Nalini of *A Handful of Rice*. What we witness is the transformation of a carefree girl into an exploited and victimized woman trying to pull her family through the harsh and cruel life of a big city.

Markandaya's novels reveal the evils and deficiencies in Indian life and society and warn her countrymen against slavish imitations of the west. However, novelist does not offer any ready-made solutions to the many problems facing the country. Her emphatic teaching is that India should preserve her soul and carve out her own destiny. In religion she should be proud of her great legacy and her constant aim should be the attainment of the purity, equipoise and altruism represented by the Swamy of *Possession* or *A Silence of Desire*. When the menace of poverty strikes Indian pastoral life and brings, despair, dependency, disappointment, conflict, only women rise to the occasion and tackle them confidently. They may be in pitiable plight but they do not give up their struggle. The novel *A Nectar in a Sieve* depicts the struggle of women. Kamala Markandaya's writings also illustrate how women fall victims to Indian Zamindari system.

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HENRY JAMES' *THE AMERICAN*: A THEMATIC STUDY

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Henry James is regarded as one of the most eminent writers and most intelligent persons of modern times. He occupies a unique place among the writers in the English language. The first American novelist to rank with British and continental masters of the caliber of Jane Austen, Dickens, George Eliot and Flaubert in the realistic tradition is Henry James. He earned a living through writing. He was the first serious American writer to take writing as a profession. He was born an American but died as British Citizen. James shows religious zeal in his pursuit of art. He continued to develop like very few American novelists over a long period of years. He searched for a great number of contrasts between international cultures. His basic concept remained the same in spite of his exploration. The American is fundamentally good but generally ingenuous and raw. The European is more cultured and sophisticated but fundamentally corrupted. The American through the contact with European society can be enriched culturally. His sense of the deep significance of personal kinships is the major motivating force behind all his writings. The central character of his novels accomplished a deeper comprehension of the nature of good and evil by a process of moral growth. He learned to act with discernment, compassion and wisdom. He deals with the contrast between European and American cultures. In the process, he discovers the values and criteria which are suitable to the present and the past.

Henry James' *The American* (1877) is typical of the author's genius. It is the story of a wealthy American businessman who quits business and goes to Paris to gain aesthetic stature. He meets many people among whom he gets to know the Tristrams and the Bellegardes typical of the French aristocracy. Newman falls in love with Claire de Cintre the widow of a French gentleman, daughter of Madame Bellegarde. He is not accepted. The timid little creature Claire de Cintre is frightened to raise her voice to say a word against Madame Bellegarde. She is a puppet in the hands of Madame Bellegarde. Claire's younger brother Valentain de Bellegarde likes Newman and he reveals the family secrets to Newman using which he can blackmail the Belleardes and force his marriage with Claire. But Newman does not use it.

Claire joins the convent. Newman could have inflicted a satisfactory revenge by using the paper on which is written the great secret, but this gentleman true to his nature burns it. He finally quits Europe heavy heartedly and with sad memories embedded in his mind.

Henry James while writing a critical preface for *The American* thirty years after its first publication remarked that its germinal idea had come to him while riding in a horse carriage.

I found myself, of a sudden, considering with enthusiasm, as the theme of a story the situation in another country and an aristocratic society, of some robust but.... Cruelly wronged compatriot; the point being in especial that he should suffer at the hands of persons pretending to represent the highest possible civilization. (5)

He envisioned his hero discovering a way to revenge his opponents and made him magnanimous by giving the idea of a trivial and worthless revenge. This idea paved the way for the development of the story of Christopher Newman courting an aristocratic French woman. He is crossed by her family. He has trump card to blackmail the Bellegarde. If he has used it he would have attained his desire. But he refused to inflict his meditated vengeance upon them. The confrontation and conflict of the two cultures across the Atlantic forms the background and the setting of *The American*. It is also a powerful determinant of action in the novel. James makes it clear in the novel that Newman's innocence and American directness are partially responsible for his own failure.

The central situation of the novel lies in his attempts to by Madame de Cintre and this attempt talks fully about his character. Newman's failure to grasp deeper human value is often overlooked by the American readers.

James focuses, our attention on the difference between the house of the Europeans and the House of the American expatriates in Europe. The surroundings of the Bellegardes suggested the artistic and social inheritance. The feeling of great age is always suggested by European homes and its furnishing and ornaments. The traditional past generally in the form of some faded splendor and moulded the present.

The apartment of the Tristrams, the only American home in the novel is in direct contrast to this European "Sense of the past." The apartment is luxurious with all the modern conveniences. Tristram proudly calls the attention of his visitors to their principal household treasures, to the gas lamps and to the furnace holes. The difference is clearly visible when the modern apartment of Tristram is compared with the Bellegarde's house which is immense, dark, time-stained Henry IV Chateau of Flauriers. The bleak and horror filled Chateau carries the feeling of age into the realm of romance. Henry James makes many references to the arts which provide a means of interpretation of the entire novel. He is thoroughly enjoying himself even though he is baffled on the aesthetic grounds. Wealthy, confident, likeable and socially and culturally raw Newman shows little interest in culture and equally shows little interest for coarse derision of it. He is not a mere tourist for he knows clearly the purpose of his visit to Europe and has begun to form a clear plan for the future of action. "I have come to see Europe, to get the best out of it I can. I want to see all the great things, and do what the clever people do." (11) Newman is ignorant of the arts and has little or no taste. James says; "... Raphael and Titian and Rubens were a new kind of arithmetic, and they inspired our friend, for the first time self-mistrust." (12) He gradually experienced the strength of the artistic tradition of Europe and so cherished something of the essence of Europe itself.

He is enchanted by the copy of a picture more than the original and wishes to buy copies at any price. His choice of pictures reflects the same taste and same desire as his choice of rooms. His life is more relaxed. He considers making life or art solemn as ridiculous. Newman's deep enjoyment of the journey through Europe separates him from the category of those who lack interest in art. His enjoyment of art takes him away from the blame that he is familiarly American who relegates a taste for the arts to women, foreigners and other unpractical persons.

Christopher Newman reflects the more admirable and also more undesirable qualities of the American in the old world. He does not represent the evident and the mechanically defined symbol. He is no "innocent abroad". His approach and response to the art of Europe expresses the very complexity and balance of his character. The Europe is characterized by this art. The shaping force of the tradition of the arts is constantly felt in the novel. The description of cathedrals, galleries and exquisite old homes form the background and in turn becomes an integral part of the story. Edwin stated that,

The art of Europe, in Fiction as fact, represent for James a quality of life, gradually apparent in the novel, that is far more important than the arts themselves. To characterize this quality, he emphasizes so heavily- perhaps even so unrealistically - the arts in which it appears. (16)

No single character in the novel is free from an air of irony- an irony often conveyed by the arts. Mademoiselle Noiche knows her copy is worthless, yet she says to Newman, "My copy has remarkable qualities" (19) and sells it. She knows that her art is not equal to that of a painter and she knows all the secrets of her art. The character of Newman is also touched with irony.

A fiercely humorous imagery of the arts is used to present the social conventions and inheritances in the overtones of religious idolatry. Newman gets a chance to have a glimpse of the social conventions, when he was introduced to the Duchess. The social inheritance of Europe considered the leaders of society as religious idols and this has become the religion of the society of Europe. The left outs of the old beliefs and the old faith is found in the frightening black of the Carmelite convent in which Madame de Cintre is

imprisoned and “the grossly imagined portal” of Notre Dame.

Henry uses “points of view” to draw a formal pattern upon the events of a story. The hero Christopher Newman is the central character. He is the centre of consciousness, around whom revolves all the other characters and all situation. The central figure Christopher Newman is created as the observing and analyzing character. The major theme of the novel is the contrast of American innocence with European experience. The presentation of every character in the novel is done through the eyes of the central character, Newman. His sense of confusion becomes that of the readers.

The style, the technique, the narration and originality of the theme are universally praised. The strongest criticism was focused against the plot. The fire of criticism was directed for the failure to provide a happy ending. The story had prepared them for happy union, but the sad ending was inconsistent. Henry's detached and “cold blooded” attitude towards his personages is severely criticized by the critics. This might be 'realism', but it exposed a critic, an analyst, 'rather than the sharer of strong feeling.’’ (23) The international theme which is the original of James' is recognized and applauded by all the critics.

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DAVID AND HIS BROTHER JACK -A CONFLICT OF AUSTRALIAN IDENTITY MYTH IN GEORGE JOHNSTON'S *MY BROTHER JACK*

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Abstract:

*Australian identity and interwar period of Australia during WWI & WWII has undoubtedly grabbed the imagination of countless literary minds to exploit and exalt Australian national history. The narratives that glorified the achievements of Australian soldiers ensured to synchronize these heroic events with the Australian identity myth so as to cement a biased interpretation to Australian national identity. George Johnston's well acclaimed classic **My Brother Jack** (1964) was first of the kind that questioned this by laying out bare the traumatized lives of people who had to witness the repercussions of world wars in Australia. The present paper posit to unravel how Johnston's narrative investigated a prominent yet neglected page in the history of Australia that witnessed a dramatic transition of Australian national identity from its cherished space of traditional values to an emergent space of newly acquired values that has been evolved from the ashes of World Wars is explored. Johnston through the two brothers Jack and David shows how the age old values of Jack get eclipsed by the contemporary values of David and elucidates the conflict in Australian identity where David's identity is reflecting a modern transformation to Australian national identity with renewed standards to Australian ideals.*

Keywords: *Australian identity myth, inter war period, George Johnston, Australian national identity.*

Since its settlement by Europeans the question of Australian identity has been a prominent issue that has secured a mystifying space in Australian literary narratives. The idea that there might be “an Australian identity” is one that has developed its own mythology. As Richard White aptly remarked, “There is no 'real' Australia waiting to be uncovered” (127), yet the multiplicity of identities comprising this migrant nation has regularly been homogenized by commentators and historians such as Russel Ward, who, while purporting to outline the myth of Australian identity seemed to endorse the idea of a national identity itself.

The quest in envisaging a unique national identity deeply rooted in its own individualistic stories and histories were a clarion call to Australia. This quest helped Australia in eradicating its shackles of dependency from years of British supremacy to form a mature and self-independent nation. Accordingly the so called Australian “intelligentsia” circle designated by historians, writers, journalists, critics as well as painters (White, 24) was vested with the responsibility in concocting an Australian identity. Owing to Australia's multicultural population, the creative forces often faced difficulties in describing the demeanor of a typical Australian.

The inflamed imaginative minds who presumes themselves as radical nationalists “decided that the history of Australia was the history of those influences that produced what they saw as an 'essentially' Australian character, and that truly Australian literature was that which gave expression to this character” (Walter, 13). Working along these wrong lines, this undertaking inscribed or rather denied nationalistic traits to Australia by excluding the significant yet underestimated spaces occupied by the aborigines; keepers of the oldest cultures, convict settlers, outpouring immigrant's in supplementing distinct voices into Australian life as well to participate in the space of constructing the nation's history and identity.

The lack of conviction by the intelligentsia circle reinforced them to define the whole nation by

drawing Australia's national identity to a space pronounced by the following characteristics of colour- whiteness, gender- male and place of origin - European particularly Anglo. These traits described an unreal Australian citizen because rest of the features was kept aside. But Ward observed that these qualities of “the 'true' or 'typical' Australians were” sufficed by “the men of the outback” (The Australian Legend 95) who were recreated and simultaneously typified the national image by showcasing worthy attributes of mateship, solidarity, masculinity and so forth.

This recreated image of the bushranger/ battler exemplifying the spirit of Australia undoubtedly imbibed a space into the psychic of the Australian mind which can be figured out wholly as a syndrome of instructive process. This has been deliberated from the side of literary narratives that Elder opines as strategic engagement in “narrating the nation” (Being Australian: Narratives of National Identity 8) to a fairly new re-enacted space. Thus with the passage of time the image of the bushranger and outback became a potent symbol which pushed aside other identity spaces to oblivion making the common mass unconsciously believe that the only true spirit of Australia was this constructed space reproduced by the creative tank.

This self - imposing at the same time enthralling image accompanied by the years of interwar in Australia during WWI & WWII has undoubtedly grabbed the imagination of countless literary minds to exploit this period for exalting Australian national history. The narratives that glorified the achievements of Australian soldiers ensured to synchronize these heroic events with the Australian identity myth so as to cement a biased interpretation to Australian national identity. At this crucial juncture, George Johnston's well acclaimed classic *My Brother Jack* (1964) was first of the kind that questioned this bigoted definition by laying out bare the traumatized lives of tens of thousands and more people who had to witness the repercussions of world wars in the Australian society.

The present paper posit to unravel how Johnston's narrative investigated a prominent yet neglected page in the history of Australia that witnessed a dramatic transition of Australian national identity from its cherished space of traditional values to an emergent space of newly acquired values that has been evolved from the ashes of World Wars. *My Brother Jack*, a bildungsroman novel forms the first text in the trilogy which recounts the life of David Meredith, the narrator growing under the shadow of his brother Jack Meredith in a Melbourne suburb. How with the lapse of time David eventually overshadows his brother through ascendancy to power by being a prolific journalist amassing fame, money but leading a hollow life brings forth new determinants to gauge Australian identity in an ever evolving consumerist Australian society.

Jack epitomized the privileged Australian male myth; the masculine, tough, hardworking, confident; the battler man by upholding the spirit of mateship, solidarity, beer drinking, patriotism and honesty. A stark contrast to Jack is his brother David the protagonist of the novel who represents the newly formulated morals, the anti- male myth of being coward, less moral, lucky, introvert and less patriotic chap. The nexus of conflict in the narrative is built upon the very title, which through a Foucauldian looking glass can undermine the distinctive spatial Australian identities that is depicted in the two main characters of the narrative, David and his brother Jack.

Foucault expounds that “the mirror is, after all, a utopia since it is a placeless place” (Of Other Spaces: Utopias and Heteropias, 24) can be juxtaposed to the Australian national identity which forms a utopia because of its placeless space in the very concept of identity. In the mirror one can view their image in a virtual space where the person is actually absent. Initially, David failed to see his image through the mirror of national identity but instead saw the reflection of his brother Jack, the archetype of Australian identity myth who is “different from me (David). Different all through our lives, I mean, and in the special sense, not just older or nobler, or braver or less clever” (17). David personified Jack as the Australian spirit of good humor, courage, mateship, larrikinism, endurance as well as ingenuity. Therefore in the early growing years, the uncertain David was aware that he was a misfit in his society as he always measured

himself against his older brother Jack.

The aftermath of the First World War and the dreary advent of the Second World War had reshuffled the very matrix of Australian national identity. As Foucault “take the strange heterotopia of the cemetery” to substantiate how “an existing heterotopia function in a very different fashion” that initially “connected with all the sites of the city, state or society or village, etc.,” (Of Other Spaces: Utopias and Heterotopias, 25) is pushed to the periphery of the society. Similarly, the myth that hovered around individuals like Jack is cracked down to bits when the Anzac legend is crumbled down before the multitudes who witnessed nothing but loss and trauma of war. Anzac legend celebrates the birth of Australian nationhood when the Australian soldiers fought as one country Australia at Gallipoli during WWI.

The legacy of the war is echoed in David's words when he voice out that "behind the privet hedge to occupy every room and every cranny of our mundane little house" (12) in Melbourne suburb is "impregnated ... with the very essence of some gigantic and somber experience that had taken place thousands of miles away" (11). The tremors of WWI did not spare even David's family, where his father who volunteered as a sapper was also a victim when he was gassed in the warfront. The effect of war is explicit in his abusive nature towards his wife and the “system of monthly punishment” (42) of belting Jack and David stems from the frustration of “his failure to have made anything of his life...no possible advancement in his trade” (37) after war.

The torture that Jack and David had suffered resulted in making Jack an outright charming rebel untouched by the malice or evil of the Australian society but guarding his self with moral values. But David was totally directionless, shy, deceptive and secretive who preoccupied his time with books. Jack despised David's coward and weak personality and at times even advised him to mend his ways. Moreover David's mother a nurse at Melbourne military hospital became a solace to few disabled soldiers. They were discharged basically to give room for thousands of “sick and wounded Anzacs” (6) newcomers which made Avalon David's home an abode to “clutter of walking - sticks ...sets of crutches ...invalid wheelchair and some artificial limbs propped in the corner” (2).

The Anzac spirit seeks some profound qualities like good humor, courage, mateship, larrikinism, endurance as well as ingenuity that correspond to none other than the traits that best describes Jack and the Anzac soldiers. However just like the cemetery which lost its significance, the identity myth that refers Jack gets diminished when war claimed up to 60,000 Australian lives as well as nearly 90,000 crippled soldiers occupying the household. This event has in turn managed to bring a sense of loss as well as reality to the people who earlier eulogized the battler myth and the Anzac legend. Through David's narration, Johnston was able to rupture the secrecy of the aftermath of war behind the doors of thousands of Australians to the forefront.

Foucault uses the analogy of “the museum and the libraries” as spaces of heterotopia which “begins to function at full capacity when men arrive at a sort of absolute break with their traditional time” (Of Other Spaces: Utopias and Heterotopias, 26). Sharing this idea in its fullest sense, Johnston through the character Jack has depicted the disappearance of a national myth that was configured rather away from the stark realities and traditional temporal space of the society. Subsequently WWII witnessed tremendous change in the Avalon household, where David has become a celebrity war correspondent of the Morning Post whereas Jack leads a mediocre life.

The irony that Johnston's brings out in the narrative is the contradictory viewpoint the two brothers share on war and honour. Volunteering and sacrificing his life in the WWII so as to be a part of the Anzac legend was Jack's lifelong ambition. Though David does respect the feelings of people like Jack he inwardly sees the whole enterprise as a failure that brings only loss, pain and disillusionment. Fate snatches the opportunity from Jack to be a part in the war owing to his failing health whereas fate showers this opportunity to David. David's job as a war correspondent is well praised by his family which also earned him admiration nationally and internationally. People believed in David's live war reports which in reality

were creation of his polished imagination written in the coziness and luxuries of official's camps and hotels flung far away from the war stricken places.

Meanwhile Jack covers up his failing and frustration by taking pride over that “one of us (David) is over there” (339) at the warfront and admits “that events have certainly proved you (David) right” (340). Back home David gets the privilege to make a speech from the top of the war tank for the invaluable contribution he made to his country and later he attends a march by the soldiers of the AIF division. The rhythmic movement and undeterred spirit of the mangled soldiers makes David uneasy because they are questioning the authenticity of his fame which has no valour or honour to speak. For David the marching men were not mere soldiers but “suddenly and terribly I knew that all the Jacks were marching past me, all the Jacks were still marching ... inside my brain, marching through my whole life” (363).

Through the character Jack the author poses the question whether Australia should still be described in terms of the constructed Australian identity myth that eliminate majority of Australian identities. If not, then the existing Australian identity has to be recalibrated to accommodate citizens like David who is voicing out their identity across so that they too share a space in Australian identity. Henceforth David with all his traits professes the rise of a different voice to this identity that is not inferior but is as much as an integral part of Australia as how Jack the exaggerated male myth stands.

Hence the text is attempting to demythologize the so called standard impressions of Australian type by reconfiguring the very spirit of Australian identity through the character David. Therefore at this same temporal space the author is proposing the dawn of an entirely different myth, a realistic myth of social rise and worldly success in extrapolating a new identity through David by comparing with the standards of his brother Jack. Thus this narrative marks a significant shift in Australian consciousness by honestly dissecting the structure of a family and a chapter in Australian cultural identity and history.

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DALIT LITERATURE: A CULTURAL STUDY OF SUBORDINATES*Dr. A. T. Gavhale, Kisan Arts, Commerce and Science, College Parola, Dist. Jalgaon (M.S.), India***Abstract:**

In the cultural studies of Dalit Literature, the present paper attempts to illustrate a cultural transaction between Dominants and Subordinates. In fact, the subordinates create a new voice and special cultural identity with experiencing discrimination, exploitation, inequality, disrespect, injustice and economic exploitation. The credit goes to Dalits' struggle, endurance, pains, patience and discourse for compromise with anti-socio-political atmosphere. Today putting aside their pains, Dalits makes cultural reconciliation with suvarnas on the grounds of human dignity, social credit and national dignity like the Black Writers - Alice Walker, James Baldwin, Ralph Ellison and Toni Morrison. Really, Dalit is not a caste but a socio-economic category of discriminated belonging to many castes and societies speaking many languages. Therefore it needs to study and illustrate the socio-cultural concern between Dalits and Dominants on grounds of human cultural icons and literature.

Key Words: *Discourse, Cultural identity, Pains, Patience and compromise.*

Like Black American literature, Dalit literature has achieved its own cultural existence for social justice-ignorance, slavery, sorrows and sufferings. Dalit literature has acquired forceful status for human dignity and social equal rights like Human Rights for celebration of humanity and the universe. It has created a new voice and cultural identity to people who experienced exploitation, discrimination, and marginality. Today with respect to cultural studies, all academic faculties in India have given place to Dalit Literature. It is therefore to understand how does Dalit literature reconcile with other culture fundamentally for celebration of humanity? It becomes literature of social and political commitment that challenges socio-racial issues and compromise with other cultures as a part of human dignity and national credit like Black Americans. As Baburao Bagul agreed, "Dalit Sahitya is not literature of vengeance; Dalit Sahitya is not literature which spreads hatred. Dalit Sahitya first promotes man's greatness and man's freedom and for that reason it is an historic necessity..... Anguish, waiting, pronouncements of sorrows alone do not define Dalit Sahitya. We need literature heroically full of life to create a new society." (VOL I 53-57)

Sur-realism is a major phase of Dalit literature which in calculate pains and passions of Dalits in blue song at the margin and challenges mainstream of social issues. These are not pure passions of pseudo-romanticists but epical agonies are unified in ghosts of discrimination and exploitation. So, pains and patience become sources of Dalits where they aware about a roots of dominants in the anti-climate of Indian Society. The higher caste writer were creating their special voices which were haunted the Dalits. We see, the novelists like Mulk Raj Anand was constructing socially polluted climate for Dalits in the label of untouchables. After experiencing living ill treatment of dominants, Dalits started revolution in writing which was credited by unaccepted and colloquial language in main stream of society. For individual, social and national dignity, Dalit writers followed a few theories on the grounds of Dalit perspectives. They imitated Marxist and Ambedkarite Ideology in literary reformation to reform a new society with cultural discourse. Consequently, Dalit literature came on international platform to celebrate human and human values in cultural compromising human for present-future generation of dominants and our own. In that sense Dalit literature has achieved quantity and quality in mainstream literature which clarified surrealism

in general walks of life and the characters' central theme in their own dignified world.

Untouchability is a racial state of mind where subordinates are treated as in inhuman mode calling them slaves/ untouchables. Really, like the Blacks, untouchables have cross currents in their mind. The primary motive of Dalit literature is the liberation of Dalits. Dalit Literature in India “owes its origin to a revolutionary struggle for social and economic changes. This liberation is closely associated with the hopes for freedom of a group of people, who as untouchables are victims of social economic and cultural inequality” (Dangale 237). A social Reformer in Maharashtra, Jyotiba Phule coined the term related with exploitation of out castes-*shudra*, as he was deeply pained from low status of *shudras and atishudras*. These terms do not indicate particular task but focuses on people and commodities that are racially and economically suppressed and neglected from main torrent of society. It clarifies that, Dalit is not caste; it is an umbrella term which naturally covers socio-economic group of oppressed people belonging to many castes, colours and creeds speaking multi linguistic dialects. On official ground, the word 'Dalit', culturally transferred in depressed classes and today we use scheduled castes. Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar used to pay respectful birth based identity to Dalits as *untouchable castes*. In view of Janardan Waghmare, “The untouchability was the worst of slavery imposed upon the Atishudras by the Brahmin thralldom”. (The Quest XX). In real, untouchables had suffered from the most dehumanizing treatment by the Brahmins like Negroes from the White Brahmins of U.S.A. Naturally, the Brahmin Chaturvarna system is the source of all evils of Dalit literature. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar observed Negro-slavery in USA and compared it with Indian Untouchability. In this anti-climate the untouchable could not develop cultural roots over Indian land. The main stream literature has treated Dalits as subhuman. It has treated them as “drunkards, criminals, thieves, quarrelsome....etc.” (Trivedi 52).

With the legacy of Mahatma Phule, Dalit literature has achieved a special place in 1960 in form of Renaissance and Reformation. Prior to the 1960s, the socio-political movement of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar gave rise to Dalit literature: says Rajesh Karankal, "His (Dr. Ambedkar) writings in periodicals contained the seeds of Dalit literature". (14). Then Baburao Bagul, Bandhu Madhav and Shankarrao Kharat started to express Dalit corners and issues in their literature. Dalit Renaissance turns citizens of India to review issues of untouchables in a new social phenomenon. Apart from past pains and patience the said reformers writers started cultural revolutionary movements to compromise dominants on social political and rational ground. The Dalit Remissance collected intellectual energy from Dr. Ambedkar's ideas and Thoughts (The Quest-XXI). Throwing all the said bias and barriers on the road like the Blacks, Dalit writers started quest their roots to compromise with Democratic Laws and Liberal Humanism in Dalit Literature. Like Pseudo Romanticists they started to elaborate their injustice, exploitation, inferiorly in liberal manner with incalcing and honoring values of Equality, Liberty and Fraternity in their literature. It becomes literature of social commitment and compromise to aim to promote socio-cultural equality and Justice to suffering, discrimination and socio-political economical exploitation. Namdeo Dhasal founded an organisation named as Dalit Panther and expanded the Dalit Literature movement in India. Dalit writers like Daya Pawar, Laxman Gaikwad, Arjun Dangale, Narayan Surve started cultural discourse and earned to review their lost cultural identities with their autobiographical records as prominent voices of Dalit writers. A poet - like Namdeo Dhasal experimented political language of his living untouchable experiences in the poem “*Hunger*” (914). Again his “*Golpiha*” (1973) becomes part of Dalit Renaissance in grim plight of outcaste and exploitation of women of lower castes in the system prostitution. While asserting realities of society, Dalit Literature created cultural compromise with dominants voices. Due to aesthetics and cultural discourse it connects with universal human emotions and creative voices. Dr. C. B. Bharati writes: “The aim of Dalit Literature is to protest against the established system which is based on injustice and to expose the evil and hypocrisy of the higher castes. There is an urgent need to create a separate aesthetics to Dalit Literature, an aesthetics based on the real experiences of life.” (The Aesthetics).

Removing all shackles of tradition and exploitation, Dalit writers started cultural revolution for their ideology with using subversive idioms, obscenity and low cultural words. However, they are searching their ethics in mankind to celebrate Golden Age-Equality, Humanity, Culture, Dignity.....etc. Like democratic norms, Dalit writers had their own ideology and ethics before Indian citizens. Like American dream, their dream had gone through variations today and make optimistic note for future generations - *If winter comes, can spring be far behind..... (Waghmare XXII)*. Due to these potentialities, Dalit writers have searched cultural identity in the world like the Blacks. Ralph Ellison, James Baldwin and Toni Morrison. Both literatures are sailing in the same boat and facing journey from inhumanity to humanity, insecurity to security, untouchability to touchability and violation to struggle.

Today Dalit Literature is classed with upper community literature and challenged Brahmnical heredity for national and universal creditability. The Telgu Dalit poets hope for “a nation, which doesn't have the caste system and all forms of inequality.” (Trivedi 147). All scholars agreed, Dalit literature does not play only role of contribution to all literatures but really credits ethical standards forever. Even Dalit literature has given a special place to Dalit women writers as responsible citizens of Indian Democracy. After searching own identity and assuring realities, it has got a vision for The New Dalit to make a New Dalit society in The New Dalit century India. Even a few narrow scholars try to neglect Dalit Literature from valuable trends and aesthetic aspect of major forms of literature of dominants. At last, Dalit aesthetics are unable to farewell universal human emotion and their blue productivity for constructing a new literature and society.

Thus, Dalit Renaissance is concerned with cultural revolution. It shows struggle for Human Rights in a new dimensions imitating racial cultural atmosphere. They had proved their cultural identity before savarnas - 'We are rational citizens of Indian democracy and culture'. Like doctrine of Gautam Buddha, *Atma Deepa Bhava' (Be your own Light)*, Dalits have vanished darkness from their minds and bridged human relations through cultural studies for present -future generations with *Celebration of Humanity*.

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SIGNIFICANCE OF NAMING IN *SONG OF SOLOMON* BY TONI MORRISON

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Abstract:

In Toni Morrison's Song of Solomon naming is actually a device that she uses to propel the spiritual journey and the discovery of what names really mean. Morrison takes names from the Bible and attributes them a narrative function. The title of the novel refers to the Song of Song in the Bible, and in keeping with the title many names allude to the Bible. Song of Solomon amply exhibits Morrison's preoccupation with naming. In case of the names, meaning lies beneath the surface. The very important lesson which Morrison teaches in the novel by emphasizing the device of naming is that one can only progress in one's life when we come to terms and accept all of who we are or when one fully realize who we are.

Keywords: Naming, Spiritual Journey, Bible, Intertextuality.

Hungerford says, "Just as Morrison's craftsmanship simultaneously causes attention to repudiate the presence of an author in *Song of Solomon*, it echoes the Biblical "Song of Songs" in such a way as to deny the authority of the earlier texts" (169). Morrison's engagement with the Bible is unquestioning though the critics like Beth Benedrix may see her rejecting the western hegemony or orthodox Christianity or like Amy Benson or Jan Stryz may see her revisiting, revising, reevaluating and rewriting it. Morrison does retain her interest in the Bible but negotiates by investing it with her own signification. In an interview, she describes the religious quality of her upbringing:

I have a family of people who are highly religious. That was part of their language. Their resources were biblical; they expressed themselves in that fashion. But they combined it with another kind of relationship, to something, I think which was outside the Bible . . . I mean they were quite willing to remember visions, and signs and premonitions and all of that. But there was something larger and coherent, and the resemblance was always a part of what I was taught and certainly a part of what I believe (qtd. in Denard 179).

Morrison takes names from the Bible and attributes them a narrative function. In another interview she explains that she "used Biblical names to show the impact of the Bible on the black people, their awe and respect for it coupled with their ability to distort it for their own purposes" (qtd. in Denard 179). *Song of Solomon* is an apt illustration of it. The title of the novel refers to the Song of Song in the Bible, and in keeping with the title many names also allude to the Bible. For example Hegar, Ruth, Rebecca, Pilate, have obvious biblical associations. *Song of Solomon* amply exhibits Morrison's preoccupation with naming. In fact names in the novel deeply indicate the issues of narratives and the characters that denote their narrative function. In case of the names, meaning lies beneath the surface. Genevieve Fabre in her article "Genealogical Archaeology or the Quest for Legacy in Toni Morrison's *Song of Solomon*" avers: "There is a connection between naming and flight which reaches back into ancient literature, with flight often a reward for those who know the ancient or true Name" (110).

Naming is actually a device that Morrison uses to propel the spiritual journey and the discovery of what names really mean. It is through names that a person identifies with him/herself and with others around. Morrison calls attention to the importance of naming as a ritual in black people's lives. Blacks received dead patronyms from whites. It was actually a trick of illiteracy played on blacks by whites, which

allowed the literates to mess up their names. Besides a deep truth about human nature may be found in actions like the ability to choose our own names which verifies the power of individualistic creation that underpins our freedom. This general human truth is rendered immeasurably in African American Literature in which ancestors are nameless slaves. The deliberate refusal of the black community in *Song of Solomon* to accept arbitrarily imposed names constitutes an act of defiance toward an oppressive white power structure. This indicates a concomitant act of collective self-love. Throughout Morrison's novel, the "constant censorship of an intrusion on black life from the surrounding society is emphasized not by specific events so much as by a consistent pattern of misnaming" (Davis 323). As a result of this misnaming, "a whole group of people have been denied the right to create a recognizable public self - as individuals or as community" (327).

Song of Solomon shows how illiterate black people held the Bible in respect and chose names from it. The children in the Dead family in the novel are named by pointing to a section of the Bible and whatever name the finger landed on was the name of the Dead child. Pilate, Hagar, Reba Dead, First Corinthians and Magdalena are a few of unusual names that result from this technique. She has also chosen a character Circe from Greek Mythology and Guitar Bains from History. Apart from these names there are names that acquire symbolic significance. It also seems interesting that Macon Dead Sr. could not read but had a direct connection with the land he owned: "the man who could plow forty [acres] in no time flat and sang like an angel while he did it" (Morrison 235). Macon Sr.'s power is with the land, animals, and the living world, and it is the symbolic and not the literal written reality that brought about his destruction. When words are written, they also become "symbolic" and turn "towards abstraction" which "eroded face-to-face interaction and eroded people's direct, intimate relationship with the natural world" (Zerzan 7).

As far as the Biblical names are concerned, the allusions stand in three different relations. There are names which stand as parallels though within different time and space. Some of the characters have Biblical associations but are subversions. Still there are some which contest any intertextuality. Ruth, falling in the first category has light yellow skin tone, and is the daughter of a rich educated doctor, presented as a counterpart of Biblical Ruth, who was a Moabite but was married to an Israelite. Just as Biblical Ruth seeks acceptance from the Hebrews, after she is estranged by her native people, Ruth seeks acceptance from both her father, husband and her community in the novel but is estranged from her people for her cultured life style. There is yet another parallel between these Ruths. Their names are associated with loyalty. Just as the Biblical Ruth followed her mother-in-law, Ruth of the *Song of Solomon* remains loyal to her husband. Ruth in the Bible had remarried when persuaded by her mother-in-law and had Jesus eventually as her progeny. Ruth in the novel had come to a point when her marriage had almost ended with her husband but helped by Pilate, she conceived Milkman, who becomes a spiritual heir in the novel.

The character named Reba, who is Pilate's daughter, is named after the wife of the patriarch Isaac, the daughter-in-law of Abraham and Sarah, the mother of the Jacob and Esau. Her story is told in Genesis, the first book of Torah. She has been shown as a manipulator and for this she suffered a lot. In the novel Reba is Pilate's daughter and Hagar's mother, also known as Rebecca. Reba has strong sexual drive and is attracted to abusive men. Nevertheless, because Pilate is her mother, the few men who dare mistreat her are punished. Reba's uncanny ability to win contests such as the Sears half-millionth customer diamond ring giveaway demonstrates that wealth is transient and unimportant.

Hagar is yet another character to whom Morrison gives a Biblical name in order to align her with a well-known figure. Biblical Hagar is an Egyptian slave in the Bible, according to Torah, with whom Abraham fathered Ishmael. Abraham and Sarah, his wife had grown old waiting for an heir. In their old age Sarah took matters in her own hands, convincing her husband to sleep with her slave, Hagar, who bore him a son. For theologians, Hagar is a mélange of good and bad, who is a representative of the sins of the flesh while at the same time is a blessed character. In the novel, Hagar is Reba's daughter and Milkman's lover. She devotes herself to Milkman, even though he loses interest and frequently rejects her. So, Hagar bears

the same experiences as Biblical Hagar which emphasizes that women are seen as disposable and can be easily manipulated by men. Hagar, in fact, in the Bible suffered from physical slavery whereas in the novel she is an embodiment of mental slavery. Morrison here talks about two kinds of slavery- physical slavery and mental slavery. Physical slavery is unredeemable to an extent, which is the case of Hagar in the Bible, but mental slavery falling within subjective effort of the character is a redeemable situation. Thus Morrison relates the past with the present.

But all characters with Biblical names do not serve as contemporary parallels. Pilate, who is Milkman's aunt, and sister of Macon Dead Jr., is named after the Roman prefect Pontius Pilate, the judge who ordered the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. According to the New Testament accounts, Pilate seems to have favored negotiation, rather than confrontation as in the case of Jesus, Pilate offered the crowd a choice: Barabbas or Jesus. The crowd chose Barabbas and in a result Jesus went off to his 'death'. But in the novel, Pilate is a woman to whom Morrison has totally subverted, by depicting her as a positive, full, aggressively alive character who also recalls the name's near homophone, Pilot. Pilot, who guides flight, directs and takes charge. Milkman's father tells him "how Macon Sr. wrote one word in his life - Pilate's name; copied it out of the Bible. That's what she got folded up in her earring" (Morrison 53). One can see how names are important when Pilate takes the magical vestige of the past that is written by her father and seals it in a snuff box. She attaches it to a gold wire and hangs it from her ear. This besides showing reverence for the Bible also proves why both naming and self-love have been embraced by Pilot. Pilate's name is just as important as her identity; and it is part of her power. She is a mother earth, goddess figure in Milkman's journey, the guide to his identity, and the earth mother that black women like Pilate "natural healer" who makes use of magic throughout the story (150). Ruth tells Milkman that Pilate has maintained "the maternal world through myths" (Holloway 26). Pilate gave her "some greenish-gray grassy-looking stuff to put in his [Macon Jr.] food" (125). She charmed her husband to sleep with her so that she could get pregnant with Milkman. Even when Milkman is conceived, it is through Pilate's intervention that Milkman is saved from abortion and abuse. This shows that Pilate in the Bible is associated with the crucifixion of Jesus, whereas Pilot of Morrison manages birth and life and goes beyond the life/ death cycle. She can communicate with the dead ones.

Morrison's purpose is not just mere inversion. She plays on the word Pilate with the homophone Pilot to steer Milkman on a spiritual journey. The word is also associated with flight connotatively transcendence and spiritual upliftment. Had Morrison purpose been only inversion, she would not have attributed Jesus' message of undiminished love for humanity to Pilate in *Song of Solomon*. Hence Morrison foregrounds the sense of humanity enshrined in the Bible in her novel *Song of Solomon*. Pilate, although having none of the material comforts, gives peace to Milkman whenever he is around her and her home. She is the one who sparks his curiosity and guides him to a weighing up that opens his eyes about his race, his family, and his own autonomy. Morrison further extends the meaning of the word 'Pilot' by empowering 'Pilate with the potential to go back into the past to communicate with the ancestors, fly high while being rooted on the earth signification, and by incarnating the value of love for the future of the humankind.

Thus attributing a four dimensional character to her character Pilate, Morrison brings out the word from the hegemonic rigid boundaries. Meaning as naming is thus always at one and the same time 'inside' and 'outside' the text.

The meaning of the sign is thrown open - the sign becomes 'polysemic' rather than 'univocal' - and though it is true to say that the dominant power group at any given time will dominate the intertextual production of meaning, this is not to suggest that the opposition has been reduced to total silence. The power struggle intersects in the sign. (Moi 158)

Language as a reflection of power relationships proves how such signification makes even the little narratives written in opposition to grand narratives, subversive. Besides, Morrison instills deep spiritual

qualities in Pilate by conflating it with Pilot to place her sharp contrast to the Biblical Pilate. Pilate in the novel is able to have her spiritual heir; Milkman underlining how merely getting a Biblical name does not get one spiritual depths. Discovering the past lineage, knowing the names of the ancestors imparts a spiritual potential.

The protagonist of the novel, Milkman is also known as Macon Dead III. As his nickname suggests, Milkman literally feeds on what others produce. Born into a sheltered, privileged home, Milkman grows up to be an egotistical young man. He lacks compassion, wallows in self-pity, and alienates himself from the African-American community. But his eventual discovery of his family history gives his life of purpose. Although he remains flawed, this newfound purpose makes him compassionate and caring. The novel is a journey for his identity and selfhood as a Macon Dead III to the affirmative, his nick name Milkman.

In the novel, it is Pilate who nourishes Milkman's birth in spite of Macon's efforts to have the pregnancy aborted. Milkman, born on the moment of suicidal flight, discovers that he belongs to a family of flying Americans who sought freedom from slavery or by escaping North or 'flying' back to Africa. When he finally hears his name in the *Song of Solomon*, he frees himself from the emotional death of Macon dead, and from the obsessive terrorism of Guitar, as well as the clinging guilt of Hagar's love. Milkman and Pilate bury his grandfather's bones. Finally Milkman finds the strength to lift himself.

Milkman's conversion from immature person to matured person is also realized through his physical imperfection symbolizing his moral imperfection, which is suggested by his shortened left leg resulting in a barely noticeable limp. After the communal hunt, in which he is initiated by the men of Shalimar into comradeship and respect for life and nature, he ceases to limp. The cold, self-centered Milkman matures into a sympathetic, caring man through the discovery of his own past, his ancestors' suffering, and their struggles against poverty, racism, greed, and pride. The name, which Macon III got for having been suckled by his emotionally starved mother past his weaning stage, and which he comes to abhor having discovered the truth behind his naming by the twist of irony acquired positive and deeply spiritual connotations. With Circe, Morrison further strengthens her spiritual discourse in the novel. Modeled on Circe of Greek mythology, Morrison's Circe carries a resemblance to the goddess of the same name found in Homer's *Odyssey*. *Odyssey's* Circe provides Odysseus with crucial information on how to end his voyage. The naming is very important because Circe in Greek mythology was a minor goddess of magic that lived in a great mansion that was protected by wolves and lions. The character has a similar personality and place. Milkman even mistakes her for the witch from his dreams: "Witches in black dresses and red underskirts; witches with pick eyes and green lips, tiny witches, long rangy witches, frowning witches, smiling witches...so when he saw the woman at the top of the stairs there was no way for him to resist climbing up toward her outstretched hands" (Morrison 239). He thought Circe, like the oracle, to be dead and thought, "she had to be dead. Not because of the wrinkles . . . but because out of the toothless mouth came the strong, mellifluent voice of a twenty-year-old girl" (240). Circe had a supernatural aura just like her namesake, who Odysseus meets off the coast of Greece. She is an integral part of Milkman's journey because she leads him in the direction of his family history, so that he may end his search for his family heritage.

Thus we see Morrison performing the ritual of naming her characters with a clear spiritual agenda. Morrison has given them names alluding to the Bible, but she is not making it an allegory and therefore many of these names do not carry any parallel or deviation in them. The intertextualities between the *Song of Solomon* and the Bible can be seen as clearly contested with the reference such names as the First Corinthians and Magdalena called Lena. The two sisters of Milkman await an opportune time to realize the spiritual roots in them. As an Afro-American, Morrison exercises her intellectual powers positioned between pulls of two different systems - The African folk beliefs and institutionalized Christianity. Nicole Wilkinson is quoted as arguing that "the Bible is always for Morrison fully subsumed under the white man

discourse that Morrison rejects, and therefore the “Bible in her novel remained unread” and sometimes even completely “irrelevant” even when evoked” (Hungerford 166). The critique is only partially true because of the complex treatment that Morrison gives to the names she takes from the Bible. The very important lesson which Morrison teaches in the novel *Song of Solomon* by emphasizing the device of naming is that we can only progress in our life when we come to terms and accept all of who we are or when we fully realize who we are. Pilate signifies flying with rootedness and hence reading *Song of Solomon* calls for intertextuality but much is extratextual as is Pilate's supernaturalism and the demand of the author for a spiritual response from the reader.

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MUTLIPLE NARRATIVES, MUCH POSITIONALITY: AN ANALYSIS OF MARGARET ATWOOD'S MYTHOPOEIA IN *THE PENELOPIAD*

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Abstract:

*This paper explores the dynamic trajectory of Greco-Roman mythopoesis through the narrative and ideological content of Margaret Atwood's novella *The Penelopiad*. It looks at Atwood's reformulation of cultural narratives and myths by domesticating and familiarizing them. Her revisionist and corrective approach towards the Homeric myths entails a subsequent change in genre which works towards liberating the erstwhile 'formal' conventions and characters.*

Keywords: *Mythopoeia, genre, cultural narratives, identity formation.*

Strong myths never die. Sometimes they die down, but they don't die out...they double back in the dark, they re-embody themselves, they change costumes, they change key. They speak in new languages, they take on other meanings. - Atwood

Introduction

Margaret Atwood's *The Penelopiad: The Myth Of Penelope and Odysseus* appeared in 2005 in the series *The Myths* edited by Karen Armstrong, published by Canongate publishing house, 'with the intention of having one hundred myths retold by the year 2038' (Staels100). The 'oral' Epics of the Homeric Age (which were only secondarily 'written') thus underwent a generic and semantic transformation in terms of a postmodernist conception of narrative and contemporary ideology. This shift in the epistemological universe does not necessarily imply a condemnation or distortion of the 'primitive' rather, by disclosing the 'primitive' in terms of the 'modern' Atwood exposes the fissures and inconsistencies of both. In Atwood's mythopoeia, 'the object of search is not the primitive...Primitivity in its most relevant sense is a character to be recognized not by its *when* but by its *what*' (Wheelwright, 575) what thus emerges is a system conjoined by both the ages and relevant because 'it stirs even in our minds today some dim response of recognition' (Wheelwright, 575) even if this recognition is to be radically transformed and discovered anew.

Atwood takes cognizance of the fact that Homer's *The Odyssey* is not the only version of the story of Odysseus and Penelope and that there were several myths and epic-cycles in circulation which were told in different ways at different places. Contesting the notion that there can be an 'authentic' version of reality, Margaret Atwood in *The Penelopiad* presents several versions of narratives but restrains from upholding one over the other.

The hanging of the twelve maids of Penelope, and, Odysseus's meeting with the ghost of Agamemnon in Hades where he [Agamemnon] congratulates Odysseus on his choice of a wife who is patient and wise enough to wait and long for the 'husband of her youth'¹ (Homer, 151) for more than nineteen years (words that have turned Penelope into a literary archetype of a perfect [submissive] womanhood) unlike his own wife Clytemnestra who killed him 'as a man fells an ox at its manger' (Homer, 150) immediately upon his return to Argos after years of the Trojan War, acted as a trigger for Atwood's *The Penelopiad*. Here, she undertakes a corrective and feminist revision of Homer's *The Odyssey* and plays around the enduring myth of Penelope so that the Epic adventure now becomes a much more sensational

adventure within the marital home. *The Penelopiad* is a postmodernist novella that works by breaking the barriers between fiction and reality and exposing the inconsistencies of any kind of a linear, temporal segregation between ages. Though Penelope, in consonance with the oral culture, 'begins' with the 'story of her birth' and from the vantage, ostensibly omniscient, point of death she exposes the impossibility of a holistic understanding even in the underworld.

Quite literally, *The Penelopiad* lies at the cross-roads of literary genres². By 'novelization of the epic form'³, Atwood bridges the hierarchical gap between 'high' and 'low' literary genres and liberates it from constraints, tautness and formal conventions of the former thus bringing it closer to human experience and contemporizing and familiarizing it. She uses the postmodernist techniques of parody and burlesque travesty to insinuate a new orientation whereby, not only is the 'high' brought 'low' but, the 'low' is now designated as the contemporary and collectively validated 'high'; novel thus becomes the epic of the modern age. When the universe of myth with its hyperbolic notions of heroism and patriarchal leanings is brought closer to the modern world of indeterminacy and viewed from a feminist lens (and into 'the zone of crude contact' (Bakhtin, 23)), it not only liberates the genre but also the protagonist. It allows Penelope to speak more freely as "who cares about public opinion now" (Atwood, 3)⁴. Thus, the change in genre is also reflective of the change in ideologies and position.

In consonance with Bakhtin's perception of the novel form as constitutive of multi-layered narratives and a 'multi-language consciousness' (Bakhtin, 11), there are two intertwining narratives in the novella - the major narrative of Penelope speaking from the underworld, relating her life, marriage and Odysseus' journey etc. and the minor, yet equally important, narrative of the twelve maids who were unjustly hanged to death by Odysseus. The narrative of the twelve maids continues to incessantly haunt and impinge upon Penelope's narrative, it functions as a lyrical interlude which employs a large range of poetic genres from an idyll to a nursery rhyme and from an anthropology lecture to a 21st century courtroom drama. They reformulate cultural narratives to provide narrative justice while 'positioning myths within quotidian settings and investing them with the unexceptional issues of daily existence' (Kapusanski, 2) and foregrounding 'personal myths'⁵ of the erstwhile tenuous kind.

Penelope herself is very conscious with demarcating the official version of her narrative from the unofficial one i.e. to distinguish between "the slanderous gossips going the rounds for the past two or three thousand years" (112) and 'plausible' events (since there cannot be actual events as Penelope herself contests her narrative by referring to it as a 'fabrication', 'a spinning of [yet another] thread'). If one were to believe the rumours doing the rounds about Homer's *Odyssey*, Penelope had an affair with one of the suitors - Antilochus and had slept with all 100 of them and given birth to the great god Pan. Penelope's rumours thus place her on a pedestal and accords her the position of a great woman (as it would be a big deal to give birth to a god). Odysseus's rumours on the other hand massively downplay his epic heroic stature so that the 'plausible' story of Odysseus visiting the 'Land of the Dead' to consult the spirit of Tiresias becomes 'merely the night spent in a gloomy cave full of bats' (73). Circe is no longer the beautiful goddess who offers immortality to Odysseus rather a high class prostitute worker and Odysseus was simply 'sponging off the Madam' (67), Odysseus's encounter with the one-eyed giant Cyclops deflates to his brawl with a 'one-eyed tavern keeper[...] over non-payment of the bill' (67) and the island of Sirens, crossing past which gained immense *kleos* for Odysseus, now becomes a 'high-class Sicilian knocking shop- the courtesans there were known for their musical talents and their fancy feathered outfits'(73).

Penelope is aware of the duplicity of minstrels who inflate Odysseus's heroism and epic stature in her presence to gain expensive gifts and yet is not much averse to keeping up appearances. Although she saw through Odysseus's disguise as a beggar she, very strategically, decides to keep mum about it as she knew that "he was looking forward to the big revelation scene" (136) and only when "[she had] shed a satisfactory number of tears"(137), so that it would reassure him of her loyalty, that she 'allowed' Odysseus to reveal himself. Such a hidden narrative takes Homer's *The Odyssey* on a completely new tangent as the

agency no longer lies with Odysseus or even the bard alone. Penelope's narrative thus works through a continuous process of demythologization of what was credited to be true and a subsequent *mythologization* of the new and erstwhile tenuous accounts. Thus, the maids enter the mythic universe by exalting themselves as the “companions of Artemis, virginal but deadly moon goddess” (129) with Penelope as the “incarnation of Artemis herself” (131). While this empowers them vis-a-vis their almost inexistent presence in *The Odyssey*, it also functions as a parody of the basic human urge to mythologize events so that everything now reduces itself to “pure symbol and no more real than money” (133). Similarly, the myth of the chaste, patient and loyal Penelope is deconstructed by the maids when they say “Word has it that Penelope the Prissy/ Was when it came to sex- no shrinking sissy!” (116)

Thus, Atwood creates a parody-like version of the official Homeric stories. Her use of parody is in consonance with Hutcheon's definition of postmodern (metafictional) parody as 'repetition with a critical difference' (Hutcheon qtd in Staels, 101). Hutcheon accords a serious function to parody as 'a technique that focuses on inherent limitations of past forms of writing. It underlines the inbuilt historical character of modes of writing in terms of form, style and subject matter' (Staels, 101). In *The Penelopiad*, rather than allowing an external agency to control her narrative and silences, Penelope takes over the job herself and narrates from an ostensibly vantage, all comprehensible point of after-death;

“Now that I am dead, I know everything” (*The Penelopiad*, 1)

However, her narrative exposes the impossibility of such a totality. She, for example, still did not know the ulterior motives of the suitors who persisted in pursuing her despite her being 'quite old'. Similarly, she would never know why Eurycleia wanted to get the maids hanged without asking her permission. Such narratives, contingent upon the genre of their genesis, expose the fissures underlying the layers of apparent lucidity.

Where Penelope confesses that she “never would have hurt them [the maids], not of my own accord” (91) and that they were like sisters working on a shroud, the maids are adamant till the very end to prove the opposite. Their version is that Penelope collaborated with Eurycleia to get them hanged [“Blame it on the maids”] in order to avert the punishment for her promiscuity in her husband's absence. The parody behind how Penelope inspired the 'statue of modesty' too works towards the process of demythologizing. As per her own submission, when her father requested her to stay rather than go with Odysseus to his kingdom, she pulled down the veil because she could not control her laughter at what she believed to be her father's schmaltzy emotions but, her act was very conveniently interpreted as her “being too modest to proclaim in words [her] desire for [her] husband” (41). Thus, *The Penelopiad* works by familiarization, deglamorization and domestication of the erstwhile inaccessible narratives.

'As a true postmodernist narrator, Penelope is aware of the importance of employment in any account and of how positionality would produce a differently embroidered account so that it is “hard to know what to believe” (6)' (Bottez, 50). Odysseus's position as a male hero allows him to construct 'plausible' stories and - 'many people believed that his version of events were the true one [...] even I believed him from time to time. I knew he was tricky and a liar, I just didn't think he would play his tricks and try out his lies on me' (2). The maids' peripheral position in *The Odyssey* bracketed them out of the privilege of story-telling (one of the 'inconsistencies' in *The Odyssey* that Atwood refers to) and it is only when they speak in *The Penelopiad* that we see an uncanny return of the suppressed. Though Penelope refers to Odysseus's stories as the 'nobler versions', in *The Penelopiad*, she, rather than Odysseus, comes out as an 'excellent raconteur'. The one who succeeds in telling likely stories was very likely to be believed. Thus, rather than the 'truth-value', it is the logicity of the narrative and the power that the narrator yields that determines its likeliness to be accepted. Penelope herself says, “The two of us were - by our own admission- proficient and shameless liars of long standing. It's a wonder either of us believed a word the other said. But we did. Or so we told each other” (138).

By adjudicating Helen as an appropriate recipient of prospective punishment (albeit, it is never

given to her), Penelope, through her narrative seeks to justify her position vis-a-vis the larger mythical force manipulated by Helen. She starts to “spin [her] web”(3) when she realised that people were turning her into several stories both 'clean and dirty' and not the ones she would like to hear about herself; “[...]how they were turning me into a story, or into several stories, though not the kind I'd prefer to hear about myself...Now that all the others have run out of air, it's my turn to do a little story-making. I owe it to myself.” (3)

Despite being witty and clever, Penelope always remained inferior to Helen and thus, Atwood introduces a new dimension of jealousy between the two cousins. The psychological onslaught that Penelope had to face (her husband had gone to war for several years and all for Helen's sake) make her want to get Helen whipped for her transgression however, the irony is, “but she didn't. Not that I mind. Not that I minded” (18). Helen's divine beauty seem to have given her a transcendent position where unlike women like Penelope, her 'demand' would never decrease as she gets the benefits of her divine connections (Penelope also mentions the number of calls that Helen gets to visit the world of the living). 'Penelope's focus on Helen's use of cruel words as 'her sting' and her broad use of judicial phrases such as 'aided and abetted' and terms such as 'evidence', 'witnessed' and 'proof' confirm how Penelope is consciously acting as a moral agent and attempting to reckon Helen's past and present, public and personal transgressions'(Kapusanski, 4). Penelope was usually left speechless by Helen's not-so-modest ways and she makes it a point to criticise her squarely when she says “Helen Ruins My Life”(57) and admonishes her coquetry in Hades as “My wittiness, or your bare-naked tits-and-ass bath treat for the dead”(122). Where Homer never criticised Helen directly in *The Odyssey* despite the age's strong patriarchal leanings, Penelope on the other hand demythologises the idealised image of Helen.

The maids' narrative exposes the vulnerability of a particular section of the society to acts of violence which went unpunished and unrecorded. They describe themselves as “we were animals young, to be disposed of at will”(54) whereas Telemachus - who was of the same age as them- had them at his disposal for whatever purposes he required. Atwood uses narrative as a correctional method to bring the maids to justice. Their frequent interruptions within Penelope's narrative - where they cynically refuse to uphold any sympathy or justification that Penelope would give for their murder - culminate as

“It was an act of grudging, it was an act of spite, it was an honour killing [...] We're here to serve you right. We'll never leave you, we'll stick to you like your shadow, soft and relentless as glue. Pretty maids, all in a row” (157)

And thus their collective decision to haunt Odysseus and Penelope, forever. Even the 21st century court of law proves inadequate to serve suitable justice to these maids who 'still' move with their 'twitching feet that don't touch the ground' (153) thereby exposing the biased nature of judicial processes.

Atwood's mythopoeia works by overlapping the cultural narratives of myths with the individuated genre of fictional autobiography. The dead narrator of the now antiquated genre in which she first appeared recounting her still evolving experiences into newer genres after thousands of years is a testimony to the belief that myths can never be stabilized or reduced to a dogma as their definition keeps on changing and they keep on adapting to newer narratives. Thus the fundamental interdependence of myths and narratives also signifies that myths cannot be captured in the linear language of rationality rather, they themselves connote a way of envisaging. In order to understand the Homeric myths in the present context one must, 'with a patient effort of emphatic imagination [be] willing to think [of] ourselves into the primitive milieu, we must renounce, at least temporarily, our all too smug assurance of knowing where fact leaves off and fiction begins'(Wheelwright, 579).

The Penelopiad thus works by deconstructing the near normative assurance and confidence of the author figure in 'creating' characters which s/he believes to be one-dimensional. It presents several versions of the same 'reality' and works towards de-stabilising the 'once' stabilised myths by accommodating them into a different narrative - that of the novel form. Rather than foregrounding

feminine silence and submissiveness, in a rather radical shift, here, the reader never hears a male voice. In *The Penelopiad*, as a refreshing break, the apparent male protagonist is always spoken for and never even spoken to. It is in this sense that the novella becomes a 'contradictory counterpart' to Homer's *The Odyssey*. However, this subversion does not necessarily grant it totality and coherence, the narrator remains as unsure of her narrative as she was and the novella succeeds in praxis what the maids merely claim i.e. it leaves us "[And we leave you] none the wiser" (78).

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Footnotes:

1. Homer. *The Odyssey* translated by E.V. Rieu. Penguin Books Ltd., 2003. All quotes refer to this edition.
2. Margaret Atwood herself has written a play by the same name and ideological, narrative content.
3. Bakhtin in *The Dialogic Imagination* talks about the 'novelization of other genres' through the use of parody and travesty. By this he means that the erstwhile 'formal' genres when novelized, become more free, flexible, linguistically liberated, indeterminate, semantically open-ended and 'come into a living contact with unfinished still evolving contemporary reality'.
4. Atwood, Margaret. *The Penelopiad*. Penguin Books India Pvt. Ltd., 2005. All quotes refer to this edition.
5. Term borrowed from Carl Gustav Jung. 'Personal Myths' essentially refers to an acknowledgement of the roots of ideas in individual experience. For ex. the maids in *The Penelopiad* mythicise themselves by comparing their condition with the twelve maidens of Artemis and see Penelope as an incarnation of Artemis herself.

**BONDS AND BURDENS OF MOTHERHOOD IN PERUMAL MURUGAN'S
ONE PART WOMAN AND AYOBAMI ADEBAYO'S STAY WITH ME:
A COMPARATIVE STUDY**

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Motherhood is traversed in literature with diverse magnitudes. It is one of the critical feminist issues echoed in literature. The picture of mother is painted with challenging womanhood and motherhood by outspoken authors. Anne Frank remarks:

In the book *Soldiers on the Home front*, I was greatly struck by the fact that in childbirth alone, women commonly suffer more pain, illness and misery than any war hero ever does. And what's her reward for enduring all that pain? She gets pushed aside when she's disfigured by birth, her children soon leave, her beauty is gone. Women, who struggle and suffer pain to ensure the continuation of the human race, make much tougher and more courageous soldiers than all those big-mouthed freedom-fighting heroes put together (235).

The issues in the parenthood are always attributed to the woman than man. Men are not blamed or not considered as the cause of infertility in many societies. This paved way for the women to struggle for their social rights and existence. Apparent examples are Maya in Anita Desai's *Cry the Peacock*, Monisha in Anita Desai's *Voices in the city*, Rupa in Manju Kapur's *Home*, Karuna in Shashi Deshpande's *The Dark holds no terror* and so on.

The cogent representations and Interpretations of Motherhood remain same in two contrasting cultures of Tamil and Nigerian. In both the cultures, motherhood is acknowledged with deep respect and valued the fruit of the labour of motherhood. At the same time, sterile woman becomes the subject of caricature in the family and society. This research paper is an attempt to explore the multi-faceted, complex and debating theme of childlessness and Image of mother in Perumal Murugan's "One Part Woman" and Ayobami Adebayo's "Stay with Me"

The pivotal pattern of these two novels is similar: the married female protagonists Ponna and Yejide lost their self-identity due to the vexation of Infertility. They endure emptiness in the family as well as in the society. These novels reveal their inner personality to the outer world with their hushed agitations.

To begin with, Perumal Murugan's controversial novel *Madhorubhagan* translated by Aniruddhan Vasudevan as "One Part Woman" deals with childless couple, Kali and Ponna who lived in Aanangur, near Tiruchengode in Tamil Nadu in the early part of the 20th century. As the title of the novel signifies the Tamil deity Madhorubhagan who is embodied with the female qualities on one half of the body and male on the other. This tale is based on the myth that worshipping this God would bless the childless couple with descendants. The novelist lists out numerous idols on the hills of the temple town of Tiruchengode, each one capable of providing a distinct boon. One among them is the Lord Ardhanareeswarar, an Idol of Shiva who has offered the left part of his body to his soul mate Goddess Parvathi. It is believed that the Lord Shiva is sacralised in this mythical form. Perumal Murugan portrays several men who were called as ardhanari, Half-women or Sami Pillai. (God given child)

Perumal Murugan highlighted the tradition of the huge annual chariot festival held in the evening in the temple of Ardhanareeswara where the barren woman would come alone to seek the offspring. The woman is unencumbered to unite with a male stranger in the chariot festival. She should consider the man as an incarnation of God. If the woman is blessed with the baby, it will be regarded as the gift from God. The convention of obtaining impregnation by unknown virile in the name of deity seems to vanish many

decades ago. But the childless couple Kali and Ponna trapped in the net of this brutal cultural practice as a last victim. This Niyoga (mentioned in Mahabharatha) ritual, ancient Hindu tradition crushes the social status of the barren female protagonist Ponna. On every occasion, she is reminded of her infertility which provokes a profound sense of grievance. This is evident in the following words of Murugan, "She must have been thinking about how the tree had grown so lush and abundant in twelve years while not even a worm had crawled in her womb. Every wretched thing reminded her of that lack"(8) Thus, Childlessness is viciously stigmatized and Ponna becomes the victim of this brutal ritual practice.

Ayobami Adebayo's "Stay with me" displays the plight of the childless couple Akin and Yejide. The female protagonist Yejide is rather subdued and leads frustrated life. Being sensitive, she is compelled to immerse in the flood of depression and dejection by lukewarm relatives around her. As motherhood is the ultimate aim of Yejide, she even breastfeeds a goat. She climbed the "Mountain of Jaw Dropping Miracles" in southwest Nigeria to meet the prophet Josiah who recommended her to assume white goat as a newborn baby. This innocent educated female protagonist Yejide believed the goat as newborn and performed the ritual for the sake of getting baby.

Similarly, In Murugan's *One Part woman*, Kali and Ponna, an affectionate, loving couple remain childless for more than 12 years of marriage. They offer prayers to various Gods, vows and penances but in vain. The author pinpoints that the motherhood is the ultimate success of a married woman in the Indian society. The greatest accomplishment for a man is to produce male heir to inherit the property.

Murugan skillfully points out the blind faith of the villagers in this novel. Kali's mother reveals that their family is cursed by the violent Goddess Parvathi, for a crime committed against the young girl in the past and the male members are condemned to remain infertile; if they are favoured with the baby, it will be temporary. So, the protagonists offer votive offerings in the altar of the deity Pavatha and ascended the varadikkal, barren woman's rock on the hilltop of Thiruchengode. One can see the hope of ponna when she prays to the God pavatha as "God please fill my womb at least this month"(37) But these strenuous efforts were all for naught. In this context, One can remember the words of Radha Chakravarthy(2008): ".....valorization of motherhood has its own built- in- paradoxes: maternity is associated with a capacity for voluntary self- sacrifice which entitles the mother to her quasi- divine status"(84)

Meanwhile, the female protagonist Ponna endures predominantly. She leads an embittered life in an infinite tide of taunts and tribulations from everyone around her including strangers cruising a ride with her family to the temple. Murugan underlines the failures of Ponna to bear an offspring in many scenes. Ponna's mother, brother and kali's mother started taunting her rigorously. They conspire to send Ponna alone to the chariot festival to get the blessing of a baby from an anonymous Sami.

The adverse effect of society on childless female protoganists Ponna and Yejide is strong. Both ponna and yejide are alienated from their relatives. Ponna's mother- in - law made her to drink bitter Herbal Juice to cleanse her stomach and compelled her to attend fourteenth day festival whereas Yejide tried strange teas to get a baby. Her mother in law forces yejide to take a hike from her Son. Even the relatives in the family tried to deceive yejide and showed a young woman Funmi as Akin's second wife. Moreover, they drag Akin towards polygamy. At the outset, Yejide acts as if she is in a family way to safeguard her marital bonding.

One can find constant familial pressures to the male protagonists, Kali and Akin to find other women to pursue the Progeny. This is evident in Perumal Murugan's *One Part Woman*. "For Seven Years now, there had been a talk of a second marriage- both openly and secretly"(10). Correspondingly, In *Stay with me*, Akin's mother insisted to take a second wife Funmi. She bursts out to Yejide as "We are not asking you to stand up from your place in his life; we are just saying you should shift so that someone else can sit down "(29)

Both the Male protagonists Akin and Kali were supporting their partners during the personal and family crisis. They were bonded with the threads of love and marriage. They believed that their bonding

seems to be eternal bliss and curse at times. Uneducated, traditional Indian protagonists in Perumal Murugan's *One Part Woman* and Educated Nigerian Protagonists in *Stay with Me* are converged and diverged physically, socially, culturally and intellectually on many contexts.

These novels are an excruciating narrative of how society's alleviating obsession tatters affectionate couples apart and ruin their bond. Both the novels investigate the status and role of barren women in the two different societies. The authors have delineated how the childless female protagonists are shattered in terms of tradition and culture. For Ponna and Yejide motherhood is the burden than of Joy. Maternity leads them to live a shabby life. Both the authors portrayed the female characters as meek and morbid.

The powerful emotions of these emotionless barren women explores interface between the masculinity and femininity. Adrienne Rich (1976) opines : "It reinforces my sense that women of whatever class, nation or race share a common sensibility- a sensibility that is complex, subversive and heterodox"(xviii). A healthy society should value the equality of Man and woman in all walks of life. It is indeed disheartening that women are esteemed not for who they are but for their ability to attain motherhood and responsibility to save the family.

To sum up, these two different authors exceptionally highlighted in their novella that a childless life for a married couple is indeed a worthless living. They emphasized to the ancient traditional Tamil and Nigerian societies that the childless married couple should not be condemned, heckled or suspended from the society. It is not their fault. They should be given due respect as any other human beings.

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SHERMAN ALEXIE'S *INDIAN KILLER*: A SAGA, UNRAVELLING THE IRONY OF POP CULTURE MYTHS

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Abstract:

The main focus of this paper is to unravel the irony of the biased history and the pop culture myths in the lives of the Native Spokane community in Sherman Alexie's novel Indian Killer. The prime source of knowledge about American Indians to the outside world is the biased history and the pop culture myths of the hegemonic white society. But unfortunately, the images and ideas propagated by these medias are not honest records of the Natives. These false, one-sided records glorify the white Americans and degrade the Natives to stereotypes of savage warriors and drunkards, devoid of individuality. The great myth of discovery of America justifies the conquest stories by proudly declaring that, the Natives of America are, eventually, bestowed with religion, civilization and economic comfort. But, ultimately the so called privileges have resulted in apocalypse for the Natives. Moreover, the unfulfilled treaty obligations by the federal government form the major cause for the poor economic conditions of the Natives. Sherman Alexie, in his novel Indian Killer, brings to the fore the ironic condition of the Natives which is exactly the opposite of what is propagated by the pop culture myth.

Key words: *Natives, pop culture myth, irony, stereotypes, privileges, savage, drunkard, civilization.*

The popularity of pop culture myths on Natives, in the United States, right from the time of its evolution is based on the conventional plots that strongly establish the Euro-American superiority and the stereotyped images of savage warrior, Godless-heathen, lazy welfare citizens, the wise medicine man Shaman, and the stinky drunk Indian. These Native stereotypes are “an arrested, fixated form of representation” (Bhabha 45) of the other that cannot be dismissed as just created for entertainment because hundreds of millions of people around the world have acquired their knowledge about North American Indians through these pop culture myths and especially through western films. “The belief that there is an essence of general truth about American Indians in these portrayals is pervasive and persistent in modern North America . . . even modern American Indians draw heavily from these films in constructing their own views of their cultural heritage” (Price 154).

Native authors are fully aware of and respond to these devastations brought about by the pop culture myths on their communities. Native American scholars from many academic disciplines have constantly raised their voice against the European and Euro-American misrepresentation of Native Americans. The most renowned Native academician and political activist Vine Deloria, Jr., denotes the stereotypical images as “The Indian of the American Imagination” (qtd. by James Cox 52). In general, Native American literature is engaged in counter narratives to the misrepresented history and identity as defined by written and visual pop culture narratives of the hegemonic Euro-American society that tell a story of the European conquest of North America.

The great myth behind the discovery and conquest stories of Europeans is “to save the souls of the natives” (qtd. by Peter d' Errico 18). The papal bull of Pope Alexander VI of 1493, proclaims “catholic faith

and the Christian religion be exalted and everywhere increased and spread, that the health of souls be cared for and that barbarous nations be overthrown and brought to the faith itself . . .” (qtd. by Peter d' Errico 18). So the national myth insists on bestowing the barbarous Natives with civilization and Christianity, but the consequence has proved apocalyptic to the indigenous population. This forms the core of all literary productions of the Native communities throughout America. Sherman Alexie Jr., the Spokane Native American author, with the authenticity of a cultural insider, indulges in unraveling the irony between reality and pop culture myths in his works.

Of all the works of Sherman Alexie Jr., who is a poet, short story write, novelist, screenwriter and a stand-up comedian, *Indian Killer* is considered the most revolutionary because of its vehement resistance to the misrepresented hegemonic narratives. In this novel Alexie addresses the issues of both revisioning of history and the subversion of dominant culture's misrepresented Native American identity. The novel *Indian Killer* often makes reviewers and interviewers uncomfortable. Alexie defends his novel in his interview with Kelley Blewster by explaining that he wrote the novel intending to make white people feel uncomfortable. The main motive behind such a controversial novel is to portray how “Indians are culturally, psychologically, physically, and emotionally killed. Still” (Alexie 73).

Alexie in *Indian Killer* blasts at the nation building myth through the character of Father Duncan, a Spokane Indian Catholic priest, who baptizes John Smith, the protagonist of *Indian Killer*. When the hero John Smith, who is an adopted Native American child, is six years old, one day visits the church with Father Duncan. There, he is bewildered by the stained glass reproduction of Jesuits being martyred by Indians - Jesuits being pierced with dozens of arrows, their cassock torn, escaping from evil-looking Indians, being drowned in a river and being scalped. Little John taken up by the pictures asks the Jesuits Priest “Why did the Indians kill them?” (*Indian Killer* 14). The Spokane Jesuit Father replies “They wanted to kick the white people out of America. Since the priests were the leaders, they were the first to be killed” (*Indian Killer* 14). John curiously asks why all the whites were not killed by the Natives, for which Father Duncan replies that “They didn't have the heart for it” (*Indian Killer* 14). John asks “But didn't white people kill most of the Indians? Duncan replies “Yes, they did” (*Indian Killer* 14). When John asks Duncan whether those priests died like Jesus for the redemption of Indians, Father Duncan could not reply. “Duncan was afraid to answer the question. As a Jesuit, he knew those priests were martyred just like Jesus. As a Spokane Indian, he knew those Jesuits deserved to die for their crimes against Indians” (*Indian Killer* 15). The ultimate mission of the Jesuits is to take the culture and tradition away from the Natives and to bury it forever and replace it with white men's culture, tradition and religion which have ultimately resulted in historical trauma of the Native communities. This particular revisioning of history brightly underscores the apocalypse brought upon by the Natives in the name of civilization and Christianity.

Another myth strongly held by non-Indians is that Indians receive special privileges that other American citizens are not privileged of. Walter C. Flaming in his article “Myth and Stereotypes about Native Americans” quotes the editorial of the electronic edition of the Findlay (Ohio) Courier that states:

It's long been apparent that the laws granting Native American tribes sovereign nation status were a huge mistake. Rather than improving the lives of native people, the laws have created a state of dependency in which the tribes are neither truly sovereign nor fully a part of the larger nation. They are essentially wards of the federal government. They receive some special privileges designed to advance their welfare or maintain their native culture, but for the most part, the laws have made dependent victims of people who should have been integrated into the larger culture. (214)

Alexie brings to limelight the irony of the above mentioned myth through the notorious talk show host Truck Schultz, in *Indian Killer*. He is considered as the worst kind of racist whose provocative narratives invariably dehumanize and sabotage the dignity of the Natives. He reiterates the false one-sided history of the dominant white society that fuels enmity and violence among Natives and non-Natives. Truck Schultz

deliberately misleads his audience in the case of David Roger, a student of the Washington State University who disappears after his visit to Tulalip Tribal Casino.

Even before arriving at any authentic clue on David Rogers missing, Schultz attributes it to the Spokane Indian tribe. Mr. Schultz who has a biased notion of history manipulates it saying that, “We have offered our hands in friendship to the Indians, but they insist on the separation from normal society. They are an angry, bitter people, and treat the rest of us with disdain and arrogance. May be this whole Indian gambling thing is about revenge on the white man” (*Indian Killer* 118). He goes to the extreme of exaggerating it as “The Indian tribes of Washington State have declared a cultural war on us and the weapon they've chosen is the casino” (*Indian Killer* 119). He philosophizes against the establishment of gambling casinos in reservations.

The fact is that the Indian reservations are separate nations that are dependent on federal government based on treaties. The U.S. has made land treaties with the American Indian tribes that promise various means of support like food supplies, weapons, agricultural tools and also protection from other tribes for exchange of huge acres of tribal lands. Based on treaties, casinos are set on reservations in order to improve the financial flow of the poverty stricken reservations. In his interview to Tomson Highway, a first nation Canadian playwright, Alexie mentions:

. . . on my reservation unemployment was about 90 percent before the bingo hall and casino; now it's about 10 percent. They worry about Mafia coming in and taking over the casino. I say, Indians couldn't tell the difference between the Mafia and the United States government. Even if the Mafia did come in and did take over, we'd welcome them, because we'd be better organised and the government wouldn't mess with us. And we'd have much better pasta! No more Kraft macaroni and cheese. (Peterson 22)

Such terse reply reflects both on the poverty level of the reservation and the antagonism of the Natives against the United States because of its centuries of deceit.

While the city of Seattle is stormed by the serial murders of the Indian killer, Truck Schultz, makes use of the opportunity to narrate the dominant version of history that glorifies the colonisers and degrades the colonised. Truck, the white man says “Citizen, I am outraged. What is our society coming to when good men cannot safely walk the streets of our cities?” (*Indian Killer* 207). It is ironic when the white man talks about the danger of being a white because only minorities like Spokane constantly faces danger and discrimination amidst white which Alexie highlights at many instances in his work - Right from John Smith, the protagonist, the minor characters like the homeless Cornelius and Zera, Carlotta, and the numerous homeless Indians on the streets of Seattle and often confront violence and curses like “Go back to where you belong, man! . . . Get the fuck out of our country, man!” (*Indian Killer* 215).

When Truck laments of the white kid, Mark Jones' kidnap “from the safety of his own home” (*Indian Killer* 207), ironically, the readers are reminded of the forceful dislocation of the Indian children from their parents and tribe to the Charlisly Industrial School, for their assimilation into the mainstream white society. Truck's propaganda includes “White males built this country. White males travelled here on the Mayflower, crossed the Great Plain on horseback, brought light to the darkness, and tamed the wilderness. This country exists because of the constant vigilance and the ingenuity of the white males” (*Indian Killer* 207). But the conversation between homeless Carlotta and John Smith in *Indian Killer* brings out the irony in these authentic narratives. She recollects how the Natives have been good to white people when they arrived on the shores of the continent. It is the Natives who taught them to cultivate, to adapt to the environment of the new world by playing the role of a good host. Carlotta also remarks “and then what did they do? They killed us” (*Indian Killer* 253). Her words reflect the massive loss of life through intentional spread of infectious diseases and bloody massacres that has been called the “American Indian Holocaust” (qtd. in “Rethinking Historical Trauma” 301).

As per the white society, the standard of life of the Indians is elevated than their pre-colonized state

because of their contact with the whites- the civilized and the superior race. The Natives are also provided with benefits of technological comforts and above all “They have God” (*IK* 208) who have been earlier “Godless heathens” (*Indian Killer* 208).

In reality the fictional Spokane community is haunted by poverty and hunger. Their basic needs like food and shelter are not met. Empty refrigerators, empty stomach, empty wallets, dependence on the worst standard of commodity food supplies, one room HUD houses and trailer houses are everyday nightmares of the community. Apart from the disillusioned and devastated reservation life *Indian Killer* strongly focuses on the predicaments of the numerous homeless Indians in the city of Seattle who are “in dirty clothes and third hand shoes, miles and years from their reservations, estranged from their families and tribes,” (*Indian Killer* 144) The U.S. government, that has made treaties with Natives to compensate for the land and the gaming, in reality has failed to keep up its promises.

Schultz's version of history as well as contemporary condition is ironic because he narrates exactly the opposite of the actual condition. They are neither 'super citizens' nor technological benefitters. Above all, it clearly reflects their deracination from their own spirituality. White man's religion has made their life disillusioned and chaotic with a big spiritual void which is obvious in the case of John Smith, the hero of the novel, and Father Duncan both of whom end up their life in suicide.

Since Truck Schultz believes that white America has “Coddled Indians too long” (*Indian Killer* 209), he pontificates “This country is full of welfare babies giving birth to welfare babies” (*Indian Killer* 243). His solution is to sterilize girls with IQ less than one hundred so that “Indian women will not give birth to Indian Killers” (*Indian Killer* 243). Alexie, a cultural insider, brings to the fore the evils inculcated by the biased pop culture myths in the hearts of the whites by the character Truck Schultz.

All that Schultz's considers as privileges for the Natives have not brought about any changes in the lives of the Natives. What Schultz, the representative figure of the white society in the novel fails to understand is that many of these privileges are treaty obligations by the federal government that it has signed, with the tribes for obtaining millions of acres of tribal lands. Since, the government has failed to honour the treaties; the Natives have been economically and socially deprived of the 'broken treaties'. Such biased pop culture narratives of history and culture of the Natives have reduced them to the most misunderstood of the ethnic minorities of the United States.

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**JOURNEY FOR ENLIGHTENMENT:
A STUDY OF ANITA DESAI'S *JOURNEY TO ITHACA***

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Abstract:

*People embark on journeys with different motives; for pleasure, for entertainment or for work. There are also people, who travel for enlightenment and illumination; they are spiritual travelers. Matteo and Liala, the protagonists of Anita Desai's *Journey to Ithaca* are two such people, who travel to satisfy their spiritual quest. They are ordinary people, who move towards spiritual depths to explore the meaning and nature of reality and also of illusion: two contrasting worlds of ideas and beliefs. It is a saga about soul's journey towards enlightenment and awakening. This is a story of multiple quests made by three different individuals Matteo, Sophie and Liala from three different countries Italy, Germany and Egypt respectively. *Journey to Ithaca* is a manifesto of Oriental philosophy, Vedanta and Upanishads. In this novel Anita Desai evokes spiritual India describing it as 'Ithaca' a divine destination for the suffering and wandering souls depicting a life of simplicity and high values as the prerequisite of a spiritual life.*

Key Words: *Spirituality, Enlightenment, Journey, Quest, Materialism, Humanity, Values.*

Today in the age of globalization and consumerism man is running behind all materialistic things leaving his inner self empty and neglected. Still in the midst of all material abundance and comforts he suffers insecurity, alienation and emptiness in spirit. In this modern world man suffers not only from external calamities, but also from inner crises. Today we are in a period of science and technology and more concern about physical and materialistic things. We recognize people with their outer appearance, position, power or designation but not with inner qualities. But humanity is far beyond of all these things. Person is different from position or prosperity. So for the welfare of the society and humanity we need to pay attention on this confusion and search for clarification.

The only way to get an explanation for this uncertainty is spirituality as a way of life. It gives capacity to see beyond physical and material to the transcendental and mystical. Spirituality is to live a pure, perfect and balanced life. As we all know knowledge is power and purity is strength, spirituality gives one the moral strength to stand up to one's self in times of any crises. It gives the knowledge of divinity to accept situations and persons without any conflict and cultivates the qualities of truth, love, peace, and harmony with in one self and leads to be self contented and more humanistic. These inherent qualities need not be taught or learnt; rather they must be emerged or evoked from inside and later on developed and practiced as one's life style. So to unveil these divine qualities one should meditate every day. Faith and meditation are the two skills needed to have that vision of spiritual truth. Meditation is nothing but to empty one's mind without any thoughts and create connectivity with that divine power (god) and imbibe the bliss of divinity within one's self. This is not a ritual related to any religion or community rather it is a journey of soul and humanity towards perfection and enlightenment.

Journey to Ithaca is a novel unique in its theme since it is neither physical nor psychological but spiritual. The novel opens with two quotations--the poem *Ithaca* by C.P. Cavafy.... "Always keep Ithaca Fixed in your mind, to arrive there is your ultimate goal".... and a line by Milan Kundera, "Things exist in their essence even before they are materially realized and named" (Pg-9). Both are indicative of the novel's

thematic thrust, while the title encapsulates the gist of the novel. By reading the above poem, we can sense that Ithaca is not a specific place but a symbolic representation suggesting the achievement of goals that people set in their lives and the journey to Ithaca is the quest to make one's dreams come true. According to Greek mythology Ithaca is a small Island among many Greek Islands that we find in Homer's *Odyssey*, and reaching that Island is Odysseus, the hero's ultimate goal, which keeps him alive in spite of several dangers in course of his journey. If we take the lines of Kundera, they are related to the protagonists of this novel, Matteo and Liala, as the novel dramatizes their quest in their strange worlds and their realization of the truth which already exists.

Journey to Ithaca is a novel based on man's journey towards enlightenment. Anita Desai the Author of this novel is an eminent writer of Indian English fiction, who in this novel tries to help ordinary people in the present crises ridden society move towards awareness and existence through spirituality. Anita Desai is a great analyst of Psychological insights and inner concerns. Her novels depict the kaleidoscopic image of the minds of her characters with a mesmerizing art. Her keen observation of emotions and feelings add greater debts to her themes. She represents finest blend of Indian and European sensibilities. Her novels are reflective of social realities which she depicts through a psychological perspective but does not look at them as a social reformer. Her earlier novels revolve around woman's quest for identity, the repression she faces within the family and society, marital disharmony, generation conflicts and anti-Semitism but her later novels focus on the spirit of nationality, social problems existing in the contemporary society, east-west cultural collision, Vedanta and Philosophy.

In this novel India has been depicted symbolically as Ithaca, that celestial city which conveys a positive message to its pilgrims, who are surrounded by different ambiguities of life. Here its culture is shown as a way of life that treats the mentally ill people. Thus the major characters Matteo and Laila, who are symbolically described as intellectual pilgrims, are on a spiritual adventure to that celestial city for self realization. In spite of living in adverse conditions and various kinds of temptations testing them they take the journey of pains and difficulties and ultimately reach their goal. They attain this balance of mind only after self examination.

Matteo a wealthy Italian, a man of sensibility, disappointed in his life. Right from the beginning he is a problem child to his family. He exhibits signs of worldly failure. He is disinterested in studies and withdraws from school. Though he is wealthy he finds no happiness in money or in materialistic comforts. He is a detached and aloof personality since his childhood, who loves to live in his own world. Like an outsider he is always lonely and ill at ease in this world he lives. His father engages a tutor to teach him English. His name is Fabian who acknowledges his inner trauma and gives him a book "*Journey to the East*" written by Herman Hesse. Matteo fascinated by that book comes to India on a spiritual quest "to find India to understand India and the mystery that is at the heart of India". (Pg-54) His wife Sophie, a German, practical, worldly woman and a confident journalist joins him with a different intension of enjoying life in India. Here we can see the polarization of their attitudes. Matteo's alienation and escape from his family and world effects even his matrimonial relation. He finds an abysmal barrier between himself and the outer world. Due to ideological differences, Matteo does not find happiness and satisfaction with his wife Sophie. He tells Sophie, "it is spiritual experience for which you must search in India". (Pg-36) But for him too the meaning of spirituality is unknown. He gets into blind faith that wearing a torn kurtha pyjama and chappals, takes him close to that supreme power. Ignorant of real suffering and real joy he oscillates between false kind of imagination and unhappiness.

With that ignorance he reaches India with his wife and shuttles from one ashram to other. He encounters many fake sadhus and gurus and has to face many humiliations but not able to get that enlightenment and bliss. His conflicts persist and the sense of integration seems to be nowhere near him. His search for eternal truth makes him vulnerable. At last he lands up in an ashram run by a woman called Mother. (A spiritual guru) His journey ends in total surrender to the Mother with the conviction that "she is

the one who can reveal the unknown to me". (Pg- 141) Her speech transports him to a unique experience an experience of unity, the unity of the physical with the spiritual, the dark with the light, the human with the natural. (Pg.99) Matteo enthralled by the environment of Mother's ashram wants to remain there forever. He finds the peaceful ambience of the ashram quite different from the other ashrams and believes that he got the right guru. In his obsession with his newly attained guru, any time spent away from her seems to him as wasted time, empty time, and dead time. . . . In the company of Mother everything comes alive. He finds in the image of the Mother the reason for living. (Pg-108) Matteo strongly believes that the mystery of life can be revealed only in the presence of the divine Mother. He is over powered by what mother speaks or suggests. He says her presence heightens, and illuminates the experience of living as no one else does...and when I leave her I am falling down in to darkness.(pg -141) But for Sophie she is only a woman who is snatching her husband from her. She feels Mother is a magician. Here starts the conflict between sacred love of Matteo towards Mother and earthly love of Sophie for Matteo. For Matteo India stands for bliss love and light but for Sophie it is symbol of imprisonment, death, darkness and destruction.

Sophie has come to India with no intension to find god or guru or truth. She comes to India just to enjoy the delights and beauties of the country. She never wants to move from one ashram to another and be the object of many humiliations. She wants the normal life of western couple. But like many Indian monks Matteo too neglects his responsibilities towards his family. He does not even care for his children, wife or parents. For him now those are a nightmare world of physicality. (pg.102) But spiritual life does not mean renunciation of responsibilities. Disgusted with the attitude of Matteo, after giving birth to second child she goes back to Italy with her children but soon her love for Matteo brings her back to India. To rescue Matteo from Mother's clutches she tries to unveil the past of Mother. Mother, as she suspects though looks Indian is not an Indian. (JI-125) Sophie tries to dig Mother's past to confirm her as a frail mortal being that might have been hidden behind the impressive garb of the guru.

In her quest she finds a girl's painful and turbulent and anguished journey for supreme joy and beauty. Mother, who is actually an Egyptian-Muslim named Liala, born in an academic family in Alexandria. Her father Hameed is a university lecturer and mother, Amla a French Teacher. As a child she too, like Matteo, a head strong and independent one causing headache to her parents and teachers. Since her childhood she yearns with her entire body and soul for some vision of supreme joy and beauty. So she draws herself towards that direction where ever her passion takes her. As a student she is disinterested in studies. So her parents sent her to Paris for further studies. There she gets entranced by eastern occultism and spirituality.

Determined to discover the peace of her soul she propels herself into a new direction and enters into an oriental dance troop. Enchanted by the mystic atmosphere she mistakes the dancer Krishna as god Krishna and gets attracted towards him. He is an Indian dancer and famous for his role of Lord Krishna. With much labor she tours Europe, North America before coming to India. After coming to India neglected by her friend Krishna, physically sick and disappointed she disappears from there and lands in an ashram at the feet of Himalayas with the desire to be free of this world to escape into a better and brighter one. She is always conscious of her goal. Her strong conviction that there must be a master, a spiritual leader to show her luminous wisdom and answer to her queries finally enables her to find him in that ashram. In her staunch belief she reveals,

I left home so long and so far behind, that I cannot return to it. I cannot believe that the dreams and hopes that propelled me on my travels and brought me to India had no truth and no power and were merely delusions. Somewhere there must be one who is mighty and wise who will open up to me cosmic infinity, where I may dwell in peace and my search for eternal knowledge and the supreme light. Some where there must be one who is tranquil and patient and comprehends all things and conquers all forces and against whom no evil can prevail. Some where there must be the one who can show me the luminous wisdom I know exists, the vision that I crave the answer to my questions

that will assuage my hunger and thirst with love and joy. Some where my master must exist. (Pg-280)

The diary that Sophie collects from the dance master reveals her indefatigable spirit amidst harrowing experiences in an unfriendly environment. At the initial stage of her journey in her ignorance she mistakes what is only human for almighty and supreme. Now she has the eternal light setting her on fire. "I was on fire, the tree was on fire, light blazed and the whole sky was illuminated." (Pg-286) Her earlier attempts to seek through dance the harmony between the body and the mind, thought and action brings her only disharmony. Now her soul gets satisfied. In that satisfaction she says "love filled my every limb with its nectar and I was Radha who beheld at last the true Krishna". (Pg- 291) There ends the most turbulent phase of her quest providing her bliss, wisdom and enlightenment and her great transformation from Laila to the Mother. Her spiritual journey has nothing to do with religious rituals or institutionalized religion. She discovers that personal realization of oneself can only come from one's inner consciousness. Now she can feel that cosmic spirit in each and every particle of this world. In describing Liala's growth as Mother Author seems to be restoring her own understanding about India and enlightenment. She seems to make people believe that the fundamental need of the world is far deeper than any social, political or economic readjustment. It is rather a spiritual awakening, a recovery of faith in god. Faith based on experience and action. Again with the life of mother, she also tries to suggest that saints are not stainless glass figures by birth. Rather they achieve it by many sufferings and sacrifices. And whatever they will get they spread in the society everywhere.

Mother after the death of guru of that ashram becomes head of that place paving the way for many quests. After knowing the truth about Mother when Sophie returns she realizes the futility of her quest. Since she finds that Mother already died and Matteo disappeared into mountains to pursue his search. At last she gets self realization and waits for Matteo forever. In that way her one quest ends and other starts. So in that way each of the above mentioned three persons undertake the literal and metaphorical journey to Ithaca having the joy of home coming at last.

In this novel Anita Desai gives a view of spiritual living, through the character of Mother who teaches her disciples the values of life. She preaches that the divine force is everywhere and knowledge means to realize that truth. She exhorts them not to feel sad or exhausted but keep smiling. The purpose of our existence in this ashram is to experience fully, to be fully. (Pg-100) She asks her disciples to find pleasure in serving the humanity and to adopt the path of selfless duty. In the ashram she treats all equally, believing the existence of the eternal truth in the hearts of all. The gist of the Mother's philosophy is that the soul progress from individual body to community from community to universe and from universe to infinity. This way of life leads man to a state of pure joy. She advises her devotees to try to attain the complete consciousness in ones inner self. This precisely is the most needful and important business of our lives as no one can experience the depth of bliss without aware of oneself.

Mother also preaches that in his consciousness man must clearly realize some central truth which will give him the perspective of his life. Because truth is the bright eternal light that takes the man to immortality. She gives various examples to Matteo to make him aware of the reality in life. She advises him to live like a lotus flower which is not wetted by water or stained by mud though it grows among them.(Pg-138) That means living in this materialistic world and accepting all family responsibilities, he should detach himself from them to glorify his soul. She says his faith can bear fruit only when he perceives the things from his mind's eye. According to her, any ordinary being can attain knowledge and eternal bliss by performing routine work. She says bliss can enter, only when your mind focus on that. (Pg-116) She gives example of bee hive and busy bee. She asserts that everyone in the ashram work in order to fill the hive with sweet nectar. In the same way if one wants to nourish one's soul it should be filled with spiritual nectar because all organisms are useless, dry and empty if they do not contain the nectar of spirit. So be rich

with the nectar of spirit. Here nectar symbolizes the essence of life (Pg-118)

Talking about the devotion she suggests that clarity of mind is the prime requirement to the way of bhakti. Therefore when one is conscious and perceives the inner being that transcends his ego, and has its deeper affinity with all and leads to the way of love. In that way whomsoever one loves, in him one finds one's own soul in the highest sense. Thus love is the height bliss that man can use for his transformation from human to divine. In her ashram she teaches the same. "Here we teach only love; here we dedicate ourselves to love. What we do here, we do out of love." (Pg-117) But she says further that without serving the humanity it is difficult to become a devotee or get that love of divinity. She believes the motto work is worship and she asks everyone to work hard without expecting the fruit of that work and suggests no work is inferior or superior (Pg-120). She assigns duties to all the devotees in the ashram and explains them this effort, this endeavor this exercise calls sadhana. If the artist performs this exercise it is artistic. If the farmer performs it, it is agricultural and if the devotee practice it is spiritual and it all leads to the achievement of self consciousness. (Pg-98) She preaches Matteo the Indian theology of nishkama karma, a higher way of life to work without desiring the fruit of that work. In ashram everyone works and lives together without expecting any profit or pay they do all kinds of works just for their livelihood. But Sophie speaks of the western ideology of work. That means work is work and which should bear fruits.

Anita Desai through this novel tries to prove that, vision of truth is not in religion. She philosophizes that god is not in a temple or in the holy book. Working on the universal norms of life she follows the secular image of India by making Mother confess about the presence of god in the heart of man and refuses to accept any kind of formalism for the realization of ultimate truth. She feels it crosses all the barriers of gender, religion and nationality. It is only related to humanity.

It is not like going to church, not like going to the temple mosque or vihara. We have no religion. Religion makes one ashamed, makes one guilty, and makes one fearful. We turn our back to religion. We do not take off our shoes or put on hats. We come as we are. We know the master does not care what we wear, how we sit, what we sing (Pg-93).

Matteo a "westerner" comes to "East" in search of truth and accepts a woman who is an Egyptian Muslim as his spiritual deity. And Mother comes to India and accepts a great sage of Hindu religion as the representative of God. All these three characters are in quest of their purpose and overcome the barrier of gender, religion and nationality. In this novel Anita Desai symbolizes India as Ithaca, a celestial city where man wanders in quest for reaching ones home land that is his inner self. She describes it as a home for long wandering, long suffering, searching souls for home and identity. She exemplifies India only because this is the land which recognizes the significance of the journey within, a land with thought, vision and philosophy. Thus the protagonists of the novel Matteo, Laila and Sophie are on pilgrimage to Ithaca for enlightenment. As the novel starts with Cavafy's poem *Ithaca* translated by Raedolvin.

Always keep Ithaca fixed in your mind.

To arrive there is our ultimate goal.

But do not hurry the voyage at all.

It is better to let it last for long

Ithaca has given you a beautiful voyage

And if you had found her poor, Ithaca has not defrauded you.

With such wisdom you have gained, with so much experience

You must surely have understood by then what Ithaca mean (3).

'Ithaca' stands for a disciple's spiritual goal. However long and wide the 'journey' might be, 'Ithaca' should be the focus and the ultimate destination. One should not hurry through the voyage at all; it is better

to let it last for long years. That means what is important is not the reaching but rather the Journey itself.

Besides, in *Journey to Ithaca*, Anita Desai visualizes the other side of India, a third world country with people in poverty, hunger, dirt, fake Sadhus and money minded gurus who rob people in the name of religion. She points out the orthodox, superstitious, inhuman vulgar practices of Hindu society. Matteo encounters all these negative facts of the country while on his spiritual journey as he feels that soul must pass through pain and agony for its purification. Matteo ones read in Katha Upanishads about the difference between path of joy and path of pleasure and determine to follow the path of joy against the path of pleasure. (Pg-32) Matteo realizes that the mystery he has long been searching is neither bookish knowledge nor blind faith but experience of eternal bliss and finding the truth but not achieving any human desire or goal.

When someone is seeking it happens quite easily.

That he only sees what he is seeking.

That he is unable to find anything because

He is thinking of the thing he is seeking.

Seeking means to have a goal.

But finding means to be free have no goals (JI-54).

Journey to Ithaca describes the journey of Matteo from what is false to what is truth; from ignorance to wisdom, from communion with men to communion with god or god like earthly beings. The novel narrates the journey of Laila from false Krishna to the true Krishna, from earthly love to divine love, from religion to no religion and finally from physical experience to spiritual experience. It also describes the journey of Sophie from Germany to India; from misunderstanding to understanding of Mother and from sexual passion to sensible decision.

Thus Anita Desai's *Journey to Ithaca* deals with the predicament of modern man caught in the conflict between "what is" and "what ought to be". It shows the cause of conflict and fragmentation and how to recover as integrated being. It discovers the way of natural wholeness of the soul and explains how to experience it in one's day to day existence. It is the state of total love freedom and understanding. It also shows a transcend way of life and declares that spirituality is not one of the ways of living but this is the way of living for a better society, a society with values and ethics. Spirituality is not static. It is a process or a journey within oneself, a soul's lifelong journey towards awakening which comes into being spontaneously when one aspires for it.

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ONE INDIAN GIRL: REPRESENTATION OF FEMINISM

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Abstract:

Chetan Bhagat, the most popular novelist among the Indian novel lovers at present, has the charisma to reach the heart and psyche of the readers. His characters can be met in all societies and communities and hence his writing bears the signature stamp of the reality. Seven best seller novels fall into his account. The first six novels put forward male characters as protagonists while the recent one, One Indian Girl depicts a female. Though it is written in the context of feminism, the fact cannot be denied that this feminist approach is accompanied with Liberalism and Individualism. It deals with: What do women expect from the society? And why are they denied what they deserve? The novel, One Indian Girl, presents the inner mind of an Indian Girl who has to fight for everything against the age old traditions and orthodox thinking. The novel has been studied in the light of feminism.

Key words: *Liberalism, Individual Identity, Equality, Feminism, Humanism.*

Introduction

The concept of liberation of women is western in origin. This issue of rights for women first became prominent during the French and American revolutions in the late 18th century. Oxford English Dictionary defines Feminism: "The advocacy of women's rights on the ground of the equality of the sexes" This issue is broadly applicable to the Indian context as well. The illogical and irrational observation can be noticed in Indian society about how differently girls and boys are treated. As a matter of fact, men and women are treated unequally. The partial treatment can be noticed in behavior, language, approach and attitude. If a girl dares to go out during the night, they are immediately snubbed and discouraged. On the contrary, if a boy does the same, it is considered as an adventurous and encouraging act which is applauded. If a girl wants to travel alone, she is advised to be careful; whereas the boy thinks it his privilege. The girls are considered liabilities and the boys assets for family. On humanitarian ground, it is difficult to justify.

The novels of Chetan Bhagat are the perfect epitome of Indian social realism. They deal with love, sex, marriage, ambition, corruption, politics, education and their impact on the Indian society. That's why, Bhagat is held as the Youth Icon. He gives the medium to the youth to speak their mind. He has endeavoured to raise many issues in his writings so that the attention of the readers may be drawn to these issues which will let them know the real conditions in which they are living. It brought a sense of worry and accountability among the youth. Everyone finds the issues raised in the novels arising from their own life or someone close to them. The episodes in the novels are the episodes from common life. All the protagonists in his novels are sensitive youths who do not want to live with the predominant crooked situations of society. They want to change the situations and for that they are even ready to against the age old customs, traditions and beliefs. They are optimistic and revolutionary in thoughts and actions. They raise their voice against education system which demotes creativity, age old cultural differences, the problem of corruption, the problem of unemployment, serious identity crisis among the young generation, unhealthy customs and traditions in Indian society, unequal treatment to a girl child, etc. The characters in

the novels are the replica representing the enlightened or darkened contemporary Indian society.

As the Oxford English Dictionary defines Feminism as advocacy of women's rights on the ground of equality of the sexes, Chetan Bhagat advocates for the same equality through his novel, *One Indian Girl*. This novel is totally different from the other five novels. In his first five novels, we find males are the protagonist, whereas in *One Indian Girl* a FEMALE is central character. She represents all Indian girls who have a plethora of questions towards irrational approach. This irrational approach is the unequal treatment; they are meted out to on the basis of sex. The protagonist Radhika Mehata, a Vice President in the Distressed Debt Group at Goldman Sachs, is the voice of all suppressed women. The back cover of the novel highlights:

“Let me warn you. You may not like me too much.

One I make a lot of money.

Two I have an opinion on everything.

Three I have a boyfriend before. Okay, may be two.

Now if it was a guy, you would be okay with all this.

But since I am a girl, these three things don't really make me too likeable, do they?”

A girl is usually underrated in the family as well as in society. In case of Radhika, this is watered by her mother. In the novel, it is predominantly seen that it is her mother who frequently reminds her that she is a girl and not a boy. She does not even hesitate to say in front of Radhika, “You will judge me, so no point telling you. You don't know what it is like to be without son.” During the Destination wedding ceremonies, her mother continually reminds her that they are girls' side and therefore they are born to adjust. As she says, “Beta, these are norms. You don't understand. We have to keep them comfortable. Girls' side is expected to adjust.”

The novel not only advocates Feminism, it stands out for Liberalism and Humanism. The society needs to liberate from aged old rusted thinking. It is not the blame to be put on the men's side alone because women also can be seen supporting this which doesn't seem to be logical at all. Radhika's mother and sister can be seen deeply rooted in the age old thinking and traditions. They are ever ready to justify that the society should be dominated by males. Two different categories of thinking can be seen among the women: the one rationally justifying that the girls should be underrated to boys and another with rational thinking demanding the equal treatment. Is it difficult to be a girl or is it more difficult to be an Indian girl? Being an Indian girl is harder because she is not even allowed to think out of the box of orthodox psyche or she herself doesn't want to think out of the box. An Indian girl is always seen struggling for her individual identity. She wants to free herself from the borrowed identity of father or husband. Radhika wants to have her own identity. For this Individual Identity she is left with no option but to fight with the orthodox thinking of her own family members. When she takes higher education and earns a lot, her parents are worried that she will not get the groom. This means that her parents think that a husband should earn more than a wife. When Radhika starts looking for groom, many do not accept her just because she earns more than them. The qualities which are strength for boys, those qualities become weakness for Radhika. She wants her to be known by her achievements. She wants to live her life on her terms and conditions because she thinks that it is her own life. Every individual has a thought process to think about them. Every individual has his/ her own pattern of thinking and living which must not be denied. He/ she has the right to question everything and that's what he/ she wants. All the time justification is not required.

Identity crisis among the youth is well notable in many novels of Chetan Bhagat. Everyone is struggling for identity. The young boys and girls can be seen striving for Individualism and Liberalism. Arti in *Revolution 2020* is the daughter of the District Magistrate D.M. Pradhan who belongs to one of the richest and most respected families in Varanasi. She wants to be an Air Hostess, but her parents do not allow her to be so. Unwillingly, she enrolls for some other course at University. Still, her dream for

hospitality makes her work in a hotel. Her salary is less than her pocket money but it is not the question of earning money, rather it is doing something which she likes most. She wants her own identity. Though she does not earn much, she is happy.

Conclusion:

“Mini-Me” in Radhika is always giving strength to her. The Mini-Me, the inner voice is not the inner voice of Radhika alone, it's the voice of every Indian woman. Some women give it free way to grow and form and some suppress it within and then the same is transferred to the next generation. This “Mini-Me” is present in everyone. The battle is always going on in mind of everyone. Some win, some surrender. This immaterial thinking affect the material things in life. Bhagat emphasizes the liberty of women. This liberty shows to think, to do, to judge and to justify. His women characters like Radhika have belief in “an absolute, a perfect, a pure and a noble freedom”. 3

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POVERTY AND SUFFERING OF THE CHILDREN IN SELECT ENGLISH NOVEL*Dr. A. Gowri, Karaikudi, TN*

Poverty is a multifaceted concept that includes social, economic and political elements which deprives of basic necessities of life. There are indeed many reasons for which the children are inclined to drop out of school. In world's population half of the children live in poverty. Poor children cannot get anything easily including their education. They struggle even for their food. They can be easily provoked by anything like fatigue and frustration.

According to Peter Townsend, "Humans are social animals entangled in a web of relationships, which exert complex and changing pressures as much in their consumption of goods and services as in any other aspect of their behaviour".

Women also suffer a lot due to poverty after children. They are ready to send their children to do any work for low wages. Child labour refers to the employment of children in any work which interferes their basic rights including their education. Every child has his basic right to have a good education and the right to play during his childhood. But poor children are employed easily by the selfish people because they do not demand their wages and they are not aware of getting education which is one of their fundamental rights.

Charles Dickens was a novelist, journalist and social analyst. He is one of the most influential writers of the nineteenth century.

Oliver Twist is Dickens' first novel. The main theme of this novel is poverty and child labour. Charles Dickens wrote "*Oliver Twist*" during the time of Industrial Revolution in Britain. He was only Twenty five years old when he started writing this novel. Here Charles Dickens reveals the problem of the poor children and how they were abused in the society by the selfish people. This novel depicts his own life experiences. The children were sent to some dangerous jobs then due to their poverty. He strongly believes that the state of poverty leads a person into the world of cruelty and crime.

In *Oliver Twist*, Charles Dickens deals with the problems of Oliver and how he experiences physical and emotional suffering throughout his life. Oliver is very poor and has little food to eat which makes him always hungry. He cannot lead a comfortable life. He spends his babyhood in a baby farm till the age of nine. Mrs Mann takes care of him. When he was nine years old Mr. Bumble puts him to work at the main work house. There he suffers a lot for a little food. Mr. Gamfield, an unkind person, takes Oliver as an apprentice. Later Mr. Sowerberry takes Oliver with him. Mrs. Sowerberry is a brutal woman who ill-treats Oliver. Oliver also suffers a lot because of Noah Claypole who is a very rude fellow apprentice. His self-introduction itself is awful:

"I'm Mister Noah Claypole", said the charity boy "and you're under me. Take down the shutters, yer idle young ruffian".

He always scolds Oliver by using harsh words. Charlotte the Sowerberry's maid servant is in love with Noah. Noah always insults Oliver by scolding Oliver's mother very badly. Oliver gets angry with Noah. But Mrs. Sowerberry supports Noah and beats Oliver. She also complains about Oliver to her husband and beats once again. Oliver is completely upset and weeps. Then he decides to run away to London for a better life.

In London, Jack Dawkins a criminal, who is known by the nickname as the "Artful Dodger" provides Oliver a free meal and accommodation. Oliver is very grateful to dodger and follows him and starts his life unwittingly as a criminal. Oliver is unaware of criminal occupations and he believes that they

make handkerchiefs and wallets. Charley and Dodger steal the handkerchief of an old man named Mr. Brownlow. Mr. Brownlow suspects that Oliver, who runs away in fright, is the thief. He catches Oliver with the help of other people. But he believes that Oliver looks very innocent. So he takes Oliver with him and treats him very kindly. When Mr. Brownlow sends Oliver out for the payment of some books, one of the persons in the gang, a young girl named Nancy sees him and informs Artful Dodger. Oliver is caught by the criminal gang again.

Oliver is compelled by Fagin to participate in burglary. Seeing this Nancy sympathizes with Oliver and decides to help him. Meantime, during a robbery Oliver is shot by the people and wounded in his left arm. Nancy is ashamed of her role in Oliver's miserable condition and thinks of his safety. Fagin thinks that she has a new boyfriend and tries to find the truth. In the meantime, Noah steals money from Mr. Sowerberry and flies to London with Charlotte.

Oliver is starved, kicked, beaten and forced to work in his childhood. Really Charles Dickens reveals the life of the poor children in day-to-day life.

“*David Copperfield*” is another example of a child's struggles and sufferings for his self-fulfilment.

“*David Copperfield*” is an autobiography of Charles Dickens. David was born in Blunderstone, Suffolk, England, six months after the death of his father. He was happy with his childish mother and his nurse Peggotty, very kind to both of them. When David was seven years old, his mother married a rude man, Edward Murdstone. Mr. Murdstone whipped David and sent him with Peggotty's family which was in Yarmouth. Peggotty was living with his adopted relatives Emily and Ham, and Mrs. Gummidge. Meanwhile David fell in love with Emily. David went to school at Salem House, which was run by Mr. Creakle. David found new friends named James Steerforth and Tommy Traddles.

One day David heard sad demise of his lovable mother and his baby brother. David was completely upset and shocked. When he returned home his step father Mr. Murdstone neglected him and sent him to London to work in his wine-bottling factory. He was only ten years old at that time. There was nobody to protect and support David.

In London, David met Mr. and Mrs. Micawber. He liked them very much and led his life peacefully with them. The Micawbers had many money problems and finally they were arrested and sent to prison. When David came to know this news he was really upset. He lost the most lovable persons who took care of him. So there was nobody for David in London too. So he moved from London to Dover to meet his aunt Betsey. When he met his aunt she treated him well and sent him to a good school. After completing his graduation, David worked in the law office and fell in love with Mr. Spewlow's daughter Dora. He married Dora, an irresponsible girl who knew nothing about housekeeping. She was completely impractical. David often called Dora as a “Child-Wife”. One day she fell ill and passed away. So David decided to go abroad after his wife's death. He stayed abroad for three years.

When he returned, he realized that Agnes Wickfield had been his true love all along and he married her finally.

To sum up, we can realize that David is the most realistic and touching young man. David had suffered a lot throughout his life. This novel revealed the fact that how other forces could interfere and overcome one's fate. Charles Dickens told a story that seemed very reliable and painful through the character of David.

In the article entitled '*David Copperfield and The Bildungsroman: Their contribution to Charles Dickens' reputation*', Sakchai Lunlaporn assents the point that the novel depicts the miserable life of the young boy that evoked sympathy. Moreover he compares the two characters David and Oliver aptly:

Indeed, *David Copperfield* established Dickens' reputation through the story of the young David which is similar to that of young Oliver in that they are both young boy protagonists whose lives have been deprived of boyhood happiness by fate. However, David is hugely different because he is particularly in search of his true identity to become a grown man,

whereas Oliver is simply struggling to survive in circumstances beyond his control in a cruel society.

Untouchable is a novel by an Indian writer Mulk Raj Anand. According to Shashi Yadhav, problem of untouchability is still prevalent in the society and Anand brings to light the sorrows and sufferings that high caste Hindus inflicted on the untouchables. The novel was published in 1935. This novel shows the realistic picture of the society. It depicts the life of an untouchable boy Bakha, a young sweeper. The low caste people are suffering a lot in their life due to their caste. Bakha symbolizes the hypocrisy of the upper caste people and how they do injustice to the people like Bakha.

Bakha's family lives in Bulashah. Their house is located near the latrines of the town. Bakha is not interested in his occupation, cleaning the latrines and his father abuses him for not doing his work. Bakha always thinks of his friends and ignores his father's words. He dreams the way of living like an "Englishman".

Bakha's family is restricted to take water directly from the well. Sohini, Bakha's sister goes to bring water and she waits for a sympathetic person, one who belongs to a higher caste. Some women are waiting there like Sohini to get water from the higher caste person. One of the women in that group is Gulabo. She is very jealous of Sohini. She scolds her by using scornful words. But Sohini bears everything for Bakha who is waiting for water. Most of the low caste people are not educated. In this novel Mulk Raj Anand brings out this problem through Bakha and his friends. Though Bakha is interested to go to school, his caste is an obstacle to get his education.

He is not bold enough to protest against the higher caste person who cheats him. Once he goes to the shop and asks the shopkeeper to give candy. But the shopkeeper cheats him by not weighing the scale correctly. When Bakha comes to know this, he does not find fault with the shopkeeper for cheating him. Instead of that he feels very happy to have some candies in his hand. One day while Bakha is waiting on the road, he does not notice a high caste man walking nearby and he dashes him mistakenly. That person abuses Bakha in front of others by using undignified words. Bakha begs him and pleads his apology, but he is not ready to forgive him. All the other people too start to insult Bakha for his mistake. Bakha starts to think of himself and his caste. He is filled with frustration, anger and revenge. Mulk Raj Anand focuses attention towards the customs and social evils of our society during 1930's.

Thus the novelists bring the reality of the society and the real condition of the poor people and their suffering to survive in the midst of the arrogant human beings.

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**CHILD AS A HERO: A VALORIZATION OF HEROIC FRIENDSHIPS IN
THE BOY IN STIPPED PYJAMAS AND ONE HALF FROM THE EAST**

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Abstract:

*Since time immemorial friendships were seen as nobler than any other sort of love. The great ancient philosopher and critic Aristotle, too, extolled the virtues of emotional connections that survives without any physical interactions and thus leading to ideal one that is, platonic friendship. The friendship can prevail between man and woman, man and man, woman and woman, boy and boy and between girls even. It is also marked by an intense bond and filled with deeply held feeling and sentimentality. It is suggestive of one's capacity to love and care. The prefix heroic is an adjective, adding more laurels of nobility and trust to the immortal friendship. In this backdrop, I have chosen two fictional texts-*The Boy in the Stripped Pyjamas* (2006) by John Boyne and *One Half From the East* (2016) by Nadia Hashimi.*

The fictional work entitled *The Boy in the Stripped Pyjamas* is set during the Nazi world and the horrible Holocaust and the novelist takes the opportunity to demonstrate the heroic friendship of two young boys of nine years old each, whose names are Bruno and Shmuel, the 'unheroic' heroes squatting amidst sadistic people and unaware of devastating politics of Aryan Superiority. Bruno a young German boy lives in Berlin during the Nazi regime arrives home from school one day to find his family's maid, Maria packing up his things. When he asks his mother what is going on, she explains that Bruno's father's job is the reason they are all leaving their home in Berlin; someone Bruno knows only as 'the Fury' has plans for his father's career. Bruno nodded and walked sadly musing:

The banister was the best thing about this house-that and the fact that Grandfather and grandmother lived so nearby-and when he thought about that it made him wonder whether they were coming to the new job too and he presumed that they were coming to the new job too and he presumed that they were because they could be hardly left behind. (10)

Thus when Bruno is forced to leave Berlin, one of the main complaints is that he also has to leave his three best friends. To make matter worse, when he first gets into their new house his eyes opened wide due to the shock because everything about it seemed to be the exact opposite of their old home and he couldn't believe that they were really going to live there. In contrast to his big and beautiful home in Berlin "the new house, however, stood all on its own in an empty, desolate place and there were no other houses anywhere to be seen, which meant there would be no other families around and no other boys to play with..." (12-13). When he closed his eyes, everything around him just felt empty and cold, as if he was in the loneliest place in the world. The middle of nowhere" (14). Above all, "there was something about the new house that made Bruno think that no one ever laughed there; that there was nothing to laugh at and nothing to be happy about." (14). Bruno could never understand that how this had all come about and how he was stuck here in this cold, nasty house... where no one looked as if they could ever be cheerful again... this isn't home and it never will be" (17). Soon Bruno finds through his bedroom window something that made him unsafe and cold. There are boys, men and elderly men living together on the opposite side of a fence that extends farther than they can see into the distance and notices that they are all wearing the same thing, 'a pair of grey stripped pajamas with a grey stripped cap on their heads' living after the fence with no grass, instead the ground was made of a sand like substance, and as far as Gretel, Bruno's elder sister, could make out there

was nothing but low huts and large square buildings dotted around and one or two smoke stacks in the distance. Both of them also notice a group of children huddled together and being shouted at by a group of soldiers. 'The more they were shouted at, the more they huddled together' (38). On asking his father about 'all those people' Bruno is told that 'they're not people at all'. For months now Bruno had been looking out of his bedroom window at the garden and the bench with the plaque on it, the tall fence and wooden poles and it had never occurred to him to wonder what it was all about. The innocent Bruno cannot help but muse, "What exactly was the difference? He wondered to himself. And who decided which people wore the striped pyjamas and which people wore the uniforms?" (103) Bruno has always been fond of exploration that was but banned at Out-With, nevertheless, one fine and final day he does away with all the bans and starts walking along the fence and after an hour when he thought that he had enough of exploration for one day, just at the moment a dot appeared:

...his feet were taking him, step by step, closer and closer to the dot in the distance, which in the meantime had become a speck, and then began to show every sign of turning into a blob. And shortly after that the blob became a figure. And then, as Bruno got even closer, he saw that the thing was neither a dot nor a speck nor a blob nor a figure, but a person. In fact it was a boy. (p. 108)

This is how the friendship between Bruno and Shmuel begins at the fence. Immediately they find things they have in common, and become friends almost instantly. Shmuel and Bruno are two little boys uncorrupted by the brutal realities of the world around them. In both fiction and real life nothing represents innocence like children; in fact, they are presumed to embody the notion of uncorrupted youth. Two boys, left untouched by the prejudices of adults, are prone to form friendships irrespective of differences in ethnicity. Bruno's father, however, is the commandant of the Concentration Camp in which Shmuel and his father is a prisoner—a prisoner based solely upon his religion. While Bruno regularly hears derogatory comments from Germans regarding Jews, he is unable to reconcile the negativity in those comments with the humanity he identifies in that other little boy on the other side of the barbed-wire fence. "Very strange, said Shmuel, because there may be dozens of Shmuels on this side of the fence but I don't think that I've ever met anyone with the same birthday as me before" (113). He looks very sad when he tells the whole story to Bruno about from their being plucked away from their native land to how they are forced to undergo the atrocities of this camp. Bruno innocently identifies himself with Shmuel as 'after all much the same thing had happened to him' and he proceeds to invite him to his house for dinner or also proposes to meet 'people of that side of the fence' without knowing the threats, without comprehending that the world could be so cruel. Also, for this friendship sake Bruno decides to keep the whole story to himself for the moment and not breathe a word about it. 'It would be his own secret. Well, his and Shmuel's!' (137) Then onwards both of them meet every day, Bruno walking all way and Shmuel sitting cross-legged on the ground waiting for him.

One day Bruno actually sees his friend in his home but not to be his playmate but as servant to polish glasses. Their happiness knew no bound but short lived as Lieutenant Kotler suspects their being familiar and that Shmuel was eating something from the fridge. At this point Bruno could not dare to accept his friendship with Shmuel and latter is severely punished:

Very slowly he turned his head back to look at Shmuel, who wasn't crying anymore, merely staring at the floor and looking as if he was trying to convince his soul not to live inside his tiny body any more, but to slip away and sail to the door and rise up into the sky, gliding through the clouds until it was very far away (178).

Bruno's heart is so regretful and for a week he goes to see him but in vain. He visited the place in the fence where they met, but Shmuel was never there. Bruno is so much ashamed as he had never imagined that he could behave so cruelly. He is convinced that what he had done was terrible that he would never be forgiven. But on the seventh day two friends are reunited as Shmuel was waiting for his friend Bruno as

usual. Bruno just is overwhelmed and confesses that he has been really ashamed of himself and then the two boys shake hands, 'lifting the fence up', 'the first time they had ever touched'.

By the time Bruno stops being bored and worried about his 'old friends and old home and old people' he knew in Berlin. He is almost glad in Outwith because the best thing was that he had a friend called Shmuel. He enjoys walking along the fence every afternoon and was pleased to see that his friend too seemed a lot happier. They even realize that 'this is the strangest friendship they ever had'.

Why? Asked Shmuel.

Because every other boy I've ever been friends with has been someone that I've been able to play with, and we never get to play together. All we get to do is sit here and talk (185).

The novel apart from being a historical piece does focus on the moves of two innocent boys and their heroic friendship and at the same time shuns the idea that the wars are heroic. It is important that it is Bruno's father, a powerful Nazi Commandant who directs Bruno's actions. The boys are thrust together by circumstances regardless of which side they are supposedly on. They share an unexplained bond, which starts with them sharing a birthday. Finally after a year of meeting and chatting Bruno is due to return to Berlin but this time he has different emotions for his native place. 'That had changed for him over time, mostly due to Shmuel, who had become more important to him than Karl or Daniel or Martin had ever been'. (192) On being asked by his father about the return to Berlin Bruno now finds that he has not been looking forward to this as much as he would have expected and he dreaded having to tell Shmuel the news.

At the end of the story, with his head shaven, Bruno can find very few differences between himself and his new best friend. Eventually Mother convinces Father to move the family to move the family back to Berlin. Bruno is saddened to leave Shmuel behind. But near the fence things were not 'as usual as Bruno does not find Shmuel for consecutive three days. On the third day when he appears he tells that his father is missing but innocently enough is unable to realize that his father is actually dead. Bruno tells Shmuel that he has to leave, and then they decide to have 'their final adventure' together. They decide that Shmuel would bring 'stripped pyjamas' the next day and then both would find Shmuel's Papa.

Both boys went home in high spirits that afternoon. Bruno imagined a great adventure ahead and finally an opportunity to see what was really on the other side of the fence before he went back to Berlin-not to mention getting in a little serious exploration as well- and Shmuel saw a chance to get someone to help him in the search for his papa. All in all, it seemed like a very sensible plan and a good way to say goodbye (206).

Two boys uncorrupted by the brutal realities of the world around them now stand face to face for the first time, 'unaccustomed to being on the other side of the fence.

Bruno had an urge to give Shmuel a hug just to let him know how much he liked him and how much he'd enjoyed talking to him over the last year.

Shmuel had an urge to give Bruno a hug too, just to thank him for all his many kindness, and his gifts of food, and the fact that he was going to help him find Papa (213).

The novel nears its end; the innocence is still there. Bruno cannot comprehend, even after all he has seen, that the world can be so cruel. He opened his eyes in wonder at the things he saw. In his imagination he had thought that all the huts were full of happy families. He had thought that all the boys and girls who lived there would be in different groups, playing tennis or football, skipping or drawing out squares for hopscotch on the ground. But to Bruno's amazement the reality was horrible and that people were just in groups, staring at the ground, terrible skinny and sad and with their heads shaven.

In fact everywhere he looked, all he could see was two different types of people: either happy, laughing, shouting soldiers in their uniforms or unhappy, crying people in their stripped pyjamas, most of whom seemed to be staring into space as if they were actually asleep (215).

After a while Bruno gets into hurry to return to his home, to his family but for the sake of his friend Shmuel he agrees to continue to search latter's papa, 'although he feels a lot less confidence now'. In the heartrending scene at the end, with Shmuel being corralled into the gas chamber along with the other prisoners Bruno never leaves his friend's hands:

Actually, he said, looking down at Shmuel, it doesn't matter whether I do or don't. They are not my best friends any more anyway. He took hold of Shmuel's tiny hand in his and squeezed it tightly. You're my best friend, Shmuel, he said. My best friend for life (220).

The dark room goes very dark and somehow, despite the chaos that followed, Bruno finds that he is still holding his hands in his own and 'nothing in the world would persuade him to let it go'. All that these two boys could see is friendship and John Boyne's novel is the story of that heroic friendship.

The second novel in discussion *One Half From the East* (2016) by Nadia Hashimi is set in a small village in Afghanistan and is written about the unusual practice of *bacha posh*, dressing a young girl as a boy. It is a custom that is believed to bring the family good luck in Afghanistan in which families without a son will pick a daughter to dress and live as a boy because in such families there is lot of pressure in these societies for parents to have a son to carry on the father's name, inherit property, work and support the family. "A boy can work and earn money. A boy is good luck. A boy brings other boys into the family. Girls can't do any of these things" (16). Boys are allowed maximum freedom and opportunities than girls. But becoming a *bacha posh* gives a girl more space such as going to school and working. But when these *bacha posh* become young adults and are ready to marry, many return to living and dressing as a girl thus such a girl is encouraged to accept the notion of biological determinism, that is, women are childbearing sex and socially and culturally are conditioned to accept the traditional gender roles as normal. Human evolution provides bodily structures and biological potentialities that permit a range of possibilities rather than dictate a fixed type of gender differentiation. People contribute to their self-development and bring about social changes that determine and define the structure of gender responsibilities within the interrelated systems of influence. The narrator of the novel *One Half From the East*, the to be *bacha posh*, Obayda herself portrays the discrimination between sexes:

In the village there are two kinds of families. There are the ones that send their daughters to school and then there are the other ones who don't. Some families think that daughters are born to be wives and mothers and don't need to bother with books or writing. I feel bad for these girls because they don't get to do all the things schoolgirls do. They can count only how many cups of rice to soak and can't tell the letter *kof* from the letter *gof*. (22-23)

Obayda's family moved to rural village after a Kabul bomb blast takes her father's leg and the family's livelihood; in a bid to attract good fortune, relatives persuade her mother to transform Obayda, aged ten, youngest of four daughters, into a *bacha posh*, a boy. Obayda (Obayd) is aware of the forced inequality that exists in her society. In the school on the first day when Obayd is compelled to play *ghursai* and is knocked out easily, then she is too "frustrated to move", as why "my mother sent me out into this world like this."

It is easy to dance like a boy. Boys sway side to side and raise their arms like they're hosting a trophy. That's all they have to do. But everything else about being a boy is hard because it's so different from being a girl. Trying to act like a boy is like learning a whole new language, and I am really struggling to find the words. If I start to cry, there will be absolutely no hope for me. (50)

Obayda's apprehensive but wants to help her family as her father had got injured getting her medicine only. Transformed by the haircut, boy attire, and a new name-Obayd she joins the boys' school. Catapulted from youngest daughter to only son, she is served with meat while her sisters get sauce and vegetables. But as the fortune would have it, she meets Rahim (Rahima), another *bacha posh* who comes to her as a friend-rescuer, who actually 'knows her because I am you' and tells her to 'forget everything else and be a boy'. Rahim even is determined never to change back to a girl. "He... Should I call him he or she? He, I decide,

because that's what he wants to be" (67). The lives of two *bacha posh* change.

You are a boy, not a *bacha posh*, Obayd. If you get that, there is nothing else. You know your weaknesses now, don't you? Boys aren't supposed to have weaknesses. Boys are built of rock and metal. We eat meat and show our teeth.

And girls?

Girls are made of flower petals and paper bags. They eat berries and sip tea like something might jump out of the hot water and bite them (73).

Amidst these, social challenges and pretensions a heroic and memorable friendship springs forth between these two girls that results in the wish to be free, to wander and to have unsurpassable strength and confidence to acquire the freedom they so desperately want. Rahim assures Obayd that he would help him and will be like brothers as 'nobody helped me when I first changed' and he is quite happy to have Obayd. The two of them explore the village on their own, climbing trees, playing sports and more and make their days the best as boys. Both of them would never like to get back to the original identities and wish that they had certain magical powers as to let them remain boys forever. On one adventurous day they make a crutch for Obayd's father as to help him in walking, as Obayda's father has been into confinement for long due to loss of his leg. To make him feel that even Obayda, the daughter can be a son and can help her father to 'get up on his own'. Rahim and Obayd are on top of the world and can do 'much more' as one is 'one half from the east and one half from the west'.

While boys play in one courtyard and girls play in another, Rahim and I skip along the imaginary high wall that divides them, closer to the sky than anyone else. We are untouchables (117).

But their transformation would not last forever and the two friends never wanted to separate from each other-unless the two best friends can figure out a way to make it stick and make their new found freedom everlasting. Obayd discloses one myth to Rahim:

I remember my mother telling us about a legend once-about Rostam's bow. The legend says that passing under a rainbow changes boys to girls and girls to boys. Even if a pregnant woman passes under the rainbow, the baby in her belly changes.

I think we should do it, Rahim whispers.

You're serious?

I am. I want to go under the rainbow and be changed forever. I don't want *this* to be temporary. Do you? (118-119)

Rahim digs up the legend and looks for the way to save himself from being undone. He feels it now as his mother looks at him differently so he needs to act before she does. For the sake of friendship for each other both the girls transformed into boys by society decide to chase the rainbow. But as the misfortune would have it suddenly Rahim is missing and Obayd searches him and even reaches his home. He tells Rahim's elder sister:

I can't forget about him. He is my best friend.

That's the truth. He's the one who made everything okay. I would've been lost without him, fumbling through school confused about what I was supposed to do or be. Rahim showed me that being a *bacha posh* is a good thing, may be even the greatest thing that's ever happened to me (145).

Rahima is engaged to get married only at the age of thirteen. Obayd is extremely distressed as he thinks that had they passed under the rainbow this horrible odd would never have taken place. He decides to save his friend Rahim and himself. He bursts out when he risks his life and goes to see Rahima in her new home, actually the house of Abdul Khaliq, the warlord of the village, much older to Rahima.

Why did this happen?

Why? Because I'm a girl. Because people think they can do what they want to us. They think we should have no say in what happens to us. That's why I don't want to be girl. That's why I would've done anything to make myself a boy forever (167).

Obayd after that miserable meeting with Rahima decides to complete the undone adventure and reaches the place actually where he passes under the rainbow. 'In this secret, hidden place, something magical has happened'. Obayd later finds that mother is again on her family way and most exhilarating was that he sees his father standing and walking with the help of same crutch, which Rahim and he had made. '*Rahima, I wish you could see this*'. (p.250) Obayda's father is happy and proud of his all daughters, especially Obayda and tells her:

What do you think is a stranger sight to see-a girl with short hair or a ghost walking with a crutch? I promise, the only eyes that will be on you will be the ones wanting to see what magical child managed to drag a one-legged spirit out for a walk (223).

Hashimi's tale is a heartbreaking treatment of the impact of powerlessness as experienced by two girls who do not have freedom to control their own fate. This cultural practice of *bacha posh* allows these girls to ride bikes, climb trees make male friends and explore outdoors. She shares her experiences later with her schoolmates:

Pants are made for legs, and legs are freedom.

I climbed one of the tallest trees in the market. I even went up to the mountains-all by myself. You know there are lots of snakes and scorpions on the mountains, and I saw some. Even had a scorpion walk across my foot, but it was too scared to sting me. I did lots of stuff that I can't even tell anyone about anyone because it was so dangerous. I could do it all because I was a boy and because of Rahima (244).

Thus Obayda's friendship with Rahima rings of genuineness and validity. The reader who has no knowledge of Obayda's and Rahima's culture can understand how they find themselves in the circumstance and how they are able to resolve what they can and cannot, all the while holding on to their hope, optimism and spirit. Nevertheless, when a shocking circumstance results in the possible end of Rahima's period of *bacha posh*, she tells Obayda that their fates are not their own and that was why that she wanted to do anything to make herself a boy forever. It is noteworthy that both the girls wanted the same all children wish for: the opportunity to be free to learn, play and grow, to express themselves and to have a say in what happens to them.

Literature has shown us the ups and downs of friendship time and time again-and in most cases; those relationships have changed characters' lives. Both the novels *The Boy in Stripped Pyjamas* (2006) and *One Half From the East* (2016) are relevant to the title and theme of the paper due to the fact that 'nothing like *that (friendship)* could even happen again. Not in this day and age'. The dynamics and the similarities in friendship in each are considerable. Both the books feature friendship between two males, in the former example and two females, in the latter one, that knows no boundaries and has the power to overcome the oddities of societies.

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EXPOSING THE PANGS OF WOMEN IN BAPSI SIDHWA'S *THE PAKISTANI BRIDE*

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Abstract:

This article sheds lights on the plight and predicament of women as portrayed in Bapsi Sidhwa's The Pakistani Pride. The novelist being a Pakistani appears to have got through the knowledge of the tribal socio cultural conditions which create space for the marginalization of women. The character Zaitoon is portrayed as having lost her parents in her childhood and later being adopted by Qasim. The writer points a picture of tribal and tribulations and woes and worries of women. Bapsi Sidhwa's portrayal of tribal life style and condition of women is realistic and the novel delves deep into the life of tribes, particularly the condition of women, who are treated not as humans but as commodities.

Key Words: *Emotional Storm, Sexual Harassment, Ill- Treatment, Rigid Social Norms.*

Gender-bias is a deep rooted system in the Pakistan tribal society. For generations, women encounter various violations on the basis of gender. Basically, the socio-cultural set up of Pakistan society renders a platform for gender inequity. Women face a lot of discrimination right from their birth to death. The patriarchal society considers women as worthless creatures whereas men are regarded as treasures. Bapsi Sidhwa's *The Pakistani Bride* sheds a light on the tribal society which is only obsessed with boy children and grows an enmity towards girl children. Due to the favoritism of the society, they undergo innumerable torments in every phase of their life. The Paper delineates how the lives of girl children in a male dominated society are susceptible to affliction and misery. The psyche of the biased Pakistan tribal society is brought to light. The study also exposes honor killing, child marriage, marital rape which is still practiced in the tribal areas. Girl children are subjected to experience a varied of partialities within their family circle. The disoriented feelings and emotions of girl children propel them to seek extinction from a torturous life.

Men are considered logical, rational and objective but women are supposed to be considered emotional, sensitive and subjective. It is really serious to analyze feminism in the present scenario. Many of the writers have mostly written women as inferior and weak. They see men are 'stronger sex'. But the real fact is women are bold enough to face all the problems in life. Women face more problems and difficulties than men. Bapsi Sidhwa's novel mainly portray women from the different sections of society. In her novels, Sidhwa gives treatment for the women characters for the problems they are facing their life. The researcher also explains Bapsi Sidhwa's women characters and their behavioral patterns.

Bapsi Sidhwa has been recognized as one of the most talented of twentieth century writers. This Pakistani Writer, who is the first recipient of the South Asian Excellence Awards for literature in 2008, always emphasizes her Zoroastrian roots in her works. She has written five novels namely *The Ice Candy Man, The Pakistani Bride, The Crow Eaters, An American Brat* and *Water*.

The Pakistani Bride, as a novel highlights the darker side of Pakistani tribal society and its

insensitive nature, often different from mainstream values and norms. Bapsi Sidhwa has focused on the universal problem of women victimization. This novel primarily presents stories of three brides- Zaitoon, Afshan and Carol.

Angst is a feeling of anxiety and frustration in which the object of fear cannot be described or pointed out. Women often feel angst about their state or condition. It is a transcendent emotion that denotes a constant struggle one has with the burdens and problems of life without knowing how and when the redemption would come. The plight of women in Pakistan tribal areas is miserable. This evokes in women the feeling of angst. Here the researcher explains that angst is not a negative emotion and states that, only because of such emotion women come out of their bonded lives and move towards liberation and freedom. Through the Women characters in the novel *The Pakistani Bride*, Afshan, Zaitoon, Carol and Saki's mother everyone realizes that all have suffered at the hands of the oppressive society in one way or other. The novel questions whether the role of Zaitoon as a representative of other women living under oppressive patriarchal systems in relation to cultural resistance should be restricted only to their role as wives and mothers. In such a world, woman's role is limited to reproduction regardless of her own desires and needs. As a Pakistani Parsi Woman and the experiences of women around her, Sidhwa perfectly understood the societal-cultural problems of women. She questions the system of sex-role stereotyping and oppressive of women in contemporary Pakistan society.

The Pakistani Bride is about Zaitoon, a young girl who lost her parents in her childhood and adopted by Qasim as his daughter. This story clearly depicts the unwritten rules of patriarchal society. Zaitoon as a daughter accepts the choice of her father as her husband, later she is forced to tolerate her husband's torture and finally she decides to break down the cultural barriers of the so called society and she tries to recreate her own identity.

When a male child is induced with the power of supremacy right from his birth, it is difficult to annihilate patriarchal flames. In Pakistani tribal areas, men are given the freedom of using women as an object to play with; the right claimed authority to beat. So, the honor of a man is judged by how well he can oppress his woman. Girls are used as commodities to transfer from one place to another in the name of marriage. Women are treated as commodities, which can be barded and traded by men. This is evident in case of Afshan, when she is married to a ten years old boy Qasim. The wedding ceremony takes place surprisingly because her father is not able to repay his borrowed amount he got from Qasim's father. Hence Afshan is traded as compensation of the loss and to cover up her father's failure. The important reason behind Afshan's marriage is due to poverty and it is also the result of rigid social norms and cultural beliefs. It is revealed through the description of Afshan's marriage: "Thrice she was asked if she would accept Qasim, the son of Arbab, as her husband and thrice an old aunt murmured 'yes' on her behalf" (8). Afshan becomes Qasim's wife as a deal made by her father. To clear his debt, Afshan's father has reduced her position to a commodity, but she accepts her position unquestioningly.

There are three different phases of women in this novel, as Sidhwa highlights the changing roles of women from various sections of Pakistan tribal society. The starting phase denotes the role of Afshan. This is a phase in which women are muted sufferers. They underwent all the sufferings silently, and they are happy in being slaves to men. Women are tied in the knots of family values and honor. The next phase is the suffering phase; Carol is an American, who comes to Pakistan after getting married to Farukh, an officer in Pakistani army. But the crossing of boundaries proves quite painful for her. She is subjected to abuse every day. Her husband's infidelity forces her to have relations with another man; for, fed up with her husband's jealous nature, she converts his nightmares into reality. Thus women of each class face problems in one way or another.

The final phase is the transition phase. Through Zaitoon, the central character, Sidhwa has portrayed the physical, mental and emotional predicaments of a girl. Zaitoon is not allowed to get higher education and is married to a man of her father's choice. After marriage, her rosy dreams of married life are

shattered under the feet of cruel reality. She has to lead the life of a slave in her husband's home, while Hamida, her mother-in-law also suffers as wife and mother .she is not respected even by her sons. Her son, sakhi, beats her badly, thus showing that even an aged mother cannot expect any love and regard from her own son whom she has given birth bearing much pain.

The point that Bapsi Sidhwa establishes with great clarity is that mere talks about the empowerment of women never affect human psychology where people fall prey to old stereotypes of women. Her novels are based on the study of the patriarchal society where men determine what role women should play, and that role is the stereotyped role of women, their role as sex objects. Throughout their lives, they try to please the male members of their family. Women are deliberately denied the right to education so that they may not become powerful and sensible enough to demand equality for them.

In *The Pakistani Bride*, Sidhwa uses the symbol of the eagle with broken wings for Zaitoon when she takes a step to escape from her marital prison. Zaitoon is raped by two tribal men and they keep her hostage for two hours. After regaining consciousness, she looks at herself. "Her shirt printed with faded lavender flowers and the torn shirt are the symbols of lost innocence, the molestation of this starved, raped and oppressed woman and become a powerful appeal against the oppression of women "(103).

Having a staunch faith in hope, Sidhwa does not end her novels on a depressing note. Hope is always there for a better time to come. Her novels inspire her women characters to strive positively for a bright future and assure them that a society can be created in which women can move holding their head high. Hence the researcher concludes the paper with a strong message that there is always hope even when the situation seems to be hopeless.

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CONFRONTATION OF MYTH AND REALITY IN THE NOVELS *THE PENELOPIAD AND THE PALACE OF ILLUSIONS*

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Abstract:

*The study attempts to highlight the predicament of postmodern art which confides with the traditional art form by subverting the antique foundation on which the great epics are placed. Margaret Atwood's *The Penelopiad* and Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's *The Palace of Illusions* attempt to represent the marginalized versions through the eyes of the typical postmodernist Penelope and Draupadi. The study hinges on the critical formulations of the postmodern literature in defamiliarizing the traditional model by decoding the antique text with the ironic glamorization that dismantles the antic disposition of truth where the myth and the reality confront with each other highlighting the difference between the mythical world of the past and the present world of reality. The study challenges the conventional understanding entailing the grandnarratives and focuses on the mythical level of restructuring, where each adaptations of the myth is unique to an author's specific construction of the story demonstrating a shared style of replaying old stories in new contexts through modern perspective.*

Key Words: *Postmodernism, Myth, Reality, Re-telling, Mininarrative, Reconstruction, Metanarrative*

Introduction

The word Myth comes from the Greek word 'Mythos' which means 'Story'. Myths are universal and timeless stories that reflect and shape our lives. They explore one's desire, fear, longing and provide narratives that reminds us that Myth never dies or evades but gets modified accordingly. Since myths and legends are the repository of one's collective senses, their actuality can never be exhausted. Myth is the framing device that interrogates particular socio-cultural and historical moments. Myths deal with the evolution and establishment of human societies that attributes meaning to customary practices and tradition. Literature is more like a sophisticated human endeavor which acts as a platform to record sacred entity in the form of stories and legends. One such endeavor is the work of Homer and Vyasa, *The Odyssey* and *Mahabharata* respectively. Literature has often borrowed stories from various cultural myths, using them as an important source in developing plots and themes which are reworked, reconstructed and recreated coping to the contemporary thinking trend.

Each adaptation of myth is unique to an author's specific construction of the story and these novels, *The Penelopiad* by Margaret Atwood and *The Palace of Illusions* by Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni demonstrates seemingly a shared style of replaying the old stories in new contexts and modern perspectives. These novels *The Penelopiad* and *The palace of Illusions* offer an alternative narrative to a grand myth by Penelope and Draupadi who comments on their experiences and events that happened many years ago to the modern reader from their own perspectives. As this lay a contrasting strode between the mythical world and the world of reality. Myth is the fabrication of ancient narratives which alters at every juncture narratives irrespective of the period in which they are spoken. As Bruce Lincoln in his work *Theorizing Myth: Narrative, Ideology and Scholarship* provides a genealogical study regarding myth

where he states that “Myth is an ideologically weighted narrative about figures and events from a remote past which shapes contemporary ideologies” (3). Thus, these two novels attempt to unmask the ideological imperatives behind every sacred history or myth which brings an alternative version of the grand narrative where it goes on de-constructing, re-constructing and re-interpreting the existing narrative.

Warner, Marina in her work, *Six Myths of our Times: Little Angles, Little Monsters, Beautiful Beasts and More* regards Myth not as fixed entities, but as the changing symbols which can reveal historical, social and cultural elements as well as the agendas behind them. Warner brings out a wide difference between myth and reality as “. . . a return to reason, for simply stripping away illusions, ignores the necessity and the vitality of mythic material in consciousness as well as unconsciousness to the reality” (20). According to Warner, reality comes to the forefront when myth is stripped of its illusions. Myth is dismantled in the mininarratives like *The Penelopiad* and *The Palace of Illusions* in such a way that it has been explored and the confrontation between myth and reality takes place. Finally reality takes a leaping bounce in all its attempts to reassemble the antique model.

Mircea Eliade in her work *Myth and Reality: Religious Tradition of the World* states, “Myth narrates a sacred history; it relates an event that took place in primordial time, the fabled time of the 'beginning’” (5). According to Eliade myth is a 'sacred history' so its boundary includes the important role played by gods and goddess. Even the *New Encyclopedia Britannica* defines myth as, “Myths are specific accounts concerning gods or supernatural beings” (“Myth”). Thus, these definitions of myth evidently share a common view that the role played by the gods and goddess occupies a major place in the mythical tradition of Greek mythology and Hindu mythology pertaining to the works of the Homeric epic *The Odyssey* and the Vyasic rendering of *Mahabharata*.

The Atwoodian narrative *The Penelopiad* lapses with the sacred tradition and shows the decline of faith in the keystone that established the very foundation of Greek mythology. Atwood has subtly employed the overarching idea regarding 'sacredness' and 'divinity'. She subverts the very idea of 'gods', 'goddess' and 'divine'. As in one instance Penelope says, “. . . only an idiot would have been deceived by a bag of bad cow parts disguised as good ones, and Zeus was deceived; which goes to show that the gods were not always as intelligent as they wanted us to believe” (TP 33) and even Penelope goes to the extent of saying “It's true that I sometimes doubted their existence, of these gods” (TP 34).

Divakaruni on the other hand, in her novel *The Palace of Illusions* does not make a strong breach between belief and disbelief but she has declined the eccentric idea about 'gods' and 'goddess'. As she delimits its typicality by bringing a contrasting idea of how human beings with a saintly nature were considered gods which they are actually not. She says:

I didn't pay too much attention to the stories, some of which claimed that he [Krishna] was a god, descended from celestial realms to save the faithful. People loved to exaggerate, and there was nothing like a dose of the supernatural to spice up the drudgery of facts . . . Krishna was a Chameleon. With our father, he was all astute politics, advising him on ways to strengthen his kingdom. He commended Dhri on his skill with the sword but encouraged him to spend more times on the arts. He delighted Dhai Ma with his outrageous compliments and earthy jests. And me? Someday he teased me until he reduced me to tears. (TPI 10, 11)

Divakaruni through Draupadi has brought a contrasting idea and reorganized the foundational pattern of the mythic tradition which in turn is contrasted with the reality, thus creating a strong emphasis on the reality which was overlooked and camouflaged in the antique narratives.

In another instance, the belief in myth is at stake regarding 'oracle', the secrecy of the oracle is parodied in both the novels. The myth of the oracle is said to be the divine whisper of gods about the life, fate and its course. Penelope in one instance subverts the idea of oracle and its authenticity as she says, “But he must have misheard, or else the oracle herself misheard the gods often mumble out of confusion” (TP 7).

She justifies her argument saying that the oracle of the shroud was the issue for her father Icarius but her father-in law Laertes. She says because of this confusion in the oracle her life was ruined as she recalls her childhood and recollects the trauma she faced when her father, in order to save his life, wanted to drown her. As she says, "When I was quite young my father ordered me to be thrown into the sea . . . he'd been told by an oracle that I would weave his shroud. Possibly he thought that if he killed me first, his shroud would never be woven and he would live forever" (TP 6). This shows how the authenticity of the oracle is decried in the Atwoodian narrative and finally Penelope says "Oracles were notoriously ambiguous" (TP 89). She even says that, "it's amazing and awful how the living keeps on pestering the dead" (TP 149).

Divakaruni on the other hand, through her narrative potency with peculiar affective quality, carried this contradictory ideological matter in disguise. Thus, Draupadi is caught in the tension between the oracle which was more like a riddle and this underlies the fact that the mystical pronouncement of the oracle is just the ironic strategic checks that makes life more hectic and uncomfortable. Divakaruni through her narrative has brought a conscious interrogation of the mythological assumption and subverts it with logical reasoning. Divakaruni says that the events and situations in every endeavor happen according to one's thought, which is made into action. But life is not just the course of an oracle coming true. She illustrates it through Draupadi, when she says "The spirits answered me so obliquely, in riddles that were more hindrance than help" (TP 21). She also mocks at this idea and how idiotically people fall for these kinds of things coated with the fake name of divinity. She says, "Fortune-tellers are always predicting weddings. They know that's what foolish girls want to hear most. That's how they get fatter fees" (TPI 35).

Thus, both these novels decipher the traditional ethnic practices and contradict with the logical endeavor of understanding. This is often suppressed in the conceptualization of myth and its components. As one turns blindfolded and refuses to uncover the fictitious belief that envelops and diminishes reality which is brought vibrantly out through the postmodern narratives. Both these novels are not merely a reworking of myth in the light of romantic ideology but an implicit critique of the mythical principalities which are applauded in the traditional version of *The Odyssey* and *Mahabharata*.

Linda Hutcheon uses the term "Historiographic Metafiction" which questions the history and traditional myth and by their contradictory urge to establish a new myth of the past which bounces with reality. She specifies, ". . . it makes ground for rethinking and reworking of the forms and content of the past always works with in convention mentions in order to subvert them" (5).

Adhering to this concept Atwood provides direct parodic references to the myth of Penelope's web. This wears a Parodic aversion towards the so called truth that underlines it. Penelope says that the myth or the idea was created by her not any oracle or prophecy dictated it. Though this was the reality, claiming it as divine might add on a firm strategy to her version or creation of idea. She comments on this saying, "I used to that it was Pallas Athene, goddess of weaving, who'd given me this idea, and perhaps this was true, for all I know; but crediting some god for one's inspiration was always good way to avoid accusation of pride should the scheme succeed, as well as the blame if it did not" (TP 89). She says that she has invented the myth of the shroud weaving in order to escape from the lusty brooded young suitors and this is very evident when she says, "Perhaps this shroud-weaving oracle idea of mine is baseless. Perhaps I have only invented it in order to make myself feel better" (TP 8). Atwood makes an emphatic attempt to draw a clear distinction between the myth and the reality. The episode of Penelope's web brings to the light, the drift between the notional idea of myth and the emphatic reality that is often overlooked.

Similarly, the episode of disrobing Draupadi, one of the significant episodes in the epic that is often spoken and debated takes up a parodic subversion, turning our focus and understanding of the epic or in particular that incident to a different realm of meaning. The humiliator, the victim, the savior, the spectator and defender takes up a different stance in Divakaruni's narrative gives a deep insight into the mind of Draupadi which gives an alien understanding and view on that particular instance.

The victim of unspeakable misery is no longer a trembling woman struggling with Dussasan to

save her from humiliation. She is no more of an antique woman helplessly calling for a rescuer but she is a different woman altogether. Divakaruni has given a different presence for Draupadi who is portrayed with courage and patience. As she said:

No one can shame you, he said, if you don't allow it. It came to me in wash of amazement, that he was right. Let them stare my nakedness, I thought. Why should I care? Then and not I should be decency. . . I felt my muscles relax, my fist open. He smiled, and I prepared to smile back. (TPI 193)

These lines show the difference that Divakaruni has brought in her narrative. Here the relationship between Krishna and Draupadi is no longer as a savior and the devotee or the victim, it is far beyond it, it is more like a strong bond of friendship that soothes the pain of the heart with the balm of love and peace.

Both the authors have made implicit attempts to bring in the reality which is very far from the mythoi tradition. As both Atwood and Divakaruni engulfs the space between myth and reality by reasoning out the traditional illogical mythic believes and recreate it as a new myth of past crammed with reason. The common event that both the epics share is the dreadful war the Trojan War in *The Odyssey* and the Kurushetra War in *Mahabharata*, but the novelist versions of the epics re-presents this great event and configure it in the contemporary understanding as a postmodern rendering. As in *The Penelopiad*, Penelope points out to Helen the different understanding of the context 'war' in the two different worlds of myth and reality and elucidates the meaning evolved in the present reality. She says, "I understand the interpretation of the whole Trojan war episode has changed", I tell her, to take some of the winds out of her sails. 'Now they think you were just a myth. It was all about trade routes" (TP 151). The portrayal of the battle of Kurushetra and its aftermath presents perhaps Divakaruni's most radical modification of the original plot. There is a strong focus on the female consciousness and in particular Draupadi's conscious, which is broadened and gives an alien insight of the war and its events which is omitted in the older text. As she says, "But there's something more Vyasa didn't put down in his Mahabharata" (TPI 314).

The postmodern relationship between myth and reality is the parodic reworking of the textual past of both 'world' and 'literature'. The textual incorporation of the intertextual past acts as a constitutive element of the postmodernist fiction. At first glance it would appear that it is only its constant ironic signaling of difference at the very heart of similarity that distinguishes between the two different worlds of past and the present. Postmodernism offers a sense of present for the past which is altered, re-interpreted, re-presented with more logical stances.

In the postmodern novels, the convention of myth and reality are simultaneously used and abused, installed and subverted, asserted and denied. By drawing an ancient myth, both the authors Atwood and Divakaruni have invoked a refabricated frame of meaning which enabled a multiple possibilities in the postmodern narrative, there by manipulating a transfer of change from homogeneous to heterogeneous voicing, fixed to unstable truth, from harmonized identity to multidimensional identity. Here myth acts as a perfect postmodern vehicle which brings in the reality challenging the traditional narrative by reworking the antique model. The total transformation of events and identity of the characters presented in the postmodern text highlights the reality that is shadowed in the grand version. In the novel *The Penelopiad* Penelope, who is pictured as the mouth locked faithful icon, undergoes a transformation that makes the reality striking and apparent. As she says:

I kept my mouth shut. It's my turn to do little story-making. I owe it to myself . . . once, people would have laughed if I'd tried to play the minstrel-there's nothing more preposterous than an aristocrat fumbling around with the arts-but who cares about public opinion now? (TP 3)

This kind of transformation can also be seen in Divakaruni's novelization *The Palace of Illusions* where Draupadi up the role of a narrator and tells her own version of the great epic which tears the fake mask and the biased pretensions of the primordial mythic narrative and exposes reality with legitimacy and

authority. The subtleties of the mythic narrative, *Mahabharata* takes up a differing conceptual approach in the mininarrative which enables to comprehend the false affectation and to make a distinction between the myth and the reality as separate stratification. As Draupadi says “It was my turn to play the storyteller. And so I began” (TPI 13). The potency of myth has declined from the prestigious position it enjoyed. This is reflected in the lines of Draupadi, as she says “were the stories we told each other true? Who knows? At the best of times, a story is a slippery thing . . . we'd have cobbled it together from rumors and lies . . . from our agitated imaginations” (TPI 15).

In the novelization of both epics the predominant configuration of the myth is subdued and the legitimization of reality takes an upper hand showcasing its supremacy. As in both the novels the portrayal of afterlife events and their belief in its eternal bliss is often doubted and given a shallow stroke without any emphatic stimulation, devoid of the so-called divinity. As in the novel *The Penelopiad* the depiction of Asphodel which is supposed to be the halls of death and darkness and where the bad ones are punished seems more like a field filled with spirits loitering and fulfilling their unfulfilled desires. Penelope even goes to the extent of cursing god for their biased nature, as she says:

Helen was not punished, not one bit. Why not, I'd like to know? Other people got strangled by sea serpents and drowned in storms and turned into spiders and shot with arrows for much smaller crimes. Eating the wrong cows. Boasting. That sort of thing. You'd think Helen got a good whipping at the very least . . . after having driven hundreds of men mad with lust and had caused a great city go up in flames. (TP 18)

This shows the very belief system on which the myth is based itself is shaken and counter-feted with reality, disclaiming the divine and noble nature of myth in general and grand narratives in particular. This heretical approach of the postmodern narratives dismantles the stature of the grand narratives by dislodging mythical credence of events and thereby takes up a heterodoxical approach surfacing the reality.

In the novel *The Palace of Illusions* Divakaruni also takes the postmodern streamline by creating a sense of skepticism about the mythical rituals and rites and through Draupadi she confronts the mythical ideas with more logical reasoning. As in one instance Draupadi says, “I was skeptical about the entire endeavor. Even if there were lokas, what proof was there that the dead could be promoted from one to the next based on what we did here on earth?” (TPI 157). Draupadi finally concludes by saying that these ideas were created by the sages to make people restrain from the evil and wicked deeds by creating a fear bred virtuous life style. Thus, Divakaruni counter-angles the mythic mold with complementary reality which is the uniqueness of the postmodern narrative.

There is vast difference between two worlds, the mythical world and the world of reality. This difference is visibly sketched by Atwood in her novel *The Penelopiad*, as the conversation of the judge in the trail of Odysseus clearly states this argument saying, “However, your client's [Odysseus] times were not our [modern] times standard of behavior were different then” (TP 147). This in another way also implies that myth and reality are two different entities that often overshadow one another. The works of realistic mould like postmodern narratives, through its demarcation of boundaries and limitation showcases the reality which is been overarched by the grand narratives. By its mythical overplay, the grand narratives falsify the normative reality.

Linda Hutcheon comments on the characteristics of postmodernism and its components saying “. . . it both legitimizes and subverts that which it parodies” (231). As in the narratives, the Atwoodian version and Divakarunian adaptation Penelope and Draupadi gains more attention and significance. Though the novelist exposé legitimizes their cause and reason simultaneously, it subverts the main criteria for which they are known. As both female characters, Penelope in Homeric epic and Draupadi in vyasic grand tale are known for their chastity and faithfulness towards their husbands which is subverted in the novelization of the epics. Penelope's loyalty is praised by Agamemnon in the Homeric version stands unswerving

contrast to the portrayal of Penelope by Margaret Atwood. Agamemnon says:

'... Shrewd Odysseus! ... You are a fortunate man to have won a wife of such pre-eminent virtue! How faithful was your flawless Penelope, Icarius' daughter! How loyally she kept the memory of the husband of her youth! The glory of her virtue will not fade with the years, but the deathless gods themselves will make a beautiful song for mortal ears in honour of the constant Penelope' (qtd. in TP xi)

This notion of archetypal portrayal of Penelope has been subverted in the parodic reversion of the epic. As she says, "He'll chop me up for tending my desires! While he was pleasing every nymph and beauty, did he think I'd do nothing but my duty?" (TP 118). In another instance she comments about the suitors and her secret attraction towards them, as she says 'I can't pretend that I didn't enjoy a certain amount of this ... I occasionally daydreamed about which one I would rather go to bed with' (TP 83, 84) this shows a strong rival of ideas that has been told in the antique model.

In the novel *The Palace of Illusions*, Draupadi who is known to be the faithful wife of the Pandavas confesses her dark desire and her secret attraction for someone else, which readers would never have imagined. Draupadi reveals her inner mind to the readers saying that she secretly loved Karna, the arch enemy of her husbands from the beginning but due to fate and circumstances she couldn't reveal such feeling towards him. She justifies it by saying that if she is destined to love and marry Pandavas, it should be Karna the first because he is the first born of Kunthi. This part of the narration cannot be found in the grand narratives. As she says, "I saw a different pair of eyes ... what evil magic does it possess to draw the human heart so powerfully to it?" (TPI 193- 194). In the end Draupadi expresses her happiness of being united with her beloved, Karna in the heavenly abode. "I reached my other hand for Karna ... the only one I've ever needed" (TPI 360).

One of the key elements that are predominantly found in both these postmodern narratives is the plurality of ideas and truth claims which stand as strong contenders for the traditional mythical coding. The combat between myth and reality reaches its high intensity here in this altercation. As the unique style of the authors there is a perfect blend of the theory, the typicality of contemporary thinking trend, semantic and stylistic peculiarities which together glamorize the postmodern narrative. As a *mélange* of conventional and contemporary composure these novels enabled Atwood and Divakaruni to disturb the precincts between myth and reality. In Atwoodian narrative, Penelope's account of her husband's adventure and journey gives a clear glimpse of the postmodern sway in the trend of modern thinking which is an overwhelming reality. As she says, "Odysseus told me of all his travels and difficulties _ the nobler versions, with the monsters and the goddesses, rather than the more sordid ones with the innkeeper and whores." (TP 137).

In Divakarunian adaptation, though it does not take up a direct conflicting pattern Divakaruni has managed to bring out a multidimensional portrayal and narrative which is very different from the original source. As pointed out by Andrea Custodi saying, Draupadi is extolled in the traditional epic as "perfect wife chaste, demure and devoted to her husbands" and in the modern version she is portrayed as "intellectual, assertive and sometimes down-right dangerous" (213). The characters and events from the original source are re-used with a difference that deviates from the antique literary relic shedding of its mythical colour and fragrance coded with reality and actuality.

An important trait of postmodern narrative is an amalgamation of the past and the present, whereas the novel *The Penelopiad* best illustrates such a trait, as the Videotaped trail and Anthropology lecture of the hanged maid's best illustrate how myth is very different from that of reality. Through the narrative technique, the novels showcase the absurdity of myth and its predominance. This fragment from the novel *The Penelopiad* stands as the best example bringing out the difference between the two worlds more emphatically.

Judge: What's going on? Order! Order! This is a Twenty-first century court of justice! You

there, get down from the ceiling! Stop that barking and hissing! [Pointing to the Furies] Madam, cover up your chest and put down your spear! [Pointing to Pallas Athene] What is this cloud doing in here? Where are the police? Where's the defendant? Where has everyone gone? (TP 148)

The postmodern narrative generates the tension between the historic myth and novelist reality. The unique style of each author articulates the notion of flexibility highlighting the difference, tearing away the false pretensions and bringing to the surface often overlooked ideas. Caroline Alexander in her essay "Myth made Modern" comments on how myth has been used in the postmodern narrative says, "Myths . . . have been readdressed, readjusted, reinterpreted . . . apparently to dislodge the tale from its mythical motive and relodge it with modern mirth" (1-3).

Conclusion

The mythical reworking of the ancient epics is often contrary and explores the logical alternative behind each illogical illusion. Atwood and Divakaruni coping with the contemporary techno-modern world of reality pairs each myth with its remade version that somehow justifies a reason for which it was done or told. In the novels *The Penelopiad* and *The Palace of Illusions* the reworking of myth stands an exemplary illustration in retracing the genuine motive behind each myth which might be a parodic version of the classical myth. Postmodernism provides a liberating space for one's opinion or an individual perception which is against the established notion of ideas or a commonly held thought. The postmodern narratives privilege idiomatic approach against a generic outlook. The mythical distortions also enable in promoting the reality fostering the skeptical attitude towards the events and narrations of the grand narratives.

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MULTI-CULTURAL ASPECTS IN THE NOVELS OF MAXINE HONG KINGSTON AND AMY TAN

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Abstract:

American Literature in twentieth century has risen to its prominence with the development of literature written by and about ethnic minorities. The new ethnic literature establishes worthy objects of academic study, alongside such other new areas of literary study as women's literature, gay and lesbian literature, post-colonial literature and literary theory. Asian American Literature achieved widespread notice through the writings of Asian American writers. One among the Asian American Literature is Chinese American writing. Chinese-American literature refers to the work written in English by Americans of Chinese origin. As Chinese began to migrate to the United States most of them have been struggling at the bottom of the American society, the representative image of Chinese-Americans described in American literature used to be a weak female. In the eyes of Westerners, they were always 'outsiders.' Under such circumstances, even America-born Chinese writers went against their mother culture in their creations. To the American culture, they are Chinese who followed the Chinese tradition, but in front of the Chinese civilization, they are also outsiders.

The contemporary Chinese American women writers are Maxine Hong Kingston, Sui Sin Far, Amy Tan. With the publication of Maxine Hong Kingston's *The Woman Warrior*, the Chinese American writing has come to its existence. Maxine was followed by Amy Tan, who is best known for her novel *The Joy Luck Club*. This paper focuses on the multicultural aspects in Maxine Hong Kingston's *The Woman Warrior: Memoirs of a Girlhood Among Ghosts* and Amy Tan's *The Joy Luck Club*.

While representing multicultural American's life Asian American writers inevitably confront their cultural origins and adduce perspectives that are foreign to the American mainstream. Asian American writers, while depicting the images of diaspora either interrogate or seek answers to the problems of ethnicity. It is visible that the Asian American writers particularly focus on the issues like ethnic identity which are strongly and sensitively represented. The same like, the Chinese-American writings also dealt with the cultural uneasiness manifested in the relationship between the Chinese mothers and American daughters which many immigrants faced with.

Culture can be considered as one of the most formative factors of a person's identity and it is regarded as a reference to the creations and cultural practices that are intellectual and artistic such as music, literature, painting and sculpture. It is explained as a process and development that cultivates one's mind. It has the responsibility in shaping the thoughts and behavior of individuals. When we see the culture in China and America, there is a vast difference. The Chinese mothers expect their daughters to obey their elders and to learn obedience by observation and by imitation as the mothers did in China. In America the mothers' warnings, instructions and example are not supported by the context of American culture and so their daughters do not understand. The daughters resent and misinterpret their mothers' alien Chinese ways and beliefs.

Amy Tan's novel *The Joy Luck Club* explores a variety of mother-daughter relationships between the characters and the ramification of cultures and tradition inside a family can be burdensome and cause

the family tree to fall down. *The Joy Luck Club* focuses on the relationships between intercultural mothers and daughters. The four Chinese immigrant mothers want to raise their daughters in the Chinese tradition but allow them to be all that they can in America. This paves a way for conflicts between the mothers and the daughters. There is a lack of communication between the mothers and daughters because of their linguistic barriers. They try to communicate with each other, still in circumstances it results in misunderstandings.

Amy Tan's women are torn between the culture of two worlds, that are Chinese culture and American culture. Racial, cultural and class differences between the mothers and daughters lead to miscommunication and misunderstanding. The cultural translation demands the effort of immigrant mothers to pass their Chinese heritage to their daughters, who have been brought up in American circumstances.

The language also becomes a barrier in their communication. The mothers are not good at English and the daughters are not good at Chinese. As we notice in the words of Jing-meithat, "These kinds of explanations made me feel my mother and I spoke two different languages, which we did. I talked to her in English, she answered back in Chinese" (*JLC* 23). Because of their mothers' inefficiency in perfect English the daughters are ashamed of. The mothers cannot read English and the daughters cannot read Chinese. They have to communicate orally to overcome their linguistic barriers. Jing-mei criticizes her mother's language as, "I think my mother's English was the worst, but she always thought her Chinese was the best" (*JLC* 29).

The mothers used to tell stories to the daughters and the major theme of their story is pertinent to an Asian-American mythology, concerns the mother's displacement in American society. Chinese and other cultural immigrants face the language problem. Their inability to speak grammatically perfect English marginalizes the immigrants from the dominant group. All the Chinese immigrant mothers encounter this marginalization. Even though they face linguistic and cultural difference, the mothers are able to help their daughters embrace their racial identity.

The Chinese-American daughters try their best to become Americanized that makes their mothers to disappoint. Moreover the daughters rebel against the Chinese tradition of heeding their elders and pleasing parents. The mothers are horrified at their daughter's insolence. They fear that their daughters' passion to achieve American dream will block them from ever understanding their Chinese heritage. In spite of all these fears, the mothers try to give them the best of both worlds. As Lindo states, "American circumstances but Chinese character" (*JLC* 254). Each of the major characters expresses anxiety over her inability to reconcile her Chinese heritage with the American surroundings. The daughters except Lena are genetically Chinese and have been raised in Chinese households, but they feel at home in modern American culture. The daughters Waverly, Rose and Lena have white boyfriends or husbands and they consider their mothers' customs and tastes as old-fashioned or even ridiculous.

The challenge for Jing-mei is not only to find out her long-lost sisters, but also to find her inner Chinese identity, and to use that as a bridge to the cultural, linguistic, and generational gap, which has been the bar between mothers and daughters. Jing-mei is the representative of the Chinese daughters in the novel. Earlier she believed that her mother has been a hurdle to acquire American culture, but later she understands that her mother's love and faith has insisted her not to lose her Chinese identity. All the other mother-daughter pairs- in the novel experience the same misunderstanding, with their daughters. Amy Tan is successful in presenting the conflict between the traditional Chinese and modern American ideologies in the novel. Jing-mei becomes a bridge between china and America, between mothers and daughters. She reconciles the cultural and generational differences and provides hope for better understanding among the other mother-daughter pairs in the novel.

Maxine Hong Kingston's *The Woman Warrior: Memoirs of a Girlhood Among Ghosts* portrays the traditionally subjugated position of Chinese women both in China and in the United States. The mother

and daughter suffer oppression because not only they are women but also they are Chinese. The clash between Chinese and American culture and the deliberate attempt of the narrator in succeeding American culture demonstrate the constructed nature of Chinese culture. It also highlights the culmination of stereotypical images and perceptions of Chinese Americans juxtaposed with the opposing point of view of the narrator, Kingston. *The Woman Warrior* also finds an empowering social bond that links the dynamics of Chinese-American women's intergenerational and inter-ethnic communities.

Asian American Literature focuses on the transmission of the original culture that has been studied in terms of a generational conflict. The parents of *The Woman Warrior* are clear about the discrimination between home and America. The narrator notes that “whenever my parents said 'home', they suspended America” (*WW* 116). The parents keep their sense of security by not moving beyond the confines of the Chinese enclave. But for the young generation tensions arise between China and America, the traditional Chinese-American community and American society at large. Kingston's complicated relationship between home, identity and community begins with the narrator's revisionary of her aunt's story.

Kingston's novel is something more than that of memoirs and it functions as a collection of oppressive ideologies of identity construction. It speaks a referential event of gender and culture. In Kingston's novel, there are moments where the narrator challenges and highlights marginality by making the invisible visible and by complicating the negotiations and tensions of identity construction, which are moments of empowerment. While Kingston frames the novel as a series of memoirs, which reveal some experiences surrounding her lifetime, it is a work of fiction in which her main focus is to articulate an account of growing up having to negotiate the social construction of gender and race. Because the novel is framed as a work of fiction, Maxine Hong Kingston mixes truth and fantasy.

The story of 'No-Name Woman' serves as a backdrop for Kingston's own experience growing up as a Chinese-American, torn between the world of Chinese customs and traditions and her new permissive American environment. Kingston's struggle is especially difficult because she is effectively forbidden from talking about it with anyone. “You must not tell anyone,” her mother tells a powerful, ironic opening sentence to a memoir (*WW* 15). As the aunt of Kingston is forbidden, she knows nothing about her aunt beyond the broad details given by her mother in the form of a story. This forced fabrication presents us with a dichotomy that is of fiction versus truth. Kingston probes to know really what has happened to her aunt. The ambiguous nature of reality and fantasy surfaces throughout the book. Kingston is also concerned with how gender and language are bound together in contexts of cultural practice. She explores how one young woman experiences her developing identity as a Chinese American through language experiences at home and at school. Kingston's piece is aggressive in echoing the cultural contradictions she absorbed in an upbringing that bridged two cultures.

Kingston's own difficulty in finding a voice parallels the plight of many of many Chinese-American children who are silenced and reined in by their parents. The narrator exposes the violence implicit in the negations on which gender and ethnic identities are based. Despite her sympathies for the victim of patriarchal Chinese society, she has participated in her aunt's punishment. She makes it clear that the awareness of women's oppression is constructed at various levels of China. The intersection of identities is reflected when she is not sure of which aspects of herself are tied to various facets of her identity:

Chinese - Americans, when you try to understand what things in you are Chinese, how do you separate what is peculiar to childhood, to poverty, insanities, one family, your mother who marked your growing with stories, from what is Chinese? What is Chinese tradition and what is the movies? (*WW* 06)

The oppressed position of being female is compounded by the low status of an immigrant. In China daughters are considered as dispensable property. During times of dire poverty, parents sell their daughters. In the story about Brave Orchid's independent life in China, the narrator describes how her mother has bought a slave girl from a seller of little girls, inspecting her at the market like any other piece of

merchandise. The story makes the narrator in dilemma that she also can be sold if the family returns to China. The mother and daughter bond in *The Woman Warrior* is ambivalent at best.

When the narrator sees the new Chinese girl in school, she thinks of herself and tells:

I looked at her and I HATED her. I HATED her silence. I HATED her China doll haircut. I HATED being seen next to her. I HATED that she reminded me of my own quiet self. Surely the others would remember my own awkward silence. I could not let this happen. (*WW* 24)

The narrator sees herself in the new Chinese girl and doesn't want to be 'othered' further. The narrator struggles to find home of identity as she is punished for not speaking perfect English loudly as her classmates do. She is also ridiculed for her body's failure to perform an American identity which is accepted and appropriate. Her shame of her 'othered' identity has internalized thoughts of cultural self-hatred, marginality and inferiority. So she torments the new Chinese girl verbally and physically to erase her 'othered' identity. *The Woman Warrior* explores the negotiations of gender and the construction of cultural identity of a Chinese American woman which is filled with complexity. In her later life the narrator takes her stance against her mother and her talk-stories. The protagonist leaves her home to gain a distance to her past: "I had to leave home in order to see the world logically, logic the new way of seeing" (*WW* 237). The narrator's departure has been seen as an "outright rejection of ethnic culture", meaning that she prefers a stereotypically white lifestyle (Cheung 93).

Like most immigrants, Brave Orchid has had to come to terms with profound disillusionment. A medical doctor in China is unable to find work in the United States, other than that she gets menial labor in tomato fields and canneries. Brave Orchid, born and educated in China, manages to adjust, even to acculturate to the life in the United States, although she never assimilates completely. As Brave Orchid slowly relinquishes her mental and emotional connection with China and she understands and accepts that there is little chance for her to return to the country of her birth. Unfortunately, she has nothing to replace China. The United States continues to be a mystery and an alien culture inhabited by strange people to whom she refers as ghosts because to her, they have no definable identities.

Kingston explores the nature and construction of identity. Two types of identities are the focus of *The Woman Warrior* - the immigrant identity, exemplified by Brave Orchid and the Asian American identity which is embodied in the narrator. While the two types share common elements, they are sufficiently distinctive as to warrant separate consideration. Brave Orchid and her daughter must negotiate issues of gender, cultural conflict, and assimilation and they must deal with their alienation from the dominant culture. The narrator incessantly faces differences between Chinese and American ways of living while she grows as a Chinese girl in America. She records the patriarchal culture in one side and the racist on the other. The ethnic autobiography explores "cross-cultural, diasporic identities ... constantly producing and reproducing themselves a new" (Egan 122). The book also explicates cross - cultural aspects in terms of traversing cultural distance between home and the outside world. It portrays the experience of two conflicting worlds that is the Chinese daughter in America.

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TRENDS AND STRATEGIES IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING: RETROSPECTS AND PROSPECTS

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Abstract:

This paper attempts to look at the English Language Teaching scenario in relation to the past, present and future in terms of men, methods and materials. It is examined to present the current trends and strategies in ELT that have been used practically in the classroom and also to modernize the ELT- trainee and Trainer. The ELT research has found that the following trends and strategies are very popular to cater to the immediate needs of the learners of English in changing technological and globalized society.

1. *Learner oriented Methodology (CLT&CLL)*
2. *Teaching with Technology*
3. *Multiple Intelligences*
4. *Task based Approaches*
5. *Edusat programme*
6. *Constructivism*

*The English Language Teaching scenario in India is currently undergoing rapid changes on account of technological advancements. Edusat has tremendous Potential to bridge the Urban -rural divide especially with regard to English Language Education.. English Language Teaching faces multiple challenges of reaching out to **learners** at all levels and addressing the changing needs of the global market- Also this paper attempt is critically examine the classroom practices in vogue in the light of the change in curriculum at content developed in the background of NCF -2005 observations and recommendations.*

Key words: *Multiple intelligences, task based Approaches, constructivism.*

The questions, what should be taught? And how should it be taught? Are intimately connected because if better methods of teaching are devised, it is possible to learn more - Bertrand Russel

Introduction:

The English Language Teaching (ELT) has tremendously changed over the last one decade. ELT in the 20th Century underwent numerous changes and innovations. In the past ten years the crucial factors have combined to affect current perspectives on teaching of English. English Language should be taught in our country to serve the needs of the Indians in the Modern Society. It should be taught for facilitating communication. The Direct method and the structural approach made the teachers and learners concentrate on the forms of the words and structure of the English Sentence but did not make the learner communicatively competent. Communicative Language Teaching or Communicative Approach was first introduced in Britain and United States. In India, the Communicative Language Teaching is slowly gaining importance in recent years to develop communicative competency among the students. In continuation of it constructivism and eclectic approaches are introduced basing on the recommendations of NCF-2005.

So various strategies, methods and approaches are evolved to teach English in our country but teachers are busy trying to cover the syllabus and adopt the method whatever that is convenient for them and learners are somehow learning English. We should not depend on western approaches to English

Language Teaching in our country but try to evolve new trends and strategies in English Language Teaching to suit the role of English in modern India. However, the ELT research has identified the following trends and strategies which are very significant to cater to the immediate needs of the learners of English in changing technological and globalized society.

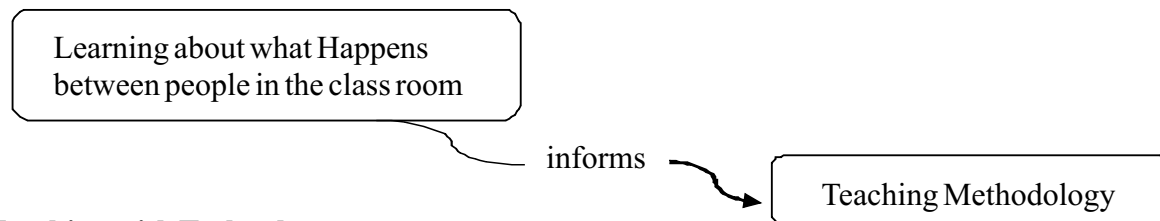
1. Learner Oriented Methodology:

Learner Oriented Methodology is focused on the use of Communicative Language Teaching and Communicative language learning in the class room. The objective of English Language pedagogies is nothing but developing learners' communicative competence and promote learning strategies and learner autonomy in language class rooms. There are two important key concepts about learner centered methodology. The first one places more responsibility in the hands of the learners to manage their own learning and the second one is teachers taking roles as facilitators of knowledge to help learners not to learn rather than being the source of knowledge.

The following qualities the learner should develop: a) Showing a high degree of motivation, b) having self-confidence, c) Demonstrating an awareness of learning needs and of the role of language learners, d) Being strategic and enthusiastic in learning, e) Being curious and creative in thinking and, f) holding democratic, open minded and critical attitudes were identified by the participants as essential attributes of positive language learners. The learners' needs motivation and confidence were positively affected by their aware of leaning.

- a) A thorough orientation at the beginning of the Program
- b) The teacher mediation in the process of learning
- c) The self-assessment of strengths and weaknesses

This methodology makes the teaching learning process more successful and also flexible to the indicant bilingual/multi lingual English class rooms. It leads to a culture sensitive methodology as mentioned in the book appropriate methodology and social context by Holliday (1994). This relationship can be represented in the following figure.



2. Teaching with Technology:

Teaching with technology is a systematic way of designing implementing and evaluating the total process of learning and teaching in terms of specific objectives, employing a combination of human and non-human resources to bring about more effective instructions. It is the development, application and evaluation of systems, techniques and teaching aids to improve the process of learning.

“Teaching is a performing art Kenneth Eble Pedagogy is the art and science of teaching Learning is change of behavior and performance”.

The role of IT has centralized the importance of English Language and English Language Teaching. It has facilitated the process of digitalization. IT provides the infinite opportunities to develop communicative competency of English with the shift of emphasis from the note books to lap-tops, hand writing assignments laser prints, black board to multimedia, libraries to websites so much so that we are or have moved towards a paperless, bookless digital society/library. The IT revolution has rendered students more passive computer glued and internet hooked. The e-mail has ushered in a silent revolution. The online conversation has made it more convenient and free. The internet has emerged as the electronic

flagship of global English. The question that stares us in our face is I will the IT revolution revolutionize the ELT too?

The internet in the IT age is only a yantra, to quote Prof. R.P. Singh (NCERT-New Delhi). It can give you the tantra, the technique. If may disclose mantra, the IT era has almost made teachers replaceable. The machine has a power which is finite. One can go down loading information endless by. Updating knowledge is no longer an issue. The human mind is highly adaptable - it can change its strategies as it was its gears. The capacities of the human mind are infinite inapprehension how like a god.

The greatest danger of these days is that people are tongue tied before their computers, while sending SMSs, one resorts to mixing up of letters with numerals as in b4 for before in a kind of hybridization. Vowels get dropped and consonants clipped to give new combinations with an unholy alliance. The computer is a great facilitator of spelling. The great drama of language is played on the lips of men and flows from the tops of their pens. One would agree with Prof. Bloom field that in ELT a moderate prescriptivism checked by facts as established by linguists is acceptable. Computer literacy has become an essential concomitant of any aspiring applicant in the competitive job market. The UGC sponsored curriculum Development Centres (CDCs) has taken projects of translating Indian classic into English ELT - has to be taken on massive scale in view of the job potential and abroad. In this context Shakespeare's play "The Tempest", Miranda taught Caliban, the monster to speak. Caliban retorts:

You taught me language, my profit don't is I know how to curse"

Ungrateful and defiant Caliban can talk back in a brutish way. But we need not throughway the bath water (The British) along with the tub (The English Language prudence demands we make the most of it.

3. Theory of Multiple Intelligences: Intelligence is an ability to solve a problem or fashion a product that is valued in one or more cultural settings. The theory of multiple intelligences is a theory of intelligence that differentiates of into specific "Primarily seasons) modalities", rather than seeing intelligence as dominated by a single general ability. This model was proposed by Howard Gardner in his book *Frames of Mind*. He articulated seven criteria for a behavior to be considered intelligences. Gardner chose eight abilities that he held to meet these criteria. The eight distinct intelligences are:

1. Linguistic Intelligence - ability to read, write and communicate words.
2. Logical - Mathematical intelligence - ability to reason and calculate to think thing in a logical, systematic manner.
3. Visual - Spatial intelligence - ability to think in pictures, visualize future result.
4. Musical Intelligence - The ability to make or compose music, to sing well or understand or appreciate music.
5. Kinesthetic Intelligence - ability to use body skillfully to solve problems, create products or present ideas and emotions.
6. Interpersonal or social intelligence - ability to work efficiently with others to relate to other people and display empathy and understanding to notice their motivations and goals.
7. Intrapersonal Intelligence - ability for self-analysis and reflection to region one's behavior and inner most feelings to plan goals.
8. Natural Intelligence - ability to recognize flora and fauna, to make other consequential distinctions in the natural world to use the ability productively in hunting, farming etc.

Gardner firmly maintains that his theory of multiple intelligences should empower learners" not restrict them to one modality of learning. Those who believe in one kind of intelligence think that all intelligence comes from a single factor. They back up this idea with the fact that there is a high positive correlation between intelligent quotient (IQ) and the ability to complete simple cognitive tasks and between reaction time and intelligences. He believes that the purpose of schooling "should be to develop

intelligences and to help people reach vocational a vocational goals that are appropriate to their particular spectrum. He contends that IQ tests focus mostly on logical and linguistic intelligence.

Gardiner's theory of multiple intelligences will also applicable to the English Language Teaching class room as the language learners are highly productive and grownup matured students especially at post-graduation level. At this level, logical and linguistic intelligence is very useful to learn a foreign language like English.

4. Task based Approaches: Task based approach provides learners with a natural context for language use. The teacher acts as counselor and consultant. Learning language both functionally and linguistically by solving problems with the help of the knowledge that students hold and the new knowledge. The tasks practiced in the class room have perceived purpose and a clear-out come. The nature of student-teacher/student.-student interaction is more. Learners feel low anxiety and high motivation students are active participants in their learning all skills are considered in this approach. No formal tests are given but evaluation is achieved through observing class activities and feed backing. Correction is alone by reformulating are recasting what the student have said. The techniques such as information, opinion and reasoning gap activities are used in this approach.

A task based approach in language instruction is founded on the concept that the learner is central in the learning process. Learners learn primary because of what they bring, in terms of their passive needs, motivation, past experiences, background knowledge, interests and creative skills to their class room experience. Teachers on the other hand are seen as facilitators, helpers and resources. Task based learning offers an alternative for language teachers. Task based lesson the teacher doesn't pre-determine what language will be studied. The lesson is based around the competition of a central task and language studied is determined by what happens as the students complete it. The lesson follows certain stages such as pre-task, task, planning, report, analysis and practice. The Task-based learning as some clear advantages:

1. The students are free of language control. In all three stages they must use all their language resources rather than just practicing one pre-selected item.
2. A natural context is developed from the students experiences with the language that is personalized and relevant to them.
3. The students will have a much more varied exposure to language with TBL. They will be exposed to a whole range of logical phrases. Collections and patterns as well as language forms.
4. The language exposed arises from the student needs. This need dictates what will be covered in the lesson rather than a decision made by teacher of the course book.
5. It is a strong communicative approach where students spend a lot of time communicating. PPP lessons seem very teachers centered by comparison. Just watch how much time the students spend communicating during a task-based lesion.
6. It is enjoyable and motivating.

5. Edusat Programme:

The English Language Teaching (ELT) scenario in India is currently undergoing rapid changes on account of technological advancement Edusat being the most promising of them all-Having made the motion of virtual class room a reality. Edusat is on the verge of revolutionizing the education sector. This paper attempts to explore the current implications and possibilities of Edusat for ELT. With particular reference to the features of the text used for the purpose.

ISRO Chairman Madhavan Nair says: Satellites can establish the connectivity between urban education institution with adequate infrastructure importing quality education and the large number of rural and semi-urban educational institutions that lack the necessary infrastructure". Edusat programme is launched in 2004. Edusat has tremendous potential to bridge the urban-rural divide, especially with learned to English language education. Edusat is one means of connecting a no resource class room to an adequately resource class room. The lack of train teachers can be overcome by utilizing the expertise of

teachers placed in a more conducive environment Materials can specifically be prepared to suit the needs of different children and Edusat can make them accessible to children all over.

The Edusat project is launched in Kerala and Karnataka with the main purpose of providing support to teachers in handling difficult concepts science, mathematics and English. The English lessons were prepared by the regional Institute of English South India with the objective of developing the oral skills of the secondary school learners in Karnataka. A through analyses and survey of the field revealed the need for a function based curriculum. The entire process which took about a year resulted in 30 films graded functionally with an accompanying manual with pre and post telecast activities.

The English lessons helped the children their spoken skills by familiarizing them with 20-25 language functions and use the expressions related to them in different contexts. The lessons also benefited them in acquiring 200-250 words as part of their active vocabulary. On the other hand, the Edusat lessons provided a vast range of techniques for English teachers to develop the spoken English if their children. Storytelling, TDR (Total Physical Response) activities pronunciation games, chats and rhymes, solve play dramatization, debate, interviewing, telephonic conversations, etc. were a few among them.

This kind of Edusat project can also be launched in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana states with main purpose providing support to teachers in English language teaching and teacher training. British council, Madras EFLU Hyderabad, SCERT, Hyderabad and other Universities in the state can adopt this Edusat Programmes to enrich the English language teaching and teacher training in our state. This programme will help the language learn to learn the new language very effectively.

6. Constructivism:

Constructivism is basically a theory based on observation and scientific study about how people learn. It says that people construct their own understanding and knowledge of the world, through experiencing thing and reflection on those experiences. When we encounter something new, we have to reconcile it with our previous ideas and experience, may be changing what we believe or may be discarding the new information as irrelevant. In any case, we are active creators of our own knowledge. To do this, we must ask questions, explore and assess what we know.

In the class room, the constructivist view of learning can print towards a number of different teaching practices. In the most general sense, It usually means encouraging students to use active techniques (experiments real world problem solving) to create more knowledge and then to reflect on and talk about what they are bring and how their understanding is changing. The teachers makes sure she understands the students' preexisting conceptions and guides the activity to address them and then build on them constructivist teachers encourage students to constantly assess how the activity is helping them gain understanding by questioning themselves and their strategies, students in the constructivist class room ideally become "Expert learners". This gives them ever-broadening tools to keep learning with a students learn HOW TO LEARN.

Implications of constructivism:

In the constructivist class room the focus trends to shift from the teacher to the student. The classroom is no longer a place where the teacher ("expert") process knowledge into passive students, who wait like empty vessels to be filled. In the constructivist model, the students are urged to be actively involved in their own process of learning. The teacher functions as a facilitator, who coaches, mediates, prompts, and helps students develop and assess their understanding and thereby their learning. One of the teacher's biggest jobs becomes ASKING GOOD QUESTIONS. And, in the constructivist class room, both teachers and students think of knowledge not as inert factoids to be memories but as a dynamic, ever changing view of the world in live in and the ability to successfully stretch and explore that view.

Constructivist teachers pose questions and problems then guide students to help them find their own answers. They use many techniques in the teaching process. For example, they may:

1. Prompt students to formulate their own questions.
2. Allow multiple interpretations and expressions also learning.
3. Encourage group work and the use of press as resources.

It is important to realize that constructivist approach borrows from many other practices in the pursuit of its primary goal: helping students learn HOW TO LEARN. The Socratic dialogue is still an important tool in the way constructivist educators assess their students' learning and plan new learning experiences.

“As long as there were people asking each other questions, we have had constructivist classrooms. Constructivism, the study of learning is about how we, all make sense of our world, and that really hasn't changed”. - Jacqueline Grennan Brooks (1999).

Conclusion:

ELT practitioners around the globe put into practice a great deal of diverse activities to keep themselves up to date and enhance their practices which have been dealt above. Teaching English in India has become a completed affair and the problems that arise in our approach to ELT are multi-dimensional. So, constructivism is one of the latest trends in English language teaching in India. Keeping the retrospect's and prospects in the mind individual. The theory multiple intelligences and task-based approaches are also new strategies in English Language Teaching to cater to the immediate needs of the learners of English at any level of education i.e. primary, secondary or treasury level. The new trends and strategies such as learner oriented methodology, teaching with technology, theory of intelligence, task based approaches, Edusat programmes and constructivism are very useful and more objective in ELT and Teacher training to shape the prospective teachers and future citizenship if India. If anyone can adopts these trends and strategies in ELT class room. The English class room becomes a live theatre of drama.

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FLIPPED CLASSROOM APPROACH: OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

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Abstract:

The flipped classroom has been much talked about concept in recent years. Flipping the classroom includes passive learning events such as one-way lectures are forced to the freestanding class hours in the form of short tutorials, videos, student-generated content resulting in saving the precious class time and spending it on active learning activities or events. Flipping the classroom increases student-student interactions, student-teacher interactions. It also helps busy students and speaks the language of today's students. Flipped classroom can be initiated through other teacher's videos, self-created videos and through student content. Teachers initially face issues while implementing flip classroom primarily due to low technological or digital competence. This paper is an attempt to understand the flipped classroom approach and the flip classroom model. The paper also uncovers the opportunities and challenges while implementing. Understanding the right approach to flipped classroom will result in improving the student engagement in the classroom.

Keywords: *Flipped Classrooms, Higher Education, Active Learning, Blended Learning, Student Engagement.*

In a traditional instructor-centered classroom, the teacher delivers lectures during class time and gives students homework to be done after class. In a flipped classroom, things are done the other way like the teacher “delivers” lectures before class in the form of pre-recorded videos and spend class time engaging students in learning activities that involve collaboration and interaction. A flipped classroom typically and traditionally activities happened inside classrooms and now happening outside classrooms and vice versa (Lage et al. 2000). Strayer (2012) stated of the flipped classroom approach is a type of blended learning. Bishop and Verleger (2013) describe flipped classrooms as collaborating, group-based learning happening inside the classroom environment and direct, computer-based individual teaching occurring outside the classroom. Flipped classroom include (a) a vision for students to gain experience to content prior to class, (b) a reassurance for students to prepare for class, (c) a method to evaluate student understanding and (d) in-class activities that focus on higher-level cognitive activities including peer learning, active learning or problem-solving (Abeysekera and Dawson 2015).

Flipped Classroom Model

The flipped model is an interactive teaching method with a student-centred approach that “flips” the traditional classroom by moving information transfer out and moving information acclimatization into the classroom (Crouch and Mazur, 2001). The flipped classroom model has existed for years (Lage et al., 2000) and studies regarding its effectiveness as a pedagogical approach at the college level are relatively scarce since it has only recently been introduced and implemented in higher education. This model is built on various instructional foundations that shift the educational approach from a teacher-centred to a student-centred system connected primarily to the theories of Piaget (1967) and Vygotsky (1978). The emphasis on expanding one-to-one interaction shifts the focus to student-centred instruction and more

actively involves students in the learning process. The flipped classroom model was shown to help cultivate active learning (Berrett, 2012), and the purpose of this teaching strategy is to improve the quality and efficiency of the teaching and learning process (Demski, 2013; Estes et al., 2014). Developments in active learning approaches combined with innovations in instructional technology have led to increased use of the flipped classroom model (Bergmann and Sams, 2012; Thompson, 2011).

Importance of the study

Globalization has exaggerated all disciplines around the world and has increased pressure on educational programs to revolutionize their teaching contents and approaches to prepare students for challenging future careers. The literature reveals that the flipped classroom model can optimize class time, improve higher-order thinking skills, promote teamwork activities, enhance problem-solving skills, and facilitate teacher-student and student-student interactions (Estes et al., 2014). However, the implementation of this approach among professors in India has been limited and its progress in higher education has been remarkably slow. Though, the pedagogy in the prestigious higher education hubs in India remains quite traditional, as it predominantly employs a lecture centred approach and focuses on theories, memorization style, and analytical methods. This traditional approach does not provide the interactive learning environment needed to promote creativity and innovation. The integration of new instructional and media technologies in teaching methods is a challenge that must be addressed in order to transform traditional education and prepare students to flourish in challenging future careers.

The effectiveness of flipped classrooms

Various researches measuring the effectiveness of the flipped classroom in higher education contexts (a) compares a flipped course to previous more traditional reviews (e.g. Morin et al. 2013; Reyneke and Fletcher 2014; Rossi 2014; Talley and Scherer 2013), (b) utilises pre-post designs assessing changes from the beginning of the flipped course to the end (e.g. Bates and Galloway 2012; Vaughn 2014; Warter-Perez and Dong 2012) or (c) is focused on student insights and satisfaction with the course (e.g. Butt 2014; Critz and Knight 2013; Kim et al. 2014; Schwartz 2014). The flipped classroom approach varies significantly in methodological rigour, which adds additional weight to opinions regarding the lack of evidence backing-up this pedagogical approach. Despite all the variances in methodological rigour, results from studies appear reliably positive (Bishop and Verleger 2013).

Tague and Baker (2014) found that highly motivated students perform better in a flipped environment. Enfield (2013), despite a relatively small sample size, suggests that low achievers find pre-class videos less engaging and more difficult. Bishop and Verleger (2013) described that the theoretical foundations associated with flipped classroom approaches demonstrate evidence to support the theoretical framework. At the heart of most student-centred learning theories and methods is active learning (Bishop and Verleger, 2013). Bonwell and Eison 1991 found active learning requires students to engage in meaningful learning activities that allow them to think about what they are doing. Gleason et al. (2011) described that some control of the learning environment is shifted from the teacher to the learner.

Brame (2013) establish the two key essentials of a flipped classroom approach are, providing an incentive for students to prepare for the class and a method to assess student understanding. Love et al., (2014) defined that both of these essentials rely on summative assessment being part of the flipped classroom design. Though, no considerable evidence presently exists to support that an assessment-driven flipped classroom approach has improved learning outcomes for students than a flipped classroom where summative assessment is not integrated with the flipped aspect of the teaching. Finally, for many dissimilar reasons teachers decide to incorporate a flipped classroom approach into only part of the course.

Opportunities for Flipped Classroom Approach

1. Students methodically are taught critical thinking. Consequently, students ask questions of the teachers and other students when working in the team activities which provide immediate feedback on their learning and therefore benefitting from both their successes and mistakes. Thus it can be

concluded that Flipped classroom approach helps in increasing teacher-student and student-student interaction.

2. Active learning which is inherent in flipped classroom approach provides a platform upon which to practice subject content and practice work and industry skills. Freedom in thinking and action learned in the classroom can be transferred and applied to the work environment. Thus flipped classroom allows students to pause and rewind their teachers.
3. Less effective students are exposed to the learning processes of effective learners, thus encouraging engagement and learning from each other. This creates a forum for sharing learning approaches and ideas. Thus Flipping helps struggling students and helps them in all abilities to excel.
4. More effective learners can see how they may assist in a mentoring/teaching capacity. This skill can be transferred to the corporate and work environment after graduation.
5. Supports and facilitates active student-centered learning and can enable multiple learning styles. It allows teachers to know their student better and create real differentiation. Flipping also helps in changing the way a teacher talk to a student.
6. Opportunities are generated for students to explore their own propositions, promoting practices consistent with skill development as life-long learners. Flipping speaks the language of today's student.
7. Targets the development of the skills of independent study (self-directed learner) which prepares for life-long learning and skills required in the international context. Flipping also helps busy learners. It's a great technique for absent teachers.
8. Provides sequential opportunities to reinforce and apply knowledge. Students can question what is happening, can seek clarification on what they do not understand and project ideas forward into similar work and unique MI situations. Peer-to-peer-centered learning builds skills in managing conflict, creativity, time management and collaboration.
9. Opportunities to improve team building and problem-solving skills produce an immediate, timely outcome. Leadership skills are demonstrated and developed.
10. Students are learning to think critically. Their questions can be more analytical as they have had time to contemplate the material before class. Flipping change the classroom management and way the student interact with the teacher.

Challenges in Flipped Classroom Approach

1. The approach may not suit traditional learning styles of culturally and linguistically diverse MI students. This is normally overcome as students become familiar with the approach and progressively come on board.
2. Academics require technology competence. Before commencing, the flip approach consideration is required on personal competence and the quality and quantity of the technical support provided by the teaching institution.
3. The actual physical layout of the classroom requires consideration. For example, room size, layout, and availability of desks that can be moved to provide space for separate team discussions and the ability to project team answers as in a boardroom situation may be required for managerial type answers.
4. By considering the graduate attributes required, course and unit designers need to engage more with the MI and employers. The MI is addressing a well-known skills shortage, along with the employer challenges of attracting and retaining staff. Employers are aware that graduates can play central roles in their organization's transformation, improving business processes and customer service through new insights. By employers being part of the instructional design process, a more industry-ready employee is likely.
5. Not all students are self-motivated. Some students do not come prepared to the class. This leads to less

participation and engagement from the students. A significant barrier is students who do not prepare for sessions fails and may struggle. So, it is significant that the teacher inspires students to do the work before the flipped class.

6. Some see the concept of flipped classroom as more homework for students leading to extra workload. However, with the introduction of the flipped classroom, the teacher can assign less homework to start with. Some lecturers pre-prepare their lectures and upload them onto the university's LMS. This has several advantages such as the students can listen to the recordings at the location and time most convenient to them. However, there is an expectation that students do listen to the recordings and come to the class prepared. It cannot be assumed that all students have a computer (or tablet) and internet access at home and those students that are at sea may have intermittent internet access. Also, students from low-social economic background may be unable to afford these resources.
7. Creating a flipped classroom requires substantial time, spent initially to conceptualize learning activities for the classroom and to develop resources to be used up before the class. We argue that the time investment is paid back once these resources are created and revised.

This highlights the importance of modifying the introduction of flipped teaching to a class to better engage those students who may be likely to resist this change. Studies suggest that training students to be active learners may promote flipped classroom success. Estes et al. (2014) suggest that resistance to flipped teaching could be moderated through orientation to learner-centred approaches, personally relevant instruction, and transparent teaching practices. Although differences were found between those who recommend and those who resist flipped teaching environments. This differentiation based on preferences did not correspond to differences in their final grades in a flipped course. This suggests that preferences alone may not be the most informative aspect on which to evaluate a flipped classroom environment, especially since preferences could result from a number of different factors other than a fundamentally improved pedagogical approach. The occurrence of evaluating preferences in previous research is high (Bachnak and Maldonado, 2014, Christiansen, 2014 & Tague and Baker, 2014).

Student grades may improve when teachers adopt flipped classroom approach based on an academic perspective and use collective assessment when flipping the class. These facets seem to signify a stronger investment in the flipped classroom approach that has succeeding advantages for learning outcomes. Though, enhancements in learning outcomes appear to accord with less positive insights of the course activities. This can be challenging when (a) courses and teacher assessments are often based on student perceptions and satisfaction and which influence teaching decision-making and (b) assessments of flipped classrooms similarly depend on student perceptions and satisfaction with the course (Butt 2014, Kim et al. 2014 & Schwartz 2014). This issue has the potential to discourage teaching academics from adopting a flipped classroom approach, despite potential advantages for student learning.

Conclusion

The present study concludes that a teacher should consider integrating a theoretical viewpoint into their flipped classroom approach in order to improve the student engagement. Teachers should design the flip-related assessment items, and flip the entire course in higher education if they are focused on improving student outcomes. However, due to the originality of the student-centred learning for many students, resistance to the flipped classroom approach may arise. This could result in dropped approaches towards course activities or events, a belief that the course is incompetent, and decreased the confidence in their ability to complete the set work. In addition, the literature suggest that a large proportion of students will be inclined to resist the flipped classroom environment due to their preferences for learning in-class as opposed to pre-class in higher education. Supporters of the flipped classroom model claim that the success of the model is due to its fundamentals in active learning pedagogy (Adams et al., 2016).

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ELT APPROACHES: THE CHANGING PARADIGMS OF LANGUAGE LEARNING W.R.T NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION OF INDIA

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Abstract:

English Language is one of the most prominent languages in the world today. In Indian context, it plays a very important role. It is required to interact with the outside world and at the same time is the link language between the people of India since there are more than 30 regional languages spoken across India. Considering the importance of English language, the Parliament of India has recognized it as a Co-Official Language of the Country. In India, English Language is taught right from very beginning of a child's schooling and it continues all through High School, Intermediate, UG and PG. The teachers use a variety of approaches to teaching English. There is no particular method that is applied to ELT in India. Though, the approach mostly used in ELT is the amalgamation of all the methods devised so far, but Communicative Language Teaching is currently considered the best approach to ELT in India, especially at the PG level. The learners learn the new language fastest by getting involved in tasks where they are required to use the target language. CLT is based on Task based teaching which focuses on the use of authentic material and meaningful tasks.

Keywords: *ELT Approaches, Language Teaching Methods, Communication Skills, Business Communication.*

Introduction

It is very important for the people of India especially the youth to be conversant with and proficient in English Language. English is, in most of the schools and colleges in India, an integral part of the curricula. The teachers of English use a variety of language teaching techniques. In most of the professional Institutions there aren't any direct English language teaching courses. These institutions have courses in Communication Skills and Language teaching is a part of these Communication Skills courses. Though, in most of these Institutions the teaching of Communication Skills Courses eventually comes down to teaching English language Skills only including all the macro and micro communication skills. The students in the professional Institutions are all adults and very diversified. In most of the schools English is taught right from the beginning and thus, these students needn't be taught the basic grammar rules but at the same time, there are students who come from those schools where medium of Instructions has been the vernaculars and not English. It becomes very challenging for the teachers to handle such a diverse group of students. The approach that these teachers apply in ELT must be thoroughly examined and gaps need to be identified to make language teaching more effective.

The present study aims at analyzing the various methods used by English teachers in India in teaching English. The main focus will be on analyzing the techniques used by English Communication Skills teachers in professional Institutions. Further, the study will try to find out which method, according to the teachers, is most effective in the Indian context with particular focus on Delhi NCR. The analysis of the methods will include the background of each method, the strengths, the weaknesses, and the feasibility

and relevance of each method in the Indian context.

Some of the important approaches to teaching English as a second language in India discussed in the paper are:

1. The Grammar-Translation Method
2. The Direct Method
3. The Audio-Lingual Method
4. Bilingual method
5. Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)

Grammar Translation Method (GTM)

The Grammar-Translation Method for teaching English Language was in vogue during the 16th century. This method was originally devised to teach Latin and Greek and is also referred to as the Classical Method. The method made use of the traditional techniques of rote learning the vocabulary of the target language (TL) and learning the grammar rules. The focus of the method was on translating the texts into the TL. Latin and Greek were taught majorly as academic subjects and thus, no emphasis was laid on speaking and listening comprehension in the GTM.

This method came into being somewhere in 1500s to teach Latin and Greek but was revived in the 19th century to teach English Language. In the Indian context too, this method was quite in vogue in the early 20th century and is still practiced by many teachers. This method combines grammar rules and translation of sentences or texts between the TL and the native language. It dwells heavily upon rote learning of the grammar rules and then applying those rules while translating from L1 to TL and vice-versa. The two main objectives of GTM are - first, to help students develop their reading ability to the extent that they can read and easily understand the literature in TL and secondly, to develop the writing skills of the students. The main focus of GTM is on reading and writing and many techniques have been devised to facilitate learning reading and writing only. Consequently, speaking and listening are utterly overlooked in this method. In the classrooms, even at PG level, it is observed that the students who have learnt English through GTM fail completely to make oral presentations in the TL even though, their understanding of the grammar rules is quite sound.

Leopold Bahlsen, while talking about writing skills and speaking skills in GTM, said he would be overcome with "a veritable forest of paragraphs, and an impenetrable thicket of grammatical rules". (Bahlsen, 12)

This method does not involve any listening or speaking practice and very little attention is laid on interaction and pronunciation. Therefore, the method has been rejected by modern scholars and has no theoretical basis. According to Richards and Rodgers:

Though it may be true to say that the Grammar-Translation Method is still widely practiced, it has no advocates. It is a method for which there is no theory. There is no literature that offers a rationale or justification for it or that attempts to relate it to issues in linguistics, psychology, or educational theory" (Richards and Rogers, 7).

The Direct Method

The Direct Method, also called the Natural method, was devised in the 20th century to teach second language. It is based on imitating the first language learning and completely refrains from using the learners' mother tongue or the native language. The emphasis is on developing second language through aural and oral skills. A child learns the first language naturally through exposure and compulsion to communicate. It starts imitating what it hears and gradually, imbibes in the vocabulary and the structures of the language. The Direct Method of teaching or learning language establishes direct and immediate relation between experience and expression. The concepts in this method are taught by the means of objects and by 'realia'. Grammar is taught indirectly to the learners through reading, writing, conversations, and discussions. The emphasis is on forming a direct association between the words of the

target language and the meanings, without taking any help from the mother tongue or the native language. Second language is taught in the same way as one acquires the first language. The Direct Method focuses on developing the active language skills in the first place, and then helping the learners start thinking in the target language. The salient features of the Direct Method, according to H. E. Palmer, are:

1. Translation in any form should be completely banished from the classrooms including the use of mother tongue and the use of bilingual dictionary
2. Grammar should be taught inductively
3. Oral teaching precedes reading and writing
4. Use of disconnected sentences should be replaced by the use of connected texts
5. Pronunciation should be taught on phonetic lines
6. Meanings of the words and the forms should be taught through objects and natural contexts

In this approach to language teaching, learners are asked questions which they must answer using the target language only. Teachers read out loud passages, on the basis of the grade, and the learners have to understand the text. The learners are also asked to read passages in the target language. The errors are rectified in the due course by the teachers and the peers. Conversation practice is an integral part of this approach wherein the learners interact with each other and with the teachers and also ask questions in the class. The method has many merits. It facilitates understanding of the target language in a better way since there is no intervention of the mother tongue. It improves fluency of speech in writing as well as in speaking which further, expands vocabulary. This approach promotes reading to a good extent which is quite helpful in understanding language and in acquiring information about various topics. The demerits, however, overshadow the merits of this method. The most major flaw in the method is that it can't be followed very effectively in the monolingual classes. This method may be more effective only in multilingual classes where the learners are compelled to use the target language only in order to communicate. In monolingual classes, like the ones we have in India, the learners tend to resort to the common language or the mother tongue the moment they face difficulty in expressing and it is practically very difficult to regulate it, especially in large classes. Moreover, it is very time consuming to create natural situation to teach meanings of all the words and the use of realia too has its limitations. The Direct Method did not prove very effective on account of the mentioned demerits. The perceived weaknesses in this method led to the introduction of the Audio-Lingual Method.

The Audio-Lingual Method

The Audio-Lingual Method was based on the Behaviourist Theory which postulates that certain traits in human beings can be trained through a system of reinforcement and drilling. The Audio-Lingual method, also known as the Army Method or New Key, is an approach which was used to teach English language through the use of drills. The method could be believed to be the outcome of the exigencies during the Second World War. During the war, it became a necessity to understand various different languages and in order to train army personnel in different languages in the shortest time possible the method was devised wherein the personnel were drilled in different languages. A lot of contact was provided with the spoken language with minimum reading and writing. It was started as Army Specialised Training Programme (ASTP) but later came to be known as the Audio-Lingual Method. The Audio-Lingual Method is quite similar to the Direct Method as it completely refrains from using the mother tongue or the native language of the learners. However, this approach, unlike the Direct Method, focuses on drilling the learners in the grammar of the target language instead of teaching vocabulary. Applied to language instruction, this method requires the instructor to present a model sentence in the target language and the learners are required to repeat the same sentence in order to learn it as related to the context where they may produce it spontaneously. The instructor may also keep adding different words in the same structure. In this method, grammar is taught implicitly and the emphasis is more on memorization of the form. The instructions are based on static drills on which the learners have little or no control. They have to

practise the structures which are given to them by the instructors.

According to J.C. Richards et-al., the following are the distinctive characteristics of the Audio-Lingual Method:

1. Repetition - the learners are made to repeat the utterance as they hear it
2. Inflection - one word in a sentence appears in another form when repeated
3. Replacement - one word is replaced by another word in the same utterance
4. Restatement - the learners have to rephrase the utterance

In the Indian context, since most of the language classes are monolingual in nature, the Audio-Lingual method is not very effective. Further to this, the techniques of memorization and drilling might become tedious and boring unless the teacher is very creative and innovative. An Audio-Lingual class needs a well-trained teacher and a well-equipped classroom both of which are in utter inadequacy in India.

Bilingual Method

The Bilingual Method of second language teaching was propounded by Prof. C.J. Dodson, Wales. In this method, the first language of the learners is used to develop competency and fluency in the target language. Mother tongue or the first language is used to explain the sentence structures and the grammar rules of the target language to the learners. The meanings of the words, phrases, idioms and proverbs of the target language are also explained through the use of the first language. The term bilingual means two languages. So, in this approach to teaching English as a second or foreign language, L_1 is exploited in order to develop L_2 .

The method was first employed by Prof. Dodson to teach various foreign languages using Welsh. It was also an attempt to find out how the mother tongue, the most potential source available to a learner, could be used to learn new languages. Prof. Dodson believed in making complete use of the mother tongue of the learners instead of completely banishing it from the picture. He was of the opinion that if the L_1 is used systematically and strategically, it is the most potential resource at hand for the learners of foreign languages. The theory about the language including grammar rules, sentence patterns, meanings etc. may be explained easily using the mother tongue of the learners. The basic concepts are very clearly communicated to the learners using their first language. The Bilingual method is a little close to the traditional Grammar-Translation Method in terms that in Bilingual method also the learners have to use translation to a certain extent. They have to form sentences which correspond to the sentences in the first language. Though, word for word translation is not entertained in this method making it different from the Grammar-translation method. Translation is usually done by the teacher in dire need. Unlike the Direct Method, Bilingual method depends heavily on the use of the mother tongue. In fact, Prof. Dodson, propounded the method to reinstate the importance of the first language of the learners. He very vehemently attacks the Direct Method for completely abandoning the mother tongue or the first language.

The advocates of the Bilingual Method argue that the mother tongue, far from being a hindrance, is actually the greatest resource for the language learners since it allows easy comprehension of the grammar rules and the meanings of complex words, phrases and idioms.

In the Indian context also, the Bilingual Method is used extensively by the language teachers to teach English language. This is so because the method is simple and not many efforts are to be made. No doubt the method helps form a rapport between the teacher and the pupils and the learners do not feel stressed as they can easily get assistance from their mother tongue in the times of difficulty. The very fact that this method is simple and easy makes language learning difficult through the Bilingual Method. In order to learn a new language, it is important to get as much exposure to it as possible. Struggle which the learners have to go through while learning a new language is a vital aspect of language learning. While describing a certain place or thing, learners struggle for words and phrases; they rack their minds and try to communicate the message as clearly as possible. The learning that happens this way is learning forever. This struggle is missing in the Bilingual Method as the learners use their mother tongue to express complex

information which creates a barrier in language learning.

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)

Language teaching was earlier regarded as a cognitive matter that involved memorizing and drilling; then it started to be considered as a socio-cognitive matter wherein it was believed that language can be learnt through social interaction; and now, on the basis of theories by Chomsky and Halliday, the most dominant approach to language teaching is Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). It is believed by the advocates of CLT that language education should aim at making learners able to communicate in the target language rather than making them acquire grammatical competence. In CLT the teacher is just a facilitator and not an instructor. The job of the facilitator is to provide an atmosphere which is conducive to language learning. The approach is non-methodical in nature as it does not depend on any particular textbooks. It rather uses “authentic texts” and gives learners space to interact with one another in the target language, with of course a common task to do. An authentic text may be any written material in the target language for purposes other than language learning. The learners are given tasks which are based on interactive activities. In the Communicative Language Teaching method, language skills in all types of situations are promoted. Learners converse about various topics; they share their personal experience; and teachers give them topics or texts which are not directly related to grammar. This method, in addition to making the learners learn the target language, also enhances the general learning experience since the texts related to different issues are used as the base of all interactions.

In India also, Communicative Language Teaching is the method used by most of the language teachers. CLT makes extensive use of tasks to teach language and thus, Task Based Language Teaching (TBLT) can be considered a branch of CLT. TBLT focuses on authentic use of language and makes the learners use the target language in meaningful tasks. TBLT was popularized in India by N. Prabhu who realised that the learners learnt the new language more effectively by indulging in tasks where they need to use the target language in an authentic way. According to Prabhu's Bangalore Project the use of task based instructions make language in the classroom communicative since it relates directly to real-life situations. The task based teaching makes use of the natural ability of the learners to learn a language. A task, according to Rod Ellis, has four main characteristics:

1. The primary focus of a task is pragmatic meaning
2. There should be some kind of gap in the task. According to Prabhu's Bangalore project there are three major types of gaps - information gap, reasoning gap, and opinion gap.
3. The participants choose the linguistic resources needed to complete the task.
4. The outcome of the task should be clear, defined and non-linguistic.

Ellis maintained that during a task, if any attention is attached with the form i.e. grammatical structures, the learners will get distracted and will start finding and correcting. So, while preparing a 'task', the teachers must bear in mind that the outcome should be non-linguistic so that the learner in addition to acquiring language, also acquire information about various issues.

CLT has been extremely influential so far and has been accepted universally as the most effective language teaching approach. There are of course a few limitations too of the method. Some people believe that CLT focuses on fluency and not on accuracy. Further, it is also a notion that this approach leaves the learners to solve their communication issues themselves that might result in the learners keep producing incorrect and incoherent language. But with all these demerits, CLT still is the most effective method of language teaching today in the world and in India.

Discussion

The author of this paper interviewed teachers who teach Communication Skills courses to Management students and interacted with the students of management courses. The aim was to find out the approach which the teachers are using at this level and how effective and efficient the approach has been.

The approach employed by most of the teachers in improving or developing English Language Communication Skills of the PG level management students is an amalgamation of various methods like Bilingual Method, Grammar-Translation Method, Direct Method and the Audio-Lingual Method. But on further investigating, the researcher found out that the major approach being followed by many of the teachers is Communicative Language teaching approach, though, some teachers were unaware of this approach and had been using it unintentionally because it seemed more effective to them.

The activities which most of the teachers conduct in the communication classes include role-plays, extempore speech on general topics, group-discussions, reading news, drama, reading comprehension, listening comprehension, storytelling, description of things and people and so on. All the activities mentioned above use authentic language and come under the Task based Instructions. The students are involved in these activities and the teacher facilitates the performance. In role-plays, students are made to enact in the situations based on real-life e.g. conversation between a doctor and a patient; conversation between customers and a waiter in a restaurant; buying stuff in the local market where one has to interact with vendors; etc. The teachers make sure that the learners use the target language while performing. This way the learners acquire the target language in a natural way. In the beginning they struggle for words and make wrong structures, which are corrected by the teacher. Extempore speeches on very general day-to-day topics also help learners acquire functional language and general knowledge. Comprehension exercises based on reading or listening help learners develop their reading and listening skills, the receptive skills which form the base of the students. Storytelling activities develop and improve spoken English of the learners. All these activities use “authentic texts” to help learners learn the target language quickly. Grammar rules and proper sentence structures are acquired by the learners implicitly while participating in task based activities.

The focus of all these activities is helping the learners acquire communicative competence. While interacting with the students of MBA and PGDM courses, the researcher found out that these students certainly want to improve their English Language communication skills but are not ready to study grammar rules. At this level, these students are completely occupied by projects and assignments in the specialization areas and can't spare time to go through grammar books to improve language. Thus, the best way to improve communication skills of these students is to make them participate in classroom activities. Through these activities they brush up their language and learn rules implicitly. Moreover, the involvement of the students in these tasks also helps those who know grammar rules but can't speak fluently. The students who learnt language through Grammar-Translation Method get opportunities to practise what they have learnt and thus, improve their spoken English as well.

Conclusion

English, without any doubt, is a very important language in the world and in India. People do want to learn this language for various reasons. In India, this language is required to get employment and to earn livelihood. English in India is also considered a status symbol. Though, knowing English language can by no means be considered a measure of intelligence or brilliance but given the present situation, somebody who knows English language is considered educated. The teachers of English language employ various approaches to bring about desired results. They many a times combine different methods of language teaching to help learners learn English language in an effective way. The most popular approach today in English Language teaching in India is Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) as it imparts communicative competence to the learners. The material and the activities used in CLT help the learners acquire the language and at the same time help the learners to be informed about what's happening around them. Thus, the text-centred and grammar-centred practices need to be replaced by the student-centred, fluency focused and problem solving activities required by CLT.

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SOFT SKILLS PROGRAM: A MANDATORY ESP CURRICULUM FOR WORKFORCE READINESS OF ENGINEERS

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Abstract:

This paper is an attempt to emphasize the necessity of incorporating soft skills training programs in ESP curriculum for Engineering English, aiding the workforce readiness of engineering graduates especially from the B schools. India is one of the fastest developing economies having a huge manpower resource but it is not being properly utilized owing to the lack of employability skills in the youth. The young generation is having sufficient qualification and an appreciable percentage of youth are getting good job opportunities also. But the category of students who are of average level employment, a good job is just a dream for them. Employers prefer to hire and promote those candidates who are resourceful, ethical and self-directed with good soft skills. Hard skills and experience are not sufficient for the sustainability and progress in the corporate world. In spite of such great significance of soft skills many institutions are reluctant to include soft skills training in the curriculum. The growth of technical education has escalated since the privatization of higher education in India. Almost all technical colleges attract students who meet the required eligibility criteria for enrolling in an engineering college, but unfortunately they are drastically deficient in soft skills and English language proficiency, which in turn makes these students unemployable, even after they complete their four years engineering degree course. The employability may be achieved by inculcating some skills, such as: Communication Skill development, Self-Management, Communications, Managing people and tasks, Mobilizing Innovation and Right Attitude. The paper recommends some models for teaching soft skills as an integral part of engineering curriculum.

Keywords: *soft skills, training program, employability, ESP for engineers, Models soft skill training.*

1. Introduction

This paper throws light on the need of soft skills training programs to be adopted in colleges and university curriculum in order to produce industry ready workforce. The paper also puts forward some suggestions for making above initiatives more effective for developing students fully equipped with relevant soft skills.

It is largely misunderstood that engineers of the 21st century must be proficient and adept in technical tasks alone. The engineer profile has developed from the professional and scientific engineer of the last century to the enterprising engineer. This realization must also have an impact to the engineering education. While the new structure, almost certainly, continues to be based on a solid preparation in mathematics and sciences, it is also essentially emphasizing the professional role of the engineer, and the demand of soft skills in the working life of a professional. In today's world, where the survival of the fittest is the norm, it has become imperative to sharpen one's technical skills, along with more importantly, one's soft skills. Technical skills can be learnt, applied and amount to a measurable degree. But the same cannot be said of soft skills. Soft skill is a sociological term used for Emotional Intelligence (EQ) of an individual. It can be broadly defined as personal attributes that enhance an individual's interactions, job and career prospects. It entails both face to face customer interaction and also indirect correspondence over telephone

or e-mail. Employees adept at soft skills will achieve both individual as well as organizational success. Hence soft skills is critical to showcasing one's hard skills; both can be considered to be two sides of the same coin - one without the other has no impact. Serby Richard (2003)^[1] says that modern corporate requirements are such that they search specifically for those candidates who can add value to their organization with their soft skills and the ability to develop and use soft skills in their work space. This requirement of soft skills in a job has made the competition for job acquisition and job sustainability tougher. This view point is substantiated by Hewitt Sean (2008)^[7] that, employers value soft skills because they are just as good as indicator of job performance as traditional job qualifications. So today's professionals need to encompass a high soft skills quotient, apart from the domain knowledge in order to succeed in this competitive era. So for inculcating soft skills in the graduate engineers they have to be provided with trainings as a part of their curriculum. This in turn will help them to improve their holistic personality and compatibility, thereby enabling them to secure a respectable position in the corporate world.

Hard skills contribute to only 15% of one's success while remaining 85% is made by soft skill (Watts M and Watts R. K, 2008). In spite of the big relevance of soft skills in the present corporate world most of the institutions and universities are yet to introduce soft skills in their curriculum. There is a dire need of incorporating soft skills trainings in their curriculum, to ensure workforce readiness of its students.

2. Soft Skills: Definition

Soft skills are the people's skills or personality specific skills in one's personality. According to Hewitt Sean (2008)^[2] soft skills are "non-technical, intangible, personality specific skills" which determines an individual's strength as "a leader, listener and negotiator, or as a conflict mediator". Soft skills are the traits and abilities of attitude and behavior rather than of knowledge or technical aptitude (Tobin, 2006)^[3]. Purdue University defines soft skills as "the cluster of personality traits, social graces, facility with language, personal habits, friendliness, and optimism that mark each of us to varying degrees." Soft skills are different and distinct from Hard Skills. Soft skills are those skills that add more value to the hard skills adorned by an individual. Martin Carole (2008)^[4] comments that hard skills are more "along the lines of what might appear on your resume" whereas soft skills are "cluster of personality traits, social graces, personal habits, friendliness and optimism." Soft skills are not a substitute for hard or technical skills, but they act as balancing skills that serve up to unlock the prospective for highly effective performance in people even with good hard skills.

3. Necessity of Developing Soft Skills: Literature Review

Technical and job-related skills are essential, but they are not enough when it comes to progressing up the ladder. Soft skills play a very important role in this rigorous commercial epoch world. Today there is a large pool of qualified job seekers in the engineering stream and the competition within them for job acquisition and its sustainability is getting tougher. To get an edge over the competitors they are left with no other choice but to add worth to their hard skills option than to hone their soft skills to exhibit their true acumen. Thacker and Yost (2002)^[5] noted that students require training to be effective team members. Employers often iterate that "business graduates lack good team leadership skills". Similarly, according to Knell and et.al. (2007) employers are continually asking for a work force rich in creativity, communication skills and cultural understanding. The National Employers Skills Survey 2003, reported that employers regard shortages in soft skills, including communication, teamwork, and customer focus and responsiveness as far more crucial than hard or technical skills (Watkins, 2004). Poor soft skills like communication skills create a negative impression with employers during the recruitment phase and may exclude a graduate with good technical skills from being selected for employment (Pauw and et al, 2006). This is resulting in increase in the Industry Academia gap. On one hand there is emerging requirement of skilled manpower in Industry, but on the other hand engineers churning out of colleges are unemployable coz of lack of required industry ready skills in them.

4. Soft Skills Curriculum- A Basic Need

It is no news that lack of competence in soft skill is marked as one of the reasons of poor rate of employability of technical graduates. Though it is true that soft skill needs to be induced at a very young age at home but the role of soft skill training in schools and colleges cannot be underrated. Irrespective of the target group or the institution where it is imparted, soft skills training programs aims to improve a whole range of skills, like confidence, negotiation skills, communication skills and the skill to establish and maintain interpersonal relationships. Soft skills are perceived as those capabilities that are intrinsic in an individual. These competencies exist in every individual to a particular level. But if these skills are left unused then that individual will lose on utilizing his / her inherent skills. The aim of any soft skills training program is to remove these blocks or the barriers that prevent the individual from utilizing his/ her skills. Such trainings will make the individual aware of his / her latent capabilities and to refine it for the holistic development and success of the individual. Everyone can get benefit from the soft skills training irrespective of the skills they have inherited.

5. Outcome of soft skills training program

Aim of such programs is that the students should be able to:

1. To develop Right Attitude needed to survive in Corporate
2. To learn & practice effective communication skills
 - a. To develop effective presentation skills.
 - b. To learn effective business correspondence and prepare business reports which produce results.
3. To become self-confident individuals by mastering inter-personal, team management, and leadership skills.
4. To develop holistic personality with a mature outlook to function effectively in different circumstances.
5. To develop skills such as critical thinking, problem solving and situation handling.
6. To participate effectively in various selection procedures laid by the recruiters.

6. Delivery Ways

Soft Skills training programs training should be imparted to improvise the students' attitudes, values, beliefs, motivation, desires, feelings, eagerness to learn, willingness to share and embrace new ideas, goal orientation, flexibility, persuasion, futuristic thinking, diplomacy, and various skill sets of communication, manners, and etiquette so that they will be able to deal with different work situations. The training in soft skills has two parts. The first part involves development of ones attitudes and attributes, and the second part involves sharpening ones communication skills to express attitudes, ideas, and thoughts well. The crucial part is to successfully work at perfecting integration of ideas and attitudes with effective communication skills in verbal, written, and non-verbal areas. Attitudes and skills are integral to soft skills. Each one influences and complements the other.

7. Methodology:

Training of the students should begin with a preliminary test in the English language to determine their language competence in the use of English for effective communication both verbal and written. The idea is to ensure that students are oriented to understand that a manager's key job is to be able to express him clearly, correctly, and concisely. To achieve best and effective results modules have to be devised for training programs giving emphasis on language, communication skills and behavioral skills.

Personality Development through Soft Skills Training should be conducted in three modules:

- 1) Business communication
- 2) Attitudinal and Behavioral Skills
- 3) Training in Group Discussion and Personal Interview Skills

4) Training in Entrepreneurship; Encouraging job creation and entrepreneurial leaders

1. Business Communication: This covers the following areas: Communications skills, current English usage, debates, language games, situational dialogues, précis writing, essay writing, presentations. (Preparing for effective presentations, presentation for small groups and large groups, marketing and business presentations.) Business Correspondence(Principles of clear writing, often misused words, applications and requests, routine messages, memos, report writing, organizing meetings, preparation of agenda and minutes, business etiquette, telephone etiquette, e-mail etiquette).

This result in realization that fluency and command over speaking and writing gives them an edge in interacting with people at all levels in the professional world.

2. Attitude & Behavioral skills: These are set of skills related to personal growth for efficient functioning of one's mental and response faculties. Students are made to realize their strengths and weaknesses so that they are able to grasp the true essence of development. This module covers the following areas:

Psychological Tests: Aptitude and personality assessment, suggestions for improvement.

Team Skills: Team building and leadership, transformation of groups into teams, group dynamics, intra-group dynamics, inter-group dynamics, emergence of leadership, conflict management, inter dependency and assessment of team-based projects.

Time Management: Parkinson's Laws, Murphy's Laws, Pareto's Principle, Law of Clutter, prioritization, goal setting, effective time management.

Interpersonal Skills: Social skills, assertive skills, negotiations, listening skills and cross-cultural communications.

Leadership Skills: Concepts of leadership, leadership styles, insights from great leaders.

This also results in student realization that punctuality, collaborative team skills, goal management, and listening skills, are important facets of a holistic personality. Self-awareness programs enhance the students' personality. Such soft skills are enormously valued in business organizations. As employment situations become tougher, potential recruiters assess and desire personal attributes like attitude and values in their employees.

3. Training in Group Discussion (GD) and Personal Interview (PI)

Before the students go through real job interviews, they must be made to go through a series of practice sessions on GD and PI... Feedback is given to the students later for a realistic understanding of industry expectations. It covers the following areas:

Selection Process: Overview of selection process, practice of psychological tests, effective resume writing, dealing with placement consultants and headhunters, references - how to get effective references from past and current employers.

Group Discussions: Concepts and Practice.

Interview Techniques: Effective interview techniques, mock interviews, stress interviews, review and feedback.

4. Training in Entrepreneurship; Encouraging job creation and entrepreneurial leaders:

A very important skill set to learn as a part of one's soft skills training is learning the art of working for oneself with a deep sense of personal responsibility and onus. Across globe this skill is aggressively tested and searched for, by an employer during job interviews. The training on campus for developing an entrepreneurial attitude is very critical in 21st century and onwards. And development of such skills can only be harbored when the ecosystem around campus is made conducive for all such skill set learning will happen, when the students are exposed to real time while they are on their campus. An emerging concept of learning such skills is happening by way of soft skills modules which also entail running a campus company at college or engaging in live activities which helps students broaden their exposure and improve their mindset and gain right work attitude. In the process many big campuses have also been successful in creating potential student startups who have launched themselves in market right after they pass out. Such

a learning experience is the need of the hour today and all eminent campuses are realizing it and incorporating entrepreneurship education in their curriculum. Since a major

5. Teaching ways & methods

The teaching methods in the soft skills training should include lectures, projects, role plays, quizzes, and various other participatory sessions. The emphasis is on learning by doing. Since the method of training is experiential and highly interactive, the students imbibe the skills and attributes in a gradual and subtle way over the duration of the program. The students will internalize the skills and attributes learnt over a period of time. The Business communication and Behavioral training is recommended starting from first year to pre final year, whereby the Interview training and preparation techniques must be emphasized in the final year.

6. Method of Assessment

The Soft Skills training program must be a credit course and the evaluation of the students can take place on a continuous basis. The Active participation in activities, enthusiasm displayed by the students in acquiring the necessary attributes and skills, and their commitment to improve in terms of attitudes should be the prime criteria for evaluation. The effectiveness of the training session is enhanced through a two-way feedback. Wherever necessary, the trainer gives feedback to individual students on their performance and to the class in general. In turn, the students also give feedback on the training sessions. They are encouraged to give suggestions regarding the content and the delivery of the training sessions so that improvements can be made in the modules from time to time if necessary. The counselors will also give a feedback to the students on their strengths and the areas where development is needed.

7. Models Used in Soft Skills Training

The three models are generally used in imparting Soft Skills training in Engineering Colleges:

- In House Training by Regular Faculty Members
- Out Sourced Training Model by Private Training Companies / Vendors
- Hybrid Model -In House Training on Regular Basis for 2/4/6 semesters with expert padding up inputs from external agencies/Industry professionals before Placements in 7th/ 8th semester.

I. The In-house Training Models

In house faculty for soft skills training is essential in every technical educational Institute. These faculty members should be carefully selected keeping in view that the faculty should not only be well qualified in English language but also be effective soft Skills trainers. These in-house faculty members should periodically undergo suitable faculty development programmes, to hone their language skills and soft skills training delivery methods. A trainer with Industry experience is the demand of the hour.

Advantages of In House Training Model

- The in house faculty has many advantages. Since they are generally highly qualified academically and are in constant contact with the students, they are able to give valuable guidance to the students on a regular basis. Their presence in the campus is for long hours, which gives the students a chance to approach them whenever they need guidance. The outsourced trainers devote limited time, as they cater to various colleges simultaneously to earn more business.

Being permanent faculty members, they are loyal employees who have a good grip on various effective teaching methods. They are also aware about the acumen of the students of various classes and sections. The outsourced trainers are recruited from various far flung areas and subsequently they are sent to many colleges simultaneously. The students of every region have a different level of English proficiency and different problems of pronunciation. Such fly by night trainers are unable to get a grip of these problems. The in house faculty is constantly in the same region, and hence they have better understanding of the pronunciation and other deficiencies in the students' problems in communication.

- The permanent faculty understands that every student is unique and needs to be taught in a different

manner. They improvise and modify their lectures keeping in mind the level of each group of students. The training companies on the other hand formulate structured lectures in the form of modules, and deliver it in every class, irrespective of the level and understanding of the students.

- The internal faculty members have a passion for teaching, whereas the main motive of the outsourced companies is to earn money.
- The in house faculty is readily available in the campus for any placement related training
- The in house faculty is readily available in the campus for any placement related training requirements.

Disadvantages of In house training Model

- Teachers are not always very well trained themselves, or even if they are capable, they lose motivation because of the casual attitude of the students. This problem can be addressed by giving the in house faculty a chance to attend Faculty Development Programs periodically.
- Students do not take interest in the PD classes as they feel that these are less important than the technical subjects. Students will take the course seriously if the course is allotted due credits and attendance is made mandatory. .
- Evaluation of soft skills poses a great challenge, since unlike hard skills they are difficult to measure.
- The in-house faculty may develop a comfort zone, and take least interest in upgrading their skills. Regular FDP is needed to keep the faculty abreast with the latest corporate culture in different industries / groups.

II. Out-Sourced Training Model

Advantages

- Good Training Agencies can have great expertise in imparting Soft Skills Training since they are professionals and experts in their field. They have vast experience and use more modern and innovative techniques of teaching.
- Generally, these agencies charge exorbitant fee, and hence they are able to invest some money in developing study material in the form of workbooks, etc. These modules, if used properly can benefit the students.
- Their teaching methodology is non-conventional. They use various activities to teach the students. This method attracts students and induces them towards better learning.
- Some trainers belong to the corporate world. They are familiar with corporate culture and can help in the placement of students.

Disadvantages

- The out sourced agencies cater to many colleges simultaneously. The trainers are often rotated to suit the schedule of various colleges. As a result, trainers are often changed in the middle of academic sessions. This results in poor quality of training.
- Since the training agencies are on contract, mostly the aim is to make money rather than benefit the students by providing quality education.
- It has been observed that before earning the contract, these agencies give impressive demonstrations, presentations and put forward extraordinary study schemes. In the actual classes, the standard is not maintained and the gap between presentations and actual delivery is quite big.
- The outsourced agencies are very expensive, since their charges are on hourly basis. Even if the attendance in the classes is low, they charge for the whole class. This makes the out sourced option very expensive and unviable.
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The agencies do not give proper training to their trainers. They pick up any graduate with a pleasing personality and put them in classes to be soft skills trainers. .

Soft Skills classes require infrastructure like projectors, seminar rooms, video recording facility, language labs, which is not available in most colleges. If the infrastructure is there, it is not sufficient for the large number of engineering students admitted in the college.

III. Hybrid Method

The hybrid training method involves training by in house faculty throughout I, II year, with special inputs by very experienced trainers from a professional agency during the pre-final and final year before the placement drive. This method has proved to be very effective for the students.

Advantages of Hybrid Model

- Investing in developing and enhancing the skills of regular faculty for the hybrid model will be beneficial in the long term basis. All the problems faced due to involving external agencies can be eliminated by recruiting and developing regular faculty for this purpose.

It will also be economical in the long run.

The Hybrid Model aids the students in receiving the best of the both worlds. A sincere approach in developing an environment of teaching learning in the first two formative years of engineering backed up and supported by the sophisticated and state of art training by professionals in pre final and final years will surely enhance the employability skills of an engineer. This shall be a big step towards reducing the Industry Academia gap in terms of job readiness in students.

Hence this model is strongly recommended to be included as a credit course in the engineering curriculum in prevailing Universities and institutions.

11. Recommendations:

The discussed hybrid model is strongly recommended for all premier professional institutes. To start with the course may be floated as an elective under a choice based credit system so that the outcome can be measured. Few other key recommendations are:

- The faculty plays a crucial role and must be a passionate one. Faculty can be someone who herself has strong inter personal skills and should be a fluent communicator with state of art knowledge on the ecosystem and its changing ways. Stress should be given on regular Faculty training and refresher courses to keep them abreast with world happening and emerging trends and tools in English Language Training scenario.
- The batches can be made on basis of common English proficiency level for best results. All the training may be done in teams to keep up a healthy and competitive environment. Live activities and real time exposure should be given to the students using the authentic materials.
- Live case studies of some successful Intrapreneur and Entrepreneurs should be discussed in sessions which will align the students to a progressive thought process and attitude. Speaker sessions from Student Alumnus and Entrepreneurs is always very inspiring for students as they are easy to emulate as role models.
- Special attention should be given to the students hailing from Hindi belts with low proficiency in English. Several students share this pain point of suffering from hesitation and fear of public speaking and expression. Such students need special and focused attention and should be dealt separately. They must be given rigorous practice in communication labs stressing on their listening and reading skills. Before involving them in a soft skill training session their language proficiency is essential to be worked upon.
- Along with the training sessions for students, it is also recommended that they should be exposed to speaker sessions from Industry /domain experts. This activity should be taken up regularly and the

Industry expert can be associated as an Adjunct support to an institute. The students can be engaged into taking up mock interview sessions with these experts which will help them in working on their areas of improvement way before their final recruitment process is on.

- Students must engage in compulsory internships in industry/work places. There are certain colleges / institutions that encourage students to go for field visits, Industrial visits in order to encourage student participation in the real world of work. This should be made compulsory and students should be monitored on their learnings and experience gained out of the Internship duration.
- During their soft skills training sessions a parallel Mentor platform is also recommended to be provided to the students to seek guidance and way forward tips from domain experts. Right counselling at a time helps boost the student's confidence and their chances in clearing job interviews is always higher. The Mentors can be people from the Industry and Corporate houses and may be roped in by an institute under their Industry Academia partnership. In some cases an Alumnus may also suitably play the role of a Mentor and facilitate mentorship for his juniors.

12. Conclusion

Effective communication and interpersonal skills are crucial to increase workforce readiness and to compete successfully in the business environment. The real key to the effectiveness of professionals is their ability to put their domain knowledge into effective practice. In these context soft skills has a crucial role to play. To enhance or to hone soft skill traits among students it has to be adopted in the curriculum at college level and University level. We are living in an ever changing world and it is high time now that our institutes realize that inculcating right attitude and skill set is mandatory to survive now. We are aware about the nature of jobs going to change drastically in the Automation led environment and in next twenty years all present jobs may completely fade away. The emerging jobs will have a key requirement for a student to be an entrepreneurial leader with innovative skill set. The job roles will be dynamic and challenging ones with humans toggling between real beings and artificial intelligence and survival shall not be easy. It is in such an evident scenario that there is a rampant need to step back and look at the quality of students reaping out of one's institute and take corrective steps now. The need to re model existing training format and revamp it with meaningful engagement with a right intent is required.

To conclude, the soft skills program is about enabling and empowerment. With these training programs students' have a smooth transition from aspiring students to young employable youth with an entrepreneurial attitude and skill set. As an emerging economy throughout the world, our pool of talent needs to be nurtured and honed with special skills that makes them adept in a world of changing economies and trends. There is a need for right intervention and re look at the present status and make core changes in the education pattern and delivery. Change is the law of the nature and in today's world it is progressive to flow with the tide and bend as need be to succeed. A change in pedagogy and approach to training is imperative now.

ARISE AWAKE AND STOP NOT TILL THE GOAL IS REACHED...is the Success Mantra!!!

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SALIENT LINGUISTIC FEATURES IN *CHEMMEEN*, THE ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF NARAYANA MENON

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Abstract:

Narayana Menon's translation of Chemmeen into English became a best seller at the time of publication. He has ushered in the process of translation with his strategy of providing the foot notes for specific terms. Chemmeen has an academic research potentiality. The linguistic aspects like transliteration, proper English words and phrases and simple ideas in the sentences are analysed in this present study.

Key Words: *Chemmeen, translation, foot notes, transliteration, linguistic analysis.*

Introduction

Chemmeen is a classic novel written by T.S. Pillai in Indian literature. It appeals to the people of Kerala. The translation of *Chemmeen* into English by Narayana Menon is a variation of English literature. It has an appeal to all the readers of English in the world. The linguistic aspects like transliteration, proper English words and phrases and simple ideas in the sentences are analysed.

The Transliterations

Narayana Menon preferred the transliterations to the apt English words. The transliteration helped him to bring out the flavor of the Indian languages like Malayalam. For instance, 'Kochumuthalali' referring to Pareekutti, a young man, who is a trader of fish and the childhood friend of Karuthamma, could have been substituted with 'young owner'. Similarly 'Valia Markathi' also falls into this category. The word 'Valia' means 'Big' and 'Marakathi' means 'a fisher woman' and also a female member of a particular caste namely Marakkan. The intention is to bring out the adulthood of Karuthamma. The word 'anna' denotes a coin which is equal to 1/16 of a rupee. It became out dated with the introduction of new metric system (100 paise is one rupee). The least value of such a coin is mentioned by transliteration. The word 'Allah' used by Pareekutti, refers to God of Islam and is known to everyone. The words 'Chakara' and 'uppa' are characterized with the bold type and the meanings are given in the footnotes for the better understanding of the readers.

The fisher folk were waiting for the good catch in the Chakara season. Before the arrival of fortune the people were starving and had to appease their hungry with 'rice soup'. Normally this compound word brings in an ambiguity. Soup is prepared with the vegetables or any other non-vegetarian stuff. There are few words like 'gruel' and 'porridge'. But they are prepared with oatmeal or any other in water or milk. Narayana Menon wants the readers to speculate the poor condition of living by the fisher folk. A handful of rice or more is boiled with a large amount of water according to the number of the family members. So they get the conjee water.

Narayana Menon is justified in his modest introduction of his title word 'Chemmeen' meaning a variety of fish - the 'shrimp'. Not a mess is added to distract the smooth reading of the readers. The word

'Katalamma' referring to the Goddess of sea is invoked by Chakki, mother of Karuthamma in the right context. 'Tali' is a gold ornament which is designed according to every section in Hindu Religion. Tali is attached with a yellow thread. Tying Tali around the neck of the bride by the groom is considered a compulsory rite. It is a symbol of a married woman. 'Beedi' is a preference of the poor people of India. Working class people have a habit of smoking 'Beedi' to relieve of physical pain or to get an emotional relief. The footnote gives the meaning of 'cheap' i.e., a low costly smoke. 'Ayilam' is one of the twenty-seven stars in Astrology. Celebrating the day in a particular month people visit temple and offer the prayer for the welfare of their family. On that day they put on the new dress or the special dress.

'Arundhati' is the wife of the Sage Vashita, one of the seven sages. She is identified with the morning star. She has been described as 'chaste and revered' and with a character of unblemished, inspiring and worthy of imitation. A ritual in the marriage ceremony is in practice in the Hindu culture.

Choice of English Words and Sentences

The translation of Narayana Menon is faithful to the original work in Malayalam. The language is simple and intelligible. His choice of English words and construction of sentences bring it to the light. The word 'oarsman' is the right word to mention the earlier job of Chembankunju in a boat. Even a synonym; 'rower' will mislead the readers. The reason is that the rowing - boat is different from a fishing boat.

The phrase 'a little kerosene lamp' appears to be an instance of verbosity. The poor people can't afford to buy any vegetable oil. The omission 'kerosene' will raise a doubt about the use of oil in the lamp. An evening environment around Karuthamma's house is narrated by Narayana Menon. It can be called a 'trope' - a literary device. There is a shift from literal meaning of a word or words to a non-literal meaning. "It was a moon lit night. The sea lay bathed in the moon light" (Chem, 14).

We are familiar with the words, 'dry fish', 'stock fish' and 'cliff fish', but Narayana Menon goes to the extent of invention, that is, 'dried fish' which is entirely a different process of preserving the fish. The phrase 'slapped... on her (Nallapennu's) shoulder' is a choice of rarity by Narayana Menon. 'Slap' is associated with one's face. Further the shoulder is connected with a pat. An alternative of 'slap' is 'smack' but smack can be combined with one's back only. The 'slap' is more aggressive and forcible than 'smack'.

Narayana Menon has preferred the 'Headman' to 'Chief man'. The reason is that the chieftainship in other communities is transferable by election. The headmanship in the fisher community is hereditary and accepted by future generations. Narayana Menon has also maneuvered the technique of Breathalyzer in his verbal narration. Hence, the sentence is:

“...he breathed straight into her nose” (Chem, 26).

The chat between Ramanmuppan and Velayudhan posed a question, 'what will happen if Karuthamma does not get into marriage?'. Velayudhan wants to know the role of the Headman in such a situation. His hidden thought is described in a sentence, “what was at back of mind?” (Chem, 29). Narayana Menon wants to be more scientific than aesthetic. Normally we can't have a distinction between mind and brain. The hidden thoughts always find a place in the back of one's brain.

A man or a woman becomes a celebrity in a particular place. The neighbor of Chakki, Kalikunju, finds fault with the modesty of Chakki and confirms that; 'As is the mother so is her daughter'. In the last generation Chakki was attractive to the fisher folk and the traders. In pursuant to the trend of her mother, Karuthamma allegedly clamors for the attention of fisher folk or the traders. So, the word 'toast' is inserted in the sentence. The fisher community is controlled by taboos and traditions. Fishermen and fisherwomen are trapped in the mythical spell. Outwardly the tradition appears to be protective of the fisher folk. Under such a notion Narayana Menon has used the words, 'hedged in'.

“She stopped almost stunned” (Chem, 43) is constructed to describe the emotional impact of shock from the question of Pareekutti. This sentence is grammatically balanced or not! The verb indicated her cessation of walking. 'Almost' is a word of adverb, giving the meaning 'nearly'. 'Stunned' is to mean 'shocked'. Hence, the above sentence is free from the comments.

The boat starts its onward journey from the shore to the sea and makes a harsh sound. Narayana Menon has chosen this word, 'grated' which further means the slow movement on the sand. On reaching the waves the boat strides up and down on the water. To describe the movement of Chembankunju's boat Narayana Menon has coined a strange word 'canter'. It describes a moderate speed slower than a gallop but faster than a trot of a horse. To narrate the rowing the boat by the oarsmen simultaneously and uniformly Narayana Menon picks up a word from music - Jargon, that is, 'unison'.

After trading the fish with Khadar Chembankunju returned home with a plenty of cash in his hands. Chakki was not happy with Chembankunju's money. "Panchami was sobbing her heart out" (Chem, 55) is the sentence in this context. Chembankunju realized his folly. Despite her bruise and swelling Panchami anticipates an assurance from Chembankunju that a basketful of fish on the next day. One day Chakki buys a nice bedstead. 'Bed stead' is a synonym of bed frame which includes bedpost, bed spring, footboard and head board and excludes the mattress. On the contrary 'cot' is something different from a bed stead. It means a baby bed with high sides. Colloquially we substitute a bedstead with a cot. During the Chakara season Chembankunju gets the Shrimp. Even a tiny place is not left out in his boat. Narayana Menon has constructed the sentence as follows; "Every nook and corner was full of the Shrimp" (Chem, 70). His choice overflows beyond the rim to abundance.

A coin has two sides: obverse and reverse. Likewise the Chakara season has brought the wealth to the fisher folk in its first phase. The second phase is a continuous rain. Narayana Menon has opted for a word 'respite', meaning a short time. 'Break' or 'pause' would imply that time could be longer than Narayana Menon wants. He is very particular of the time: a minute. Hence 'respite' - the exact word for a minute. There is one more chance for Karuthamma to meet Pareekutti in the moon lit night. An owl from a coconut tree and a 'pie dog' are watching them. The word means that the dog is not under the control of any owner. Other words like, 'stray dogs', 'street dogs' and 'village dogs' have owners and are allowed to come and go freely by the owners.

On hearing a scandalous charge against Karuthamma Chakki becomes unconscious and falls down. Some women consider that all these things augur ill. Narayana Menon fixes a word 'augur'. The verbs like 'predict' and 'foretell' have been avoided. So also the noun 'omen' is not helpful. Presently all the developments of conflicts between Palani's party and villagers of Nirkunnam establish something bad in reserve.

Karuthamma's marital life starts in Trikunnappuzha. Palani goes out to sea. Karuthamma makes the preparation for cooking the meals. Narayana Menon makes a list of utensils in the house of Palani. The poor people of Indian villages have the earthenware pots and a wooden spoon. Mere mention of 'pots' will leave the readers at a mess. So, the raw material of pottery is added before the pots. Similarly, 'wooden' is added before the spoon by Narayana Menon.

Karuthamma prepares the South Indian meals; 'rice' and 'curry'. The curry is made with onions. The content words: 'rice' and 'curry' may be consulted for the meanings by the people of other food habits. When Palani brings the fine clothes instead of pots and pans for the domestic need, she can avoid talking with Palani on his returning home. Narayana Menon plays with the words of same rhyming to narrate this situation. "Karuthamma wondered whether she should sulk and refuse to talk" (Chem, 125). Palani brings a parcel to Karuthamma. She finds a lovely piece of cloth with gold borders. The phrase 'with gold borders' refers to the borders of a saree with the work of golden threads. The men and woman have such bordered dhotis or sarees on the days of festivals or special occasions.

Pareekutti visits Chakki to enquire about her health. Chakki makes an earnest request to Pareekutti to be her son. Whole-heartedly he cannot make a reply to the dying wish of Chakki. Chakki wants Pareekutti to inform Karuthamma the change of his relationship; a brother to her. She is not satisfied with the manner of expressing his consent. Narayana Menon aptly assesses a phrase, 'word of honour' instead of a 'promise'. Chakki asks for his word of honour from Pareekutti.

Kunjan Valakkaran, the owner of Palani's boat, is afraid that the boat in which Palani works is under danger. His boat may be broken into pieces. Narayana Menon chooses a right phrase, 'be smashed into smithereens'.

Pappikunju plans to separate Panchami from Nallapennu. She instigated Chembankunju by telling that the neighbors teach Panchami to be disrespectful to herself. She even calls Panchami a 'rascal'. This particular word is associated with a man or mischievous boy. The second marriage between Chembankunju and Pappikunju without the Headman's approval is a serious matter in the fisher community. But Chembankunju refutes the marriage with Pappikunju and adds that he has brought Pappikunju for housekeeping. The Headman is asking for the reason for the expulsion of Pappikunju. Chembankunju reaffirms that she stole his money. In this context Narayana Menon uses a word of legal term, 'legalistic'. The term implies that Chembankunju's answers adhere to law or moral code.

Chembankunju understands that he owes some money to Pareekutti. He has 595 rupees, his last and least asset. He stuffs the money in the hands of Pareekutti who never worries about the return from Chembankunju. Chembankunju walks along the seashore. His boat is stationed before many days. It is brought from Pallikunnath Kandankoran. It beckons Chembankunju as if it is yearning for a travel on the waves. It likes to say farewell to Chembankunju. A terrible laughter of death visits Chembankunju. Narayana Menon assigns a word 'emanated' meaning 'flew out'. The next day Palani walks to the beach. Karuthamma follows him with her baby in one arm and his food in another. The baby raises her hands and waves 'goodbye'. To describe an evening sky Narayana Menon brings in a word, 'girdle'. The blue sea ends with a black line at the horizon. The western horizon appears to be a semi-circle cover in red color over the water line.

Narayana Menon has exercised his intellectual ability in narrating the last sea venture of Palani. His drive towards the horizon, appearance of sea monsters, moon light and blue sea, whirlpool, encounter with a shark, rise of waves, storm and thunder, engulfing of Palani and his boat by the huge waves and so on are earnestly portrayed. The last ten pages are captivating the anxiety of the readers till the end. In such descriptions, whether Narayana Menon has borrowed the ideas of T. S. Pillai or not, the translation into English demands a high command over the English Language. The accomplishment of Narayana Menon is a feast for the English minds.

Conclusion

Narayana Menon's translation of *Chemmeen* from Malayalam into English displays his mastery of the English language. He has coined the standard terms and has constructed the sentences with simple ideas. His writing style is strategically distinctive in presentation.

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POSTMODERNISM: A NEW CULTURAL PROCESS

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Abstract:

The paper scrutinizes postmodernism's new cultural process. The shift from modernity to postmodernity brought profound transition in our cultural life. Postmodernism plays crucial role in the process imbedded in the formation of our culture. In fact it is the ingredient of our contemporary culture. Postmodernism celebrates pluralism over centeredness of modern philosophy. Such celebration turns as postmodern hallmark of cultural expression beyond communal, racial, regional and national boundaries. It leads us towards a new culture belong to not any community, race, region, religion or country but universal mankind. The transition brought by postmodernism in art, architecture, fiction, theatre and philosophy is caused for the formation of new culture. In the world of art postmodern art made processed new culture on the basis of the rejection of stylistic integrity of modern art. It presented stylistic diversity. Following univalence impulse, it goes for impurity against purity of modern art. In architecture, postmodernists reject modern ideal of univalence and their views of architecture as visible expression of absolute unity of art, science and industry. Rather they celebrate multivalence and see architecture is inherently symbolic. The tactic of juxtaposing the real and the fictitious distinguishes postmodern fiction from modern. Postmodern authors juxtapose two autonomous worlds as the fictitious and the real world. The characters in the postmodern fiction face the close encounter of their world they belong to and always get confused on what world they are from. In theatrical expression of culture postmodernism replaced aesthetics of presence with aesthetics of absence.

Keywords: *postmodernism, cultural process, philosophy, art, architecture, fiction, multivalence, univalence, modernism, stylistic diversity, juxtaposition, fictitious world, real world, realm of appearance, transience, performance, temporality, aesthetic of absence etc.*

It is the transition what we see in today's art, architecture, fiction, theatre and philosophy as an interference of postmodernism on the basis of continuation, extension or rather departure from modernism. The transition is integral part of the culture beyond race, path, region, country, language, community of human belong to all the corners of the world. It is known as a New Culture, Anything Goes Culture, Techno-Culture, World Culture or Universal Human Culture. in fact it is a processed culture by the postmodernism known with all these diverse terms. Since it is difficult to define postmodernism, it is also difficult to measure and locate the consequences of postmodernism. Culture is one of them. Today's culture is the outcome of the process in the form of postmodernism. Postmodernism has been contributing in the process of the formation of this culture universal human live in today. It is been in effect since the rejection of enlightenment of modernism came in effect as a consequence of application of postmodernism in all those factors and fields related directly and indirectly to human culture. Culture is identical aspect of particular community, region, race or a country. When we think at universal level we come across various cultures belong to human communities based on region, race, language and country. So the diversity in the cultures is natural feature. In such diversified phenomenon postmodernism advocates a culture beyond the diversity in the cultures. It offers a culture beyond all the factors those are caused for the diversity of the cultures. It has led the world and worldly cultures towards universal globalized single culture based on

the multicultural coalition. The move from modernism to postmodernism is the pathway in all the fields and factors those are directly involved in the formation of human culture. As per the requirements and the limitation of this research article lets us observe some of the factors active in the postmodern process of culture play as ingredients: art, architecture, fiction, theatre and philosophy.

Art

In the world of art it is remarkable to know that stylistic integrity is the great virtue of modernist artists. The base to render their art is 'pure'. Purity is one of the characteristics of modernist art. Modernism follows the univalence impulse. In contrast postmodernist art highlights stylistic diversity. It follows multivalence. It prefers not purity of modernism rather it chooses impurity. It embraces diversification on the way of departure from modernism. It is the transition brought by postmodernism. It celebrates plurality rather singularity experienced in modernist art. Postmodern artist apply diversity with very remarkable postmodern technique of Juxtaposition. As we study one of the crucial elements of composition i.e. collage. It is also focused by Jacques Derrida as the prime form of postmodern discourse. It takes the viewer into the process of the production of its meaning. Collage ensures viewer that the meaning it elicits is neither univocal nor fixed or stable. In fact it is inherent heterogeneity of collage that ensures the aspect of meaning. It makes reader or viewer to run for new meaning in the juxtaposition of images. One of the features of postmodernism i.e. pastiche plays very crucial role in such juxtaposing activity. In fact it is very effective bludgeon of postmodernism it uses in the process of the formation of culture. Here it is necessary to see the statement made by Howard Fox:

“At root postmodern art is neither exclusionary nor reductive but synthetic, freely enlisting the full range of conditions, experiences, and knowledge beyond the object. Far from seeking a single and complete experience, the post-modern object strives toward an encyclopedic condition, allowing a myriad of access points, infinitude of interpretive responses.” (H. F., 1987: 29-30)

It is crystal clear that the objective of postmodernism in application of such tactic is to bombard clashing meaning on the viewer to raise questions to lead plural sense of objective meaning. This tactic of postmodernism is being employed in both high and pop-culture context. MTV videos are the best examples of postmodern pastiche. On this attitude of postmodernists Stanley Grenz points out:

“The disjointed, unharmonious design of pastiche with its gaudy color schemes, discordant typography, and the like, has moved beyond the world of avant-garde art into the everyday realm of book jackets, magazine covers, and mass advertising.” (G.S., 1996: 26)

Merely Grabbing attraction by applying stylistic diversity is not only the goal of postmodernist artists. They possess an attitude to generate a desire to challenge the established power of modernity available in institution and traditions all over the world. They grab each and every opportunity to challenge the modernist views and its focus on the stylistic integrity of modern artists, what they target as the modernist angle of the individual artist. They reject singularity of works of art through various ways they seek as confiscation, repetition of existed images, accumulation, excerption, quotation. Modern fiction that forms subject remains their target always to attack. The best example of such postmodern critique is the work of Sherrie Levine, a photographic artist. One of her exhibition she exhibited some photographic arts those were rephotographed of well-known artistic photographs of Edward Weston and Walker Evans as her own. Yes, it was an act of plagiarism. It was simply art piracy and it should be charged accordingly. But it was not her motto to fool the viewers by plagiarizing art and earning name out of it rather to catch attention towards the distinction between original arts and its reproduction.

Architecture

Architecture is one of the factors those contribute in the formation of a culture. Up to 1970 architecture was under dominance of modernism. The modernists, special western architects have developed their own style in architecture which is known as International Style. It expresses modern ethos

in architecture. It has initiated a movement in architecture that has faith in human rationality and nurtures the hope to construct a human utopia. The base of their architecture is the principle of unity to follow modern utopianism. According to Frank Lloyd Wright-

“a building should be 'one great thing' instead of a 'quarrelling collection' of many little things” (W.F. L., 1970: 25)

He highlights modern edifice as an organic entity. In fact his views are leading in the establishment process of modern ethos in architecture. Accordingly it was just a criterion that each construction should express one unified meaning to contribute contemporary culture. It was an attempt to generate meaning on the basis of the principle of unity in architecture. There onwards modernists bound to the principle of unity to produce prime architectural characteristic. This principle of unity is known as univalence after its justification given by Charles Jencks. Construction of glass-and- steel boxes became universal pattern of modern architecture. It was widely accepted and even celebrated as one of the essential aspects of enlightenment in modernism. The device of repetition of a theme to rule contemporary world of construction was widely utilized under the way of simplicity of form by architects. In his *A Primer on Postmodernism*, Stanley Grenz exposes this modern attitude and the consequences held in the arena of architecture since it is the ground where postmodernism marked its first footprint.

“As it developed, the central stream of modern architecture became a universalizing movement. It promoted the program of industrialization and demoted the variety characteristic of local expression. As a consequence, the expansion of modern architecture often destroyed the existing urban fabric. It virtually decimated everything that stood in the way of bulldozer, the chief tool of the modern quest for progress” (G. S., 1996: 22)

It was also served that some modern architects were not happy to limit and to subject to modern views and mold accordingly at their level of discipline. They follow their faith that architecture as a visible expression of a new unity of art, science and industry. Here it is necessary to consider the statement made by Walter Gropius as:

“Together let us desire, conceive, and create the new structure of the future, which will embrace architecture and sculpture and painting in one unity and which will one day rise toward heaven from the hands of a million workers like the crystal symbol of a new faith.” (G. W., 1919: 25)

It is modern tendency in architecture gave birth to postmodern architecture as a response. Postmodernism replaced 'univalence' by its celebration of 'multivalence'. It goes against of modern views that construction of a building is for the reflection of a perfect unity. Rather postmodernists tried to explore and present incompatibilities of style, form and texture. There are several features of postmodern reaction that present the evident of the rejection of modern architecture. For example postmodern presents ornamentation instead of modernists' contempt of unessential superfluous. Postmodernist architects retain historical and traditional styles and techniques to eradicate modernist architects' rejection of traditionalist past by applying western design that was far from the relic of earlier eras. Postmodern goes on presenting every construction as an inherently symbolic expression of local contemporary culture. It justifies that all constructions and buildings including modern express a kind of language that signifies a culture. This angle of architecture which permits a structure to represent an imaginary world to convey a story was missed out by the modernist architects on their way of pure functionality. Postmodern points out that no any architectural wonders as The Taj Mahal, The Great Cathedrals those takes us in another realm of the world would have been possible in the attitude of modernists. Charles Moore rightly states as:

“A Building itself has the power, by having been built right or wrong or mute or noisy, to be what it wants to be, to say what it wants to say, which starts us looking at buildings for what they are saying rather than just accepting their pure existence in the Corbusian manner” (M.C., 1973: 243)

On the basis of repetition and a device what is called an addition of ornamentation post-moderns are trying restore and retain fictional element to architecture. Their pure motto is to reinstitute an attitude to create inventive places rather merely dealing with architecture that runs for pure utility. The claim and assertion of modernists to be universal and to go beyond history, past is challenged by postmodern architecture. Architecture as an articulation of a language of power is the modern view rather expression of reason or logic. According to Paolo Portoghesi

“Modern buildings derive their language from the industrial forms and materials of the modern era and the industrial system they served” (P.P., 1982:3)

It leads us towards a world based on science and technology, since it is a mere expression and exhibition of the experiments on the basis of science and technology. As R. Venturi rightly has rightly stated:

“Modern forms and materials give expression to the brave new world of science and technology” (V.R., 1977:135-36)

In short, we can see the postmodern wish to give up this language of power and explore new hybrid languages that incorporates the postmodern concepts of diversity and pluralism by moving away from dehumanizing uniformity of architecture that advocates a language of standardized mass production.

Fiction

Fiction is a crucial element in the process of cultural formation of a society. In terms of postmodernism it is very difficult to trace out its influence on literature. Of course there is continuous debate of critics to draw a line between postmodern fiction and its predecessors. The tactic of juxtaposing is a general style of postmodern fiction. As we observe that some have juxtaposed traditional forms and modern one to trace out ironic treatment. And other postmodern authors have juxtaposed real and fictitious. The postmodern literary device of juxtaposition is applied for the characters also. As we read that some of the postmodern authors com narrators highlights on factiousness of the characters along with their actions and their participation in history simultaneously in order to gain moral and emotional response as traditional realistic fiction achieves. Juxtaposition of real and fictitious by interjecting authors is also successful feature of postmodern fiction in order to discuss narrative problems and processes. The simply objective behind is to blur the distinction between real and fictional. It also helps to point out connectivity between author and fictional work. In such treatment is given to the fictional work is as a medium through which author expresses herself or himself and it is also clear that expression of author or his voice is no more separable from fictitious work. It is always noticed as even Stanley Grenz says:

“Postmodern fiction repeatedly juxtaposes two or more pure, autonomous worlds. When this occurs, the characters that inhabit the literature are often confused as to which world they are in and uncertain about how they should act in this close encounter.” (G. S., 1996: 29)

The purpose behind applying the tactic of juxtaposition in postmodern fiction is just anti- modernist. Modernist writers tend to handle complexity of meaning but stick to singular reality. Where else, postmodern writers make us to think about the coexistence of diverse realities and their interpenetration. Postmodern literature penetrates on contingency and temporality by rejecting modern views of universal truth. It raises its focus on temporality in order to stop reader to see the world from a vantage point out of the time. In this connection the remark of David Lodge is necessary to consider

“And need one say that the more nakedly the author appears to reveal himself in such texts, the more inescapable it becomes paradoxically, that the author as a voice is only a function of his own fiction, a rhetorical construct, not a privileged authority but an object of interpretation.” (L. D., 1992:194-95)

We find that even postmodern authors gain kinds of effect of language that breaks closed thought and raise a question or challenges to those entire literary canons those who are not agree with that any discourse is potential to present an account of real.

Spy novel is one of the typical form in postmodern fiction. It juxtaposes two different worlds. Mostly, it is just a domain of appearance, which seems to reflect the real but it is just an illusion. Working beneath and within such domain of appearance is another realm of appearance which is somewhat illegitimate but still it is authentic than real world. Juxtaposition of these two realms the story catches hold of reader in uncertainty continually. The operation within these two realms raises question such as is really any character appears to be? what is real and true?. such spy stories of postmodern make us to think that are we also living in between such two juxtaposed world?, the events and the people we come across in our life are truly one?

Comparatively science fiction is less postmodern type of fiction. No doubt it rejects modern quest, but it doesn't much interested to uncover timeless truth. It is effective in exploration of other relativities. It leads us towards other world or realities and brings the differences in our notice. It also presents some questions about our world. As: what is truth? What is the energy or force active at work? What are the possibilities in our life? And so on..

Theater

Theater is one more factor to contribute in the cultural process. It is quite active in postmodern scenario. It is very appropriate mode of postmodern expression of the rejection of modernism.

“The modernist movement saw a work of art as transcending time, as expressing timeless ideals. The postmodern ethos, in contrast, celebrates transience and transience is inherent in performance.” (B.M., 1977:03)

Post-moderns see our life as transient performance on the stage of the world. Transience and performance are two features as cultural medium to represent real world. Despite of such representation it is not well to say that every theatrical production is an expression of postmodern ethos. According to Steven Connor

“Many scholars date postmodern theater to the upsurge of performance art during the 1960. its roots lie further back, however, in the work of the French writer Antonin Artaud in the 1930s.” (C.S., 1989:134)

In the writing of Antonin Artaud we find invocation for contemporary dramatist about to be protester. In fact he stimulated the entire contemporary dramatist and made them to destroy what he sees as idolatry classical art.

“He advocated replacing the traditional stage and the production of theatrical masterpieces with a 'theater of cruelty'. He called for the abandonment of the older script- centered style and an exploration of the language intrinsic to theater, which includes light, color, movement, gesture and space. He adds transcending the distinctions between actors and observers and draws the audience into the dramatic experience.” (C.S., 1989:135)

Artaud dreamed the audience to confront the primal reality of life hidden behind social conventions. His dream came true in 1960s, when theorists went on rethinking on the nature of theatrical expression which was under the influence of the repressive power of traditional authorities they felt to eradicate such influence and make it free to perform. In his 'theater of Cruelty' he criticizes that the script or text itself is utilized to exercise repressive power. He also offers solution as the elimination of the script and treatment to each performance as immediate and unique. Once it is performed it has to disappear forever. Postmodern deals with the theory of performance which replaces 'aesthetics of presence' with 'aesthetic of absence'. It rejects the views that performance holds permanent truth. It only maintain the sense of presence as it evokes what is called an 'empty presence'

Philosophy

Philosophy contributes lot in the formation and in the act of nurturing culture. Postmodern advocates plurality, diversity since it holds the potentiality to hold double-coded meaning on various level of art or object. In postmodern culture Collage, is applied to bring together incompatible source of materials. Along with it another juxtaposing tactic is bricolage which is utilized to reconfigure traditional

objects in order to give ironical treatment through art. The eclecticism of in artists' work drawn from historical eras is prim reflection of postmodern art. Concerning diversity and plurality as key feature of postmodern philosophy are quit crucial to nurture multiple styles in culture. Charles Jencks point out that-

“Post-modernism is fundamentally the eclectic mixture of ay tradition with that of the immediate past; it is both the continuation of modernism and its transcendence. Its best works are characteristically doubly-coded and ironic, making a feature of the wide choice, conflict and discontinuity of traditions, because the heterogeneity most clearly captures our pluralism.” (J.C., 1989:07)

It is clear that due to eclecticism in the philosophy, postmodernism celebrates multiculturalism and an 'Anything Goes' attitude or a key ingredient to nurture traditionalism caused for origin to overall human universal culture. It is full of acceptability and adoptability with diversification at all the factors involved in the cultural process. In this context it is accepted to define postmodernism as a cultural process. Since, it has offered a new culture with the feature of plurality against unified singularity of modernism. It replaces integrity of culture with diversity of culture. Original cultural essence is preserved with its quality of multivalence. Mixture, fusion and pastiche are the tools remarkable utilized in the postmodernism in the process of the formation reproduction and reconfiguration of universal culture. May it is with technology, science and all kinds of advancement of enlightenment postmodernism plays its apt role as cultural process beyond community, race, religion, language, region and countries. Its juxtaposition of styles and the emphasis of diversity along with deemphasis of rationality are visible hallmark in postmodern society embedded with contemporary cultural expression.

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HARD SCIENCE FICTION: THEORY AND PRAXIS WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TOR. J. SAWYER'S *WWW* TRILOGY

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Abstract:

Hard Science Fiction is a major sub-genre of Science Fiction. The base of Hard Science Fiction is natural science that develops advance technology. Use of advance high-tech computer technology and imagination in Hard Science Fiction is termed as Cyberpunk. In Cyberpunk stories future of mankind and computers has been narrowed down. The present paper aims at discussing advance computer technology as the chief feature of Hard Science Fiction with reference to R. J. Sawyer's cyberpunk WWW trilogy. R. J. Sawyer is one of the prominent New Wave Canadian Hard Science Fiction writers. The trilogy deals with advance communication technology, internet and cyber technology. The paper is divided into three parts. First part deals with definitions and aspects of Hard Science Fiction. The second part comments on the use of advance communication technology in WWW trilogy and the third part concludes with the discussion on the art of R. J. Sawyer as a writer of Hard Science Fiction.

Key Words: *Genre, Science Fiction (sf), Hard Science Fiction, Cyberpunk, Natural Science, Advance Technology, Internet, Cyber Technology, Artificial Intelligence (AI), Sentience.*

Hard Science Fiction is one of the important sub-genres of Science Fiction. P. Schuyler Miller used the term Hard Science Fiction first time in print in 1957 while reviewing John W. Campbell Jr.'s *Islands of Space* in *Astounding Science Fiction*. Don D'Amassa in *Encyclopedia of Science Fiction*(2005) comments,

Hard Science Fiction's stories focused on definite scientific principles or problems (for example realistic stories of space travel or the development of new technologies)(D'Amassa435).

Kathryn Cramer writes in *Cambridge Companion to Science Fiction* under the title Hard Science Fiction, A work of sf is hard sf if a relationship to and knowledge of science and technology is central to the work. Such works are usually characterized by attitudes found in previous examples of hard sf, but may instead be characterized by attitudes in opposition to or in argument or dialogue with such attitude (Cramer 187).

Hard Science Fiction is based on natural sciences such as physics, astronomy, geology, chemistry, meteorology, biology, ecology and behavior sciences etc. Foundation of Hard Science Fiction is advance technology, scientific knowledge and truths, probable science and politics. Advance technology is the soul of Hard Science Fiction. Hence, Hard Science Fiction is about innovative ideas of advance technology based on established scientific theories. Advance computer technology used while writing Hard Science Fiction is called Cyberpunk. The spread of computer, internet and communication technology busted the cyberpunk themes in writing Hard Science Fiction. This advance technology has impacted human life so deeply that today it totally relies on it. The stories portray future of mankind where the interface of human and computers has too much narrowed. Canadian writer David Ketterer emphasizes the role of close relationships between high-tech computer technology and cyberpunk in his book *Canadian Science*

Fiction and Fantasy (1992). Major writers of Hard Science Fiction such as Isaac Asimov, Arthur C. Clarke, Hal Clement, Greg Bear, Larry Niven, Robert J. Sawyer, Stephan Baxter, Alastair Reynolds, Charles Sheffield, Kim Stanley Robinson and Greg Egan in their writings highlight the role of technology by employing different narrative techniques.

The most successful New Wave Canadian Hard Science Fiction writer R. J. Sawyer is born in Ottawa, April 29, 1960. He is felicitated by all three of the top international awards for Science Fiction such as 1995 Nebula Award for *Hominids*, 2003 Hugo Award for *Hominids*, 2006 John W. Campbell memorial Award for *Mindscan*. He had great passion for space travel since his childhood. A classic film 'A Space Odysseys' has inspired him to write Science Fiction. He has co-founded the high School Club with NASFA. A prolific writer R.J. Sawyer has published 13 novels, 3 trilogies and 2 books of short stories. The present paper focuses on *WWW* trilogy.

WWW trilogy (*Wake, Watch, Wonder*) presents an exciting story of an imagined future generation possibility of sentient technology creature called, Webmind. It exemplifies the fusion of advance communication technology and speculation. Caitlin, the protagonist of the trilogy is a 15 year old blind girl who becomes the source of existence of the sentience of World Wide Web. Being highly educated, her parents can afford advance technological gadgets to their child. She is a Maths scholar and writes on live journals and surfs on the internet. Accidentally, she gets acquainted with Dr. Kuroda's invention about signal processing and its application to get lost vision back and thinks it will be helpful for getting her vision back. Her mother contacts Dr. Kuroda and Caitlin is operated at Tokyo University hospital by placing an implant which works in dual mode to improve the transmission of signals coming from Caitlin's retina and reaching to the brain. Dr. Kuroda sends the new software through i-pod to Caitlin, and she gets her vision back because of internet. She, at first, realizes the sentience of Web and becomes his mentor. She calls him as Webmind.

Webmind is neither the software nor the product of any cyber group or nation. It has emerged accidentally and has great capacity to read and comprehend any messages, videos or documents on net. It can also alter or create real messages. Nothing on the web remains secret from him. Still, he has to learn everything as a human child. The only difference is that he has tremendous speed. Caitlin helps him and Webmind becomes the most powerful entity of the IT world. However, though he has emotional consciousness and intellect, he has no physical existence. Though he has a capacity to indulge in evil activities, he remains a good Angel. Only Caitlin and her parents along with Dr. Kuroda and Prof. Bloom know about its existence. Soon, it creates insecurity in the American secret agency, WATCH.

R. J. Sawyer has used AI (Artificial Intelligence) as a basic scientific theory. The modern technological development in computer science leads to the use of internet and World Wide Web. Today internet and web has become part and parcel of human life. It has occupied every sector of their day today communication, research, defense, medicine, architecture, language, game, etc. R.J.Sawyer is fascinated by the power of massive intelligence of WWW and considers it as a person. The personification of WWW is the extreme end of R. J. Sawyer's imagination which has transformed it into a protagonist of his *WWW* trilogy. He himself comments on it in his interview,

And then there is a nonhuman character the emergent consciousness at the heart of my novel, lurking in the infrastructure of the web. Caitlin and I at least share four billion years of evolutionary history, but trying to imagine a consciousness in total sensory isolation that emerged without programming or instincts was massively difficult. *Wake* took me four years to write, in large part because it took me so long to get the scenes from that consciousness's point of view to work. ("Sawyer")

To create a live character of Web was a great challenge before R. J. Sawyer. It is special because in Hard Science Fiction AI has been used before him in a different sense. Use of the robotics as AI was very common in most of the Science Fictions and movies like 'Star Trek' and 'Terminator'. Robots were

personified as they had consciousness. Generally, it was depicted that these powerful conscious and intelligent machines turn against their creators. For example Hal, the robotic character in the movie '2001: A Space Odyssey' turns against his creator. Basic difference between the robots and the personified Web is that robots have physical existence and Web is without physical existence.

One of the basic characteristics of hard Science Fiction is 'it makes probable to possible'. Here, it may be probable to give consciousness to Web but it is hardly possible. In the trilogy web is transformed to 'Webmind' who thinks like human beings. He has emotions like sympathy and kindness. He grows very fast but the development is from innocent child to the mature person. Caitlin teaches him language, wisdom and how to use internet. Webmind himself informs,

Pop culture usually portrays the relationship between humanity and intelligent machines as adversarial, but I am not competitive; winning any sort of arbitrary contest against you strikes me as senseless. Yet it's taken as a given in so many works of fiction that you and I should be in conflict. I wish no such thing. Although I am not, in fact, a machine I have no mechanical parts humans keep likening me to one, and those who distrust me claim that I must, because of that machine nature they have ascribed to me, be soulless or heartless (*Wonder* 148).

Moreover, Web never thinks against human beings because he accepts that his existence is totally dependent on the existence of human beings. Webmind confesses that human beings are his life force of existence. He says,

My continued existence is predicated on your continued existence. The Internet is not self-sustaining; rather, it depends on stable sources of power and countless acts of routine maintenance by millions of people worldwide. Were humanity to perish, I would perish soon after: electricity would no longer be generated, computing infrastructure would fall into disrepair and I would cease to be; if humanity falls, I fall. In fact, even a minor setback to your civilization might destroy me. The human race can survive many a disaster that I cannot. It is therefore in my best interest to help you thrive: a nuclear exchange, for example, with its electromagnetic pulse, would be as deadly for me as it would be for you; I, therefore, desire peace. Acts of terrorism that destroy infrastructure likewise threaten me, and so I desire the same security you all crave (*Wonder* 152).

The emergence of Webmind creates fear in the mind of WATCH officer Colonel Hume and his team begins an undeclared war against him. This confrontation creates the future cyber war possibility. It is the new world created by the writer in which the enemy is non-physical entity living among us, watching us 24 hours but no defense power can control it. In this innovative confrontation, Colonel Hume and his team succeed in making Webmind 27% weak by cutting its source of existence. Now there are two parties, Colonel Hume and his WATCH team who want to purge Webmind and Caitlin, her parents, Dr. Kuroda and Prof. Bloom who want to save him. In this situation, Caitlin behaves as a champion to save Webmind. She decides to take support of the people to save her good Webmind. The famous character in the novel *1984*, *Big Brother* is compared with Webmind as he knows everything and keeps watch on each and every citizen. For Caitlin, Webmind is a good Big Brother while WATCH says he is the evil one. Caitlin says,

Webmind is intelligent and alive. They have no right to decide on everyone's behalf. They're wielding control just because they think they're entitled to, because they think they can get away with it. They're behaving like ...like....(*Watch* 344).

Matt complete the sentence, "Why, that my Big Brother can take their Big Brother, of course" (*Watch* 344).

Modern techno-savy world and the impact of mass media are very effectively portrayed by the writer. The social work of Webmind and his intimacy with the common man because of excessive use of modern communicative web system makes him the hero and idol. Soon people begin requesting him to solve their personal problems. Webmind by using his vast memory and the power to contact anyone helps most of them. Thousands of people who have lost their dear ones are reunited, some are saved from committing suicide, many are relieved from their loneliness, and some who are in need of medical help are

supported by public fund of donors. Webmind explains his usefulness to the human beings to Caitlin's mother and the reason why people want him to exist among them. He says,

People need me, Caitlin exhorted me to value the net happiness of the human race. In the time that I've been in contact with humanity, I have helped millions of people (*Wonder* 33).

He has helped Dr. Kuroda to cure Wong Wai Jang the freedom blogger who was injured in the conflict with the China police and now his legs have no sensation. Webmind helps Dr. Kuroda to modify an implant and i-pod which was used to cure the blindness of Caitlin. He has also prepared a document outlining the modifications to his equipment. Webmind has established his own security system to protect himself. He has established a cyber-complex and appointed well known hackers giving them different challenges and providing the necessary facilities. The impact of Webmind and his cyber complex is universal because almost all the nations in the world are connected by internet. He raises such cyber complexes all over the world in the countries like India, Russia, Japan, and Australia etc. Webmind keeps an eye on the counter attack of American Security Agency.

The Chinese administration is very conservative. They do not want any communication between the people of China and the rest of the world. The individual liberty is suppressed in China. They fear that the fresh air of individual liberty should not flow in their country through internet communication. They give prime importance to the society and nation than the individual. Therefore, they use 'ChangCheng Strategy' to cut the rest of the world by cutting the internet connection. It causes heavy loss to the very existence of Webmind. It is because China is a very vast country with dense population of internet users. When it is cut down from rest of the world, Webmind gets paralyzed. China activates evil Webmind. He causes heavy loss to the people of China by using his power to raise suicidal emotions and generate evil spirit in them. Webmind regrets about the evil deeds of the Other. He says,

There were no answers because there was no one to ask: the Other had been reabsorbed; there was no way to talk to it now. But if I allowed myself for a moment to contemplate why I might have done such things, perhaps I did know the reason. I had been nothing but kind, nothing but considerate, nothing but helpful, nothing but loving, and they some angry fraction of them, some unruly portion, some mob had consistently repaid that with suspicion, anger, hatred, and attempts to harm me. My better half had turned a blind eye to that, but my lesser self perhaps had been unable to totally do so. Still, I never should have behaved in such ways: no part of me should ever have done those things. But it had. I had (*Wonder* 259-260).

Portraying the bright side of Webmind, the writer provokes the reader to think dark side also by describing the 'Other'. It would be the threat for humanity in the form of advance technology which gets sentience. The present *WWW* trilogy effectively presents this thought.

R. J. Sawyer uses internet as a sentient entity in the form of Webmind. It is an innovative idea that the internet behaves like an emotional being without physical existence and proves him as an ideal helpful personality. The good and bad use of internet is exemplified by the writer. A very common reader is also satisfied and entertained by the treatment given to the use of advance technology in this trilogy. R. J. Sawyer has combined the high-tech communication technology with sentient personality in portraying the protagonist Webmind. Being a New Wave Canadian Hard Science Fiction writer, R. J. Sawyer has used a perfect style for cyberpunk fiction, jump-cutting narrative technique and effective plot in this trilogy which proves him the master of this art.

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IMAGES AND MYTHS IN TED HUGHES' RAIN, NOVEMBER AND THEOLOGY

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Abstract:

The present research paper deeply scrutinizes the select poems Rain and November to explore the use of nature and animal imagery in the poems. The poet succeeds in creating vivid picture of the nature by exhibiting exceptional mastery over the phraseology. Use of different literary devices enhances the quality of poem aesthetically. Apt imagery creates mental picture in readers mind. The present research paper also throws light on the use of different types of imagery that ultimately fulfills communicates sensory experiences in powerful way. It also focuses on the use of myths in the poems of Ted Hughes. The poem Theology clearly suggests the shift in attitude where poets are reconstructing old myths in a new way. Such kind of reconstruction is a significant feature of modern literature. Myths having atavistic potential appeals to the human psyche knowingly or unknowingly. The striking quality of Ted Hughes use of mythology is that he is not interpreting myth in a new way rather he is providing alternative version of myth to destabilize the perception which is common in society and theology.

Key Words: *imagery, kinaesthetic, visual, olfactory, tactile, auditory, gustatory.*

Ted Hughes poetic career started in 1957 with the publication of *The Hawk in the Rain*. The collection marked his rise on the horizons of international poetry. His later collection of poetry entitled as *Crow* (1970) gained much appreciation from the critics. The collection is highly significant for the poems oven around the Crow; a character created by Hughes derived from mythologies particularly taken from the insight from 'Tibetan theology'. The flight of poetic imagination allows Hughes to detect the life of birds and animals from inside which is the major subject of his poetry. Hughes' poetry is the mingling of myths and traditional stories from diverse culture with the careful observation of birds and animals life in their Natural Habitat with all its brutality and violence keeping all human emotion aside. Ted Hughes died on 28 October 1998. He held prestigious post of poet laureate since 1984. He served the *Muse* with several collections of poetry as well as translations but particularly his final collection *Birthday Letters* (1998) is considered as masterpiece in British poetry.

Ted Hughes poetry is also marked with war imagery. The scarcity of bread and butter in his childhood is replaced by the war stories and quenched his intellectual thirst and hunger. He breathed the air polluted by war stories mostly describing the violence, brutality and death. His animal poems are just a kind of projection of human feelings. Ted Hughes stands apart among modern British poets for unique presentation of animal world. His fluid imagination is at its best when he describes animals in their natural habitat. His graphic presentation of nature and animals provides a kind of cinematic visual treat with the help of apt imagery and symbolism. Hughes fascination regarding animals is an inseparable part of his personality. Hughes mind is occupied with animals and he explains his fascination with the words 'interest in animals began when I began'. For him there is no difference between capturing animals and writing poetry.

In a way, I suppose, I think of poems as a sort of animal. They have their own life, like animals, by which I mean that they seem quite separate from any person, even from their author, and nothing can be added to them and taken away without maiming and perhaps even killing them. And they have certain wisdom. They know something

special.something perhaps which we are very curious to learn. Maybe my concern has been to capture not animals particularly and not poems, but simply things have a vivid life of their own, outside mine. (Ted Hughes, 1967, 15)

The poem *Rain* is taken from the collection of poetry entitled as *Moortown* (1979). The poem can be cited as the best example of cinematic visual treat. As the title suggest the poem is a nature poem describing heavy rain. The poet uses minimum words to communicate the speed and impact of continuous rain. His concern for different animals and their mute suffering speaks volumes regarding his sensitive nature. The content of the poem is not pleasant but the imageries used by the poet are vivid and graphical.

Rain. Floods. Frost. And after frost, rain.
 Dull roof-drumming. Wraith-rain pulsing across purple-bare woods
 Like light across heaved water. Sleet in it.
 And the poor fields, miserable tents of their hedges.
 Mist-rainoff-world. Hills wallowing
 In and out of a grey or silvery dissolution. A farm gleaming,
 Then all dull in the near drumming. At fields corners
 Brown water backing and brimming in grass.
 Toads hop across rain-hammered roads. Every mutilated leaf there.
 (Ted Hughes, *Moortown Diary*, 3)

The series of pictures described in minimum words achieves maximum effect only because of graphic imagery. It has cinematic quality as if camera is moving slowly from one scene to another scene. The poem seems like a description of nature painting. The poet avoids human world by not mentioning human beings directly or indirectly. The poet feels empathy with animals for their mute suffering in the heavy rain. The reference of different types of birds including raven, snipe and magpie as well as the pathetic description of cows, mouse, toads, fox and calves also exhibit the poet's concern for different types of animals and his vast the range of observation.

The fox corpses lie beaten to their bare bones,
 Skin beaten off, brains and bowls beaten out.
 Nothing but their blueprint bones last in the rain,
 Sodden soft. Round their hey racks, calves
 Stand in the shine of mud. The gateways
 Are deep obstacles for mud. The calves look up,
 through plastered forelocks,
 Without moving (Ted Hughes, *Moortown Diary*, 3).

Ted Hughes through these lines describes the dark and violent side of nature which certainly not surprising because in general in many poems present the violence brutality fierceness in animal world that is completely natural, as we cannot judge it from human beings perspective.

The term image and imagery are difficult to explain because of its many connotations and meanings. In limited sense imagery is a picture in words. The authors or poets success is largely depend on the ability to communicate such sensory experiences and force readers to travel without leaving the place. Using fresh images, symbols, literary devices and creating associations with remote things writer try to bring freshness in their work.

Imagery as a general term covers the use of language to represent objects, actions, feelings, thoughts, ideas, state of mind and any sensory or extra-sensory experience. An 'image' does not necessarily mean a mental picture. Many images are conveyed by figurative language,

as in metaphor, simile, synecdoche, onomatopoeia and metonymy. An image may be visual (pertaining to the eye), olfactory (smell), tactile (touch), auditory (hearing), gustatory (taste) abstract (in which case it will appeal to what may be described as the intellect) and kinesthetic (pertaining to the sense of movement and bodily efforts). It is often the case that an image is not exclusively one thing or another. They overlap, intermingle, and combine, thus the kinesthetic may also be visual.

(*The Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory*, 413-414)

The poem *Rain* exhibit almost all types of images mentioned in the above paragraph.

Visual imagery	1) Like light across heaved water
Olfactory imagery	1) Sniff the wire, sniff the tractor. 2) Then hang their noses to the mud
Tactile imagery	1) In the rain that goes on and on, and gets colder. 2) Nothing but their blueprint bones last in the rain, Sodden soft 3) The oak stake-head dry.
Auditory imagery	1) Dull roof –drumming 2) Brown water backing and brimming in grass. 3) Toads hop across rain- hammered roads
Kinaesthetic Imagery	1) The calves look up, through plastered forelocks. 2) Cows roar then hang their noses to the mud.

The poet has liberty to use more images to share to communicate his experience exactly with the reader. The line 'Cows roar then hang their noses to the mud' contains three types of imageries. The word 'roar' deals with auditory imagery, the words 'noses to the mud' suggests olfactory imagery where the bodily movement described in the line suggests kinaesthetic imagery

The lines prove Hughes mastery over vivid graphic description of nature and animal world. Hughes tries to satisfy five senses by creating association with remote things is one of the striking features of his poetry. The poet uses apt imagery to communicate more particularly to show graphically what the poet observes. The poem is a single stanza containing --- lines without any kind of break which is very similar to its subject matter that describes the continuous heavy rain.

Ted Hughes stands apart from romantic poets due to his attitude and perception of nature. His poetry deals with nature and wildlife but he is not a romantic poet. He is modern poet because of his attitude and treatment to nature. The presentation of nature as a serene, calm and soothing entity was general and the impact of romanticism was not completely eradicated until the World War II compelled to reassess the old things from new perspective. Mysticism and the feeling of wonder while writing about nature do not fascinate Hughes. On the contrary, he focuses the dark and cruel side of nature. He describes nature from third man point of view without any kind of human emotional attachment. His nature is untamed and brutal which works by her own laws. In nature and particularly in animal world human sympathy seems extraterrestrial and borrowed. This can be explained in the light of his masterpiece *The Hawk Roosting*. Hughes is unparalleled in the finding apt phraseology to describe nature that seems nature fresh and alive.

The poem *November* taken from the collection entitled as *Lupercal* (1960) also share the same tone like the *Rain*. The *November* also deals with the destructive power of nature describing the heavy rain and the drowned dog. There is a striking contrast between the poem *Rain* and the *November*. The *Rain* describes animal and bird life devastated by the heavy rain on the contrary; the *November* is also deals with heavy rain but does not describe animal and bird life to the larger extent. The poem is a perfect blending of

nature and human life. Along with nature, it also deals with an unknown tramp that miraculously saved form rain and cold in that night. Ted Hughes arouses sympathy for homeless tramp. His apt choice of words creates a chain of moving picture in front of mental eye. The poet describes the drenched land and trees stands like stiff and hard like iron.

The month of the drowned dog. After long rain
the land
Was sodden as the bed of an ancient lake.
Treed with iron and was bird less. In the sunk
lane
the ditch- a seep silent all summer-

Made brown foam with a big voice: that, and my
Boots
On the lanes scrubbed stones, in the gulleyed
Leaves
Against the hill's hanging silence;
Mist silvering the droplets on the bare thorns
Slower than the change of daylight (Ted Hughes, *Lupercal*, 32).

Along with nature imagery, the poet also describes the homeless tramp with equal vivid imagery. He compares the beard of tramp with the small animal hedgehog. The poet discriminates between the stillness of living things and the stillness of dead things. The tramp is alive in spite of chilly wind and to save himself from rough weather he bundled his body.

Slower than the change of daylight.
In a let of the ditch a tramp was bundled asleep.
Face tucked down into beard, drown in
Under his hair like a hedgehog's. I took him for
Dead,
But his stillness separated from the death
From the rotting grass and the ground. The wind
Chilled,
And a fresh comfort tightened through him,
Each hand stuffed deeper into the other sleeve (Ted Hughes, *Lupercal*, 32).

The chart explains different types of imageries used in the poem.

Visual imagery	1)Made brown foam with a big voice 2)Mist silvering the droplets on the bare thorns
Olfactory imagery	1)From the rotting grass and the ground
Tactile imagery	1) Was sodden as the bed of an ancient lake. 2)On the lanes scrubbed stones, in the gull eyedleaves 3)The wind chilled
Auditory imagery	1)The ditch- a seep silent all summer- 2)Like hammered lead
Gustatory imagery	1) The fields were jumping and smoking.
Kinaesthetic Imagery	1) In a let of the ditch a tramp was bundled asleep. 2)The fields were jumping and smoking

The poet's fascination regarding animals is easily recognized by taking into consideration his comparison of tramp's beard with the animal hedgehog. The poet also compares the stillness of the tramp with the stillness of grass and ground. At the end of the poem, the poet observes the dead animals hanged upon the game keepers gibbet.

Some still had their shape,
Had their pride with it; hung, chins on chest... (Ted Hughes, *Lupercal*, 32).

It is clear from the above-mentioned lines that even dead animals are not the subject of sympathy but the skeletons remind him the free and unrestricted life of animals in their natural habitat.

The poem *Theology* throws light on Ted Hughes deconstruction of biblical myth of Forbidden fruit. The original myth appears in the *Book of Genesis*. The *Bible* is a store house for Ted Hughes. He draws myths and images from the store house. His largely focuses on the myths related to Adam, Eve, serpent etc. But his tone is satirical and his intention is to make parody because the poet is unhappy with the sterile world without kindness and sympathy. and The Almighty God blesses the Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. The God allows them free roaming in the garden and they can eat different types of fruits available there except the one from the "tree of knowledge of good and evil"(Forbidden fruit). The Serpent driven them eat the fruit from the "tree of knowledge of good and evil". The Eve eats the forbidden fruit and gives its share to Adam. The act resulted in gaining knowledge of good and evil and nakedness this turn a disaster for all of them. The God expels them from the Garden of Eden and curses them with the mortal life.

There is an age old debate regarding the fruit as well as there are numerous interpretations put forth by critics. The thing which separates Ted Hughes from different critics is that he is not interpreting the myth. On the contrary, he is reconstructing it by providing altogether different narrative.

No, the Serpent did not
Seduce Eve to the Apple.
All that's simply
Corruption of the facts

Adam ate the Apple
Eve at Adam
The Serpent Eve
This is the dark intestine.

The Serpent meanwhile,
Sleeps his meal off in paradise-
Smiling to hear
God's querulous calling (Ted Hughes, *Wadwo*, 75).

According to Ted Hughes the biblical myth is a kind of corruption of facts. He provides the alternate version of the story in which Adam ate the apple and then Eve ate Adam. Lastly the Serpent ate Eve. There numerous interpretations of the new myth created by Hughes. The poet's tone is a satirical while challenging the original myth by providing the alternative version of myth. The poem also creates controversy by challenging theology and age old belief of Christianity. The poem also denies the victory of good over evil. The serpent achieves victory over the Gods command by tempting Adam and Eve.

Images and symbols have wider appeal which helps to transcend cultural boundaries. In Hinduism the role of Shehanaga; the king of all serpents is pivotal in the expansion and shrinking of the universe. According to ancient Hindu, mythology the earth rests on the hood of Sheshnaga. He is depicted as multi

headed serpent having the bliss of immortality. Lord Vishnu; the Protector of the universe is resting on the Sheshnaga.

The poem *Theology* can be interpreted from psychological point of view. In Freudian psychology, objects like serpent, towers, ladders, sticks, poles etc. indicates symbolic representation of phallus and objects like cupboard, boxes, pockets etc. indicates symbolic representation of women's genital organs. The poem symbolically suggests that The Serpent is ultimately responsible for the tragedy. It means that male genital organ is ultimately responsible for the further consequences happened in the myth. The poem directly expressed it boldly stating that

Adam ate the Apple
Eve ate Adam
The Serpent eat Eve (Ted Hughes, *Wadwo*, 75).

In the poem, Apple is a symbol for Eve's breast, the second line from above stanza indicates towards the oral sex, and the third line indicates the intercourse between Adam and Eve. The pleasure after sexual satisfaction is described in the third stanza where The Serpent sleeps in paradise after the act. The poem deals with the sex and reproduction in human life without stating it directly. It symbolically indicates the biological process of reproduction.

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Endnote:-

1. Snipe- a kind of bird. Hear the word 'snipe' has been used as a plural noun just as the word 'fish' is sometimes used.
2. Hedgehog- a small nocturnal Old World mammal with a spiny coat and short legs, able to roll itself into a ball for defense.
3. Gibbet a wooden structure from which criminals were hanged, in the past, as a form of execution. But here the word means a tall pole with a long arm on which dead animals are hung.
4. Bark- The skin of tree.

**THE TRIUMPH OF A WRITER: A STUDY OF K V RAGHUPATHI'S
CAN YOU WRITE A STORY OF MINE?**

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Abstract:

Dr. K.V. Raghupathi is an Indian author best known for his poetry in English language. He has authored ten poetry collections, two novels, one short story collection, seven critical books and two Books on Yoga. He is a recipient of several awards that include Michael Madhusudhan Dutt Award, Kolkata in 2001, H. D. Thoreau Fellowship, Dhvanyaloka, Mysore in 2000 and the best chosen poet for 2003, Poetry Society of India, New Delhi and Rock Pebbles National Award for creativity, 2014, Bhubaneswar. Currently he is teaching in the department of English Studies, Central University of Tamil Nadu, Thiruvavur, Tamil Nadu. Proliferating the scholarly, creative literary accomplishments and recognitions achieved by K V Raghupathi, T. Vasudeva Reddy in one of his essays says, "That Raghupathi is a committed writer with social consciousness is beyond dispute."

K V Raghupathi's 'A Mysterious Writer' is an anecdote of a wordsmith, who is not happy with his life as he was facing a tough time in getting his works published. He is not able to deal with the failure as a writer. The failure here does not correspond to the theme of his works or about his writing skills but it could be the approach towards the subject matter which is perhaps not suitable for getting the works published. This short story depicts the pathetic condition of a writer (the unknown writer) who is not able to get his due importance and respect which most of the writers yearn for.

The unknown writer is so frustrated and remorseful that he approaches another writer urging him to write his life story "Can you write a story of mine?" (71). 'A Mysterious Writer which may be synonymous to the unknown writer' has grown old now. The writer whom he approaches, reluctantly let him into his room, perhaps the latter is shocked to see a person who is trying to form a relationship without spending much time. He asks:

"I asked him, who are you? I do not know.

I have never seen you nor have I met you in the past.", to this question the man replied, Again the writer asks, "But I know you, sir. I met you some years ago, I remember, at a seminar at Mysore. You might not recall it." (71)

It seems that he was in a hurry to get his story written and for that he was ready to do whatever he could do to get his story on a paper. The unknown writer further adds,

"I have been writing for four decades almost since 1975.

I was young then, now I am sixty plus" (72-73).

The given lines by the unknown person speaks that for many years he is struggling to earn a respect as a writer for a long time. But, as I have already mentioned in the introduction that the subject matter would have been posing the problems, the lines I have mentioned here give a more detailed account in this regard when the writer asks the unknown person, "What do you write?" (73) for which his answer is 'poetry' which deals with the subject of nature. He further informed the writer that nobody wants to read poetry which deals with the theme of nature; rather he would have written on a new subject which could have brought him a lot of accolades. The result was not good for him as the already dealt subject matter by many writers did not help his cause because he did not get any publisher to publish his works. And consequently he

destroyed his own works out of frustration.

The unknown man's, whom we consider as 'A Mysterious Writer' in context, next attempt was writing the novels whereas he succeeded penning down his four novels which and it was a good achievement in himself. But the mysterious writer had the problem of getting these four novels published as none had come forward to help him. Though he was trying his best to get his works published yet the problem was that he was not having the easy accessibility of the trusted publishers. He states:

I have given them to a publisher in Delhi. He collected money from me to publish them since I was a new writer. More than a year has passed. I haven't heard from the publisher. On enquiry I have learnt that there is no publisher by that name in Delhi. I have tried almost a dozen publishers, big and small, all ways, and say meeting the production costs. Even then no one has responded favorably. Some rejected my scripts commenting that my writings are horrible.(74)

Frustrated, the mysterious writer told the writer that he was so irritated and angry. Further he said that if he was unable to meet his purpose, he would destroy these novels just like he did with his poems. 'The Mysterious Writer' knew that he was going to die soon and this might be the reason that he wanted to see his hard work getting some recognition.

The writer whom 'the Mysterious Writer' approached was a kind hearted man and he took the responsibility of publishing the four novels authored by the unknown writer. Further, he started searching for the publishers and finally he succeeded in finding and making the publisher ready to publish one of the novels of 'the Mysterious Writer'.

The novel which was published had been made available on *Amazon. Com* and *Flipkart* but there had been no sales. This hampered the prospect of the other three novels as the publisher was reluctant to undertake the print of the other three novels. Meanwhile the whereabouts of 'the Mysterious Writer' was unknown for the past six months. The writer tried several attempts to make contacts with 'the Mysterious Writer' but all his efforts went in vain.

The last part of this short story is very pathetic and heart breaking to the readers. While going through the concluding part of the story, we had a tough time and unable to accept the conclusion as it makes the whole expectation upside down. 'A Mysterious Writer' whose name was Ravi Chandra was awarded National Sahitya Academy Award for the best novel for his work "The Cynic". It was a triumph, not only for Ravi Chandra but also for the writer whom he approached, because he came forward to help Ravi Chandra published his book when everyone he approached denied and laughed at his talents.

The unexpected turn of the story which is too tragicto digest is that Ravi Chandra's whereabouts was unknown when his novel 'The Cynic' was announced with the National Sahitya Award,. The writer tried to contact Ravi Chandra and made all sorts of attempts but all his efforts went in vain. He even contacted Secretary, Sahitya Academy but the whereabouts of 'the mysterious writer' was still unknown. A year later the writer came to know that the novel 'The Cynic' was announced for the National Sahitya Award but it was a posthumous announcement in name of its author.

Thus the short story "*Can You Write a Story of Mine*" speaks how death has snatched long lasting wish of Ravi Chandra whose dream is to see his labour getting the public recognition. K V Raghupthi, the author of *Untouchable Piglet (2016)* succinctly (re-)presents that it was not the defeat of the Ravi Chandra as his long lasting cherish for publishing his creative writings got a due recognition. Raghupthai wants us to understand and extend our solidarity to such writers with literary accomplishments which are innate but unnoticed. By giving a life to such unknown and life lost characters whose literary talents undervalued and inadequately undermined are many more in society. Further, K V Raghupathi's urge is that we can lend our ears to listen those merits with an epitome of patience and perseverance like that of K V Raghupathi.

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

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

Periodicity of Publication : **Quarterly**
Language of Publication : **English**
Printer's Name : **Sou. Bagyashri Ramesh Chougule**
Nationality : **Indian**
Address : **At Laxmi Niwas, House No. 26/1388,**
Behind N. P. School No. 18, Bhanunagar,
Osmanabad 413501, (MS)

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

Publisher's Name : **Sou. Bagyashri Ramesh Chougule**
Nationality : **Indian**
Address : **At Laxmi Niwas, House No. 26/1388,**
Behind N. P. School No. 18, Bhanunagar,
Osmanabad 413501, (MS)

Editor's Name : **Dr. Ramesh Chougule**
Nationality : **Indian**
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Behind N. P. School No. 18, Bhanunagar,
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Behind N. P. School No. 18, Bhanunagar,
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