

Interdisciplinary Research Journal for Humanities

(A Peer – Reviewed Journal)



ISSN 2249-250X

Volume – 14

No.1.1

March 2024

ST. XAVIER'S COLLEGE (AUTONOMOUS)

[Recognized as College with Potential for Excellence by UGC]

[Accredited by NAAC at 'A++' Grade with a CGPA of **3.66** out of 4 in IV cycle]

PALAYAMKOTTAI – 627 002.

TAMILNADU, INDIA

Website :www.stxavierstn.edu.in

Interdisciplinary Research Journal for Humanities
(ISSN 2249-250X)

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Printed @

ARS Print & Systems

210, Mundagan Street, Sivakasi – 626 123

Mobile: 9514331644 / 9944716072

Publisher

St. Xavier's College (Autonomous),

Palayamkottai, Tirunelveli, Tamil Nadu, India-627002

Veritate Lumen et Vita
(Light and Life through Truth)



The articles of this issue Volume-14, No. 1.1, March 2024 are selected from the papers presented by the delegates in the National Conference “The Confluence of Literature, History and Culture: Negotiating Differences through Intercultural Dialogues and Third Space” conducted by St. Xavier’s College (Autonomous), Palayamkottai held on 23.01.2024 & 24.01.2024. They are accepted for publication after plagiarism check and review process.

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A PERSPECTIVE ON HEALTHY MASCULINITY: A CHARACTER STUDY OF JOHN KINSELLA IN CLAIRE KEEGAN'S *FOSTER*

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Abstract

Masculinity refers to the obligations, activities, and qualities that are considered appropriate for boys and men in a particular society. The concept of "healthy" or "positive" masculinity asserts that men can express their emotions without feeling less of a man. A man possessing such a strong sense of masculinity would be an excellent husband and father. *Foster* by Claire Keegan introduces the character of John Kinsella to present a unique viewpoint on positive, healthy masculinity. The primary objective of this paper is to shed light on masculine behaviour through cognitive and social means and its impact on other beings by applying the theory of gender studies and examining the traits of healthy masculinity as described in John Kinsella.

Keywords: Gender Studies, Masculinity, Responsibility, Independence, Cognitive Analysis.

Gender Studies is an interdisciplinary field that examines how gender shapes our identities, social interactions, and world. It focuses on the complex interaction of gender with other markers like race, ethnicity, sexuality, nation, and religion. Gender identities are psychologically, socially, historically, and culturally determined. Kamala Bhasin suggests that in society, both men and women should possess certain attributes, with women expected to exhibit gentleness, caring, nurturing, and obedience and men are expected to be strong, self-confident, competitive and rational. Masculinity, rooted in early-modern Europe, suggests that behaviour is influenced by one's persona. *The Will to Change: Men, Masculinity, and Love* by Bell Hooks promotes healthy masculinity, emphasizing emotional openness, connection, empathy, and personal growth.

Irish writer Claire Keegan is renowned for her narrative style, which effectively conveys the complexity of rural Ireland as well as the substance of human interactions. Her work of art frequently examines the complexities of families, customs, and peace in close relationships. In her short story *Foster*, Claire Keegan portrays the tale of a young child who spends a brief stay with the Kinsella family in a rural household. She feels safe and secure with the Kinsellas, but tension builds when she has to return home at the end of the summer. The narrative delves into themes of attachment, grief, and the fleeting nature of

relationships, ultimately leading to a heartbreaking parting that profoundly affects the protagonist's life.

John Kinsella is one of the central figures in Foster, the novella. John Kinsella's wife is named Edna. They live in Wexford on the coast. In his yard, he cultivates crops. He is an extremely pious man who frequently attends church. He welcomes the protagonist warmly for her summer visit and treats her like his own daughter. The girl is exposed to a side of fatherhood that her own father never presents. Dan, the girl's father, is a prime example of toxic masculinity. He resides in Clonbeg with his family. Mary, his wife, is never treated with respect by him. He also has an addiction to gambling, which has cost him most of his farmlands and livestock. Every year, in spite of his inability to provide for his family's basic requirements, he succeeds in getting Mary pregnant. His family so expands by one every year as a result. Since he is unable to care for his family, he agrees to send his daughter to live with a foster family for the summer.

Respect for others is highlighted as a critical component of positive masculinity in Levant's *Introduction to the Psychology of Men and Masculinity*. He goes on to emphasize the need of establishing healthier interpersonal interactions by treating people with respect and acknowledging their range of experiences. In his village, John is regarded as an honourable individual. When the father of the girl, Dan brings her to his house at the beginning of the novella, he politely steps outside to greet Dan. He even agrees to assist right away when the neighbouring woman begs for his assistance in digging a cemetery for the deceased Michael. Furthermore, he does not lose his temper with the inquisitive neighbour who tells the girl about the accident that has claimed his son's life. He also complies with the request of Mary and escorts the girl to her residence.

Dan does not really care about his wife or his children. He is aware that his wife provides for their family and his business while he gradually loses his cattle and farmlands as a result of his gaming. Nevertheless, in keeping with patriarchal social norms, he expects his wife to submit to him. After bringing the girl to her foster home, he decides it is not necessary to let his own daughter know where she will be staying or when she will be returning home. "Why did he leave without so much as a good-bye, without ever mentioning that he would come back for me?" (10). He simply drops her off at the Kinsellas' home, where she is unfamiliar. Meanwhile, John states his desire for her to remain in his home at the conclusion of the novella. She is not yet ready to leave her foster home, so he gives her a strong hug when she rushes towards his car. In fact, she addresses him as 'Daddy' and grants him perpetual bliss by recognizing him as her father.

Dan receives some rhubarb from Edna as a kind gesture, and a couple stalks fall from his hand. Dan exhibits traditional patriarchal behaviour by waiting for her to pick up

the fallen stalks rather than doing it himself. John is the one who picks up the dropped rhubarb stalks, preventing Dan from disrespecting his wife.

According to Hooks, it is critical for males to be emotionally engaged and honest. As she describes, a healthy masculinity is being open to expressing and experiencing the whole spectrum of emotions. John Kinsella agrees to foster the girl alongside Edna, even though he knows the latter has not moved on from the death of their son. He has benefited his wife and the girl's parents by doing this. John concentrates on making the girl feel at ease and completely content with her stay, whereas Edna gives the girl all her affection, which she is unable to provide to her son. John wants the girl to have a special place in their lives as herself and not as a replacement, while Edna wants the girl to fill the vacuum left by her son. His first act of moving on from his son is to buy her new outfits, and he helps his wife follow suit. He has the ability to emotionally overcome from his loss to love a child wholeheartedly.

He took the girl to the beach to cheer her up, when he himself was hurt. He has the maturity to see the truth that he is not the father of the girl, so the most he could do for the girl is to make her feel special and thereby to create an identity for herself. John and Edna play a major role in shaping the character of the girl. John is special to the girl because she has never received the love from her father, as there are many children in their house. He goes so far as to lovingly call her "Petal."

John is a natural host and communicator. Conversation with other people comes naturally to him. Dan, on the other hand, strikes up a casual conversation with the man until he finishes his meal before quickly leaving for home. Every now and then John organizes wild card games for his friends since he is a great host. He is also a hilarious guy. Playfully, he tells the girl not to drink and to heed her mother's advice not to take gifts from persons of the other gender. In addition, he teaches her how to avoid shady men who may try to entice her when she is older. This is the behaviour of a typical, loving parent.

Brené Brown examines masculinity through the prisms of openness and vulnerability in *The Gifts of Imperfection: Let Go of Who You Think You're Supposed to Be and Embrace Who You Are*. Brown defies convention, arguing that vulnerability is the path to great strength. In addition, he promotes honesty among men regarding their flaws, seeing sincerity and sincere relationships as necessary elements of a strong sense of masculinity. When Edna let the girl into her innermost feelings, she was completely exposed. John, on the other hand, wants the girl to feel content and at home. He is the first to point out that the girl should not be wearing their deceased son's outfit. Hence, in addition to other items, he bought her new outfits and shoes. Even though he has worked hard for his money, he feels bad when he hears about starved deaths.

‘A man starved himself to death and here I am on a fine day wud two women feeding me.’

‘Haven’t you earned it?’ the woman says.

‘I don’t know have I,’ he says. ‘But it’s happening anyway.’ (*Foster 17*)

The woman who lives next door calls John a "soft-hearted fool" after he fails to shoot his dog, which led his son to the slurry tank and drowned him. John always gives his wife credit when she is correct. Edna urges John to bring the lamp with him when he brings the girl to the beach. He initially declines, but eventually accepts. The intuition of his wife is acknowledged by him with a smile later when it gets dark.

‘Ah, the women are nearly always right, all the same,’ he says.

‘Do you know what the women have a gift for?’

‘What?’

‘Eventualities. A good woman can look far down the line and smell what’s coming before a man even gets a sniff of it.’ (*Foster 32*)

Marriage requires mutual commitment to shared values, open communication, and shared challenges, while accountability involves owning actions, acknowledging mistakes, and working towards a healthy, resilient partnership. The Kinsellas are supportive of each other and never try to devalue one another. Edna assists John when he needs support on the farm. John also assists Edna as she works around the house.

“Kinsella gets up and takes a stack of plates from the cupboard, opens a drawer and takes out knives and forks, teaspoons. He takes the lid off a jar of beetroot and puts it on a saucer with a little serving fork, leaves out sandwich spread and salad cream. My father watches closely as he does this.” (*Foster 8*)

“She is like the man, doing it all without rushing but neither one of them ever really stops. Kinsella comes in and makes tea for all of us and drinks it standing up with a handful of Kimberley biscuits, then goes back out again.” (*Foster 17*)

John never once complains to his wife and always helps her out when he can. They have a clear understanding that is essential for the marriage to run properly. In their situation, John takes the lead, and Edna follows suit since, as she admits, her husband is always correct. “John’s not always easy but he’s hardly ever wrong” (25). John chooses not to open the letter that the girl's mother has sent to his wife. Rather, he gives it to her, and she reads the letter on her own. This modest act demonstrates his deep regard for his spouse and marriage.

Positive role modelling encourages people to adopt healthier habits and aspire to be their best selves by fostering values, resilience, and constant development. John is an accountable citizen as well. He does not hesitate to invite men into his home when they ask

for money to build a new roof for the school, adding, "Just because I have none of my own doesn't mean I'd see the rain falling in on anyone else's." (21) For the daughter, who has grown up with a narcissistic father who only thinks about himself, John becomes a wonderful role model. She even wishes John were her father at one point. The girl was drawn to John's positivity to the point where she could never have imagined her existence without her foster parents. While a person's physical growth may halt at some point, their emotional growth never stops. John's character also changes with time, going from a lonely man with a lonely wife to a family man who looks after his foster daughter and maintains relationships with his neighbours.

An investigation on John Kinsella, a role model for healthy masculinity, shows that qualities like emotional intelligence, respect, and a commitment to self-improvement have shaped his positive identity. John's empathy, communication skills, and open-mindedness are a few instances of a masculinity that transcends stereotypes. John resists harmful conventions and embraces diversity. His optimism draws people up, fostering inclusive connections and promoting social progress. Therefore, John Kinsella, a character in Claire Keegan's novella *Foster*, represents a revolutionary vision in the attempt to redefine masculinity, challenging antiquated ideas and paving the way for a more compassionate and equal future.

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SUSTAINABILITY IN THE HEIGHTS: EXPLORING ECOLOGICAL DIMENSION IN FESTIVALS AND RITUALS OF THE TRANS-HIMALAYAN REGION

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Abstract

Festivals and rituals are cultural performances which reflect the community's history and beliefs. Likewise, the society of Ladakh is embedded with a wide spectrum of festivals and rituals that sum up the elements of its belief system. The recognition of the divine is at the heart of its cultural belief. These beliefs are eco-friendly, seeking to live in a way that minimizes harm to the natural environment, promoting the philosophy of eco-centric, and they despise being logo-centric. The communities' ecological vision is exhibited in every auspicious ceremony that celebrate the coexistent space between humans and nature. The long history of its agrarian society commemorates the cycle of cultivation, including multiple rituals that narrate the interdependency between humans and nature. This paper explores ecological dimensions of the festivals and rituals in the trans-himalayan region.

Keywords: Eco-centric, Festivals and Rituals, Ladakh, Culture, Sustainable Development.

Rituals and festivals are integral part of human life. However, the growing industrialization faded away the ritual and much traditional festive performances. The post-industrialised society witnesses huge changes in the economy, social and cultural life of the people. Most of these changes occurred without checking the major impact on the nature space. Ritual and festivals are one of the major aspects of the society to acknowledge the benefits of non-human beings. It helps to sustain the ecosystem. In this line, Ladakh has a wide spectrum of festivals and rituals connected with the nature space. Many regions and sub-regions are famous for their unique festivals and rituals. Most of these are either religion or agrarian associated. According to elder farmer of Ladakh more than ten festive and rituals are celebrated in a year. Sometimes both rite and religion are intertwined to commemorate the organic and non-organic entity. Therefore, this paper explores the rituals and festive of Ladakh that are eco-centric. How the local entertained ritual and festive which demonstrate nature space as an essential part of their life and thereby serves to maintain an eco-friendly culture. Further the paper discusses how it is imperative to preserve such ritual in an ecological crisis era. To examine the researcher will consider some villages of Ladakh where the celebration of the festive and ritual represents whole. And to collect data an interview and oral literature is the prime sources.

The question why it is important to study ritual and eco-criticism in Ladakh because Ladakh is a developing state, much of its eco-friendly culture is transforming without knowing it's important in an ecological crisis era. And the rituals and festive is one of the major cultural performances that inculcated the habit of empathetic attitude toward nature's belongings; it also recognizes the importance of natural elements. Janet Rizvi in her travelogue entitled *Crossroad of High Asia* mentions about the changing direction of Ladakhi cultural life around 90s. She pointed out Ladakh is situated in the most secluded area where the region remains alienated for six months yet the influence of the modern culture cannot surpass it.

In a similar note, Helena Norbege who visited Ladakh for two times one before 1970s and the other around 1990s was shocked to observe the drastic changes in the landscape of the region in the later period. In her travelogue named *Learning from Ladakh; an Ancient Future* she narrates that Ladakh and its life before 70s are wholly eco-friendly culture, however after 90s is more modern and advance but less eco-centric. Many of its practices which had revolved around sustainable development have been replaced by modernity. She realizes the danger of western mono-cultural practices in the universe and its impact on Ladakh's society as well. She gives importance to the native ideal cultural practices because she notices Ladakhi life is eco-sustainable culture. She said there was no concept of waste; everything was used in an organized way. However, this has been changed after the coming of modernization. Therefore, she along with local like Gen. Thupstan Paldan and others succeeded to establish an organization named Ladakh Ecological Development Organization to promote the eco-friendly culture of the region. It also encourages other institution and policy maker to come up with such project.

Gen Thuptan Paldan one of the local writers always writes about the changing culture of Ladakh. Many of his non-fiction focuses on the importance of Ladakh culture which reflect integrity and stability with nature space. Most of his works are the representation of Ladakhi landscape in the post-colonial period and in his novella entitled *After Thirty Years* demonstrates the lack of industrial material in the region in 70s and the notice of the same in abundance in Leh town after 70s. Roof Robert in his travelogue wonders by the healthy production of Ladakhi crops in 1936 and compare it to England farming. He says Ladakh was not developed in term of advance technology but he hardly seen people with serious disease. It is because Ladakh until 70s had sustainable eco-friendly cultural practices. Everything produces and consume were biodegradable. Furthermore, Ladakhi until 90s has less interruption and more consideration to nature as equal and supreme entity. Instead of this changing cultural transformation, the ritual and festive performance hold its space. It has become the medium to educate about sustainable development's importance and impart about substantiate skill.

An interview with Yangchan Dolma, an elderly farmer of Khalsar village narrates, “There are many festive and rituals associated to seasonal farming namely saka, dartsas, spitlak, tsorma, rhubla, bumstor and so on. Besides there are some other rituals that purposely performed for the benefit of natural entities such as rhiyo-zangchod, lhu-stor, lhu-sang, lhu-tyus, rhi-tyus, lhung-tyus.” The entire rituals are intertwined with environment nuances. The performance of the rite includes both human and non-human being indicate the equal share space of the earth. The priest, villagers, and animals are participated to complete the rituals and it is performed to receive bless to natural entity like water, soil, plant, and snow. Ladakhi considered these elements as an essential part of everyday life and respect its space. Theirs’ treatment to nature and its element is friendly and the performance of the rituals and festive is to eradicate any evil causes and disease to the non-human world. Such treatment arises consciousness to protect the inorganic body’s existence and its life fragile. Also, it allows the younger generation to understand how nature’s space is crucial and how the human has a deep connection with environmental material. Hence the ritual helps to generate the sense of empathetic attitude toward ecosystem.

Saka, the first ritual of the season is one of the greatest and auspicious rituals, followed by two days festive named darstis. Saka is something related to soil. It is celebrated not only to appease the divine figure named Lha and Lhu but to have a healthy crop and to receive blessing to the soil, animal, and crops. The ritual is considered auspicious as it initiates the use of the land, water air, animals, manure, seed, moon, and sun and acknowledge its significance for the cultivation. Without performing this ritual, the farmer does not initiate the farming. They believe offering prayer and warm regard to natural entity prior to its use. Furthermore, Ladakhi believes the existence of divine power in the natural entities and the performance of this ritual is to gain the permission and cooperation. It also exhibits that Ladakhi does not treat the natural elements as commodity but as supreme and valuable part of the mother earth. They acknowledge its life and its contribution to the ecosystem. Such perspective allows minimal exploitation to non-human world.

The entire aspects of the ritual involve many non-human entities such as soil, field, animal, sun, and moon. And many of them become the site to hold the ritual. In saka and bum-stor rituals, the soil and field are the main site where stor-ma is performed both at home and on the nature’s site. Choosing such site helps to commune with the organic elements and force and construct the harmonies spiritual nature relation. Further it works to bring integrity and stability with the environmental elements. In general, we pray to deities to protect the valuable things and the offering of rituals to organic bodies reflects the recognition of environmental elements as valuable too. Both priest and laymen assemble on

the land to perform the rituals and offer pray to the non-human world. Besides priest, the laymen also chant the mantras while performing the rituals. In an interview with priest Namdol, “in Saka ritual, the priest recites the nyang-gyad from Buddhist religion text and the laymen also chant a different mantra to initiate farming and also sing a song while ploughing to encourage the dzo, a hybrid of yak and cow.” The saka is performed to successfully invoke symbolic powers of regeneration that work as purification, leading to renewed vigor and nourish crops. A small amount of the soil, seed, manure, and water are used to inform it is used in the near future.

In a similar note, the bum-stor’s performance includes lay men participation irrespective of gender and age helps harmonious connection with the natural world. According to priest Nyamdol, Bum includes 16 sets of Buddhist religion and stor means to give round. Therefore bum-stor means to give a round by carrying this set of religious text. Further it consists of two rites namely tyus and rabnyas. The ritual is performed toward the end of 5th and the beginning of 6th month in the summer season to sanctify the environmental elements and to remove destructive causes from the environment. Disket Lamo narrate that around 10 to 15 monks come to perform the ritual. Monk halts for five minutes to every main field and perform tyus and rabnyas rite. The tyus rite is the purification ceremonies reinforce to maintain pure and clean environmental element like air, water and soil. It is believed to invoke symbolic powers of regeneration and purification. And the rabnyas is celebrated to have blessed to the non-entity. Both the ritual focuses on the integrity of air, water, and land to produce pure, nourish and healthy crop.

In every ritual the phok-khalchor is a part. It is the gesture of reception and welcoming the eminent personalities with gratitude and respect. Arranging the same in the tyus, bum-stor and tsor-ma rituals is not only to welcoming the priest but also to the natural elements and its use in the cultivation. Similarly, the making of dang-chung has a symbolic spiritual connotation. Therefore, the ritual practices engage eco-friendly culture led to the sustainable development. The coming of modernization introduces many unfriendly eco-cultures practices such as the uses of plastic, construction of factories, buildings and so on. It leads to unbalance ecosystem. And a climate change is one of the major issues that have been facing by Laadakhi recently. The cloudburst and untimely snowfall become challenging year by year. These lead to the question of who is responsible for this. And the performance of the lu-stor, and ryebo-zangchod is the reminiscence to maintain the environment elements. It also recognized the maximum interference of human into the nature’s world and disturbs its existence. Dolma mentions that they perform the lu-stor to meadow, and to village benefit. They made stor-ma, and feed to meadow. They believe meadow is the abode of divine figure and stor-ma is to giving fest and appease the divine figure.

This conception helps to sustain the meadow and its agency. Even today in many villages witnessed clean flowing meadows that used for drinking water. Other than rite, there are many festive associated to the cycle of agriculture season. Darstas is celebrated after saka, spitlak and ryub-la rituals. It includes the play of archery by men and women cheer them. The organizer serves wine and local tea name gor-gor/butter/skukan, sweet tea and biscuit to all. The celebration is believed to spell away many devil omens. Spitlak is another big festive, celebrated in the third and fourth month according to the Buddhist calendar. The purpose of celebration is to inform the people that the hard time of farming is passed away and the time to enjoy and merry-making. Local tea, sweet and biscuit and meal is served. The celebration includes singing folk dance and song. The beauty of these festive lies in the fact that most of the products used are base on local eco-friendly origin.

The rituals and festive of Ladakh are intertwined with non-human world. It helps to invoke ecological consciousness and cultivate eco-centric attitude. Most of it is revolved around cycle of seasonal farming. From the beginning until the end of harvest the ritual is a must. Without offering ritual, the farmer doesnot initiate to use the non-human entity. Further their treatment to natural elements as supreme and believe in the equal sharing space of the earth. That is why most agency of environment in Ladakh found clean and less exploit. The rituals and festive that celebrates the integrity, stability, and beauty of the earth, respecting all its organic and inorganic entities for a healthy planet. All species, all organisms, all entities, all ecosystems should be treated as having their own unique, intrinsic value that cannot be substituted. Furthermore, the ritual and festive works as a medium to educate the importance of sustainable development. It reflects how the eco-friendly culture is part of Ladakhi life. And many genres including travelogues and fictions of the pre/post colonial period deal with the same theme and the thematic exploration of the literary text can be done.

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CONFLICT AND CONUNDRUM: POSTCOLONIALITY AND FEMININITY IN GIRISH KARNAD'S PLAY *HAYAVADANA*

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Abstract

The term 'postcolonialism' implies the political and social emancipation of previously colonised people and is inextricably linked with the notions of freedom, choices, and power. Girish Karnad, as a postcolonial Indian writer, is recognised for his dramatisation of Indian experiences and identity. His play *Hayavadana* serve as as a layered representation of postcolonial hybridity and further contextualizes the female sensibility in contemporary India. This paper analyses the conflicts and crises experienced by the characters in the play, and attempts to highlight the problems of 'inbetweenness.'

Keywords: Postcolonial, Femininity, Identity, Hybrid, Indian Drama.

Girish Karnad is recognised as one of the pre-eminent playwrights of contemporary India. He has carved a niche for himself, with respect to his authorial identity and a unique dramatic style. Karnad and his contemporaries, who came to maturity shortly after independence, contributed extensively to the reshaping of Indian theatre. Modern Indian theatre, which emerged against the backdrop of the Indian independence movement, was revitalized with a new purpose and identity. The works of Karnad and the other Indian playwrights of his time, portray "a determined and self-conscious effort towards a new Indian drama" (Dharwadker viii).

The efforts of these playwrights were shaped by political autonomy and the newfound sense of freedom. It is only befitting that the dawn of independent India's new era witnessed changes in the art and literary scene of the country. Karnad is known for employing devices of myth and folklore to explore the absurdities of human life and conflicts. Karnad's unique engagement with history, myth and folklore foregrounds the concerns of contemporary India in a distinct manner. His plays often depict identity crises and existentialist quests that shaped the experiences of many in modern day India. As remarked by Dharwadker, "The majority of his plays employ the narratives of myth, history, and folklore to evoke an ancient or premodern world that resonates in contemporary contexts because of his uncanny ability to remake the past in the image of the present" (Dharwadker ix)

Karnad's play *Hayavadana* explores the human tendency to search for perfection and completeness. Kirtinath Kurtkoti rightly comments that the play presents a "world of incomplete individuals, indifferent gods, dolls that speak and children who cannot, a

world indifferent to the desires and frustrations, joys and sorrows of human beings” (Kirtinath vii). The play draws from Thomas Mann’s *The Transposed Heads* and also refers to the Sanskrit work, *Kathasaritasagara*. Karnad’s originality lies in the multiplicity of contexts and the symbolization of the tussle between the ‘head’ and ‘body’ through several characters, and with reference to Indian myth and folklore. This East-West connection that serves as the background of the play, also can be considered as an indication of postcolonial social conditions and consciousness. With its creative play-within-a-play structure and the East-West connection as discussed earlier, *Hayavadana* also alludes to the hybridization of identity, much like the play’s characters and the audience watching the play. Dharwadker notes that *Hayavadana* can be considered as a “de-orientalized, contemporary Indian theatrical version” (Dharwadker xxvi) of Mann’s work. Dharwadkar further comments, “The play’s real originality lies in the reflexive frames Karnad constructs for the story, and the thematic force of its representation of femininity, desire, and identity in and for the present, independent of its source” (Dharwadker xxvi).

Hayavadana, thereby, presents postcolonial hybridity evidently through its dramatic structure and the playwright’s choices. The combination of Indian and Western theatrical techniques and subject matter, the connection of the past with the present, the inextricable relationship between characters with imperfections, depicts the fusion of cultural influences. The blending of distinct artistic traditions represents the hybrid nature of postcolonial literature.

The play develops the complex web of relationships that binds these characters together and the eventual clash of personalities presents a comprehensive picture of the human search for perfection. The characters’ attempts to navigate and resolve conflicting situations demonstrate the complexities and challenges posed by postcolonial hybridity and postcolonial ‘inbetweeness’. The two parallel plots in *Hayavadana* also showcase the discontentment and resentment that emerges when the desired completeness and perfection is not achieved. Karnad, in *Hayavadana*, presents the identity crisis and related conundrum at three levels: human, animal and divinity. The play begins with a prayer to the deity Ganesha, with Bhagavata singing and praising Ganesha. However, Ganesha is also described as “An elephant’s head on a human body, a broken tusk and a cracked belly - whichever way you look at him, he seems the embodiment of imperfection, of incompleteness” (Karnad 106). This contradiction is what baffles and fascinates Bhagavata the most. He ponders: “How indeed can one fathom the mystery that this very Vakratund-Mahakaya, with his crooked face and distorted body, is the Lord and Master of Success and Perfection?” (Karnad 106).

The titular character, Hayavadana, is a figure with a horse head and a human body. Born to a Celestial Being and a human Princess of Karnataka, Hayavadana is

shown to be desperate for ‘completeness.’ Hayavadana remains suspended between the human and animal world. He shares his grief with Bhagavata, as he ponders over the solution to his problem. He cries: “But what a forehead! What a forehead! If it was a forehead like yours, I would have accepted anything. But this! . . . I have tried to accept my fate...I have tried everything. But where’s my society? Where? You must help me to become a complete man, Bhagavata sir. But how? What can I do?” (Karnad 114)

Hayavadana’s half-human and half-horse form represents the intense struggle to reconcile different aspects of oneself, which can lead to a sense of fragmentation. His ‘broken’ character shows more sensibility when compared to the human characters in the play, as remarked by P. Dhanval in his work, *The Indian Imagination of Girish Karnad: Essays on Hayavadana*, “The horse-head appears to symbolize plain common sense. He asks intelligent questions and points several loopholes in the individual and social system” (Dhanavel 42). Despite his strong civic sense and good intentions, his life remains distressing and he is ridiculed, for no fault of his. He achieves a sense of completeness and wholeness by surrendering his human abilities and finds happiness by turning into a ‘complete’ horse, by the end of the play. However, this fulfillment is more appears to be more complicated in the case of humans, as Manisha Dwivedi remarks: “But for a human being, who is a combination of flesh and spirit, body and mind, completeness requires a harmonical relationship between body and mind but cartesian division seems to be a perennial irresolvable problem for man” (Dwivedi 234).

In the human world, the trio of Kapila, Devadatta, and Padmini also grapple with their desires and the confused state of being ‘incomplete’. Kapila has a strong physique but lacks intellectual prowess. Devadatta, poet and “comely in appearance” (Karnad 106), is intellectual but lacks physical strength. Padmini, who is married to Devadatta, suffers from her unfulfilled desires as she wants the best qualities that Devadatta and Kapila possess in her husband. Devadatta and Kapila share a close relationship and their friendship is characterized by duality and co-existence. Devadatta is the brain, Kapila is the body. The former is delicate, the latter is rugged. Devadatta is a scholarly Brahmin intellectual, interested in poetry and literature. Kapila on the other hand, is an iron smith, grounded and with brute strength. From a postcolonial perspective, one can also note that despite caste and personal differences, both of these characters have forged an unlikely friendship.

However, both Devadatta and Kapila appear to be alienated from their own selves as well as others, despite being “one mind, one heart” (Karnad 109). This also indicates that the Modern man is in disharmony with his sense of self, and yearns for wholeness and completion. Devadatta and Kapila complement each other and in many ways, complete each other to form a unified whole. However, ridden with insecurities and desires, they end up in conflict with their own selves and the other. As Devdatta gets

increasingly jealous of Padmini's interest in Kapila, his internal conflict also intensifies. Kapila remarks that Padmini is sharp witted and might not be a good match for Devadatta, "Kapila: You are a gentle soul. You can't bear a bitter word or an evil thought. But this one is fast as lightning - and as sharp. She is not for the likes of you. What she needs is a man of steel" (Karnad 126). Later in the play, he showers her with attention and gazes at her with "pleading in his eyes" (Karnad 129). Devadatta and Kapila, thereby, both remain in this state of 'inbetweenness,' with respect to their conflicting self-consciousness and their duty towards one another. Their constant anxiety represents the anguish of postcolonial inbetweenness and identity conflicts, as they embody the tussle between the 'mind' and the 'heart,' experienced by many in contemporary India.

As a postcolonial literary text, *Hayavadana* reflects on femininity and showcases a woman as desirable as well as an individual with desires of her own. The very presence of such desires challenges the norms of conventional, feminine norms established by the patriarchy. Dharwadker comments: "Beyond its philosophical reflection on identity and its self-reflexive structure, *Hayavadana* also resonates in present dramatic and cultural contexts because it gives primacy to women in psychosexual relations of marriage, and creates a space for expression, even the fulfillment, of amoral female desire, within the constraints of patriarchy" (Dharwadker xxviii).

Padmini admires Kapila for his virility and admits to herself that "no woman could resist him" (Karnad 134). In the beginning of the play, the female chorus aptly sings, "I have neither regret nor shame" (Karnad 117), highlighting the frank self-awareness that Padmini nurtures. However, she subconsciously acts on her desires by mixing up the severed heads of Devadatta and Kapila, which implies her inner wish of being with a man with Devadatta's mind and Kapila's body. Padmini's inability to cope with and accept incompleteness and imperfections leads to chaos, and she eventually realizes that transposing of heads was a failure. Devadatta and Kapila, as 'hybrid' individuals, find it difficult to sustain their 'new' identities and the three of them remain unhappy. One can label her character as a transgressor of social norms, or one can see her plight as a "woman's vain attempt to unite Man as intellect and as flesh in order to further her creative purpose" (Naik 196). Padmini represents a modern, emancipated woman, who is conscious of her sexuality and wit, but surrenders to her suppressed desires. Her conflicting emotions reflect the difficulty in making choices, in one's search for perfection.

Devadatta, Kapila and Padmini suffer from the anguish of this "mad dance of incompleteness" (Karnad 170). Even Padmini's son experiences a severe identity crisis, given that his biological father's identity is profoundly complex. The play suggests that in the contemporary world, disrupted selves and fragmented identities are aplenty. The child

and Hayavadana, both have suffered because of the choices made by their respective parents, and find comfort and completeness upon meeting one another.

As a modern Indian play, *Hayavadana* is richly layered and presents existential anguish, frustrations, and one's quest for identity. Karnad ingeniously comments on the human condition in the face of the increasingly changing social milieu of contemporary India. *Hayavadana* serves as a timeless work of literature, as it ponders over socio-political concerns but simultaneously transcends the time warp to ponder over existential dilemmas.

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"VEILED VISIONS": EXPLORING FEMINISM AND DIASPORA THROUGH THE LENS OF ORIENTALISM

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Abstract

The abstract focuses on "Veiled Visions" which intricately explores the interplay of feminism and diaspora, focusing on three women within a diasporic community through the lens of Orientalist theory. The present paper critically examines societal norms, challenging entrenched stereotypes and offering a nuanced portrayal of self-discovery and resistance. As the women confront patriarchal expectations in both their enclave and the host society, the narrative becomes a poignant reflection on the intersection of gender and diaspora. The paper significantly contributes to feminist discourse, urging readers to reconsider prevailing narratives and recognize the agency of individuals.

Keywords: Intricately, Interplay, Diaspora, Societal, Narratives.

David Fort Godshalk's "Veiled Visions," is the exploration of the 1906 Atlanta Race Riot which initially appears to follow a well-established narrative pattern rooted in racial tensions and violence. As commented by Keith Volonto, "the author provides the first book-length analysis of this tumultuous riot's far-reaching effects on the city of Atlanta and American race relations." The riot's causes align with a familiar script: white-on-black violence fueled by racial hatred and social anxiety, exacerbated by fears of black mobility, and intertwined with notions of threatened manhood. The aftermath, characterized by angry white mobs, a terrorized black working class, and a city marred by bloodshed, is not surprising in a place like Atlanta, known for its commercial focus and civic boosterism.

As quoted by Berry, "Godshalk describes a summer of inflammatory headlines and unsubstantiated accusations of black men attacking white women, which incited armed white mobs, who attacked African Americans, resulting in at least twenty black fatalities and over one hundred injured (376)." The contemporary landscape of diasporic communities reflects a complex interplay of cultural, gender, and identity dynamics. This research embarks on a nuanced exploration of the intricate relationship between feminism, diaspora, and Orientalism. Central to this investigation are the narratives of three women situated within a diasporic community, individuals whose experiences serve as poignant lenses through which one can examine the broader societal intersections.

In framing the context, the background illuminates the relevance of veiling as a symbolic representation, a focal point that encapsulates the nuanced layers of identity negotiation within diasporic settings. Veiling, often steeped in historical significance and

cultural connotations, becomes a potent vehicle through which the intersectionality of gender and cultural identity is navigated. By delving into the narratives of these three women, the paper seeks to unravel the profound ways in which veiling becomes a prism through which their experiences are refracted. It becomes evident that veiling is not merely a sartorial choice but a symbolic journey, laden with meaning and cultural significance. Its exploration promises insights into the broader questions surrounding agency, resistance, and self-discovery within the intricate tapestry of diasporic life.

Objective

The goal of the paper is to make a substantial contribution to feminist discourse within the context of diaspora and Orientalism. By shedding light on the agency and diverse experiences of veiled women, the paper seeks to challenge and reshape prevailing narratives. It urges readers to reconsider entrenched viewpoints, fostering a deeper understanding of the complex interplay between gender, culture, and identity within diasporic communities.

Analysis

Godshalk's treatment of the events goes beyond a simplistic retelling of historical events. He delves into the intricacies of Atlanta's response to the riot, revealing that the city's later self-designation as "the city too busy to hate" during the Civil Rights Era was influenced by the immediate aftermath of the riot. While Atlanta did not officially adopt this slogan until later, Godshalk suggests that the post-riot period served as a precursor to the city's self-promotion as a place focused on progress and harmony.

What sets Godshalk's narrative apart is its nuanced examination of the aftermath. Rather than dismissing Atlanta's response as mere propaganda, he acknowledges the complexity of the situation. The author draws connections between the events of 1906 and the civil rights activism that unfolded later in the 20th century. By framing Atlanta's reaction to the riot as a flawed but instructive template for managing racial tensions across the United States, Godshalk invites readers to consider the long-reaching consequences and legacies of such historical events.

In essence, "Veiled Visions" uses the 1906 Atlanta Race Riot as a lens through which to analyze not only the specific historical moment but also its reverberations in shaping subsequent civil rights activism and the broader management of racial tensions in the United States. As stated by Beck, "The author does a superb job establishing the socio-economic context for the mob violence (1822)." The book prompts reflection on how cities respond to racial violence and the lasting impact of their choices on the trajectory of race relations.

In a significant contribution to the narrative, David Fort Godshalk, in "Veiled Visions," shifts his focus beyond the familiar retelling of the 1906 Atlanta Race Riot and

dives into the intricacies of the experiences of the riot's black protagonists. By closely examining their struggles, priorities, and inner conflicts, Godshalk offers a nuanced account of the interclass tension within the black community during this tumultuous period.

Godshalk's exploration of the style of black leadership that emerged from the riot becomes a central theme, shedding light on the complexities faced by black leaders during this turbulent time. Through a comprehensive analysis of various sources, he argues that the decision of elite blacks to cooperate with whites played a crucial role in preventing further violence. However, this cooperation came at a significant cost, as it obscured the promising black visions for America's future, illustrating the trade-off between immediate stability and the long-term aspirations of the black community, "but only at the cost of veiling promising black visions of America's future (290)."

The author allocates only one early chapter to describe the riot itself, purposefully dedicating most of the narrative to a more compelling aspect: the aftermath. By doing so, Godshalk provides ample space to explore "the concrete ways in which the memories and representations of an individual race riot helped reshape a city and a nation (4)." This approach enables a deeper understanding of the lasting impact of the riot on both the local and national levels.

One of the key contributions of Godshalk's work is his examination of the differing narratives crafted by black and white Atlantans about the riot. However, his primary focus lies in another dimension: the version of events that circulated in the national media and became ingrained in the national consciousness. By highlighting the national perspective, Godshalk underscores the broader implications of how such events are remembered and interpreted on a larger scale, beyond the immediate locality.

"Veiled Visions" not only provides an insightful analysis of the 1906 Atlanta Race Riot but also elevates the discussion by examining the aftermath and the enduring impact on the black community's vision for the future. Godshalk's attention to the national narrative adds a layer of complexity, emphasizing the broader resonance and historical significance of the events in Atlanta.

According to that version, cooperation between white civic leaders and the "better sort" of blacks allowed cooler heads to prevail and end the riot. Then, in the aftermath, black and white elites forged an interracial alliance dedicated to the preservation of law and order, which maintained the peace and allowed the city to flourish commercially. The premium these leaders placed on such strategic cooperation and the economic success it made possible became known as the "Atlanta Plan," and its guidelines steered race relations in the city for the remainder of the 20th century. Godshalk makes plain that the Atlanta Plan was conceived by elite whites as a wholly

defensive measure, a “cold calculation” intended to protect the reputation of the city and its business prospects while forestalling blacks’ demands for social change (269).” The interesting and agonizing part of Godshalk’s story is the response of African-American elites to a plan that promised an end to racial violence, but required them to cut ties to working-class blacks, renounce militancy, and genuflect to traditional structures of white power.

In “Veiled Visions,” David Fort Godshalk scrutinizes the responses of black leaders to the tumultuous events surrounding the 1906 Atlanta Race Riot. With notable exceptions like W.E.B. Du Bois and Jesse Max Barber, Godshalk observes that most black leaders chose to accede to the Atlanta Plan a strategy involving cooperation with whites to prevent further violence, a plan which necessitated trading progress for peace. While Godshalk refrains from outright condemnation of Atlanta’s influential blacks for their decisions, he unmistakably presents this tradeoff as a cause for lament. The Atlanta Plan, he argues, came at a significant cost for subsequent generations of African-Americans. It intricately “enmeshed black elites in a dependent patron-client relationship with whites,” a relationship that exacted an even heavier toll on the working-class black population (277). The security achieved through cooperation, according to Godshalk, had the unintended consequence of perpetuating a hierarchical and unequal dynamic between black elites and their white counterparts.

As the narrative unfolds, Godshalk reveals that the Atlanta Plan eventually transforms into what he terms the “Atlanta Paradox.” Despite the city’s reputation as a “mecca of the black middle class,” Atlanta remains, at the conclusion of the book, one of the most segregated cities in America. This paradox underscores the complex legacy of the choices made in the aftermath of the riot. While the Atlanta Plan may have provided short-term stability, it also contributed to the persistence of racial segregation in the city, revealing a profound and lasting impact on the racial dynamics of Atlanta, “an underlying cause was the growing racial tension in a rapidly-changing city and economy, competition for jobs, housing, and political power.”

In essence, Godshalk's portrayal suggests that the decisions made by black leaders in response to the 1906 Atlanta Race Riot, while ostensibly ensuring immediate peace, had far-reaching consequences that influenced the socio-economic and racial landscape of Atlanta for generations to come. The “Atlanta Paradox” serves as a poignant reminder of the intricate interplay between short-term stability and the long-term implications of compromise, shedding light on the complexities inherent in navigating racial relations in the aftermath of significant social upheaval.

Conclusion

The conclusion culminates by underlining the importance of fostering inclusive discussions that grapple with the complexity of gender, identity, and cultural negotiation

in our globalized world. It encourages a dialogue that transcends oversimplified narratives, acknowledging the diversity of experiences and perspectives within diasporic communities.

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POLITICAL SATIRE IN INDIAN STAND-UP COMEDY: ANALYZING THE ROLE OF COMEDIANS IN CONTEMPORARY DISCOURSE

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Abstract

Stand-up comedy is a popular form of entertainment in the contemporary era, but when fused with politics, it becomes an art of expression. Comedy veterans like Vir Das and Kunal Kamra frequently grab media attention for their noteworthy contributions to political comedy. From Kenny Sebastian's "Why I Don't Do Jokes About Politics in India" to Varun Grover's "Aisi Taisi Democracy," this research traces the instances and influences of stand-up comedies on the 21st century Indian population. This paper investigates the reciprocal nature of satire and the contribution of comedians in fostering a more insightful and socially conscious collective dialogue regarding political dissent.

Keywords: Comedy, Contemporary, Dialogue, Expression, Politics.

According to Jonathan Swift, "Satire is a sort of glass, wherein beholders do generally discover everybody's face but their own" (1). When analysing our Indian narrative tradition, we had several prominent figures like Tenali Rama and Narada, who promptly criticised everything from kings to fools and can be considered the forerunners of present-day socially responsible entertainers. From Pope to Premchand, readers have been enamoured by this bewitching power of satire, which has helped us bridge the gap between mirage and reality.

The term stand-up comedy was initially used in entertainment magazines and the trade press, and a lot of different definitions were attributed to it. (Double 2) The present-day arena of Indian stand-up comedy, apart from being a new art form of entertainment, has also become the forefront of a modern approach towards raising voice towards the current political scenarios in the country. The democratic aspect of stand-up comedies has enabled their access and reciprocity among Indian youth, thus inviting both applause and boos from the audience.

This paper analyses the comic pieces of Kenneth Mathew Sebastian, Kunal Kamra, Vir Das, and Varun Grover's *Aisi Taisi Democracy* to analyse how hypocrisy in gender, politics, and contemporary opinions is dismantled and disseminated to the public using the theoretical lens of Jurgen Habermas's theory of the public sphere. Since we are part of the largest democracy, featuring plenty of different cultures and languages spaced across our vast India, dissent and conflicts are bound to happen. George Orwell, in his

preface to 1984, has noted that if liberty means anything at all, it means the right to tell people what they do not want to hear. (1)

Jürgen Habermas illustrated his idea of a “public sphere” (German: öffentlichkeit) in *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* (1962, translated to English in 1989). He defined öffentlichkeit as “a realm of our social life in which something approaching public opinion can be formed” and into which “[a]ccess is guaranteed to all citizens.” Habermas established a conceptual ideal space where all citizens would be able to gather and discuss matters of common interest in an “unrestricted fashion” (49).

Jürgen Habermas’s theory of the public sphere is applied to understand the relationship between comedy and audience reactions to political themes. This theory is a domain that allows public opinions to be articulated and disseminated. It involves the coming together of people to engage in rational and critical discussions. It offers an inclusive space, regardless of social status, and comes to a shared understanding of the ideas being discussed. He also focuses on the role of media in generating greater mass in this sphere and allowing for a more informed discourse.

On April 23, 2018, Kenneth Mathew Sebastian uploaded a 12-minute video on his YouTube channel titled ‘*Why I don’t do jokes about politics in India*’ that had around 7.4 million views in 2024. In the video, he expresses his audience’s comments regarding his writing jokes on topics like exams and food rather than religion and politics. He then makes tongue-in-cheek remarks, addressing the comments. With a tint of sarcasm and humour, he mentions that nobody is ready for jokes on these sensitive topics, and the repercussions are too grave if attempted. He mentions a strict focus on light-hearted jokes but not on serious crimes and concerns that the people in this country are facing. He also points out that people who try to raise their voice regarding these topics, such as journalists, academicians, and activists, have had to pay the price.

We are reminded of many media martyrs, like Gouri Lankesh, Ahamed Faktoo, and many others. He blatantly confronts the crowd and says that he is “scared” even though he has a “privileged” background. He also points out the disparity in pay scales and perks between government employees and private sector employees. At the end, he gives a subtle hint on how families automatically come under the radar of risk if a comedian says something related to politics that might offend someone. In his defence he said “I don’t do jokes on religion because I’m not insane.”

The public sphere is seen as a domain of social life where public opinion can be formed. (Habermas 398). In an environment where public opinion is curtailed either

through mob agitation or censorship, we are forced to thoroughly examine the reality of democratic freedom. Although he considers state power as ‘public power’ (398), which is legitimised through the public in elections, the state and its forceful practices and powers are not part of but are a counterpart of a public sphere where opinions are formed. Therefore, public opinion has to control the state and its authority in everyday discussions as well as through formal elections.

A public sphere is the basic requirement to mediate between the state and society and, in an ideal situation, permits democratic control of state activities. To allow discussions and the formation of public opinion, a record of state-related activities and legal actions has to be publicly accessible. Matthew finally gives a subtle hint on how families automatically come under the radar of risk if a comedian says something related to politics that might offend someone.

The high viewership on Kenny Sebastian’s video points to the interest level on this topic, and around 6,000 comments reflect the relatability of the audience and that a lot of people have certain viewpoints about it. But there is a stark difference between the number of people who viewed it and the number of people who reacted to it. It reflects the broader socio-political issues prevailing in society and elucidates the complexities of addressing all pluralities. Questions regarding the notion of free expression are once again under scepticism. The audience has reacted by re-sharing this form of content and giving their views on Twitter (now X). While some pointed out the comic timing, set, and theme of the show, others took notice of the elements in his verbal content and appreciated the free flow of his views to relevant people.

When it comes to a controversial video essay titled “*I COME FROM TWO INDIAS*,” delivered by Vir Das at the Kennedy Centre in Washington, D.C., he started spewing out the inherent contradictions within our country. His speech focuses on the issues of gendered violence and community riots. He talks about an India “where children in masks hold hands with each other and yet,” ... “from an India where leaders hug each other without masks,” along with the Indian reality where we “worship women at day and gang rape them at night.”

The hypocrisy surrounding COVID protocols, the false security of women, and even the persistent farmers’ protests were addressed during this speech or poem. The reactions and outcries in their aftermath cement the reciprocal nature of comedians in fostering a more insightful and socially conscious dialogue regarding our contemporary political dissent. Supporters flooded the media, who harshly criticised the Orwellian authority’s censorship of public opinion. Vir Das further clarified it in a tweet: “The video is a satire about the duality of two very separate India’s that do different things.

Like any nation, it has light and dark and good and evil within it. None of this is a secret. The video encourages us to never forget that we are great. To never stop focusing on what makes us great.”

Though Habermas’ model only holds a normative claim, it does not actually exist in modern democracies that are industrially advanced, constituted as a social-welfare state, and where masses of people are supposed to form a public. It is an idealistic model of democracy that is shaped by structural changes in society that result in a transformed understanding of the public sphere. But true liberty needs to be questioned and critically traced by analysing responses to such outrageous acts of courage. Das was harshly criticised for his ‘insensitive’ video, which prompted Aditya Jha, a state spokesperson for the Hindu nationalist party, to file a police complaint against Das for “insulting the country.

Similarly, on March 2, 2017, Kunal Kamra released an 8-minute video on YouTube titled “*Patriotism and Democracy*,” after which he received numerous death threats. The video has 8 million views, with around 22 thousand mixed comments. The video talks about how there is no clear distinction between nationalism and patriotism known to people and how everyone is trying to make the country feel inclusive, but it lacks in various parts of the country. The video begins with the line “India is a democracy until you criticise it,” which points towards the restrictions that prevail associated with free-flowing speech. He also comments on the indecisive nature of the government and focuses on the mindset of the citizens regarding the ruling parties. We are ironically reminded of the poignant remark by Idi Amin Dada, who infamously once said, “There is freedom of speech, but we cannot guarantee freedom after speech.”

Mr. Kamra has recently testified in a case against him, stating that the Supreme Court should trust the public not to form opinions on the basis of a few jokes he cracked on Twitter. Mr. Kamra said “taking offence” to comedy or satire had become a much-loved indoor sport in a growing culture of intolerance. Though many do not acknowledge comedians as the gatekeepers of democracy, they are as martyrs as any other veteran defending public life and dignity.

Furthermore, the controversy that was the major result of *Patriotism and Democracy* was due to the sheer ignorance and hypocrisy of its viewers, who were fueled by their xenophobia to fully grasp our reality. Kamra mainly uses his own real-life example to make the sensitive issues in the video easy to grasp. But the people filed cases against it and took social media to storm, asking to ban his channel as he has disrespected the government, religion, faith, and the armed forces. It questions the freedom of expression and equal treatment of citizens in the court of law. The audience reacted by re-

sharing this form of content and giving their views on Twitter (now X). People asked questions about the system through social media, taking inspiration from the show.

The comic trio Rahul Ram, Varun Grover, and Sanjay Rajoura have tried to capture the subtleties of Indian reality fused with humour, and reality serves as a slap in the face of all the ignorant and passive crowd. While analysing the satirical song titled ‘*The History Song*,’ criticism of everything from selfish politicians and activists to all the major political parties can be dissected. The song dissects how history has been distorted and retold, catering to the needs of ‘agency.’ It was shared on their official Facebook page on November 29 with the caption: “In this season of people offering money to behead others over depictions of history, *AisiTaisi Democracy* drops the new song about the forever-in-conflict phenomenon. Share it with ten people, and Lord Macaulay will appear in your dreams to deliver his fake speech.”

It scrutinised everything from the Rajasthan government rewriting the outcomes of the Battle of Haldighati to the exhausting debate over the Hindi film *Padmavati* to even the RSS and BJP. The outrage expressed against this in turn reinstates such comic strip influence on the public. However, another prominent area that needs to be revisited is the political biases, or lack thereof, of such comedians since they have such a vast viewership due to the digital revolution. Similarly, the audience also needs to be thoroughly re-educated to maintain a more tolerant and critical re-evaluation of comic pieces.

Although stand-up comedy gigs have become a popular source of leisure watching and listening, the lack of freedom and security in maintaining fidelity has enabled only a few voices to come out. Desensitisation through such media exposure helps to generate societal awareness and open discussions that are often neglected in mainstream media. The participation of the audience remains painfully passive in this case but has positively garnered more exposure and understanding regarding political realities through these stand-ups. Though Habermas conceptualised an ideal reality, more efforts should be made to strike a balance between public opinion and state control so as to ward off India being under the spotlight of an Orwellian totalitarian leader.

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UNVEILING THE DYSTOPIA: A FOUCAULDIAN ANALYSIS OF THE FILM *KGF*

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Abstract

Movies possess the special ability to blend reality and fiction which confuses the audience into engaging with the plot. *KGF*, a Kannada Movie translated into many other South Indian languages and directed by Prashant Neel in 2016 is a perfect example of this. This movie portrays a Dystopian World characterized by power, discourse, and surveillance where a marginalized community is subjected to be ruled over by an economically and politically privileged aristocrat in a secluded space separated from the outside world. This paper attempts to dissect this dystopian world which is a coal mine in the movie with the Foucauldian themes of Panopticon and power-discourse theory while incorporating the Marxian concept of class conflict.

Keywords: Power, Surveillance, Class, Spatiality, Dystopia.

Spaces are known to us as spaces of projecting realities in their truest form. But there are spaces unknown to us or chosen to remain hidden for a purpose often controlled or manipulated evoking a sense of horror. These spaces have popped up in literary works in earlier times as Utopian spaces characterized as ideal places of Goodness. The alternatives of these spaces are called dystopias “a term first coined by J.S Mills as a term, where he used the word in contrast with the term utopia” (Jan Pospíšil 9).

Dystopia is defined as a miserable place where suffering and the fall of democracy are peculiar features. Citizens in a dystopian society “suffer from the living conditions imposed upon them” (Hanno 2). Dystopia represented “a version of hell” or “a place of ultimate misery” as “a projected societal future” (Claeys 330), (pospisil 10). Dystopia is an “immortal state” conducted in an “unjust and wrong way” (Bassmah Altaher 154). The rulers of the dystopian state “are oppressors and dictators, using flawed laws that cause corruption in the society” (Hermansson, 2011, p.1).

In the dystopian society, “institutions employ a range of disciplinary practices which ensure that life continues in a regularized, patterned way” (Lyon 7). The initiation of the power happens with disciplinary actions and regulations achieved through surveillance as its major format. The concept of surveillance where “citizens who live in a dystopian community are constantly monitored and recorded” (Hanno). Michel Foucault stated that surveillance is through the concept of panopticon.

The establishment of a panopticon is for constant monitoring which will allow the authority to control the citizens and implement in them a constant fear making it easier for the same. A panopticon is placed at a pedestal position like a huge tower in which a one-way view is only possible. It is “to induce in the inmate a state of conscious and permanent visibility that assures the automatic functioning of power” (Foucault 200).

Foucault argues that “power and knowledge directly imply one another; that there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge” (Foucault 27). Thus, in dystopias, those in positions of authority are always powerful because they have extensive knowledge of what is going on in society as a whole. They are always aware of the hidden motivations and secrets behind the creation of this dystopian society. As a result, those in positions of authority frequently withhold certain information from the public to keep them ignorant and, ultimately, weak.

The fear of surveillance forces the citizens to engage in certain actions while abandoning others to avoid the harsh consequences of their wrongdoings. This is consistent with Foucault's theory that whether citizens are being monitored, they begin to exhibit docile behavior, which is precisely what the government seeks to achieve to keep its subjects obedient. This occurs primarily because constant surveillance of citizens creates a power hierarchy in which citizens are the weakest and those in positions of authority are the strongest (Foucault 191).

Dystopia is usually associated with science fiction” which are trend gathering a wide audience (Altaher 152). These Science fiction movies often depict a dystopian future with the human race surviving a world war, a totalitarian elite controlling masses through technology and surveillance, machines taking control, loss of individual freedom, reduced communication, alienation from society, degradation of spiritual or ethical values, and civilization's demise.

In the case of the movie, *KGF* it is quite different as it is not titled as a dystopian movie but the paper attempts to gather the dystopian images through a spatial study of the same. *KGF* movie was a commercial success in 2018 starred by Yash and directed by Prashant Neel where a usual pattern of Hero vs villain is followed. Attempting a spatial study of the film will able to fill the gap in identifying the dystopian elements in the commercial movies which are not titled as science fictions. To support this argument this paper attempts to find answers for the following questions:

1. Which is the dystopian space identified in the movie?
2. What notions of Foucauldian concepts are employed in the space?
3. How is the functioning of the space portrayed in the movie?
4. How is the Protagonist in the movie negotiating with this space?

The paper follows a thorough examination of the film-by-film analysis using Foucauldian themes (Panopticon, power discourse) to dissect *KGF*. Scenes depicting power dynamics, surveillance, and spatial arrangements will be coded, transcribed, and analyzed to uncover dystopian elements. The findings are synthesized, with an emphasis on theoretical connections to provide a more nuanced understanding.

The movie revolves around a sprawling and oppressive gold mine, called Kolar Gold Fields which serves as the narrative's focal point. This mining environment is distinguished by a stark, desolate landscape that represents the harshness of the dystopian world run by the popular don and politician Surya Vardan. "In 1951 in digging a well, there found a strange stone", which led to the construction of the Mine (8:41). Suryavardan killed the officials and leased the land for 99 years in the name of a limestone mine called *Narachi*.

"To safeguard the place, he brought people by force," shows that a marginalized community works under the control of economically and politically privileged aristocrats in *KGF* (10:55). The people are dragged to the mine with chains around their bodies like dogs without any humanitarian concerns (1:24:39). The mine becomes a microcosm of societal inequities, with the ruling class exploiting the labor of the marginalized community for personal gain. The physical confines of the mine are "Huge Gate in the Entrance, Guards on Towers and Security Structures emphasize its isolation and separation from the outside world, reinforcing the dystopian atmosphere (1:25:18,1:25:27,1:25:35).

Three Forms of Security are arranged in *KGF* which is "a huge wall, a huge door and a ruthless commander Vanaran" (1:25:47-1:26:04). The extent of surveillance the place owns is understood from this dialogue. The entire place is covered with watch towers with guards on it from where a clear view is possible. Every guard has a walkie-talkie, which speeds up communication. ". We have guards at the gate, we have guards at the mining, we have guards at the watch tower, we have guards at the wall, and guards of Garuden" (1:34:51 - 1:35:19). Throughout the movie the guards have placed at a certain height from where they can easily watch the workers. The top view gives better surveillance (1:25:35).

The surveillance feature of the gold mine serves as a constant reminder of the character's vulnerability and the constant threat of betrayal. The dim light passages' strategic placement of security measures creates an atmosphere of tension and suspense. "Suryavardhan called this place *Narachi* which means gold smith weighing scale on which he placed intelligence on one side and the other side it is equalized with the fear of people" (1:26:56 – 1:27:27).

The oppressive spatiality reflects the control exercised by those in power, resulting in an environment in which residents are constantly scrutinized and manipulated. The juxtaposition of the confined mine and the outside world highlights the stark contrast between the privileged elite and the marginalized masses. Hence *KGF*," is serving as a metaphorical arena where power, exploitation, and surveillance converge to create a vivid and oppressive depiction of a society marked by stark class divisions and authoritarian rule.

The Panopticon view from the antagonist Garudan over the Mine is the Strongest Surveillance mode as he controls the Mine (1:29:18). In Narachi 20,000 people are controlled by just 400 guards it is possible with the help of the idea of the panopticon and the fear that generates in the mind of people. It is a one-way view from the watch tower the guards can see every inmate but they cannot see them. Not always the panopticon view is from a height as "no one in should raise their heads and look at the guards, as they do not tolerate being looked, they will shoot you" (1:31:02). The movie places both the antagonist Garudan and the Hero Rocky as Omnipotent Figures. Both characters can predict the incoming circumstances and act accordingly.

The movie shows the harsh reality of the harassing treatment of laborers in the Coal Mine. workers are not either paid or given proper food. Their necessities like food, shelter, and clean water are denied to them. The workers include Pregnant women, elderly people, and even children. The moment the guards find a citizen unfit to work there, he/she is taken to the mines and brutally killed. (1:38:20 – 1:39:32) There are two scenes in which a blind man and a disabled one are killed by the guards. The identity of the workers is minimized to the number imprinted on their bodies with hot iron pressed on their skin. (1:27:14 – 1:27:29)

However, there is a shift in the current state of Powerlessness, when *Rocky* who is among the workers gathers information about the workings of the mine. The shifting of the power starts with the panopticon view of Rocky is shown as gains the same view of Garudan (1:29:22). He confirms the location of every guard and his primary objective, Garudan. He entered the security room and looked over the entire Narachi map. (1:55:04 – 1:56:13) By doing this, he is acquiring the omnipotent power that Garuden previously possessed. Rocky has taken over replacing *Garudan*. By saving the elderly man from Durga (guard), he ignites courage and hope in others. (2:09:32 – 2:10:14). At the end of the movie, we can see the people fighting against the guards for Rockey. The mad worker took the young girl, gave her to Rockey, and shouted out that he would protect the child. (2:01:07 – 2:02:10). He was able to create hope among the workers which slowly reduced their fear and instilled hope in them. The populace believes he is the god who has come to

their salvation. And they were following him out of respect rather than fear thus seeing the rising of a dystopian hero.

The film *KGF* depicts a dystopian space within the oppressive Kolar Gold Fields, characterized by extreme inequality, exploitation, and surveillance. Drawing on Foucauldian concepts like the panopticon, the film depicts a society in which power dynamics and fear rule the lives of marginalized workers. The spatial analysis emphasizes the contrast between the privileged elite and the oppressed masses, emphasizing the pervasive control wielded by those in power. As the protagonist, Rocky, challenges the existing power structure, the narrative shifts, demonstrating the possibility of resistance and hope in the dystopian setting. *KGF* is a nuanced exploration of dystopia that transcends cinema's traditional genre boundaries.

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CONQUERING THE RACIAL DISCRIMINATIONS: A STUDY OF TREVOR NOAH'S *BORN A CRIME*

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Abstract

Colonizers captured the South African native people's land; they began war with the natives; invoked their own laws to subjugate and enslave them under their control. The Dutch rose up to claim South Africa as their rightful inheritance. To dominate over the black people, they established the 'Apartheid' policy. Also, the white implemented several laws against the black to take control of them and segregate them away throughout the Apartheid era. Trevor Noah, a South African man of mixed race who was born in 1984 during the Apartheid era discusses all these aspects in his autobiographical novel *Born a Crime*. Since the 'Immorality Act' had just been passed, it was illegal for him to exist at the moment. Postcolonialism Theory by Robert J. C. Young discusses the blending of Indigenes and Colonialists results in conflicted Identity has taken place. This article expresses the struggles faced by the native people and the trauma of Trevor Noah during the Apartheid era; and how he conquers the racial discriminations in his life.

Keywords: Postcolonialism, Apartheid, South African, Race, Immorality Act.

This is a modest attempt to examine the wounded hearts of the people during the postcolonial apartheid era in South Africa, especially Trevor Noah who faced numerous traumas in his childhood days because of his racial identity. The birth of Trevor Noah during the apartheid period is an offensive activity, because the physical relationship between the white and black are strictly prohibited in the apartheid policy. Whenever a couple of mixed races get busted with police; The Immorality Act has been forcefully established by the government. They warn the white and leave them, but the rule is completely different for the black. He suffered a lot by the apartheid policy. Whenever he wants to play with children, his family protected him inside the house. Being a biracial child, he does not allow to play with other children. Although he goes with his mother to the church, he is not able to walk along with his mother. He has to slightly stick around with the whites in the pathway. The traumas he faced in his childhood is to born as a mixed racial child and his existence of his presence is a crime, he cannot even enjoy the childhood days as others, betrayal of his pet and the conflict between his mother and step-father. Everything shaped Trevor and he turned all the traumas to his intellectual development throughout his lifetime. As Trevor says, "You have to work a bit harder to offend me because I'm from the home of some of the best racism in the world. I'm a snob when it comes to racism." The vicious treatment of their own government in the name of apartheid policy has sharpened his mind.

Before 350 years, the Dutch colony established the Dutch East India Company at Cape of Good Hope, South Africa. The Dutch vanished the indigenous Khoisan and San people from their own lands. They established the company for the trade of spice and silk. Then the invasion British colonialism made the Dutch people to evade into South Africa. This results in the emergence of Afrikaner community and language. They do not want to mingle with the majority of black, Afrikaans seek to hold the dominative people in South African region. The South African's two dominant groups, the Zulu and the Xhosa. The Zulu were well known for bravery. So, they started war on the colonial invaded armies with nothing but the spears and shields against men with guns. They enslaved all the people who rose against them. After the fall of British Empire, the Dutch wanted to capture the South Africa as their rightful inheritance. But the majority was black and the white were minor in ratio. So, they planned to segregate the tribal indigenes by a policy. The National Party imposed the Apartheid policy in 1948. The word 'Apartheid' means 'Apartness' in the Afrikaans language. The Dutch word 'apart' means 'separate,' and 'heid' means to the hood. The segregation of the indigenes by dividing them into different ones will result in conflicts between them. Then only the Afrikaans get dominated socially, politically, and economically. Whites were considered as the highest status, followed by the Indians and Coloreds, then Blacks. National Party of South African invoked numerous laws against the black to get them under the control of white.

Trevor Noah is a Biracial South African Man, who born to a Xhosa South African mother and a White father from Switzerland in Johannesburg. Trevor was born under apartheid in 20 February 1984. At the period, interracial relationship was illegal under the 'Immorality Act.' His mother Patricia and granny Nomalizo Frances Noah, both brought Trevor in the black township of Soweto. They kept him inside the house to protect him from the sight of Police. If a Biracial kid caught by the police, they would take away the kid and it would be a problem for the kid's parents. After some years, the Immorality Act was amended off. Noah started his primary education at Maryvale College, a Roman Catholic primary and high school in Maryvale, a suburban area in Johannesburg. In 2002, he got an opportunity to do a small role on a South African Episode, soap opera *Isidingo*. Then he hosted his own radio show *Noah's Ark* on Gauteng's popular youth-radio station, YFM. Later in his 20s, his friends encouraged him to perform a comedy routine at a nightclub. Trevor was highly talented in narrating stories about his friends and his life with humour.

That night was an eye-opening for him because he started to do perform a lot of comedy routines at various night clubs. This results in the recognition of Trevor all around the township so he dropped his radio show and focussed on comedy. In 2009 Noah performed his first solo comedy show, *The Day walker*. The theatre in Johannesburg was fully crowded and the DVD recording of the show became the best seller. He later did host a

television named, *Tonight with Trevor Noah* during 2010 – 2011. In 2012, he moved to the United States, shined as the first South African comedian to get appear on the American Television show *The Tonight Show with Jay Leno*. Noah starred in *Trevor Noah: African American*, a comedy special on television in 2013. Despite his great success on comedy tours around Europe, Africa, and the Middle East, he was not as well-known in the US. In 2014, Noah took part on Comedy Central's satirical television news program *The Daily Show* with Jon Stewart. The next year, after Stewart announced his stepping down as host; Noah was announced as his replacement and the name of the showed swapped as *The Daily Show with Trevor Noah*. Noah's popularity sprouted in the United States with *The Daily Show*. In addition of hosting the show, Noah desired to do comedy tours around the world.

He performed several stand-up comedies with fully sold-out tickets in his venues around the world like *Trevor Noah: Lost in Translation* performed in 2015, *Trevor Noah: Afraid of the Dark* performed in 2017, and *Trevor Noah: Son of Patricia* performed in 2018. In 2018 he got a share with American Media conglomerate Viacom to innovate Day Zero Productions, an international production and distribution company. At the same year, he began the non-profit Trevor Noah Foundation in Johannesburg to develop skills of the young people to get successful in life. In 2019, Noah launched a podcast programme namely *On Second Thought*. It is a podcast that delivers information about different kinds of topics like sports, race, and science. He hosted the Grammy Awards ceremony in series of 2021 – 2023. His memoir *Born a Crime* was an Autobiographical novel which contains stories from his childhood in a humorous narrative style. Patricia, mother of Trevor Noah took a central role in the *Born a Crime* novel. Whereas his European father has taken part in occasional places in his memoir, which was favourably received by most of the U.S book reviewers. It became a number one *New York Time* Bestseller and was named as one of the best books of the year

Adam Levin states in the article “If I speak like you, I am you”: Racial passing in Trevor Noah's *Born a Crime and Other Stories*,” that Trevor portrays his life experiences of racial discrimination in apartheid and post-apartheid South Africa. He has used humour and imagination in constructing his childhood. He reveals his situation and the challenges he has faced in shaping his identity through his stand-up comedy. According to Adam Levin,

In his memoir *Born a Crime and Other Stories* (2016), Noah reflects on his position as “a subject of difference that is almost the same, but not quite” in a similar manner to in his stand-up performances. In the memoir, Noah documents his experiences growing up during apartheid's final years and, thereafter, in post-apartheid South Africa. (Levin 2)

In the research article, “Unveiling humorous resistance: Incongruity and critical discourse analysis in *Born a crime: Stories from a South African Childhood*, Ngcobo and Roya says that Trevor designs his existence in South Africa during apartheid policies and

legislation were designed harshly implemented. He educates his readers and audience about socio-economic challenges through his humour and innovation. He uses the languages of the global South to represent the culture of the South African people. They utter,

...*Born a crime* is translated to not only all South African languages but international ones as well because Noah has an international profile and the book provides a useful historiography of South Africa. All political formations and civic organizations representing South Africa's diverse religions, cultures and ethnicities should interact regularly on ways to sustain tolerance among citizens and speak strongly against gender violence and the abuse of children. (Ngcobo and Roya 7)

The Postcolonial writer Trevor Noah expresses the sufferings of indigenes during the apartheid in his memoir *Born a Crime*. According to Robert J. C. Young, "Postcolonial critique focuses on forces of oppression and coercive domination that operate in the contemporary world: the politics of anti-colonialism and neo-colonialism, race, gender, nationalism, class and ethnicities define its terrain" (Young 11). All these aspects can be seen in this work of Trevor Noah. Both merits and demerits of the colonialism are still existing in every colonized area. Trevor faced lots of consequences to be born as a biracial child but he turned everything as a 'Step towards Success'. In the 1950s National Party Government designed a policy that would promote complete segregation of blacks, so the white could claim their status as high. Apartheid is the 'Strongest Form of Subtle Racism' that happened to the natives of South Africa.

Trevor encountered so much of struggles since his birth. At the moment of Immorality Act happened, mixed racial physical relationship was illegal. Those whoever get caught by the police will be sentenced prison for above 5 years. It was the 'Born a Crime' incident in his life. Although he was accepted by his mother Patricia's family in Soweto, they protected him like a gem in their home. Whenever the police caught the wrong color kid along the wrong neighbourhood, the government would give entry into the area and enquire the parents of custody. Then they set down the kid in an orphanage. So, he was restricted to play outside the house. He says, "Please. *Please*, can I go play with my cousins? No! They're going to take you!" (Noah 29), these lines show that his granny Frances does not let him to play along with his friends and cousins outside the house.

Despite of being an indoor kid; it does not break Trevor. He became good at being alone with his books and toys. "... but I learned several languages because I grew up in a house where there was no option but to learn them" (Noah 54). This multilingual talent makes him to feel comfortable. Because most of the people suspect whether he is a white or colored. His mother used to speak a lot of languages like Zulu, Xhosa, English, German, Afrikaans and Sotho. This inspired him a lot.

Trevor do this chameleonic way to escape from the strangers those who tries to bully or mock him. When strangers ask him ‘where are you from?’ he would reply them in whatever language they asked him. “Oh, Okay. I thought you were a stranger. We’re good then” (Noah 55). Speaking in their own language may make them feel okay with his race and also, they think that he belongs to their tribe.

The black people who are living in the neighbourhood hurt them. Trevor mentions, “There goes that prostitute with a white man’s child” (Noah 69). His mother wants to get rid of this burden and from the shadow of her family. So, they moved to Eden Park, a place where colored people live. After he completed his grade six, he left Maryvale and joined in H. A. Jack Primary, a government school. He scored good marks in the aptitude test that they conducted so the teachers wanted to put him in ‘A’ section. It is the section where white kids and colored kids study. When the recess time came, he went into the ground and saw an ocean of black kids playing. Trevor says, “The white kids I’d met that morning, they went in one direction, the black kids went in another direction, and I was left standing in the middle, totally confused.” (Noah 57).

Trevor experiences the segregation in school for the very first time in his life. He feels like kids are together yet not together. The number of the white kids were few compared to the black kids. He becomes friend with Theesan Pillay, an Indian kid and he shown his polyglot talent. He wondered how a colored kid can speak all those African languages. He takes Trevor and introduces to other black kids by this amazing trick. Trevor replies all the kids in their languages like Zulu, Xhosa, etc.

Afrikaners used to troll the colored people like they are ‘The almost-boss.’ They recognize as the second-class citizens. So that they can gain the benefits of government easily. The Afrikaners says,

You’re almost there. You’re so close. You’re *this close* to being white. Pity your grandfather couldn’t keep his hands off the chocolate, eh? But it’s not your fault you’re colored, so keep trying. Because if you work hard enough you can erase this taint from your bloodline. Keep on marrying lighter and whiter and don’t touch the chocolate and maybe, *maybe*, someday, if you’re lucky, you can become white.” (Noah 118)

The above quote shows that people are trying to change their race as white. Colored people trying to promote themselves as white by marrying white spouse and giving birth to white baby. If the baby born as colored, they remain same as colored and will not get the high status like white. If the baby born as Black, the family labels as black family and they should leave the neighbourhood. The family may suffer due to this type of situation because black people earn lesser than the colored people. So, the parents take some difficult idea to live separately. This can only help them to lead a life with some extra wages. Apartheid

states that, “Only reason colored people couldn’t have first-class status was because black people might use coloredness to sneak past the gates to enjoy the benefits of whiteness.” (Noah 120).

White used to think that the black will turn into white by marrying the white but the race cannot be determined because of the biological factors. The white does not want the black to be recognized as a high status in their area. Jealousy minds of the white would not allow the black to enjoy their resources. They did not get a good education in their own lands. People who belong to high class are only able to afford the studies of their kids. Exemption is for those who are rich in Blacks, Indians and Colored. Otherwise, the low status families join their kids in the government schools by providing Bantu education.

Bantu education is nothing but teaching the mere things for the students like metrics and agricultural works. They never teach mathematics, social and science. They sowed the idea that Whites are intellectual compared to the knowledge of them. After the fall of apartheid, black acquired the high status in their region. White also considered as a secondary high status. But those who are colored faced many consequences regarding their biracial appearance. They did not consider them as either black or white. After the apartheid faded away, Racism exists! When Trevor walking back to his home in Eden Park, he watches a group of colored kids who are about to bully him for his appearance. They bully him by speaking Afrikaans language. He thinks that he is going to get new friends by his multilingual trick. Unfortunately, when he replies the boy in the same Afrikaans language, the kid gets offended because his co-mates laugh at him and that kid replied, “Get the fuck out of here! Go away you stupid Bushie! Bushman!” (Noah 122).

Trevor gets bullied by his appearance; the kid knocks the berry in Trevor’s hand and smashes it in the ground, and cursed him very badly in his Afrikaans language. Trevor avoided it and returned to his home. He gets thrown by a mulberry in his head. But it does not hurt him, it was the startling of the hurt. “... all of these kids started pelting me with berries ... they were laughing and pelting me and calling me “Bushie! Bushman!” I was terrified.” (Noah 122). He feels sad for being a colored.

Although it is a colored area and colored kids, the racial discrimination was penetrated the minds of these kids. This is how their own government turns against them with the apartheid policy. Trevor does not meet this kind of discrimination in his schoolings. “I started crying, and I ran. I ran for my life, all the way back down the road to our house” (Noah 122). He went his home all the way crying towards his mom and his mom did not take it as a serious thing. She laughed and consoled him because he was not wounded, it is just the berry’s juice not the blood of Trevor. Her mom is always with his side to overcome all the worries and teaches him how to become a man.

Postcolonial activities result in the segregation of natives and whites in the South African Region. People belonged to both races faced so many struggles and few lost their lives. These happened because of apartheid policy by their very own government. Countless discriminations and racial segregations were faced by Trevor Noah but he turned all the struggles to his intellectual development. Trevor's mother Patricia Nombuyiselo Noah played a vital role in his life, she made him as a multilingual person and taught him how to overcome all the worries. The unacceptable sufferings of the black in South Africa, witnessed by Trevor. His fluency of multiple languages helps him to defend himself from the strangers. Whenever natives asked him about his identity, he replied them in the exact way of their accent and language.

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A CLOSE SCRUTINY OF THE ATTACHMENT STYLES OF THE CHARACTERS IN THE NOVEL *TO THE LIGHTHOUSE* BY VIRGINIA WOOLF

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Abstract

Establishing a secure relationship is an imperative aspect for one's well-being, but it is inevitably a strenuous task to form such a relationship. This article explores the factors responsible for vulnerable relationships through the application of British psychologist John Bowlby's Attachment Theory. Besides, it unveils the fluid and complex nature of human behaviors through the illustration of major characters in the ground-breaking novel of Virginia Woolf, *To the Lighthouse*. The reason for the terrible end of Virginia Woolf's life has also been probed through her characters in this novel. Gender stereotypes related to human behaviors further worsen an individual's mental condition and attachment style. It is regarded as a crucial factor that leads to an insecure attachment style. This social pest makes a drastic influence on the life of every individual.

Keywords: Secure relationship, Attachment Style, Gender Stereotypes, Depression, Anxiety, Behavior.

Virginia Woolf's experimental novel, *To the Lighthouse*, is remarkable for its usage of a novel technique called, "Stream of Consciousness." This technique permits the readers to delve into the inner realm of the characters as well as the novelist herself. It lends paramount significance to the delineation of inner life rather than the external world. It lacks a conventional plot. This novel is a skillful amalgamation of subjectivity and objectivity through the integration of lyrical and narrative art. Some her other novels that are notable for her unique style are *Mrs. Dalloway* (1925) and *The Waves* (1931). This work is apt to be regarded as a psychological novel thereby providing an immense assistance to access the attachment style of the characters. Having a profound knowledge of the thoughts, emotions and feelings of the complex characters is crucial for identifying the problems that prevent one from creating and maintaining secure relationships.

Some researchers have analyzed these complex and ambiguous characters from different angles. For instance, "Analysis of Mrs. Ramsay's Emotions and Behaviors in, *To the Lighthouse* based on Adult Attachment Theory", done by Jiajie Weng. He asserts, "Mrs. Ramsay exhibits both secure and anxious attachment behaviors, which reflects the contradictory nature of her character. However, the secure and anxious attachment styles are unified in her and exist in different forms of explicit and implicit expressions. (Weng). This research slightly differs from these findings since it has ascertained the fact that Mrs. Ramsay is a fearful avoidant.

John Bowlby, a remarkable British psychiatrist, and psychoanalyst, is the pioneer of the Attachment Theory, an astonishing conception that proposes the importance of the relationship between infants and their mothers. He is of the ideology that infants are biologically stimulated to form attachments since it is an indispensable aspect of a social being. These early attachments determine an individual's emotional health and relationships in his future. The central idea of Attachment Theory is, "primary caregivers who are available and responsive to an infant's needs allow the child to develop a sense of security. The infant learns that the caregiver is dependable, which creates a secure base for the child to then explore the world" (MSSED). His theory has been expanded by his colleague Mary Ainsworth in her seminal work, "Patterns of Attachment." Mary Ainsworth's further substantiated Bowlby's theory and presents a structure for comprehending the different attachment styles – secure, avoidant, and anxious – that emerge from the quality of early interactions with caregivers. In 1986, researchers Mary Main and Judith Solomon added a fourth attachment style known as disorganized-insecure attachment for the Ainsworth Strange Situation Procedure (MSSED).

People with secure attachment style tend to feel safe, stable, and more contented in their close relationships. They have high self-esteem and confidence. They are in a jubilant state always since they can be comfortable both being alone and amid close relationships. Here, the primary caretaker has given enough care and comfort.

People with avoidant attachment style fail to establish long-term relationships with others due to an inability to invest themselves in physical and emotional intimacy. This is the result of the primary caregiver's emotional and physical absence and being indifferent to the child. It afflicts his trust in others and pushes him to be over-independent. People with anxious attachment style are too clingy and constantly demand validation. They set poor boundaries and are anxious about their relationships. This occurs because of the unpredictable nature of the caregivers.

One who has disorganized attachment style (Fearful Avoidant) is terribly inconsistent in their behaviors and has difficulty relying on others. This is the effect of experiencing abuse, trauma and receiving comfort and pain from their caregivers. However, these attachment styles are not static but dynamic. So, it changes depending upon one's experience with their friends, peers, siblings, and others. However, it is hard to get rid of the effects of the attachment style in childhood.

This novel projects a family with eight children called the Ramsays and their guests enjoying their vacation in a summerhouse on the Isle of Skye in Scotland in the first part called, "The Window". In the second part, "Time Passes," the family members are in distress because of the demise of their closed ones called Mrs. Ramsay, Prue, and Andrew.

In the final part, some of their family members, i.e., Mr. Ramsay, James and Cam set out to the Lighthouse to fulfill the wish of Mrs. Ramsay. Here, the attachment styles of the main characters Mrs. Ramsay, Mr. Ramsay, James Ramsay, Lily Briscoe, and Charles Tansley are probed for the better comprehension of the characters and their nature of relationship with others.

Mrs. Ramsay has both anxious and avoidant attachment styles. Thus, she is a fearful avoidant, but this true self has been concealed by her attempts to be an ideal Victorian woman by complying with the Gender stereotypes. These gender stereotypes prevented her from expressing her true self. This is a sign of extreme anxious attachment style because she can please others if only acts an ideal Victorian woman. She is in the state of expecting validation from others. She is really delighted to be praised for her beauty and her considerate nature. She strives to make others admire her even though the other person is not interested in speaking with her. Mrs. Ramsay's avoidant attachment style is revealed through these lines: "For now she need not think about anybody. She could be herself, by herself. And that was what now she often felt the need of—to think; well, not even to think. To be silent; to be alone." (94). She says these words when she has the chance to be alone. These lines imply that she is suppressing her true self. This is the result of gender stereotypes because it veils her real nature. This style of attachment can be seen through her hunger for freedom and solitude.

Mrs. Ramsay feels some sort of oneness with the lighthouse, which symbolizes solitude and comforting others. This symbolizes her fearful-avoidant attachment style. Similarly, identifying herself as wedge of darkness further indicates that she is torn out of conflicts within her since a wedge can secure something at the same time it can separate something. Thus, it suggests that she is struggling with her contradictory thoughts as a fearful avoidant. This character shares the essence of Virginia Woolf's personality. Woolf had a problematic childhood and adulthood because of losing her mother, being sexually assaulted by her half-brothers, and living in the patriarchal society. This is the plausible reason that confirms how she turns into a fearful avoidant. "Such individuals could also suffer from other mental health issues, such as substance abuse, depression, or borderline personality disorder" (Team).

Lily Briscoe is an avoidant, which is confirmed by her sense of autonomy and her denial of forming emotional connection or closeness. She has a negative view of marriage. "She need not marry, thank Heaven: she need not undergo that degradation. She was saved from that dilution." (Woolf 154). She is a replica of Woolf's self of being an artist. Mrs. Ramsay and Lily Briscoe manifests the facts that forced Woolf to commit suicide. Both are stifled by oppression and suppression and the case is alike for Woolf and this leads to

depression. This depression and fearful-avoidant attachment style, which is more susceptible to mental illness are the factors behind Woolf's suicide.

Mr. Ramsay has an anxious attachment style. This has been illustrated by his moments of obtaining validation and lingering around Mrs. Ramsay. Even men also suffered by gender stereotypes, and this has been perceived through the words of Mr. Ramsay: "It was a disguise; it was the refuge of a man afraid to own his own feelings, who could not say, This is what I like—this is what am;" (68). James Ramsay is a fearful-avoidant since he shows much aggression towards his father and mother besides being clingy to his mother. His father's ignorance in providing emotional support results in chaotic and problematic relationships. He finds his father tyrannical and articulates: "why were they lagging about here? He would demand, or something quite unreasonable like that. And if he does, James's thought, then I shall take a knife and strike him to the heart." (273). Charles Tansley, a young philosopher, is an avoidant because of being raised to be independent since poverty prevented him from establishing secure relationships. He just spends his time alone by immersing himself in studying books. He was despised by everyone because of his social awkwardness. By the end of the novel, James's heart begins to melt when Mr. Ramsay acknowledges his sailing as good. James has been waiting for these words and once he heard them, there forms a bond between father and son. In addition to that Lily Briscoe at last finished her painting because she no longer worries about criticism and prepares herself to face whatever the future might be. If one is freed from expectations and ceases to worry about their future without any fear, one's mind becomes clear, and one can form meaningful and secure relationships. Self-Realization is crucial to heal the wounds of the past and for moving ahead with hope and confidence. Thus, a person can transform their attachment style by being ready to change their perception of relationships and showing self-compassion.

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EMOTIONS, EMPATHY AND ENVIRONMENT IN BRITISH MYSTERIES: THE INTRIGUING HARMONY OF FLORA AND COZY SETTING IN THE SELECT WORKS OF COLLINS AND CHRISTIE

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Abstract

Nature in literature has travelled a long way from the concept of the natural elements as an 'inner manifestation' to that of a being mere background and as an observer and judge. From the twentieth century, the representation of the environment has been limited to discussion of destruction issues due to human activity. Wilkie Collins is one of the finest writers and the pioneer of sensational works during the Victorian Era. Agatha Christie, the Queen of Crime, belongs to the Golden Age of Detective and is the creator of about 60 detective novels. Their works mainly focus on the mysterious shades of humanity. The objective of this paper is to comparatively focus on the depiction of nature in Collins and Christie's works and the minor role in shaping their plot.

Keywords: British Literature, Mystery, Nature, Human Emotions.

The representation of nature and the relationship of human-nature is gradually shown through art in various ways. Its role in literature varies according to the cultural and social changes of our society. In some instances, its worshipped and contrarily in some as the cause of destruction in human life. For example, the pastoral life is always seen as a life which human should follow. Nature is seen as something much more beyond the hold of mankind. But there is always a factor of nature that decides the human destination and its consequences. The relationship of human and nature is widely seen by certain authors, who see it as a major part of human actions. Some authors, though do not completely focus on the characterization of nature in plot, but unconsciously it plays a silent role somehow.

Wilkie Collins is believed to be the inventor of detective fiction according to T.S. Eliot and also the major reason behind the evolution of crime fiction according to Dorothy L. Sayers. Wilkie Collins, son of a painter, draws his works based on social issues such as mental health, Victorian social system and its effects on middle class working people. He lived an unconventional lifestyle and that is reflected in his view towards the Victorian society in a very humorous way and with some radical approach and his views on some injustice of his time. Agatha Christie, best known for her 66 detective novels and 14 short stories, remains the bestselling author of all time. Her works mainly focus on the man's

greed for money and concept of deception among humans. The novels chosen for analysis are Wilkie Collins' *The Guilty River* (1886) and Agatha Christie's *Five Little Pigs* (1942).

The Guilty River revolves around the major three characters, Gerard Roylake, Cristel, and the deaf Lodger. The male characters Gerard and the deaf Lodger belongs to upper social status. The characters are depicted in two ways. Gerard, being the more radical one, tries to reason with the other minor characters. The minor characters in most of Collins work are used with the perception of criticising the social issues of Victorian era. The other types are the aunt of Gerard and the deaf characters. The aunt character reminds him of his past and he is seen with the view towards the ugly river. The ugly river is the reflection of his past bitterness and also the current life with his step mother. He comes for his father's death. He is unwilling to come. His inner feelings are portrayed through the only river that runs through their place and it is named by the local people as 'the river Loke' and the places in TrimleyDeen.

The character of deaf lodger is shown in a way who does not like the social status after her becomes deaf. Even though he is respected with social criteria, his life becomes miserable when it comes to the physical disability. This makes him take his own path. He reaches for a train that would lead him to any destiny it goes. The train reaches the ugly river. He feels connected with the river. Even the introduction of his character in the story starts with the climate to be gloomier. "If I could be sure that the moon had not deceived me, the most beautiful face that I had ever seen was looking down on us—and it was the face of a man!" (13). The moon represents his beauty but the ugly River reflects the dark side of his character and his mental health. He felt his career to be respected among his contemporary society. But after his deafness the same society respects him for his social status but his physical disability makes them turn away. Here the social status does not support him. The mental health of Victorian society due to the followed social system is given emphasis here. He relates himself to the environment: "... I found myself in a dirty manufacturing town, with an ugly river running through it. After little reflection, I turned back on the town, followed the course of the river, in search of shelter and solitude on one or the other of its banks. An hour of walking brought me to an odd-looking cottage.....So far as appearance went, here was the very place for me" (30). Even the relationship he feels with the female lead, Cristel, is decided by his inferiority of mental health. He decides to marry her because of her lower social status. She is given the eligibility to marry because of his physical disability. He is aggressive about this and is determined to marry her.

The character Gerard, is a very calm and composed. There is always an inner conversation for him and that is always connected with nature. The environment in which he lives "A time passed, dull and dreary. The mysterious assemblage of trees was blacker than the blackening sky. Of millions of leaves over my head, none pleased my ear, in the airless

calm, with their rustling summer song.” (3) Everything has changed according to him, the sweet past which he tries to recall. He feels the river as an old ‘buddy’. “The ugly river, like the woodland glade, looked at me with the face of an old friend.” (7) His step mother with the motive of certain social status tries to engage him to a lady of same thoughts. He disagrees with the political thoughts of his step mother and her snobby friends. Even though he wishes to return Germany, his only escape of such emotional trauma is the ‘Fordwitch Wood.’ Whenever he is disturbed mentally, the wood has always been a therapy place for him. The situation makes him feel: “The sluggish river looked muddier than ever, the new cottage looked uglier than ever, exposed to the searching ordeal of sunlight.” (34)

The ‘ugly’ River in Gerard and the deaf lodger’s life represents their condition in the narrow- minded society. Contrarily, the River indirectly supports the character and the life pattern of Cristel Toller. Here the author uses the support of nature towards the people attached to it. Cristel belongs to the lower social status. But her mind yearns for a life where she can fly freely. The life she wants is given to her by the ‘ugly River’ itself. The story ends with her being sent to her uncle’s house and there she is given the education that is denied and also restricted for the women during the Victorian era. She is abducted by the river to reach on the other side which may have certain hurdles but she has the courage to face the obstacle. She wants the risk of the other path and with the help of her father decides to move away from her caged scenario: “The rocket was fired to re-assure her father; and Cristel was rowed to the mouth of the River, safely received on board the yacht. Thus (with his good brother’s help) the miller had made the River his Guilty accomplice in the abduction of his own child!” (121)

Similarly, in Agatha Christie’s *Five Little Pigs* (1942), the dark shades of human life are depicted. The story revolves around the main characters- Carla Lemarchant, Caroline, and Amyas Crale. Caroline’s parents Caroline and Amyas died when she was young. According to the society, her mother is accused of the murder case of Amyas. She is left with the note of her mother that she is not the person whom she thinks her to be. This turns the plot and makes her decide to takeup this case. She goes to the famous detective of Agatha Christie, Hercule Poirot. He agrees to go with the case of about 16 years old. There are five suspects and each give their narration.

The use of herbal plants is mostly used in this work. The detailing in plants shows Christie’s knowledge of medicines as she worked as a nurse during the first world war and the second world war. The character Meredith Blake is shown with the character to show much interest in plants.

Dandelion tea, for instance; marvellous stuff. And a decoction of hips -I saw the other day somewhere that that’s coming into fashion with the medical profession again. Oh yes, I must confess, I got a lot of pleasure out of my

brews. Gathering the plants at the right time, drying them- macerating them- all the rest of it. I've even dropped to superstition sometimes and gathered my roots at the full of the moon or whatever it was the ancients advised. On the day I gave my guests for that matter. (119)

The concept of nature can be viewed with two perceptions. The knowledge in medicine. And the nature here supports as the evidence for the case. Amyas Crale, father of Caroline is murdered with the use of the poison coniine replaced in a scent bottle. The case takes many twists and turns, but when it comes to the time of revealing the truth, the concept of season solves the case. According to the character Meredith Blake, who is a person with the much knowledge of herbal plants, recalls his memory of the jasmine garden during the time of the murder:

I can remember standing here and smelling the jasmine through the open window. But the month was September, and the jasmine creeper outside that window would have finished flowering. It is the ordinary jasmine which blooms in June and July. But the scent bottle found in her room and which contained the drugs of coniine had originally contained the jasmine scent.... her bag. (309)

The jasmine stimulated his memory and the case gets a tiny hint for the lead towards the truth.

Eventually, the nature, sometimes though plays a silent role, it was crucial for the truth for its revelation. The nature here is objectified but at the same time the nature is shown as something beyond the hold of mankind which is inevitable. Mankind cannot completely avoid the association with nature. The journey of nature travelled a long way from the Greek myths for being the representation of fables to that of humans amused with the nature views in parks and other landscapes. The concept of nature does not always have to be seen with a negative perception. It frequently remains a silent part in human life.

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CONCERNS OF WOMEN AND MOTHERHOOD IN CHITRA BANERJEE DIVAKARUNI'S *SISTER OF MY HEART*

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Abstract

Life manifests itself in diverse forms, but its common origin is the mother. A mother's significance is unique and the status of the mother is second to none. The mother-daughter bond has figured prominently in feminist scholarship since the 1970's. Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni is an accomplished contemporary Indian American writer, whose novels are rooted in Indian culture, history, feminism, and human relationships. Her *Sister of My Heart* is set both in India and America and features Indian-born women caught between the old and new world values. She has been successful in painting mother characters in her works and they are extremely interwoven with the plots of their stories. A significant aspect of the mother-daughter relationship that Divakaruni addresses in her works is the protectiveness of their daughters. This paper aims to analyse the role of mothers and how they strive to remain connected with their daughters in patriarchal societies.

Keywords: Mother, Daughter, Feminism, Relationship, Diaspora.

Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni is an accomplished contemporary Indian American writer, whose novels are rooted in Indian culture, history, feminism, and human relationships. She has made a mark for herself among the diasporic Indian women writers. Her major themes center on her desire to investigate the identity of South Asian women. Divakaruni's works are autobiographical as she has portrayed women characters through her social observation and experiences as an Indian immigrant in America.

Divakaruni's novel *Sister of My Heart* (1999) is set in India and America. It features Indian-born women caught between the old and new world values. It is an expanded version of her earlier short story 'Ultrasound' from *Arranged Marriage* (1995). Unlike her other novels, the *Sister of My Heart* sheds light on homeland realities rather than diasporic ones. The novel is divided into two segments namely, *The Princess in the Palace of Snakes* and *The Queen of Swords*. She makes use of mythological metaphors to emphasize the liveliness of experiences her characters undergo. In the first part, the protagonists Anju and Sudha attempt to conform to the feminine roles assigned to them by the male hegemonic society; the latter part shows these women recognize the strength of their self. Divakaruni uncovers the social and familial position of the Indian female and presents different facets of women's lives.

Divakaruni portrays women as 'mothers' in her works. Life manifests itself in diverse forms, but its common origin is the mother. A Jewish proverb rightly affirms what

majority of us have experienced: “A mother understands what a child does not say.” A mother’s significance is unique, and the status of the mother is second to none. Motherhood is central to a women's life and Divakaruni explores the scenes of motherhood and its challenges in her novels. The image of the mother as an epitome of love and sacrifice is used a lot by Divakaruni. This paper aims to analyze women's concerns and mothers' role in patriarchal societies.

The story of *Sister of My Heart* revolves around the Chatterjee household of Calcutta. The male members of the aristocratic family had perished in a ruby-hunting expedition leaving the women to fend for themselves. The family is run by Gowri and supported by Aunt Pishi and Nalini. These women are bound by tradition and Divakaruni constructs the hardships of women as mothers who must support the family emotionally, economically, and physically. The novel is written in a realistic form and portrays the traditional aristocratic family of the 70’s and 80’s in Calcutta. The protagonists of the novel are Anju and Sudha, the young daughters of the Chatterjee household. Since their widowed mothers raised them in the absence of men in the family, the challenge of bringing up the two girls in a patriarchal society was not an easy task for them. The mothers had to endure the challenge of economic sustainability as there were no male members to support the family.

Gowri heads the matrilineal household. She is the widow of Bijoy Chatterjee and the mother of Anju. Gowri becomes the matriarchal head of the Chatterjee home after the unfortunate death of her husband Bijoy during a ruby hunt. She came from an old, respectable family and acted responsibly. Gowri, according to Pishi, Bijoy’s sister, was a perfect wife and her perfection lies in the goodness deep in her heart. Gowri accepted her sister-in-law Pishi when she returned to the Chatterjee’s as a young widow. Also, she is an archetypal mother to everyone at home.

Gowri was the one who shouldered the responsibilities of the family, keeping them safe from the day she received the news of her husband’s death. She was a practical woman who did not believe the fairy-tale stories of the hunt and had opposed her husband’s expedition along with Gopal. In the event of her husband and his cousin not returning from the expedition and later the news of their death did not allow her to break down completely. When she was forced to vent her emotions and let out her sorrow she said, “I don’t have the luxury. I made a promise, and I must use all my energies to keep it.” She was not the one to be terrified of the situation. Rather, she tried to provide the best kind of upbringing to both the girls. She did not care about society and when others commented about her running the bookstore, she looked at them with hard eyes and replied that she would do whatever was necessary to ensure her daughter’s future as she had promised to her husband.

Anju believes that her mother is wise and thinks that “.... My mother is the most intelligent person I know, and the most efficient. Still, the store never seems to make a profit, and each week she has to go over our household expenses carefully, frowning way, trying to cut costs.” (SMH 25) Everyone in the family respected her and her decision was taken as final in all matters.

Gowri also treated Sudha like her own daughter even after knowing the fact that her husband was killed because of Sudha’s father Gopal. She educated both the girls and was a role model to Sudha, who aspired to be brave and noble like Gowri Ma. Not only she was an ideal woman but also a strong force that united the family from falling apart.

Divakaruni exhibits how dowry imposes a significant burden on girls’ families. A mother can sacrifice anything for the well-being of her children and Gowri is no different. Although she suffered a heart attack and had to undergo a bypass surgery, she refused it saying she could die from the infection afterward. She says, “She can’t risk, not until Sudha and Anju are married.” (SMH) Bad health does not stop her from doing her best for the girls. She wants them to be settled before she dies. Unlike others, she doesn’t condemn the daughters for the fact that they were born on the day of their father’s death. The love concerned with her daughter makes Gowri remark, “But, I promise you this much, Anju Ma. I’ll arrange your marriage with a man who lets you go to college, and lets you work, too, if you want it.” (SMH 109) Divakaruni portrays Gowri as a protective mother and her determination for the sake of her daughter and family is remarkable.

Abha Pishi is the sister of Bijoy Chatterjee. She was widowed at the very young age of sixteen and she is a victim of rigid patriarchy. Though she could not fulfill her wish of rebuilding her life by continuing her studies, she stood by the Chatterjee family in all its hard times and acted as a moral force to come out of tragic experiences in life. She dedicates her life to the upbringing of the Chatterjee girls after her brother’s death. She has motherly affection towards both Anju and Sudha and is constantly in touch with them more than their mothers. She is able to experience the blessing of motherly-love, and for this she thanks God, “Because you and Anju are the daughters I was not lucky enough to give birth to. Through you the Bidhatapurush has allowed me to experience the blessing of mother-love, and for that I always thank him.” (SMH 112)

Pishi revealed the secret of the family’s past to Sudha. “But most of all Pishi is our fount of information, the one who tells us the stories. Our mothers will not, the secret, delicious, forbidden tales of our past” (SMH 16). She not only guides and supports Gowri in running the house smoothly, but also bridges the gap between Gowri and Nalini at times of conflict between them. She plays a vital role in upholding the prestige of the Chatterjee house.

Sudha's mother Nalini is a typical traditional woman who allows herself to drift along in life. Though Nalini is the most beautiful of the trio of Chatterjee women, she is less brainy and less compassionate. She was conscious of her beauty and tried to sustain it by following her beauty regime every day. Sudha describes her mother, "Her skin is still golden, for though she is a widow my mother is careful to apply turmeric paste to her face each day. Her perfect-shaped lips glisten with red from the paan, which she loves to chew-mostly for the color it leaves on her mouth, I think." (SMH 17)

Nalini was in stark contrast to Gowri and Pishi. Nalini had a love marriage with Gopal by eloping. When she arrived at the Chatterjee house as a newlywed, she did not possess any ornaments. Her life was not the way her husband had promised before marriage. She made complaints about her poor husband who failed to keep his promises of riches and persuaded him to go in search of treasures. She continuously berated her husband Gopal to earn more money. The discontented and selfish attitude of Nalini prompts Gopal to take on the disastrous adventure. She continues to live with the Chatterjees even after her husband's death as neither she had a place to go nor any means to earn a living. Though she always felt a sense of insecurity and humiliation for being dependent on the Chatterjees, she enjoyed the comforts of the Chatterjee home. She enjoyed being the center of attention and spent her time gossiping with friends.

As a mother, Nalini tries her best to prevent her daughter Sudha from making the wrong choice about her marriage as she had ruined her life in her younger days. She forces Sudha to get married as soon as she completes school, and she does not want her daughter to go to college. Later, when Sudha arrives at Chatterjee home after leaving her husband, Nalini is reluctant to receive her pregnant daughter. She does not appreciate her daughter, rather is more worried about society. As a woman, Nalini is challenged by patriarchal tradition as well as the modern need for confirming identities.

Nalini's daughter Sudha is married to Ramesh of the Sanayals of Bardhaman. Sudha feels dejected when she fails to give birth to a child even after five years of marriage. Sudha having tried for a baby is disappointed and desperate and writes to Anju, "I felt motherhood was my final chance at happiness. Perhaps, I believed it would give me back what wifehood had taken away or perhaps it is just that desire lies at the heart of human existence. When we turn away from one desire, we must find another to cleave to with all our strength – or else we die." (SMH 183)

A childless woman is looked down upon in society and a woman's role as a mother accords a special position within the household. "In the Hindu-Indian family, the wife is supposed to be in a subordinate role to her husband and to other male members, but her position is validated once she becomes a mother." (Kakar 65-66) The glorification of

motherhood and victimization of barren women affects women in real life irrespective of class, caste, and religion.

Sudha is happy when she discovers that she is pregnant, but her happiness is short-lived when her mother-in-law forces her to abort the baby after the test result reveals that the fetus is a female. When Sudha informs her mother Nalini about her mother-in-law's conspiracy to abort the girl child, Nalini does not support her daughter. After knowing about Sudha's impending abortion Nalini says, "... it's the lesser of the two evils." (SMH 261) Sudha writes to Anju about her mother's reaction saying, "When I told her, she said I mustn't leave, absolutely not. My place is with my in-laws, for better or worse. She is afraid they'll never take me back, and then what would happen to me? Everyone will think that they threw me out because I did something bad. They'll think my baby is a bastard." (SMH 261) Nalini does not hesitate to sacrifice her own daughter's or granddaughter's life when it comes to preserving her dignity in the honor-conscious society.

Sudha runs away from her in-law's home when her motherhood is threatened. "Yet Sudha is determined to place her small foot – so elegant, so fragile – on the compartment steps and begins her hard journey." (SMH 241) For her child, Sudha is ready to bear any amount of emotional stress, as motherhood compensates for all other issues in her life. As expected, Nalini raised a lot of hue and cry when Sudha arrived at Chatterjee home, remarking, "I told her to grit her teeth and put up with it, and try for another pregnancy. A woman can have many children, after all, but a husband is forever." (SMH 265) It was Gowri Ma, who intervened and asked Sudha to stick to her decision and offered support. Pishi was more forthcoming when Nalini lamented, "Why should she care anymore what people say? What good has it done her? I spit on this society that which says it's fine to kill a baby girl in her mother's womb, but wrong for her mother to run away to save her child." (SMH 268) When Nalini was not by her daughter's side, Gowri Ma and Pishi welcomed pregnant Sudha home and comforted her.

Sudha was clear about her priorities as a mother, and she realized the meaninglessness of her mechanical life with her husband. Her priority as mother overtakes her and she decides to flee from the clutches of her in-law's wrath. She becomes empowered when she must confront and tackle the problem of pregnancy and abortion alone. Gowri Ma decides to sell the house to provide for Sudha's child while Nalini refuses to be of any help.

Later, Sudha sees a ray of hope when her former lover Ashok confesses his love for her and proposes a marriage. But, when Ashok asks her to leave behind her daughter Dayita, Sudha becomes furious. For Sudha, there was no compromise regarding her daughter. She is now stern and firm with her priorities and responsibilities towards her daughter and refuses

Ashok. She says, “Dayita is my daughter. She needs me. How will I face her later when she asks me why I abandoned her for the sake of my own pleasure?” (SMH 293)

As a woman, navigating life’s many obstacles alone is a tough feat. The mothers wanted Sudha to accept Ashok’s proposal, but Sudha decided to seek out some independent path for survival and not break down. Divakaruni subtly implies that women would no doubt create superior position for their daughters to live in.

As mothers, Gowri, Pishi, and Nalini have always tried to provide support and guidance to their daughters. While Nalini comes across as a handicapped woman when it comes to saving her face in the honor-conscious society, Gowri, Pishi and Sudha relentlessly try their best to provide for their daughters. Sudha emerges as an emancipated woman when she becomes a mother. Ironically, without male intrusion, women as mothers can re-discover their strength and carve out a position for themselves in society. Divakaruni’s novel exhibits the quintessence of mother-daughter bonding and motherhood as a unique cultural entity.

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THE NARRATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE NOVEL *LADIES COUPÉ* BY ANITA NAIR

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Abstract

This article explicates the narrative techniques employed in the novel *Ladies Coupé* by Anita Nair which reinforces marriage as an oppressive concept within Indian society. The narrative structures of the novel manipulate the characters to unveil their past condition and act as an illuminator that exposes the desperation of the protagonist that results in creating a space for self-reflection. Though the characters are unique in their own aspects, the narrative modes utilized in the novel gives an elegance over their nature by striking them with certain rhetorical questions. The plot focuses on the verbal, mental and physical abuse towards women of all sectors which exposes the fact that woman of any social hierarchy can be a victim of domestic conflicts. Through narrative techniques, Nair links all the characters to present the multiperspectivity on the subject patriarchy.

Keywords: Self-reflection, Abuse, Oppression, Marriage.

Anita Nair, "A born storyteller" (Cover copy) said Khushwant Singh, was born on 26 January 1966 in Palakkad, Kerala. She is an essayist, poet, short-story writer, novelist, and a playwright. This versatile writer was educated in Chennai, where she acquired her B.A degree in English language and literature. Later, she found a job as the creative director of an advertising agency in Bangalore. She wrote her first short-story collection *Satyr of the Subway* in Bangalore and the book earned fellowship from the Virginia Center for the creative Arts. Nair's second book *The Better Man* was published by Penguin India and was the first Indian book to be published by Picador USA. Nair's early works were penned in the late 1990's for the Bangalore Monthly magazine, *Explocity*, in a column titled 'The Economical Epicurean'. In 2002, *Ladies Coupé* was elected as one of the five best in India. Anita Nair's *The Better Man* and *Ladies Coupé* are translated into twenty-one languages.

In 2002, she published her first poetry collection *Malabar Mind*. Nair's poems have been included in *The Dance of the Peacock: An Anthology of English poetry from India*. She has also written children's book and several audiobooks including *A Field of Flowers* (2021) and *little Duck Girl* which was narrated by Prakash Raj.

The Ladies Coupé focuses on the feministic perspective of life. Being written in a feministic mode, the topics primarily focus on the oppression, male-dominated social structure, gender disparity, violence, and mistreatment experienced by women in Indian society. Previous researches had covered major themes mentioned above. This paper evaluates the narrative techniques used by the author to highlight the role played by family

members, parents, and relatives in the main character's life to suppress them. The concept marriage has been selected by the author as an instrument to explicate the helpless condition of women in the novel. Her narrative style terrifies the reader to think of marriage as an oppressive institution within the Indian context. But the portrayal of protagonist's struggles, of being a single woman, explicitly present the difficulty of being a woman in Indian society. The narrative techniques concentrate on the main character's close relatives, their endeavours to have them under control, how they tricked them to camouflage their desires in the name of culture and traditions. As daughters, the women characters are impotent to relieve themselves from the influence of the family bound, yet they tried to discover themselves amidst all the family turmoil, this leads to self- reflection.

The plot begins with a third-person narrator who possesses complete knowledge of Akhila's life. The narrator elucidates Akhila's desire to flee the location by delineating her strong dislike for the familiarity that surrounds her. The narrator compares the ticking clock with the rhythm of her heart. "The moving hands of a clock beating" (Nair 1), symbolises the deadline for the obstacles that restrains her desire of escaping the place. The narration expresses her disgust towards the stench platform. "The crackling of the public" (1), in the railway platform provokes the thoughts of escaping from the place, at least for a while. Akhila's intention to escape the place put forth the anticipation to know her life further. Therefore, the narrator starts to narrate her life in detail. The use of symbols to depict Akhila's inner thoughts can be interpreted as a Hermeneutic code, a concept developed by the narratologist Roland Barthes. Roland Barthes affirms "The Hermeneutic code refers to those plot elements that raise questions on the part of the reader" (Fellunga). As declared by Felluga, this plot of Nair of exposing Akhila's inner thoughts, raises questions in the reader's mind: What causes the thought of escaping the city? Hermeneutic code is employed by Nair in this novel as a narrative technique to engage the readers.

Akhila, the protagonist is the forty-five-year-old woman, who harbours a long-standing aspiration for personal freedom. She feels restricted by the fact that she shares her flat with her younger sister's family. Akhila, the eldest of the family was forced to dedicate her life and money to settle down her younger siblings after her father's death. While adhering to her obligations, she was compelled to focus solely on her familial affairs, neglecting her personal well-being. Despite her expectations being met, she continued to be controlled by her mother and younger siblings. Following her mother's demise, she desired to reside alone in the apartment by relocating from Chennai to Bangalore. Regrettably, Akhila's sister intervened to determine Akhila's destiny under the pretext of ensuring her safety, given that Akhila was an unmarried woman. At this juncture, though Akhila decides to escape the city to refresh her soul, she hesitates as "Akhila was not the creature of impulse. She took time over every decision" (Nair 2). The term 'escape' means a lot in

Akhila's life, as she has to stack approvable lies to get permission from her younger siblings, who have replaced the place of her mother. When Akhila's mother was alive, she was her boss and now, the younger siblings assume that responsibility. This irritates Akhila however she represses her feelings. Akhila decides to live alone after this short break of refreshment. But her desires got arrested with a question that runs in her head, "Can a women live by herself?" (21). this quest of Akhila advances the plot.

Akhila got her train ticket to Kanyakumari, a berth in the second-class compartment, in the ladies' coupé. Akhila felt happy to share the coupé "with five other women who will all want to know the story of your life" (7). The novel has multiple narratives. Once Akhila gets into the coupé, she meets the other four women in the coupé and last one joins later. The characters introduce themselves with the fellow passengers, so did Akhila. The technique used by the novelist to introduce the main characters, maintains the tradition of an Indian's rail journey. When Akhila introduces herself as a spinster, the fellow travellers become curious to know more about Akhila, they ask her so many questions, which highlights Indianess. In turn Akhila asks them the prolonged question in her mind, "Can a women live by herself alone?" (21) This leads the other women in the coupé to narrate their story in order solve the puzzle. The omniscient narrator of Akhila's life recounts her story at the midpoint of each narration. Ladies' coupé is the setting of the novel which connects the multi perspectives of these women.

There are eleven chapters in this novel out of which only six chapters are named by the author. Of those six chapters, five chapters were of fellow female travellers, the remaining one is of Akhila. The author does not name the rest of Akhila's chapter. The novelist wrote the stories of Akhila, Janaki, Sheela, and Prabha Devi in a third-person narrative. The other two characters Margaret Shanthi and Marikolanthu tell their stories by themselves.

Janaki, the eldest passenger in the coupé begins her story which is written in the third-person narrative. The narration begins with her marital life. Janaki's husband Prabhakar was a caring and protective husband. Janaki feels stressed with prabhakar's compassion and over protectiveness. At times, she desires to express her thoughts but Prabhakar volunteers to speak for her, which irritates Janaki. But Prabhakar believed that he is a supportive husband. Janaki never tries to explain her feelings to Prabhakar because she believed that she cannot live without a male companion. "I am a woman who has always been looked after. First there was my Father and my brothers; then my husband. When my husband is gone, there will be my son" (22). Instead of expressing her emotions to Prabhakar, Janaki is packed with the thought of dependency. It is apparent that Janaki is reluctant to be herself. This struggle was voiced out by Virginia Woolf in her work *A Room*

of *Once Own* who says, “It is much more important to be yourself than anything else” (Woolf 92).

Then comes the youngest passenger, Sheela’s story. Which is in third-person narrative. She is only fourteen years old girl, travelling alone in the coupe. Sheela’s narrator unveils her rebellious nature, protective parents, and the sexual abuse she faces as a child. And the helpless state of Sheela’s father to warn the abuser, as he is their neighbour. Sheela’s father cannot help his own daughter. Instead, he started controlling Sheela to protect her from the evil world outside. Elaine Showalter in her essay *Towards Feminist Poetics* emphasised that Women are the daughters of male tradition (Herman Apte and Drumi 92). Sheela could not resist it.

Prabha Devi’s story is also in third-person narrative. She is a woman who is of Akhila’s age. She was the only daughter in her family. So, her rich parents brought her up carefully, believed that they could give her hands in marriage to a good husband of their status. Prabha Devi after marrying Jagdeesh she wished to dress up in a trendy way. So, she wore western clothes. Her husband never restricted. But when Pramod, Jagdeesh’s friend took sexual advances towards her “Prabha Devi made a decision. She would camouflage this body that had sent such reckless messages to the world” (Nair 183). So, she repressed her feelings.

Through these narratives Nair emphasized that women of any social hierarchy can become the social victim. These women are influenced by their parents and society to repress their feelings and emotion. To effectively bring out the real inner realities of the woman of all sectors, Nair purposefully employed a power tool, the third-person narrator, to highlight and expose the helpless state to resist the external forces.

The other two characters are Margaret Shanthi and Marikolanthu. The author allows these characters to narrate their story. Margaret Shanthi is the victim of domestic conflict. Margaret’s husband Ebenezer is a self-centred man who never values Margaret’s emotions. He forces her to abort their child, to pursue degree in education instead of pursuing her doctorate degree. Margaret wishes to be a researcher but Ebenezer pressurizes her to change her mind. She resists everything because of her love for him. But when Ebenezer becomes ignorant of her love, she feels disappointed with her marriage life. She wishes to quit her marital life but she remembers her mother’s words “It is normal to quarrel with one’s husband.... It is a women’s responsibility to kept the marriage happy” (112). So, she decides to revenge him by feeding him oily food which transformed his body dependable. As he becomes fatty, he starts to rely more on her. Margaret is a stable woman who knows her every move and its consequences. Marikolanthu, shares her bitter experiences in life. Being a harassment victim, she manages and overcomes the external forces. She is capable of

taking her own decisions and she even prepares her mind to accept the consequences of her decision. Marikolanthu manages to live by herself even after being the victim of this evil world.

After listening to these stories “Akhila Speaks,” which is formulated as the title of the final chapter. Akhila, at the beginning of the novel, is shown as an introvert and unstable woman, but at the end, she resolves to speak her mind. The train journey and the women’s narration helped her to discover her inner self. “Akhila discovers that she likes being alone. She has no more doubt about what her life will be like if she lives alone” (271).

Anita Nair has worked deliberately on her multiple narrative techniques. She has skilfully crafted each character to explore the nuances in women’s life. The characters’ development and its psychological progress has been presented in an excellent way. The conscious questioning by the character in the novel shows the helpless state of women to express their thoughts and emotion. India is the country which project marriage as a divine concept, which doctrines women to tolerate the iniquity of their husband. This gender inequality made the divine concept a cruel one. Woman are also the hindrance for the emancipation of women because they are indoctrinated to believe that men are superior. This has affected the most of the women character in the novel. As they are dependant, they suppressed their feelings. Nair proves herself to be a gynocritic through her unusual style of narrative techniques used in this novel. She employs dignified languages to describe women’s ability and misery.

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THE ROLE OF CULINARY PRACTICES IN PROMOTING MULTICULTURALISM AND INTERCULTURALISM

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Abstract

Culinary practices are reflections of the socio-cultural background of a specific region. The modifications and improvisations done on a culinary discourse highly affect the individual lives living in that particular region. Thus counter-cultural interactions take place. The paper seeks to analyze the impact of glocalization on culinary practices whereby different cultures converge and form into a new, hybridized culture, and analyzes the question of authenticity associated with it.

Keywords: Culture, Counter-cultural Interaction, Homogenization, Hybridization, Local, Global, Glocal, Authenticity, Multiculturalism, Interculturalism.

First and foremost, it is very significant to analyze the term ‘Culture’ which itself is ambiguous. As propounded by the American anthropologist Margaret Mead, “Culture is the learned behaviour of a society or a subgroup” (Sardar and Van Loo 5). Thus, we can consider culture as a social behaviour in this context. Culture and culinary discourse are mutually integrated disciplines and the influence of one could be perceived over the other. Ashish Nandy in his article *The Changing Popular Culture of Indian Food: Preliminary Notes* observes the fluid politics of food in countries like India and how they are radically altering the preconceived notions about the local culinary practices in an area. The primary literary text under study is *The Hundred-Foot Journey* by the American novelist Richard C. Morais which recounts the life of a middle-aged chef Hassan Haji who is an Indian immigrant in France, where the book is abundant with culinary images and flavours and also vividly portrays the notion of interculturalism where both the French and the Indian cultures are merged and thus the cross-cultural interaction takes place.

The term ‘Glocal’ is a portmanteau word formed from the words ‘Global’ and ‘Local,’ respectively. Globalization is “[t]he process that is transforming the world into the proverbial “global village,” rapidly shrinking distances, compressing space and time” (Sardar and Van Loon 161). In other terms, globalization could be perceived as a process of universalization of Western culture. International brand awareness of a product is created as a result of this process, whereas ‘localization’ promotes local culture and retains its traditional cultural value.

As stated by Gitanjali Roy in her article *Authenticity vs Glocalization as Represented in the Digital Platforms: A Study on the Food Culture with Special Reference to Tripura*, “Glocalization is the integration of the global market with the local market which is

also a strategic convergence towards capital income” (8). Global corporate brands such as Pizza Hut, Lays, Mc Donald’s etc have introduced several Indian local foods in the country, which in turn make them ‘glocal food’. Examples are Maharaja Mac, Veggie Mc nuggets, Mc kebab rolls, etc by Mc Donalds and Indian flavoured chips by Lays such as Indian Magic Masala, Cheddar Jalapeno, etc. Dosha-flavoured pizza is yet another example in this context.

Interculturalism or cross-cultural interaction is a frequent phenomenon at the present. It becomes more apparent in the culinary practices across the country. At present, it is very likely that in a rural area of East India or North India, people have dosa as breakfast and in South India, people have chapati for dinner. Whereas Multiculturalism “is the common notion that describes diverse races living in pluralistic harmony” (Sardar and Van Loon 123), Interculturalism tends to promote a homogenous culture by adapting from different cultures around. While one could perceive interculturalism as a more beneficial and harmonious concept as compared to multiculturalism, there arises the question of authenticity.

Ashish Nandy discusses these questions of authenticity and inauthenticity in his article where he states that a food becomes inauthentic when compromises are made with its taste due to unavailability of ingredients or because of other commercial reasons (11). For example, it is very likely that in India, a South Indian dish can be prepared with a Bengali touch. When South Indian spices are unavailable, sambar could be made using Bengali spices in North India. The same is the case with several other dishes from across the country. They lend and accept improvisations and modifications from each other and form a new, hybridized dish. Even dishes which come from outside the country, get mixed and hybridized. Omelettes, cutlets, etc are examples. They are ‘Indianized’ in the case of ingredients and spices.

In the film adaptation of the novel *The Hundred-Foot Journey* directed by Lasse Hallstrom by the same name, the protagonist Hassan cooks mutton curry in the initial scenes which he was supposed to make in Indian style in their Indian restaurant in France. He instead instructs his brother Mansur to rest the mutton in a little red wine and to add some crushed cardamom. Mansur finds it very strange and unusual and questions Hassan. Hassan responds that as it is an emergency for them to cook the meat in less time, the wine will flavour the meat. Mansur again disagrees and Hassan answers that they need to adapt and make use of available ingredients to survive in France rather than sticking to their Indian ingredients. This episode is prominent in the depiction of interculturalism or the counter-cultural interaction in the work, where the need to adapt rather than remain static, becomes more significant.

The professional rivalry between Madam Mallory who runs 'Le Saule Pleureur' (The Weeping Willow) a sophisticated French restaurant in Lumiere and Hassan's family who runs 'Maison Mumbai' just opposite it gradually paves the way to counter-cultural interaction where Madam Mallory finally acknowledges the culinary talent of Hassan and takes him to work in her elegant restaurant to promote his talent. Hassan's father who was adamant to not accept Madam Mallory's proposal finally yields in, thinking of the boy's future where he believes he will get more exposure and recognition in the world. In Madam Mallory's Le Saule Pleureur, Hassan cooks a traditional French chicken recipe with some Indian spices and coriander added to it.

It is significant to go back to the question of authenticity once again and think whether such culinary boundaries are needed or not. In the Indian context, many food items which are claimed as indigenous or as 'Indian' are not as such. Nandy takes food items such as *idli*, *jalebi*, *biryani*, *pulao*, *kebab*, etc as examples and states that they have come from outside such as Indonesia, Persia, Arabia, etc. The impact of Mughals, Afghanis, Chinese, etc is apparent in the case of various Indian food (11-12). Apart from the food items, ingredients such as tomato, potato, sweet potato, French bean, cashew nut, tapioca, maize, capsicum, rajma, papaya, etc have all arrived from the outside and became integral parts of the Indian cuisines.

Nandy observes that chilli, which is an inescapable part of Indian cuisine at present, came from South America. India is widely known for its spices. But some of them have reached the country from outside among which are garlic, fenugreek, turmeric, cinnamon, ginger, asafoetida, etc (11). Moreover, "the concept of the authenticity of the food is a socially constructed idea (based on geography, ingredients, the processes of making dishes, etc.). A homogenous concept on the authenticity of the food is difficult to establish" (Roy 6). The question of authenticity becomes more complex in the Indian context which is a multi-cultural and multi-lingual space.

Hassan's promotion from Le Saule Pleureur to Le Chien Mechant up the Rue valette in Paris where he found the process of "combining the most bizarre ingredients from the most exotic corners of the earth" (C. Morais 130). The homogenization of cultures occurs from the hybridization process making it exotic. Such an exoticity lends it enough attention and respect, where "a triumph of style over substance" (C. Morais 130) is perceived in the case of culinary discourses which are cultural markers. Hassan who was propelled to the top ranks became the first immigrant who ever won the third star in France in the work. His elevation to the uppermost echelons of French haute cuisine introduces him to the world of experimental food combinations which makes him realize the importance of counter-cultural interactions in one's life journey. The addition of ground cardamom seeds to the oyster dish, a mixture of coriander, fenugreek and Indian masala in the French dishes, cauliflower ice

cream with a skim of capers and egg yolk, etc, are vividly portrayed. Such hybridized dishes are spaces where the culinary divisions and boundaries get blurred.

The importance of harmonious interaction among people belonging to different cultural identities is vividly portrayed towards the end of the film where Madam Mallory tells her guests that they will eat at Maison Mumbai with food prepared in Le Saule Pleureur. This scene lights up the mood of the characters as well as the audience which indicates the need to go beyond multiculturalism and accept interculturalism for the sustenance of human lives. The same aspect could be perceived when Hassan's brother-in-law puts forward a business proposal towards the end of the book to open "tip-top French restaurants in India" (C. Morais 176). The approval and embracing of different cultures are crucial for the sustenance and prosperity of human lives whereas after all, "man is a social animal," as propounded by Aristotle a long time ago.

India is a country which is diverse in culture and ethnicity, yet hybrid and homogenous simultaneously. This ambivalent position of India in the global context attracts the attention of learners from all over the world. Thus, it is difficult to assign a uniform term as 'Indian' for the dishes from within the country itself where it gets further subdivided into South Indian, North Indian, Punjabi, Bengali, etc. Where several ingredients and dishes themselves have entered the country from the outside, the need to assign authenticity also gets invalid or less significant. The country's diversity suggests its need to go beyond homogeneity and accept new forms, especially in culinary discourses practised across the country. After all, innovations are to be welcomed and appreciated, if it is for a good cause. Cross-cultural interactions are important for the sustenance of human lives across the globe.

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BEYOND BLOOD BATHS: UNVEILING INTERSECTIONAL AGENCY IN *BLUE EYE SAMURAI* (2023)

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Abstract

Through the evocative blend of brutal violence and heartfelt human drama, *Blue Eye Samurai* (2023), created by Amber Noizumi and Michael Green, transcends the mere exhibition of a bloodbath to offer a nuanced character study. Set in 17th-century Japan and portraying various social prejudices, the protagonist, Mijo, is not merely attempting to survive by subverting her gender norms but is also establishing an identity while complicating the narrative. This highlights the limitations of binaries. Through the lens of cyborg feminism and intersectionality, this paper aims to argue that the complexity of the protagonist is a nuanced interplay of race, gender, and self-determination that ultimately does not reduce into a mere 'amachinen' of vengeance.

Keywords: Intersectionality, Cyborg Feminism, Anime, Gender, Race.

Over the last few years, anime as a medium of culture and expression has transcended its niche status and has become a global phenomenon, seizing audiences both inside and outside Japan with its diverse narratives and expressive visuals. Anime is a multi-genre enterprise, unlike the traditional animation industry in the United States (Halsall 54). This surge in popularity is not merely coincidental; from the decades of 80's and 90's it was quite evident that anime as a mode of visual media going to capture cultural minds; In recent years its thematic richness and nuanced portrayal of characters has been a potent reflection of contemporary identity discourse where themes of self-discovery, belonging, and the ongoing negotiation of social roles resonate deeply with viewers grappling with similar questions in their own lives.

The newest addition to the crème de la crème is Netflix's *Blue Eye Samurai* (2023) created by Amber Noizumi and Michael Green who is an Academy Award and Emmy-nominated film television writer and producer, known for *Logan* (2017), *Blade Runner 2049* (2017), and *A Haunting in Venice* (2023). The series starts with the journey of Mizu, set in 17th century Edo Japan, a mixed-race samurai hunting the trail of a gun dealer, who will lead the protagonist voiced by Maya Erskine to the "white man" she wants to kill. Through Mizu's quest to seek vengeance, The narrative walks a tightrope between the sting of personal betrayal and the labyrinthine world of political treachery. It's the animated series' complex narrative about identity and the feelings of love, betrayal and rage that can accompany that elevates it beyond other adult animated titles (White). This paper delves into the intricate tapestry of Mijo's identity in the anime, challenging the one-dimensional interpretation of her just as a mere device of vengeance to show violence. By employing the

nuanced lenses of Cyborg Feminism and Intersectionality, this paper tries to dismantle the reductive binary framing of her actions and motivations and search for her agency as a product of intricate interplay between race, gender, and a fierce drive for self-determination. Through close analysis of the anime's portrayal of Mijo's defiance against social expectations, we argue that she embodies a cyborg subjectivity, exceeding the limitations of conventional revenge narratives.

The word 'Cyborg' is an amalgamation of the human and the machine. As Ahmed mentions, our imagination might even drift to an image of Frankenstein's monster or a depiction such as Major Mira Killian in the anime *Ghost in the Shell* (2002) (Ahmed). The answer to the question what it takes to make a human, determines whether the path we perceive is ideological or political. Cyborg refers to a hybrid idea which moves beyond the gender binary and thus leads us to the way to theorise it beyond Human-Machine norms, which leads to pluralism and promptitude. In "A Cyborg Manifesto," Haraway explores how the publication of *Origin of Species* by Charles Darwin, broke the notions of human exceptionalism and the concept of evolution as an understanding of human evolution. As the industrial revolution came to the shore of humankind, all aspects of human life became mechanised. The notion of a cyborg comes with the blurring binaries of humans and machines. Haraway uses the cyborg as a model to present her vision of a world that transcends sexual differences, expressing her rejection of patriarchal ideas based on such differences; Because a cyborg is a hybrid of the machine and the organism, it merges nature and culture into one body, blurring the lines between them and eliminating the validity of essentialist understandings of human nature (Ahmed).

In this context, cybernetics erase gender boundaries. Societal narratives have confined women to a constructed "nature" weak, submissive, ruled by emotion, and incapable of intellectual complexity. These roles, deemed inherent and unchangeable, confined women to the domestic sphere as mothers and wives. However, as Donna Haraway posits, if these "natural" roles are demonstrably social constructs, then the very concept of the "human" as an essentialized category falters. Haraway mentions,

Gender, race, or class consciousness is an achievement forced on us by the terrible historical experience of the contradictory social realities of patriarchy, colonialism, and capitalism. And who counts as "us" in my own rhetoric? Which identities are available to ground such a potent political myth called "us," and what could motivate enlistment in this collectivity? Painful fragmentation among feminists (not to mention among women) along every possible fault line has made the concept of woman elusive, an excuse for the matrix of women's dominations of each other (Haraway 17-18).

As this paper speaks about another aspect of this discussion, Intersectionality, a theoretical framework coined by legal scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989, has become an indispensable tool for film analysis in recent decades. It remarks individuals' experiences are not shaped by singular identities like race, gender, or class, but rather by the complex interplay of these and other social categorizations. The theory began as an exploration of the discrimination and subjugation of women of colour and was born from the call for a distinct feminist practice that centralized their lived experiences but today it has expanded its reach to embrace additional aspects of social identity and a complexity of prejudices (Jacob 37).

To analyse *Blue Eye Samurai*, one has to start with the protagonist Mizu who battles childhood trauma as well as deep self-loathing a mix of internalized shame and internalized misogyny put forward by society. She was born from sexual violence, committed by one of those four white men. Her goal through this eradication is to eliminate her biological father, which can be analysed as an act of Revenge - an act women are not culturally permitted to engage in. Transcending the limitations of her biological self and societal limitations and stereotypes about being a 'Monster', Mijo embodies a cyborg perspicacity that challenges the binaries of Human and machine. At the same time, she also tries to break the binaries of nature and culture, the Patriarchal order which was evident in Edo period Japan. Haraway argues that the cyborg, neither fully human nor entirely machine, disrupts the "Western metaphysical tradition" built on "the separation of mind from body, subject from object" (Haraway 149). In Mijo, this duality transforming into a hybrid one is evident. In the opening scene of episode one, Mizu argues with her master about feminine vulnerability and the notion of a warrior. "A woman wielding a katana? unheard of!" (Episode 1 - 25:08). Mijo's swift parry and retort, "Then hear it now," not only showcases her physical prowess but also embodies Haraway's notion of cyborgs displacing "the established subject of Western metaphysics" (Haraway 150).

While going beyond the subjectivity of physical realm, a vengeance narrative typically stays reserved for male heroes, be it in periodical movies or anime. She breaks the passive roles assigned to women in historical narratives. In a pivotal scene where she confronts the architect of her family's destruction, Mijo declares, "I am vengeance itself," (Episode 6 - 36:08) striking back at the agency and power typically wielded by men in tales of revenge. This resonates with Judith Butler's notion of performativity: "if gender is instituted through acts which are internally discontinuous, then the appearance of substance is precisely that, a constructed identity, a performative accomplishment which the mundane social audience, including the actors themselves, come to believe and to perform in the mode of belief" (Butler 520).

Mijo's internal conflict also brings forth the conversation of cyborg felinity. In a heart-wrenching scene, in episode 6, Mijo gazes at her reflection, in the water, where she

tries to remove the impurities before going on to the penultimate trial to get her revenge. She whispers, "Part flesh, part vengeance, am I woman or weapon?" This introspective moment reflects Tsing's observation of the cyborg caught between "the organic and the inorganic" (Tsing 187), highlighting the complexity of Mijo's identity and her struggle to exist within a society that prioritizes rigid binaries. Mijo's journey becomes one of navigating this duality, embracing her hybrid identity while challenging the very systems that seek to define and control her.

Alongside cyber felinity Mijo's mixed race identity, embodied by her blue eyes marks her as a queer within her society, resulting not only in systematic discrimination but also in her being compelled to navigate the conflicting cultural ideologies. In episode one, some local bully chases Mijo and calls her "You deadened demon half-blooded bastard - you look like Onryo" (Episode 1, 07:26). In Japanese traditional culture and folklore, Onryo is classified as a type of ghost who returns to the physical world to seek revenge. She grew up with all these vile notions about herself, which can be studied to examine how her intersectional agency plays a role in narrative and visual storytelling. Her Blue eyes become a symbol of hatred, fear, and disgust. The villagers shun her as a "monster," and even within the samurai class, she faces microaggressions and prejudice. After witnessing her prowess in training the villagers taunt her as "Demon Spawn", which. Reflects the social exclusion because of her otherness. However, Mijo's agency lies not in simply resisting this exclusion but in the nuanced ways she navigates it. She reclaims her identity by choosing the name "Mizu," meaning "water," a counterpoint to the fire imagery associated with her blue eyes. In another Dozo scene where the samurai lord dismisses her as "half-blood" (episode 3), Mojo replies that she has the blood of the samurai.

The show cleverly uses narrative elements to deconstruct the mechanisms of racism within Mijo's world. Not only is the character's racial identity the motivation for the entire plot, but the story cleverly deconstructs racism for a very broad audience by depicting a society that incorporates anti-white prejudice as part of its nationalist, xenophobic structure (Romano). To dissect this notion, it would be ideal to look at the fifth episode of season one named the "Tale of the Ronin and the Bride." This chapter's flashbacks give the audience new shades of emotional battle to both Mizu's quest for revenge and her past. It is beautifully created by making parallels between Mizu's story and that of an Onryo - taking this journey to different heights. The puppets manipulated by gray figures, represent how external power dictates the perceptions of race and identity. Patricia Hill Collins' concept of "Controlling Image" also talks about the same. Stereotypes are not just images purely to establish the difference between different groups of people or generalizations, rather they are meant to justify the maltreatment of marginalized people (Seltzer and Tran). However, the

show subverts this trope by having Mijo eventually take control of the puppets, symbolizing her agency in reclaiming her narrative and dismantling her imposed identities.

Viewers get a clear notion of anti-white prejudice within the society which tries to disrupt the racial power dynamics in Western narratives. Here prejudice arises from a smell of nationalistic xenophobia which is evident in today's modern world, which is constructed and contested. Racism is not simply individual prejudice but a "system of power and privilege" that operates on multiple levels (Goldberg 45). Mijo's journey in *Blue Eye Samurai* offers a nuanced exploration of agency through the lens of intersectionality. By reflecting on both the challenges and the potential for self-determination within a complex social framework, Mijo emerges as a powerful testament to the intersectional experience and its potential for reclaiming agency and rewriting the narrative. Through her hybridity, she tries to disrupt the binaries of nature and culture, human and machine, as mentioned before and rewrites the history of femininity by reclaiming agency and defining her narrative. Mijo's story demonstrates that the cyborg is not merely a metaphor; it is a powerful lens through which to reimagine identity, agency, and the very fabric of historical narratives. It is a commentary on the questions faced by multiracial communities. As the creator implies, "I wanted to explore feeling in between two worlds, but the only world I knew was the world in which I tried to assimilate with mostly white people. So, what would it have been like to try to assimilate with mostly Japanese people?" (White Interview).

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TRACING CROSS-CULTURAL SENSITIVITY IN BISHWANATH GHOSH'S *AIMLESS IN BANARAS*

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Abstract

The rapid change in global livelihood and the growth in tourism worldwide, through social media and other mediums, have witnessed the importance of experiencing and adapting the nature of cultural diversity. People travel to various countries, say, the UK and the US, to visit famous places, through which they interact with indigenous people and sensibly mingle with them, especially through culture. Acculturation and cultural sensitivity allow people to acknowledge existing cultural differences and divergent cultural identity belonging to other social groups, without harming or influencing these sense of those culture. Cross-culture promotes to be aware of effective cultural behaviours along with appreciation of cultural distinctiveness. India is also among the major countries where cultural diversity can be encountered everywhere. However, people belong to the same nation, but each corner of the country endows a vast cultural difference. This paper analyses the cross-cultural sensitivity of the narrator, who travel stone of India's religious sanctum sanatoriums, Banaras (Kashi), to cremate his mother at Manikarnika Ghat. It also explores cultural sensibility of the narrator, who exuberantly accept cultural diversity of the place.

Keywords: Cross-culture, Diversity, Culture, Sensitivity, Acculturation, Difference.

“No culture can live if it attempts to be exclusive”

- Mahatma Gandhi

The mobilization of cultural groups at various places caters to people who voluntarily or involuntarily interact with host cultural groups at some point. The sort of togetherness developed through mutual agreement or disagreement, regardless of distinct social backgrounds, liberates people to acknowledge cultural differences and similarities in various social milieus. Cultural differences depend upon a set of beliefs, customs, rituals, practices and ways of people's everyday life followed by a number of people in a single society (Storey, *Cultural Theory and Popular Culture*, 2). Each social group retains a distinguished cultural essence and values reflected through language, behaviour, and everyday activity. Raymond Williams asserts the complexity and dynamism of the word-culture, which is inclusive in nature. Precisely, it encompasses the happenings of daily life as well as homogeneous social attitudes, likes and dislikes, interests, tastes, music, art, etc. (*Culture and Society* XV-XVI). The nature of cultural diversity or differences in culture is caused by various social, geographical, political, and economic reasons. The emergence of specific cultural conditions is contingent upon people's adaptation of shared values, mores and acceptable social behaviours ushered in from generations by the continuous and pooled

exertion of such reasons. Such cultural attributions diversify individuals and contribute to developing a separate cultural condition, which helps shape unique social and cultural identities.

Cultural differences were brought to notice in the 1960s when theorists, such as Charles Sanders Peirce, William James, E. B. Du Bois and Alain Locke analysed the flourishing of numerous cultures in a state or a region. People's immigration to foreign lands or countries, such as the UK and the US, for various purposes, say, education, business, tourism, etc., ameliorates to burgeon distinct cultures in those nations over the years. Such cultural variation tends to examine a place from a multicultural perspective, which is also known as cultural or ethnic plurality. The concept of multiculturalism carries a holistic approach in terms of inquiry into cultural differences. It supports the demolition of cultural hierarchies by transforming both the vertical and the horizontal relationships among cultures (Murdock, 2016).

The advent of acculturation, intercultural, and cross-culture is caused by the association of diverse cultural groups, which occurs through the interaction between cultures at a given place. The term 'acculturation' was introduced by an American psychologist, John Wesley Powell, to monitor the effect of it on the mind of people in psychology in the 1880s. According to him, acculturation is a process that occurs when an individual or a group of people meets or happens to exchange cultural aspects with other cultural groups (Lou, 2021). They thus exchange the features of their cultures with other cultures to maintain continuous contact between them. Similarly, interculturalism refers to a political idea that enhances intercultural policy to uphold reciprocity and exchanges in educational institutions. As a result, it instills persuasive interaction and comprehension among students from different cultures (Kastoryano, 2018).

Cross-culture is attributed to acknowledging and understanding cultural differences and similarities among cultures. It promotes awareness of effective cultural behaviours and the appreciation of cultural distinctiveness. The term was first used by a Cuban writer, Fernando Ortiz, to examine the nature of cultural hybridity in Latin America in the 1940s. Cross-culture generally seeks to analyse shared cultural traits or similarities by comparing cultures to construct the idea of cultural universalism (Kinzer et al.). The inclusive nature of each culture yields the adoption of consensual cultural attitudes, ritual practices, and everyday life shared by people of the two cultures through various mediums of interaction. Every culture is loaded with considerable familial characteristics, which ordinary people employ to negotiate in public places with different cultural groups. Cross-culture eases to convey message and meaning, irrespective of the intensity of cultural differences, to the people of the host culture by highlighting the similarities. The term is frequently used for business purposes; when employees travel to other countries for business, they have to work

in strange places for a period of time. To better understand people and their business strategy, they need to be competent in comprehending language and culture. Such competencies will make them proficient in exchanging and conveying messages and meanings to each other.

Culture or cultural differences originate from a sense of superiority and inferiority among people who assume they have a more affluent culture than that of others. In a multicultural state, such complexity and subversive disposition are pertinent to looking down on culture, which is precisely known for its flexibility, dynamism, and inclusivity. Each culture significantly appropriates and adopts features from other cultures through reciprocity and interdependency. This progressive nature of culture by and large requires a sensible inclination at the time of mingling and contact. People from different cultural groups must be sensitive enough to acknowledge and accept the differences between cultures without harming and influencing the essence and values. Cultural sensitivity endorses a peaceful and affectionate harmonisation of varied cultures, regardless of their dissimilar features that lead to inducing conflict. Sensitivity in culture is vital for assimilation and homogenisation that, unlike repulsion and condemnation, promotes a sense of respect for the diverse ethnic group. The dictionary meaning of the word sensitivity is- 'the state or quality of being able to sense slight impressions or differences' (Merriam-Webster Dictionary). Such cultural differences are amicable and profound to be observed through the senses.

In addition, cross-cultural sensitivity, as it was defined by Alonso Marks, is to be aware of and promote tolerance and respect for diversity being among or surrounded by host cultures (Hernández et al., 2018). It advocates individuals' exposure to admit the variation in multiple forms, such as food habits, attire, everyday activities, taste of music, language, ritual, practice, etc. Sensitivity towards each culture is expressed by one either being in one's own cultural arena or being away in another cultural land, which must be exhibited through intercultural negotiation. Intercultural illustrates the differences between or among cultures, which may vary in numerous ways, such as the degree of complexity and flexibility, tolerance towards outsiders and the rate of flourishing over the years (Barker, 2016). Nevertheless, sensitivity encourages endurance and brotherhood by examining similarities and differences endowed in cultures. Cross-culture sensitivity alludes to people's competency and openness by demarcating the knowledge of self and of the other through careful observation and analysis of the level of cultural diversity (Hernández et al., 2018). It involves both external and internal aspects inherent in individuals of different cultural groups to appropriate and adopt cultural differences by manifesting sensitivity towards the target culture.

Competence and sensitivity are usually essential when people travel to transnational or trans-culture for various purposes, such as business, vacation, and education. Their participation and involvement to serve the purpose are prerequisites for them to become accustomed to the host culture. Many students travel to other states or countries in search of quality education; to begin with, they need to adopt the attributes of a culture over there and experience and appropriately sensibly the nature of diversity served. Tourism is also one of the major aspects that turns a one-culture nation into a multicultural one. People travel to enjoy tourist places and endure cultural variations. To perceive the distinctiveness of culture, people have to observe the targeted culture as well as sensibly identify differences and similarities that are shared between them. Cross-cultural sensitivity has been applied to analyse a text that is based on an Indian city known for its richness in culture and heritage.

The terms such as multicultural, intercultural, and cross-cultural can aptly be applied to India. The country is full of cultural diversity known all over the world. Each corner of the nation endows distinct cultural traits that distinguish each part of the country from the other. There is a wide cultural difference between the eastern part and western part of the country. The northern part is quite different from the southern part of the nation. Similarly, cultural differences exist within the states and even within the regions. The state, say, Uttar Pradesh, can be divided into two parts on the grounds of cultural differences. The Eastern UP is different from the Western UP. Likewise, other states, such as Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka, West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh, Odisha, Assam, Jammu and Kashmir, Arunachal Pradesh, etc., are different from one another. These states also have cultural variations within the states. Tribal states, such as Meghalaya, Bihar, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Tripura, Manipur, Mizoram, etc., share their part in the nation's cultural diversity. There is no single culture that can represent India on the global stage, but rather, the diversity of the country significantly portrays India as an amalgam of differences at the cost of caste, class, race, culture, language, food, dress, art, literature, and everyday life.

Among the major cities of India, Varanasi is a prominent city which is famous worldwide for its rich culture and heritage. The city is also popularly known as Banaras, Benaras and Kashi amongst the locals as well as it is one of India's religious sanctum sanatoriums. People from other parts of the country, as well as outside of the country, visit the city. The city's geographical location is in the eastern part of UP, which is 300 km from the capital city of Bihar, on the bank of the river Ganga. A large number of people visit the city every year to know the mystery of its richness in terms of old heritage, culture, tradition and performance. The author, Bishwanath Ghosh, is also among the travellers who come to the city for the first time to cremate his mother. His mother dies in her 60s when he is employed in Chennai, Tamil Nadu. He comes to cremate his mother at one of the most famous ghats in Varanasi, called Manikarnika Ghat. He discovers that whosoever is

cremated in Varanasi at Manikarnika Ghat, will go straight to heaven without any stopovers in the form of rebirths. A few mysteries regarding the city's rich culture, heritage and temples, which make it popular among people, arrive to him through the murmuring of the people at the ghat. He decides to visit the city again after a gap of years. His second visit uncovers numerous mysteries and lets him know many untold stories about the city. His book- *Aimless in Banaras* (2019) covers all his experiences regarding the city, which is systematically unveiled across the book.

The author hails from West Bengal. He is nourished in a Bengali culture, which has given him a different identity and is quite different from the culture of Varanasi. He says, "The city described in this book is known variously as Kashi, Banaras, Benares and Varanasi. I have chosen to call it Banaras because I find it most evocative of the culture it cradles and also because the name, when suffixed with an 'i', denotes its most important element: its people". He is astonished after looking at the narrow streets and ghats over there. He says, "Quintessential Banarasis inhabit its ghats and galis, and those are the places where this book is set." He moves through the streets and ghats and finds people sitting at tea shops while discussing local and global politics. He observes different forms of pujas (worships): offering for the dead one and a newborn baby, which is being performed at the same place. He is fascinated by looking at the kinds of rituals, performances, and everyday life of people there. He finds people fearless about life and death, and are ignorant about tomorrow. They believe that whatever happens to them happens due to the grace and curse of lord Shiva. They say if lord Shiva wants them to be happy, they will be happy; no one can be an obstacle in this way.

The author's close observation alludes him acknowledging and accepting the city's flourishing culture, which has a long history. His visit to a strange place, which is not his own, makes him sensitive at the time of negotiation and interaction with people, the so-called Banarasis. He patiently listens to people who talk about the city's distinguished culture and everyday activities, which give them a distinct identity. He visits temples and witnesses mesmerizing performances, such as Ganga Arti, Subah-e-Banaras, and processions. He is exposed to such cultural essence and rituals being performed there. He is fascinated and surprised by seeing people's stuffed- mouths speaking and lecturing others. They consider themselves among the happiest people on earth. He is immersed in the timeless aura of the city. He roams ghats and galis and mingles with people open-heartedly, who express the timelessness of the city. He embraces the city's diversity and uniqueness, staying here for many days.

This paper analyses *Aimless in Banaras* through a cross-cultural sensitivity perspective. It explores how the first-person narrator, who is a traveller, visits the city to know and experience cultural differences. He had never been to Varanasi, but he came to the

city to cremate his mother, who died in her 60s. His first visit was for a specific purpose, but he was attracted by observing people and their ways of life. He wanted to unveil the hidden mysteries and to hear the untold stories of the place, which makes it one of the oldest cities of its time. He embraces cultural differences. He is Bengali by birth, but he is very sensitive towards other cultures, especially culture in Varanasi. He calmly obliges towards the city's everyday performances, which give the city a taste of Banaras. He wanders through the streets and ghats, which endow the flourishing of culture and calls it a city of gali(street). He meets with people joyously, who express the timelessness of the city. He embraces the diversity and uniqueness of the city being here for many days.

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CRITICAL REGIONALISM IN DAVID DAVIDAR'S *THE HOUSE OF BLUE MANGOES*

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Abstract

History is a construct of society. It is reflected not only in the social order but also in literature. David Davidar's *The House of Blue Mangoes* traces the socio-regional history of south Tamil Nadu as India journeys through the freedom movement. Historical events of importance are represented in the novel, considering each event's impact on the common people of the region. The current study uncovers the representation of historical events such as the Breast-cloth controversy of 1859, the Great Famine of 1877, the caste riots of 1899, the Swadeshi Movement of 1905-47, the Non-cooperation Movement of 1920, the Civil Disobedience Movement of 1930, the Quit India Movement of 1942, and other events of historical importance in the novel, concerning historical documents, making it a new historicist analysis.

Keywords: History, Historicism, History, Social Issues, Independence, Region.

Critical regionalism is an approach to literary criticism that is based on anti-foundational principles. Thus, literary theories such as poststructuralism, postmodernism, new historicism, etc. which are anti-fundamental in nature, can be classified under the umbrella term critical regionalism.

New Historicism is a critical approach that examines a literary text considering its historical and cultural context or co-text (Mambrol). It involves parallel reading of literary and non-literary texts from the same period to reveal their connections and influences (Ringo). It challenges the idea that history is a linear and causal sequence of events (Cheraku). Some examples of new historicism are as follows. Stephen Greenblatt analyses Shakespeare's plays and their relation to Renaissance culture, politics, and religion (Parvini). Catherine Gallagher studies the rise of the novel and its connection to the emergence of property rights, contract law, and capitalism (Sharma). Louis Montrose explores the Elizabethan court and its representation in Spenser's *The Faerie Queene* (Sharma).

David Davidar's *The House of Blue Mangoes* is a historical narrative that features historical events spanning from 1837 to 1947. It chronicles the impact of these events on the southern region of Tamil Nadu. The novel, a multigenerational saga, is divided into three books. The first book explores the caste conflict between the fictional castes of the Andavars and the Vedhars. The second and third portray the tension between the native Indians and the colonial British as the Indians struggle for self-government.

The novel is set in a seaside village called Chevathar on the banks of a river named Chevathar, a tributary of river Thamirabarani of Tirunelveli. The village juts into the Gulf of Mannar. Most of the Andavars in the novel are converts to Christianity. Father Ashworth, the British priest of St. Paul's Church, goes into peace conversations with leaders of both castes and tries to stop the impending bloodshed due to caste conflict. Davidar, at this point, draws on up the church's history, saying that the church was destroyed and rebuilt twice, once during the fire of 1837 and again 30 years later in 1867 due to a cyclonic storm. Davidar also portrays that the church campus has a school, a dispensary, and a parsonage, hinting at the missionaries' immense educational and medical services (44).

The main problem of the novel's first book is the caste conflict between the Andavars and the Vedhars, as the Vedhars claim the lands belonging to the Andavars. The Andavars in the novel are portrayed as rich and landowning, embodied in the character of Solomon Dorai, the village headman. His ancestors were the traditional headmen of the village, owning a house with twenty rooms referred to in the novel as "the Big House." Solomon's ancestors were known for keeping caste tensions away from the village. So, Solomon takes it as his responsibility to protect the village from caste conflict (Davidar 21). The conflict arose due to the construction of roadways into the village in 1899 and because of a religious issue, too. The Hindu Andavars went to the Amman temple, while the Vedhars went to the Murugan temple, and people of either caste were forbidden to enter the other caste's temple. The road was initially planned to go along the house of Solomon Dorai. However, the heads of the other communities argued for the road to pass through their settlements, too. Finally, the road was laid connecting all the communities connecting the quarters of the conflicting Andavars and the Vedhars (40). Further, Davidar notes, "the road was a government road and therefore had no caste restrictions placed on it" (41). The novel begins with the rape of an Andavar girl by Vedhar men. The Vedhars reason that the rape was retribution to the Andavar men who entered the Vedhars' Murugan temple. This is the starting point of a caste battle that comes towards the end of book one. The Vedhars are defeated in the battle, and the Andavars claim supremacy.

Book one also hints at the Sivakasi caste riots of June 6, 1899, of which the local authorities were alarmed of an impending caste riot in the Kilanad district, the southernmost part of the Madras Presidency, of which the village Chevathar is part. The caste battle of Chevathar occurs even after measures to control it by the local authorities. Robert Hardgrave, in his book *The Nadars of Tamilnad*, mentions the Sivakasi riots and the riots in the south between the Nadars and the Maravars, which is what is fictionally represented by Davidar in his novel (111). Thus, the Andavars are the fictional counterparts of the Nadars and the Vedhars of that of the Maravars or the Thevars. Hardgrave mentions a similar temple-entry issue as mentioned by Davidar as well (114–115). Similarly, in the novel by

Davidar, the defeat of the Vedhars in the battle of Chevathar in 1899 corresponds to the defeat of the Maravars, as mentioned by Hardgrave.

It is hinted in book one that there is a possibility of the failure of the monsoon. It is also stated that the famine recurred seven times in the Madras Presidency (Davidar 116). The novel mentions the death of 11 people in the village in 1896, 16 in 1897, 3 in 1898, and 2 that far in the year 1899, which is where the novel begins. Solomon is worried as the headman is responsible for caring for the villagers if another monsoon fails. This fictional representation of the famine can be analysed with reference to Digby's *Famine Campaign*, which details the rummages of the great famine of 1877 and how the people came out of it with the government's efforts (46). Such a fright over death due to famine and starvation loomed over the people during the latter half of the nineteenth century.

Solomon remembers the Breast Wars of 1859 as he is concerned about an impending caste war. The breast wars were a campaign against the taxes levied for covering the upper body by lower caste women of South Travancore who were normed to remove their upper garments when they were in front of the upper caste people. Davidar mentions this stripping of Nadar and Andavar women and how the missionaries try to eradicate it by approaching Sir Charles Trevelyan, who later orders the prohibition of the stripping (34). Further, Davidar notes the hierarchical undressing of the upper body, as mentioned by Hardgrave too.

Hardgrave, in his book *The Nadars of Tamilnad*, documents that the Nadar or the Shanar women "are obliged to go uncovered from the waist upwards" (22). It is mentioned that Colonel Munro, in 1812, permitted the Christian converts to wear upper garments with efforts by the missionary Charles Mead, which later provoked controversy. He notes that the covering of the upper bodies by the lower caste women provoked anger in the upper caste people who took suppressive measures (61). It is stated that houses were burned and looted in January 1859 (65). It is also mentioned in book one by Davidar that after the Great Revolt of 1857, the British stopped interfering with the local customs and traditions. Once the battle of Chevathar is over, book one ends with the arrival of the monsoon.

Chapter 34 of book two takes place in 1907 when the British were alarmed as it was the 50th anniversary of the 1857 War of Independence. Davidar brings out the tension in the British officials over the Indian freedom movement through the character Chris Cooke, the Sub-Collector of Ranivoor, a town near Chevathar, who is on a visit to Madras and through the journalist Nicholas. They discuss the Indians' struggle for freedom. Nicholas speaks of the Governor's two-day trip to Coimbatore and about the furore caused by Bipin Chandra Pal in Bengal, who urged the Tamils to burn the Englishmen alive. They also discuss the division of Bengal. The Swadeshi Movement was in vogue in 1907, which is the boycotting

of English products by the Indians and the usage of indigenous products. The chapter also highlights the internal power struggle between the Extremists and the Moderates of the Indian National Congress. Davidar refers to more freedom wars: the Poligar Wars, the defeat of Tipu Sultan, and the Vellore Mutiny.

James Campbell Ker, in his book *Political Trouble in India 1907-1917*, considers the Swadeshi Movement as follows: "The boycott was simply the boycott of foreign goods of all kinds, particularly those of English manufacture;" (6). Similarly, the boycott of foreign goods is depicted in Davidar's novel as well, which is evident in the boycott of the Abel circus, wherein Aaron Dorai, the second son of Solomon Dorai influenced by the talk of S. V. Iyer, a lawyer and freedom activist from Madras Presidency, pledges that the circus would have zero participation from the locality.

Later, Iyer calls Aaron and his friend Nambi to go on a demonstration in Tuticorin. They follow the meetings of the Extremists. The extremists plan to assassinate white representatives like L. M. Wynch, the Tinnevely District Collector who arrested V. O. Chidambaram Pillai, A. F. Pinhey, the Additional Sessions Judge, and R. W. D. Ashe, the District Magistrate of Tinnevely (the then name of Tirunelveli). Aaron is assigned to be part of the trio who assassinate Ashe and is arrested. He later dies of tuberculosis in the Ranivoor prison even after medication given by his brother Daniel Dorai, who is a renowned doctor.

In chapter 47, Davidar describes the Indian contribution to the British in World War I. He estimates that 100,000 Indian soldiers died in the war (241). In the next chapter, Davidar explains that the British use the difference among the Indians, that is, the caste sentiment, to suppress them (243). He chronicles the establishment of the Justice Party on November 20, 1916. Kavitha Muralidharan cites the importance of the Justice Party in Tamil Nadu. J. B. Raju explains the doctrine behind the non-cooperation movement in his book *Critical Study of the Non-Cooperation Movement in India* as follows: "The most striking feature in the public life and political teaching of Mr. Gandhi is his insistence on the supreme value of non-violence" (30).

In his doctrine of Ahimsa, Gandhi advocated non-cooperation with the British in boycotting foreign goods, especially those of the British and stopping going to educational institutions and administrative offices. Davidar represents this in the way students boycott schools and burn their uniforms. In chapter 54, Davidar talks about the Non-Cooperation Movement. It was a movement involving the boycott of schools, colleges, offices, and courts; the burning of foreign clothes; and the picketing of toddy shops. Its impact on Chevathar is found in schoolboys roaming in their underwear and burning their uniforms. When enquired by Daniel Dorai, a boy replies, "We have to boycott school and foreign garments, aiyah," to which he counters, "Without education you will all become loafers"

(276). Daniel Dorai is displeased with the act and orders the boys to return to school. He also complains to the tahsildar. Over 90 thousand students left schools and colleges, and bonfires of foreign cloth were found on every street. The British government got tougher as the British prince came to tour India, but it was retributed with demonstrations and black flags.

Daniel Dorai plans to become the headman and holds a village elder committee meeting where he proposes to ban any form of political activity in the Chevathar. It receives support. Nevertheless, his next proposition of dropping the caste names is not supported. In chapter 59, Davidar mentions the Dandi March and the Salt Satyagraha that started on April 6, 1930. Dandi March was a 25-day march from Ahmedabad to Dandi to make salt in an indigenous manner without paying taxes to the British, which was against the British order (Nayar xv).

In the novel, Davidar mentions a procession of people clad in white who, when inquired by Daniel Dorai, say that they were not mad but following the footsteps of the Mahatma and their brother Rajaji in breaking the salt laws (298). Thus, in this manner, the salt satyagraha sees its way into the fictional village of Chevathar and south Tamil Nadu, inspired by the Mahatma and Rajagopalachari.

Arun Chandra Bhuyan writes about the Quit India Movement: “Gandhi believed that national unity could be achieved only by eliminating the third party, i.e., the British Government, from the national scene” (38). Daniel Dorai’s son Kannan was admitted to Madras Christian College, while Gandhi announced the Quit India Movement in August 1942. The slogan “Do or die” echoes everywhere. In their misunderstanding of the movement, college students cut down a dozen palm trees to affect the palm business. Later, in chapter 73, it is mentioned that in 1944, many Congressmen were imprisoned.

Kannan finds a job as a manager in the Pulimed Tea Company, a tea company run by the British. At first, he is on good terms and friends with his British colleagues. He participates in their World War II discussions, goes to clubs with them and so on. However, later, as he is the only Indian manager in the company, he finds himself excluded when the deaths of English men are reported. The British officials corner him as they suspect him also being a part of the Quit India Movement. Finally, Kannan resigns and returns to Chevathar, where he realises that home is where the heart is.

The historical events from 1837 to 1847 represented in *The House of Blue Mangoes* highlight that the nation’s history has a lasting impact on the family’s history. The analysis has brought to light that history as a construct influences people in both personal and social dimensions. The parallel reading of history and its representation in the novel helps to fix the novel’s events in its sociocultural context to understand the regional sentiments.

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‘OTHERING’ THROUGH CINEMA-REPRESENTATION OF MUSLIMS IN CONTEMPORARY BOLLYWOOD FILMS

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Abstract

This paper explores the phenomenon of “Othering” that is manifested in contemporary Indian cinema, with a specific focus on Muslim representation in Bollywood movies. Analysing how nationalism and religious identities interact in Bollywood films, the research aims to reveal the underlying factors that contribute to the construction of “other” and its impact on societal perceptions. This paper employs a qualitative method of thematic analysis of three selected Bollywood movies - *Raazi*, *Uri: The Surgical Strike*, and *The Kashmir Files* thematically to locate prominent patterns that perpetuate “othering.”

Keywords: Nationalism, Bollywood, Muslim Representation, Othering, Religion, Identity.

Following 9/11, media has perpetuated harmful stereotypes about Muslims, fostering anti-Muslim sentiments. Hindu-Muslim relations in India shaped by events like the Indo-Pak partition, impacted Bollywood, generating negative stereotypes. Despite predominant biases, some films show positive Muslim characters. The study aims to examine the depiction of Muslims in contemporary films; their contribution towards positive and negative portrayal of Muslims.

Bollywood films carry powerful ideological messages, encouraging nationalist causes (Tyrrell), where the upper-middle-class Hindu males are portrayed positively and the Muslim men as the menacing outsiders (Ganti). This majoritarian bias fabricates historical events, portraying Muslims as anti-national.

Early Bombay Cinema reflected Nehruvian secularism, while the 1970s saw a shift in films regarding communal conflicts (Clini). The emergence of Hindutva contributed in portraying Muslims as the 'other' (Tripathi & Raghuvanshi). Today, Muslims make substantial contributions to the industry, yet again, are subjected to a narrative that associates Hinduism with India (Hirji).

Major Narrative Platitudes in Muslim Representation

There are two major platitudes regarding Muslims:

1. "All Muslims are not terrorists but all terrorists are Muslims" - *Fanaa* (2006) *New York* (2008).
2. "The identity of Muslims is entirely determined by their religion (qaum), and their religion is the source of violence" - *Sarfaroosh* (1999), *Charas* (1976) *Shaurya* (2008).

The paper applies qualitative thematic analysis of three films: *Uri: The Surgical Strike*, *Raazi*, and *The Kashmir Files*. Using Levi-Strauss' Media and Representation theory as a theoretical framework. This study investigates how media produces meaning, exploits binary oppositions, and reinforces cultural values and ideologies.

Directed by Adhitya Dhar, the film revolves around the alleged surgical strike carried out by the Indian army across the Line of Control on September 29, 2016. The film's central theme is nationalism, which can be seen in dialogues like "It is time to seek revenge, an eye for an eye" or "This is a new India- this will infiltrate your home and hit you where it hurts." The victory against a common enemy Pakistan inspires a sense of unity and perfect harmony among all Indians. Today, nationalism in India is primarily marked by repulsion and hostility towards Pakistan due to the escalating conflict between the countries. The concept of "Naya Hindustan" talks about how India has never initiated a strike on other countries in its history. However, the New India will not tolerate any wrongdoing, thereby falling under the framework of majoritarian nationalism.

Major Vihaan Singh Shergill retires to care for his dying mother, but the Prime Minister reminds him of his duty to the nation as she is also a motherly figure. Imagining the nation as a mother fits within the framework of majoritarian Hindutva ideology, emphasising a son's duty to protect and defend mother India (Menon and Bhasin). The movie takes the approach of 'we, the sanctimonious and they, the deprived'. Throughout the movie, Indian officials are shown as more efficient and capable than Pakistan officials who are portrayed as sloppy, callous, and incompetent individuals. The Indian commando teams successfully eliminate all of the terrorists with zero casualties. In reality, India admitted that one of its soldiers was in Pakistani custody, but there was no such detail in the film, resulting in an extremely glorified one-sided representation.

In the song "Challa," there is a scene where three of the commandos are praying namaz revealing their muslim identities. These characters are portrayed as the 'Good Muslims,' a common narrative used in Bollywood movies, differentiating between the Pakistani and Indian Muslims. The film's strategic display of Muslim prayers, while avoiding Hindu ones, portray the inclusion of these muslims among the heroes of the surgical strike, willing to sacrifice for Mother India. This portrayal highlights the marginalisation of Indian Muslims in the framework of Indian nationalism, offering a relatable narrative for the community.

Raazi, directed by Meghna Gulzar, follows the story of a Kashmiri woman, who marries a Pakistani army captain to spy on Pakistan. Here, Nationalism is portrayed as an integral part of individual identity. In the film, Sehmat remarks, "Mein hi toh mulk hu" ["I, myself depict the nation"], emphasising one's national identity. The lyrics of "Ae watan"

shows that one's country is considered to be a home and it will always be a home irrespective of where one lives. In Sehmat's family, the notion of putting "India first" has permeated generations. When Hidayat, Sehmat's father is confronted about endangering his daughter's life for the sake of the nation, he remarks, "She is an Indian first." Sehmat sacrifices her aspirations and consents to her father's final wish. During her training, when officer Mir asks Sehmat why she agreed to do this, she replies, "There is no 'me' before the nation".

When Sehmat's husband Iqbal learns about Sehmat's mission, he says: *I love you, Sehmat – But love can never come before the country.* Both individuals are willing to sacrifice their love and relationship for the sake of their countries, implying the importance of recognizing individual national identity. The major characters of *Raazi* are Muslims, despite the variations of being Indian, Pakistani or Kashmiri. The movie emphasises on the patriotism of Indian and Kashmiri Muslims through the depiction of a Muslim family who are strongly nationalistic in nature. Religion is vital to the protagonist's family, but when it comes to their motherland, they serve the nation with devotion and differences being set aside.

The 'Othering' aspect of the movie is explored through the Indo-Pak relationship. The protagonist is enmeshed in an ideological conflict, where she struggles to spy on the family that she is married into. When she moves to Pakistan, everyone greets her with affection, with the exception of the family's oldest servant, who treats her coldly. Despite marrying into a muslim family and being a muslim herself, Sehmat is viewed as an outsider for her distinct national identity. *The Kashmir Files*, directed by Vivek Ranjan Agnihotri, is set in the 1990s, at the outset of an anti-Indian uprising in Indian - administered Kashmir.

The film opens with children playing cricket in a gully. Shiva, a hindu kid exclaims "Sachin Sachin!!", inviting abuse from his Muslim teammates. They beat him up, call him "Indian Dog" and threaten him to say "Pakistan Zindabad". The movie portrays the nationalistic feelings of Kashmiri Muslims towards Pakistan. In one of the rallies, a Kashmiri Muslim says: Leader: If we want to fight the war for freedom, our people should know who our enemy is! / Crowd: India! India! India!

The scene depicts Kashmiri Muslims' hostility towards India and Hindus, leading them to believe ethnic cleansing or a Holy Jihad is the only way to free Kashmir. The movie portrays Muslim characters as barbaric or subservient to a barbaric cause. The antagonist, Bitta, is shown as a cruel man with no conscience; where even his kindness is accompanied by betrayal. This portrayal extends to all the Muslim characters of the film, deliberately fostering associations between Islam and fundamentalism, leading viewers to perceive Islam and fundamentalism as essentially synonymous (Said). The movie fails to show Muslims who protect their Hindu neighbour or other victims of the militancy, thus simplifying a

complex and challenging conflict, selectively highlighting aspects that serve its narrative objectives.

Lines like "Agar Kashmir mein rehna hai toh Allah-hu-Akbar kehna hai" and "Raliv, Galivya Chaliv" (convert to Islam, leave, or die) show the supremacy of religion over country. This reinforces stereotypes that Muslims are violent and prone to terrorism, and aligns with the argument "The identity of Muslims is entirely determined by their religion (qaum), their religion is the source of violence" (Kumar H.M.). The film drew criticism for its misrepresentation of events, such as claiming that more than 4000 Kashmiri Pandits died, where in fact only 219 deaths were listed in the government records from 1989 to 2004. By distorting facts and misrepresenting history, the film engages in a history war (Lichtner and Bandhopadhyay). This narrative, portraying Muslim bloodlust and Hindu trauma, aligns with the stereotype of the inherently arrogant Muslims and the supposedly tolerant Hindu (Kumar H.M.).

The movie shows that the issue of Kashmir is not just any Hindu-Muslim conflict, but a rebellion against India. In the film, Kashmiri Pandits hold Rajiv Gandhi responsible for betraying them and putting his friendship with Farooq Abdullah above all else. But on the contrary, it was VP Singh (backed by BJP) who held the office at the time. Another recurring theme is "Love Jihad," the opposition of Hindutva ideology to Muslims proposing to marry Hindu women. During the Colonial era (Mubarki), the Hindu women were considered as the embodiment of the nation and its honour, their bodies were prohibited territory for the Muslim 'Other.'

Raazi makes a strong point: being a patriot doesn't mean harbouring hatred for other countries. It advocates for a nationalist worldview based on peace and integrity, separating patriotism from hatred. The movie questions majoritarian nationalism by emphasising the freedom of an individual to make sacrifices for the nation. The last scene, which shows elderly Sehmat, all by herself, highlights the emotional toll of the war and offers a conflicted viewpoint on nationalism. The film's overall nationalistic theme is left vague, neither pro nor anti-nationalistic.

In contrast, *Uri*, while avoiding blatant jingoistic nationalism, serves as a conduit for the right-wing state ideology of a "new India." It emphasises on a modern India that merges scientific knowledge with traditional values, uniting India's diverse audience by invoking nationalism through the victory against Pakistan.

The Kashmir Files drew criticism for its evident propaganda and bias against the Muslim community. The film focuses solely on the experience of Hindu Kashmiri Pandit

refugees, presenting a one-sided narrative, placing blame on Congress, liberals, human rights advocates, further deepening the partisan nature of its narrative.

The representation of Muslims in these movies differ according to their nationalistic ideologies. *Raazi* shows Muslims in a courteous manner, avoiding vilification. Pakistan is portrayed as India's eternal enemy in *Uri*, presenting Pakistani Muslims as the opponent while emphasising the virtues of Indian Muslims. In contrast, *The Kashmir Files* unanimously portrays all Muslims as cruel and barbaric, perpetuating hatred and prejudice. The films' representation of Muslims is determined by their nationalistic narratives and varying political leanings, ranging from respectful in *Raazi* to divisive in *Uri* and outright disparaging in *The Kashmir Files*.

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CONTESTING HISTORIES AND MEMORY IN THE POSTCOLONIAL INDIA: A CRITICAL READING OF ANEES SALIM'S NOVEL *THE ODD BOOK OF BABY NAMES*

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Abstract

History is a contested site for the search for truth. In the post-partition era in India, the Muslim communities are often subjected to existential crisis owing to the projected xenophobic fervour of the privileged informed with political intentions. When the historical contributions of Muslims to nation-formation are negated, they rely only on their collective memory to find a sense of belonging in the newly formed nation. *The Odd Book of Baby Names* traces the story of a dying Muslim king in post-independent India, who is rumoured to have fathered every child in a city. The novel revolves around the search for a diary which carries the names of all the children the king had fathered. This paper attempts to understand the contesting relationship between history and memory under the light of memory studies.

Keywords: History, Memory, Muslims, Postcolonial, Religious-Minority.

History plays a vital role in identity production. A trope of national history is a site of contest between the majoritarian and minority voices to claim one's national identity. "Post-modern critiques of 'grand narratives' have been used as ammunition in the process to argue that the nation cannot have just one standardized narrative, that the nation is always a contingent result of many contesting narratives" (Chakrabarty 473). The postcolonial India faces the challenge of writing the nation. The violence occurred during partition of the country left the Muslim minorities in India in a vulnerable situation and fight to accommodate their experiences in national narrative. Their neglected voices create a futile ground for literary expression in framing the national narrative.

Anees Salim is a Kerala-born writer in English who contributes both to fiction and non-fiction. Most of his novels are translated into foreign languages and regional languages of India. He was awarded with Sahitya Academy Award under English category for his novel *The Blind Lady's Descendants* in 2018. Salim is known for capturing the Muslim experiences in postcolonial India. His novel *The Odd Book of Baby Names* was published in 2021 in English. The story consists of nine narrators with unique narrative style of their own which makes the novel experimental. All these narrators weave the story of a dying Muslim king and the palace he lives named Cotah Mahal in fragments. The novel takes place in 1980s and happens in Hyderabad. The plot revolves around the search of a diary which carries the names of all the children the king had fathered.

The nine narrators voice out in the following order, Moazzam, Azam, Humera, Hyder, Shabaz, Muneer, Zuhab, Sultan, and Owais in the novel. All the nine narrators are children of the dying king. However, except for Moazzam and Azam, none of the narrators know their biological father. Moazzam and Azam are the legitimate children who live in the palace with their father. All the other narrators are placed in different sections of the society and live in a despaired condition. Humera is the daughter of a palace dancer. Hyder is an attendant who is appointed to watch the dying king. He has speech difficulties and he stammers while narrating the story. Shabaz is a poet. Muneer is a tailor who runs a famous tailoring shop which makes *fez*. Shuhab is a man who ran from his village and settled down in town; a poor story teller. Sultan is dead before the actions took place in the novel but still, he narrates a fragment of the story of the King. Owais is just a telephone voice and does not make any physical appearance in the novel. The novel does not fit in the traditional narrative pattern of beginning, middle and end.

The following research questions were raised to be addressed in the paper: Why the novel is predominantly filled with Muslim characters? What is the role of the dying King in the novel? What is the reason for prevailing sense of loss and existential crisis in the characters of the novel? and What is the role of history and memory? The key concepts in memory studies are used as a research tool to address the above-mentioned questions. Though memory is often understood as an individual's experience, Halbwachs claims that "it is impossible for individuals to remember outside of their group contexts, rejecting an individual-psychological approach to memory. He identifies individual and collective memories as tools through which social groups establish centrality in individuals' lives". (Bosch 3). Birgit Neumann reflects on the process of writing fiction that "In their world-creation, literary works resort to culturally predominant ideas of memory, and, through their literary techniques, represent these ideas in an aesthetically condensed form" (335). In all the novels of Anees Salim, one finds that the primary characters belong to Islam. In the chosen novel *The Odd Book of Baby Names*, hardly a non-Muslim character appears. That does not conclude Anees Salim as a religious fanatic but a writer who recollects from his cultural memory to create his characters.

Human beings, unlike the instinctual animals, are vulnerable to environmental contingencies. They are the most helpless creatures during the time of birth and depends on its fellow species. When grownup, the human is subjected to multiple choices like the dress one wears, the food one eats, the leisure one passes from which one has to be chosen. The choice making depends on environmental factors as well as the community in which he lives. The repeated choice making by a community becomes a culture during the pre-history period. After the advent of civilization, human beings recorded their recurring choices in various forms like art, songs, monuments, etc., in order to convey their life to the upcoming

generation. The interpretation of memory of the past is history. History meant different things across time aligned with ideological context of the people. However, dissemination of history can be broadly classified into textual history and public history.

Textual history gives importance to written language and locates itself within mainstream academics. Often, it is a study and interpretation of written manuscripts, writings on walls and literary texts from the temporal past. They examine historical events in cause and effect relationship and analyse the dynamics of lived societies. Public history is an attitude towards history which invites interaction from the people outside academic setting. More than a form it is medium to disseminate history. Museums, religious sites, cultural events, public lectures, and historical sites extend the accessibility of history to ordinary people.

Muslim minorities' access to both textual history and public history is distorted due to the rising religious fundamentalism after the independence. On 6th December 1992, Babri Masjid, a mosque in Ayodhya, Uttar Pradesh was raided and demolished by members of Vishva Hindu Parishad, a Hindu fundamentalist group, and allied organizations. To make things worse when the BJP government backed by Hindu fundamentalists gained supreme power in the center in 2014, existence of Muslim minorities was under threat. Babri Masjid Demolition case which ran for thirty years, came to an end on 9th November, 2022 with the acquittal of all the 32 accused perpetrators of the crime. In a recent radicalization carried out by NCERT, most of the portion pertaining to Mughal rule as per the 2023 -2024 syllabus of class 7 –class 12 were removed. "From the Class 12th History book 'Themes of Indian History – Part 2,' chapters related to 'Kings and Chronicles; the Mughal Courts (C. 16th and 17th centuries)" ("NCERT modifies syllabus"). The history of Muslim minorities is at threat both at the textual level and public level.

Garde-Hansen implicit "memory, remembering and recording are the very key to existence, becoming and belonging" (Bosch 2). When one's history is under attack, any community will resort back to the collective memory of its community to have a sense of belonging. Such cluster of memories is rendered as a novel by Anees Salim. The dying king, though a fictional character, is mixture of qualities often identified with Muslim kings who ruled parts of India. The King in the novel is a close associate of Jawaharlal Nehru that reminds one of the last Nizam of Hyderabad who lost his kingdom to Indian army after independence. Secondly, the fictional King is nominated as one of the best administrators of the world in an international magazine which recall a special issue by TIME magazine which featured Akbar as one of the best administrators. Thirdly, the king is identified as a lover of art and "he once ran a circus company" (Salim 37) which reminds one of Shah Jahan. The fictional king is borne from the collective memory of Muslim minorities.

“Memory lane has always been a sunless alley” (80). The mixture of these qualities of the King can be understood as the fluid nature of memory.

The diary plays a vital role in the narrative of the novel. Though most of the people in and around Cotah Mahal knows through hearsay that the King carries a secret diary, it was Moazzam and Azam who were anxiously searching for the diary to find out who is the next successor. Also, it is Azam who figured out the diary and disappointed to find out that it carried only the names of the children the King had fathered and no will of succession. Through his reading, the readers understand all the nine narrators are children of the King but hardly were they aware of it. This is an allegory of how access to text or textuality is available only to the people of power and privilege. Azam when describing his father’s anxiety about history says, “Like every fallen ruler, my father harboured a grudge against historians. I would have been surprised if he did not. They never did him justice, but then historians seldom do justice to the fallen” (3). Traditional history talks only about the kings and the queens and not about the ordinary people. Anees Salim as a part of vulnerable Muslim community reflects though the Muslims kings are documented in history, the experiences of ordinary Muslims are not recorded.

The King is the symbol of the glorious past where Muslims were part of the mainstream national narrative which is receding in the memory of the people. The characters inaccessibility to the diary fails them to connect with their past which symbolizes the Muslims living in the post-independent India who could not connect their cultural experiences with national history. Since the Muslim experiences are underrepresented in grand narratives, Salim takes a chance to record the varied and diverse lives of Muslims. Memory questions the grand narratives of history and power but a community which is reduced to search their history only in their memory is in a vulnerable situation.

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PARROTOLOGY: MIMICKING THE COLONISER IN NGŪGĨ WA THIONG'O'S *MATIGARI*

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Abstract

Colonisation in third-world countries has left lasting impacts. Independence from colonial rule never resulted in freedom, rather it simply replaced the oppressors. The peasants were oppressed, muted, and puppeteered by the authorities. Ngũgĩwa Thiong'o, the renowned writer of political resistance, sheds light on the authoritarian governance that persisted both before and after independence. *Matigari*, Ngũgĩ's post-colonial political satire, exposes the tyranny of the national bourgeoisie, who conditions the natives as parrots to only follow commands and mimic the master. This paper explores Ngũgĩ's concept of parrotology in *Matigari*, suggesting that in post-colonial Kenya the behaviour of the native authorities mirrors the coloniser's behaviour.

Keywords: Oppressors, Authority, National Bourgeoisie, Mimic, Parrotology.

Colonialism, as Europeans claim, is not a mission to civilise the underdeveloped third-world countries but rather a covert scheme of permanent cultural imposition. The behaviour of the third-world countries continues to bear the impacts of colonialism even in the post-colonial era. The prefix "post" in post-colonialism does not mean the end of oppression; rather, it merely means the end of political dominance over the nation. The native politicians replaced the colonisers and suppressed and exploited the people. Moreover, even after the colonisers have left the nation, the impact they have left on the people and their customs, traditions, culture, and religious beliefs continued to exist. The natives too blindly followed the colonisers.

The British created an image that their language, custom, culture, and colour are superior and the other cultures and traditions are inferior. Frantz Fanon writes about this strategy in *The Wretched of the Earth*: "When the colonialist bourgeoisie realises it is impossible to maintain its domination over the colonies, it decides to wage a rearguard campaign in the fields of culture, values, and technology, etc" (9). Consequently, the colonised people started to esteem and acknowledge western culture and religion as their own. "The black man wants to be like the white man," says Frantz Fanon in his book *Black Skin, White Masks* "for the black man there is only one destiny. And it is white" (228). Homi K. Bhaba refers to this tendency of imitating the westerners as 'Mimicry.' According to him, 'Mimicry' is a complicated phenomenon in which colonial people imitate the attitudes, actions, language, and cultural customs of their colonisers. Mimicry annihilates the native's

cultural identity by making the colonised subject "almost the same" (Bhaba 86) but not equal to the coloniser.

Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o's political satire *Matigari* was first published in 1987 in his native Gikuyu and later translated into English by Wangũiwa Goro. Ngũgĩ exposes the national bourgeoisie's mimicry and critiques the failure of democracy in post-colonial Kenya. Government officials in post-colonial Kenya are viewed as colonial parrots, and Ngũgĩ has termed this concept of mimicking the coloniser as 'parrotology'. The term "parrotology", according to Ngũgĩ, refers to the blind acceptance and mechanical replication of the colonisers' propaganda by the indigenous leaders. F. Odun Balogun in his article "*Matigari: An African Novel as Oral Narrative Performance*" says, "Parrotology, another name for robotic sycophancy to dictatorial powers, is a prominent theme deployed as a satirical vehicle in *Matigari*" (148).

According to Dr. Peter S. Sakas, parrots are "beautifully coloured birds which are very intelligent...with a phenomenal ability to mimic" (5). When a parrot is kept as a pet, it loses its unique identity and becomes a human object. It is deprived of access to the outside world and is deceived into thinking that remaining indoors and imitating humans is both elite and safe. Even with its extraordinary capacity for copying humans, it can never fully transform into a human. Similar to how the colonisers treated their colonial subjects as parrots, the national bourgeoisie, consisting of colonised intellectuals, wants the peasant masses to act like their parrots. 'Colonised intellectuals' are the educated indigenous people who have been indoctrinated to support the colonial authority. In *Matigari*, Ngũgĩ exposes various ways in which the colonised intellectuals mimicked the coloniser. It includes the imitation of cultural and religious practices, and the behavioral traits like nepotism, elitism, and oppression.

Matigari vividly portrays the western culture's gradual assimilation of the indigenous culture. Indigenous culture and tradition perished with the arrival of colonists. European culture had a significant influence on the colonised bourgeoisie's way of life, from attire to architecture. Clothing in Kenya is more than just a means of protection; it holds great symbolic value and ecological significance. Men of the Kikuyu tribe dressed in animal hides to represent their hunting strength. The feathers of huge birds were used to decorate along with their traditional beads in their hats. They also stretched and pierced the earlobes, which the Kenyan Maasai tribe regarded as a symbol of knowledge. However, as a result of colonisation, all indigenous styles were considered inferior, and people began to imitate the colonisers' culture.

Matigari, an eponymous hero, is regarded as a saviour who represents traditional Kenya and speaks for the great majority of common people. He was traditionally dressed for

the meeting that the minister had arranged. "On his head was a wide brimmed hat...decorated with beads, and an ostrich feather. He wore a knee length coat, made of leopard skin" (111). Contrastingly, the minister of the ruling party "wore a dark suit with grey stripes. The party tie...was tucked well inside his waistcoat" (100). The minister also boasts with pride about his European-style home: "Look at me. I have a seven-storeyed house here. I have three swimming-pools...The house is decorated with marbles from Italy" (102).

Names play an integral role in the identity of every culture and are highly symbolic of the place they originate from. Every tribe, person, village, and hill in Kenya has intrinsic cultural significance. It was eventually dominated by the impact of the colonial language, English. The intellectual natives fancy English names and reject the meaningful native names. Gikuyu names reflect the personalities of the individuals. The protagonist of the novel has a Gikuyu name Matigari ma Njiruungi, which literally translates to "the patriots who survived the bullets"(20). The ruling party's spy is named as Gĩcerũ, which literally means 'informer'. Whereas, the names of the colonised intellectuals are John Boy and John Boy Junior. A new European name "Progressville" (118) was given to the Kenyan village, where the word 'ville' in English is borrowed from French, meaning a town or a city.

Christianity, which was spread by the colonisers in Kenya continued to thrive. According to the reports of the 2019 census, 85.5% of Kenya's total population is Christian. The religion had a deep impact on the colonised country that the post-colonial minister refers to the government as "Christian Democracy"(121). The rulers, like the colonisers, always used religion as a means to justify and portray themselves as God's servants to silence the natives. The Minister of Truth and Justice says: "You should count yourselves lucky that the government is led by a man who is merciful and a Christian" (104).

The people are deeply established in religious beliefs that when Matigari escaped from prison, they believed that "Jesus had returned" (93) in the form of Matigari and that "it was Gabriel the Angel of God who had opened the prison doors" (105). The same religion that instills hope in the majority of rural people is also used as a weapon by the colonised intellectuals to subjugate people. The colonised intellectuals resemble the Pharisees, who belong to a religious group that is mentioned in the Bible. The Pharisees, who adhered to the Law of Moses, convinced the people to follow the law devoid of reason. Similarly, for colonised intellectuals, the Bible is their law, and the priest serves as an interpreter, telling them "all about truth and justice"(92). When the common people, together with Matigari, raised their voices for justice at the meeting, disturbance occurred, and in an attempt to relieve the tension in the meeting, the minister calls "upon the preacher to read...the Ten Commandments" (120). The leaders used the law to mute the people, but they never fully adhered to it. Jesus exposed this hypocritical nature of the Pharisees in *The Holy Bible*:

“Pharisees, you hypocrites...are full of greed and self-indulgence...on the outside you appear to people as righteous but, on the inside, you are full of hypocrisy and wickedness” (Matthew 23:25-27).

The indigenous people were used by colonisers for their own selfish gains throughout the colonial era. The colonisers rewarded those who assisted them in their wrongdoing. Howard Williams, often known as 'Settler Williams,' has seized Matigari's land. He had a black servant named John Boy. John Boy allied with colonist Williams and attacked Matigari, seeking financial and personal benefit from his master. The coloniser was impressed by John Boy's devoted service and bestowed upon him many favours. The learned native group members who have been chosen by the colonisers to embody their ideologies are termed as colonised intellectuals. They were educated in the West and believe that Western values are the best. After independence, they were allowed to hold important positions like administrators and experts. The colonised masses “equate this nepotism with acts of sabotage and...declare: "What is the point of being independent then . . .?"” (Fanon 10). In post-colonial Kenya, the colonised intellectuals mimicked the coloniser's discriminatory nepotistic behaviour. John Boy, who was acknowledged by the coloniser, used his influence to benefit his son, John Boy Junior. As a result, he “went to England...studied at the London School of Economics” (48) and became one of the members of “the board of governors of the leather and plastic factory” (50).

Elitism is a belief that certain things are exclusive to a select group of people with unique qualities or skills. It implies that the elite minority is more powerful than the common majority. The colonised intellectuals who lead the nationalist political parties considered themselves elite since they imitated their colonisers. The ruler addressed in *Matigari* "His Excellency Ole Excellence" is a prime instance of the elitist imitation. People frequently use discrimination and marginalisation as a strategy to present an elitist image. Throughout the colonial era, the colonisers used blacks for their personal gain in war and labour. The indigenous people have given their blood and sweat to work on their own land for a foreigner who claims the land to be his. The coloniser never touched the soil but claims ownership of the production. In the post-colonial era, the native elite, as colonised parrots, imitated this elite behaviour of the coloniser and exploited their labour. The exploiters lived in luxury, while the workers languished in poverty. In *Matigari*, this labour exploitation by the elite is presented in an effective manner.

The colonised intellectuals who embrace the values of the colonisers believe that it is normal and even superior to live off the labour of others. It is clear from the minister's question, “What sort of world would this be if those who sow are the only ones allowed to eat?” (116). Further the minister exhibits his elitist behaviour by neglecting the presence of peasants in the land. He states, “A country's welfare and stability are dependent

on three kinds of people...The wealthy, the soldier, the leader - that's all we need" (116) excluding the nation's hardworking rural masses. The Member of Parliament made the most unpleasant statement, which serves as another evidence for the elitist behaviour: "the main cause of poverty is the fact that women breed like rats...No more children for the poor! Let us give that responsibility to the wealthy!" (119). The government's strategy to entirely eradicate the rural people and transform the country into an elite nation is revealed by prohibiting poor women from giving birth.

Oppression always followed discrimination. Although it was not as overt as it was during the colonial era, oppression continues to persist in the postcolonial era. In the colonial era, it was slavery; in the capitalist era, it was labour exploitation. *Matigari* features two different kinds of oppressors. The first oppressor is the white colonist Settler Williams, and the second is the colonised elites, who misuse their position of authority to oppress the underprivileged. During independence, the natives believed that they had escaped from the frying pan, but they ended up on fire. Ngũgĩ presents this persistence of oppression as, "a handful of people still profited from the suffering of the majority, the sorrow of the many being the joy of the few" (12). The peasants, together with Matigari, demanded an increase in wages for the labour that they rightfully deserve. However, the government does not deliver justice to the workers; instead, it condemns them for seeking truth and justice. The authoritarian stance of the leaders is demonstrated through the minister's response to the workers' protest. He states, "How can industries run if the workers are the ones who are to decide who is to be employed and what wages are to be paid?" (110). This "hooded truth and justice"(117) in the post-colonial land resembles the colonial oppression. The difference between the colonial rulers and the post-colonial leaders is only their skin colour. Their attitudes towards the common people are the same. The government controlled the media and the demands of the peasants were ignored. The media never addressed the peasants' demands or requirements, and they were left voiceless. "A group of madmen"(133) was how they were described when they were discussed on the radio during their protest. The newspaper 'Daily Parrot' only spoke for the governing class, demonstrating their status as parrots, and the radio network 'The Voice of Truth' hypocritically praised the ruling party.

Parrotology is an oppressive practice in which everyone else is silenced except those in power. The people sang a traditional Gikuyu song for Matigari, which was immediately banned by the authority. The oppressors initially silenced the people, and when anyone protested, they were extinguished and their memory was erased from the nation. The minister further said everyone should "like loyal parrots, agree that Matigari ma Njiruungi was just a bad dream" (118). He also proudly declares, "We have qualified professors here who can write new history for us" (118). This oppressive practice of rewriting history in favour of the oppressors mirrors the colonisers' portrayal of Africa as a primitive, backward,

and inferior 'Dark Continent' to the rest of the world. The colonised intellectuals imitated the coloniser in whatever they did. The native elites held an unreasonable belief in the coloniser's superiority and adopted all of their traditions. Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o in his novel *Matigari* effectively satirizes the mimicking attitude of Kenya even after independence. Though the colonial rule was not extant, the colonial attitude and the fascination for the colonial practices and religion were prevalent in Kenya.

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TONES OF SUBALTERNITY IN THE NOVEL *CIRCE* BY MADLINE MILLER**Anu Kiruthika (22PEN508)**

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Abstract

Power holds everything. The present study revolves around the revisiting of Madeline Miller's *Circe* through the lens of subalternity. Subaltern theory is an infamous theory in the field of postcolonial studies. This research paper will divert this concept because *Circe* is a retelling of Homer's *Odyssey*, which means it comes under Greek mythology. In Homer's *Odyssey*, Circe the female witch will share only a single chapter in the narrative of Odysseus. What about her views, wishes and recognition? The places where her voice has been constantly suppressed are all the things which will be revisited and viewed under subaltern theory.

Keywords: Subaltern, Power, Mythology, Witch, Suppression.

Literature is a field which blends both facts and fantasy. One step ahead of this mythology can be considered as a genre which fabulously instigates the imagination of the author as well as the reader. Especially Greek mythology holds a significant place in the world of fantasy, greatest works like Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey* accommodate a wide range of retellings with innovative and unique styles. Such a modern-day work is Madeline Miller's *Circe*, published in 2019 and acclaimed as a huge success. This work is considered to be a modern retelling of Homer's *Odyssey* more particularly about a witch named Circe who shares only one chapter that to in the narrative of Odysseus. Madeline Miller in one of her interviews said that she immerses herself in this tedious project of retelling to explore the voices which have been muted for a long period. So, the novel can be taken as a derivation of a chapter by a male author with a male narrative and retold in the perspective of a female protagonist with a female author.

The need for all these retellings is widely varied. Sometimes it is to voice out the voices which was unheard, many times it is because of the perspectives. It is always a huge question whether a male author and narrator can give a full justification to the female character, can if her views, opinions, ideas, emotions, intellect, and thoughts can be fully expressed as true to her nature. The creation of their own space for women as a reader and writers provided some sort of justification to them, then the question comes what about text that is already established? At this point, the theory of Subaltern has emerged. Antonio Gramsci coined this term in his article 'Notes on Italian History,' which appeared in *Prison Notebook*. Subaltern as a theory emerges from Marxism and Poststructuralism. The unavoidable emergence of globalisation in third-world countries' subaltern studies has its prominence. A servant or peasant was referred to as a subaltern in medieval England, lower-ranking troops or foot soldiers were called subalterns in 17th and 18th century England. The

main motto of subaltern studies can be considered as rewriting histories from the view of the underprivileged, those voices which were unheard and voluntarily disposed of space. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak an important towering figure in the field of subaltern studies, identifies herself as Practical Marxist – Feminist Deconstructionist. In the world of Spivak, she identifies women, black people, colonised people, and working-class people as subalterns. *Can the subaltern speak?* Considered as a most important text, focuses on how the subaltern woman is portrayed as detached, dumb, or unheard. Gayatri Spivak acts as a north star for the women in the subaltern studies.

A person with a class consciousness will always judge another person with the same consciousness, so there arises a problem of valuing human beings for their good traits. Such people will not value other human beings for their literal presence, but for the amount of power, wealth and value they possess in their lives. This hegemonic existential idea is going to be analysed through the kaleidoscopic view of the character Circe. Circe is a nymph Goddess who is prone to both privilege as well as vulnerability. The movement of the character Circe can be analysed in three phases. In the first phase, Circe is a very simple and plain nymph, without many magical and special powers and without any Godly standards she appears to be very plain in front of other powerful Gods. In the second phase with her art of witchery, she attained some minimum powers but that was not accepted in her patriarchal society and she was exiled for that, this phase also had another significance that people whom Circe had believed and loved left her once they attain or known about their powers. In the final phase, Circe can only be settled with a person who has no power at all and a person who is far away from all the societal judgements. So, throughout these phases, it is clearly understood that power plays a vital role. Power in the form of patriarchal domination, judgements and standards. So, this paper will traject the motion of Circe from her subservient phase to the final phase where only a person with no power and class consciousness will able to go with her and accept her for her reality.

Gods and Goddesses were exempted from all the materialistic things of the world, Madeline Miller break this myth with her mythological work. The very first moment Circe is born she is only recognised as a bride, even though she is a daughter of the great God Helios and high birth, her fate remains in how fair she can make a match. The great Sun God Helios is bestowed with the power of prophecy and his first daughter with the union of Perse got her prophecy as ‘She will make a fair match,’ he said. A very moment of subalternity begins when a girl child is born in the family, she will be viewed as only a bride, in a young phase she will be subordinate to her father and in the later stages to her husband.

“I had been raised to think that I had none of his strengths” this particular line by Circe provides a kind of realisation of her life. The rules which were repeated in the name of morality, lead to the confinement but the repetition of the same rules over some time again

and again provides some realisation too. Now Circe understood the politics of these rules. The patriarchal domination aims to prove that women are subordinate to men not because they are not capable but because they want them to be inferior. This kind of realisation will come in everyone's life but the point is that some rebel against it, but in most cases, they will accept it as their fate.

The term 'power' according to Michel Foucault, power is inherent in all social relations. The power has been established to show the normalisation of subordination. Rules and regulations were made according to which an individual or even a society will think it is a usual thing to obey. In *Madness and Civilization, Birth of the Clinic* he discussed how the rules were repeated and again and made to believe that as a norm of the society. I have related and analysed the above discussion in the light of the character Circe, and how throughout her life she was subordinated by her society by imposing their powers. Once she got out of that institution that is out of that already established power structure, she was named as an evil witch. This directly indicates that the society around her was not in a position to accept her power "Individual's power".

Revisiting mythology is standardly considered a good thing for women. Because mythology is considered a storehouse of stereotypes. Greek mythologies or Greek epics were mostly about war, war heroes and kings. Generally, in this type of epic, the stories of female characters will be in the narration of male heroes or male counterparts. In 'The Thieves of Language' by Alicia Ostrike, says that revisiting mythology is good for women because it corrects and challenges gender stereotypes in a most powerful form. Hilda Doolittle who is considered one of the first female revisionary authors, crafted 'Eurydice', which is a derivation of the myth of Orpheus, a legendary musician in Greek mythology from the standpoint of his wife Eurydice. The powerful side gulps the view of the other side. The narration, the thought, the ideas if everything was given by one to other means, what about the own view, own ideas, and own thoughts. This 'otherness' is a main term of discussion in subaltern studies. Otherness can be of various types it may be of race, casteism and gender. In the novel, the otherness is caused by patriarchal domination. Othering was established as a main idea in postcolonial studies by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, she spoke about othering in the concept of colonized and colonizers. But previously even without as a concept Simon de Beauvoir in her work *Second Sex* establishes the idea of how with certain regarded norms men consider women as 'other.' Edward Said, a master of Orientalism, talks about this othering as a technique or skill of colonizer. Occidents by establishing this otherness over orients maintained their differences and continued their subjugation. Again revisiting the previous discussion of power, it is a wise analogy to show that all these othering or otherness will emerge from powerful arena to subjugate the considerably less one. So, as it is mentioned before power holds everything.

Applying all these things in Madeline Miller's *Circe*, it is arguable that the vulnerable position, domination, realisation, and transformation of Circe everything come from the various rays of power. Beginning from her vulnerability or subjugation in her father's court, it is patriarchal domination with all its power subjugated Circe, an ordinary nymph, the less attractive daughter of Helios. If we start to analyse the origin of power in the context of the court of Helios, it is understood that certain norms were repeated and that norms were believed to be true, and the more pathetic situation is the other side started to accept that exposure of power and experiencing domination.

In the final stage of the novel Circe chooses to end her immortality, that is to leave her power. She decided that her remaining life would be with Telegonus. Telegonus, son of Odysseus and Penelope, who once rejected a powerful gift by Athena. So I like to conclude this paper by saying that if, Telegonus accepted that power he would be not in favour of Circe and once again the concept of power and subjugation would rule over. So only a person with no power consciousness will be able to accept and move with her. The tone of subalternity runs parallel with the theme of power.

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UNDERSTANDING DIFFERENT ASPECTS OF FRIENDSHIPS IN DAVID WILLIAMSON'S *MONEY AND FRIENDS*

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“A friend is, as it were, a second self.” – Marcus Tullius Cicero

Abstract

Friendship is a timeless subject and topic contemplated by many veteran philosophers and thinkers through the years. The existing definitions and interpretations may have helped us understand the universal relationship better, but as humans evolve, the term “Friendship” has found its explanation in various contexts. The present study attempts to understand different aspects of friendships portrayed in David Williamson’s *Money and Friends*. In the play, eight individuals from diverse economic backgrounds stay together as a healthy community until their financial status and class start influencing their fellowship. This paper will present an analysis of how the author has attempted to capture the clash between materialism and ideals in friendship in obedience to Aristotle, Plato, Cicero and Bacon’s moral philosophy on friendship.

Keywords: Interpersonal Relationship, Friendship, Family, Financial Status, Philosophical Reflection.

“Friend” Old English “*freond*” which means “one attached to another by feelings of personal regard and preference” and “ship” from Old English “*-sciepe*” and Anglian “*-scip*” meaning “state, condition of being,” come together to be spelt as “Friendship.” The abstruse term is one of the basic vocabularies and often overused in the present world. The relationship that has stayed central in social lives for centuries and been highly praised by great thinkers and writers. Through the years, the term has gained its own definitions, interpretations and found its own explanation in various contexts; it still continues to stay ambiguous.

In present days, the real meaning has become even more complicated with practices like clubbing and social media usage where anybody can be “friended.” The relationship begins with mere likings on a particular activity or subject and later gradually fades. Friendships a few decades ago were more close, intimate and defining it was much simpler. Irrespective of its differences, Friendship still stands the test of time for its compassion, love, understanding, quality, and benefits. Cicero after centuries still agreed to Plato and Aristotle’s philosophies on friendship; fastforwarding, people in the current techno era can still relate to Francis Bacon’s *Essay of Friendship* published in 1612.

Michael Richard Kauth, professor at Baylor College of Medicine, begins his essay “How we got here: The origin and function of friendship” with C.S. Lewis’ remark that friendship had no survival value, and later contradicts with his researched article. The professor’s idea on friendship is valid with a few research statements. In the article he states, “In a study of 323,000 people across 99 countries, friendship was linked to better health, greater happiness, and a higher level of well-being”. Adding to the professor’s point, numerous researches continue to prove that healthy friendships enhance one’s life. These contemporary theories and research articles are only an addition to the early philosophers’ ideas on this meaningful relationship. Thinkers in their process of bringing out a perfect definition for “Friendship” the philosophers have ended up giving numerous ideals on friendship. Adding to the best qualities, the philosophers also insist on the benefits an individual gains from a friend.

The paper is an attempt to understand different aspects and ideas of friendships proposed by philosophers in context to David Williamson’s *Money and Friends*. David William’s play portrays the story of eight individuals from diverse economical backgrounds who stay together as a healthy community until their financial status and class start influencing their fellowship. The dark comedy published in 1991 features the contemporary ideas of friendship and capitalism. For the study, the ideas of Plato, Aristotle and Bacon’s definitions on friendship are interpreted. The ancient Greek philosopher, Plato begins to discuss friendship more significantly in his works *Symposium*, *Lysis*, and *Phaedrus*. Plato in his Socratic dialogue, *Lysis* (around 380 BCE) dishes on the definition of friendship *Socratic dialogue* by Plato around 380 BCE. Plato’s approach towards friendship is rather political and egocentric as he mentions how friendships are made for one’s own benefits. Plato continues to contemplate on how the relationship is influenced by the individual’s social status and argues that genuine friendship can only be found amongst the middle-class people. This is because, according to him, neither the rich nor the poor tended to be particularly virtuous, and friendships require virtue.

Aristotle shares his ideals of friendship in *Nicomachean Ethics* (335 BCE), a well-known work from the philosopher in his last period of life on ethics. The most studied work on ethics introduces the readers to the three types of friendships according to the thinker. Firstly, it is the friendship of utility where the relationship is based on what friends can do for each other. Next is the friendship of pleasure that depends on the enjoyment of a shared activity or the pursuit of fleeting pleasures and emotions. The last one is the friendship of virtue where friends influence each other positively and push each other to be better. He describes perfect friendship to having another self and glorifies it as rare and demanding. He also insists on sharing goodwill and spending quality time to attain such friendships. Compared to Plato’s Aristotle’s view on friendship is more idealistic and chivalrous.

Francis Bacon, the father of essays, writes an entire essay contributing to friendship. He goes by Aristotle's ideas and later shares his perspectives on the actual fruits of friendship. Francis Bacon begins "Of Friendship" with an anthropological statement of Aristotle, "Whatsoever is delighted in solitude, is either a wild beast or a god." He continues by bringing out three aspects which he considers as the fruits of friendship. Bacon neither glorifies friendship like Aristotle nor demeans it like Plato but rather brings out a realistic view. All the three thinkers' perspectives are indeed different from our times, considering that the circumstances they lived in were of a completely different kind. The paper would present an analysis on how the author has made an attempt to capture the clash between materialism and ideals in friendship in obedience with Aristotle, Plato, and Bacon's moral philosophy on friendship. The play begins with Margaret introducing Peter as a polite man in his forties. As per Margaret's words, Peter is "the least neurotic of the friends" and a generous host. Peter and Margaret along with their friends, Conrad, Alex, Stephen, Penny, Vicki and Jacque come together at Crystal Intel for weekends for a staycation. Despite their difference in thought and status, the eight have a decent friendship happening. They stay together as a healthy community until their financial status and class start influencing their fellowship.

Peter does the most to his friends and acts as an ideal friend as Plato, Aristotle and Bacon describe. He acts as a listener, a companion, a witty counselor and "the un-official Father Confessor." Every character finds solace with Peter and wants him around to either redouble their joy or cut down grief in halves. The real question on their friendship when Peter faces a financial crisis and his friends instantly step back. Bacon in his essay talks about the material rewards we find in friendship. For centuries, royal people have been rewarding their witty friends with their riches. Fast forward, in the present days, we have money. Peter considers his friends as his only tribe and though the friends have a cordial relationship, they are hesitant when they are asked to give financial assistance. Conrad, Alex and Stephen put forth their priorities and validate themselves by mentioning their financial commitments. Margaret on the other hand being portrayed as the most hostile of the friends instantly is ready to lend a hand irrespective of her troubled financial background.

After reflecting and exchanging thoughts, Conrad, Alex, Vicki, and Jacque come to a discussion of contributing to help Peter. Each couple contributes one third of the required money along with Margaret. Stephen decides to stay on his stand and does not contribute which later breaks his family. The play concludes on a brighter note with Peter winning the lawsuit and returning the money he had borrowed earlier and things almost settle back to where they were, except Stephen and Penny.

The play makes the readers contemplate the actual fruit of friendship. Being titled *Money and Friends*, the play naturally portrays the grey areas of adult friendships. Though

the financial contribution by the three friends seems like a life saver, it is Peter who has been saving their lives as an ideal friend bearing the real fruit of friendship.

David Williams does not necessarily idealize friendship rather gives the most realistic and factual aspects of adult friendship. His candid portrayal does not rush in defining friendship and seems more relatable to the contemporary world. Francis Bacon says, "But no receipt openeth the heart, but a true friend; to whom you may impart griefs, joys, fears, hopes, suspicions, counsels, and whatsoever lieth upon the heart to oppress it, in a kind of civil shrift or confession." According to Plato's views, it is natural for any man to prioritize his needs and be mindful when helping one another. Bacon on the other hand also talks about the negative fruits of friendship when one is too invested and dependent on his or her friend. He mentions some of the iconic betrayals that happened in history because one trusted the other too much.

Though the idea of "Friendship" still continues to be abstract, it is obvious for any individual to look forward to a genuine friend. As Bacon states, an individual needs a friend in life and even when dead. In the meantime, it becomes necessary to be cautious and be aware of the friends we make. Reading the play while contemplating the thinkers' ideas just insists on being a good friend while one can and also equally be aware of one's own needs and priorities.

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DISEMBEDDEDNESS OF RELIGIOUS FAITH IN POSTMODERN TIMES: A CRITICAL READING OF ELIF SHAFAK'S *THREE DAUGHTERS OF EVE*

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Abstract

Religion, a fundamental aspect of human existence, has witnessed profound shifts since the world wars, reaching a pinnacle during the postmodern era when religious faith became increasingly disembedded from people's hearts and minds. Elif Shafak's *Three Daughters of Eve* delves into the nuanced experiences of three women – Peri, Shirin, and Mona—each navigating distinct states of religious faith. Through a meticulous analysis of the novel, this paper addresses pivotal questions: How does religious faith diminish in influence as individuals transit into adulthood? What factors contribute to the disembeddedness of religious faith, particularly in the postmodern era? What are the advantages and disadvantages of this disembeddedness? Are there viable methods to reintegrate religious faith into contemporary lives?

Keywords: Postmodernism, Identity, Formation, Cultural Taboos, Spirituality.

Elif Shafak is a Turkish – British novelist, essayist, public speaker, political scientist, and activist. She is best known for her novels. She has been described by the financial times as “Turkey's leading female novelist.” Her works have prominently featured the city of Istanbul and dealt with themes of eastern and western culture, role of women in society and human rights issues. Certain politically challenging topics addressed in her novels, such as child abuse and the Armenian genocide, have led to legal action from authorities in turkey that prompted her to emigrate to the United Kingdom.

Past modernism is a socio – cultural and literary theory and a shift in perspective that us manifested in variety of disciplines including the social sciences, art, architecture, literature, fashion, communication, and the technology. The shift has begun sometime back in the late 1950s, and it is still continuing. Postmodernism can be associated with the power shifts and dehumanization of the post second world war era. The term postmodernism implies a relation to modernism. Modernism has placed emphasis on impressionism and subjectivity. It was concerned with how the individual perceives, rather than what, and How impressions are formed on the individual mind, and how the subjective self responds to this impression modernism is also Characterized by a rejection of the boundaries between high and low culture. Postmodernism shares many of the features of modernism, it even goes a step further and deliberately mixes both low art with high art, the past with the future, one

genre with another. Modernism and postmodernism give voice to the insecurities, disorientation and fragmentation of the 20th century west world. The west world in the 20th century world began to experience the deep sense of insecurity because it progressively lost its colonies in the third world was torn apart by two major world wars and found its intellectual and social foundations shaking under the impact of new social theories and development such as postcolonial global migration, new technologies and the power shifts.

Modernism projects the fragmentation and decentredness of contemporary world as tragic. It laments the loss of the unity and centre of life and suggests that works of art can provide the unity, coherence, continuity and meaning that is lost in modern life. Post modernism on the other hand celebrates fragmentation. It considers fragmentation and decentredness as the only possible way existence, and does not try to escape from these conditions. Every character in the novel has their own unique concepts or perspectives about God, according to their perception.

Selma, mensur, peri, mona, shirin are the major characters in the novel. Selma's youngest son umut was caught by the police for indulging in a mistake. In order to save umut they begged to the police to leave umut, indeed the police chief denied and said you don't keep an eye on your children. They mingle with godless communist bastards; they get themselves into all sorts of shit. When it's too late, you wail and beg (Shafak 2016, pg.3). From these readers can understand that parents mark is permanent to reap the benefits of their children for the rest of their days.

Mensur who is a secular person expressing his beliefs about God 'I have no sympathy for religion or for the religious, but you know why I 'm still fond of god?' (shafak 2016, pg.38). "Because he is lonely, pericim, like me.. like you: he consider god as a lonely person". "All alone up there somewhere, no one to talk to maybe a few angels, but just how much fun can you have with the cherubim (Shafak 2016, Pg38)

According to Mensur opinion there is nobody to fulfill the desire of God or to give him a company, Mensur explains about different kinds of prayer that people who are constantly asking about the materialistic things such as success, wealth, and material belongings of the world to fulfill their own needs.

Selma who is stalwart person in God, and she question the beliefs and morals of westerners when she had been with Peri at oxford university. Selma questioned her husband: How would she be able leave Peri all alone amidst these people? Westerners might be advanced in science and education and technology, but what about their morals"? (Shafak 2016, Pg.99). The above line reflects about Selma's belief that materialistic things have nothing in conduct with moral aspects. The statements of Selma tell her opinion that western

society has progress in the fields of technology, education and in science which is to be considered as advancement of society, but according to her view, it has nothing to be dealt with eternally. In order to her opinion everything should be followed and viewed through the spectrum of religious teachings.

When Peri was young, there was a quarrel in their house on the day of Eid al Aaha. (Shafak 2016, pg 292) Selma was against the ritual of sacrificing animals. According to his belief that money spent on bar ribs would be given to those who in need so that they can fill their starving stomach. But Selma disagreed. (Shafak 2016, Pg.292) There was a reason why God had wanted things to be this way, she said 'If only you cared to read the Holy book, you'd understand.' She thinks through complete study of particulate text the individual can gain knowledge and clear understanding of how they want to be in their life.

In Earlier days of Selma's life, Selma had joined into a religious circle led by a preacher called Uzumbaz Efendi. "Under the preacher's influence Selma had changed visibly. She now not only declined to shake hands with the opposite sex, but also refused to sit on a bus seat that had last been occupied by a man – even if he vacated it for her" (Shafak 2016, Pg 19). This indicates that she was influenced by her religious convictions. She banished all kinds of confectionery and snacks even good stuffs which contain collagen. "Such was her fear of coming into contact with any pig extract that instead of shampoo she used raw olive oil soap: instead of toothpaste a miswak stick (Shafak 2016, Pg 19)

This indicates that Selma was upholding her religious beliefs and principles firmly to keep divine relief that results in deep peace within her. When Selma has come back from Mecca to her home after pilgrimage her daughter questioned her "Mum, did you bring us anything" (Shafak 2016, Pg74) she replied "brought you the whole of Mecca! Dates, honey, miswak, prayer mats, musk, rosaries, scarves and zamzam in tiny bottles. (Shafak 2016, Pg.74) This reflects her love towards religious things and it's significant about the religion and its customs.

Peri, Mona, Shirin are called as the Confused, Believer, Sinner. In the novel Three daughters of Eve, Elif Shafak has distinctly portrayed about culture, identity, and its background. Peri the main protagonist of the novel has the habit of writing diary known as God Diary. Peri opened her diary and wrote "I think God comes in many pieces and colors. I can build a peaceful God, all loving or I can build an angry God, Punishing. Or Maybe I'll build nothing. God is Lego set (Shafak 2016, Pg.). The statement shows that, Peri believes that she can be able to mould and build God according to her personal thoughts. She believes and doubts God because her father had said people are giving petitions of prayer like protect me, love me and support me. It is all about themselves, it reflects selfishness of people. So, this made her to struggle in midst of doubt and belief in God. Peri was witnessing to the

dispute of her parents; how loved ones would treat each other by arguing day and night. Peri asked to her father why didn't God help umut? If he exists. Several thoughts make her to ponder the existence of God. "There was no fight more hurtful than a family fight, and no family more hurtful than one over God" peri tells family was dividing with themselves in name of God or religious. (Shafak 2016, Pg21)

Peri's close relationship with her father plays a magnificent role in her life. Mensur advice her daughter "Trust me, you don't give your heart to anyone who doesn't care about science. knowledge." (Shafak 2016, Pg.37) Constant conflict between him and Selma made him to utter to her daughter. Mensur made peri to move to abroad to seek education at oxford and explore about the technology and science. "Peri always feels a gap between her and the ways of religion printed on her pink ID Card at Oxford". (shafak 2016, Pg.85) This talks about her identity, religion, and her beliefs. Meanwhile peri and mona became friends at oxford. They started to share about their family beliefs culture and identity. That same night peri wrote in her God diary, "Some people want to change the world: others, their partners, or friends. As for me, I would love to change God. Now that would be something. Wouldn't everyone in the world benefit from that? (Shafak2016, Pg.128) This notion came to her mind while mona said she and her sister was given different options by their parents. Peri was undergoing gender discrimination in the name of religion while she entered a Mosque. "A middle-aged man followed them into the mesque girls should pray at home", This is alla's house, it's for everyone: said peri.

Shafak depicts Shrin as stubborn, natural – born warrior, British – Iranian girl (shafak 2016, pg .102) Shirin was depicted as atheist girl in the novel. "The British – Iranian girl seemed to harbor a disdain for women who covered their heads – a disdain she felt no need to hide." (Shafak2016, Pg.103). The lines imply the dislike of Iranian girl Shirin expressed her dislike of wearing and covering their heads. Peri consider shirin was a sandwich baby born between sin and shame. Shirin consider herself to be "Half Muslim, half modern" termed as muslimus modernus (Shafak2016, Pg.114)! Shirin and peri became friends. Shirin explained about seven types of people, they are the social – environmental – justice types, second, there were the Euro trash. Third, the public-school crowd, international students, the nerds. Shirin had explained to peri professor Azur had changed her. She considers herself to be ball of anger. Because of his lecture she became calmer person today. Mona address shirin as a self- hating muslim! (Shafak2016, Pg.312). Shirin becamefury and utter the statement such as "I've never understood people who're proud to be American, Arab or Russian... Christian, Jewish or Muslim? Why should I feel satisfaction with something I had no role in choosing?" (Shafak2016, Pg.312) Which consider herself as atheist who lost her faith in religion.

Her religious faith has been fragmented. And" really worked hard for my scepticism, I'm proud of my journey" (Shafak2016, pg312). This explains that shirin has analyzed and questioned the social norms. She deliberately participated in forming her own way rather than accepting what the world has offered to her. She disjoins herself from gatherings, substantiate her desire for independent life. These lines propound that shirin was not influenced by society but rather her circumstances through conflicts develop her own beliefs.

Mona was Egyptian – American. Mona was involved in a series of volunteer activities by studying different cultures. "She wrote cynics, hoping that one day some one would rap them" (Shafak 2016, pg128). Mona was proud of her religious identity wearing headscarf wrapped neatly in a turban style. Mona prefers to cover her head. She tells "My hijab is a personal decision, a testimony to my faith. It gives me peace and confidence. Even though I have been bullied for it". (shafak2016, pg 136) It tells the challenges that has been faced by Mona due to the religious attire. "I've been bullied called names, pushed of a bus, treated as if I were dumb it's just a small piece of cloth" (Shafak 2016, pg.310). she conveys the mistreatment of wearing headscarf, according to other it may be look like just cloth but to me it represents my identity, dignity, faith and obligation, allegiance to her beliefs.

Globalization played a vital role at the university of oxford. People from different parts of the world interact and integrate, thereby ceating a space where the national boundaries blur. Here in the novel Peri, Mona, Shirin has come from different places and different culture, Merged into one. Though their convictions, beliefs faith experiences are different they learned from professor Azur in the seminar on the topic about God and his existence. In a Snippet Three daughters of Eve is magnificent work to read. The Author has clearly described about the individual changes and challenges and conflicts between tradition and modernity.

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FROM DREAMS TO DISILLUSIONMENT: DECONSTRUCTING THE AMERICAN DREAM IN COLSON WHITEHEAD'S *HARLEM SHUFFLE*

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(Author's note: This study is supported by the fund received from the University Grants Commission for Junior Research Fellowship).

Abstract

The urge to improve oneself financially and enhance one's status in society is universal. Everyone dreams of achieving one's aspirations. For most of them, the 'American dream' fuels their desires. The 'American dream' is the idea, which holds that anyone with enough hard work can achieve financial success and material wealth, or whatever the dream might be irrespective of one's class, race, sex, and region or simply put, the background from which they come from. Raymond Carney, the protagonist of *Harlem Shuffle*, manifests his tremendous belief in the American dream ideology. This belief transforms him into a capitalist who is predominantly driven by greed while compromising moral values. This research paper endeavors to limelight the shortcomings of this seemingly innocent ideology by analyzing Colson Whitehead's *Harlem Shuffle*. This article further showcases how the belief blinds people to systematic barriers like inequalities, racism, etc. thereby, eliminating the need to eradicate such issues that put people at a disadvantage.

Keywords: American Dream, Systematic Barriers, Inequality, Ideology, Racism.

The concept of 'American Dream' has a universal appeal. Everyone around the globe seems to understand it because it is grounded on a basic human desire, that is, to improve oneself financially and socially. As Jim Cullen points out, "The American Dream is very much a national, even global, phenomenon" (Cullen 160). An examination of this concept reveals that the origin of American Dream was not purely secular. It all started with the puritans' revolt against the corruption of the Anglican churches and their pursuit of freedom to practise religion. They moved to America in the 17th century. Since they always heard preachings about damnation, hell fire and predestination doctrine, their anxiety about afterlife skyrocketed. To solve this, came the belief called Protestant work ethic. As Max Weber described in *The Protestant Ethic and the "Spirit" of Capitalism*, "Work gained an unprecedented dignity by being understood as a vocation or calling (Beruf) ordained by God" (19). This idea suggested that workers and their employers were not pursuing activities of mere economic interest. They were fulfilling roles that were part of a divine plan. Therefore, according to this belief, work ethic or striving hard to do good works for the betterment of the community will ensure a person's place in heaven. With the passage of

time featuring a multitude of historical events like the civil war, the declaration of independence and the success of people like Abraham Lincoln, Benjamin Franklin who had modest beginnings, the idea evolved more and more secular and it became a tool for the capitalist ruling class. They spread “the idea that individuals have control over the course of their lives” (Cullen 10). It gives a delusional “moral underpinning.... that everyone is eligible”, which in reality, is not the case (Cullen 108). The following reasons prove it: the stripping of African Americans from their human level, displacement and killing multitudes of indigenous population, disenfranchisement of woman, legalizing inequality through Jim Crow laws, abusing the immigrants, neglect of widening gap between the rich and poor and the growing number of homeless and hungry. Even after all these atrocities, the ruling class has managed to convince the people that the playing field is fair. If anyone struggles with poverty, it is not the state’s fault but the person’s own laziness and lack of hard work and determination. In the light of all these, this article examines Colson Whitehead’s novel *Harlem Shuffle*.

Colson Whitehead is a contemporary African American writer residing in New York. His novels deal with a variety of racial issues. He is a recipient of not one but two Pulitzer Prizes for fiction. *Harlem Shuffle* was published in 2021. It follows the life of Raymond Carney, an African American furniture salesman. Ray’s life is heavily influenced by his father, Mike Carney’s criminal life. The novel provides a glimpse into the backdrop of Ray’s childhood, which was filled with violence. The narrator states, “Like most Harlemites, Carney grew up with broken glass in the playground, the pageant of sidewalk cruelty whenever he stepped outside, and the snap of gunfire” (Whitehead 96). Usage of words like broken glass and gunfire clearly illustrate the role of violence, neglect by the government in his socioeconomic condition. Growing up among these conditions severely limits a person’s worldview and development opportunities. However, the American Dream has taught its devote followers to view these undesirable conditions as “the indispensable bedrock of distinction” (Cullen 68). The ideology is successfully interpellated in Ray’s mind. It becomes clear through the lines “The dark hours were the canvas for coursework and haphazard self-improvement... He put in nine good months advancing his cause: all A’s” (Whitehead 130). Ray is fully dedicated to self-study that takes place outside the formal education, which means it is purely driven by his aspirations for a better future. He learns the advertisements and business plans of his competitors and other successful ventures by burning the midnight oil. These educational pursuits display his belief in the American Dream which says that “anything is possible if you want it badly enough” (Cullen 5). Despite the obvious inequalities in the system, his belief in the American Dream like those around him stops him realizing simple truths. That is how powerful ideologies can be.

Althusser defines such ideologies as “the system of the ideas and representations which dominate the mind of a man or a social group” (Althusser 107). Ideologies cannot exist on its own, it will fade. To keep it alive, various apparatus operate in the society. Althusser has listed many like “the educational apparatus, the religious apparatus.... the ‘cultural’ apparatus, etc.”, this article focuses on the family apparatus and how it perpetuates unknowingly a ruling class ideology that is harmful to itself (Althusser 101). Franz Fanon has talked about the influence a society has on a human in his work *Black Skins, White Masks*, he declared, “But society, unlike biochemical processes, cannot escape human influences. Man is what brings society into being” (Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks* xv). In this line, Fanon explains the relationship between man and his society. First, humans shape the society. Later the society shapes them. This reciprocal phenomenon is evident in Raymond Carney’s life as he is pressurized by his in-laws. Ray’s wife Elizabeth is from a well-to-do family. Her father, Leeland, is a wealthy accountant who brags, “about his collection of loopholes and dodges, the fat-envelope bribes passed over in the drawing room of the Dumas Club” (Whitehead 64). Illegal activities like tax dodging by utilizing the loopholes in the system is considered as an expertise and skill that is praiseworthy. Later, the story reveals that every member in the Dumas club, which is open only for wealthy African Americans, is engaged with immoral activities in some way. These men represent what Fanon would call, “a bourgeois bourgeoisie that is dismally, inanely, and cynically bourgeois” (Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* 249). Because these middlemen neither do they produce nor do they care about the ill effects that are causing to their own society by their wrongful acts. Alma, Elizabeth’s mother also puts pressure on Ray by always complaining his small apartment and her daughter marrying a man of low economic stature. To his in-laws, Ray is a nothing more than a “rat that crept out of the gutter and squeezed under the door” (Whitehead 93). All of these things combined with his American Dream of moving into Striver’s row, an area in Harlem, which he much admires, trigger Ray to indulge in all sort of criminal undertakings to make money. Striver’s row, as the name suggests, accommodates wealthy Americans who supposedly attained success only by striving hard for it. Ray hopes to be like one of them. He fences stolen furniture, stolen jewels and always bribes the bureaucrats to keep his profile low. His total disregard for the community becomes apparent when he helps the robbers of Hotel Theresa, the first luxurious hotel that allowed African Americans into it. It is known in the novel as “the headquarters of the negro world” (Whitehead 34). Ray is able to sense every shady business that goes behind every shop door just by looking at it. This hints at the copious amount of crime rate in the city and the indifference of officials in repairing the system. Due to this prevalence, Ray’s conscience and moral concerns were drastically affected. On which, the narrator declares, “Carney trafficked quite frequently in stolen goods, but that is not how he saw it. There was a natural flow of goods in and out and through people’s lives, from here to there, a churn of property, and Ray Carney facilitated that churn. As a middleman. Legit”

(Whitehead 31). This line explains that he did not view his wrongdoings as anything immoral. To him, it was natural just like the American dream. Moreover, Ray is motivated by wrong role models like Leland and Wilfred, who make profits by hurting the society in which they dwell. Rather than being motivated by the actual founding fathers of the American dream like Abraham Lincoln, Benjamin Franklin, and Andrew Carnegie whose eminence “rested on a sense of character” (Cullen 177). This clearly illustrates the evolution of the nature of the American Dream. Previously, it was combined with hard work and character. The 17th century puritans who were disappointed by the corruption in the Anglican churches wanted to bring reforms. Such “faith in reform became the central legacy of American Protestantism and the cornerstone of what became the American Dream” (Cullen 15). But in today’s world, it has been reduced to superficial materialistic values. Its impact can be observed in the life of Raymond Carney, who transforms slowly into a capitalist engulfed by greed for money and power. By the end of the novel, he has saved enough resources to make his American dream come true, which is buying a house in the striver’s row as he wished. That, nevertheless, does not mean that his actions are without repercussions.

Ray does not get a free pass. He is found ridden with guilt and he often struggles with moral conflicts. He has turned into what Marxists would call a rugged individualist. Because such people keep “the focus on ‘me’ instead of on ‘us,’” (Tyson 60). Their behavior is of a typical bourgeoisie who are selfish to the core. Their existence only sickness the well-being of society as a whole. Ray realizes that he has become a parasite that feeds off its own host. On the night, Ray avenges Wilfred Duke for cheating 500 dollars, he feels a deep remorse. It is expressed in the lines, “It didn’t feel like revenge, it felt like debasement; he had descended rungs into the sewer and become another shabby player in the city’s sordid theater” (Whitehead 190). The word “debasement” indicates Ray’s realization of the moral deterioration that has accompanied his success. He has become the very thing he hated, that is, turning into a criminal like his father. He understands the hollow nature of his achievements. This displays the difference between the ideal version of the American dream that is accomplished through hard work and the real version with ethical compromises. Ray lives a dual life. One, privately as a criminal and the other, publicly as a morally upstanding businessman. He tried his best to keep the former latent. The sign at the front of his furniture store, which read, “Carney Furniture”, represented the latter. He laid much importance on that sign because people have always associated him with the criminal life of his father. In order to cope with the guilt of his wrongdoings, he resorts to self-delusion. As seen earlier, he views himself as a legitimate middleman in the natural flow of goods. “Carney was only slightly bent when it came to being crooked, in practice and ambition”, comments the narrator (Whitehead 35).

The more sinister side of the ‘American Dream’ ideology is its denial of systemic barriers. People from different background have a different history of subjugation. They are in no way given equal opportunities to compete in a free market. Nonetheless, this ideology disseminates the view that everyone is given a fair playing field and if anyone fails, it is because of his or her own deficiencies. Carney, who lives in Harlem, realizes this only at the latter part of the story. In the city, there is a powerful white family called Van Wyck family. When Carney’s cousin, Freddie, gets in trouble with them, Carney finds himself in a situation, which he must navigate carefully. He is shocked to find that a wealthy white family that owns multiple skyscrapers and a good reputation has henchmen and is involved in extortion and other unlawful acts like the petty criminals Carney encounters in his neighbourhood. The only difference is that these powerful families “who were as bent as gangsters but did not have to hide. They did it out in the open, notarized their misdeeds or engraved them into bronze plates for building facades” (Whitehead 265). This is the moment of change in Carney’s perception of the American Dream, meaning that from this point on, he suspends his baseless optimism. The incongruity between the Van Wyck family's public persona and their private criminality exposes the hypocrisy at the heart of the dream, which is a lie that material success and morality are both synonymous and that wealth is an indicator of virtue. It is not. Carney's journey through the novel informs the readers the realities of systemic inequality and the facade of meritocracy. Carney begins to see through layers of corruption upon which this professed equal society is built and he realizes that this is a world that favors those fortunate enough to be born in the side of power and money, while leaving others defenseless on an uneven playing field and a system that is rigged against them.

The systemic barriers Ray encounters are not just economic. Ray as an African American has to also deal with racism on a daily basis. He is denied various business contracts due to the prejudices based on his skin color. Therefore, for the people who face such systemic barriers like wealth gap, unequal access to education, racism, etc., the only solution is to think communally like the 17th century puritans from whom the American dream originated, not selfishly like the later generations. Colson expresses this feeling through the character Ray Carney in the following lines, “It was a map of the black nation inside the white world, part of the bigger thing but its own self, independent, with its own constitution. If we didn’t help one another, we’d be lost out there” (Whitehead 264). This quote speaks volumes about the need for communal efforts within the African American community. It indirectly notes the flaws in individualism. Carney’s battles are symbolic of the broader struggle experienced by many men and women living in marginalized communities, who must overcome a heap of roadblocks on their pursuit of material success. These challenges are dismissed without second thoughts by individuals from privileged classes, who because of their steadfast belief in the American dream ideology, use it “to

ignore, or even consciously obscure, real divisions in American society” (Cullen 189). Furthermore, as stated by Louis Althusser, like every other Ideological State Apparatus, the American Dream too contributes, “to the same result: the reproduction of the relations of production, i.e., of capitalist relations of exploitation” by turning a blind eye on the need to recognize and address the inequalities in the system (Althusser 104).

So, is the American Dream nothing more than a false bill that promises material success for the marginalized? For the most part, yes. Because it overlooks systemic barriers and racial inequalities that can impede progress. Are there any benefits of believing in it? Yes, the validity of the American dream cannot be ignored altogether because it does stress on the importance of hard work and determination. These traits are essential for anyone in pursuit of their dreams. A good way to approach the American dream, as Jim Cullen proposes, would be to use it “as a rigorous standard that we can use to ask a series of searching questions. What does it really mean, for example, to leave no child behind? How have we defined equality in our everyday lives, and are widely accepted terms like ‘equality of opportunity’ more than empty abstractions?” (Cullen 189). Interacting with these questions encourages not just an analysis but actions that can help create a more inclusive and fairer world. Reimagining the American Dream in this way can serve as remedy for counteracting and correcting the systemic barriers. It provides a basis for redesigning of social structures to make the dream not just an exclusive privilege available only for certain members, but one achievable by anyone irrespective of one’s race, class, sex, or background.

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WAVE OF FEMINISM IN THE NOVEL *THE DARK HOLDS NO TERROR* BY SHASHI DESHPANDE

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Abstract

Indian English Literature is produced in India by writers who write in English-language. There are a lot of English-language novelists in India. One of the most well-known novelists in India is Shashi Deshpande. Her novel *The Dark Holds No Terror* is one of the well-known works. This novel describes the struggle and survival of women in India. It also addresses the dehumanization of women in our patriarchal society. Sarita is the female protagonist in this novel. Both before and after her marriage, she experiences trauma and hardships in her life. The author depicts not just women as victims in this culture, but also men. This paper mainly focuses on the expectations that the Indian society has for men and women. This novel demonstrates Sarita and her husband's struggles to fit in with today's culture, with feminism playing a significant part.

Keywords: Feminism, Modern Society, Gender Inequality, Trauma, Dehumanization.

Shashi Deshpande is a most prominent Indian novelist. She won the Sahitya Akademi Award and the Padma Shri Award. In 1980, she wrote her first novel, *The Dark Holds No Terrors*. It was also translated into German and Russian. In one of her interviews, she stated that this novel is her favorite. This novel is set in India during the 1970s, a period when the second wave of feminism was vibrant. The second wave of feminism began to emerge in the 1960s and continued until the 1980s. It encompasses a broad array of topics, such as gender discrimination, reproductive rights, workplace inequality, domestic abuse, sexual harassment, and gender roles and expectations. Gender discrimination and societal expectations played a significant role in this novel. However, the main theme of this novel is the second wave of feminism. The protagonist's journey toward freedom and self-discovery mirrors the wave of feminism in this novel.

This paper focuses on how our patriarchal society dehumanizes women and chronicles the struggle and survival of women in India through Deshpande's writing. Sarita, also known as Saru, was the protagonist of the novel. She was an educated, professional doctor and a financially independent woman. During her childhood, she was oppressed by her mother, and later, by her abusive husband, whom she married against her mother's wishes. The novel begins with Sarita returning to her father's home after her mother's death, which triggers her childhood nightmares. She returns home in search of solace after her marriage becomes unbearably strained.

The gender crisis started when she was a young girl. She was ignored by her parents simply because she was a girl. The author used her mother's admiration for her son, Dhruva, at the expense of her daughter as a unifying factor to incorporate her feminist ideas. In many Indian households, it is common to prefer boys over girls because of their role in carrying on the family lineage. Saru grew up with low self-esteem regarding her appearance. She was constantly reminded by her mother to avoid going out in the sun in order to prevent getting darker, as it might make it difficult for them to find a suitable marriage match for her. "Don't go out in the sun, you'll get even darker." "who cares" "we have to care if you don't. we have to get you married." She even called herself ugly in front of the mirror in her mother's bedroom. "I am ugly. I stood in front of the mirror and mouthed the words to myself."

When Saru was growing up, her mother made her feel insecure and ashamed about her body, not only through words, but also in the way she looked at her daughter's body. "And there was something unpleasant in the way she looked at me, so that I longed to run away, to hide whatever part of me she was staring at." "And it became something shameful, this growing up, so that you had to be ashamed of yourself, even in the presence of your own father." When she experienced her first menstrual cycle, she described it as "torture." In India, it was customary for girls to be prohibited from entering the kitchen or prayer room during their periods. She was not supposed to touch anything. She was provided with a separate sleeping mat, plate, and glass, and served from from a distance. The author discussed the challenges women have faced due to gender crises since childhood. And how society imposes rules on girls at every stage of their lives. At all these stages, Saru rebels against the rules.

Her mother despised Saru even more after the death of her younger brother, Dhruva. She blamed Saru for not helping her brother when he was drowning. Her mother frequently mistreated Saru and even wished for her death. "Why didn't you die? Why are you alive and he dead?" She even thought to herself that her mother was praying to God to take Saru as well. "And the small Saru had asked herself agitatedly...is she praying to god that I should die too?"

Saru's parents never cared about her schooling or college. Saru faced opposition when she chose to study medicine in Bombay. Her mother wanted her to pursue a degree and then get married because she believed that investing more money in her education would leave insufficient funds for her marriage. And for the first time, Saru's father took her side and encouraged her to pursue her passion.

The society expects women to compromise their dreams and passions in order to adhere to tradition. Indian people use tradition to oppress women, even today. There are societal expectations that women should marry early and stop working after marriage. They

are often expected to sacrifice their careers and dreams to care for their families, and they are not supposed to earn more than men. All these rules are imposed on women in the name of tradition. Saru suffered at the hands of her mother throughout her childhood. The hatred toward her mother made her leave the house and pursue her career as a doctor. After college, she was in love with Manohar, also known as Manu. He was a college teacher. Saru's mother was against their marriage because he belonged to a lower class. She also looked down on him because his father runs a bicycle shop. But Saru loved him, married him against her parents' wishes, and left the house.

Saru thought her life would change after getting married because she and Manu loved each other. The only thing Saru wanted from Manu was love. But after getting married, Manu became jealous of Saru's success as a renowned doctor. She became a renowned doctor and earned the title of a prodigious woman. He felt inferior because of Saru's reputation. But he did not directly express his anger. He began to sexually exploit her. At night, he sexually assaults her, but in the morning, he was kind and concerned. The author opens the novel by describing Saru's mentality when he was exploiting her. "Now there was no waking. The dream, the nightmare, whatever it was, continued. Changing now, like some protean monster, into the horror of rape. This was not to be death by strangulation; it was a monstrous invasion of my body." "Panic and sensation came back simultaneously. I turned my head slightly, fearfully, and saw him beside me, snoring softly. No more a stranger, but my husband." Manu did not seek revenge directly. Instead, he used sex as a weapon to strike and weaken her.

Most men do not want women to grow as they think it might damage their reputation. According to Indian society, men are expected to be the breadwinners of the family. One incident in this novel illustrates the dependency on men, as they managed and controlled everything. Smita, one of Saru's friends, reveals how her husband dominates her. Her husband changed her name from Smita to Geetanjali. Women often have to make adjustments to make the relationship work, sometimes at the expense of their own identity. She borrowed money from Saru to buy a gift for her sister-in-law because he had not given her enough money for gifts. The author asserts that women are expected to be submissive. They have to compromise and adjust in order to survive in this society without facing judgment.

The author mentioned "The Room of One's Own" by Virginia Woolf to emphasize that every woman needs personal space and economic independence to enhance and develop. When Saru read this book, she realized that neither her mother nor she had ever had a room of their own. Saru was asked to give a speech at a college about "Medicine as a profession for women," but ended up discussing how women should be submissive and dependent on men in order to survive in society. Furthermore, women are often overlooked

in this male-dominated society. Women are expected to play the supporting role. Manu and Saru can be seen discussing female characters in Shakespeare's plays with their friend, Vidya. She stated that Shakespeare's works reflected a "typical man's view of life; the man at the centre, the woman always on the periphery." "he made the women always subordinate to the men." Someone responded, "But that's how it was, wasn't?" According to this perspective, women are supposed to stand behind men and never take the lead.

At the end of the novel, she finally opened up about her problem with Manu to her father. When she learned that Manu was coming to see her, she tried to leave the place. But her father asked her to stay and confront her problem. She stood up for herself against societal expectations and marital abuse. In Indian households, growing up as a girl is not easy. They are not allowed to choose what they want; they are compelled to depend on others. Furthermore, educated and professional women were suppressed in the name of tradition and culture. The society expected women to sacrifice their dreams and goals in order to support their families. The Indian tradition restricts women's autonomy.

In conclusion, "Dark Holds No Terrors" encapsulates the central theme of the second wave of feminism by depicting a woman's struggle to navigate and resist the patriarchal environment in which she finds herself. This novel contributes to broadening our understanding of the second wave feminist movement and its role in redefining gender discrimination and societal norms.

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EXPLORING POSTHUMANISM IN KAZUO ISHIGURO'S *KLARA AND THE SUN***G. D. Hari Bhuva Shree (22PEN526)**

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Abstract

This research paper explores the pervasive impact of artificial intelligence as depicted in the novel *Klara and the Sun*. Ishiguro focuses on the intriguing idea of these artificial beings being fed subjective experiences. It delves into the narrative portrayal of artificial intelligence, examining the ethical and existential questions surrounding the integration of advanced technologies into human lives. The analysis considers the implications of creating sentient beings, the blurred boundaries between machine and consciousness, and the impact of societal dynamics. Through the critical lens of Posthumanism, the article seeks to make an exploration of Transhumanist concepts within the context of Ishiguro's thought-provoking narrative.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence, Sentient Beings, Subjective Experience, Enhancement, Posthumanism.

Posthumanism is a school of thought that questions traditional humanistic views and emphasizes the interconnection of humans, nonhumans, and technology. It challenges the common view of humanism and tries to decentre the person from the centre of the universe. It investigates the possibilities of improving human nature and growing artificial intelligence while rejecting essentialist conceptions of human nature. Posthumanism also investigates the connections between humans and other living things, such as animals and plants, as well as the interactions between humans and nonliving matter. It has been seen in science fiction, popular culture, literature, and other academic fields.

The Japanese descent British novelist, Kazuo Ishiguro in his eighth novel *Klara and the Sun*, made a human-like artificial friend as the narrator. Artificial Friend is a kind of AI that can have the same subjective experiences as humans. The boundaries between humans and machines are blurred, that raises ethical questions. The setting of the novel is in the near future where human-like robots (AF) are purchased for teenagers by their wealthy parents for unspecified reasons. The AFs' role is to give company to the teenagers. The eponymous character as well as narrator, Klara (AF), is purchased to accompany the teenager Josie, who undergoes the process of lifting. (artificial enhancement of human intelligence)

The AF Klara is solar powered, and it gets energy and nourishment from the sun. She is described as a French woman in appearance and known for her power of observation. "Klara has so many unique qualities, we could be here all morning. But if I had to be her appetite for observing and learning. Her ability to absorb and blend everything she sees

around her is quite amazing. As a result, she now has the most sophisticated understanding of any AF in this store, B3s not expected” (Ishiguro 49).

Ishiguro depicts Klara's learning process through her observations and continuous cognitive development. Generally, the human-like robots are fed by the creators while the novel depicts the AFs acquiring of knowledge through observation. This questions human consciousness and the potential of AI to acquire knowledge and self-awareness.

From the beginning of the novel, the letter's' is capitalized in the word 'Sun' because the AF narrator gives more importance to the sun. The role of the sun in Klara's life is like that of God, but she does not belong to any particular religion. She has the belief that the sun has the power to cure human lives, just as the sun gives nourishment and energy to AFs. Before Josie purchases Klara, she used to observe human lives and her surroundings through a window in the store. While observing, she sees a 'Beggar Man' and the dog that lies on the pavement of the road like a dead man. The next morning, Klara says, "The sun was pouring his nourishment onto the street and into the buildings, and when I looked over to the spot where Beggar Man and the dog had done it, I saw they weren't dead at all—that a special kind of nourishment from the sun had saved them" (Ishiguro 44).

Klara gives more importance to the sun and believes that the sun has the power to give lives to human beings, like the sun does to her. There seems to be a connotation, refers to miracle of regaining life after death and exhibits the spiritual dimensions of Klara. Usually, humans have more connection with nature, and the sun represents the whole of nature in the novel. In the contemporary era, humans are detached from nature and move towards the advancement of technologies but in the novel, Ishiguro depicts a spiritual connection between man-made technologies and the sun. In the end of the novel, Klara's belief becomes partially true through the narration. When Josie suffers from a chronic illness while undergoing 'Lifting', Klara asks the Sun in her head to cure Josie from her illness believing the Sun could hear her. In this novel, there is no detailed description about the fictional process of Lifting. The only description is that the lifted children will have more options to join colleges for their higher studies as Josie had. When the other children like Rick who have not undergo the Lifting process have no options even when they were intelligent. The notable point is that only the wealthy one can afford this Lifting process.

Finally, Josie recovers according to Klara's wishes. Klara says, "The Sun was illuminating her, and the entire bed, in a ferocious half-disc of orange, and the mother, standing closet to the bed, was having to raise her face..... for the next few moments, we all remained in our fixed positions as the Sun focused ever more brightly on Josie" (Ishiguro 314). A hypothetical dilemma appears while pondering on the ethical questions as to whether the sun really has the power to cure the human being's illness or if Klara has the

power of love and faith that cures Josie. This reminds the reader of an unanswered question in the novel. More ethical questions are raised while examining the relationship between humans and technology. Ishiguro highlights that a human lives comfortably with technological development that contrasts with the conventional human roles. "They'd just wanted to take off their sports shoe and do something to it, or to press their oblongs" (Ishiguro 10). This brings out the contemporary scenario of how the human beings give more importance to the technology than their traditional roles. Ishiguro portrays more contemporary scenario like the online education system. Though the novel is not set during the pandemic era, this talks about the online education when the tutors teach through online mode. "But first Josie had her tutorial, and I watched her spread her papers over the surface of the Island and turn on her oblong" (Ishiguro 64-65). In this novel, Josie is isolated because of her Lifting process and her illness. So, she gets her education through online mode.

Ishiguro presents the ethical implications of humanizing the AI entities. When Josie's Mother introduces Klara to Josie's Father and asks him to talk to Klara, Josie's Father questions, "Part of the family. Is that what you are saying?" (Ishiguro 211) The machines are becoming part of a human family. The aspect of posthumanism lies in examining the impact of technology on human identity and blurring the difference between humans and technology.

Ishiguro's novel "Klara and the Sun" also deals with the transhumanistic concept. In this novel, the wealthy parents want to enhance their children's cognitive level so that they can admit their children to the college for higher studies, where only the lifted children are allowed. The process of lifting means the genetic enhancement of children, which costs a lot and not everyone can afford it. This can also be an allegory for the present condition of human lives. Now a days, the students undergo many tests and go through intense coaching to enhance themselves to get placed in the best college. Not all the students get this opportunity. Some did not get placed and failed in the process. Like this, during the process of lifting, some failed and lost their lives as Josie's sister. Through the narrative, many ethical questions concerning societal dynamics and ethical dilemmas arise from the advancement of AI and artificially enhanced human abilities.

In upcoming days, the role of advanced technologies and artificial beings will increase. They will decenter the human beings. As Radhika Gorur and Joyeeta Dey say "Posthumanism decenters the placement of humans above other life forms, and at the same time rejects the view of humans as autonomous and fully defined individuals". Rather, it treats "the human itself as an assemblage, co-evolving with other forms of life, enmeshed with the environment and technology" (Nayar 04). At the end of the novel, Josie's Mother says, "Klara deserves better. She deserves her slow fade" (Ishiguro 326). This decision of

Josie's Mother gave us the hope that still people are in human centered world. Josie's Mother accepts to buy Klara because of her observing skills. The Mother instructs Klara to observe Josie and ask her to imitate Josie. The Mother's intension was to replace Josie by Klara, if Josie died of chronic illness. The posthuman thought of Josie's Mother is rejected by Josie's Father. However later he also accepts this partially. In contrast, when Josie recovers from her illness, the family does not want Klara's help and she becomes useless. After the years of service, Klara moves to the place called Yard where AFs can spend their days after being abandoned by their purchased owners. There Klara prefers to be alone and recollects her good memories with her family. This scene gives us the parody to the last phase or the retirement phase of human beings.

As a final argument, posthumanism and transhumanism are both that reject conventional ideas about what it means to be human and celebrate the revolutionary possibilities of technology. While they both share an interest in investigating the limitations of human existence and pushing for the use of technology to increase human capabilities, their approaches, future visions, and ethical issues differ. This article delves into the novel's profound reflection on the developing connection between people and technology and also the philosophical problems that emerge as mankind accepts a posthuman future. It examines how Kazuo Ishiguro's book *Klara and the Sun* raises important questions regarding the future of sophisticated technology while highlighting the possible advantages and disadvantages of human improvement.

Ishiguro questions the idea of what it means to be a human in an increasingly technological society by delving into subjects such as the emergence of artificial intelligence, human-nonhuman relationships, posthuman subjectivity, and the role of technology in identity formation. Other potential areas of further research include the impact of posthumanism as a on society, the role of emotions in posthuman existence, and the influence of technology on human identity.

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BEYOND BINARIES: EXPLORING HYBRIDITY IN THE NOVELS OF MEERA SYAL

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Abstract

Meera Syal is an acclaimed British Asian writer. In her novels, Syal emphasises the role of cultural components in the formation of 'hybridity.' The in-between position occupied by Syal's characters illustrates Bhabha's notion of liminal space. Although it creates ambiguity in identity, it serves as a productive space for them to resolve cultural tensions and forge a unique identity. This paper deals with how the Third Space turns out to be a site of transformation for Syal's characters. It encapsulates how the fusion of cultural elements enables them to acquire positive aspects of diverse cultures.

Keywords: Ambiguity, Cultural Identity, Hybridity, Positive Self-positioning, Third Space.

Meera Syal is a versatile personality, writer, journalist, actress, TV artist-comedienne and social activist. She is one among the Indian diaspora residing in England. She has published three novels to her credit. They are *Anita and Me* (1996), *Life Isn't All Ha HaHeeHee* (1999) and *The House of Hidden Mothers* (2015). Syal addresses real issues pertaining to individual and group identity. She makes a significant contribution to the literary world by articulating a counter-discourse to Western hegemonic concepts over South Asian diasporic literature and popular culture. She has brought considerable changes to the notion of South Asianness and South Asian womanhood. Syal's novels highlight the fact that hybridity is significant among younger generations whose socialisation occurs across cultural boundaries.

Culture in the postmodern era could not be viewed as a closed, static system. It is not homogenous. It is a dynamic entity that is constantly changing. This challenges the essentialist notion of purity in culture. The global exchange of cultural artefacts and meanings has a strong impact on cultures. They challenge the traditional notions of social and ethnic identities and boundaries. Homi Bhabha's concept of hybridity describes the transcultural forms that result from linguistic, cultural or ethnic intermingling. It offers a new perspective to power relations. It challenges preexisting hierarchical structures and binaries like East and West, Occident and Orient, black and white, coloniser and colonised, they and us, and self and other. It challenges the myth of racial and cultural authenticity and purity. It believes that there is no fixedness in identity. It provides an alternative discourse that challenges the notion of a dominant culture and a unique cultural canon. In *The Location of Culture*, Bhabha claims that hybridity is both disruptive and constructive. The

concept of hybridity is closely associated with the notion of identity for diasporic groups and people of colour. In the age of globalisation, diasporic identities are multidimensional.

Anita and Me set in 1960s traces the early childhood days of a nine-year-old Meena. She is the daughter of an Indian immigrant who lives among the white, British working-class community. She grows up in the city of Birmingham. The lovely teenage years she spent with eccentric family members and friends are shattered when Anita Rutter and her dysfunctional family move to Tollington. Anita is blonde, aloof, attractive, rebellious and stylish. Meena desires to possess all these traits of Anita. Meena successfully gets her way into Anita's life. Being more adventurous by nature, Meena dislikes the confined world of the Indian immigrants who frequently visit her house. She imitates and tries to become like Anita in order to fulfil her desire to gain a British identity. She is torn between two cultures and is unable to find her place in either of it.

Syal's second novel *Life Isn't All Ha HaHeeHee* revolves around the lives of three India friends Tania, Sunita and Chila who are residing in London. Initially, they enjoy a considerable degree of personal freedom. They all lead a Westernised lifestyle. Tania, one of the three protagonists, leaves behind her family in India and resides with an English boyfriend Martin. She has cut all the ties which she had with her family and mother country. In London, she is a successful film maker. She is satisfied with her business success. She leads a carefree life there which makes her far removed from the stereotypical roles that are expected from an Indian female. She is much interested in the outside world as she finds it more interesting and promising for her to realise her true potential. Tania aspires to be a well-known film maker despite all the challenges that she faces in her work place. She holds herself responsible for all the problems that she faces. She hates the socially constructed roles of being a wife and mother. She doesn't want to get married to an Indian. She expresses her dislike for whatever is Indian which ultimately leads her to transgress her traditional culture and merge with the western one.

In *The House of Hidden Mothers*, Shyama is rebuked by her mother and Tara for her absence at home. For Shyama, the attempts made by her parents to sustain familial bonds seem vague as she lives in a societal set up that is entirely different from theirs. She desires to lead a life of singularity and autonomy just like her English friends. She wants to feel free and liberate from the clutches of traditional family values of obligations and caring. She wants to attain success through individuality and singularity which is clearly reflected in her dream of becoming a popular figure through her career. Like her English friends, she no longer values familial interrelationships and the circle of pretend relations could not compensate the loss of the familial bond caused due to displacement. There is a drastic difference between Western and Eastern cultures. Thus, it has not always been an easy task for the South Asian diaspora to maintain their cultural values and beliefs in their adopted

land. Eastern cultures, for instance, tend to be more oriented toward the collective whereas western cultures are more focused on the individual. Similarly, social hierarchy, gender roles, coping mechanisms and other culturally specific concepts exhibit cultural differences.

Ernest Gellner, in his book *Nations and Nationalism*, states that the cultural homogeneity and the availability of the institution to promote cultural congruity leads to the development of a nation. This state apparatus facilitates the protection of High Culture. The one who owns this High Culture is considered as a part of the state, whereas the one who is recognised with a different rhetoric makes him an object of endless disgrace. Since, he is treated as a stranger, outsider, secluded, incessantly doing ‘the wrong thing’ and he becomes an intolerable one. Gellner declares that people succumb to assimilation when confronted with an incongruity between one’s own culture and that of the dominant culture. As a result, the nationalism’s homogenising drive and the desire for one nation disregard the variances exhibited by the minority group since everyone is expected to comply. Syal’s characters feel humiliated since the cultural practices mark them the odd among those residing in Britain. Since, multicultural society is also likely built upon the concept of nationalism; Meena, Tania and Shyama have to assimilate into the systems of High culture in order to keep themselves from humiliation. English society seems to be receptive to diversity but ethnic interaction takes place merely on the surface level. Other ethnic minorities have to assimilate into European culture in order to gain acceptance.

Syal’s protagonists use different strategies to resolve the conflicts mentioned above. The acceptance of their hyphenated identities enables them to find a balance between the multiple positions they are placed in. The inbetween position occupied by Syal’s characters illustrates Bhabha’s notion of liminal space. It serves as a productive space for them to resolve cultural tensions and forge an identity that combines their parental and host cultures. In *Anita and Me*, Meena is stuck in the middle, not truly British or truly Indian. Meena subverts this liminal area into a space where she creates her hybrid subjectivity and reformulates her identity. This grey area which alludes to Bhabha’s Third Space turns out to be a place filled with new opportunities for Meena. Meena declares, “I vowed that I would never leave her, this wrenching of daughter from mother would never happen again” (AM 202). Additionally, Meena expresses her desire to know more about her culture. This positive self-positioning as “a British girl with a Punjabi background” (Stein 52) gives Meena the power to initiate change in her own life.

In *Life Isn’t All Ha HaHeeHee*, Syal affirms that in order to lead a content life women must combine tradition with progressivism. Tania realises that there must be an equal coexistence of both. She realises that she should not discard one for the other. Tania says that, “It was possible, literally, to stand with a foot in each world on this corner” (LAH 40). Syal states that work and family life must be well balanced. In *The House of Hidden*

Mothers, Shyama decides to balance her family life by fulfilling her responsibility as a mother as well as upholding a career in order to realise her true potential. As depicted in Syal's novel, it can be a challenging and difficult task for Black women to fulfil both traditional and modern roles. Syal depicts the cultural balancing act carried out by the South Asian women residing in Britain. Heidi Safia Mirza in *Black British Feminism: A Reader* says that, "Cultural hybridity, the fusion of cultures and coming together of difference, the 'border crossing' that marks diasporic survival, signifies change, hope of newness, and space for creativity" (16).

Only the first generation of immigrants is concerned with fully assimilating into native culture, whereas the second generation is concerned with their hyphenated identities. Therefore, this does not mean that they completely discard their national identities. Instead, individuals have renewed opinions about their racial and cultural identity. They manage to navigate between the diverse facets of their identity while feeling deeply connected and proud of their heritage. Despite prejudice and intolerance, they consider Britain to be their home and identify themselves as British Asians. Although they have adapted to the new environment, they feel a strong connection to their nation of origin.

Young British Indians who adopt a multiethnic perspective eventually develop new cultural identities. The fusion of cultural elements enables them to acquire positive aspects of both cultures. Syal's characters are well aware that their own culture has rich values and customs that should not be discarded. In *The Location of Culture*, Bhabha states that, "Despite the exposure of the third space to contradictions and ambiguities, it provides a spatial politics of inclusion rather than exclusion that initiates new signs of identity, and innovative sites of collaboration and contestation" (1). He insists on the need to resist these rigid conventions and constricting ideas of the other. By doing so one would erase these distinctions and promote the creation of a new composite culture. Syal's characters have combined historical native culture with modern Western culture to create a composite culture. According to Bhabha, in spite of the ambiguities and ambivalences present in the Third Space, it serves as a venue for creative thinking, collaboration and challenging prevailing colonial ideologies.

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EMBRACING LOCALIZATION OVER GLOBALIZATION FOR A SUSTAINABLE GLOBAL PARADIGM

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Abstract

Vandana Shiva advocates for localization as a means to address the negative impacts of globalization and corporate-driven economic systems. Localization can promote self-sufficiency, community resilience and sustainable practices since it prioritizes local resources, knowledge, and economies. Localization is a powerful tool for challenging and transforming the existing power structures. Building our local economy eventually resists corporate control. By reclaiming control over food production, communities can break free from the clutches of multinational corporations. Not only in agriculture and food systems, but even in other fields local production must be built and embraced to create a self-sufficient nation. This paper aims to break the prevailing cultural hegemony and help build a sustainable global paradigm.

Keywords: Hegemony, Sustenance, Capitalism, Localization, Globalization.

Earth and its resources are being plundered by a handful of global corporations and powerful countries that seek to control it. The global corporate economy, which was founded on the notion of unrestricted expansion, has evolved into an entity that is at war with both the environment and humankind. These businesses are solely focused on making money and exercising greed. There exist apparent conflicts over land, where the tribal people's means of subsistence are stolen; conflicts over water, when resources are extracted to benefit corporations rather than the local population; conflicts over climate change; conflicts over forests, and so forth. The goal of these corporations is to turn the world into an open-air supermarket. Every essential living resource that supports the delicate web of life on Earth has been seized, commodified, and privatised by businesses.

Corporate rule through globalization is built upon the foundation that colonialism created and continues to leave behind it a trail of destruction and devastation. Corporations try to transform commons into commodities depriving the politically weaker groups of their right to survival and it robs from nature its right to self-renewal and sustainability. Our mother earth and people have fallen into the trap of the capitalist greed which has been marked as “compassionate capitalism.” Nature is shrinking as the capital is growing.

Industrialization is believed to have increased the efficiency and productivity of the market. The ‘efficient’ market economy becomes highly inefficient when nature’s economy is taken into account. The efficiency and productivity associated with industrial agriculture

hides the costs of depletion of soils, exploitation of groundwater, erosion, and extinction of biodiversity. Industrial agriculture uses ten times more energy than it produces and uses ten times more water than biodiverse farming. Natural resources are sacrificed in the name of growth illusion. It is important to recognise that the process of turning natural resources into commodities for the market drives this expansion. Growth is fueled by deforestation and overfishing, suggesting that nature is shrinking as capital increases. Natural resources are turned into money, but it's important to realise that no amount of money can replace the natural world that humans have devastated.

Colonialism has had its effect on the cultures of the colonized. Though the formal colonial rule came to an end, they still continued to rule us through our mind. The capitalist countries are economic predators, the former colonial masters who look for new opportunities to exploit. The only way to fight these colonial overlords is through political and economic campaigns of self-sufficiency. Globalization with the idea of development has undermined the capacity of local communities and citizens to influence policies that affect their lives. Vandana Shiva believes that Localization and Decentralization are the way forward for the earth and the marginalized. Localization and Decentralization do not imply dictatorship or isolation, for they are based on the principle of subsidiarity and thus help to discriminate between the different aspects of social and economic life. Only by establishing such appropriate governance form can the protection of people and the environment be ensured.

The issue of the global ecological holocaust compels us to rethink the dominant western model of development and to think of making ways to bring about a sustainable model of development. "Think globally, act locally" is the slogan echoed around the world by protestors of the anti- globalization movement. The idea here is to concentrate on one's own surroundings; little actions taken here and there will gradually transform one's own house or place of business, followed by a neighbourhood, a city, a state, and so on. This concept is primarily related to sustainability and the environment. The Anti- globalization movement is a social movement which is against the economic globalization. This movement is against the neo- liberal globalization. These movements accuse multi- National Corporation of seeking to maximize profit at the expense of the third world countries using their unregulated political power exercised through trade agreements and deregulated financial markets.

If globalization is corporate- driven for corporate control, localization is people- driven for protecting the environment, survival and livelihood. Localization offers a number of advantages, from improving community self-sufficiency and resilience to lessening environmental harm. By fostering economic self-sufficiency and resilience, local economies help us become less dependent on outside help. Local companies and sectors encourage

local entrepreneurship and provide job opportunities. Strong local economies enable us to weather economic downturns and accelerate our recovery during times of global crisis. One such people-centered economy is the Indian wheat economy. The Indian Wheat economy is based on de-centralised, small-scale local production, processing, and distribution. It provides livelihoods and nutrition to millions of farmers, traders, and local mill operators. This decentralised small-scale based economy generates millions of livelihoods while ensuring fresh wholesome food available to people at accessible prices. Moreover, their method of production and processing has no negative environmental impact.

The need to turn self-sufficient and to grow our local economy was strongly insisted by the global pandemic. This pandemic affected the entire food system and exposed its fragility. With border closures, trade restrictions and confinement measures there was a crisis in accessing the global markets which disrupted domestic and international food supply chain reducing access to diverse diets. This lockdown imposed various restrictions forcing the world to take a pause from its active regular lifestyle. The already rising pressures of conflict and climate change along with convergence of the covid-19 pandemic have left the world with having to rethink its ways. The pandemic induced strong calls for manufacturing back home.

Shiva emphasizes the significance of local self-sufficiency and resilience in the face of crises like the Covid-19 pandemic. She argues that communities and local economies that prioritized local production, food systems and resource management were better equipped to respond to disruptions in the global supply chains. By supporting local businesses and farmers, communities can ensure their needs are met and thus reduce their dependency on distant sources. The vulnerability of globalization and its food systems was exposed during the pandemic. The consolidation of corporate control over food and food production has weakened the food security and shifting towards localized and regenerative agriculture practices is the only solution to build back our food security.

A strong local economy can raise living standards generally, lessen poverty, and promote financial stability. A robust local economy fosters additional economic expansion and development. It helps small companies and reduces unemployment by generating jobs. Strong local economies are more resilient to shocks to the economy, which benefits the community. It lessens the nation's reliance on other nations. Its primary function is to safeguard the nation during a recession. It lessens dependency on imports by fostering local production, which increases self-sufficiency. Wealth is preserved through fostering the local economy.

As consumers, we must prefer to choose a locally produced product over an internationally credited one. The consumer must decolonize his or her mind from

considering that anything west is superior. Consumers must be liberated from the clutches of pseudo-satisfaction. As consumers of 'Third World' countries, we need to abandon these imitative consumption patterns in order to free ourselves from the economic and cultural dependence and to make an efficient use of one's own resources for their own well-being. This thought process would bring us one step closer towards self-reliance.

A question that must arise in oneself is why our resources must be exploited to benefit someone far away. One of the earliest examples of consumer liberation movement is the Seikatsu Club. This movement was founded in 1970s by women, particularly mothers in reaction to the Minamata disease. Minamata disease is a neurological disorder caused by long-term exposure to methylmercury. This toxic substance was discharged into Minamata Bay in Japan by a chemical company polluting its environment. The mercury released into the environment contaminated the soil leading to contamination of the food chain. Food products (crops, livestock, poultry, and seafood) became contaminated posing risk to consumers of meat, fish, milk and eggs. It polluted even mother's milk.

Through this movement the women and other consumers began to take direct interest in agricultural methods and the agricultural policy in general. They realized the inherent dangers in official policy, which was ready to sacrifice self-sufficiency in food to preserve the interests of a few. They wanted to build an agricultural policy that took the people's interest seriously. The Seikatsu Club used the purchasing power of consumers, especially women to promote the development of organic and ecological farming. Seikatsu Club is committed to promoting sustainable and ethical consumption practices. There is co-operation between producers and consumers to promote organic agriculture. SC members actively participate in decision making processes and prioritize social and environmental concerns by supporting local producers who follow environmentally friendly and socially responsible practices. The SC members aim to steer the whole society in the direction of building a self-reliant, ecological subsistence society. This SC club is a living example of consumer liberation. When each consumer realises their responsibility and substitute capitalist circulation of goods and services by creating alternative routes that connect producers and consumers directly a liberation is attained.

Shiva is not against development in itself but she insists in creating an alternative development that includes the interest of the earth, the people and the marginalised. She is against development that favours only a few at the expense of all others. Shiva does not say that all decisions should be made on a local level. She insists that there should of course be decisions and policies made on the national and global level, but to reach these other levels, policies have to constantly pass through the screen of living democracy which includes localization and earth democracy.

Localization at its best is seen in an Indian based NGO run by Vandana Shiva. It is a network that attempts to shift from the genocidal economy of agribusiness imposed by the WTO and WB to living economies of food. More than 20,000 farmers in this network work to provide their consumers with quality food while enriching the earth and creating prosperity for rural producers. It aims to rebuild nature's economy by reintroducing biodiverse farming which involves biodiversity of microorganisms and soil fertility to replace chemical farming and to increase productivity in yield and in nutritional value.

Instead of relying on big agribusinesses to provide us with cheap industrially produced, genetically engineered product, it is advisable to rely on our local farmers who can provide us with nutritionally good products. It is high time a shift is made from cheap and nasty food to fair and healthy food. Each one of us needs to embrace our local producers and support them through which the environment and public health is enriched. Localization does not mean isolation from the larger world but self-determination with interdependence. Localization recognizes the diversity and uniqueness of different regions and it acknowledges the importance of adapting to the local context rather than submissively submitting to a standardized or global approach.

In order to counteract the detrimental effects of corporate-driven economic systems and globalisation, Vandana Shiva is a proponent of localization. Localization has the ability to promote self-sufficiency, community resilience and sustainable practices since it prioritizes local resources, knowledge and economies. A potent technique for undermining and altering the current power structures is localization. Developing a local economy gradually makes corporations less powerful. Communities can escape the grasp of international companies by taking back control of food production. To achieve a self-sufficient nation, local production must be developed and accepted in many sectors, not just in agriculture and the food system. Shiva places a strong emphasis on developing local economies as a way to oppose the patriarchy of capitalism. The "Go Local" movement and the necessity of "Localization" have grown in importance in today's globalized world. As responsible citizens we have the power to make conscious choices that promote localization which would help shape a future where people, nature and culture are not threatened.

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LIVING WITH THE NON-LIVING: A SPATIAL STUDY OF MIRZA WAHEED'S *THE COLLABORATOR*

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Abstract

Third Space, as postmodern geographer Edward Soja theorises it, looks at the lived experience not only temporally but spatially. In *The Collaborator*, a novel focused on the tragedies of youth, Mirza Waheed depicts the living reality of Kashmir through a melancholic gaze. However, the space portrayed here is cohabited by living and non-living bodies – a landscape abundant with unmarked graveyards filled with reeks of rotten meat of young boys, etched in to the psyche of the characters. Therefore, this paper aims to discuss the layered space where death infects life, and abject bodies regulate the spatial matrix in Kashmir.

Keywords: Third Space, Geocriticism, Graveyard, Non-living, Kashmir.

The philosophical, social, and literary theories have long been saturated with the discourse of time, history, and teleological developments. Without reducing its influence and incorporating the shifting dynamic and nuances of postmodernism, Edward Soja brings forth his idea of “Third Space,” which interweaves the social, historical, and spatial complexities. This spatial turn enables a novel way of (re)examining and (re)presenting the irresolvable Kashmir issue with a scope of dialogue between socio-political conundrum and geography. This paper proposes to see Kashmir both as a place and space and its impression on people and to record the lived experience of Kashmiri people in the “real-and-imagined spaces” (as Soja terms it) as represented in the novel *The Collaborator* by Mirza Waheed.

In *The Production of Space*, the French philosopher and sociologist Henri Lefebvre brings into discourse a “conceptual triad” which impacts Soja’s theoretical formulation of thirdspace: Lefebvre’s “perceived,” “conceived”, and “lived” space roughly corresponds with Soja’s notions of firstspace, secondspace and thirdspace. Soja sees thirdspace as an inventive reunification of a “firstspace perspective that is focused on the “real” material world and a secondspace perspective that interprets this reality through “imagined” representations of reality.” (Soja 6) Thirdspace offers radical openness by transfusing uncanny, unruly, transgressive interpretative forces. To illustrate this with an example, we can observe the contrasting representations of bullet holes on walls, unfortunate spatial characteristics in the socio-political context of Kashmir, in two different narratives: *Munnu: A Boy from Kashmir* by Malik Sajad and *Harud*, directed by Amir Bashir. The protagonist of the Indie film *Harud*, looking outside through the bullet hole at a chained white lamb, reinforces the image of oppressed Kashmiri youth; on the other hand, we find Munnu’s friend gesticulating about fornication as he slides his finger through the bullet hole of his

classroom wall. The former imagery is repetitive; the metaphor is appropriated and acknowledged critically within the framework of Kashmir studies. However, the latter remains exclusive, enriching, and additive – constantly negotiating with the master narratives.

The confusion and chaos in Kashmir are materialised in various texts, fiction and non-fiction, of varied media and genres. The majority of the texts aim to expose the innards of repressive and ideological state apparatuses in Kashmir. However, the driving force of the narrative of *The Collaborator* is born out of a liminal space, an open graveyard, between the contested borders of two nation-states. The 19-year-old unnamed narrator belongs to the Gujjar community living in the Kashmir Valley's uplands. After Chief Minister Sheikh Abdullah's provisions in the 1970s, this nomadic community settled in the village of Nowgam, and the novel is anchored in this geo-politically peripheral locale¹. The narrator, the son of the village head, grows up tolerating casual racism; his identity is always questioned: "The valley people did not think of us as Kashmiris anyway." (Waheed 26); "You are not even a proper Kashmiri!" (278). Despite this continuous discrimination and humiliation that the community faces, many close friends of the narrator belonging to the same clan have left home in pursuit of their collective dream of what they believed to be a "free homeland". One after another, they disappear secretly for armed training in Azad Kashmir, and with each departure, the societal fabric in the village undergoes subtle changes. In a Derridean sense, this absence now dictates and restructures the spatial and social practices, behaviours and the interrelationship of the living. The narrator finds himself in the middle of a curious situation where the awareness of the growing expectation of him following his friends' path becomes almost palpable. However, it is a paradox that his state-sponsored job requires him to collect identity cards and weapons from the dead bodies of the "militants" from the unmarked graveyard near the LOC.

Captain Kadian, the army commander of the anti-infiltration operation in that area, is the Eichmann, and Kashmir is his Jerusalem². He is not a man of extraordinary calibre or evil demeanour but an ordinary man of either Punjabi or Jat descent in his mid-thirties. At his order, young boys crossing borders are regularly gunned down, whom he refers to as "dead meat", and to fetch information about them, he appoints "the local boy", someone without an identifiable uniform, the narrator. Those piles of bodies on the secret tracks, in the pastoral folds of the valley connecting "this Kashmir" to "that Kashmir", are prized possessions for the captain. Bodies are left to rot as a cautionary sign for the vigilant enemies from the other side. This intermediary space exudes a strange, uncanny feeling and a peculiar tactile-visual-olfactory sensation with decomposed and fresh corpses. This lived space, feeding on non-living dead bodies, is transgressive and challenging to any spatial study.

Soja writes that thirdspace is “marked by the openness of the both/and also..., with the “also” reverberating back to disrupt the categorical closures implicit in the either/or logic” (Soja 7). Following this line of argument, all binary oppositions are refuted in Soja’s thirdspace; no narrative is privileged over another. Instead, multiple perspectives simultaneously exist because “il y a toujours l’Autre” or “there is always another” (7). The narrator imagines the graveyard as a “murderscape” devilishly designed by the captain; the same landscape is later (re)imagined as “corpse-land,” and he outrageously uses the imagery of growth and sustenance in his assertion “harvest of human remains” (Waheed 13). The putrid gut-wrenching stench repels and haunts him; he says that the smell stays with him like an unremovable second skin, and all his desperate acts of washing, cleaning, and scrubbing are futile. Then again, we see him making casual trips down the “skeleton lane” to his “skeleton audience.” The lonely, friendless narrator falls asleep thinking about the hair oil emitting from the teenaged, non-living being lying next to him. With tenderness, he counts seventeen flowers that have grown between the legs of his new acquaintance after waking up. Fresh wounds and missing limbs of the bodies chillingly trigger him to wonder if all the neighbourhood animals are feasting on them. Adding horror to this description, he continues pondering on how the soldiers must have felt while “looking at a man-eating mela day and night, at all the gnawing and pulling and the peeling and chewing and the grunting and ...” (15) through their binoculars.

The question arises then: How does this macabre space become a private territory for the narrator, and what does it signify? Adding to this are fundamental questions such as, How is a place distinguishable from space? What kind of emotions do these terms evoke? How does our perception of a place affect our appreciation of it? Answering these requires a phenomenological investigation of the space and place. For Edward Relph, space is “amorphous” and “intangible”, whereas places are sensed in the interplay of a visual setting, people, customs, personal experience and other things. The humanist geographer Yi Fu Tuan contends in *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience* that both terms “place” and “space” are mutually interdependent for meaning, and together, they constitute the “lived world”. The abstract, undifferentiated “space” gathers value and meaning through learning and experiencing, producing a “place”. Tuan further argues that a person knows and constructs his reality through various modes of experience. However, the space in *The Collaborator* evades all sorts of rigid categorisation; it is neither a mere backdrop nor an empty container, but with all its spatial attributes and textures, it adds depth to the narrator’s “lived experience”. His intimate knowledge of its topography, flora and fauna, and rivulet running through the meadow, and his realisation of the dire consequences of current socio-historical events (manifested in the form of decaying dead bodies), force him to develop an eerie, complex, multi-layered connection with this specific landscape. Heidegger writes, “‘Place’ places man in such a way that it reveals the external bonds of his existence and at the same time the depths of his freedom and reality” (qtd. in Relph 1). This nuanced relation

renders ambiguity in his attitude towards the non-living entities scattered around the valley. The narrator sometimes constructs their personal history by carefully reading the letters, notes, diaries, cards, and photographs found on them, even indulging in an imaginative conversation with them, and the collected ID cards are instrumental in naming the lifeless. However, shockingly, he chooses these bodies as targets for his gun practice, justifying his gruesome act by reasoning that they are already dead, human waste and in the no man's land, nothing is off limit. Empowered with a naive sense of authority and freedom, it is in this wasteland that he commits the only act of defiance against Kadian; it is also the only decision in the entire narrative that he took out of his own volition. This action of igniting the bodies, strategically placed in the novel's penultimate section, hints at the transformative radical energy of thirdspace.

This paper sees the absent figures – the narrator's friends – as non-living agents; they exist only in the shadowy realm of memory and the longing for their return. Despite being lost for long; they exert a persisting influence on the collective psyche of the villagers. The condition of the Kashmiris from Nowgam is precarious; they are always awaiting a metamorphosis, as the state can dismiss their identity at any given time. In the traditional Western idea of metamorphosis, this transformation occurs only at the external surface, altering the form, shape, or appearance; the substance or inner reality is uninterrupted or unaffected. Catherine Malabou challenges this notion by proposing a new concept for metamorphosis that can shape and reconstruct the human psyche. This is common among survivors of traumatic experiences, where, sometimes, an "unprecedented persona" starts dominating over the suffered and violated self. In the novel, the anxiety and apprehension of losing her son like the rest of the disappeared boys in the village, the narrator's mother becomes a recluse, a metamorphosed persona; she does not talk and likes to confine herself in her carefully crafted kitchen garden just in the manner the narrator himself is psychologically afflicted by his absent and presumably dead friends. His day-to-day activities are reminders of a lost time; remembering and reliving every minute of the days before they vanished are his only ways to feel close to them. Their spectral presence destabilises the power politics within the village; the revered sarpanch, headman's command over the grief-stricken, apprehensive villagers, is now disintegrating; they wish to migrate out of their present settlement.

Notes

¹ For a detailed analysis of Kashmir's demography and history, see Snedden, *Understanding of Kashmir and Kashmiris*.

² It is a reference to Nazi war criminal Adolf Eichmann who believed that his following of state order was his duty as a law-abiding citizen. See Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report of the Banality of Evil*.

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**RECOLLECTION AND REVELATION OF MEMORY: A MODERNIST
READING OF KAZUO ISHIGURO'S *PALE VIEW OF HILLS* AND
*THE BURIED GIANT***

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Abstract

Memory studies, an academic field that emerged at the end of the 20th century, offered scholars a different way of viewing past events. Kazuo Ishiguro, the Nobel Prize and Booker- winning novelist is a writer belonging to the modern age. Most of his novels are covered with a sense of memory, history and identity. This paper tends to examine the influence of historical and cultural contexts on Ishiguro's representation of memory in *A Pale View of Hills* and *The Buried Giant*, considering how these factors contribute to a modernist reading.

Keywords: History, Identity, Memory, Culture, Nation.

Literature plays a significant role in exhibiting memory as a narrative tool to manifest various social, political, and cultural issues. French author, Evelyn Ender shows how memory has not only a factual basis but also is inseparable from fictional and aesthetic elements. As such, Memory studies, an academic field that emerged at the end of the 20th century, offered scholars a different way of viewing past events. One recurring theme in the novels of Kazuo Ishiguro, a Japanese writer, is memory, which plays a vital role in the characters' experiences of loss and gain. Ishiguro's novels often deal with memory, history, grief and identity. Memory is an integral part of the humanities, and Ishiguro portrays it both positively and negatively in his works. As such, the objective of this research paper is to investigate the emotional and intellectual impact of Ishiguro's narrative choices on the reader's engagement and understanding and consider how the modernist approach to memory enhances or challenges the reader's experience with the novels. It is hypothesized that the exploration of recollection and revelation in Kazuo Ishiguro's *A Pale View of Hills* and *The Buried Giant* through a modernist lens will reveal a complex interplay between memory, narrative structure, and the construction of meaning, ultimately shedding light on the author's distinctive approach to portraying the intricacies of human consciousness and historical consciousness in his works.

It is a multidisciplinary field which combines intellectual strands from anthropology, education, literature, history, philosophy, psychology, and sociology. At

the start of the 20th Century, a new social perspective on memory emerged with the term 'collective memory' coined by Austrian novelist Hugo Van Hofmannsthal in 1902, following individual memory. French Sociologist, Maurice Halbwachs introduced the term first time into literature through his books *The Social Frameworks of Memory* (1925) and *On Collective Memory* (1950). Collective memory refers to the process of recalling events that are related to objects and places encountered by people in a social framework or between groups that experience these events.

In 1925, Maurice Halbwachs introduced the idea that memory is not an individual phenomenon but rather a social one. He argued that memories are constructed collectively and that this collective construction of memory shapes how individuals remember. His work has provided the foundation for the concept of collective memory and has continued to influence research on the topic. However, Jan Assmann, a German Egyptologist, disagrees with Halbwachs' idea of collective memory. Instead, he describes memory as having two distinct categories: communicative memory and cultural memory.

Assmann's theory proposes three categories of time, identity, and memory. These three categories relate to each other on three different levels. The first level, referred to as the inner level, includes personal memory. This level defines the time frame as the inner or subjective time of everyone of a given society. The second level is the social level, which Assmann's model consists of two types of pasts - a recent past and an absolute past. The recent past is set within the realm of three to four generations, which includes a time span of around 80 to 120 years. The formation of social identity is based on this. Communicative memory refers to historical experiences set in relation to individual biographies, and it is highly informal. The third level is the cultural level, which relates to the time frame of the absolute past. The concept of identity on this level is that of a diachronic 'cultural identity', which involves the society's sagas and myths. Those myths allow each individual to retrace their origin in accordance with the society's traditional past. This leads to the formation of social identity, which can then be refreshed or actualized by following generations.

Kazuo Ishiguro is a modern-age novelist who has been awarded the Nobel Prize (2017) and the Booker Prize for his work. He is a Japanese born British author. His family moved to Britain in 1960, where his father, an oceanographer began a one-year research project funded by British government. His novels delve into human emotions, trauma, love, attraction, and more.

In the novels of Ishiguro, memories play an important role in shaping the characters' personal identities. The characters in his stories try to make sense of the past by remembering it, hoping to overcome their loss. They try to discover their true identity

by delving into their memories. In his debut novel, *A Pale View of Hills* (1982), the Japanese widow Etsuko, living in England, recalls her past life in Japan. The loss of her elder daughter prompts her to recollect her past experiences. As a Japanese woman, she has faced many difficulties due to wars and the atomic blast in Nagasaki. With hope, she migrated from Japan to England with her second husband, but her daughter Keiko struggles to adapt to the new culture. In effect to that, she committed suicide. Etsuko wants to forget Japan's troubled past so much that she does not even give her younger daughter a Japanese name,

Niki, the name we finally gave my younger daughter, is not an abbreviation; it was a compromise I reached with her father. For paradoxically it was he who wanted to give her a Japanese name, and I – perhaps out of some selfish desire not to be reminded of the past – insisted on an English one. He finally agreed to Niki, thinking it had some vague echo of the East about it. (APVH 1)

Etsuko is not pleased with the way Japanese women lived during the war. She is concerned about ladies who are having a difficult time settling down in life. However, as the book reveals, every woman never gives up on finding a new life, even when she fails to reconstruct her life back together. Etsuko compares her new identity with another character, Mrs. Fujiwara, who is abandoned by the Japanese after the war. However, she looks back at her early years in Japan in an attempt to recover her identity and memory:

“There's a young woman I see every week,” Mrs. Fujiwara went on. “She must be six or seven months pregnant now. I see her every time I go to visit the cemetery. I've never spoken to her, but she looks so sad, standing there with her husband. It's a shame, a pregnant girl and her husband spending their Sundays thinking about the dead. I know they're being respectful, but all the same, I think it's a shame. They should be thinking about the future.” (APVH 25)

Sachiko, one of the significant characters of the novel, a female neighbour of Etsuko in Japan, experiences hardships in her life as well during the period of war. It is possible that Etsuko and her daughter Mariko, who stands for a rejection of both traditional and modern Japanese values by emigrating to America, were the main influences for Etsuko to leave her husband and move to England. She eventually began to imitate English people after believing that the traditional Japanese ways were wrong. After her daughter Keiko commits suicide, Etsuko laments for bringing her to England and eventually understands that her identity as a citizen of a foreign nation is only a delusion. At the end of the novel, she has come to terms with the fact that her true identity is rooted in Japanese culture.

Another book by Kazuo Ishiguro, *The Buried Giant* (2015), follows an elderly couple named Axl and Beatrice as they search for their son, who has not been seen in

years. They meet the Saxon warrior Witsan, the knight Sir Gawain, and a small Saxon youngster named Edwin as they make their way into post-Arthur Britain. The weird mist that enveloped all of Britain was caused by the breath of a female dragon named Querig, which left the people of the country lost their memory. At the end of their voyage, each of these individuals has a specific task to complete. They find it difficult to recall their own and the nation's identities as a result of this forgetting. The fundamental mythological pattern is adhered to in the book *The Buried Giant*. The characters of the novel roam their way in pursuit of their goals while certain features of significant landscape stir their memories. The mass amnesia in the novel *The Buried Giant* is intended to unite society but fails in this precisely because it lacks memory. Without the ability to form new memories properly, people are overly suspicious. Moreover, citizens feel no particular links to each other to the point that Axl claims he is from "the neighbouring country" rather than neighbouring village, or simply "a day's walk away" (TBG 82). Earlier, Axl is sympathetic to a village elder because "it's the same in our own country" where they've "witnessed many incidents of such forgetfulness among our own neighbours" (TBG 67). Axl can align his experiences with those of others, but not see their identities within a shared framework; he cannot imagine a community beyond the local because he cannot remember what they have in common.

Through the dragon, a priest by the name of Merlin cast a magic spell that caused widespread amnesia. As a result, there was Peace prevailed throughout the country, Saxons and Britons who were enemies in the past, forgot their differences. Before the mist, the elderly couple Axl and Beatrice had an unstable relationship but now they have an immense love with one another. The Briton Knight, Sir Gawain attempts to safeguard the life of the Dragon as the mist of her breath creates peace. But, Wistan the Saxon warrior was ordered by his King to slay the dragon. At the end of the novel, both of them duel with one another, as a result of that the female dragon Querig got slayed by Wistan and the mist cleared up from the country. In effect to that, people recollect their lost memory and the buried giant of anger, resentment and distrust emerges from the collective amnesia. While remembering a brutal past did not endear people to one another. "The giant, once buried, now stirs. When soon he rises, as surely, he will, the friendly bonds between us will prove as knots young girls make with the stems of small flowers. Men will burn their neighbours' houses by night. Hang children from trees at dawn." (TBG 340) The elderly couple found that their son had passed away a long time ago, and Axl recalls the infidelity of Beatrice and left her on the shore, where the boatman takes her to the island, which was symbolizes here as a place where people go after death.

Thus, in this research paper, an investigation of the emotional and intellectual impact of Ishiguro's narrative choices on the reader's engagement and understanding

have been dealt with and it has also been considered how memory enhances or challenges the reader's experience with the novels. As such, the exploration of recollection and revelation in Kazuo Ishiguro's *A Pale View of Hills* and *The Buried Giant* reveals a complex interplay between memory, narrative structure, and the construction of meaning, ultimately shedding light on the author's distinctive approach to portraying the intricacies of human consciousness and historical consciousness in his works.

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ECOFEMINISM AND QUEER ECOLOGY THROUGH THE LENS OF ANTHROPOLOGY

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Abstract

Queer Ecology is a coming-of-age theory which depicts re-imagining nature in the light of queer theory. The ideas of nature are generally perceived to be heterosexist and homophobic. The Queer Ecology thereby disrupts the said heteronormative notions of nature and establishes that nature does not believe in differences of any sort. Ecofeminism is more of an intersectional phenomenon intersecting theories of ecology and feminism. It is a critical lens that focuses on the many ways that gender shapes how people see and treat nature as well as people's interactions with their environments. The researcher attempts to perceive ecofeminism and queer ecology through the lens of anthropology. The paper aims to analyze the mentioned two theories, finding their commonalities and understanding their underlying differences through the lens of anthropology emphasizing the need for interdisciplinary approaches to understand the complex relationships between culture, sexuality and the environment.

Keywords: Anthropology, Ecofeminism, Queer Ecology, Heterosexist, Homophobic.

Anthropology is a scientific study of origin and development of human societies and culture thus including the behaviour of people, their beliefs, social structures, and institutions. The study investigates how different people and their societies lived throughout history in a clear and unbiased manner. The researcher attempts to perceive Ecofeminism and Queer Ecology through the lens of Anthropology. Ecofeminism is more of an intersectional phenomenon intersecting theories of Ecology and Feminism. To be said in lucid sense, it is merely a connection between women and nature. It is a critical lens that focuses on the many ways that gender shapes how people see and treat nature as well as people's interactions with their environments. Queer ecology disrupts prevailing heterosexist understandings of gender, sexuality, and nature.

Queer Ecology is a coming-of-age theory which depicts reimagining nature in the light of queer theory. The ideas of nature are generally perceived to be Heterosexist and Homophobic. So for example, although this is now beginning to change, and there are many evolutionary and other biologists who are speaking about sexual diversity in the more-than-human world, there was for a very long time an assumption that the natural form of mammalian at least, sexuality is heterosexual and anything other than that must be some kind of deviation or that the display of non-heterosexual behaviour or

homosocial behaviour must somehow be part of the larger practice of heterosexuality in a given species.

The Queer Ecology thereby disrupts the said heteronormative notions of nature and establishes that nature does not believe in differences of any sort. The central tenets of queer ecology are that experiences of sexuality and gender identity are also influential in shaping one's relationship to the natural world. Although this is a very complex topic and the researcher does not mean to suggest that queer ecology is somehow anti-family. The idea that that futurity might not be tied to inheritance, the idea that consumption and amassing of wealth in the nuclear family might not be the best way of thinking about property, about cooperation and thinking about family is a very key insight that queer ecology has brought to the world. The paper aims to analyze the mentioned two theories, finding their commonalities and understanding their underlying differences through the lens of Anthropology.

The term Eco-feminism was coined by Francoise d'Eabonne in her 1974 book, "Feminism or Death" which is an intersection of Ecology and Feminism with its prime focus on female perspective and understanding. This theoretical framework was employed to help us better understand how hierarchical and dualist definitions of gender could explain humanity's dominance in relationship with nature. These hierarchical structures and cultures assign more power and value to one side of the binary which is called as Oppositional dualism. This theoretical framework suggests that oppositional dualism and hierarchical structures as reasons behind the subjugation of women and nature, since these constructs justify masculinized acts of violence and domination towards women, animal, and natural world. For example, Hunting is seen as a sport and show of masculinity. Religious sacrifices symbolize male behaviour. Eighty percent women suffered displacement during climate change. Sex trafficking of girls is linked to rural poverty, drought, and floods. When it comes to lack of water, the impact is more on female since women are primarily responsible for washing and cleaning and require need of water for menstruation and cleaning. The census record stands evident for the above accounted preposition. Eighty five percent women were left behind and unable to escape during Hurricane Katrina, and during Bangladesh Cyclone. Women were five times more likely to die because of their restrictive mobility due to cultural clothing. Ecofeminism is where gender and environment intersect.

In a study published January 27 in *Science Advances*, researchers analyzed long-term data from women and found that for some, their periods synced with lunar light and gravity cycles at certain times in their lives. Cartesian ontological belief has placed man over other beings and has separated humans from nature. Ecofeminism, as a theory, challenges the existing patriarchal paradigms and holds that there is a strong connection

between women and nature and they are inseparable. They suggest that the oppression of women and nature are interconnected. Traditionally, women have been associated with nature—they are seen to have a biological link with the natural world because of their reproductive ability and life sustainer. Women have been seen connected to nature because of their physiology, social roles, and psychology. This typical alliance creates gender stereotypes that being feminine is to be passive and intuitive, and hence to be masculine is to have strength and rationality. Radical ecofeminism attempts to challenge these formed dualistic assumptions of typicality and aim for a reconstruction of society.

Culturally, the devaluation of women is viewed as a social construct; it is a manifestation of masculine consciousness. Therefore, Cultural ecofeminists celebrate women's particular connections to the natural world.

Their philosophy embraces an ethic of care and human-nature relationships. It has been frequently discussed as a criticism of political and social studies. Others have approached it through the theories of Psychoanalysis and Marxism. It has also attracted a number of feminist readings and has received much attention and appraises from contemporary ecofeminist analyses. However, none has compared her ecofeminist stance towards the different cultures represented in the novel—the patriarchal culture of the Condors and the matriarchal culture of the Kesh compared with the dominant modern American culture “This meant to me only that I had no father’s mother, no father’s house, and therefore was a half-person” (Le Guin 1985, 10). These contrasting cultures can be seen inside her when she lives with her father's family, the Condors, and tries to become similar to them. She is, as the title suggests, always coming home. Le’Guin’s *Always Coming Home* presents an ecofeminist perspective which intends to weigh different cultures in relation to each other. The Kesh people are a mix of hunters, gatherers, and farmers. They have a strong respect for nature. They live peacefully in the Valley. In their view, human beings did not do things accidentally and the evil in the world has been done consciously and deliberately such as the release of radioactive or poisonous substances, the permanent genetic impairment from which they suffer in the form of sterility and congenital diseases. It is the path they follow which is relational rather than hierarchical. A nearby culture called the Condors is all men of no houses. They are living for themselves. They believe that everything belongs to them; women, animals, things, and the whole world. They are trying to expand and conquest as much territory as they can. Their culture is based on dominance and destruction.

In summary, women’s health inequities are related to low-income, poverty, and environmental conditions including residential exposures in low-income neighborhoods and substandard housing (Wasylishyn and Johnson 1998; Welch and Kneipp 2005). Because of women’s responsibilities in society, and in particular low-income mothers,

they are in positions of unique exposure as well as unique consciousness (Clay 2003, A34). Ample evidence indicates that social determinants of health, including income, housing and social policy have a stronger influence on health than individual lifestyle choices, and are rooted in factors beyond the control of most individuals. Trends in an increased burden of chronic diseases are reflected in geographical distributions of economic and social disparities and a rural-urban divide.

The primitive idea of reproduction as the main reason for sexual and romantic relationships limits our objective which fuels anti-queer rhetoric in western social norms. We interpret nature based on our inherent biases and use our biased understanding of nature to defend and justify these societal biases we have. The paradigm that queerness is both unnatural and primitive is seen in the same arguments used in oppressive ideologies like racism and sexism. Queer can be seen as normal, the society which constantly tries to create balance only makes it more unbalanced by disturbing the flow. "Nature is wonderfully Homosexual, Non-Monogamous and Queer."

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TRACING THE ELEMENTS OF CULTURAL RELATIVISM IN MAMANG DAI'S *THE LEGENDS OF PENSAM*

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(Author Note: This study is supported by the fund received from the University Grants
Commissionas Junior Research Fellowship)

Abstract

Ethnographic research, especially among the Northeast Indian tribal groups has been done by a lot of researchers in recent times. It can also be noted that the tribal peoples' oral literature has found its way into the mainstream culture expressed in the form of poetry, novels, short stories, memoirs, and non-fiction writings. In this context, Mamang Dai, a novelist and poet from Arunachal Pradesh has particularly woven most of her novels that express the cultural identity and societal constructs of the Adi tribes. One of her acclaimed novels, *The Legend of Pensam* serves as a portrait of the tribal lifestyle in Arunachal Pradesh. Their rituals, customs, beliefs, and threats are brought out through various characters. This research paper attempts to find out the elements of cultural relativism, a concept introduced by the famous anthropologist Franz Boas.

Keywords: Ethnography, Cultural Relativism, Anthropology, Adi tribes, Societal Constructs.

Human life is shaped by various cultural constructs and societal structures that prevail within the society. A specific group of people or an individual has a set of beliefs, ethics, rituals, customs, faith, symbols, cultural and linguistic identities. This kind of collective consciousness should be understood, interpreted, and analyzed based on the societal hierarchies and cultural circumstances the people live. Culture is often based on certain beliefs, rituals, faith, behaviour, attitude, and objects too. Some cultural objects are represented in outward and external things that hold a significant value in the society. In some instances, culture creates the cultural objects and vice versa. For example, Christians hang decorative bulbs in star shape during Christmas. Within Christian culture, star has become a cultural object because they believe that the star of Bethlehem guided the wise men from the East to find the newborn Christ. Similarly, any object can become a cultural object in course of time. This shows how a particular religious group has created a cultural object. It may be communal, religious, linguistic, tribal, and so on. The other one is maintaining a unique individuality based on individual interpretations.

In Mamang Dai's *Legends of Pensam*, a tribal society is portrayed in terms of their rituals, beliefs, interaction with nature as well as the mainstream society and so on.

The literary work describes the characters that belong to the span of four generations in a village of Arunachal Pradesh. The readers come to know about Hoxo's father in the first few pages and the novel ends with Hoxo's grand-daughter. Hoxo's father belongs to the generation in which people believed strange creatures of the forest. They were not in any way connected to the mainstream culture. Their faith, belief and attitude are deeply well rooted in the ethnic roots of their tribal society. They believed in spirit manifestation and accepted without question when Lutor, the chief of Ida clan told them about a boy who fell from the sky. i.e. Hoxo. The reader also encounters a female character named Losi who is said to be born to the river woman. The lores narrated in the *Legends of Pensam* bring out the liminal spaces where the tribes are placed between myth and reality that influence the lives of Adi tribal society.

There are also characters that belong to different cultures interacting with the tribal people. The narrator is accompanied by her friend Mona who is eager to know about the ways of the tribal people. Mona and her husband Jules have a "mobile lifestyle; they move across countries and continents and were at that time on a brief posting in New Delhi" (Dai 18). From this reference one could interpret that Mona's family belongs to the urban culture. Cities play an important role in shaping the urban culture. They give space for many subcultures to interact and come close with each other. The tribal culture and the urban culture come in contact with each other in *Legends of Pensamas* the narrator visits the tribal village accompanied by Mona. Mona's husband Jules joins them afterwards. The villagers had lots of stories and other such things to narrate to their visitors. The visitors are wondered and awestruck by everything they listen, see and hear. They adore and admire the landscapes of the tribal culture and they seemed to show much interest in everything that the villagers had prepared for them. Still, at times, "Jules was in a hurry to get back to the city" (Dai 47).

Throughout the novel, one can find elements of cultural relativism being performed between these two cultures. In parallel, there are also traces that indicate the presence of emergent and residual cultures within the tribal group among the younger generation. Cultural Relativism refers to the observation of another culture without any prejudice or certain universal standards. It holds the point that no culture is inferior or superior to each other and every culture should be understood from its own context. The theory of Cultural Relativism was established by Franz Boaz and popularized by his student Ruth Benedict. Cultural Relativism holds the view that any culture should not be judged based on Eurocentric standards. The cultural practices of other groups should be understood in its cultural context. In the words of Ruth Benedict, an anthropologist, and a folklorist, who popularized 'Cultural Relativism' in her work *The Patterns of Culture*, "The significance of cultural behaviour is not exhausted when we have clearly understood that it is local and manmade and hugely variable. It tends also to be

integrated. A culture, like an individual, is a more or less consistent pattern of thought and action” (46).

Mona shares the autistic behavioral condition of her daughter Adela to Hoxo’s family. She requests the narrator to tell them to pray for her daughter. When Adela was three years old, Mona realized that there is something wrong with her child. She had hired a middle-aged house maid and accommodated her in her home. As days passed, Adela got on so well with the maid. Mona is a famous development scientist and the proprietor of a glossy magazine. Her chores became easier because of the maid and she “began to leave the house for longer and longer periods to pore over her papers and peer into her computer at office. Then, one day, her daughter refused to speak” (Dai 18). After a medical consultation, Adela was diagnosed with the condition of autism. On listening to this, the reaction of Hoxo is nothing of that which showed prejudice or anything. Rather, he listened to them in silence.

In turn, he tells them about Togum’s son Kepi. One evening, Kepi suffers from high fever. His mother did not want to rush him to the general hospital. Eventually the temperature rises and they took him to the hospital. He consumed the prescribed medicines by the doctor and was taking rest. At night, he let out a high-pitched wail that held everybody in fear. From that day onwards, he did not move but cried, ate and slept. The tribal people believed that the spirit of a snake had coiled around his body. Hoxo was called to perform the serpent ritual so that they can restore the sick child. They chanted and negotiated with the spirits but “the spirits had moved away to a place beyond call” (Dai 24). Both these children loved music. They also share a similar kind of sickness but were treated in an entirely different way. When these two life experiences are shared between cultures, each of them listens, understands and empathizes for each other.

The presence of emergent culture is also traced in *The Legends of Pensam*. In the words of Raymond Williams in his work, *Culture and Society*, “The idea of culture is a general reaction to a general and major change in the conditions of our common life. Its basic element is its effort at total qualitative assessment” (314). In addition to this, he also states that the emergence of culture is a process and not the conclusion. The last chapter of the novel describes about the youngsters grouped around the TV and watching a programme where “a group of men and women smiling and singing” (Dai 181). This is a direct contrast to the image of the book cover. The image of the book cover illustrates a group of young people, under the background of bamboo forests with their traditional outfit and jewelry sitting in a semicircle form. A gradual shift from sitting around the elders to hear stories and folklores to sitting in front of a modern invention to be mesmerized by the popular values and beliefs is emerging. This culture shift has not occurred overnight but gradually across four generations.

It can also be noted that the tribal culture adapts itself into the emergent culture and brings out the residual culture. They eagerly involve in activities that documents their culture and thus preserving the ethnic tradition. While Mona and her film-maker friend came to survey the place, the villagers gave a warm welcome to them and displayed the magnificence of their culture. “A number of important visitors had arrived, and the stage was being set to showcase traditional culture through the festival that would go on for three days. Yesterday and today would be presented on the same platform; a mingling of old-style presentations and new, modern talent” (Dai 184). Everybody was awaiting the performance of the legendary performer Menga X. They cheered him up to their fullest when he performed. Such a great performer too lacked powers to renew the tribal culture that has undergone a paradigm shift. He longs for the past. In his words, “But I want the old days back... The days when I was poor and unknown. It was the time my soul sang at its loudest and saddest. It was also the time my soul sang in elation, for the love of a woman... Oh, the days of my youth, the bittersweet kernel of my days! Give me back my gift! Give me back my soul!” (Dai 187).

In spite of all such diversities in the subcultures within the tribal group that spreads over four generations; cultural relativism is at its peak. It does not judge the other culture by having some prejudiced notions and moral standards. This helps in knowing the newness of each culture and paves a way for adapting the goodness in each culture. This shows that, when cultural relativism is practised it creates an effective interaction among diverse cultures and make the world a better to place to live in.

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MULTIFARIOUS THEMES OF POSTCOLONIALISM IN AMITAVGHOSH'S *THE SHADOW LINES AND SEA OF POPPIES*

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Abstract

This paper probes the legacy of colonialism and imperialism in Amitav Ghosh's novels *The Shadow Lines* and *Sea of Poppies*. Amitav Ghosh has been known for his postcolonial writing that focuses on the history of the nation, narration of the characters, time and space, and spatial dimensions. He adroitly handled critical themes such as cultural identity, power dynamics, colonial oppression, hybridity, third space, nation boundaries, and resistance through the characters. In the novel *The Shadow Lines*, Ghosh explores memory and traumatic experiences in the family of Datta Chaudhuris and the Price family. In the postcolonial novel *Sea of Poppies*, Ghosh highlights colonialism, migration, the quest for identity and ecocritical concern. This research article traces the multifarious themes in the selected novels through the lens of postcolonialism.

Keywords: Postcolonialism, Third Space, Spatial Dimension, Resistance, Adroitly.

Contemporary writers have a strong desire to describe the historical, emotional, and artistic picture of the modern world, which is torn by the colonial past. Amitav Ghosh is one of the best contemporary postcolonial writers. His work has set a yardstick for modern literature and his voice has become revolutionary in aftermath colonialism and climate change. Ghosh's real life is an example for his exploration of his novels. He was born in Calcutta and he grew up in India, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka. And he living in London, he seeks a rich engagement with the journey through the history. In postcolonial perspective how colonisers conquered and controlled the colonised and how the oppressed group have since faced the problems and resistance to those ordeals. According to Bill Ashcroft,

The spatial significance and the frequent paradox of colonial nationalism becomes obvious when we consider the amount of emotional and political energy expended, in the name of such artificial, detached and culturally erroneous boundaries. The question of how postcolonial people are to inhabit the space defined by these boundaries, how they are to retrieve the 'placeness' of such a space, lies at the heart of the political realities of the post-colonial state. (Ashcroft 177)

This research paper focuses on how Postcolonial themes are represented in Amitav Ghosh's novels, *The Shadow Lines* and *Sea of Poppies*. Ghosh skilfully handled critical themes such as cultural identity, memory, power dynamics, colonial oppression, history of the past, hybridity, third space, nation boundaries, and resistance through the characters. Ghosh inspects the background history of the nation and various political upheavals during colonial period.

The Shadow Lines was published in the year 1988 and it won Sahitya Akademi Award. The novel divided into two parts 'Going Away' and 'Coming Home'. Both two parts title itself reveal the leitmotif 'journey.' Gosh begins the novel with precolonial India and he give a sensitive picture on India.

In the novel *the Shadow Lines*, author knit the novel with the important background of histories such as partition of India in 1947, Swadeshi Movement, Bombing of London in World War II, and the Communal riots of Dhaka in 1963 and Calcutta in 1964. In the communal riot in Dhaka on 1964 Tridib, and Jethamoshai were died. Tridib's, death affected all these people to whom he was related and became an incident that was permanently imprinted on their minds and heart wrenching one in all their life. The novel portrays the friendship between the Bengali family and an English family, over three generations and it interconnected the characters across the country. And the novel shifts from one place to another place. The interconnected places are London to Calcutta to Dhakka told through the point of view of a contemporary male character.

The border boundaries reflected in the novel through the character, Jethamoshai. He was the main reason of Thamma's Dhaka visit. Everyone compels him to leave Dhaka and move with his family who have come to bring him back all the way from Calcutta. Jethamoshai told to Thamma;

I know everything, I understand everything. Once you start moving you never stop. I said: I don't believe in this India-Shindia. It is all very well, you are going away now, but suppose when you get here, they decide to draw another line somewhere? What will you do then? Where will you move to? No one will have you anywhere. As for me, I was born here, and I will die here. (TSL 215)

Ghosh uses memory as a main thread to knit the novel. The narrator uses the past and the present memory. Once Socrates gave an important feature on memory. Socrates said to Theaetetus about memory:

Imagine, then, for the sake of argument, that our minds contain a block of wax, which in this or that individual may be larger or smaller, and

composed of wax that is comparatively pure or muddy, and harder in some, softer in others and sometimes just the right consistency. Let us call it the gift of the Muses' mother, Memory, and say that whenever we wish to remember something we see or hear or conceive in our own minds, we hold this wax under perceptions or ideas and imprint them on it as we might stamp the impression of a seal-ring. Whatever is so imprinted we remember and know so long as the image remains; whatever is rubbed out or has not succeeded in leaving an impression we have forgotten or do not know? (Richards 25 -27)

Socrates explained memory is an experience. It begins with the perception of mind not traces on memory. Socrates called the term mind is Tabula Rasa (blank slate). Experiences leaves the traces. These traces faced by the characters narrator's memory on Tridib, and Grandmother Mayadebi. The narrator recollects his memories.

In this novel the characters contend to build their identities. The postcolonial characters in *the Shadow Lines* are in quest their identity. The grandmother in the novel is a refugee and Ila face rootlessness in this modern world, and the unnamed narrator investigates the world through the eyes of his uncle Tridib. The anti-imperialist grandmother's national faith is based on her sincerity and loyalty both to her nation and family. Ila's identity is based on diaspora and colonialist superiority. The unnamed narrator's identity is based on the memories of history through the eyes of his uncle Tridib. The concept of identity is connected with nationality.

Sea of Poppies was published in the year 2008 and it shortlisted for Man Booker Prize. It is first volume of Ibis trilogy. And this novel set against the backdrop of Opium Trade during the colonial period. Ghosh probes the themes of exploitation, cultivation of poppies, displacement, migration, cultural clashes, and economical disparities brought by British imperialists on colonial India. In this novel European nation not only changed the culture and society of Third World Nations but also the ecology of the Indian colonial regions. The novel is set in the colonial India of 1838 and begins at Ghazipur, the place where poppies was produced during the British Raj India. The protagonist Deedi, who forced into a marriage and lost her opium addicted husband. And she saved from Window's pyre by Zachary Reid an American sailor. Neel Ratan Halder was an Indian Raja called Zamindar and an orphan boy named Lambert. All of them started a journey through Ibis ship. There their story intertwines each other. And this novel scrutinises the harsh realities of the colonial exploitations and their longingness for the freedom.

The colonised people exploited, tormented, and deprived by the colonisers. The land that once produced rich and varied food crops is swamped with the rising drift of (opium) poppies. The exploitation forming a diasporic community. The workers toiled

for hours together without any rest, and were subject to the most inhumane treatment by the White Supervisors. The land is inhabited by whites. When Deeti noticed that the landscape on the river banks had changed a great deal since her childhood. Deeti's transformation from a submissive to surviving woman. And 'Ibis' ship is an example of globalisation. It aboard the characters including Indians, Americans, and Europeans. It reflects the interconnectedness of the cultures. The novel *Sea of Poppies* explores the themes like struggle for liberation and dehumanising effects of exploitation. The article has focused on the postcolonial themes in the novels of Amitav Ghosh. The colonial rule has shattered the lives of the people. They impose their exploitations, cultural suppressions on them. And aftermath colonialism often resulted on the cultural identities, loss, traumatic experiences, and trajectory memories. The point of the view of the colonised people is reflected in the contemporary trend of Postcolonialism in the novel *The Shadow Lines* and *Sea of Poppies*.

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THE DIALECTICS OF 'GRACE AND LAW' IN *PARADISE LOST*

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Abstract

The timeless epic *Paradise Lost* by John Milton delves into profound theological concepts, with a central focus on the juxtaposition of grace and law. These terms carry significant weight in both theological and literary contexts, representing the divine order and the mercy extended to humanity (Danielson1982). In this exploration, the goal is to dissect the nuanced portrayal of grace and law within the intricate tapestry of Milton's magnum opus. In *Paradise Lost*, the theological origins of grace and law are manifested in the cosmic drama unfolding within both celestial and mortal realms. Milton skillfully integrates theological concepts into the narrative, determining the characters' fates based on their engagement with divine law and grace (Danielson1989). This paper explores this dynamic interaction between grace and law that becomes a pervasive thematic undercurrent that permeates the entirety of *Paradise Lost*.

Keywords: Milton, Fate, Grace, Law.

In theological discussions, the term "grace" encompasses the undeserved favor and kindness granted to individuals by a higher power. It is frequently linked to divine mercy and pardon, acting as a redemptive influence that surpasses human imperfections. Conversely, "law" denotes the unchanging principles and rules established by a supreme authority, delineating the moral and ethical limits that govern the universe. In literature, these concepts transcend their theological origins, transforming into potent allegorical devices that mold characters and influence the dynamics of the plot.

Milton's *Paradise Lost* navigates the cosmic drama of the fall of man, intricately weaving together the themes of grace and law against the backdrop of Adam and Eve's disobedience. The poem commences with the rebellion of fallen angels against God's law, emphasizing the repercussions of defiance. As the narrative progresses, the contours of divine grace become increasingly evident, providing a glimmer of hope amid the inevitable consequences of transgression. Milton's nuanced exploration of grace and law extends beyond divine realms, permeating the mortal realm and influencing the choices and destinies of Adam and Eve. The tension between God's just laws and the redemptive potential of grace forms a central dialectic, propelling the narrative with philosophical depth and moral urgency.

This exploration seeks to unravel the intricate interplay of grace and law within *Paradise Lost*, examining how Milton crafts a theological epic that addresses timeless

questions of morality, free will, and the enduring struggle between divine justice and mercy. Through this analysis, we aim to illuminate the profound insights embedded in Milton's poetic tapestry, providing a deeper understanding of the complexities inherent in the divine-human relationship as portrayed in *Paradise Lost*.

In the expansive tapestry of *Paradise Lost*, the concept of divine justice serves as a foundational pillar upon which the narrative unfolds. Central to this justice is the celestial law, a manifestation of God's all-encompassing wisdom and righteousness. Milton meticulously explores the role of law in divine justice, presenting it as the unassailable standard by which the cosmos operates. The portrayal of God's law in the poem is far from arbitrary; rather, it symbolizes divine order and perfection. This law functions as the moral compass governing both celestial and earthly realms, embodying the unchanging nature of God's character. The cosmic order, grounded in divine law, becomes the instrument through which God's justice is administered. This perspective aligns with Christian theology, where the concept of law is inseparable from God's nature and is a reflection of His holiness.

Milton's portrayal of God's laws in *Paradise Lost* transcends a mere regulatory framework; it becomes the very fabric that sustains the universe. The poem vividly illustrates how the cosmic order, governed by divine law, orchestrates the movements of celestial bodies, the flow of time, and the fate of both angels and humans. The meticulous adherence to these laws is presented as essential for maintaining harmony within the divine plan. In contrast, disobedience to these divine laws is met with severe consequences. The rebellion of Satan and his followers serves as a poignant example of the price exacted for defiance. The cosmic upheaval caused by their rebellion underscores the gravity of transgressing God's law. Milton, drawing from theological underpinnings, emphasizes that the consequences of disobedience are not arbitrary but inherent like divine justice. The portrayal of these consequences adds depth to the moral and theological dimensions of the poem, highlighting the intricate balance between justice and mercy.

In essence, the examination of divine justice and law in *Paradise Lost* unfolds as a profound meditation on the cosmic order. Through meticulous analysis, Milton invites readers to contemplate the nature of God's justice, the significance of divine law, and the repercussions of straying from the ordained path. This exploration adds layers of complexity to the narrative, positioning divine justice as a central theme that reverberates throughout the epic, challenging characters, and readers alike to grapple with the profound implications of moral choices within the divine framework.

In *Paradise Lost*, John Milton introduces a nuanced interpretation of grace that surpasses traditional theological boundaries. Milton's concept of grace is not confined to a passive bestowal of divine favor; rather, it emerges as a dynamic force weaving through the narrative, shaping the destinies of celestial beings and mortals alike. Rooted in his deep engagement with Christian theology, Milton's understanding of grace aligns with the idea of unmerited divine favor, but he expands this concept to encompass the transformative power of redemption. Milton's portrayal of grace challenges the deterministic notions of predestination prevalent in his time. Grace, in his view, becomes a catalyst for change a force that actively engages with the moral choices of characters. It operates as a beacon of hope, offering the possibility of redemption even in the face of profound transgressions. The significance of Milton's concept of grace lies in its role as a counterbalance to the inexorable consequences of divine justice, introducing a redemptive dimension that elevates the narrative beyond a mere exploration of cosmic order.

Satan's Rebellion and the Challenge to Law in *Paradise Lost* the core of *Paradise Lost* resonates with the tumultuous echoes of Satan's rebellion against the celestial order governed by God's law. Milton vividly depicts Lucifer's defiance, his audacious rejection of divine authority, and the rallying of a legion of angels to challenge the established cosmic hierarchy. The implications of Satan's rebellion reverberate not only through the celestial spheres but also echo in the very foundations of Milton's exploration of law and morality. Satan's insurrection is rooted in pride and a desire for autonomy. The fallen angels, enticed by the prospect of self-governance, reject the divine law that governs their existence. This rebellion poses a profound challenge to the very fabric of the universe, unsettling the cosmic balance and initiating a conflict that forms the backbone of the epic. The fallen angels, once radiant beings in God's presence, now grapple with the consequences of their disobedience, thrust into a realm of darkness and despair.

Adam and Eve, as divinely created beings, possess the gift of free will—an inherent capacity for choice that extends to their interactions with the laws set by God. The unfolding narrative meticulously examines how human agency, guided by moral considerations and divine directives, shapes the destiny of the first couple. This exploration underscores the profound interplay between autonomy and obedience, inviting readers to reflect on the implications of human choices within the divine framework.

As Adam and Eve navigate the pristine Edenic environment, the laws set by God become the guiding principles that define their existence. The divine commandment to abstain from the forbidden fruit serves as a litmus test for their adherence to divine law.

Milton paints a nuanced picture of the couple's decision-making process, influenced not only by their free will but also by the moral imperatives laid out by God. The consequences of Adam and Eve's actions unfold as a poignant exploration of the intricate relationship between human agency and divine law. Their choice to defy God's command ushers in a cascade of consequences not merely as a punitive measure but as an inherent outcome of their violation of the established cosmic order. The narrative carefully delineates the cause-and-effect dynamics, portraying the ripple effects of disobedience on the couple, their descendants, and the world they inhabit.

Milton's *Paradise Lost* intricately weaves a tapestry where the paradox of grace and law unfolds with compelling complexity. Throughout the poem, instances arise where these two foundational concepts of theology seem to coexist in tension or conflict. One such instance is evident in the character of Satan, who, despite embodying rebellion and defiance against divine law, becomes a vehicle through which the redemptive grace of God is paradoxically manifested. Satan's fall serves as a canvas where the stark contrast between divine justice and the potential for grace is vividly painted.

Another poignant moment occurs in the mortal realm, as Adam and Eve face the consequences of their disobedience. Amid divine judgment, there are glimpses of grace in God's willingness to offer a path to redemption through future salvation a paradoxical interplay where justice and mercy converge. The tension between these instances becomes a thematic undercurrent, challenging conventional notions of a dichotomy between divine law and grace.

The very essence of the paradox lies in the tension between divine law, representing justice and order, and grace, embodying mercy, and redemption. Milton crafts a narrative where these two seemingly opposing forces converge, creating paradoxical moments that prompt profound reflection. One such tension arises in Satan's internal struggle. Despite his rebellion against God's law, there is a poignant acknowledgment of God's grace in allowing him to continue existing, albeit in a state of eternal punishment. This paradox challenges readers to grapple with the complexity of divine mercy extending even to the fallen. The narrative further deepens the paradox when considering the fall of humanity. The consequences of breaking divine law are severe, yet within the unfolding drama, God's grace emerges as a beacon of hope. The promise of redemption through the future Messiah introduces a paradoxical interplay where the severity of divine justice meets the boundless potential for grace.

In essence, the paradox of grace and law in *Paradise Lost* serves as a philosophical crucible. Milton invites readers to confront the tension between justice and mercy, obedience, and rebellion, in a narrative that transcends simplistic dichotomies.

The coexistence and conflict between grace and law become not only a thematic exploration but a profound meditation on the intricacies of the divine-human relationship, challenging readers to navigate the paradoxes inherent in the cosmic drama of Milton's epic poem.

Paradise Lost unfolds as narrative rich with moments of redemption, where characters grapple with the consequences of their actions and encounter the transformative power of divine grace. One pivotal moment occurs in the aftermath of Satan's rebellion. Despite his defiance and perpetual enmity with God, there is a subtle yet profound element of redemption woven into his narrative. Satan, in his introspective moments, becomes a mirror reflecting the potential for repentance and change, albeit within the confines of his fallen state.

In the mortal realm, the story of Adam and Eve is a canvas painted with hues of redemption. Their disobedience triggers a cascade of consequences, yet even in their fallen state, the promise of redemption and eventual salvation is embedded in the divine plan. Milton navigates these moments with intricate detail, portraying the characters' journeys from despair to hope, underscoring the redemptive undercurrents that shape the epic.

The experience of grace in *Paradise Lost* is not a passive phenomenon but a dynamic force that operates within the lives of the characters, offering a pathway to salvation. For Satan, grace manifests as an internal struggle an opportunity for self-reflection and potential repentance. Despite his rebellion, there is a persistent element of divine mercy that challenges the notion of absolute damnation.

The exploration of grace as a means of salvation delves into the very heart of Milton's theological inquiry. It challenges deterministic views of predestination, presenting grace as an active and transformative force that engages with the choices of individuals. In this dynamic interplay, characters confront the consequences of their actions while simultaneously experiencing the redemptive potential inherent in divine grace. In summary, *Paradise Lost* navigates the theme of redemption and the role of grace with a nuanced brush, painting a narrative where characters grapple with their moral choices and encounter the transformative power of divine mercy. The exploration of grace as a means of salvation underscores the dynamic nature of the divine-human relationship, leaving readers with a profound meditation on the complexities of sin, repentance, and the enduring hope embedded in the concept of redemptive grace.

The examination of temporal and eternal dimensions brings to light the interplay of grace and law in both realms. In the mortal realm, divine grace manifests as a

redemptive force, offering a glimmer of hope and salvation even in the face of human disobedience. Conversely, in the eternal realm, the tension between divine justice and the potential for grace creates a complex moral landscape where the consequences of rebellion persist but are juxtaposed with the possibility of redemption. Milton's depiction of temporal and eternal dimensions is laden with symbolic and allegorical elements. The earthly and celestial realms serve as metaphors for the human condition and the cosmic order, inviting readers to reflect on the timeless themes of morality, free will, and the consequences of disobedience. The exploration of temporal and eternal dimensions in *Paradise Lost* enriches our understanding of how grace and law operate across different realms. It underscores the universality of moral choices and the enduring consequences that ripple through both mortal and celestial spheres. Milton's nuanced treatment invites readers to contemplate the interconnectedness of time and eternity within the grand theological and literary canvas of his epic poem.

Milton's use of blank verse, with its iambic pentameter and unrhymed lines, imparts a sense of gravity and solemnity to the thematic content. The elevated diction, replete with archaic and grandiloquent language, not only captures the epic tone but also elevates the theological discourse. This stylistic choice contributes to the gravity of discussions on divine law and grace, underscoring the weightiness of the themes explored. The characterization of both divine and fallen figures in *Paradise Lost* is another stylistic device through which the dialectics of grace and law are vividly portrayed. Milton endows characters with distinct voices and attributes, enabling them to serve as conduits for the exploration of theological themes. The dialogue becomes a dynamic space where the tensions between grace and law are articulated, providing insight into the characters' perspectives and moral dilemmas. Milton skillfully employs rhythmic variations and pacing to mirror the ebb and flow of the dialectical themes. This intentional pacing enhances the emotional impact of moments where grace and law intersect or collide.

Milton's literary techniques in *Paradise Lost* serve as a testament to his mastery of craft, elevating the portrayal of the dialectics between grace and law to unparalleled heights. Through epic similes, blank verse, intertextuality, characterization, and rhythmic variations, Milton crafts a rich tapestry that invites readers to not only engage with the theological themes but also appreciate the aesthetic brilliance with which these themes are rendered in the epic poem.

In the epic tapestry of *Paradise Lost*, John Milton intricately weaves a profound exploration of the dialectics between grace and law, crafting a narrative that delves into the complexities of divine justice, human agency, and the redemptive potential inherent in the interplay of these foundational concepts. The exploration of grace and law in

Paradise Lost reveals a multifaceted tapestry where these theological concepts intersect, conflict, and coalesce. Through meticulous examination, it becomes evident that Milton's concept of grace is not merely an antithesis to law but a dynamic force that operates within the framework of divine justice. Instances such as Satan's rebellion, the fall of humanity, and moments of redemption serve as focal points where the tension between grace and law is palpable.

Satan's rebellion, a dramatic defiance of divine law, becomes a paradoxical canvas where the potential for redemption, despite disobedience, is subtly portrayed. The mortal realm, embodied by Adam and Eve, serves as a microcosm of the cosmic drama, illustrating the delicate balance between free will, obedience to divine law, and the transformative power of grace. The consequences of disobedience are severe, yet redemption and salvation remain palpable threads woven into the narrative. Milton's exploration of the dialectics of grace and law transcends the confines of a theological epic, offering profound insights into the human condition, morality, and the nature of the divine-human relationship. The paradoxes embedded in the narrative challenge simplistic dichotomies, prompting readers to grapple with the nuanced interplay between justice and mercy, rebellion, and redemption.

The broader implications of Milton's exploration extend to the theological discourse of his time and beyond. His portrayal of grace as an active and transformative force challenges deterministic views, emphasizing the potential for redemption even in the face of profound transgressions. Milton engages with the theological debates of his era, offering a unique perspective that navigates the complexities of moral agency and the divine plan. In "*Paradise Lost*," grace and law become not only thematic elements but lenses through which profound philosophical questions are examined. The narrative invites readers to contemplate the intricacies of the human experience, the consequences of moral choices, and the enduring hope embedded in the concept of redemptive grace. Milton's exploration leaves an indelible mark on literature, theology, and the ongoing dialogue surrounding the complexities of divine justice, mercy, and the intricate dance between law and grace in the cosmic drama of existence.

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TEXTUALITY OF HISTORY AND HISTORICITY OF TEXT: A NEW HISTORICAL ANALYSIS OF THOMAS HARDY'S *A SPELLBOUND PALACE*

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Abstract

The proposed research attempts to scrutinize Thomas Hardy's *A Spellbound Palace* from a New Historical perspective, which focuses on the textuality of history and the historicity of the text. This article studies that the textuality of history incorporates the writer's point of view in the characters' minds or in describing a particular event. In contrast, the historicity of the text emerges from the supremacy of the history and the writer's own life experience on the text and the reader's response to the text. The present research concludes that the text resonates with history by recreating historical events.

Keywords: New Historicism, Textuality of History, Historicity of the Text.

New Historicism is a critical approach that developed in the 1980s, mainly in Stephen Greenblatt's and Louis Montrose's works, based on the assumption that a literary text must be considered as an output of the historical and cultural conditions of its production and interpretations rather than as an isolated creation of genius. It aims to understand the work by its historical background and, at the same time, understand cultural and intellectual history through Literature. Literature is observed as an expression of the surrounding society's power structures, which is heavily influenced by Foucault's analysis of Power.

A Spellbound Palace is among the best poems by Thomas Hardy. It was written around 1925, a few years before Hardy died in 1928. It was posthumously published in the collection *Winter Words in Various Moods and Meters*. As many of Hardy's great poems were inspired by his early life with his first wife, Emma, *A Spellbound Palace* is no exception. In this poem, Hardy uses various poetic techniques and recalls his visit to Hampton Court Palace in 1874-75, located on the banks of the river Thames. By reminiscing his visit to the Hampton Court Palace, Hardy pictures Tudor England in *The Spellbound Palace* during King Henry VIII's reign.

And there swaggers the Shade of a straddling King, plumed, sworded,
with sensual face,
And lo, too, that of his Minister, at a bold self-centred pace:
Sheer in the sun they pass; and thereupon all is still,

Save the mindless fountain tinkling on with thin enfeebled will (qtd in Flores, Poetic Lyricism in Thomas Hardy's Descriptions of Nature 8)

In *Professing the Renaissance: The Poetics and Politics of Culture*, Louis Montrose asserts that New Historicism employs textuality of History and the Historicity of texts. The Historicity of text allude to the 'cultural specificity and social embedment of all modes of writing'; it focuses on the text's historical, socio-political and cultural backgrounds of its production. The Textuality of History alludes to the fictional construction of history.

By the Historicity of texts, I mean to suggest the cultural specificity, the social embedment, of all modes of writing... By the textuality of history, I mean to suggest, firstly, that we have no access to a full and authentic past, a lived material existence..., and secondly, that those textual traces are themselves subject to subsequent textual mediations when they are constructed as the 'documents' upon which historians ground their own texts, called 'histories' (qtd, Carroll *Possessed by the Past: Agency, Inauthentic Testimony, and Wilkomirski's Fragments*).

The poem's title, *A Spellbound Palace*, depicts the writer's point of view in describing a particular event under the title, *A Spellbound Palace*, while textualising the history. The narrative technique of omniscient focalisation allows the writer to textualise the history with his point of view while describing the Hampton Court Palace as *A Spellbound Palace*. It is believed that some sorrowful events happened in the palace. Henry VIII's third wife, Jane Seymore, died in the palace while delivering her son, Edward, who later became Edward IV. Also, another wife, Catherine Howard, was arrested in the Hampton Court Palace and later murdered in the London Tower. It is believed that Jane Seymore's spirit would appear every year on her death anniversary; her spirit still revolves around the palace. 'Omniscient focalisation is a traditional narrative method, which is featured that the omniscient narrator can narrate from any perspective and from any time and space' (Shen 204).

Thomas Hardy illustrates the Hampton court palace and provides the history of King Henry VIII from the Age of Renaissance in 1925. 'As 'twere history's own asile' (qtd, Flores, Poetic Lyricism in Thomas Hardy's Descriptions of Nature 8). *Merriam-Webster Dictionary* says the word 'asile' is now "a passage separating sections of seats". But earlier, the word was used to refer to various things which are related to the kingdom; for instance, it was as follows,

Hardy uses simple language that is easy to comprehend; even in his poetry, he has slightly rare or archaic terms. The word 'asile' is a nice illustration of this: asile is an early form of the more familiar word 'asylum', which refers to the idea of solace or refuge and also refers to madness. "'Court' and 'asylum' are also semantically linked, given the other, legal meaning of 'court'. The notion that Hampton Court Palace is 'History's own asile' suggests not only that visitors to the palace have a chance to observe a place where English history has been preserved, but also that the history being preserved was wild and chaotic – as indeed it was, since Hampton Court immediately summons the ghosts of not only King Henry VIII but also his Minister, Cardinal Thomas Wolsey, whose fall from grace preceded Henry's break with Rome and his divorce from his first wife, Catherine of Aragon (a divorce Wolsey had failed to make happen) and his subsequent marriage to Anne Boleyn" (Tearle).

Another important notion in New Historicism is that it aims to understand the work by its historical background and, simultaneously, understand cultural and intellectual history through Literature (Venugopal et al. 196–197). New Historicism suggests 'parallel' reading of literary and non-literary texts. The literary foreground and the historical background always conflict with each other and have a dialectical relationship. Historicity of the text alludes to the notion that the text has a specific social, cultural, and political embedment.

At the poem's beginning, Hardy traces back to the day of his visit to the palace. Hardy portrays the season, the imagery of crossing the yew trees, and the architecture of the Hampton Court Palace and its Spires through his yet pleading poetic language.

On this kindly yellow day of mild low-travelling winter sun
The stirless depths of the yews
Are vague with misty blues:
Across the spacious pathways stretching spires of shadow run, (qtd,
Flores, Poetic Lyricism in Thomas Hardy's Descriptions of Nature 8).

Also, Hardy pictures the things he finds inside the palace. He even talks about the brick it is made of. In the 20th century, he depicted all these things belonging to the Age of Renaissance, approximately the 15th century. Perhaps it is Hardy's experience in his life. 'And the wind-gnawed walls of ancient brick are fired vermilion' (qtd in Flores, Poetic Lyricism in Thomas Hardy's Descriptions of Nature 8).

To conclude, *A Spellbound Palace* is a product of a specific historical and cultural context. The poem's historical context is embodied in the application of omniscient focalisation, and Historicity of the text can be realised through the influence

of the writer's historical background. By textualising history, Thomas Hardy breaks the boundaries amidst history and Literature. He also provides materials for a better understanding of history in a better way.

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UNEARTHING CONCEALED CONNOTATIONS IN MITCH ALBOM'S *HAVE A LITTLE FAITH*

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Abstract

Mitch Albom, an author of numerous fiction and nonfiction, is also a screen writer, journalist, and philanthropist. *Have a Little Faith* is one of his best-known and well-read works which offers a beautiful story of an eighty-year journey between two worlds, i.e., two men, two faiths and two communities. It explores the idea of a life's purpose, the journey of losing and regaining faith, and the divine spark that resides inside each of us. Though it is the tale of one man, it is the narrative of all of us. The present paper focuses on the uncertainty of life and how it changes into a state of bloom in the fiction, *Have a Little Faith*.

Keywords: Faith, Meaning, Hope, Purpose, Life.

Mitchell David Albom, an American author, sports journalist, musician, renowned writer, and a best-selling author. His books are often exploring the study of redemption, forgiveness, love, and the meaning of life. In his famous work *Tuesdays with Morrie*, he portrays the meaning of faith in his own words: "Sometimes you cannot believe what you see, you have to believe what you feel" (Albom 61). He insists the fundamentals of one's own faith on something. The book, *Have a Little Faith* takes the readers in the journey of discovering the faith in order to find meaning in one's life.

The book, *Have a Little Faith* encounters the life of two eminent personalities from two different spaces. Albert Lewis, whom Mitch used to admire from his very childhood, made a request: "Will do you my eulogy?" (1). Mitch considered this as a task to take risk. All his age, he used to witness the life of Albert Lewis, shortly as Al, who is a pious and a man of honor next to God. Al, born in New York and experienced terrible poverty in his childhood. Al, who wanted to be a history teacher but the plan of God is not always same as one's thought. Then Al as a rabbi in a synagogue where he spent his life whole - to teach, to insist discipline, and above all – to sow faith.

Henry Covington, another character who is from a different perspective, to put simple, he is from another faith. Henry, a convicted thief, a drug dealer, almost defies ten commandments by his actions. His life is transformed from these to something which is beyond imagination and the reason is, beautiful faith does. Being lost his father in his childhood, Henry is not led a regular life instead he lived his life he wanted. While the journey, his beloved daughter passed away which is a tremendous blow in the life of

Henry. From bitterness to gladness, his life is transformed when he surrendered his life to the living God. From then, he became a Pastor and served people as many he forgot. Henry's service towards needy is the best change in his entire life. The journey of Al is different to Henry Covington. Both their life is similar in a particular aspect which is faith, the way they pursuing their faith is eventually the same.

Where faith is tested, results would be incredible. The life of one can be determined by level of faith in one thing. In this modern living era, the part of mind and body are important than anything. To achieve certain thing, one must in need of believing a thing. The act of faith is tested before the result is progressed. Faith is something that one can be experienced before the outcome. There is a thin line of variance between hope and faith. Hope is what we believe in something that one may promised. Faith is something one's believe in before the progress. In the case of faith, the mind must be prepared to meet fear and anxiety. The outcome may not be visually seen in the case of faith. Hope is manifested by the very probability of one may promised to an individual. When one has faith and being not confident about it, the journey towards life is of no use and considered as vein. The journey of faith is a two-way process. One may not find it in his own and reach destiny by himself. The nature of faith is not depending on one's own self.

Above all, the aspect of science and spiritual mindset play a crucial role in terms of faith and hope. Science is meant to be proved and spiritual psychology is meant to be experienced. Both may not go hand in hand. When a design is structured by the pattern of science, incidents that are recorded in the form of writings and things that are proved in the space of sciences, still there are things that are keep unanswered. One may separate mankind into two forms where one is believing Creator and other is resisting the Creator rather accept the creation. When Al did a sermon on how things happened in life, he quotes like this, "Money can save or destroy. Science can heal or kill. Even the nature can work for you or against you" (198) where he finally ends up by saying there are no things that God created 'bad.' He leaves it to mankind and that is what called as free will.

Through faith, one may stand as righteous in his life. The life of Al is undoubtedly relatable to this concept. He moves people from wickedness to righteousness through his sermons and inspired many beings to attain this asset. One who follows faith will make difference from one who blindly follows something on his own. The situation may not do justice to the result rather faith stands still in the end. The situation in Henry's life is often terrifying where he is in a state of dejection. Faith is not only expecting but need to experience the result become it comes.

The way one sees things is different from how a faith filled man evaluates things. There are multitudes of understanding may be proven in the context of religious belief. An instance from the Bible, in the book of Genesis, a character named Abraham who is called to be the father of faith. Abraham believes in God's word and believe in the process where he would not stagger in his faith. It is not only for Abraham, but also for those who believe in faith and believe in the process of God. To add more color, there is a Bible verse which follows, "Therefore it is of faith that it might be according to grace, so that the promise might be sure to all the seed, not only to those who are of the law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all" (*The Holy Bible* Romans 4.16)

Simply put, God asked Abraham's son to be sacrificed for Him. Without any second thought, Abraham did what God instructed to him. When Abraham obeys the word of God by his heart, the blessings made him richer holistically. The act of Abraham seems worthy in the eyes of God. Therefore, God elevates Abraham as a chief of faith, blessed him as well like nobody did. In between the journey of Abraham, he never suspected God anywhere and there is a Bible verse which enhances the idea, "He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God," (*The Holy Bible* Romans 4.20)

In the life of Al, he faces the most troublesome situation when he lost his daughter Rinah at her infant, Albert never tires about his faith. He bears the pain one side and keep his faith towards the other side. In the end, when he is in distress, the very peaceful lines from The Bible comforts him. It is from the book of Psalms and goes like this,

"The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.
He maketh me to lie down in green pastures:
He leadeth me beside the still waters.
He restoreth my soul..." (185)

It is not the case of everyone. Some may lack in faith in the beginning and later on, they gain their faith back. In the book of John, in the Bible, one of the twelve disciples- Thomas, who is a figure of prototype for Henry in *Have a Little Faith*. Thomas witnessed miracles through his eyes and knew his Master very well. He experienced Jesus even by walk with Him. After the resurrection of Jesus, He appeared for His disciples and beloved. When Jesus showed Himself to His disciples, Thomas was not present there. Afterwards, when other disciples shared their experience, Thomas didn't believe at all. Then Jesus appeared to him for the sake of increase his faith. Jesus found him weak and helped him to regain his faith. In the Holy Bible, it is quoted as, "Jesus said to him, "Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."" (*The Holy Bible* John 20.29)

In the case of Henry, he is not also exceptional where Henry, with his imperfection, comes to God and repents for what he had done in his past. He pours his heart through the given lines, I deserve hell,” he whispered. “The things I’ve done, God would be justified. God is not mocked. What you sow, you reap.” ... “You can’t work your way into heaven. Anytime you try and justify yourself with works, you disqualify yourself with works. What I do here, every day, for the rest of my life, is only my way of saying, ‘Lord, regardless of what eternity holds for me, let me give something back to you. I know it don’t even no scorecard. But let me make something of my life before I go. . .’ (220, 221).

His past is not good before God in his life. After his submission to God, the life of Henry is never be the same anymore. His commitment towards God is the greatest change in the life of Henry. After committed to God, Henry is clear about one thing where he holds the beauty of faith and says, “God is Good” (229). The way he handles and how he oversees situations in life, is quiet a turnaround in the journey of Henry.

Have a glance at one’s need in life - Three meals a day, enough clothes to cover, shelter for sleep and what else is needed for a man to survive. The value of a meal is only known for those who wanders miles for a hand of food. The value of shelter is only known for those who sleeps in temple at nights. The value of cloth is only known for those who walks half naked in streets. In the life of Al, he settles a life of pattern, which is contentment. End of the day, one would not mind these valuables instead looking others’ holes and try to fill their gap. The pattern of life is simple: anyone can be anything in anytime. In the life Al, who experienced poverty right from his childhood and then God blessed him to serve for the people and his life was extremely grateful throughout his life. One needs to be thankful for what he has. One needs to be content for what he possesses. One needs to be grateful for what he eats. One needs to be truthful for the blessings showered upon him. When Al is in his old age, he experienced life and he quotes in *Have a Little Faith* “What profits a man if he gains the whole world, but loses his soul?” (117). One must keep this in his heart to lead a content life: Wakeup by thanksgiving and return to bed the same. Expect nothing and do something for those who are all in need where Henry was a drug dealer, addict and then became a pastor and helped people at his best and he lived by actions and not by words. Love one another, not based on religion, caste, and any non-sense.

When one approaches a situation through one’s own sight, it would make one’s faith a null and void. The beauty of faith is different from anticipation, confidence and expectation which are some optimistic qualities, when one would meet through his journey. When logic is questioned, faith comes into the dilemma. When reasoning is interrogated, faith unties by its attitude. While taking the life of Henry, there are bunch of

things happened and his life is a testimony of how a man's life is changed from shattered hope to beautiful faith. It is not by self-interest or self-belief. It is by the very trust in God that one can possess faith in his life where Albert's life for instance, being a rabbi is a great blessing to many where his insights over God and life are thought-provoking in the book, *Have a Little Faith*. Both Albert and Henry they have one thing and it is clear: without having God in oneself, the progress of achieving, it is of vein.

What is the use of having everything and being inwardly sick? The prime thing to be considered is, the mentality. People may think that anything can be bought and anything can be reached. What people running for is, things which are associated with materialism. But what need the most is contentment. In the journey of reading the book *Have a Little Faith*, Albom records some of the sermons from the reb where Albom gives insightful ideas through it. The below quote is given from a conversation between a lady and a young child where the thoughts of young child convey the need of one's life.

The girl was sleepy. She leaned against the packs and duffel bags.

"A lady came by, stopped, and patted her on the head.

" 'Poor child,' she said. 'You haven't got a home.'

"The child looked up in surprise.

"But we do have a home,' she said. 'We just don't have a house to put it in.'

(111)

The book, *Have a Little Faith* unfolds the characterization of two people from two different faiths and explored the idea of one's life purpose, the journey of losing and regaining faith, and the divine spark that resided in one's life. The paper enables the readers' attitude by regaining their faith and focuses on the uncertainty of life and how it changed into a state of bloom in the book, *Have a Little Faith*. The key aspect of faith is justified with the characters Albert and Henry through their journey of life. It finds the meaning in meaninglessness through the character Henry where he was a man of everything from nothing by faith, also highlighted the character Albert and how his lost faith transformed to a successful one. Thus, it discovers the sense of meaning through the characters Albert and Henry and how they pursued beautiful faith.

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THE TRANSGENERATIONAL TRAUMA AND (DE)CONSTRUCTION OF DIASPORIC IDENTITY: CULTURAL ANALYSIS OF BENJAMIN KWAKYE

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Abstract

Global mobility has renewed the configurations and inaugurated dynamic transformations in the culture, economy, politics, norms, lifestyle, etc. of the nations of the world. The local and popular cultures are negotiated in the global trends enabling the transcultural horizons across borders and cultural boundaries. An understanding of the cultural sphere cannot be achieved by analyzing a single entity since the limitations are erased by the transcultural turn. A comprehensive approach to culture is the need of the hour which comprises the broader issues of the migrants, expatriates and diasporic identities. This research article investigates the trauma of diasporic communities and their generations by exploring how identity is constructed in the global phenomenon. And also tends to introspect transgenerational trauma and the cultural legacy of diasporic identities across nations and generations with the key lens of Benjamin Kwakye.

Keywords: racial trauma, transgenerational memory, culture, diasporic identities.

“Who we are cannot be separated from where we'refrom” (Gladwell 221). The gravity of global trade pulls and displaces individuals irrespective of nation. Wherever the individual is, whatever his present residence may be, he has a non-erasable fixed identity of his native. The global liberalism has erased the boundaries of nations and has accelerated the movement of men and materials across borders unifying the global window. Globalization is “the closer integration of the countries and peoples of the world which breaks down of artificial barriers to the flows of goods, services, capital, knowledge, and (to a lesser extent) people across borders” (Stiglitz 9). The greater essence of humanity is constructed, reconstructed and sometimes, deconstructed in the flow of global modernity.

The sense of belonging and the home attachment allows for the dynamic emergence of social frameworks of memory and enhances the construction of one's own identity as well as their generation. The term diaspora literally means the scatter or the dispersal of the people from the native land consisting “at the core of the concept of diaspora lies the image of a remembered home that stands at a distance both temporally and spatially” (Stock 24). Even though physically lost their relationship with their motherland, they maintain their

bondage through cultural relationships via memory, imagination, nostalgia, etc. The presumption of returning to the homeland remains to be myth in reality still the aspirations of nostalgia are expressed through the memory waves maintaining the diasporic consciousness of the home. Right from the trans-Atlantic slave trade, the African diaspora constitutes diverse and complex diasporic communities. First generation writers Indian-American Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, second-generation diasporic writers like the American Tania James of Indian origin, African Diasporic writers like Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, Wayétú Moore, Yaa Gyasi, and Benjamin Kwakye offer a vivid picture of diasporic themes. Benjamin Kwakye, a Ghanaian novelist explores the experiences and the trauma of the human interconnectedness and struggles to construct the ethnicity of humanity through his works. His themes include the African migrant experiences, internal conflicts, identity, belonging, and racial discrimination faced by the modern man bubbling with the interests of African cultures and traditions evident through his words “even if I couldn’t claim the American part, I could claim Afro part” (Kwayke, *The Other Crucifix* 31).

Migration has become an inseparable part of the imperial world. The challenges faced by the diasporic communities begin with the desire for a comfortable life which later scrolls with the struggle for the basic fulfilments of life overflowing with dejection, alienation, economic crisis, identity crisis, racial discrimination, and so on. Rejections and alienation steer the concept of returning to home as the natural and psychological conceptualization of the diasporic individuals which set out the systematic search of the traces of the past to compensate for their inability of physical mobility. “Homesickness is such a hard thing” (Kwakye, *Shama* 146). People who have migrated to a new country continue to survive with the notion of the question of return in desire. Recreating their home through memory is the major characteristic of the diaspora. “The re-encounter of home and its accustomed places and social relations can be a profoundly significant experience of the migrants, resulting in shifts of consciousness and their sense of identity” (Marshall 144).

The contextualization of ethnic and racial discriminatory encounters destabilizes the cultural frame increasing the loss of spirituality, personality changes, grief, self-hatred, depression, anxiety, etc. The intensity of the trauma clutters care and love and pushes towards survival with emotional exhaustion. The erosion of anonymity “wasn’t just external, but also the internal isolation from the self” (Kwakye, *Shama* 187). The idea of racism is socially constructed and snares the essence of the roots assembling the inferiority complex questioning humanity. The encounter of racist ideology and exploitation shatters oneself. According to Franz Fanon struggling with irrational racism is extremely traumatic and he explains “the glances of other fixed me there in the sense in which a chemical solution is fixed by a dye. I demanded an explanation. Nothing happened. I burst apart” (Fanon 82). The crumble of the otherness with the deep cut of the words like “black” and “nigger”

dissociates the spirits of the young children refusing to imprint their self-identity in the global concern (Kwakyee, *Shama* 262).

The evocation of diasporic thoughts of Kwakyee recollects Freud's "mourning and melancholia" where mourning is "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" (Freud 243). Jojo's loss of his ethnic culture, way of his life, erasing the traces of his motherland, communication barrier, and struggle to earn for living become "an open wound" which could never be healed and these traces of pain and feeling are echoed throughout the novel and also transferred to the next generation consciously or unconsciously (Freud 253). The core of one's being oscillates between the socialization of the host land and the motherland. Jojo's son Juju clearly understands his dad's situatedness which is evident through the following words "He was always a foreigner in this country. He always felt it" (Kwakyee *Shama* 214). Through mourning the individuals try to understand the reality whereas melancholia leads to a pathological sense of intense sadness.

"The writing of trauma implies return and repetition" (Mishra 108). Jojo is constantly kept under the judgment of a foggy vision of race, ethnicity and language accent till his death. Repetition in this sense refers to the cloud of his past. Jojo "tried to reach for the safe and expedient surrogacy of memories of home rather than the hard inconveniences of physical encounters" (Kwakyee, *Shama* 205). Kwakyee pinpoints the dilemma of the second or later generations of the diasporic communities by probing "But where is home?" (*Shama* 240). Explaining Marianne Hirsch's "Postmemory" the passing of the traumatic incidents, pain, and dejections and conceptualizing the second-generation psyche with the past of the first-hand generation and "a consequence of traumatic recall but (unlike post-traumatic stress disorder) at a generational remove" (Hirsch 106). The later generations try to regenerate their representations through transgenerational memory. Jojo intends his self-transformations to assimilate himself with the host land "a connection to make me believe that I belonged somewhere in America, belonged to someone, belonged to a group" (Kwakyee, *Shama* 208). His torch of disappointments drags and manipulates the minds of his generation particularly his son Juju who faces the reality as his dad. The omission and the commission of the world defining the sensitiveness of skin color suggests the cruelties despite its beauty. Jojo was pained to see the experiences of his little son in relation to his diasporic constructions and "was shocked and pained by what I saw and regretted having gone through his things" (*Shama* 262).

On the contrary, Jojo protested the mannerism of his daughter Ama for her complete transformation into an American and "this daughter I loved so shunning the country of my birth, the country I still loved so strongly. She was becoming a part of the land I wanted to

rescue her” (Kwakye, *Shama* 189). Jojo felt the loss of his daughter to something which he did not belong to. The first-hand diasporic individuals cannot reconcile the transformations and it is not quite easy dealing with the psychological demands and the solution to this lies with the question “Who was to blame if I lost her to this strange land?” (Kwakye, *Shama* 188). The parental mourning for the loss of his cultural homeland remains a scar and the pain of the wound persists transmits to generations. “Loss of family, of home, of a feeling of belonging and safety in the world “bleed” from one generation to the next” (Hirsch 112). Juju grows up with the collections, his shredded expectations, and the recollections of the present and the past episodes of his father Jojo and “the spiritual presence that necessitated the search for that spiritual home outside of the home” through the transformable filter of memory. Juju detaches from the physical world and lives through the memory of his father’s soul of Ghana. He left America and reached Ghana stating “This place is so vibrant, yet in a human way... I’m so glad I’m here” (Kwakye, *Shama* 201). Ghana is the place where Juju has never visited since his birth but he feels retrieved to reach his motherland structured through transgenerational memory.

The ethnicity of the parents has a close bondage with the later generations. Having a dichotomous link with parental nativity and the transcultural world, the intergeneration attunes to unstable sustenance with the provisions of transcultural memory. The nuanced status of the immigrant potentially impacts the transgenerational status and influences the psychological tract of the later generations. Kwakye explains the serious issue by explaining “Juju was home? Where was that? The physical location where his father was born and his mother had spent many years.” The ethnicity has become like a “ceremonial piece of clothing to wear or not wear?” (*Shama* 241). The capitalist economy has influenced modernization manifesting civilisation in terms of ideology by privileging the dominant which automatically segregates the subjects fostering social inequality invisible in neoliberalism. Kwakye expounds by probing an ever-ending solution for the problem “From where erupts such venom?” (*Shama* 263).

The outcome of the research hits at the bull’s eye of the ideologies streaming behind the screen invisible to the world audience. Tackling racism and the trauma of the diasporic communities cannot be achieved within a single shot since the intensity is deep and vast. Addressing a theoretical approach to contemporary issues through literature tries to initiate an honest discussion hoping to create awareness promoting human equilibrium at the local and global levels. There is plenty of scope for future researchers to bring the magical awareness to the global society.

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ETHNIC IDENTITIES IN THE FICTION OF V. V. GANESHANANTHAN**Divya V Menon**

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Abstract

Sri Lankan diaspora represents a vibrant and diverse community spread across the globe. The Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora refers specifically to the community of Sri Lankan Tamils and their descendants who have migrated and settled in various parts of the world. Sri Lankan Tamils living in a country that was formerly colonized were destined to face the profound and lasting impact of postcolonial trauma, as well as the trauma inflicted by racism within a society where they were a minority. The objective of this paper is to examine the challenges faced by the diaspora from a conflict-torn nation and their struggles to grapple with the complexities of a dual identity when they constantly find themselves torn between their past memories and the cultural context of their present lives as depicted in V.V Ganeshanathan's debut novel *Love Marriage*.

Keywords: Ethnic Identities, Sri Lankan Diaspora, Ethnic Conflict, Race.

The distortion of identities induced by diasporic experiences and the traumatic realities in the homeland necessitate a profound transformation in the perspective of the writers who have settled away from their home countries about life and the world in general. Being compelled to involve in a process of reconstruction they strive to incorporate their traumatic experiences into a cohesive narrative that enables them to create their own identity and construct a meaningful sense of self.

Stuart Hall's views on identity revolve around the concept that identity is not fixed or predetermined but rather a complex and fluid concept that is constantly shaped and negotiated within different sociocultural frameworks. According to Hall, identity is not something we inherently possess, but rather something we actively construct and perform through a continual process of interaction and interpretation. Hall emphasizes the idea that identity is not solely determined by individual attributes or characteristics, but is deeply influenced by social, historical, and cultural forces. Hall suggests that identities are not fixed entities, but are subject to continual transformation. He also emphasizes the importance of recognizing and challenging the essentialist notions of identity that seek to reduce individuals to fixed categories or stereotypes. As stated by Stuart Hall in his "Cultural Identity and Cinematic Representation." Identity is not as transparent or unproblematic as we think. Perhaps instead of thinking of identity as an already accomplished fact, which the new cultural practices then represent, we should think, instead, of identity as a 'production,'

which is never complete, always in process, and always constituted within, not outside, representation” (Hall 68).

Love Marriage, the most popular novel of Ganeshananthan delves into the intricacies of various aspects of life, such as complex marriages that hold diverse meanings, the inner conflicts experienced by the younger generation, and the identity crisis faced by the diaspora. It explores the perplexing journey of the first-generation migrants who carry vivid memories of war-induced violence from their origin countries seeking to shed the traumatic past behind and embrace a buoyant future. Moreover, the novel sheds light on the challenges encountered by second-generation children as they struggle to locate their niche in their homeland, defined by the stigma of being perceived as different. Additionally, it depicts the intertwined relationships within families, which grow increasingly strained amidst external disturbances.

Love Marriage is a novel that explores the nuances of recreating family bonds through the examination of the narratives and the unearthing of memories. Yalini, a young woman is the narrator of the story. She was born to Sri Lankan parents who are settled in New York. The character of Yalini in the novel is found consistently grappling with the Sri Lankan traditions of her household and the Western culture into which she has been assimilated. Adding to the tension is the background of the ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka, with news accounts highlighting the conflict between the Tamil and Sinhalese populations. Unexpectedly, Yalini is propelled into the community of the Tamils in Canada following a phone call from her mother. Her family has temporarily relocated there to care for her uncle Kumaran, who was once involved with the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, the group that fights for the freedom of the Tamil ethnic group in Sri Lanka. This incident further complicates her sense of identification. As Avtar Brah states in her book *Cartographies of Diaspora: Contesting Identities*:

The idea of identity, like that of culture, is singularly elusive. We speak of ‘this’ identity and ‘that’ identity. We know from our everyday experience that what we call ‘me’ or ‘I’ is not the same in every situation; that we are changing from day to day. Yet there is something we ‘recognise’ in ourselves and in others which we call ‘me’ and ‘you’ and ‘them’. In other words, we are all constantly changing but this changing illusion is precisely what we see as real and concrete about ourselves and others. And this seeing is both a social and a psychological process. Identity then is an enigma which, by its very nature, defies a precise definition. (Brah 31)

Through conversations with Kumaran, Yalini becomes a conduit for her family's history and the impact of the war on their homeland. Her identity is in constant flux as she has to identify herself with a society that starkly contrasts with her host community.

Flashbacks provide glimpses into the past, while *Love Marriage* intricately weaves together the complexities of cultural identity, family ties, and the lasting effects of war, offering a rich exploration of personal and societal transformations. The interplay between fact and fiction is evident in the narrative. The collective memories of the communities portrayed in the novel are based on actual historical events, specifically the Sri Lankan Civil War. On the other hand, the personal memories of the characters serve as fictionalized accounts presented from the perspective of the Sri Lankan Tamils. Yalini also narrates the marriage of her cousin Janani, Kumaran's daughter. Kumaran is depicted as a past member of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). They are portrayed as those who have undergone a transformation from direct combat roles to non-combatant positions as propagandists and fundraisers for the LTTE. The novel seamlessly weaves together the narrative of Yalini, a Tamil girl, with the political context of the Sri Lankan ethnic strife.

Yalini gains a deeper understanding of how the war has profoundly impacted her own family when Kumaran and Janani, both directly connected to the conflict, come to live with them. Their presence illustrates the complex interweaving of personal experiences and the broader political landscape. Yalini has to constantly reconcile herself with the contrasting realities of the battle-torn Sri Lanka and the peaceful life in America. She tries hard to retrieve her identity and affirms her ability to remember her childhood. As Yalini's memories flood back through the narratives shared by Kumaran, she attempts to construct a new personal identity that incorporates the collective identity of her ethnic group and the traumas endured.

Ganeshanathan opens the novel with the line "In this globe-scattered Sri Lankan family we speak only of two kinds of marriage," instantly establishing her regional and ethnic identity within her narrative. As Lisa Lau suggests in her article "Making the Difference: The Differing Presentations and Representations of South Asia in the Contemporary Fiction of Home and Diasporic South Asian Women Writers"

Wherever contemporary South Asian women writers may be writing from, it is clear from the outset that many grapple with issues of identity. Identity is one of the most common themes in their literature, and in many cases, the search for self-identity is portrayed as confusing, painful, and only occasionally rewarding. Some write semi-autobiographical novels, delving into personal pasts in order to either discover or re-examine their motivations and affinities. Others use fictional characters and situations to question traditional norms, testing, trying, and occasionally reinforcing (whether intentionally or otherwise) notions of race and culture. (Lau 252)

Ganeshanathan's narrative becomes an account of the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora centered around marriages, relationships, and politics. The political stance of the work is

ambiguous since it evokes the readers to either embrace or reject its portrayal of Sri Lanka's ethnic conflict-related politics. It can be argued that the novel represents the second-generation Sri Lankan diaspora settled in Western countries. The novel critiques both the Sinhalese and Tamil extremism and views the conflict from a more balanced perspective.

The novel encapsulates the diasporic Tamil Sri Lankan experience and identity. Ganeshanathan, representing the diasporic Tamil community from Sri Lanka, can inform diasporic audiences and analyze ethnonational politics from her position as a diasporic subject. In the final stages of the novel, Yalini undergoes a transformation finding refuge in her Sri Lankan Tamil identity and reconciling it with her American identity. Yalini also expresses her optimism for the future, stating that one day she hopes to return to Sri Lanka, a country her parents had to leave behind. So, it can be argued that Yalini has accepted her origins and her homeland and the impact it has on her subjectivity and identity. Yalini comments,

Don't think you can find out the truth about your family by coming in, exiting, and reentering through a back door of history, borrowing the record keeper's excuse for intruding with a pen. Even family members will not feel they owe you more than memory, which is convenient, and which has been made beautiful, often through falsehood. At the most, you can pull back the veil for a moment. But the imagination of a family can be as real as its history. Let me be clear: I am only one person. In mapping a family, we draw blood from each other. I enter my family as I would a dream—with great caution and wonder. (Ganeshanathan 70)

As the narrative advances Yalini evolves as a woman who embraces her unique journey and asserts her individuality. She rediscovers her ethnic identity and also accepts her mixed identity. The portrayal of individual Sri Lankan Tamil women in the novel challenges the notion of a uniform Sri Lankan or ethnic identity often attributed to female characters in diasporic writing. Instead, it elicits the individual concerns and experiences that lead to the evolution of diverse characters, particularly within diasporic settings. In conclusion, *Love Marriage* breaks away from stereotypes and offers a nuanced portrayal of Sri Lankan Tamil women, highlighting their agency and complexities.

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EXPLORING BEING 'FEMALE' IN MIEKO KAWAKAMI'S *BREASTS AND EGGS*

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Abstract

Meiko Kawakami, a Japanese contemporary writer's *Breasts and Eggs* gives insights into the female body, ethical questions, and the dilemmas of modern Japanese society. The novel *Breasts and Eggs* is divided into two parts and is narrated by Natsuko Natsume, an aspiring writer in Tokyo. In the first part, Natsuko's sister, Makiko and her 12-year-old daughter, Midoriko arrive in Tokyo from Osaka. Makiko has come to Tokyo seeking a clinic for breast augmentation. In the second part, set years later, Natsuko contemplates becoming a mother and the options open to her as an older single woman in Japan. The word 'Female' is generally defined as 'belonging or relating to the sex that can give birth to young or produce eggs. Through various female characters belonging to different decades of age, Kawakami brings out how socio-economic and political conditions influence the female psyche and life. This paper analyses such influences under the pretext of feminist theories and presents how females experience conflict with the norm of being female in various stages of life in the context of contemporary Japanese female life.

Keywords: Female, Psyche, Feminism, Identity, Conflict.

The first part of the novel *Breasts and Eggs* is set in 2008, Makiko is thirty nine years old hostess in Osaka, Japan. She is the elder sister of Natsuko who is thirty years old and an aspiring writer in Tokyo. Midoriko is the daughter of Makiko. Makiko is, "Another single mother, working herself to death". Because of her family situation she had to work from her school days and has no skills to get a normal job to sustain her family. She works as a hostess, though she has to return home daily drunk to her daughter and has to leave her alone at nights. She refuses to be benefited from welfare schemes of government, thinking she will be a parasite to the country and her dignity will be destroyed. Such a woman decides to do breast augmentation which costs huge amount, that "It didn't even sound like a real number". Natsuko never asks directly the reason for this decision when Makiko still has to support Midoriko's education. Makiko also never reveals it. But Suzuka, one of her colleagues' story answers it. She is in her thirties, gave her best for five years to the bar and is the major reason it was running, but was paid less than a new comer, a college girl, Jing Li because she is younger than Suzuka. This makes Makiko deciding to somehow enhance her appeal to secure her current job, the only source of livelihood of her family.

Midoriko watches how her mother's work drains the life out of her. "I see what working every night does to my mum. It takes it out of her." She also thinks living by

oneself is hard enough and giving birth to children will only be adding extra burden to oneself. She is determined against giving birth and suffering like her mother. As Pramod.K. Nayar puts in *Contemporary Literary and Cultural Theory*, the reproductive organs of humans are biological but they are given specific values and meanings socially, since women are biologically capable of giving birth, social norms impose and naturalizes that a female should procreate. It makes procreation the true symbol of female. Midoriko realizes that many of her classmates are attaining puberty. The girls who have attained puberty group together and talk about it, as if it's a privilege, superior, next stage of their identity and Midoriko feels left out. She wants to fit in with other girls as puberty is one of the biological development processes, a girl has to undergo. The students are made to read books, targeted for girls who are yet to attain puberty, with stories where the girl is very happy to become "a part of circle of life" by attaining puberty and her mother congratulating her on becoming a woman. These books naturalize the societal attribution of procreation as the meaning of a female and the children are made to assimilate this even before they attain puberty.

Someone in Midoriko's class would say "I was born a girl, so yeah I definitely want to have a baby of my own eventually." Midoriko is conflicted at this. She questions whether just attaining puberty makes one a woman, a potential mother. It is seen how students has assimilated the value that books naturalize using biological developments as the facts which decides the natural course for a girl child is attaining puberty then procreating in their lifetime. One time Midoriko learns about the biological reproductive organ development in the female embryo, that eggs start to form inside the ovary of the female embryo even before she is born. She is deeply influenced by the societal value and perceives that the biological ability or fact as the one that pushes her to procreate, "Set up to give birth, before I was even born" and suffer like her mother. While it is the societal norms that uses the biological fact and naturalizes and imposes that the pre ordained, unalterable fate of female is procreation. Kawakami also shows how a girl child in Midoriko's socio economic situation feels guilty to be a burden to her improvised mother and feels terrified, conflicted and feels like she has no say about the ability to give birth, the desired outcome of the value socially constructed with being a female.

Natsuko is a thirty years old aspiring writer at the beginning of the novel. She can be passionate in love but never finds sexual intercourse "enjoyable, comforting or fulfilling". She is asexual. Pramod.K. Nayar says, "Patriarchal society attributes particular values to the women's body and the woman assimilates these values." Similarly, she always feels responsible to make the sexual intercourse better as she has assimilated the value, that it is a woman's responsibility and tries to do it though she hates it. At one point she comes to feel so terrible that she wishes to die rather than to doing it. The patriarchal society objectifies woman's body and one of the values it attributes and naturalizes is that 'a woman' uses her

body to please her male partner. Natsuko's sexuality doesn't correspond to this value and but she has assimilated this value and so starts having identity confusion. As Pramod.K. Nayar says "Her (here Natsuko's) sexuality, desires or identity is determined by the societal norms." "Am I really a woman? Do I feel like a woman? I mean what does feeling like a woman actually mean? I'm not sure how that relates to how I feel about sex, but it has to." This conflict is made more prominent when Aizawa Jun, a man she gets interested in, also confesses his feelings for her. But she thinks she can't get into a relationship when she can't have intercourse. One of her close friends passes away and she wants to talk about the grief to Aizawa, as he understands her deeply. But immediately she wonders whether she is capable of having intercourse. She realizes Aizawa never conveyed by any way that she has to do it to have his emotional support but she has assimilated values given to woman's body, and feels she must use her body to have his emotional support. She hates feeling like this.

In her essay, "Why Dehumanization is distinct from Objectification" Mari Mikkola uses Cahill's concept of derivatization, to state that dehumanization is crueler than objectification and is one of the problems caused by patriarchy in women, she quotes Cahill, "the derivatized subject is degraded not by being mistakenly treated as an object, but by being mistakenly treated as a subject whose subjectivity (actions, speech, appearance, and so on) can be wholly determined by the subjective needs or desires of another." and shows, "one(women)'s subjectivity and identity are projections of other(men)'s desires and needs" and are made to "conform to men's needs and desires." Women come to internalize this kind of dehumanization, as seen in one of the characters, Rie's mother. Her subjectivity is solely based on her husband. She takes care of her in-laws till the end and never perceives her husband's domestic abuse and oppression as hateful. She considers her children as things that are replaceable as her subjectivity depends on his and he abuses them and doesn't give importance to them. "I could always have more kids, but there's no replacing your father" Instead she caters to her husband's every need and desire. This causes severe distrust and hatred in Rie that she couldn't love herself or form true bond with her daughter as she feels her identity will also be solely catering to her husband and his family like her mother. She won't have the autonomy and so won't be able to form her own desirable identity. As Mari Mikkola says "Women are treated as subjects all right, just not self-determining ones—dehumanization turns on precisely aiming to hamper and frustrate women's self-set goals, aims, and life plans."

The socio-political control and exploitation of female reproducing ability is seen in the novel, as the government allows only couples to undergo infertility treatments, which use technological advancements like artificial insemination and exploit women. As they are used to protect men's honour and male infertility as just a myth. Single women are not allowed to use these methods to give birth, though they are responsible and are financially stable to

raise their own children. While married women are forced to accept the sperms of some anonymous man and conceive a child to hide the fact that their husbands are infertile or impotent. Aizawa and Yuriko were born for the same reason. In case of Aizawa, his paternal grandmother made his mother to use the sperm donated by an anonymous man to hide the fact that her son was infertile.

Kawakami also explores what it means to give birth and raise a child. Through Consequences of women giving birth and being irresponsible in taking care of the child because they didn't want it in the first place but were forced to have it, Kawakami questions whether females are justified of procreating just because they have the ability to reproduce. Natsuko is single and old in the second part of the novel but wants to have a child of her own using the donor concept, so she researches for any possible poor effect of the method in the child and discovers Yuriko. Her biological mother's husband was not able to do it so he forced his wife to undergo this method. They were incompatible and always fought, so he moved out of the house and Yuriko's mother worked at nights in a restaurant. Yuriko was taken care at such times by her grandmother. Sometimes he used to come home and sexually abuse Yuriko. Until she was twelve, he used to sexually abuse her and also let other men abuse her. Her parents divorced when she was twelve and she went into the custody of her mother. She did not reveal anything about this to anyone. Only when she was twenty-five, she comes to know that at least the man who abused her was not her actual father. Yuriko talks against people giving birth to children, she says most parents do try to protect their children but people simply give birth to children, "Because whoever the child is, the one who lives and dies consumed with pain, could never be you". Yuriko's story is a warning to Natsuko, to be responsible for the child she, a woman brings into the world. Through Yuriko, Kawakami brings out that just because people have financial and technological facilities to bring in a new life does not mean they can use it at their dispose, especially though women are forced to have children they do not want to, they must not give birth to children they do not want to be responsible for. So, Kawakami presents how just by being female with the ability to give birth does not make one qualified to bring new life into the world.

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A PREY'S PERSPECTIVE: AN ECO-CENTRIC ANALYSIS ON JIM CORBETT'S *MAN-EATERS OF KUMAON*

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Abstract

Jim Corbett, an Indian-born British hunter-naturalist and colonel in the British Indian Army was well known during the early 20th century in the regions of Kumaon and Garhwal of the Indian Himalayas for tracking down and hunting man-eating tigers and leopards. His book *Man-Eaters of Kumaon* is a collection of ten experiential hunting accounts that not only provide a vivid description of the treacherous encounters, but also factual insight into the nature and history of man-eaters. The man-eaters, though claimed to be, and treated as blood-thirsty and cruel evil-spirits or *shaitan* by their victims, possess rational justification behind their transformation from wild big cats to notorious and fatal man-eaters whose cause primarily traced back to human deeds. This paper aims to explore the aforementioned text from an eco-centric perspective, analyzing the effect to fanthropogenic activities on nature and the effects of disruption of natural behavioural patterns.

Keywords: Man-eaters, Hunting, Eco-centrism, Nature, Behavioral Disruption.

“Tigers do not know that human beings have no sense of smell, and when a tiger becomes a man-eater, it treats human beings exactly as it treats wild animals. - *The Chowgarh Tigers Man-Eaters of Kumaon* is a collection of personal encounters of Jim Corbett, a British hunter, naturalist, and writer in the west-central section of the Himalayas in northern India from 1900s – 1930s. The source book is a first-hand narrative collection that recounts the experience of tracking and hunting of over 6 man-eaters officially recognized, and two other non-man-eaters. Corbett's descriptions throughout the book are vivid, encompassing not just the mortal ordeals but also the flora and fauna of the region. According to Global Nonviolent Act Database, “From 1926 to 1921, villagers in Kumaon in northern India set hundreds of forests to fire to protest the colonial British state's increasing regulations of the natural environment”.

Eco-Centrism advocates the importance of all living and non-living beings, inclusive of the importance of their environment respectively. This paper aims to provide an eco-centric analysis from the perspective of the hunted or preys. The source book is set in the early nineteenth century- a period when felling of trees and clearing of forests along with game hunting was prevalent and vogue during the reign of British Raj in India. The main source of fuel for the people in the Kumaon region was firewood, therefore when regulations were laid on the natural environment by the British government in order to build sleepers,

the people of the Kumaon region resisted by setting fire to hundreds of trees in the forest. This act, coupled with the rapid intrusion into the forest by people for fuel, food and other necessities shrunk the territories and habitat of the native animals of the forest, slowly stripping them off their space, food and habitat. This situation became worse because of the constant game hunting that threatened these animals' safety and survival.

Here, in the title, 'Prey' represents the tigers and other animals that experienced similar fate as the tigers. Out of 10 narrations in the book, five narrations elucidate the capturing and killing of man-eaters. And out of the five man-eaters, two were wounded by gun-shot and had taken to man-eating. While there was another non-man-eater tiger which was injured by gun-shot but had taken to cattle hunting instead. According to Corbett, a tiger or leopard only becomes a man-eater under the following circumstances: a) it is injured (possibly man-made or other causes); b) it is of old age or sick; c) there is no available food for it. "I found that the upper and lower canine teeth on the right side of her mouth were broken, the upper one in half and the lower one right down to the bone. This permanent injury to the teeth-the result of a gunshot wound- had prevented her from killing her natural prey, and had been the cause of her becoming a man-eater" (265).

These animals in most cases are forced by the stress of circumstances to adopt a diet that is not of its natural habit. A tiger in particular relies on its speed and strength i.e. its teeth and claws to stalk and hunt its preys, however when a condition arises, rendering it unable to hunt its prey or kill it due to injured claws, broken or worn down teeth, septic gunshot wounds or imbedded porcupine quills, the animal would then change its diet to either humans or cattle, for, they are far less difficult to capture than wild preys.

To these tigers or man-eaters, human beings are yet another wild animal species that are easier to prey on and their frequency depended on a) the supply of natural food in the area in which it is operating; b) the nature of the disability which has caused it to become a man-eater, and c) whether it is a male or female with cubs and Corbett also mentioned in his book that tigers never kill in excess of their requirements. Nevertheless, there are also instances of some man-eaters, for example the Champawat man-eater killing more than 400 individuals- as its rampage was left unchecked for years. The Champawat man-eater was forced to prey on humans because of a gunshot wound that destroyed her teeth- her primary asset and weapon for hunting its natural preys.

There are also the aforementioned instances of humans infiltrating and destroying these animal's natural habitat, either by burning the forests or felling of trees to clear the forest for agriculture or other purposes. Then, there's the prevalent game hunting which wiped away the potential natural preys of these animals which also unintentionally or

intentionally led to these animals becoming a prey themselves as *prized trophies* or accidental victims of human greed and recklessness.

The hunting of man-eaters in a nut shell is a vicious cycle of humans disrupting the natural predator's environment or their *space* which forced these predators to diverge from their natural behavior and intrude into human habitat, who, in response attempted to eliminate the positive or *potential threat*. "It was this secure retreat, and the government rules prohibiting night shooting, that had enabled the bachelor to retain possession of his much sought-after skin." (The Bachelor of Powlgarh). "...in 1930 the Forest Department started extensive felling in the area surrounding the Bachelor's home and annoyed at the disturbance he changed his quarters" (The Bachelor of Powlgarh).

To any organism its territory is its home, its space. This space provides the organism its essentials for survival including but not limited to food, shelter and safety however when the space or any aspects related to it, is in a state of peril, or endangered, the organism experiences a *behavioral disruption*, which more than often is detrimental to its survival though it is meant to facilitate it with its chances of survival.

Keeping the aforementioned points in mind, the prey's perspective can be analyzed further from the point of view of the tigers. These tigers were primarily victims of encroachment, which more often than led to the misconception of these animals intruding human habitat. They were then the victims of poaching and venery. They often became accidental victims to gunshots and subsequent victims of lack of natural food. This led to the tigers adopting a foreign diet of humans or cattle. "My enemy lives and continues to claim victims but do not be deceived into thinking it is a tiger, for it is no tiger but an evil spirit, who when it craves for human flesh and blood, takes on for a while the semblance of a tiger" (The Chowgarh Tigers).

Though villagers did recognize the abnormal pattern of tigers becoming man-eaters, they, however attributed it to supernatural elements at work more often. To them the tiger was not a being like them but rather a demon or *evil spirit* at work that had to be eliminated, failing to understand their contribution in their behavioral disruption. "There it is on the rock! Pull it down and let us hack it to bits" (*The Champawat Man-Eater*). "The trunk, legs and tail of the tigress were cut into pieces and distributed (*The Champawat Man-Eater*). After the tigers were killed, they were skinned or more often paraded around then, its pieces of flesh and bone were distributed to make lockets or charms. The skin of not only the tigers but also Himalayan bears and leopards were in demand during that period- as a *mark of prestige* or fame. "...for tigers never kill in excess of their requirements" (The Chowgarh Tigers). "...for tigers do not kill unless they are hungry" (*The Thak Man-Eater*).

These tigers kill only for survival and never in excess or for entertainment; however, humans hunt and kill these animals for various guised reasons which are predominantly guided by greed. These animals are very conveniently bestowed the title- threat and are exterminated by the so-called victims who are the indisputable perpetrators. "...the tiger...received a bullet in the shoulder which fractured the bone. No attempts were made to follow him up and thirty-six hours later, his shoulder was covered with a swarm of flies" (*The Pipal Pani Tiger*).

When a tiger is wounded its ultimate end is death by being killed under the guise of eliminating a potential threat or by painful natural process. There were two instances of non-man-eaters being killed, one as a venery- a prize and the other for it had taken to killing cattle at times. The later though wounded once by gunshot had not taken to consuming human flesh but cattle instead and was seen as a threat for cattle- affecting the livelihood of people- and was requested to be killed. "The buffalo had been killed by a pair of tigers... so I stalked them while they were sunning themselves on some big rocks above the kill, and shot both of them" (*The Chowgarh Tigers*). "To class such an animal as VERMIN, as is done in some parts of India, is a crime which only those could perpetrate whose knowledge of the leopard is limited to the miserable, underfed, and mangy specimens seen in captivity" (*The Chowgarh Tigers*). "the opportunity had come now, and I do not think the leopard heard the shot that killed him" (*The Chowgarh Tigers*).

The leopards and bears of the Kumaon region were not exempted from the similar fate as the tigers- it was even worse for leopards were considered to be easy targets that got killed along the way- like plucking leaves when collecting flowers- they were even treated as inferior species when compared to tigers in some regions.

Eco-Centrism denies any existential divisions between humans and non-humans. Therefore, the so-called acts of eliminating threats and protecting oneself and one's home- while forcing a fellow being to change its natural behavior by taking away its space, food and other means of survival is undoubtedly a condemnable one. These Preys- victims of anthropogenic activities are still in danger. They like humans have equal rights to survive and thrive by the natural law and disrupting it will only lead to unfavorable counter reactions.

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THE RISE OF THE GENDERED AUTOBIOGRAPHY: A TRANS(IN)FUSIONISED READING OF PRIVATE LIFE IN COLONIAL BENGAL

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Abstract

Trans(in)fusion, a theory introduced by Ranjan Ghosh, sees the cross-cultural transaction as “translation” and how the impossibility of translation often leads to conceptual rewriting. This paper argues how the influence of Western modernity on Bengali intellectuals reshaped the idea of “private” in nineteenth-century Bengal and gave birth to numerous autobiographies, which maintained significant differences from their occidental counterparts. Here, however, the primary focus lies on the women’s autobiographies and how these texts result from transfusion and infusion of ideas stemming from both worlds.

Keywords: Trans(in)fusion, Autobiography, Gendered Archive, Colonial Discourse, Nineteenth-Century Bengal.

Nineteenth-Century in Bengal was a discursive space for colonisers and colonised, a space of collision and negotiation. During this time, Western concepts perturbed and often challenged the tradition¹, yet, at times, Bengali intellectuals commonly categorised as Bhadrakalok found ways to initiate dialogue with alien thoughts to accelerate their identity politics. This assimilation was both conscious and unconscious. However, the paper intends not to reify binaries in postcolonial terms but to understand the complexities of this conceptual translation and its politics. The theoretical crux of this paper rests on the theory of trans(in)fusion – a mode of critical thinking that helps us to understand different forms of “trans” involved in the dialectic transition, translation, and transformation. In the context of trans(in)fusion, “translation” signifies any cultural transaction aligning with its historical specificity. It is also inevitable that when a distant concept is transfused, there will always be some friction and tension due to the receiver’s innate resistance. Therefore, to keep the difference intact, the receiver infuses local thoughts and rewrites concepts according to the set purpose and convenience. Despite that, Ghosh explains, “Concepts retain some of their substance and essentiality and also function in an enlarged consciousness where the target culture introduces a fresh topology of experience. Translation is both thought and thinking across” (Ghosh, Trans(in)fusion 85).

When Raja Ram Mohan Roy and other stalwarts of cultural reformation invited European education to substitute the pre-existing modes of instruction in Bengal, they embraced the coloniser’s literature, language, natural science and, as a matter of course, philosophy of “self.” Before moving ahead with the history of modernity and the invention

of new ways of life-writing, it is necessary to discuss the differences between Western and Indian concepts of selfhood or individuality. Whereas, to generalise, in continental philosophy, the notion of “I” emerges out of Descartes’ famous pronouncement, “cogito, ergo, sum,” in the East, the self is either a false perception or illusion, as Vedanta argues, or the self aims at the continued negation of “I” as Buddha sees it. Enlightenment philosophy, the driving force behind the white man’s burden, puts the individual self in the centre of the discourse, unlike the East, where the self always exists in relation.² Kant defines enlightenment as “the human being’s emancipation from its self-incurred immaturity,” that is, attaining selfhood without superstition and moving towards a more rational existence in critical terms (Kant 18). This quest for individuality and understanding of self is prevalent in most European autobiographies: it is a history of one’s interiority and private life. Sudipta Kaviraj, in *The Invention of Private Life*, points out how this genre of literature and “the idea of a ‘private life’ is a historical construction of Western modernity” (Kaviraj 304). Before the intervention of English education in Bengal, the only mode of biography writing people were acquainted with was *Carit Sahitya*, the hagiography of religious figures, often mythical and non-Kantian; as for Kant, any personal enlightenment must be based on reason and denounce nonage, “primarily in terms of religious matters” (Kant 22). The other significant difference can be found in the narrative technique of history writing, as all biographies or autobiographies are essentially recordings of events. History in the Hegelian sense was relatively new in the nineteenth century. Ghosh writes, “polarisation of myth and history and secular distinctions between “facts” (and science) and “fiction” (and literature), which are the characteristic features of European modernity, are not integral to early Indian historiography” (Ghosh, *Presence* 147). Most early Indian historians blended mythopoeic elements with history and preferred a non-chronological mode of storytelling. This separation originates from an ontological difference between *itihasa* and history, as the distinction between *kavya*, poetic composition in Sanskrit, and *itihasa* is also very thin. As a result, the Western idea of individuality and the need for archiving life could not exist without a conceptual translation – a localisation of private life. The private life recorded in nineteenth-century Bengali autobiographies is less focused on interiority and masked with religious metaphors while omitting intimate history such as conjugal life. In the case of colonial Bengal, the context was the identity politics of learned intellectuals and the need to archive indigenous and, later, national history.

The archival politics of Bengal are nuanced and directly linked to the project of modernity and cultural reformation. In the face of the burgeoning pressure of losing one’s identity and erosion of collective memory, for *Bhadraloks*, archiving the past and projecting the culture in literature was requisite. To use Tagore’s phrase, Literature became the “live umbilical cord” for Bengali identity formation (qtd. in Chakrabarty 661). It is also a fact that the power centre that determined the course of literature was primarily Hindu elite

intelligentsia. For the same reason, all the autobiographies and biographies that gained critical attention were composed by either Hindu upper-caste men or women, with a few exceptions here and there. Nevertheless, this casteist angle cannot explain the rationale behind the sudden emphasis on women's autobiographies in fact, the very first autobiography in Bengali was written by Rashsundari Debi in 1876 when education for women was still scarce. To understand this phenomenon, we must revisit the consequences of the Bengal Sati Regulation Act and the discourse surrounding the trial that hurt the sentiments and pride of a section of Hindu elitists. The aspiration of the *Bhadralok* class to be a part of European modernity was hindered by the persistent "women's question." To resolve this, reformists developed a strategy to separate the outer world from the inner world, a division of material modernity where they were no match to the colonisers' supremacy and spiritual interiority where Westerners were purported to be void. By this, the question of women was also pushed towards the invisible realm of sovereignty – the politics of home. Then, the question arises: How do we represent home in literature? Is the home archivable? Moreover, who speaks through the gendered archive?

In *Dwelling in the Archive*, Antoinette Burton sees life-writing by a woman as an archival repository that can be used to document gendered history because of the possibility of recording contradictions, anxieties, and aporias in the backdrop of the *bhadralok* politics. Burton locates these texts "at the intersection of home and history by virtue of their relationships to imperialism and nationalist projects" (Burton 5). However, this claim cannot negate that the voice we hear from the zenana or *antahpur* (inner sanctum) in any nineteenth-century archive is refracted; the words are faint and subject to careful revision. There is almost no scope for verifying the publication history of many of the early autobiographies written by women, and considering the gravity of *bhadralok* politics, it can be argued that most of these narratives went through textual changes before publication. A typical example could be Tagore's revision of Soudamini Devi's reminiscence of Debendranath Tagore, *Pitrismriti*. The lamentation over the condition of women and the very synthesis of emancipation that trans(in)fuses Victorian ethics with the politicised notion of Indian tradition was put forth through periodicals and treatises. Didactic articles written by women were widespread in periodicals like *Bamabodhini* and *Bharati*. Reformed women were assigned two tasks – becoming the intellectual companions of the *Bhadralok* and sustaining the sanctity of the home. "Every autobiography," Kaviraj observes, is "a vindication that such a new kind of life for the individual is not merely desirable, but actually possible" (Kaviraj 304). For instance, in most "hegemonic feminist" readings, as phrased by Gayatri Chakraborty Spivak, the infusion of Hindu religiosity and its codes is overlooked. Rashmi Dube Bhatnagar, in her analysis of an early twentieth-century Braj poet, Mahadevi Varma, points out how, for the critics, "she was feminist when she talked in the idioms of secular nationalist modernity about the need for schools and colleges for girls, and

regressively pre-feminist and religious when she affiliated herself to an early modern poetic practice” (Bhatnagar 92). The traces of Vaishnavite literature intertwined with the episteme in gendered autobiographies call for trans(in)fusionised reading techniques and involvement of cross-continental dialectics. This bears the possibility of radically supplementing the historiographer’s poverty in archiving the poetics of intimate space.

Notes

¹ By tradition, I refer to the Hindu moral codes and instructions that guided the strict caste and gender-based livelihood in Bengal before the arrival of British rulers.

² For a comparative analysis of Eastern and Western concepts of self, see Jun, 86-110.

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PSYCHIC-FRAGMENTATION OF WOMEN IN HILARY MANTEL'S *WOLF HALL TRILOGY*

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Abstract

King Henry VIII was the successor of King Arthur in 1509. An extravagant king who was interested in hunting and was deeply rooted in religious views. He along with Cardinal Wolsey construed the power regime of England. The reign of King Henry VIII witnessed lots of transformations and tribulations in terms of religion, politics and gender roles, hence there are lotsof fiction focusing on his reign. Though outwardly all these torments were subjected only to women, beit in the kingdom or outside the kingdom, women were subjugated in various terms. This article focuses on how various narrative discourses bring out the psychic fragmentation of women during the period of Henry VIII, with a special emphasis on Mantel's *Wolf Hall* Trilogy.

Keywords: Psychic Turmoil, History and Feminism, Gender Hierarchy, Repressive State Apparatus.

England during the fifteenth and sixteenth century undergone several changes in its socio-political, cultural, and historical structural milieu as well. King Henry VII was a staunch king who was very stoic with his monarchy. King Henry VII had two sons namely King Arthur and King Henry VIII. Soon after the regime of King Henry VII, King Arthur was made to access the throne of England as he was the eldest in the Tudors family. However, King Arthur's hold over England short-lived as he died in the war in 1502. King Henry VIII was not mentally sound to access the throne of England, but Henry VIII was a voracious reader and wanted to happily involve into the matters of the state, the unexpected death of King Arthur made Henry VIII to be the king of England without his own interest.

The reason why King Henry VIII was made the king is that, he was the only male heir in the family, this mental stigma where the male heir alone is given the power to rule and not the female was predominate in the Tudor dynasty hence this trait continued in the minds of King Henry VIII as well.

Catherine of Aragon was married to King Arthur but unfortunately their marriage short-lived as King Arthur was dead in the battle. It is in this context that Catherine of Aragon was reduced to a pawn at the hands of the Tudor family she had no other choice but by force was made to accept and marry King Henry VIII without her interest. Hilary Mantel

in her *Wolf Hall Trilogy* explicitly mentions the condition of female in her trilogy, “Wolf Hall”, “Bring up the Bodies” and “The Mirror and the Light.” Though Hilary Mantel projects Thomas Cromwell to be her major character, she also equally focuses on the other female characters as well. Through the eyes and the voice of Thomas Cromwell she explores the world of women in the rein of King Henry VIII.

The aim of this paper focuses on how women were psychologically tormented and fragmented through political, social, and cultural milieu. Only a text by a female can more elaborately picture the struggles faced by a fellow woman. Hence it becomes an integral part to bring out the subjugation of female through the discourses by woman writers, “I consider women’s literature as specific category, not because of biology but because it is in a sense, the literature of the colonized” (*The Privilege of the consciousness*) as Christina Rochford states or places literature of women on the side of the colonized so does Hilary Mantel as she places all the queens of King Henry VIII on the colonised section.

In the context of Hilary Mantel’s *Wolf Hall Trilogy*, Mantel projects the patriarchal mind set of King Henry VIII, where he considers his female subjects especially his queens to be the producers of material production as Spivak states that in her *Feminism and Critical Theory* as, “the idea of the womb as a place of production” (Lodge 498), hence Henry VIII considers womb of his queens to be the locus of his production of power and this idea of womb which should only foster male heir is considered to be obsessive aggression of King Henry VIII which later on instigates him to take up terrible decisions in his life. Correspondingly Henry VIII is obsessed with the male heir when he begets a female child from Queen Katherine, he places this as a major allegation for the annulment of his marriage with her. He considers begetting a female heir as a curse or an ill deed, “Why have I been left after twenty years with one frail daughter, whom any vagrant wind may destroy” (*Wolf Hall*, 81). Thus, immediately is followed by the annulment of marriage. Henry VIII forces Queen Katherine to accept to this annulment of marriage through Cardinal Campeggio, “Cardinal Campeggio has implored Katherine to bow to the king’s will to accept that her marriage is invalid and to retire to a convent” (*Wolf Hall*, 144).

King Henry VIII not only fragments the physical construct of his queens but also their psychic construct as well. Queen Anne Boleyn miscarries a child when she comes to know that King Henry VIII was grievously injured and was on his death bed, as he fallen off the saddle, but eventually he gets better. Queen Anne Boleyn was unable to recover from that shock and hence she miscarries a child, instead of mentally supporting Queen Anne Boleyn he objects her miscarriage as a crime which she committed, not stopping there he also alleges her to be possessed by an evil entity. This is where King Henry VIII psychologically dominates Anne Boleyn and made her to accept that miscarrying a child was

absolutely her mistake and promises Henry VIII for another child, “I will soon give you another child... a male child” (*Bring Up the Bodies*, 218), conforming to this statement Anne too believes that begetting a female child is a curse and that is why she promises King Henry VIII for a male heir. After this particular incident a bill is passed in favour of King Henry VIII that he can marry anybody in case if Queen Anne dies and Anne is mentally broken to know this, “This bill provides that if I die say I die of fever and I die undelivered, that he can put another queen in my place” (*Bring Up the Bodies*, 537). A woman is not even allowed to live as per her choice even the life which grows inside her is being determined by the patriarchal society.

The concept of love is determined by the patriarchal society as well. Harry Percy falls in love with Anne Boleyn and they had secretly married too, but here again Anne Boleyn was used as a pawn for the political reasons where she was forced to marry King Henry VIII by the words of her father Thomas Boleyn and her brother George Boleyn as they were promised for a better position in the court of England. Cardinal Wolsey persuades Harry Percy, to forgo the marriage which took place between him and Anne Boleyn as that was not considered to be on the legal side. Hence Harry Percy was by force made to dissolve his marriage with Anne Boleyn, so that King Henry VIII could marry Anne this made Harry Percy to be completely infuriated and he says, “Henry may be the King but he is stealing another man’s wife...How will he stand on the day of judgement” (*Wolf Hall*, 377).

In the reign of King Henry VIII being a woman is a misfortune, because Queen Katherine was reduced to a commodity as she was displaced from one person to another without her own personal interest in order to make the kingdom function without any discrepancies. She even thinks of going back to her family to live with her father, “the late king Henry would not let me go back to my father because he said he was owned money – he haggled over me like one of the doorstep women who sold us bad eggs... I tasted the death of humiliation” (284 *Wolf Hall*).

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THE POWER OF THE GAZE: PANOPTICISM AND DISCIPLINE IN MARGARET ATWOOD'S *THE HEART GOES LAST*

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to discuss the changes that happen in the lives of Stan and Charmaine who lives in utopian society that eventually turn into dystopia. The future world depicted in Atwood's novel is filled with violence and deprived of both human bonds and hope. The theoretical framework applied in this study is Michel Foucault's theory of power specifically the concepts of surveillance, where 'Surveillance' is the continuous observation and assessment of citizens and Jeremy Bentham's concept of the Panopticon. The article discusses the dystopian vision of the near future with direct references to these concepts which allow the people in authority to control the lives of the citizens. The study also proves the futility of applying utopian systems in the real world as they always fail and turn into dystopias instead.

Keywords: Dystopia, Surveillance, Power, Utopia, Panopticism, Discipline.

Stan and Charmaine are forced to live in a car after losing their home and employment as a result of the calamity, viewing necessities like food and a bath as luxuries. Nowadays, personal safety has become a luxury as well, as cars serve as a vulnerable deterrent against robbers and rapists, from whom escape is the only means of protection. Furthermore, the beginning of the novel can not be categorized as a dystopia.

When Charmaine first sees the advertisement for the utopia while she is working as a waitress at a pub, it makes her think of the simpler, more carefree days she spent with her grandmother. The appealing image of a gleaming black glass wall with people strolling in where the young couples holding hands, happy, and animated is shown on the bar's TV. Next, Stan and Charmaine see a clean, recently painted house with grass and hedge, devoid of abandoned cars or broken-down couches, and the camera pans through the second-floor window, past the curtains, and into the room. A lovely deep-sided tub with numerous enormous fluffy white towels hanging beside it can be seen through the open bathroom door. The bed is king-sized, with four pillows and crisp, blue, and pink sheets with a cheery flower pattern.

In the advertisement, the Positron Project in Consilience is marketed as the only route out of the overall chaos and crisis as well as a way to solve personal issues while also

resolving national issues. The jail "Positron" and the metropolis "Consilience" combine to form the experimental "double" city known as the Positron Project. The announcer in the commercial appears to be speaking directly to the helpless and in need, asking people like Stan and Charmaine if they are sick of living in their cars. Stan and Charmaine both agree that the system functions flawlessly, and they apply for this project and are hired and given a house right away. According to the prison's reasoning, citizens are required to move into the prison once every two months to work and reside there; they must give up their homes and employment to "alternates" who have been found guilty during the previous two months.

First, the word "propaganda" refers to the dissemination of particular information, which may or may not be factual, to persuade listeners to accept particular viewpoints as true. In dystopian societies, propaganda is typically employed to instill false beliefs and notions in the minds of the populace, allowing for easy manipulation.

"An ultra, ultra important experiment; the think-tankers use the word ultra at least ten times," is how the authorities characterize the Consilience or Positron town. The authorities want the public to understand how important the project is, which is why they keep using the word "ultra" repeatedly. This highlights the fact that the government is trying to convince the public that this initiative is the answer to all their issues by employing specific language. The repetition of words highlights how important the endeavor is. This endeavor turns into the haven that will rescue Charmaine and Stan from their anxieties and issues.

People who choose to apply for the project are utterly cut off from the outside world, there is no unemployment, and Consilience is completely devoid of crime. No correspondence or phone calls are permitted. Such a society conceals a deeper degree of control and compulsion, despite being prosperous and egalitarian. Consilience itself is a jail city. They are unable to escape the area in which they are imprisoned. When Conor, Stan's brother, finds out that Stan plans to apply for the Positron Project, he even issues a warning.

"Panopticism" is characterized as a form of surveillance where individuals are constantly monitored and even the smallest movements are under observation. "A compact model of the disciplinary mechanism" is panopticism. According to Foucault, a Panopticon is designed as an architectural device, typically a tower, that provides inmates with a constant state of visibility so they never know if they are being seen or not, ensuring the automatic operation of power. This purpose is fulfilled in Atwood's novel by a highly developed surveillance system rather than a tower that watches over the prison.

The Panopticon technique is one of the characteristics of a dystopian society, according to Foucault's theory of evaluation and surveillance. Panopticon is a tool for

surveying people, including workers, students, patients, insane people, and prisoners. The Panopticon's divisions in architecture provide the authority in charge to control the inmate's movements and activities. Although people may not always feel that they are being watched or spied on, their behavior is controlled because they believe that those in positions of power are constantly monitoring them. According to Foucault, the evaluation and monitoring of inmates is seen as an efficient means of establishing order in the community. Similar to this, the novel *The Heart Goes Last* demonstrates how citizen monitoring and evaluation contribute to the upkeep of a lawful and orderly community.

Consequently, implementing the Panopticon procedure in any utopian society helps in controlling and manipulating the behaviors of the citizens and also makes applying the system implemented by the authorities easier. Unfortunately, citizens who live in a dystopian community are always under constant surveillance. Everything they do is monitored. Their behavior is tracked as though they are constantly imprisoned in a Panopticon-like setting, with permanent surveillance over their every move.

The rulers of Consilience accomplish their objectives by managing people's lives, prohibiting them from engaging in potentially illegal or even upsetting behavior and molding their ideas. They also use people as a perpetual workforce. The novel's most unsettling section demonstrates inventive yet covert neurosurgery which is used on patients to create lifelong romantic relationships with whoever they choose. This is a means of suppressing and managing people's innate desires, such as the ones that Stan and Charmaine felt for Max and Jocelyn, their respective alternatives, in their early months in Consilience. "How far can humans go in the alteration department before those altered cease to be human?" (Atwood, *Dire Cartographies* 91).

Control over a person's body leads to more disturbing practices, such as the sale of an individual's organs and the repression of offenders. As the "Chief Medication Administrator," Charmaine is one of the people tasked with keeping lawbreakers in check. Even Stan is not allowed to know what her job is. Criminals are put to death via injection, which gives them a brief period of calm before their heart, as in the novel's title, "goes last," stops, and they pass away.

Atwood demonstrates how the characters in *The Heart Goes Last* deal with a variety of obstacles. Firstly, the encounter of Charmaine and Stan about the Consilience/Positron project was through an advertisement on TV. They get in real contact with the founders of the project only during the introductory workshops before joining the project. Later all the meetings that take place in Consilience/Positron are through TVs. The citizens never attended any meetings in reality. Additionally, TV commercials are the primary source of news that the town's residents receive. Televisions serve as the barrier here which detaches

citizens like Charmaine and Stan from those who are in authority. This proves that through their advertisements and meetings on TV, those in charge manage to control the minds of the citizens and convince them that this project is very beneficial. The constant monitoring of the populace and the various obstacles they face allow the government to oppress the people and guarantee their compliance.

In Consilience/Positron, residents are isolated within the dystopian societies without having any access to or knowledge of the outside world. They live in a Panopticon-like milieu in which they are always being monitored and assessed. Also, the citizens face verbal and physical barriers that limit their actions as well as freedom. As a result of their entrapment and constant surveillance, the citizen's actions are always controlled as they fear being punished for their wrongdoings. This also means that even though surveillance may sometimes be invisible the citizens feel that they are always being monitored. Thus, their actions are calculated.

Atwood's conclusion is arguable and may cause one to pause and reflect. Following a critique of Margaret Atwood's *The Heart Goes Last* in the context of Michel Foucault's theory of power, it is important to note that the book's conclusions demonstrate how societies founded on utopianism ultimately fail and devolve into dystopia. It is significant to remember that the dystopian societies collapse at the novel's conclusion. It can also be interpreted via the prism of utopia and the author's belief that social progress is essential. According to Atwood, "We should probably not try to make things perfect, especially not ourselves, for that path leads to mass graves. We're stuck with us, imperfect as we are; but we should make the most of us" (Atwood, *Dire Cartographies* 95). Similarly, the novel *The Heart Goes Last* eventually verges on dystopian territory for the same reason.

It is crucial to talk about Michel Foucault's view about the creation of utopias because the primary goal of this research is to apply and analyze Foucault's theory of power in the dystopian society that Margaret Atwood creates in the chosen novel. According to Foucault, people are the engines of power in society or the channels via which power is utilized, abused, and controlled. They frequently support the use of power in a community both directly and indirectly. Because power is a fundamental component of all kinds of relationships, power dynamics always involve some degree of power shifting. Power, in Foucault's view, is not static. Conversely, it moves from one entity to another. In a dystopian society, power will sometimes be with the government, and at some times, the people will be more powerful than the government.

For instance, when a dystopian society is created initially, the government is considered the most powerful entity. However, after the downfall of a certain system or government, the citizens become more powerful than the government. This is similar to what

happens exactly in the dystopian societies in Atwood's novel. The Consilience/Positron project started as a very powerful society that controlled and manipulated the citizens. Later, these dystopian societies disintegrate, and the populace becomes more powerful than the people in authority.

According to Foucault, utopias cannot be implemented in the real world. According to him, utopias are made-up locations that don't exist and can't be used in everyday life. In contrast, it appears from his writings that he supported the methods or systems that create utopias to maintain law and order in a community. Consequently, his theory of power which is applied throughout this study demonstrates that it is feasible to impose discipline and order on a community on a real-world basis.

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RESISTANCE TO IDENTITY: THE INTREPIDITY AGAINST CONFUCIAN CONSCIOUSNESS IN MINJIN LEE'S *PACHINKO*

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Abstract

This paper examines the theme of resistance in Min Jin Lee's novel *Pachinko*, focusing specifically on the in trepidity against Confucian consciousness. Using a combination of literary analysis and historical research, the paper explores how the characters in the novel resist the societal norms and expectations imposed on them by Confucianism and its associated patriarchal structures. Furthermore, this research also throws light on the discrimination and racism that Koreans faced at the hands of the Japanese and how Korean immigrants in Japan resisted Japanese culture and identity.

Keywords: Confucianism, Immigrants, Resistance, Identity, Discrimination.

Confucianism is an ethical and philosophical system that originated in ancient China. The Chinese have adapted and lived by the Confucian way of thinking for more than 2,000 years. This philosophy was developed by the philosopher Confucius and his followers. Confucianism governs Chinese society and has an important on other nations, particularly Vietnam, Korea, and Japan. This philosophy emphasizes personal virtues such as sincerity, filial piety, social order and harmony. Confucius believed virtues such as benevolence, righteousness, propriety, wisdom, and faithfulness were essential for creating a peaceful and harmonious society.

Fumie Kmagai in his article titled, *Families in Japan: Beliefs and Realities* says about Confucianism as "Confucianism has become a moral code of the Japanese emphasizing personal virtue, justice, and devotion to the family, including the spirit of one's ancestors" (137). Though here are certain positive norms in Confucianism which are very much essential for a healthy society. In Confucianism there are certain negative aspects too. Some negative aspects have been identified by scholars and critics, they are Patriarchy, Repression of Individualism, Authoritarianism etc. Mostly the negative aspect of Confucianism is mainly concerned with women.

Confucianism is one of the significant themes in the novel, *Pachinko*, written by Min Jin Lee, a Korean American author, who is best known for her diasporic writings. The novel, *Pachinko* portrays characters who reject some of the traditional Confucian values, especially the women characters resist certain norms that is imposed against them. The main

objective of this paper is to examine the characters' life in Confucian society and certain characters' bravery against Confucian consciousness.

The core value of Confucianism is filial piety and respect to elders. The virtue of filial piety is to pay respect to elders, stay attached towards family and support parents. In the novel, *Pachinko* filial piety is the most significant element. Moreover, every character in the novel is very much attached to family. The filial piety is seen in the protagonist of the novel, Sunja who is very much devoted to her family all through her life. Sunja's decision to marry Baek Isak is seen as her desire to protect her parents from shame after becoming pregnant out of wedlock. She feels a strong sense of duty to her parents and thus she wishes to sacrifice her own happiness to uphold their honour. This incidence is expressed in the following lines, "Her mother told her Baek's intentions, and Sunja prepared herself to be his wife" (84). The phrase 'prepared herself to be his wife' suggests that in order to satisfy her mother's wish she accepts to marry him. Filial piety is also seen in Noa, the son of Sunja and the illegitimate son of Koh Hansu.

In Confucianism, the relationship between elder and younger brothers is based on the idea of filial piety and respect for elders. This elder and younger brother relationship is seen between Yoseb Baek and Baek Isak and then between Noa Baek and Mozasu Baek. Gender roles are an important aspect of Confucianism. In Confucianism, men are traditionally seen as the head of the family, while women are considered to be submissive, and their primary role is to bear and raise children. In Confucianism, men are expected to occupy the public sphere, that is they engage in politics and business. Women, on the other hand, are expected to occupy the private sphere which means that their duties are to maintain household chores and to raise their children.

Eunkang Koh in his article titled, "Gender issues and Confucian scriptures: Is Confucianism incompatible with gender equality in South Korea?", explains about 'hoju' system. He writes as, "The Korean hoju system, introduced in 1953, was a family registration system under Civil Law. All members of a family were registered under hoju or "the family head", thus "family" consists of the family head and the other members" (346). Here the family head is the male members of the family and in the Korea's patriarchal system the male members of the family are generally considered as the hojus. Feminists say that this system represents an idea of patriarchy informed by Confucianism.

These gender roles are portrayed in the novel, *Pachinko*. Discrimination between the male and female is very much evident in the very first chapter of the novel, when the matchmaker visited Hoonie's house to tell Hoonie's mother about Yangjin. When the matchmaker was explaining about Yangjin's father and his situation, she says that "The

widower cursed with four girls and no sons” (7). The word ‘cursed’ suggests that gender discrimination is very much evident in Korean culture.

Women are being subjugated in Confucian society and the women is meant to suffer all through her life. Min Jin Lee expresses this statement in many of the incidents in her novel. Yangjin recalls Bokhee and Dokhee, the servant girls of the boarding house, who were taken advantage of by Japanese soldiers, and she could not help them. She says, “A woman’s lot is to suffer. We must suffer” (266). Min Jin Lee often expresses the statement that women in the Confucian society must suffer.

In Confucian society, women were often considered objects of desire for men. This is very well portrayed in the novel, *Pachinko*. In the novel Korean women are often depicted as objects and were objectified in certain occasions. One such example is when, Koh Hansu, the Korean Japanese businessman seduces and impregnates Sunja without confessing her that he is already married to Japanese woman and have three daughters. On another occasion in the novel, Kim Chango wishes to marry Kyunghee after her husband Yoseb dies. He sees her as an object to satisfy his physical desires. These kinds of objectification of women are seen in many instances in this novel.

In *Pachinko*, there are several instances where characters show intrepidity against Confucian consciousness. The characters in the novel resist the traditional gender roles and expectations placed on them by Confucian society. Yangjin, Sunja’s mother, is a determined woman stands against the traditional Confucian gender roles assigned to women. She runs a boarding house and supports her family through hard work and determination after her husband, Hoonie dies. In Confucian society women were not allowed to work, but Yangjin stood against the Confucian norms and worked to take care of her daughter.

Sunja is a character who challenges the traditional Confucian values that dominate Korean society during the time period portrayed in the novel. She demonstrates her intrepidity by neglecting the ideas placed on her as a woman. As a woman, Sunja is expected to be obedient to men and to give priority to the needs of her family above her personal preferences. However, when she becomes pregnant by a wealthy married man named Koh Hansu, she refuses to become his mistress. On hearing that, Hansu is married to Japanese woman and having three daughters, Sunja stood against him. Hansu was very much surprised by her attitude.

Sunja shows her bravery against Confucian consciousness when she decides to sell her watch to a pawnbroker to settle Yoseb’s debt. Yoseb has not made his payments on time. Thus, two Korean working-class men came to their house with a document and complained about him. In order to settle Yoseb’s debt Sunja decided to sell the gold watch, given by

Hansu. Yoseb felt bad and ashamed because the women of his home went to the moneylender and paid his debt on his behalf. Sunja's decision to sell her watch can be seen as an act of intrepidity because it goes against the traditional gender roles and expectations of Korean society. By this Sunja is demonstrating her independence and self-reliance.

Baek Isak's marriage to Sunja can also be seen as an act of intrepidity against Confucian consciousness. Sunja, as an unmarried pregnant woman, is seen as a social misfit in Korean society. By marrying her and accepting her child as his own, Isak goes against the Confucian values of family honour and duty to one's parents. Isak's decision to place his own values of love and tenderness over societal expectations is an expression of boldness against Confucian consciousness. Marrying a pregnant woman out of wedlock was seen as an infringement of these conventions.

Kyunghee explains to Sunja about her aspirations of starting a new business and selling kimchi near Tsuruhashi Station. She explains to Sunja that Yoseb will not let her work outside the home because he is an old-fashioned man, and he goes after the Confucian tradition. But to this contrary, Sunja, after Baek Isak got arrested determined to earn money by doing some work. She even thought of becoming a peddler. Though Yoseb does not allow Kyunghee to sell pickles, instead Kyunghee helped Sunja in making pickles and kimchi. By doing so, she challenged the conventional ideas about femininity and social hierarchy that were profoundly embedded in Korean society. Sunja's decision to sell kimchi was a courageous act against the Confucian consciousness that dominated Korean society, as it challenged traditional gender roles and social hierarchy.

In a society which objectifies women, a woman's worth will be tied to how loyal she is to her husband and how much she depends on her husband for her identity. However, Etsuko after the divorce, when she gets shunned by society and her own children, she does not let it deter. She neither tries to leech off her husband, nor does she try to beg her husband. She starts her own business and strives to live a life on her own, in spite of living in a patriarchal society her whole life, which basically tells women that women's lives have no meaning outside marriage. Her decision to leave her husband and pursue her own happiness, even if it means being a single mother, is a bold move that challenges traditional Confucian family values. This is how Etsuko shows her boldness against Confucian consciousness. Noa Baek, son of Sunja, the act of leaving his mother and family can also be seen as the intrepidity against Confucian consciousness. Solomon, son of Mozasu enters his father's workplace and expresses his wish to work for him which is against his father's wish and this behaviour is against the Confucian value where Solomon stood for his life instead of obeying his father. This is where Solomon's intrepidity against Confucian values is expressed. Overall, the novel *Pachinko*, portrays the conflict between Confucian

consciousness and the characters bold act against the traditional cultural norms. In order to follow their own paths in life, the characters in the novel defied prevailing cultural conventions.

The novel *Pachinko* explores the theme of immigrants' identity issues in a complex and subtle manner. Throughout the novel, the Korean characters face discrimination and marginalization in Japanese society due to their ethnic identity. They are often referred to as Zainichi, a term used to describe non-Japanese residents of Japan and are seen as outsiders and second-class citizens.

Zainichi Koreans may struggle to find a sense of belonging and may experience a sense of dislocation or displacement. They may feel as if they are caught between two cultures and struggle to reconcile their Korean heritage with their experiences living in Japan. This can lead to feelings of isolation, anxiety, and depression.

The novel *Pachinko*, follows a Korean family over several generations, starting from their life in Korea under Japanese occupation and continuing to their struggles as immigrants in Japan. Throughout the novel, the characters are shown to struggle with their identity as Koreans living in Japan. Many of the characters, particularly the older generation, resist identifying with Japanese culture and society. Resistance to identity is seen in the protagonist of the novel Sunja, a Korean woman who moves to Japan with her husband, Isak, a Christian minister. Despite living in Japan for many years and having two sons who were born and raised there, Sunja never fully assimilates into Japanese culture and always considers herself a Korean.

Sunja's resistance to Japanese identity is seen when she speaks Korean at home, cooks Korean food, wears traditional Korean dress. In an effort to prevent discrimination Kyunghee acts as a Japanese woman by wearing a western - style clothing. This is explained by Gayla Freeman in his article, *What Koreans? Status and Marginalization of Koreans in Japan*, he says, "Zainichi Koreans remain invisible in Japanese standpoint, they look identical to native Japanese. Zainichi even talk and act Japanese" (164).

Though the local people looked down on her, Sunja does not want to dress like Japanese because she resists Japanese culture which is considered as the dominant culture. By resisting Japanese identity, Sunja is asserting her own sense of pride and identity as a Korean. Sunja's determination to maintain her Korean identity and resist assimilation into Japanese culture is seen when she decides to sell Kimchi at Japan. Kimchi is a traditional Korean dish and is considered a symbol of Korean culture and identity. By selling kimchi, Sunja is sharing a part of her heritage with others while also asserting her own cultural identity. Selling kimchi at Japanese is seen as a form of resistance against the dominant

Japanese culture that surrounds her. “Kimchi kimchi! Homemade kimchi! The most delicious kimchi in Ikaino! More tasty than your grandmother’s! Oishi desu, oishi!” (178).

Hu is a Chinese Christian orphan who refuses to participate in the Japanese ritual of offering obeisance at a Shinto shrine, and instead mouths the words of the Lord’s Prayer. This act of resistance leads to his arrest by the Japanese police. By refusing to bow to the emperor and offer obeisance at a Shinto shrine, Hu is asserting his own cultural identity and refusing to get incorporated into the Japanese culture. This is where Hu’s resistance to identity is seen. *Pachinko* portrays the complexities of identity and resistance to identity among Korean immigrants living in Japan. This paper tried to examine the characters resistance over certain norms to be followed in the Confucian society and their resistance over the dominant identity.

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ECOFEMINISM AND PSYCHOLOGICAL APPROACH IN HANKANG'S *THE VEGETARIAN*

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Abstract

The Vegetarian is a South Korean novel that consists of three parts. It brings to light the customs and traditions of South Korea, especially in food habits and eating practices. The novel revolves around the protagonist Yeong-hye, who goes through a series of dreams and illusions, which insist that she avoid all forms of meat in her eating routine like octopus, beef, squid etc. Therefore, by disregarding the food and materials made of meat, she was considered as a nun natural woman in South Korea. She was later diagnosed with a norexia and schizophrenia (difficulty in distinguishing real and imaginary world). She was also controlled by her husband, whom she calls as her second master, by her father, the first master and by the society as a whole.

Keywords: Feminism, Ecology, Customs, Traditions, Dreams and Illusions, Patriarchy.

The term eco-feminism was coined by the French Feminist Francoise d'eaubonne. According to the Eco-feminists both women and environment were exploited and dominated. Therefore, the Eco-feminists always wished for a peaceful environment where all the living beings were treated normal especially women in the universe.

The Vegetarian by *Han Kang* is a feministic novel, where the protagonist Yeong-hye wants her life to be ecologically friendly by all means. She wants to lead a simple life without disturbing the mother nature and she barely speaks to other people. Yeong-hye does not like wearing tight clothes because she wants to be as free as the plants and trees in the universe "She was a woman of few words. It was rare for her to demand anything of me" (TV, 4)

The first part of the novel was narrated by her husband Mr. Cheong. They both reside in Seoul, South Korea. South Korea is an East-Asian country where, rice, meat, kimchi and various forms of meat is the base for their diet. In such case, Yeong-hye's family life gets disturbed because of her strange graphic dream in the middle of the night. She was haunted by this dream because the dream was full of bloodshed, where Yeong-hye kills an animal and pushes the raw meat into her mouth. After this horrendous spine-chilling dream, she threw all the meat from her refrigerator. Gaspd by the action of his wife, Mr. Cheong asked the reason for Yeong-hye's change in behaviour. "My clothes still wet with blood. Hide, hide behind the trees. Crouch down, do not let anybody see. My bloody hands. My bloody mouth" (TV, 12).

In the following days, Yeong-hye resembles very pale and weak. She avoided cooking meat completely. This infuriated Mr. Cheong and he started questioning the actions of his wife. The only answer he got from his wife is that 'I had a dream.' As she completely neglected eating meat, all the people around her questioned her pale appearance. But this did not bother Yeong-hye and she continued avoiding meat in her diet. But Mr. Cheong was completely disturbed by Yeong-hye's actions and he deliberately avoided questions based on Yeong-hye's look by the people around him. After the dream she threw away beef, belly pork, squid, sliced eel and eggs. Mr. Cheong thought that his wife went completely crazy and insane. The word 'self' gets repeated in almost every feminist texts. Han Kang's *The Vegetarian* is not an exception to it. By leading the life in a way which Yeong-hye likes makes her as a feminist. And by being environment friendly she becomes an Eco-feminist. Mr. Cheong thinks that the reply of his wife was so methodical. He thinks that she herself considers her ridiculous decision as completely rational and appropriate.

Within few months she becomes very lean and pale and she distanced herself from her husband. This shows she started avoiding people who includes meat in their diet as they all smell like meat. Mr. Cheong becomes very hesitant to attend public gatherings. But one fine day Mr. Cheong and Yeong-hye were invited for a dinner along with Mr. Cheong's colleagues. There she reluctantly avoided meat in her diet and therefore the conversation directly shifted towards the topic of vegetarianism. Everyone who gathered at the dinner questioned about Yeong-hye's ideology of not consuming meat. Mr. Cheong however managed to avoid the questions by diverting the topic. The wife of Mr. Cheong's director implied that those who arbitrarily cut out any food without being allergic to them are called narrow-minded. Therefore, according to the traditions and customs of South Korea, one who deliberately avoiding meat in their diet without any medical conditions are considered narrow minded.

Mr. Cheong later decided to inform Yeong-hye's family about her change in behaviour and they too failed convincing her to consume meat again. Her sister In-hye tried her level best to make her sister eat meat. But all their hard work ended in vain. Day by day Yeong-hye becomes very pale and weak as she goes through nightmares almost every day. Yeong-hye's father, her brother-in-law, all failed in their mission. According to her by protecting all the living creatures, she can make this environment a peaceful place to live on. "The liberation of the earth, the liberation of women, the liberation of all humanity is the next step of freedom we need to work for, and it's the next step of peace that we need to create", says Vandana Shiva

All the family members around her continued to force her by giving her meat. And in the process, Yeong-hye's father pushed a piece of pork into her mouth and he

aggressively slapped Yeong-hye. Yeong-hye was greatly intimidated by this and she furiously spitted the pork and with the help of the knife near her she cuts her wrist open. She was immediately admitted in the hospital by her husband and brother-in-law. She suddenly disappeared from the room and she was found near the hospital with a dead white bird in her hand. The dead white bird could be the symbolic representation of Yeong-hye as she was forced to have meat by her father. With this the first section which was told in the perspective of Mr. Cheong ends and then the second section of the novel, which was told in the perspective of Yeong-hye's brother-in-law, begins after a time period of two years.

The second section of the novel was named as "Mongolian Mark" by the writer. The second section of the novel brings into light the attraction of the brother-in-law towards Yeong-hye. The brother-in-law is a video artist and his salary is not sufficient to lead a normal life and due to this the marriage life of In-hye and Yeong-hye's brother-in-law was not happy. Therefore, the brother-in-law became very attracted towards Yeong-hye. And in this span of two years, Mr. Cheong has left Yeong-hye and therefore she lives alone. The brother-in-law requests Yeong-hye to permit him to paint his body with flowers. As Yeong-hye is greatly attracted towards nature she accepts his brother-in-law to paint her body with flowers without any clothes on her. This shows that Yeong-hye wishes to be one along with the nature like flowers, plants and trees. And in the course of time, both Yeong-hye and her brother-in-law develop a sexual relationship, which denotes that Yeong-hye leads her life the way she likes without the intervention of others. And both of these people did not discuss or talk about this incident thereafter.

After several months Yeong-hye again comes to her brother-in-law's studio and she tries to be very close to her brother-in-law. Again, the topic of vegetarianism arises between Yeong-hye and her brother-in-law. But Yeong-hye tells that he could not understand the reason for it. Her brother-in-law asks Yeong-hye to be a model along with one of his fellow friends and Yeong-hye agrees to it. She does not even have the idea that she is married to Mr. Cheong. Therefore, by ignoring her marital life for the sake of protecting the living creatures around her, (by ignoring all forms of meat) she proves herself as an Eco-feminist. Yeong-hye also admits that she has sexual attraction towards her fellow artist named J. The second section ends when In-hye comes to know about Yeong-hye and her husband's relationship while into the camera which has the recording of Yeong-hye's naked painting. On the whole, Yeong-hye becomes ardent feminist by having relationship with many men and she continued ignoring meat in her diet which made her to look completely pale and feeble. "He wrote on the label of the master tape with a black pen: 'Mongolian Mark 1 – Flowers of Night and Flowers of Day'". (TV, 95)

With this change in plot, the second section comes to an end and the third section begins with the narration of protagonist Yeong-hye herself. The third section was named as *Flaming trees* by the writer. In this narration the protagonist loses all her beauty and she becomes completely weak and she became extremely unidentified. She was waiting for the bus and she was about to reach Ch'ukseong Psychiatric Hospital and she lives in this psychiatric hospital and now completely refuses to eat. The doctors advised her to eat her food and they warned if she does not accept her food she would be admitted in the general hospital where they will proceed with a dreadful surgery and hook her with IV to bring her back to normal life. Yeong-hye gets vague memories from time to time and she remembers certain incidents from her past and now she considers herself as a tree. She thinks that by assuming oneself as a tree, he/she could be easily attracted to nature. If a person considers himself to be inverted in position, his both legs will be considered as a branch and he could live happily dancing to the rhythm of wind. Yeong-hye considers trees and plants to be her brothers and sisters and considers nature as her only family. She avoided every meal and considers only sunlight and water as her only food as she became one with the nature. "Look sister I'm doing a handstand; leaves are growing out of my body; roots are sprouting out of my hands . . . they delve down into the earth endlessly . . . yes, I spread my legs because I wanted flowers to bloom from my crotch; I spread them wide . . ." (TV, 127).

On the other hand, In-hye was guilty on seeing the condition of Yeong-hye and she also thought that she would have prevented Yeong-hye from this health condition by allowing her to live the way of life she likes. Yeong-hye became ill and doctors advised to insert a tube into her nose. Yeong-hye was greatly disturbed while the doctors were trying to insert the tube and she completely ignored eating. When In-hye saw the struggles of her, she went into the room and she bit the caretaker's hand and made Yeong-hye to leave the hospital and get into the ambulance. When looked at the face of Yeong-hye she said that she too gets dream everyday and according to her one should wake up from dream and come to the reality. With this the third section of the novel ends.

Therefore, the dreams which Yeong-hye gets from the unconscious state of mind made her to be conscious about her environment and all living creatures around her. Both the women and the living creatures in the earth were subordinated and degraded in the name of culture and tradition. This novel *The Vegetarian* brings into light the traditional food habits of South Korea and also shows how the choice of women were not respected by the people around her.

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REREADING THE HISTORY OF AFRICAN SLAVES: A DETAILED STUDY OF ALEXHALEY'S *ROOTS*

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Abstract

Alex Haley, an American writer is the author of the novel *Roots*. Haley travelled to the village of Juffure in Gambia and met Griot who is a tribal historian since he wanted to know about the tribal history, specifically Kunta Kinte who was the protagonist of the novel *Roots*. In *Roots*, Haley explores Kunta Kinte's capture in America, his horrible journey on a slaveship to America, his struggle as a slave on the plantation and his determination to maintain his identity and heritage. This paper discusses the major historical elements such as the American Revolution war, the Civil War, and the slave trade the brutal conditions endured by the enslaved Africans during their passage to America and the institution of slavery itself.

Keywords: Identity, Heritage, Slavery, History, Struggle.

Alex Haley was the American writer and the author of the novel *Roots*. Haley traveled to the village of Juffure in Gambia and met with Griot who is a tribal historian because he wanted to know about the tribal history and specifically Kunta Kinte who was the protagonist of the novel *Roots*. In *Roots*, Haley explores Kunta kinte's capture in America, his harrowing journey on a slave ship to America, his struggle as a slave on plantation and his determination to maintain his identity and heritage. The paper discusses the major historical elements that happens in the novel *Roots*. The paper vividly portrays the history of Mandinka tribe, Transatlantic slave trade system, and some important years and dates.

The term 'New Historicism' was first coined by Stephen Greenblatt. It is started during the year 1850. New historicism means reading the historicity of text and textuality of history (LC ii). New historicism is a fascinating lens which analyses the historical period and interprets literature. It emphasizes the importance of historical context and interconnectedness of literature and history. Peter Barry define New Historicism as follows:

It is a method based on the parallel reading of the literary and non literary texts usually of the same historical period. This is to say, new historicism refuses to privilege the literary text: instead of a literary foreground and a historical background it envisages and practices a mode of study in which literary and

non-literary texts are equal given weight and constantly inform or interrogate each other. (117)

Peter Barry compares both the literary and the non-literary texts. As a result, it proves both the historical facts are true. In some situation historical events go hand in hand, while in others it may require interpretation to determine which historical event is authentic.

In *Roots*, Alex Haley discusses the lives of the Mandinka people. The novel starts with the background of the Village of Juffure and precise the Mandinka tribe. "A man child was born to Omoro and Binta (R 1)" and they named the baby on the seventh day. It is the rule of the Mandinka if the child was born, the parents should name the child on the seventh day because it would develop "seven of the characteristics of whomever and whatever he was named for"(R 2). The boy was named as Kunta which was the name of his great late grandfather Kairuba Kunte Kinte". Mandinka's people staple food is groundnut. Throughout the novel whenever Mandinka traveled they used to eat steamed groundnut with rice. Men used to cultivate couscous and groundnut and women used to cultivate rice "the women worked even harder than the men, for not only help their husbands but also tend both the rice fields and the vegetable gardens they cultivated near their kitchens". Sarah Pruit in her writing *Who Are the Mandika?* proves, "Most Mandinka men are poor subsistence farmers, for whom one rainy season spells hunger and ruin. Peanuts are a main crop and a staple of the Mandinka diet and they also plant millet, corn, sorghum. Mandinka women do the laborious, physically demanding work of tending the rice fields, in addition to their role as wives and mothers".

According to Mandinka men and women belong to different "Kafo" mates based on their ages, Kunta belongs to third Kafo mate. Kunta after his manhood training, he thought to visit his ancestral places. Kunta goes into the forest to take trunk for his travel. During the search of the trunk, he is captured by the Toubob. Toubob are White Americans who enslave the black tribal people and torture them mentally. Toubob whip them and treat the slaves as animals. Kunta and other slaves are locked by the chains. These chained slaves are for trade so toubob put all the slaves in a ship. Kunta feels for the other person who was "chained to him by the ankles, lay some other man, someone who kept up a steady moaning and they were all so close that their shoulders, arms and legs touched if any of them moved even a little". (*Roots*, 150-1)

John Harris in his writing *9 facts about the transatlantic trade system* proves that slaves are brutally treated by toubob's Captives endured tremendous violence and trauma during the Atlantic crossing. According to slavevoyages.org, an estimated 15 percent died. Slave traders did everything in their power to prevent their captives from fighting

back, arming themselves and shackling their human “cargo.” But captives resisted. Rebellions occurred on at least 10 percent of voyages, usually when ships were on or near the African coast”.

Toubobuses "their whips in lashing down" the slaves and the slaves babbling and whimpering for their beating. Kunta is one among them as he belongs to Mandinka he never shouts and yell at the predators. It is the one of the manhood training for Kunta. The training teaches that a Mandinka must keep quiet and observe the hunters to kill them. Kunta startesallah to save his life among slave. Each and every one started to pray to god to escape from this hell. As toubob attack the slaves their body are filled with blood and there is a rotten smell everywhere. Slaves done their vomit and feces in same place. Kunta says that" the clouds of acrid stream left the holding smell better but soon it would again be overwhelmed by the choking stink. it was a smell would never leave his lungs and skin" (168).

All the slaves are taken to a market with hands cuffs and eyes closed, Kunta listened comprehendingly to the strange cries "Fit as a fiddle Plenty of Spirit in this buck" And at brief intervals other toubobwould interrupt with loud exclamations Three hundred and fifty, Four hundred! Five! And the first toubob would shout: Let's hear six! Look at him! Works like a mule! R 197. Slaves are taken to market for auction. The auction of selling slaves for trade is called transatlantic trade system. Toubob's consider slaves as mules. Toubob start the auction from three hundred, "then shouted eight until someone in the crowd shouted it back. And then before he had a chance to speak again someone shouted eight fifty198". At last Kunta sold for eight hundred and fifty. Once Kunta was sold to his master he was freed from the hand cuffs and eyes closed but his ankles are "hobbling along in the iron cuffs" (215). According to Steven Mints, *Historical Context: Facts about the Slave Trade and Slavery* talks about the sale of slaves and their profit to the whites "Prices of enslaved persons varied widely over time, due to factors including supply and changes in prices of commodities such as cotton. Even considering the relative expense of owning and keeping an enslaved person, slavery was profitable. In order to ensure the profitability of enslavement and to produce maximum “return on investment,” slaveholders generally supplied only the minimum food and shelter needed for survival, and forced their enslaved persons to work from sunrise to sunset”.

The other event in the novel is Boston tea party "Dey's tellin' dat one night some a dem Boston peoples got so mad 'bout dem king's taxes dey marched on dat king's soldiers. Dem soldiers commence to shootin', an' firs' one kilt a nigger name Crispus Attucks Dey Callin'it De Boston Massacare (R 275). In the year 1773 a group of

American colonists disguised as Native Americans boarded British ships and dumped tea into the Boston harbor as a protest against British taxation.

The historical facts from Britannica proves that Boston Tea Party, (December 16, 1773), incident in which 342 chests of tea belonging to the British East India Company were thrown from ships into Boston Harbor by American patriots disguised as Mohawk Indians. The Americans were protesting both a tax on tea (taxation without representation) and the perceived monopoly of the East India Company. It proves that historical incident and literary text go hand in hand.

Roots takes place between the years 1863 and 1865 which are significant periods in history. In 1863, the American Civil War was in full swing and the Emancipation Proclamation was issued, declaring the freedom of enslaved individuals in confederate territories. In 1865, the Civil war came to an end with the surrender of the confederacy and the Thirteenth Amendment was ratified, officially abolishing slavery in the United States. According to the historical facts regarding 1863 and 1865 incidents are true.

The other important character in the novel is Chicken George. Chicken George is the son of Kunta Kinte and Bell. He is known for his skills as a cock-fighter, hence he earns the nickname "Chicken George". Throughout the story, Chicken George faces many challenges and hardships, but he also demonstrates resilience and determination. His journey showcases the complexities of life as a mixed-race individual during a time of slavery and highlights the strength and endurance of the human spirit. Chicken George's character adds depth and richness to the narrative of "*Roots*". The history of Chicken George character is enrolled as play as Chicken George which was played by Rege Jean Page.

In *Roots*, Haley brings the different period of American history. All the historical incidents that Haley told us are true. Hence the government historical record and Haley's record go hand in hand.

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NATURE FOR HEALING: EMPIRICAL STUDY ON MEDICINAL PLANTS FROM SELECT CONTEMPORARY CHEROKEE LITERATURE

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Abstract

Indigenous peoples believe in holistic and traditional way of treating patients through herbal medicines and foods. Cherokee Native Americans have a rich cultural heritage following the use of medical plants for the natural process of healing. Medicinal herbs are the defence mechanisms for traditional therapeutic processes to cure and prevent health issues. This research paper focuses on the existence of valuable rare medicinal plants from the contemporary Cherokee fictional works of Brandon Hobson and Margaret Verble. The ethical study on the views of Penelope Myrtle Kelsey's "Tribal Theory in Native American Literature" and J. T. Garrett's "The Cherokee Herbal" helps evaluate the purpose of a Native Plant-based lifestyle that enriches the lives of people.

Keywords: Medicinal, Plants, Humanities, Health, Culture and Heritage.

Cherokee Native Americans belong to one of the largest civilised tribes in the United States of America. They are the victims of the Removal Act by the federal government during the period of 1830s. Cherokee Natives have survived the Trail of Tears and formed a separate nation where the native people have enrolled and become members of the Indian territories, The Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma and The Eastern Band of Cherokee Nation at North Carolina respectively. The Cherokee people have a strong connection to the Appalachian Mountains and Mother Earth in general. There are oral traditions and folklore of the lives of Cherokee Native Americans that are recorded from the natives of North Carolina and many other places where the Cherokees scattered after the Removal period, such as Virginia, Kentucky, South Carolina, Tennessee, Georgia and New Mexico. As Robert J. Conley in *The Cherokee Nation: A History* (2005) says, "Many historians and anthropologists believe that they came to the Southeast from the Northeast, having been driven there by other Iroquoian Tribes" (14).

The traditional and native method of treating health issues through the medicinal plants are discovered, followed and healed by the Cherokees from ancient times. Plant-based medicines are used to treat diseases that can be obtained and cured with the assistance of native people. According to the Cherokee Indian tradition, the required prescriptions are collected and preserved from their ancestors to treat illnesses through the medicinal plants and native practitioners as well. This research article examines the cultural practices of native people regarding the medicinal plant treatment from the recent contemporary works of Cherokee

Native American Writers, Brandon Hobson and Margaret Verble. These writers have emancipated the essence of historical and cultural narratives in their fictional work of art. The purpose of medicinal plants and nature's way for healing and treating both physical and mental health issues are depicted in their selected works. This research explores the holistic understanding of the Cherokee Native culture and medicinal values through the perspectives of ethnographic study on the keen analysis including the supportive secondary sources of J. T. Garrett and Penelope Myrtle Kelsey based on Cherokee Herbals and Tribal Theories, who belong to the Native American Community. As J. T. Garrett and Michael T. Garrett says in *Medicine of the Cherokee: The Way of Right Relationship* (1996), "The natural way and healing by self-choices promoted by Indian Medicine are included in almost every "alternative" therapy today. With a blend of stories and teachings, I want to share what I was taught about the beginning of Indian Medicine" (8).

In Brandon Hobson's *The Removed* (2021), the Echota family suffers from serious mental health issues due to the sudden demise of Ray-Ray, who is one of the children of Ernest and Maria apart from Sonja and Edgar, which is the traumatic event in their lives. Edgar has been addicted to drugs and alcohol and living in the 'The Darkening Land' along with his friend Jackson. The hallucination level of Edgar has reached the saturated point and he decides to recover after the self-realisation from the signs and signals of ancestors, dreams, flora and fauna. Brandon Hobson has elucidated the healing journey of Edgar with the Cherokee cultural references related to medicinal plants and spiritual connection of Tsalagi with peace and harmony in his narratives. He mentions through the descriptive point-of-view of Edgar in one of his dreams and awakening as, "I KEPT WAKING UP, coughing. In sleep I dreamed that a woman brought me a seed basket full of rainbow-coloured corn, turkey gizzard beans, and trumpet vine seeds" (TR 199). This symbolizes the healing journey of spiritual awakening for Edgar from his addiction.

According to *The Cherokee Herbal* (2003) by J. T. Garrett, the corns are used by the Cherokees for several multifaceted purposes in their day-to-day life and it plays a humongous role in the lives of native people. Corns are cooked along with vegetables and fruits as a healthy food customary in their tradition. It has a mythological and ancestral relation with Cherokee natives as a sacred thing and is used in all their traditional ceremonies as well. The rainbow-coloured corns are found in the dense Native American regions which are used for healthy lifestyle. Beans are the main ingredient in the foods of native people. The turkey gizzard beans have multi-purpose and cooked in various recipes. There are many bean seeds, plants and Cherokee trees that are considered for medicinal uses in Native American culture and heritage. The trumpet vine seeds are the major medicinal and natural herbal usage for the treatment for someone having kidney related health issues. These seeds are medicinally proven healthy food which can be prepared with fruits and vegetables. This trumpet vine seeds are found in the

Appalachian Mountains by the Native Americans. Garrett says corns and beans medicinal purposes in different ways,

“Corn was also preserved in the husks, which were kept in bins called *u wa da li*. It was also made into cornstarch, which is still used as a powder for babies and to soothe dry feet. Corn silk is used as a diuretic for women with bloating and water retention problems” (68). He further states, “Beans, or *du ya*, such as kidney, navy, pinto, string, and wax beans, are used as natural diuretics. In earlier years beans were a staple food for American Indians, along with corn and wild greens”. (155)

Maria has been suffering from depression after the death of her son Ray-Ray, yet, she tries to recover from the counselling sessions of her native doctor and she tries journaling along with the natural way of healing by connecting with the earthly elements. She teaches Cherokee Native abandoned children at the Young Shelter about the historical and cultural stories as recollecting and revisiting the past to enrich their cultural heritage. Brandon Hobson has used the narrative technique of teaching the readers about the Cherokee herbals and medicinal plants for treating and healing from any health-related issues. As an ethnographic study on the text *The Removed* (2021), the cultural phenomenon acts meticulously as historical and traditional narrative from the multidimensional perspectives of the main characters from Echota Family. It conveys, “The black-eyed Susan plant contains a liquid that cures earaches.” ... “that some people put liquid from the black-eyed Susan plant in their tea and drank it?” ... it helped them feel better. It was good for snakebites.” I help up another page with a photograph. “This is the cat-gut plant,” I said. “The Cherokees believed that if you mixed the bark in water, it would make you strong.” (TR 59)

J. T. Garrett mentions about the medicinal values of these black-eyed Susan plant and cat-gut plant, which is also known as devil’s shoestring. It is evident that the Cherokee plantation system of cultivating numerous herbal shrubs, plants and trees for the sake of their welfare and healthy generation. Garrett who belongs to the same Cherokee American County from the Eastern Band of Cherokees in North Carolina has collected the purpose of medicinal plants from the Cherokee ancestors for the next generations to follow and cherish their cultural heritage, customs and traditions. Cherokee Natives have a strong spiritual and medicinal connection towards nature and earthly elements such as flora and fauna. Garrett points out in *The Cherokee Herbal* (2003) that, “Black-eyed Susan (*Rudbeckia hirta* or *R. fulgida*). Called *a ga do li*, *gah ne ge i* (“black eye”) in Cherokee, black-eyed Susan was mixed with yellow dock and yarrow and used in liquid form for treating earache.

The fictional works of Margaret Verble *Maud’s Line* (2016), *Cherokee America* (2020), *When Two Feathers Fell from the Sky* (2021) and *Stealing* (2023) depicts the cultural practice of Cherokee Native Americans in harvesting and cultivating plantations and their determined connection towards nature for healing process. The food and lifestyle of Cherokee Native

Americans is based on the four natural elements and different seasonal availability of fruits, seeds, vegetables, shrubs, crops and other rich healthy plants. As J. T. Garrett says, “Some earlier Cherokee were almost obsessed with water cleansing and herbal washes and “going to the river” (252).

Verble narrates the importance of potato and tomato plantation in Cherokee culture and also the use of medicinal plants treatment in her historical and cultural narration on the lives of Cherokee native people from the late nineteenth century. “... Lovely was still shaken from the whole ordeal, they pitched in and scooped out the wash water, carried it to the garden for the tomato plants, and set wood for a fire in the pit.” (ML 4). “The land was flat, the potato plants only inches out of their mounds, the corn fluttering in a breeze close to the ground.” (CA 11). “... Check had immediately sent Clifford away from the house to search for medicinal plants.” (CA 23). “More often, she mixed the leaf with other plants and bark and smudged her room.” (WTFFFTS 290)

Garrett provides insights on the importance of potatoes and tomatoes as the popular cultivation in the plantation process of Native Americans. He mentions in *The Cherokee Herbal* (2003), “Potato and pine were considered “moon Medicine” plants” (256). Tomato plantation is highly amiable for the native people as they considered tomatoes are medicinally valuable plants and they used for treating illnesses as healing agents. This tomato treatment is used as medicinal plant and also added in various food recipes as a main ingredient to heal any health issues. J. T. Garrett says. “It may seem ironic that tomato was considered a Medicine in earlier years. Several foods were used as Medicine, including cabbage, celery and carrots. Add tomatoes and nodding onions to a warm soup and you have a very old Cherokee formula for treating colds and fever” (243).

Penelope Myrtle Kelsey is the Native American theorist whose works predominantly focuses on the ethnic socio-cultural, socio-political and socio-historical perspectives of native livelihood in the contemporary world. In the theoretical work, *Tribal Theory in Native American Literature* (2008), Penelope reinforces the emancipation of understanding indigenous lives and their native heritage from their perspectives. This native based theory highlights the tribal culture, history, language and literature of various indigenous communities in the Native American territories. Penelope further constitutes the decolonizing the conceptual ideology of the native nature-based healing journey from the oral traditions and medicinal plants. “In the woods?” “She goes there to draw. She draws in the woods” (WTDST 68). “Her lips separated a little. She took a deeper breath” (WTFFFTS 360).

From the views of Penelope Myrtle Kelsey in the Tribal theory, it is evident that the process of the healing journey of the native people could resonate with the connection from the natural elements and the spiritual awakening from the ancestral voices with historical references

as well. The resurrection of the native people after the survival of the Trail of Tears and the Removal Act by the federal government assimilation of the United States of America has changed the lives of the Native American and their connection towards their lands as well. As Penelope conveys, "... with a consideration of how their work invokes and reformulates treaty discourse through wampum tropes or affirms Indigenous knowledges through its discussion of traditional medicines" (113).

The protagonists in the select recent contemporary Cherokee Literary works are survived, existed and healed through the natural way of heading towards the earthly habitants. The evolution of medicinal fields in the contemporary scenario has paved the way for the emerging plant-based medicines and foods as a part of the studies and treatment to enhance the qualities that existed from the ancient times. This research focuses on this keen aspect of highlighting native way of natural healing from the medicinal plants in literary ethnographic studies of Cherokee works and writers.

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ARMAITI'S NEVER FADED FRIENDSHIP IN THRITY UMRIGAR'S *THE WORLD WE FOUND*

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Abstract

The word "diaspora" comes from the Greek "diasperien" (dia = across, and perien = to sow, scatter). It can be described as a group of people dispersing from their place of origin. The vibrant Parsi community was originally from ancient Persia (modern-day Iran), from a town named 'Pars'. Indian-American novelist, critic, and journalist Thrity Umrigar was born in a Parsi family and immigrated to the United States at the age of 21. Thrity has revealed the trying times of a patient with a brain tumour in *The World We Found* through Armaiti. Thrity has skillfully described how a broken person can experience magic in their life through friendship and the touch of nature.

Keywords: Diaspora, Migration, Nostalgia, Friendship, Nature.

Diaspora is a word derived from the Greek term diasperien (dia – across and perien - to sow or scatter seeds). It can be defined as dispersion of group of people moving from their home land. The dispersion can be either forced exiles or self-imposed exiles. It also suggests, as Braziel points out, a dislocation from the geographical location of origin and relocation in one or more countries, states or territories. The Oxford English Dictionary traces the etymology of the word 'Diaspora' back to its Greek root and to its appearance in the *Old Testament*. As such it has reference to God's intentions for the people of Israel to be dispersed around the globe.

The flourishing Parsi community has experienced a tumultuous history. Parsis originally came from ancient Persia (modern-day Iran). The group takes pride in having had outstanding educators such as Zarathustra, who bestowed upon the group the sacred text known as the Zend- Avesta. The powerful Persian Empire had its heyday under the leadership of notable monarchs like Darius I, II, and III. Darius the III was humiliated by Alexander of Macedon, which put an end to the Persian Empire. Following the Islamic conquest of Persia in the eighth century, a Parsi diaspora emerged. Numerous Parsis reached the West Coast of India, where Yadav Rana, the local leader of a Gujarati province, offered them refuge. This was conditional on them agreeing to share their religious beliefs with the king, abandoning their native Persian language, and adopting Indian languages; Their women would wear traditional Indian attire; their men would lay down their weapons; and their marital ceremonies would only take place at night (Kulke, 28). After agreeing to these conditions, the Parsis relocated to Indian Territory. They afterwards relocated to urban

centers such as Lahore and Bombay. Parsis and their English overlords got along well under British rule. In addition to sticking to their religious beliefs, they collected wealth and easily adopted western lifestyles. After India became independent, the Parsis found themselves in a difficult situation. They found themselves stranded in Pakistani and Indian Territory amid the partition. However, decided to stay where they were because it was more sensible. The Parsis, despite being a minority group, have significantly impacted every facet of Indian life. An industrial empire was founded by Jamshedji Tata. Indian nuclear research was overseen by Homi Jehangir Babha. Later on, Sam Manekshaw rose to prominence as among the most renowned generals in the Indian Army. Dadabhai Naoroji and Madam Bikaji Cama are well-known Indian Patriots. Freddie Mercury is a well-known Western singer, and Zubin Metha is a world-class orchestra conductor. Renowned cultural theorist and academic expert on diasporic consciousness is Homi K. Babha. On the down side, the Parsi community faces several challenges, including intercommunity marriages becoming more common, low birth rates, rising divorce rates, illness, and aging. More significantly, the community suffers from extreme psychological strain as a result of continuing to be a numerical minority in both Pakistan and India.

The Parsis represent a conceited minority. The emergence of communal influences has made minority communities more self-aware. Their relationships with other communities across the nation are based on this. During periods of national crisis, these communities rise above their communal awareness, and their minority awareness has never been at odds with their national consciousness. In the context of the evolving situation, interpersonal bonds within both the family and the community have also been characterized by kindness. The concepts of ethnic homogeneity held by the elder generation of Parsis are often opposed by the younger generation. Nilufer E. Bharucha elucidates ethnic identity and ethnicity in her essay, "Resisting Colonial and Postcolonial Hegemonies, Bapsi Sidhwa's *Ethno - Religious Discourse*." In general, ethnicity refers to the state of belonging to a particular group, often associated with a feeling of pride. "Western sociologists have viewed ethnicity not just as a categorical marker but as a pejorative construct" (Pg 319, Connor). As a result, Secular modernity cannot be allowed to trump ethnic identity. The majority eventually reside in tribal residences.

Thrity Umrigar is an Indian-American journalist, critic, and novelist. She was born in an Indian Parsi family and immigrated to United States in her 21. Umrigar is proficient, and natural story teller who remains an optimistic narrator despite all her grim plot twists, though she never softens the effect of the various tragedies on her characters. Her famous novel *The Space Between Us* illustrates the intimacy, and the irreconcilable class divide, amongst two women in contemporary Bombay. Thrity Umrigar's novels deal with cultural aspects. Her first novel *Bombay Time* depicts the decline of Bombay, delivering an

impressive debut offering a glimpse into a cultural world especially that of the Parsis, an ethnic minority that most Westerners know only in its barest outlines. In *First Darling of the Morning* Umrigar alternates between sweet and biting accounts of her middle-class Parsi upbringing in 1960s and 1970s Bombay. She recalls moments from her tumultuous childhood through her teenage years and finally into her early 20s when she leaves India for the U.S. In *If Today Be Sweet*, the protagonist Tehmina Sethna finds herself torn amidst two cultures that could not be more different: Bombay and Cleveland. In the novel *The Weight of Heaven* Umrigar continues her exploration of cultural divides in this beautifully written and incisive novel about an American couple's experience in India. *The Story Hour* is a deeply moving portrait of connection, disconnection, and missed connections set in an unnamed Northeastern University City. *Everybody's Son* centers on Anton, who is nine years old, first enters foster care, he still believes his mother is coming back for him. *The Space Between Us*- this splendid tale should appeal to all readers with open hearts, regardless of their familiarity with the culture of Mumbai.

The fictitious world of Thirty Umrigar revolves around unpleasant experiences such as being marginalized and excluded by society, being exploited, being poor, and being decadent. Her writing explores issues pertaining to the feminine diaspora related to her passionate mentality. She juxtaposes the experience and intertwines the historical and current. She combines contrasting viewpoints with affection and class distinction. She carries on an amazing tradition of recounting passionate devotion among transcultural majorities. Her methods for recounting Parsi ancestry are incredibly sophisticated. Umrigar compares unfamiliar eyes with ones that are familiar. She works in an erratic manner to depict India in her texts and settings. She expresses the feelings and ideas that she imagines with ethnic sentiments from somewhere on that planet. India is interesting but fascinating toward her. The writer talks about the pain Indians are going through as they cry out for freedom. Umrigar's writing in a Bombay style evokes reminiscences of Salman Rushdie's style. She thus supports the idea of discrimination against India by both insiders and outsiders.

The World We Found (2012) by Umrigar unfolds across India and the US. Four friends who attended Bombay University together are the subject of the story. It looks at the decisions that this circle of friends made and the costs associated with those decisions. All of them were activists from the student body who supported a "New India." Frances Itani, reviewing Thirty Umrigar's *The World We Found* in the *BookWorld*, commented:

It takes courage to explore the idealism and hopes of youth and to compare these with the realities of lives lived three decades later ...Umrigar handles these important themes with expertise and without judgement. A storyteller through and through, she ensures that her

characters face up to the costs and consequences created by their choices, right or wrong, principled or unprincipled. (Book World)

Thrity Umrigar's *The World We Found* was honoured with the 25th Lambda Literary Award in the Lesbian General Fiction category. Armaiti, the divorced woman, is given six months to live; she is still living in US and attending Harvard with her daughter. Seeing her three closest friends Laleh, Kavita, and Nishta again in Bombay is her final wish. They had been inseparable as idealistic Communists in college, but these days they hardly communicate. Laleh fulfills the roles of mother and wife, Kavita is a successful architect, and no one has spoken to Nishta in a long time. It is evident that the largest barrier to achieving Armaiti's last wish will be Iqbal, Nishta's husband, a fellow idealist from university who has turned fundamentalist, when they eventually locate her hiding under a burkha in a conservative Muslim neighborhood. Umrigar depicts a divided India with no holds barred, skillfully identifying the main problems the nation is currently facing and following them through a legacy of cultural death and rebirth. Strong secondary narratives are provided by Armaiti's reflections on meeting death unexpectedly and Kavita's battle to live openly as a lesbian in spite of encouraging friends. Death is inevitable, and it is even more pitiful to know that one will pass away soon. More chaos than any other person in the world permeates the thoughts of those who are suffering from a chronic illness and are anticipating their imminent death. Thrity has revealed the trying times of a patient with a brain tumor in *The World We Found* through Armaiti. Thrity has done a masterful job of explaining how a broken person can find magic in their life when they connect with nature.

Armaiti had a tumor and was trying to figure out how long she had left. She stops the chemotherapy and treatment because she is physically and mentally depressed and hopeless. She was terrified of the treatments and the anguish and sufferings, even though as a mother she was not prepared to leave her daughter all by herself. She has witnessed her mother's suffering from medicine. Her trip to the beach helps her mind become clear and her spirit become renewed. During her college years, Armaiti was an activist who never gave up easily and persevered until the very end. However, the fear of dying weakens the fighting spirit. In order to cheer up her daughter during stressful times, Armaiti takes her to the beach. Armaiti unwinds on the beach, where the waves affirm her determination to never give up. Armaiti decides to overcome her fear and battle her illness. She merges with the natural world. The ultimate illuminating principle was death. As Armaiti sat by the water's edge, gazing at the white curls of the waves, she became more aware of the earth's curvature and the world around her. She felt as if she had accidentally wandered backstage and was witnessing the stage craft that went into making the planet--- gravity, magnetic field, the earth's burning core. Armaiti felt her eyes widen, as if better see it all, to take in, to absorb, to reach the point where she felt her bones melt into the warm sand, where the hot blood in her

body became the salt water of the sea, where her breathing and the breathing of the ocean become one.

One experiences emotional healing and feels happy and upbeat when they are in nature. For mental and physical health, nature is a tonic. It lowers the synthesis of stress hormones, stabilizes heart rate, and lowers blood pressure. Numerous studies demonstrate how the view of nature aids patients in managing their pain and overcoming negative effects. The body is soothed and the restless mind is relaxed by nature. One can powerfully connect with their soul when they are in nature. The five senses are awakened, and a deep spiritual connection is formed with the natural world. One is introduced to the real beauty and gains spiritual power by responding to the rhythm of nature through the lovely scent of trees and flowers, the cold waves hitting the land, drizzling rain, howling wind, earthly smell after rain, and all the little things of nature. Everyone discovers the joy of mindfulness and begins to savor life's small moments. With nature, nothing seems impossible or hopeless. When one is holding hands with nature, holding on or letting go seems significant. Umrigar's personal experiences, both in India and overseas, are reflected in a number of her novels. Mumbai serves as the setting for her stories, which are set in fiction. She has an intense fascination with the city and has never before in her life imagined leaving Bombay. Bombay will always be remembered as a haven of love and affection.

Umrigar's literary fiction frequently addresses issues such as women's suffering, violence, social discrimination against women in society, and class conflict, in which women bear the brunt of suffering. Umrigar makes the point in *The World We Found* that friendship can heal a person's mental illness just as nature can heal a physical one.

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THE STRUGGLES FOR LEGITIMIZING THE EXPERIENCE OF DALITS IN KARUKKU

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Abstract

The objective of this paper is to throw light on the struggles of Dalits in the novel *Karukku*. *Karukku* is an autobiographical novel by Bama. The title of the novel explores the life and struggles of Bama in society. They are collecting and selling the Palmyra leaves to the Naicker's shop to fill up their bellies. Eventhough they have given their hard work for the welfare of their masters, their masters are not ready to give them proper wages. The Government puts lots of effort into strengthening their economic status but they lead to another track.

Keywords: Dalit, Humiliation, Discrimination, Education, Caste.

The word 'Dalit' is derived from the Sanskrit word 'Dal', which means broken or exterior caste. They were considered as a sinned people. They were helpless. They were enforced to live exterior part of the village. They do not have enough fertility to live in their area especially grocery shops, well, and school. They have to come to the mid of the village for buying goods, pouring water from the public well. While they were walking upper caste's street, they were not allowed to wear footwear, towel on their shoulders. They have to place their towels on their waist. On way back, they were forced to do odd jobs without any payment. Upper caste people were not ready to sit along with them in a journey. They were not allowed to wear footwear, enter into the upper castes' street, pouring water from the public well. They were not ready to touch or seen these people. They considered birth is a boon and curse by God. Dalit people were untouchable. They come under Sudras category. They were cursed by God for their misdeeds in their previous birth so, the upper caste people believe that even a single touch or seeing these people is a sin. It is the upper caste people's unwritten mythical norms. The upper caste people considered Dalit as a sinned and untouchable whereas, Dalit people believe that upper caste were their Maharajas. They were not ready to protest against this. If they do so, they will be sacked from their job. Sometime they may not steal somebody's possession, but they considered as a thief. They were exposed their talents in their academics and non-academic performance. They will get a reward. They call upon stage with their names along with their community. It would hurt them a lot. They were not revealing their identity. They believe themselves as a sinned people. Being a dalit, they were exploited by socially, politically and economically.

The upper caste people considered Dalits as a sinned and cursed people by God, because of misdeeds of their previous birth. Dalit people considered the upper caste people as their Maharajas. Even though they worked hard for their masters, their masters were exploited them. They were not ready to provide proper wages. They only give waste food or minimum wages for their maximum works. After Bama's grandmother finished her work and placed her vessel by the side off drain. The Naicker woman came with the vessel. It contained waste food which thrown it away. The woman tipped the unwanted food into Bama's grandmother's vessel and went away. Bama told her grandmother that was an ugly. "When paatti said to me in return was this: These people are the Maharajas Who feed us our rice without them, how we will survive? Haven't they been upper caste from generation to generation, and haven't we been lower caste? Can we change this?" (Bama).

The upper caste people thought Dalits were untouchable. They are not ready to touch even a drop of water touched from these people, they will get sin. It was their unwritten mythical norms. Most of the lands were possessed by upper caste people. Dalit people worded upper caste people's fields. When these people feel thirsty the upper caste woman poured water from some distance to them. They drank the water without any hesitation. Dalits were enforced to believe themselves as a slave to their masters. They were unable to raise their voice against them. If they do it, they would be sacked from their jobs. They were hard to dill up their bellies and lead their life.

Bama did not know the seriousness of untouchability up to her third standard. When Bama returned to her home, she had a chance to see that particular incident. An elder man from her street carried snacks to the Naicker without touching it. The man took the parcel by its strings. The Naicker received the parcel and ate vada. It made Bama to laugh at them. She conveyed everything to her brother which she encountered in the evening, but her brother did not laugh. He instructed Bama about untouchability and gives a solution to overcome the problem. Education can create an impact in society. Bama studied hard to improve her status in society. Bama experienced the same untouchable experience while returning to her home by bus. The upper caste woman saw her face and hesitant o sat along with her. The lady asked Bama what was her community Bama boldly replied that she was belong to paraya community. The woman insisted Bama to sit somewhere in the bus, but Bama did not woke up and sat in another place. The tragedy is that upper caste woman did not prefer another place. She was standing in her entire journey.

Bama had another bitter experience in her seventh standard. If any misdeed is happened, they will suddenly come to a conclusion it was done by Cheri children. Even though they did not do it, they were humiliated in public. After the school, she was playing along with Cheri children. They climb up the neem tree and hanged like pats. Next they

were ready to climb the coconut tree and touch the tip of the tree. The tree was in bent. Therefore, they climbed the coconut tree and touched the ripped coconut. Everyone touched the coconut. It was fallen down with a third sound. On hearing this, every one fled to their home. Next morning Bam was scolded but the headmaster in the assembly. The headmaster called out her name “You have shown as your true nature as a paraya”. He said “You climbed the coconut tree yesterday after everybody else had gone home, and you stole a coconut. We cannot allow you inside this school. Stand outside” (Bama 19).

Bama was sweeping. Everyone looked her as a stranger. One of the teachers of that school counsels her to get a letter from the priest to allow her to attend her regular classes. She went to the priest home and conveyed everything detail. After listening to her statement he said, “You are from the Cheri. You it” (Bama 19). Bama was crying on hearing this. She got a permission letter from the priest and handover it to the headmaster. The headmaster scolds her with abusive words and allows her to attend the class. She went to the class and sat in last bench. Government offers scholarship to upright the poor for their study. If they got literate, they could earn money through their education. But it sometime derailed and leads to negative track. When the class teacher or Physical Education Teacher asked all the schedule caste students to wake up, they stand before two thousand people. After everyone name was noted. They were allowed to sit. They were standing with hanging heads in an assembly. It shows they committed wrong. Dalit people they were not ready to reveal their identity. Due to their suffering, offering the scholarship, it is the kind of humiliation.

The author concludes that education would create an impact in society. Providing academic support raises the standard of a person. All the people would get equal opportunity. Authority power would be shared among different group of people. It helps to eradicate discrimination in the land.

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DISPLACEMENT AND ASSIMILATION: ELEMENTS OF DIASPORA IN PERUMAL MURUGAN'S NOVEL *FIREBIRD*

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Abstract

"Displacement" in the context of diaspora refers to the physical and metaphorical sense of being uprooted or disconnected from one's original homeland. This displacement can manifest in various ways and has implications for individuals and communities within the diaspora. "Assimilation" is the process by which individuals or communities from a particular ethnic, cultural, or national background gradually adopt the customs, values, and behaviours of the broader society in which they have settled. Displacement and Assimilation are a painful process in the life diaspora. The displacement may be a choice or a forced one but moving away from the roots and re-rooting in the new land is always a challenge. The contemporary Tamil novelist Perumal Murugan subtly crafts nuances that evolve in the harrowing ordeal of displacement and assimilation in his novel *Fire Bird*.

Keywords: Diaspora, Displacement, Assimilation, Society.

"The formation of a diaspora could be articulated as the quintessential journey into becoming" - OkwuiEnwezor

Diasporic Literature speaks about the different dimensions and phases in the life of the displaced or migrated people from their homeland to a foreign land but are still deeply connected to their native culture and their longing for homeland. It articulates the important elements of Diaspora such as, the sense of loss, alienation, displacement, existential crisis, rootlessness, nostalgia and quest for identity and assimilation. The immigrants go through different phases in their life in the process of re-rooting themselves in the host land. In the first phase, one is strongly haunted both by the nostalgia for their homeland and anxiety in a new land. In the second phase, the immigrant comes to face the reality and his quest for survival forces him to adopt themselves to the new environment. The third phase involves the migrated people's gradual assimilation of the new culture in order to forge a new identity. Following the culture of the host land and articulating in the new language is an attempt to become part of the new land. The fourth phase happens after he settles down comfortably in the foreign land. In this phase the immigrants start contributing to the economy and politics of the host land as they feel that they have achieved their permanence and identity.

‘Displacement’ is the initial stage of Diaspora. Displacement refers to the physical and metaphorical sense of being uprooted or disconnected from one's original homeland for various reasons. In the new land, the migrated people's attempt to observe and adapt the new culture in order to be accepted by the hegemonic culture. Displacement and Assimilation are painful processes in the life of diasporic people. The displacement may be a choice or a forced one but moving away from the roots and re-rooting in a foreign land is always a challenge.

Writer Perumal Murugan is a prolific writer and a contemporary literary face of Tamilnadu. He hails from Namakkal district, which is situated in the North West part of Tamilnadu and almost all his literary creations are centred in the locale. Perumal Murugan's writings exquisitely reflect the topography, culture, rural life and dialect of the land which is familiar and intimate to his heart. Murugan is versatile writer and so far he has written eleven novels, seven short story collections, six anthologies of poetry, a vernacular dictionary and myriads of non-fiction. Several of his novels are translated into many languages. They are *Rising Heat* (1991), *One-Part Woman* (2013), *Poonachi or The Story of a Black Goat* (2017) and *Fire Bird* (2012). He is also a recipient of many prestigious national and international awards including the Sahitya Akademi Award for his most controversial novel, *One- Part Women*.

This paper focuses on Murugan's novel *Fire Bird*, which was originally titled in Tamil as *Alandapatchi* in 2012. The novel has been brilliantly translated into English by Janani kannan. It has won him the most prestigious award, the JCB Prize for Literature in 2023. IAN comments:

Originally titled *Alandapatchi*, *Fire Bird* is a thought -provoking exploration of the human desire for stability in an ever-changing world. Perumal Murugan draws from his personal experience of displacement and explores the fragility of our fundamental attraction to permanence and the ultimately futile efforts to attain it novel which explores the human desire for stability in an ever-changing world. (*Eastern Mirror*)

Nothing is permanent in this world including human relationships. This is the eternal truth yet the human being's anticipation for perpetuity in all aspects of life is the driving force of survival. The novel *Fire Bird* illustrates the transient nature of life. Here in this novel the the ephemerality of human relationships is the root -cause of migration that happens in the life of the protagonist Muthu. When he was young, he was the darling of his family. He was petted and pampered by his three elder brothers. But when the family grows bigger, the need of the family also grows bigger. As a consequence , his parents decide to divide the family properties. Muthu gets the least portion. It is the land and the driest part of

land whereas his elder brothers get the most fertile part of land for cultivation. He was even asked to leave the family house, as there is no space to accommodate his wife and his three children. Frustrated by the injustice of the family and baffled by the fragility of the familial relationship Muthu moves to his piece of land but from there too he was forced to migrate to a far distant land. The reason is, in his absence, his wife goes through a sexual assault by his own elder brother. This traumatic shock forces him to totally disconnect himself from his family and his homeland which is so familiar and intimate to him. Hence, Muthu's migration happens by force.

Uprooting oneself from the native soil would be undoubtedly a painful process. Murugan narrates the excruciating pain of dislocation:

Peruma may find the village and its land bitter. She was, after all, transplanted there. But it was not the same for him. He had germinated on that soil and was rooted there. Thirty tears of memories lay buried in him. He lay down on the cement floor of his father-in-law's house and remained that way for a long time. He did not know when sleep descended on him - two days' worth of sleep, tired from bearing all that burden (*Fire Bird*, 114).

The search for the new land and the process of assimilating to the unknown landscape and the new culture is the second phase in the life of diaspora. Once decided to move, from that moment onwards the journey of a diaspora starts. Muthu's quest to create a new permanent identity and the way he pursues his ambition is elegantly and exquisitely depicted in the novel by the writer. Perumal Murugan's description about the topography of that particular area reflects his vast knowledge and rich experience of his homeland. Through his powerful native dialect, Murugan describes the way in which Muthu identifies himself with new land for future survival. He uses his natural intelligence that comes out of his personal experience with the soil, culture and rituals and beliefs and sentiments.

After crisscrossing villages for ten days, finally he decides to stay at one particular village called Karnkaradu, from the gestures guided by his oxen. Murugan describes the mystic behaviour of the oxen as, "The ox tied to the right side of the yoke dropped dung and lay on the ground... the oxen on the left did not lie down but lowered its neck trying to the pull" (*Fire Bird* 1). He feels that they are the signals sent by his family deity, Mansaami. The new land is in the hillside and the texture of a soil, culture, dialect and attitude of the people are totally strange to him. Being stranger, he experiences strange things. At first he is a little confused by the unusual atmosphere of the village:

From there the village seemed within his reach. It was fully made of palm thatches. Thatches hadn't been replaced for many years...He wondered why there were so many farms that lay wide open but not with proportionately enough cattle or goat-the bunds were full of grass. They have left the grass untouched even in summer.

They must be people who did not farm for a living. How are we going to spend our life time with them? (*Fire Bird* 115)

The second thing that surprises Muthu is that,” an intense game of *thaayam* was taking place on one side of the platform. The other sides were filled with people napping (*Fire Bird* 115). *Thaayam* is, a local game, played in the villagers in leisure hours. Muthu is from an industrious agricultural background where lethargy is loathed. He is further astonished by the disrespectful language of the people in that part. The uncouth dialect of the people of that village is shown in the following words,” ... he asked, ‘Say,... where is the house of this village’s *naataamai, nga?*’ The entire crowd turned around. ‘What did yoask?’ said a young a man from amidst the crowd. Muthu’s face shrank at the lack respect in that question... Muthu has noticed that already. Beyond Rattor, any sense of politeness gradually vanished, to the point that no heed was paid even to the differences in age “(*Fire Bird* 116). The uncultivated land and the difference in the culture and language of the new place are the real challenges to Muthu. Muthu’s optimistic thoughts and efforts show his quest for identity.

Throughout the novel Murugan draws a vivid canvas of changing landscapes, spectacular village fairs, local customs, beliefs and a variety of village folks. The novel also deals with issues such as caste relations, sexual violence, village superstitions and survival instincts. The present era of Decolonization, encourages the quest to explore the unknown native cultures. Through the English translations, the regional literature of India comes to spotlight and are globalized. It helps Indiansto acquire a first-hand knowledge about our indigenous culture. In this respect Perumal Murugan’s writings are an asset both to Tamil Literature and Literature in translations. His writings are the literary feast about uniqueness of the North west province of Tamil Nadu from where he was born and brought up. Diaspora as a theory, deals with the issues faced by the migrated people in a foreign land. At the same time, it is not mandatory that migration and the problems related must happen abroad. It happens within nations and within states. In this sense, the novel *Fire Bird* speaks about the two strongest elements of Diaspora, displacement and Assimilation

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BREAKING BOUNDARIES: A STUDY OF GENDER EQUALITY STRUGGLES IN BUCHI EMECHETA'S *SECOND CLASS CITIZEN*

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Abstract

Gender equality and social ideology are recurring themes in many African novels. African female writers raised their voices against the negligence of gender equality in pre-colonial and post-colonial periods. Focusing mainly on the inequality between men and women, their novel addresses issues related to patriarchy, cultural norms, and societal expectations. Buchi Emecheta's *Second Class Citizen* engages deeply with the themes of gender equality and human ideology. Through the protagonist, Adah, Emecheta highlights the horrors of gender discrimination, societal expectations and her quest for freedom, which in turn is shaped by Emecheta's own experiences as an immigrant writer. The paper delves into the complexities of Adah's life in Nigeria and in the United Kingdom, shedding light on the patriarchal norms and cultural dynamics she confronts. It explores Adah's determination and her resilience against the struggles she faces in society that relegate her to a second-class status.

Keywords: Resilience, Equality, Second-Class, Social Ideology.

Gender equality indicates the principle of treating individuals both female and male as equals with the same rights, responsibilities and opportunities. It involves ensuring equality to access resources, education, employment and social life. It aims to promote a society without any partiality, in which all people get equal opportunities to reach their potential regardless of their gender. Many African women writers support the disparity of gender equality which was disregarded by male writers in general. Focusing mainly on the inequality in society, their novel addresses issues related to patriarchy, cultural norms, and societal expectations. Their novels also highlight how such social beliefs reshape human ideologies.

Women are generally deprived of the opportunities to prove their excellence. As Bell Hooks, states her views in the work *Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center* "Male supremacist ideology encourages women to believe we are valueless and obtain value only by relating to or bonding with men" (43). Women, in general, are not considered equal to men in both African societies as well as in Western countries in the pre-colonial and post-colonial eras.

Buchi Emecheta was a prolific Nigerian-born British author. Emecheta was known for her novels that explore deeply the concepts of gender studies, identity and post-

colonialism. As a feminist writer, she throws the spotlight on African women and offers a nuanced and compelling portrayal of their strength and resilience in the face of adversity. Colonization left a great impact in Africa compelling the people to change their way of life. In her works, Emecheta offers clear insights into the dilemma faced by all females in Africa following such changes. Almost all of her protagonists suffer from the pertaining social ideologies that hinder their growth. Her semi-autobiographical novel *Second Class Citizen* revolves around the protagonist Adah, who questions and refuses to be restrained by societal constraints.

Adah tended to challenge societal constraints imposed on women. During her childhood, she encountered gender-based discrimination inside her family, as her parents displayed a distinct lack of enthusiasm towards her education. In stark contrast, Adah's younger brother, called 'Boy,' was granted the privilege of attending the school in Lagos. This disparate treatment ignited feelings of envy within Adah, while simultaneously fomenting a deep-seated hatred of her parents for depriving her of educational opportunities. Deeply rooted in her parents' adherence to the prevailing belief, that educating girls was unnecessary, Adah's fundamental right to access education was denied. But unlike other characters in the novel, Adah never accepted such ideologies imposed upon her. She tried to overcome all the restrictions society and her family forced upon her. Her quest for freedom to attain education made her attend school without the consent of her parents. Over time her persistence made her change the ideology of her parents.

Adah saw education as a means to transcend societal constraints. Lawyer Nweze, a lawyer in the UK was deeply respected by people in Lagos. He came back from the UK to Lagos for vacation and was referred to as a 'been-to', a term used for the African people who work in the UK among the whites. Adah was inspired by Nweze, a valued male figure in society. She tenaciously pursued her studies wishing to be like Nweze, enduring numerous hardships along the way. Emecheta underscores Adah's unwavering commitment to learning. Adah's initial triumph in securing an education, an opportunity typically denied to girls at that time, signalled a transformation in her family's ideologies. Adah harboured a fervent desire to further her studies and broaden her knowledge base. However, she soon encountered the entrenched traditional gender roles deeply ingrained in Nigerian society. Society expected her to embrace her life by getting satisfied with being a wife and mother, but her aspirations leaned toward the pursuit of education and career, thereby challenging these societal norms.

Adah's marriage to Francis catalysed her childhood dream to be called a 'been-to' like Nweze. Adah firmly believed that the United Kingdom represented a land of hope and a refuge where she could transcend the obstacles she faced in life. She held a deep admiration for the people who spoke about the United Kingdom. She envisioned the United Kingdom to

be a utopian society devoid of discrimination and deeply entrenched societal ideologies. As a child, she dreamt of going to the United Kingdom. Surpassing societal expectations, she dared to dream about the unknown and had an ambition to achieve it. She believed that living in the UK would highly improve her social standards and it would earn her immense respect among the natives of Lagos, a place which subjugated women.

Adah encountered gender-based discrimination and mistreatment from the men, she met including Francis who failed to back up her goal and interest, even when Adah wholeheartedly supported him. Adah secured a position as a librarian, an early achievement of Adah that frequently triggered feelings of inadequacy in Francis. Francis as an African man was hesitant to accept financial support from Adah. Adah's earnings significantly benefited Francis, yet he resisted her aspirations. The reversal of gender ideology is portrayed by Emecheta. Society expects men to work and women to do household duties. Adah works and earns money to support Francis in his studies. Adah proposed the idea of relocating to England, a suggestion met with opposition by Francis, whose stance reflected traditional African gender norms and expectations. This divergence in their views encapsulated the broader challenges faced by women striving for gender equality.

Adah takes the identity and place of a man in her family. She supports her in-laws as a dutiful daughter-in-law. Despite all her care, their cultural tendencies made them dominate Adah. They wanted to keep Adah under their control. Adah knows how the patriarchal society will torment her. She learns a new decisive plan to make them believe all the luxuries they get by allowing her to leave Lagos and move to England. Adah unlike a typical African woman character who accepts the oppression on them strives for her freedom. Adah's departure to England opened another dimension towards life. Her encounter with actual colonial beliefs undermines her not only based on gender discrimination but also racial discrimination. She has to endure double subordination. As Francis states, "You must know, my dear young lady, that in Lagos you may be a million publicity officers for the Americans ... but the day you land in England, you are a second-class citizen. So, you can't discriminate against your own people, because we are all second-class" (39).

Adah encounters setbacks, disappointment and hardships but she displays a remarkable resilience when faced with adversity. Adah as a spirited woman, refuses to give up when challenged with problems related to her gender, race and immigrant status. After moving to the UK, she struggled to get proper accommodation, as many white people didn't wish to have and see black neighbours. Adah soon discovered that not all people follow societal ideologies. It depends upon the individual belief in them. Adah understood that whites and blacks are equal as human beings. They are also imperfect by nature. It is their personality and personal prejudice that deems them to be good and bad. She further questions the tendency of whites, who claim them to be superior over others.

Adah discovered a newfound source of hope through the act of writing, using it as a means to express her pent-up emotions and ultimately overcome the challenges she faced in England. Initially, this creative outlet allowed her to establish a profound connection with her inner self, bringing joy and stability to her otherwise uncertain world. Through her writing, Adah delved into her own experiences and cultural background, finding a space where she could embrace her true interests without the interference of prevailing cultural and social ideologies.

However, Adah's journey as a writer faced significant opposition from Francis, who vehemently disapproved of her literary pursuits and even went so far as to burn her written works. This act served as a final breaking point for Adah, prompting her to liberate herself from the confines of her unhappy marriage. Despite living in a Western country, that subjected women to rigid social norms and ideologies, Adah never considered herself inferior to anyone. Instead, she emerged as a resilient warrior, seizing opportunities and defying societal expectations to carve her path to happiness and fulfilment in England. As Baisel claims, "In Buchi's *Second Class Citizen*, from the long-going on war Adah gets out as the winner. She becomes successful in her fight with the outside world and makes England her home and thus gains her identity. So, in the immigrant experience, it is the woman who succeeds in finding a place of belonging, a real home, and building a secure sense of self-identity" (11).

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**EMPOWERED VOICES: TRACING THE TRANSFORMATION OF
FEMALE CHARACTERS IN FATIMA BHUTTO'S *THE SHADOW OF THE
CRESCENT MOON* AND MEENA KANDASAMY'S *WHEN I HIT YOU OR, A
PORTRAIT OF THE WRITER AS A YOUNG WIFE*.**

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Abstract

Women have advanced throughout history, as seen in literature. Women and women's empowerment have evolved, as seen by the shifting roles of women in literature from the past to the present. The personified representations of power, strength, and sanctity that women play in literature go beyond mere physical attractiveness and sexuality. Revolutionary movements were spurred by women's fights for self-identity and freedom around the globe. The awareness of women's desires, sexuality, existence, and destiny has expanded during the past century. This paper analyses the empowerment of two women Fatima Bhutto and Meena Kandasamy through their chosen works.

Keywords: Perseverance, Inner strength, Representations, Power, History.

Women writers today are still fighting to liberate the feminine realm from national mythologies and constrictive sociocultural norms. Currently, more women are writing as authors than at any other time in history. With exponential growth in higher education throughout the century, they were able to acquire the skills necessary to advance their profession. The majority of scholars feel that many female writers accepted the various forms of domesticity that were necessary at the time without explicitly saying so. They further contend that as the century went on, an increasing number of women started using their artistic expression to express their discontent with gender roles and the status of women in general.

The representation of female characters in modern literature has emerged as a key topic for examining social conventions and questioning gender roles. The powerful stories *The Shadow of the Crescent Moon* by Fatima Bhutto and *When I Hit You* by Meena Kandasamy explore how female characters go from oppressed to powerful voices. The goal of this study is to clarify the many ways in which these writers negotiate the complicated issues of female agency, resiliency, and self-discovery in relation to the cultural and socioeconomic settings that are shown in each of their works.

It is a wet Friday morning in Mir Ali, a small village in Pakistan's tribal areas close to the Afghan border, where Fatima Bhutto's amazing debut starts and ends. Since the 9/11 attacks, this region has also been the scene of a three-dimensional battleground where conflict seems to never end. US drones are killing Taliban members, Shia Muslims are being attacked by Sunni Muslims, and a hidden population is battling to escape from the control of the central government. The story centres on two young girls, Mina and Samarra, and three siblings, Aman Erum, Sikandar, and Hayat. The Pashtun customs bind them together, and the revolution's harsh discrimination forces them to reflect on their past and make difficult choices.

Women who live in societies where patriarchal norms are enforced also have to contend with the legacies of colonisation. They are forced to overcome colonial and patriarchal constraints, even if it means losing loved ones and ending relationships. Bhutto creates a strong female character, Mina, in *The Shadow of the Crescent Moon*. Throughout the novel, they go through enormous internal transformations. In her article, "Critically Analyzing War on Terror in the Light of Fatima Bhutto's 'The Shadow of the Crescent Moon'", Zainab states that "Women were the most important characters of the novel as they were remarkable for their courage and strength of heart in the region where they could not even move with their own choice and their voices were out of bounds" (2249)

Mina was once a clever, shrewd, and enthusiastic university psychology professor. After she and Sikandar's child were killed in a Taliban attack, Mina has been depressed and strange, with his flashing 'Bubblegummer' (215) trainers helping to identify him among the wreckage: "Mina entered people's homes with a serenity that came with the feeling that she was closer to Zalan" (114). After quitting her job as a teacher, she now works at children's funerals, finding comfort in their common pain. Sikandar is compelled to call his erratic wife when upset mourners call to voice their displeasure.

The reader feels sympathy for Mina since she seems insane and goes to every unidentified grave. Despite her insane appearance, she behaves more sensibly than any learned woman. She speaks for the Pakistani women who have been most negatively impacted by sectarianism and terrorism. Her only child was sacrificed in an explosion, and she is going through unimaginable grief and suffering. After her son Zalan passed away, Mina might have remained at home to grieve for the rest of her life. However, she must visit the bereaved children's families and share their sorrow with them. Since Fatima Bhutto depicts her female characters as having all the comforts and freedoms of life, they are not kept captive in their homes. Typically, Mina would pause at a bazaar on route to various conferences across the nation and purchase the singer's latest compilation. Although Mina appears reserved, frightened, and reliant on other

people, her behaviour betrays a different side of her. She uses her craziness as an excuse for her dominating strength, even though persons with psychiatric issues and traumatic past experiences are viewed as inferior.

Despite her mental health issues, Mina approaches the officer and tries to save her husband from the Talibs' attack. This is not an issue because of her lunacy. She let out a cry. "It was you, it was your men, your men who took him from us. He hadn't done anything. He hadn't even begun to live. ... He had blisters on those toes. I saw them. I kissed them, touching each toe to my lips, when I went to identify him. Do you have any shame? Do you have any shame in the face of the mothers you have robbed of their boys?" (234). Mina jumped from the van. Pushing past the cop in the light blue turban and wispy beard, she opened her door. She pushed hard, pushing past all social norms to touch him, her hands flat on his body as she strained her arms to push with all the strength she had. Though it would have been strange to witness a lady speaking to a Talib, especially in Mir Ali, Mina is unable to give up her husband because she has already lost her kid to the Taliban. Though Bhutto's female characters do not entirely accept marriage, they also do not reject it.

Meena Kandasamy, the author of *When I Hit You*, narrates a story of domestic abuse in southern India in her distinctive and authentic style. In addition to being a terrifying tale of rising violence, it also describes how the narrator's career as a writer has been impacted by this violence. Primrose Villa, the Mangalore home where the unnamed narrator spends the first few weeks of her wedded life, is described at the outset. The reader gets the impression right away that this is a place of confinement; "-this is the space within which I must move" (23); where she spends her days doing the monotonous, repetitive housework of being the ideal wife, including shopping, cleaning, and laundry. These events are told as though they are from a screenplay for a movie, with the narrator playing a part. However, her husband forbids her from living the glamorous life of stardom, ordering her to stick to his radical Naxalite ideals and dress in T-shirts and pyjama bottoms.

The narrator's husband begins to exert control over her literary life as well. He demands that she deactivate her Facebook account, controls her emails, and limits her weekly Internet access to three hours, isolating her from friends and important contacts. Then the hitting starts and she takes on a writer's perspective to detach her and deal with what's occurring, just like in the movie script: "On a dull afternoon, I can catalogue the weapons of abuse that have gathered around the house. The cord of my Mac-Book which left thin, red welts on my arms. The back of the broomstick that pounded me across the length of my back" (56).

In *When I Hit You*, the story takes a sinister turn as the protagonist's abuse becomes more severe and culminates in a terrifying act of rape. The narrator's realisation that her life is in peril is sparked by this crucial event. In light of the catastrophic situation, she bravely sets out on a quest for self-preservation. The narrator discovers an important aspect of her husband's past in the midst of the ongoing anguish. Equipped with this acquired understanding, she deftly reverses the situation during one of his aggressive outbursts. This change in the balance of power represents the protagonist's tenacity and her resolute attempt to take back control of her own story, and it becomes a crucial turning point in the novel.

The narrator comes across as a strong character when she deftly uses the knowledge she has gained to weaken her husband. Taking charge of their story turns into a potent instrument for her liberation. In the end, her calculated action helps her escape the bonds of an abusive relationship. The novel is expertly written by Meena Kandasamy, who also uses it as a means of examining themes of resilience, empowerment, and the transformational power of narrative. Meena Kandasamy skilfully negotiates the nuances of gender dynamics and cultural expectations through the narrator's journey, offering readers a moving meditation on the resilient spirit of women in the face of hardship. In her review of the novel, Preti Taneja views that, "The raw material of domestic abuse leads to a meditation on writing and a searing examination of a woman's place in contemporary Indian society" (n.p.)

The novels *The Shadow of the Crescent Moon* by Fatima Bhutto and *When I Hit You* by Meena Kandasamy portray the transformation of female characters, which reflects the changing societal norms while emphasizing the importance of women's empowerment and agency in shaping their own destiny. The act of storytelling emerges as a powerful tool for empowerment, as seen in the way the characters exercise narrative control in times of adversity.

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UNVEILING THE HIDDEN LAYERS OF POWER: A PSYCHOANALYTIC READING OF GEORGE ORWELL'S *ANIMAL FARM*

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Abstract

Animal Farm (1945) can be considered as a satiric and allegorical work penned by Eric Arthur Blair, an English novelist, whose pen name is George Orwell. From a psychoanalytic perspective, this novel can be seen as a reflection of the unconscious desires and conflicts within the human mind. Through the close analysis of specific characters and their behaviours, the readers can gain a deeper understanding of how the Id, Ego and Superego demonstrate the power structures and conflicts depicted in the novel. Through the lens of Freudian psychoanalytic theory, this paper aims to discover the inner psychological dynamics at play within the characters of *Animal Farm*.

Keywords: Psychoanalytic, Id, Ego, Superego, Power, Proletariat, Resistance.

This paper explores the application of Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory to George Orwell's renowned novel *Animal Farm*. Through Freudian concepts of Id, Ego, and Superego, power, control and psychological manipulation of different characters of *Animal Farm* can be understood effectively. Psychoanalysis, as developed by Sigmund Freud, is a psychological theory that explores the unconscious mind and its impact on human behaviour. In the context of literature, Freudian psychoanalysis focuses on analyzing the hidden meanings, symbols, and motivations within literary texts. In short, Conscious becoming aware of the Unconscious.

The major Freudian concepts are Id, Ego and Superego. Id completely resides at the unconscious level. Ego resides in conscious i.e current contents of working memory. Superego resides in preconscious level i.e the conscience. These concepts work on certain principles. Id operates on pleasure, Ego operates on reality and Superego operates on ideal morality. The Id, Ego and Superego approach is applied to study the major characters and their actions in this novel.

Based on the characters, Napoleon, a boar with Snowball, leads the rebellion against Jones and systematically takes over the farm falls under Id. Squealer, a porker pig who becomes Napoleon's mouthpiece and manipulates the animals also comes down Id (power and control). Snowball an intelligent pig, who comes up with new ideas and cares about the working animals comes under Ego.

An Old major whose speech rouses the animals in to rebellion, Clover, a motherly horse and Boxer, a dedicated hard worker can be grouped under Superego. In

Freudian terms, The Ego represents the rational and realistic part of the mind. In *Animal Farm*, the ego can be seen in the Character of Snowball, who initially aligns himself with the idea of equality and principles of revolution among animals. Snowball's accurate decision making and forming the animals to rebel against Mr. Jones, for instance Snowball first attacked through thirty-five pigeons, flew to and fro over the men's head and second time attacked through Muriel, Benjamin and signalled horses. He led them to dash Mr. Jones and got shot at his back, resulting in victory in the Battle of the Cowshed. His master plan makes him accomplish the brass medal "Animal Hero, First Class". His practical approach of developing plans for the windmill and the idea of rebelling everywhere would make them not to defend themselves, exhibits the practical consideration of the farm.

The superego is the moralising and ideal part of the mind. It represents the values and standards of the society. In *Animal Farm*, Old major's character is the embodiment of super ego. Old Major, the wise boar inspires the animals to rebel against human oppression such as consuming without producing, whipping them, slaughtering them hideously when they become too old to be of any use. "Man is the only real enemy we have" (07). His teachings like whatever goes upon four legs or has a wings is a friend, Animals must not resemble Man, not to live in a house or sleep in a bed or to wear clothes or drink alcohol or smoke tobacco or touch money or to engage in trade shows that Old Major upholds higher moral standards and strive for these If governance of animals. Another character which exhibit Superego is Clover, a motherly figure which shows great care towards others. Clover always tries to question the Pigs authority as it concerns the well-being of animals. Till the end of the novel, Clover sticks to the seven commandments as the resolutions are the foundation of Animalism. Boxer's selflessness and willingness to work tirelessly for the betterment of the farmaligns with the superego's principle of fulfilling societal responsibilities. "I will work harder" and "Comrade Napoleon is always right" (43) shows his unquestionable trust on Napoleon and the pigs. This trust in authority shows Boxer's super ego to confine him to rules.

The Id operates on the basis of immediate satisfaction of desires and pleasures without considering the consequences. In *Animal Farm*, the major characters like Napoleon and Squealer exhibit Id. These Characters embody the primal instincts and desires of power, manipulation, control and personal gains. They manipulate and exploit the other animals for their own benefit disregarding the welfare of others. They reconstructed the laws of Animalism according to their wish and needs.

Napoleon's jealousy over Snowball's wind mill plan and his action of urinating on it and rearing dogs in order to shoo away Snowball from the *Animal Farm* exhibits his hunger for power. Controlling behaviour is exposed when Napoleon made

their voices timid and silenced by the growling of dogs which he reared. Whoever tries to question against the laws and resolutions are smoothened either by the dogs or by the goats which bleat, "Four legs good, two legs bad"! (49) Moreover, whenever they are irresolute about the commandments Squealer, the pig, speaks so persuasively. For instance, one of their commandments is "Whatever goes upon two legs is an enemy", (19) but when they make trade with Mr. Whymper, Squealer asked shrewdly, "Have you any record of such a resolution? Is it written down anywhere"? (49). This is how it satisfies the animals that they have been mistaken. In order to enjoy milk and apple, Squealer propagandize that the pigs dislike them but it is scientifically proven that Milk and Apple preserve Pig sheath as they are the brain of the farm. By reaping the benefits of being the leader, Squealer forces them to believe that leadership is not a pleasure.

After expulsion, more often, they portrayed Snowball as a traitor with precise incidents, make the animals believe, reveal the manipulative nature of Napoleon and Squealer. Napoleon's impulsive decision-making that is deciding to sell Boxer to the knacker is a quick selfish decision made to gain money. He does not consider the loyalty and hard work of Boxer. Napoleon indulges in luxuries like, great Farmhouse, comfortable bed, royal alcohol and resembles humans by walking in their hindlegs to exhibit power and oppression shows his personal pursuit of pleasure rather than equality. Thus, being pleasure seeking creatures they exhibit the demonstrative selfishness and impulsive attitude of Id.

When the Id minded pigs gain absolute power they changed the main motto of *Animal Farm* i.e "Four legs good, two legs bad"(Pg.no:25) to "Four legs good, two legs better" (95) by engaging in trade with humans and finally even worse to "All animals are equal But some animals are more equal than others". (95). It is evident that under the rule of human beings they experienced miserable conditions and oppression. But what has changed when Pigs come in rule? The animals still live a miserable life in the name of Animalism. Pigs started behaving more like humans, they started exploiting their own fellow animals leading to the fact in Lord Acton's words, "Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely".

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EXPLORING THE TOTEMIC GEOGRAPHY IN BRUCE CHATWIN'S TRAVEL FICTION ON *THE SONG LINES*

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Abstract

Bruce Chatwin, a British travel writer who had wanderlust, travelled to the heart of Australia and wrote an account of his encounter with Australian Aboriginals. Songlines are the invisible pathways created by the Indigenous people of Australia. They are considered as the lines of energy or the invisible paths that surround the Australian continent. It also contains spiritual and philosophical teachings of the ancestors. Ancestors pass over the country making the landscape, the animals and the law under which the society has to live. Since time immemorial, the indigenous people of Australia have walked along the songlines, passing the knowledge to the next generation to preserve their culture. This paper attempts to explore the Indigenous Australian culture from the perspective of a traveller.

Keywords: Totems, Indigenous, Culture, Travel, Land.

Nomadic lifestyle has become uncommon in the present century. There are various factors for this deterioration including industrialization, urbanization, and most importantly the perception of civilized people towards nomads. Nomads have a good relationship with the surroundings in which they live. They take utmost care of the environment. They maintain ecological balance, but the civilized people encroach their area since it is abundant in resources like gold, diamond and medicinal plants. In some places they are forced to take the sedentary lifestyle by the government, as they consider themselves as barbaric.

In the contemporary world, due to the developments in the society, nomadic lifestyle has deteriorated. However, a new type of nomads emerge who has a passion to move around the places. They are filled with nomadic spirit, restlessness and lust for travel. Bruce Chatwin, a British travel writer who had wanderlust, travelled to the heart of Australia and wrote an account of his encounter with Australian Aboriginals in the novel, *The Songlines*. Chatwin's works such as *The Nomadic Alternative*, *Anatomy of Restlessness*, and *In Pantagonia*, dealt mainly with restlessness and nomadic spirit. For *The Songlines*, the writer went to the place called Alice Springs in Australia to explore more about Australian Aboriginals. The reason why he has chosen them is, for the reason it is they who preserve the nomadic culture till now. He says, in the earlier part of this story that human beings are in general nomads at mind. It is

only during the last 10,000 years or so, they settled on land. Earlier, they were continuously on move, following their cattle and livestock as a means of survival.

Songlines can be considered as a metaphor for the nomadic spirit. They are considered as the lines of energy or the invisible paths that encircle the Australian continent. It connects places, people and animals. They are just unimaginable and it contains information about earth's creation, development of landscapes, climatic changes, and movement of birds, fauna and flora and so on. It also contains spiritual and philosophical teachings of the ancestors. Ancestors pass over the country making the landscape, the animals and the law under which the society has to live. The travelling of these ancestors through the country creates a songline. According to their culture, these sacred stories have to be passed down from one generation to another in order to preserve their culture. Most of the people would have specialized in certain sections or chapters of the songlines which are related to a specific land. People belong to the neighbouring land would have the next sections of the songlines which relate what happened to the ancestors as they traverse over to their own part of the country. Since time immemorial, the indigenous people of Australia walked along the songlines, passing the knowledge to the next generation to preserve their culture.

A Songline can be related to the people, the land and the customs of the Aboriginals. It also defines the rituals and the responsibilities of Aboriginal people and also the sacred sites situated in their country. The songs hold the key of the geographical aspects of the land along a particular path. The Aboriginals who know the song can use it to find the way or navigate the land. Bruce Chatwin in his *The Songlines* explains the importance of songs to the Aboriginals. He says that the ancestors have spread a trail of words and musical notes along the lines of their footprints, these Dreaming-tracks serve as a way of communication between the tribes. Chatwin gains more knowledge about songlines with the help of Arkady, who is a Russian, mapping the sacred sites of the Aboriginals in Australia. This paper discusses about the totemic geography of the Aboriginals.

Arkady learnt about Aboriginal songlines, when he was a school teacher. He learnt songlines as a "labyrinth of invisible pathways which meander all over Australia and are known to Europeans as 'Dreaming tracks' or 'songlines'; to the Aboriginals as the 'footprints of the Ancestors' or the 'Way of the Law'" (SL 02). Aboriginal Creation myths, tell of the totemic beings who had wandered over Australia in the Dreamtime, singing out the names of everything that crossed their ways. It includes birds, flora, fauna, rocks and even waterholes.

A song is considered as both an atlas and location-finder for the Aboriginals. Provided one knows the song, they can easily find their way across the country. The

person on a walking trip always has to move down one of the songlines. If a man wanders away from the songlines, he is considered to be trespassing from his way and as a consequence he would be punished with spears. So long as he follows the track, he could find his own people who are sharing his Dreaming. In fact, they are all his brothers and he can expect hospitality from them. So, song is a gateway or food token for the Aboriginals while they are wandering across the continent. In General, the whole Australian continent can be analyzed as a musical score. Hardly one or two rocks or creek had not been sung. One can imagine the songlines as a “spaghetti of Illiads and Odysseys” (SL 13), every section or episode could be traced in terms of geography.

Here, episode means sacred sites of Australian Aboriginals. Aboriginals could say the story regarding any feature of the landscape present all over the bush. They could say whether it is about “Kangaroo” or “Budgerigar” or “Jew Lizard” (SL 13) relying on which ancestor walked that way.

In the Aboriginal tradition, sacred sites mean places of utmost importance or significance within their boundaries. Any natural features like rocks, creeks, waterholes, plants can be termed as sacred sites. The space between two sacred sites can be calculated as a stretch of song.

Aboriginals believed that some sort of spirits came out of the pre-existent substance which was often described as sea or plains created the landscape, human beings, and other living creatures. The whole Australian continent was marked with sites that are so sacred for the Aboriginals. Sometimes, these spirits had taken the forms of different plants and animals occupying the entire area.

Sometimes these supernatural beings got transformed into rocks, hills and other natural objects; in some other places, they made their mark by leaving their impression as a winding watercourse or a crack in the rock surface. These mystic creatures departed their life and came to the earth through some specific places. Though they were dead, their living presence lingered in these sacred sites. Spiritual beings were considered as the ancestors of the different kinds of species including human beings. On the basis of Aboriginal belief, these spirits were present everywhere including certain sites, human beings, floras and faunas; they were connected to the sacred sites by their Dreaming. The concept of Dreamtime had to be understood as an Aboriginal equivalent of the first two chapters of Genesis as mentioned by Chatwin. In line with this statement he further explains, “In Genesis, God first created the ‘living things’ and then fashioned Father Adam from clay. Here in Australia, the Ancestors created themselves from clay, hundreds and thousands of them, one for each totemic species” (SL 12).

Since it is evident from the stories and songs, these ancestor spirit beings had done the habitual doings of all the creatures belonging to the natural world. They had done agriculture, hunted animals, lead a family life, exchanged fights with other tribes, and carried out all ceremonies and rituals. They had set the rules and regulations and the ways in which an aborigine had to lead a life. For Aborigines, Life has to be lived as it was lived in the Dreaming.

Bruce Chatwin mentioned in his *The Songlines* about the information he had gathered about the Dreamtime. The Australian Aboriginals treated the land as a sacred one, they had an earthbound philosophy. For them, land is everything; it gives them food, life, skills and take him back once they die. They never tried to wound the land; they can do anything to protect their land. According to them, even the spine of an animal is a sacred one, it has to be kept unscarred. Here, unscarred means in the name of modern technology like mining, railways and roads, the sacred land and the natural world of Australian Aboriginals has been damaged by the Government. Arkady, the guide of Bruce Chatwin explains how important the land is for the Aborigines. In his words,

To wound the earth' he answered earnestly, 'is to wound yourself, and if others wound the earth, they are wounding you. The land should be left untouched: as it was in the Dreamtime when the ancestors sang the world into existence.'... The Aboriginals, he went on, were a people who trod lightly over the earth; and the less they from the earth, the less they had to give in return. (SL 11)

Australian Aboriginals respect their land more than anything in their life, for this reason, they never understand the fact why the European missionaries call them as barbaric and uncivilized. They have not slaughtered any animals or human beings; instead as an act of showing gratitude to the land which provides them everything for their livelihood, they would cut their veins of forearms and sprinkle the blood on the ground.

Chatwin explored more about songlines by visiting some of the interior areas of Australia; he met some Aboriginals and tried to interview them. Some of them had given information about the songlines whereas many refused to reveal. The Individuals who had undergone walkabout was actually making a ritual journey. They followed the impressions or footprints of the ancestors. They sang their songs without any change in the stanzas or musical notes. By doing so, they recreated the creation.

Arkady gave details about songlines to Chatwin from one of his experiences of encountering ancestors singing a song. He was engaged by the government to make a survey of the ancestral land to create railway lines. Once he took some group of old men to the desert. When they reached a ridge of sand hills, they started singing.

Arkady asked this strange nature of old men, they replied “singing up the country, boss. Makes the country come up Quicker” (SL 14).

Putting it all together, the concept of land, first existed in the mind, then it was sung and finally, it was created. Aboriginals had a notion that everything in this world had been already created under the earth’s crust including white man’s gun, car, and aeroplanes. As they were all sleeping below the earth’s crust, each new invention will be invented, waiting for their turn to come out.

As Bruce Chatwin is a travel writer, one can see the concept of restlessness, nomadic spirit, wandering lust and fantastic homelessness. He has tried to write a book namely *The Nomadic Alternative* to present the ideas about nomads and their life. But he is not successful in writing about nomads.

As explained by Strauss that the savage mind is no way inferior to the civilized mind. Civilized people call the tribal people as barbaric, but the tribal people look down them as some kind of an animal. They too do things intellectually with the resources available to them as tinkerers or bricoleur. In the following statement, he opposes the false notion of superiority of the civilized mind.

Chatwin incorporates his insights in his work *The Songlines*, and he states that the Aboriginal life represents a good relation with the environment and the landscape. Aborigines though termed as barbaric, lead a peaceful life and maintained a natural harmony with the environment. They were constantly on the move for their survival in the wild. The instinct for travel presents in every human being in their subconscious mind. Chatwin says that travel is a cure for all the depressions that the settled life created.

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NAVIGATING THE COMPLEXITIES OF MODERNIZATION THROUGH NAGA MYTHICAL STORIES IN KIRE'S *WHEN THE RIVER SLEEPS*

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Abstract

The changing world order has led to a substantial change in the thought process of the coming generations. The younger generation since engulfed in the world of science and technology has resorted to discarding the older natural ways of life and the myths and traditions associated with it. This paper through Kire's novel *When the River Sleeps* aims to talk about various Naga folklore which supports a natural way of living life and considering oneself as apart of nature. The rise of individualism has gradually replaced the once-prevailing sense of collective identity. This paper therefore also aims to showcase how the erosion of traditional social structures, values and belief systems has led to a shift in the Naga community's way of life.

Keywords: Folklore, Myths, Nagaland, Nature, Northeast, Tenyimias.

Ville, the major character of Kire's novel is the ideal representative symbolizing the indigenous people; living from the last 25 years in the forest, he is the perfect forester. Moreover, Ville has been appointed as the preserver of a bird called gwi, found in the adjoining areas of west of Kohima. In addition to this, he has also been appointed by the department of forest as the official protector of the rare bird called tragopan.

According to Temsula Ao, a Naga writer, "Nagas have an oral tradition that is rich and vibrant, passed down from one generation to the next through storytelling, songs, and performances" (Ao, 2006). The oral tradition of the Nagas includes various elements of folklore such as myths, legends, proverbs, and folktales. The myths and legends of the Nagas are often associated with their religious beliefs and practices. An important element of Naga folklore is the belief of the community in the existence of supernatural beings such as ghosts, spirits, and demons. As A. Lanunungsang Ao, a Naga writer and researcher, explains, "The Nagas believe in the existence of a world beyond the physical realm, where spirits and supernatural beings reside" (Ao, 2002). The Nagas have various rituals and practices to appease these spirits, including offering sacrifices and performing religious ceremonies. The belief in beings which are supernatural is often reflected in Naga folktales and legends, where they are portrayed as both benevolent and malevolent entities. The Naga folklore is an important part of the Nagas' cultural heritage, and it continues to be passed down from generation by generation through storytelling, songs, and performances.

American ethnographer, A. Irving Hallowell in his academic research paper named *Ojibwa Ontology, Behavior, and World View* coined a term “other-than-human-persons” which means, understanding the nature of a relational entity from the animal world inhabited by persons both human and otherwise. Kire through this novel has tried to instil life into and establish human relations into the non-living entities which includes the flowing river, the forest, the weretigers, etc. Villie’s promise that “the forest is my wife” (Kire, 2014) provides a humane identity and an emotional relation to the forest i.e. the Nature. He is so much attached to the environment that he lives in- the forest that Villie has although left his home years ago, is ready to leave his community as well only because he finds peace and solidarity amidst the nature. He strongly believes in the fact that “leaving the forest would be the same as abandoning his wife”, that “he was being an unfaithful spouse” (Kire, 2014). The said sleeping river and the stone too have been given the humane status. Villie’s fight against the “river person” has been described as a fight between two humans both willing to defeat the other one.

Krishna, another character in the novel too believed in leading a natural, happy and contented life near to the natural environment. When asked what future plan he has for his son, he goes on to explain how important it is to live honestly in the anthropocene: “I am not a rich man. I don’t have the means to send him to school. I will teach him my trade and he will grow up and earn an honest living. School is not for the like of us” (Kire, 2014). The inclusion of such instances in the novel gives a glimpse of the close reality of a culture of a community. How the community is largely affected by the nature and subsequently the myths, folklore, traditions, customs all become an integral part of what we call the Indigenous or the natural way of life. People living amidst nature do not always try to fend for a materialistic life but for a fulfilling one. Through the character of Krishna, Kire throws light upon the inhabitants of the forest who have the urge to earn honestly.

The novel has the elements of Eco-spiritualism. Eco-spiritualism is a philosophical and cultural movement that combines elements of spirituality, environmentalism, and social justice. This movement is based on the community’s belief that humans have a responsibility to protect and preserve the natural world, and that the health of the planet is intimately connected to our spiritual well-being. Abrams in *A Glossary of Literary Terms* projects, “The common view in such traditions... envisions the natural world as a living, sacred thing, in which each individual feels intimately bonded to a particular physical ‘place’, and where human beings live in interdependence and reciprocity with other living things” (Abrams, 2015).

As the mythology of the Tenimiya Nagas say, humans are the descendants of the woman and the clouds and are supposed to live in harmony with the living, non-living, natural and the super-natural. The knowledge base having the archives of the cultural and traditional knowledge of the Naga community and the myths associated with it always places the

supernaturalism, occult, etc at the pedestal of the hierarchy. Every little thing which is occurring on a daily basis is related to the natural and supernatural elements and is collectively accepted by the community thereby indicating that they are one with the nature-supporting the idea of Eco- spiritualism. The Naga theology acknowledges the mysteries behind every occurrence. Transforming oneself into spirits, different kinds of creatures, and reptiles is also frequent among Naga people. Men from nearby tribes, for example, have been shaped into huge snakes, while women's souls went from being human to monkeys. "Among the Angamis, the weretiger ritual was a closely guarded one. Men whose spirits were turning into weretigers would begin to behave strangely." (Kire, 2014). The process of this transformation is called "Tekhumiavi" (Kire, 2014). In the novel as well when, Villie escapes to the forest of Rahuria, he says "Mine is the greater spirit. I will never submit to you!" (Kire, 2014). This statement again points towards the reality that the forest too was infested with the spirits. "Kirhupfumia" (Kire, 2014) again is a myth in the Angami Nagas where certain women folks are believed to possess magical powers who could bring death upon a person by pointing fingers towards him/her. The sisters in the novel, Ate and Zote were believed to possess such powers are hence were outcasted from the village.

Kire resurrects such stories and cultural practises in her writings to emphasize the strong connection between the realms of the natural and the supernatural: "We do not recommend these practices but we are telling you about them because knowledge is always powerful. That is what the age-group houses are for, to impart knowledge of the natural and the supernatural to you so that you go out into the world with knowledge of both, and not disrespectful of either world as some people are" (Kire, 2014). The river around which the entire novel revolves for sure has been occupied by a living spirit, the real value of the river and the heart of the river- the stone is explained by the headman Kani of the adjoining village. He is the one who explains Vilie that, "those who try to grasp the spirit of the river for wealth, are going to lose something that wealth cannot buy for you. You will lose knowledge of the spiritual. And you will lose the power it offers you...over both the world of the senses and the world of the spirit" (Kire, 2014). This was what made Vilie realize that, "he wanted the spiritual knowledge that the sleeping river would give him if they found it" (Kire, 2014). The Naga culture incorporates a number of such natural and supernatural elements which highlights the ancient culture and its significance even to this day. Through these myths Kire, infuses deep symbolic significance to the sleeping river:

The river is the human mind (constantly restive and distracted by the objective world). When it sleeps (attains the meditative 'zen' state of equanimity) it becomes possible for a seeker to gain access to a heart-stone (profound knowledge from one's core). As soon as the heart-stone is within grasp, the river puts up an almighty fight (that is possibly the person wrestling with the doubts and tectonics of the paradigm shift in awareness being churned by his newfound knowledge). If the seeker is able to withstand the onslaught and

assert his supremacy over the river, he becomes the owner of the heart-stone. (Balantrapu, 2015)

Easterine Kire, in an interview with *The Hindu*, explains the strong reason behind the inception of the novel, *When the River Sleeps*:

I have many hunter friends. My own son is a hunter. They would tell me stories and in particular this one about rivers that ‘went to sleep’ at a certain time at night. No one knew when the river would fall asleep, but if they were fortunate enough to find it asleep, they would quickly take out a stone from its depths and it would act as a charm. This story stayed with me for a long time and surfaced when it was time for it to be written as a book. (Daftuar, 2015)

With this expression of the narrator’s significance of these myths and folklore to the people, Kire acquires the allocade of the Angami Naga storyteller because of the novels which has been referenced before. Historians, such as Richard Hugh Grove and Ramachandra Guha, resort to the harsh truth that the colonizers [had] weakened the ancestral folklores and cultural orders in India (Grove & Guha, 2004). Explaining how hazardous the conversion turned out to be, in the case of the Naga Angami tribe.

It was not before the nineteenth century that the Naga community was brought under the cloak of Christianity, before which this community had their very own indigenous cultural way of living including the head-hunting expeditions, as narrated in the novel. The American Baptist Missionaries have converted over the Naga individuals and also changed their perspective in a huge manner. The missionaries saw the “savage and wild” races as the Other. The enforcement of Christian convictions into the indigenous community of the Naga have separated the “Naga-self” from their ancestral practices. What used to be one’s age-old native culture has now turned into the “other” for the Nagas also leading to cultural emergency.

The erosion of traditional social structures values and belief systems has led to a shift in the Naga community’s way of life. In the past, the Naga society placed great emphasis on communal harmony, respect for elders, and the preservation of cultural heritage. These values played a vital role in maintaining social order and fostering a strong sense of belonging among community members. However, the rapid pace of modernization, influenced by globalization and the influx of external ideas and lifestyles, has significantly impacted the Naga community. The rise of individualism has gradually replaced the once-prevailing sense of collective identity. Younger generations are increasingly embracing Western ideals of personal success, material wealth and science and technology often at the expense of community welfare. This shift has caused a considerable strain on the fabric of Naga society, undermining the traditional values that once bound people together.

Today, with the gradual mutation of the traditional social structures, the age-old community ties are also breaking down. In the olden days, Naga villages were considered to be one common community. Where everyone had strong bonds of kinship and interdependence on each other. The community people relied and depended on each other for various things such as agriculture, hunting, and other communal rituals such as death, birth, etc. But, with time these traditions eroded and this has had far-reaching consequences in today's times. It has resulted in the loss of communal harmony, weakened community ties, and also a steep decline in the authority of traditional governance systems has also been noticed. As the Naga people navigate through the complexities of globalization and modernization, it becomes essential to find a balance between embracing new ideas and preserving their rich cultural heritage. Only through a thoughtful and combined approach can the Naga community hope to restore a sense of nativity, while cherishing their unique identity, folklore and their way of living.

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THE MAN-GOD: A STUDY OF MOMENTS OF ETERNITY IN DOSTOEVSKY'S KIRILLOV FROM *DEMONS*

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Abstract

During an epileptic aura, the person can experience the 'awayness' and disconnect from the common (present) and have a sense of ecstasy which surpasses time and space. This article will study the nuances in the experience of the character Kirillov from Dostoevsky's novel *Demons* (also called *The Possessed*) and his descriptive narration about it. In the novel, the man Kirillov is referred to as a 'man-god' because he attempts to take control of death by committing suicide. The article considers time and space as limitations and characteristics of a human in his normal, physical state and that Kirillov's aura helps him to surpass these limitations. The epileptic aura of Kirillov helps and contributes to his attempt to become or at least his idea of 'man-god'. In this article, the loss of consciousness, feeling of ecstasy and certain other characteristics will be studied from the perspective of Kirillov, and his epileptic aura will be taken as an experience and an attempt to surpass human limitations.

Keywords: Man-God, Aura, Time, Epilepsy, Superhuman.

The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines time as, "The indefinite continued progress of existence and events in the past, present, and future regarded as a whole" (67). It can be understood only by analysing and experiencing the changes happening around us every second. If there are no changes, logically it means time cannot be identified; it has paused. Circadian rhythm is what drives a human body through its physical and psychological needs: hunger, sleep etc., also known as the biological clock. Anyway, the neuropsychological basis of the perception of time is still ambiguous. The perception of time differs based on the events and activities in a human's life. Its passing is sensed during the beginning or end of a particular event. Like, the beginning of a lecture, the end of a trip, waiting in a queue. These are classified differently by the brain which neurologists call as an 'episode'. The varied episodes we have, the more it can be sensed. We can sometimes feel that time can be felt longer for some events comparatively than other events. For example, waiting on a one minute call or for the arrival of a taxi can be sensed longer than an hour-long interesting conversation. Here, the social and emotional category of the event is identified and time is sensed as it passes. In his *Confessions*, St. Augustine tries to state the complexities of time and ends with many other hypothetical questions:

I heard once from a learned man, that the motions of the sun, moon, and stars, constituted time, and I assented not. For why should not the motions of all

bodies rather be times? Or, if the lights of heaven should cease, and a potter's wheel run round, should there be no time by which we might measure those whirlings, and say, that either it moved with equal pauses, or if it turned sometimes slower, other whiles quicker, that some rounds were longer, other shorter? Or, while we were saying this, should we not also be speaking in time? Or, should there in our words be some syllables short, others long, but because those sounded in a shorter time, these in a longer? (159)

At the same time, it is also a limitation to any human being as the brain has restricted itself to think and work only about the present. Moving backwards or forward in time is impossible for a human being. In fictional characters like Prince Dastan in *Prince of Persia: The Sands of Time* and Harry Potter in the sequel *Harry Potter*, this change in time is possible with magical or supernatural elements. This paper asserts that this fluidity in time and moments is equally possible for an epileptic and the person can sense “moments of eternity” during an aura. In a letter to his friend Starkhov in the year 1868, Dostoevsky explains this, “For several instants, I experience a happiness that is impossible in an ordinary state, and of which other people have no conception. I feel full harmony in myself and in the whole world, and the feeling is so strong and sweet that for a few seconds of such bliss, one could give up ten years of life, perhaps all of life” (06).

They can sense the pause in time and be in an entirely different space which are the limitations that make one a human, thus transcending them. It can be compared to the ‘Pensieve’ (597) experience in *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire (2000)* that transcends time. An epileptic aura is a pre-ictal state of sensing repetitions from memory or change in the level of consciousness either taking one back into the past or into the future. So, as noted, time is something we understand only with the change in our environmental sequence. The epileptic aura gives a pause or a *caesura* (an unrepresentable heightened moment of break) and helps to psychologically recollect things from the past or interpret the future. During an aura, the consciousness pauses, making time impossible to proceed through these moments, based on which a person is taken into the past or the future. This feeling of the pause in time and moving backwards/forward in time is impossible for a common man to experience. Thus, Kirillov is studied as a man who can surpass the sense of time.

Though epilepsy does not have any direct connection with religion and spirituality, prior to Hippocrates, the Greek physician, it was conceived as a disease of a spirit taking control of the patient's body. It has been viewed both in positive and negative perspectives. It was conceived as ‘seized’ by a spirit through which one can prophesy, was seen positive, whereas the incident in *The Book of Mark* in the Bible, where an epileptic boy was brought to Christ is seen as impure “Then they brought him to Him. And when he saw Him, immediately the impure spirit convulsed him, and he fell on the

ground and wallowed, foaming at the mouth” (Mark 9.20). A seizure stops the passing of time for the epileptic, as it abruptly changes the level of consciousness that connects one to their present environment. Throughout his writings, Dostoevsky has highlighted with full detail, the time of any event. During an aura, the person is taken either back in time to some particular *familiar* place or sense of taste and smell or one might feel futuristic visions which was taken for prophecies by spirits. In both ways, the patient is clearly not in his present physical or psychological state. The person’s mind can surpass the limitations of time and space and create a miniature of time travel within itself. In his book, *On Convulsive Seizures* (1888), John Hughlings Jackson describes in a chapter on Epilepsy about a case study about visions from the past and future: Another account is “peculiar sensations passing through his memory and appearing before his eyes”. “*He thinks of things he has, might, or will do,*” “ he mentally sees people whom he has not seen for some years.” (192). “[W]hat is occupying the attention is what has occupied it before (past), and indeed has been *familiar*, but has been for a time forgotten, and now is recovered with a slight sense of satisfaction as if it had been sought for” (202).

Though the same is possible through the consumption of alcohol or drugs, the above-mentioned ways cannot be considered natural. An epileptic can surpass time in his usual epileptic state whereas the same has to be forced by consuming alcohol or drugs for a normal person. Also, it has been traditionally backed up with prophesy and time in most cultures. The aura can surpass all feelings and be in a “dreamy state” of pause in time which was discussed earlier. The closest association with this feeling is the feeling as if in eternity or heaven. No other feeling can be associated to explain. Even then, the feeling of an aura cannot be fully described, it is a caesura or an unexplainable moment.

The following case studies and testimonies of patients substantiate the idea that time cannot be felt or it pauses during an aura. More than 80 percent of the patients have mentioned words like ecstasy, heaven, elation and as completely out of this world. Regarding dilation in time, some have stated that,

– “I escape into the time-space of my body. It is a moment of fullness in the loophole of time, a return to myself.”

– “Entirely wrapped up in the bliss, I am in a radiant sphere without any notion of time or space. My relatives tell me that it lasts two to three minutes, but for me, these moments are without beginning and without end.”

A patient Subirana aged 45 years explains about her ecstatic aura that it gave her a sudden feeling of happiness “complete out of this world” and indescribable happiness “knew what it was like to be in heaven” - impression that it lasts for hours. (Picard 2)

The character Aleksey Nilych Kirillov is a young man of twenty-seven years. He believes that life consists of pain and suffering. He further believes that God does not exist and, therefore, anything is possible. Consequently, without the existence of God, Kirillov suggests that suicide is the ultimate expression of man transcending into a greater form, i.e. a godlike existence. He suffers from epilepsy too. His idea that a human can become godlike is supported by his epileptic symptoms, especially his aura which can help him experience eternity and surpass the limitations of a human being.

During one of his pre-ictal experiences, his friend Shatov identifies an epileptic aura through the conversation and speaks to Kirillov.

“Kirillov, does this often happen?”

“Once in three days, or once a week.”

“Don’t you have fits, perhaps?”

“No.”

“Well, you will. Be careful, Kirillov. I’ve heard that’s just how fits begin. An epileptic described exactly that sensation before a fit, word for word as you’ve done. He mentioned five seconds, too, and said that more could not be endured. Remember Mahomet’s pitcher from which no drop of water was spilt while he circled Paradise on his horse. That was a case of five seconds too; that’s too much like your eternal harmony, and Mahomet was an epileptic. Be careful, Kirillov, it’s epilepsy!”

“It won’t have time,” Kirillov smiled gently. (Dostoevsky 678)

Studying the above conversation gives a clear picture of what it is like to have an aura, including its duration. In his book *The Men of Genius* (1891), Lombroso states that Prophet Muhammad in Islam was also an epileptic. While looking into the words of Kirillov “It won’t have time,” it can be assumed that an aura does not have time or it surpasses time. It is a caesura or a pause in time. This can be perceived with more clarity in comparison to the words in the *Book of Revelations* in the Bible ‘time shall be no more’ (King James Version, Rev.10.6). “And yet, before the attack of the seizure, the Prince keeps coming back to reflect on the seizure, fantasizing it as evoking eternity (he says he understands the extraordinary phrase ‘time shall be no more’ from the Book of Revelation when he has his last seizure” (Fung 27).

Thus, an aura is an experience that can transcend time and space giving the epileptic a godlike experience. Robert Lord, in his *Dostoevsky: Essays and Perspectives* explains about the aura that “If these moments were to endure for more than a second of time, the epileptic would be transformed into a god, or into a superhuman (Kirillov), or simply annihilated” (94). These moments are ecstatic and unbearable. To endure it one has to become a man-god, which is the theory of Kirillov in *Demons*. Kirillov, throughout the novel, has been portrayed as an extraordinary character: a man-god.

Kirillov can be perceived as a Man-God. The same novel has many other references about the pause in time and eternity, adding to the idea, the words 'eternity', 'forever and ever', and 'no more' are actual conceptual references that sterilise the perception of time that it cannot be experienced or measured. Observing all these characteristics and ecstatic auras, one can apparently conclude that the character Kirillov could be referred as a man-god. He can surpass time and space in his 'Pensieve experience' i.e. his epileptic aura. The same idea can be discussed profoundly taking all the characters with epilepsy in Dostoevsky for a detailed study. Though the idea of time is still ambiguous, reading and re-reading such characters that have the elements of both medicine and time makes space for more fruitful study about art, epilepsy and the process of creation.

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**LOCATION OF THIRD SPACE IN THE MAGICAL REALM: AN
INTERPRETATION OF CULTURAL TROPES INC. S. LEWIS'S
*THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA: THE LION, THE WITCH AND
THE WARDROBE***

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Abstract

The paper analyses the location of the third space in the magical realm and the cultural tropes located both in the real world and the magical world of C. S. Lewis's *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. It also analyses the cultural paradigm cascading beneath the manufacture of dominant ideology. The paper unspools the post-colonial concept of colonial mentality and the socio-control structures of the society. The art of C. S. Lewis especially in book-2, manufactures cultural hegemony through the portrayal of four human beings in the world of Narnia as rulers. The post-colonial discourse that prevails in the novel, deals with the complex transit of dominant mentality from the real world to the magical realm of Narnia. Even though it is considered to be a fantasy novel, it also involves in production, circulation and consumption of cultural products. It is not only an imaginary art but also instils dominant ideology in the minds of young readers.

Keywords: Cultural Industry, Narnia, Third Space, Magical Realm, Colonial Mentality, Cultural Hegemony.

The paper analyses the location of third space in the magical realm and the cultural tropes located both in the real world and the magical world of C. S. Lewis' *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. It also analyses the cultural paradigm cascading beneath the manufacture of dominant ideology. The paper unspools the post-colonial concept of colonial mentality and the sociocultural-control structures of the society. The art of C. S. Lewis especially in *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* manufactures cultural hegemony through the portrayal of four human beings in the world of Narnia as rulers. The post-colonial discourse that prevails in the novel, deals with the complex transit of dominant mentality from the real world to the magical realm of Narnia. Even though it is considered to be a fantasy novel, it also involves in production, circulation and consumption of cultural products. It is not only an imaginary art but also instilling dominant ideology in the minds of the young readers.

The cultural representation of the dominant is subtle and authoritative, oppresses the indigenous tradition. Bhabha says "Hybridity is the sign of the

productivity of colonial power, its shifting forces and fixities” (112) The production of meaning is controlled by the domination and it is a sign of authority, but a new identity is offered in the third space which is fluid and not fixed. Bhabha says “The intervention of the Third Space of enunciation, which makes the structure of meaning and reference an ambivalent process” (37). The third space and however the space-in-between represents ‘beyond’ the meanings attribute by the binaries. This paper examines C. S. Lewis’ representation of humans in the imaginary land called Narnia. The collusion between a work of art and a dominant culture result in the separation of dominant and subservient.

In his *The Location of Culture*, Homi Bhabha argues:

It is significant that the productive capacities of this Third Space have a colonial or postcolonial provenance. For a willingness to descend into that alien territory - where I have led you - may reveal that the theoretical recognition of the split-space of enunciation may open the way to conceptualizing an international culture; based not on the exoticism of multiculturalism or the diversity of cultures but on the inscription and articulation of culture’s hybridity. To that end we should remember that it is the ‘inter’ - the cutting edge of translation and negotiation, the in-between space- that carries the burden of the meaning of culture. (38)

In the land of Narnia as Bhabha said, the third space is a place of dominance and a provenance of cultural hegemony. In the novel, the four children Peter, Susan, Edmund and Lucy were evacuated from the air-raids and sent away from London to an old Professor’s house. There they found a magical wardrobe in a spare room, which is a portal to the land of Narnia. These four children got new identities in the mystical world. Their arrival into the alien territory is unlikely a welcoming factor in the land of Narnia. There is a prophecy “*When Adam’s flesh and Adam’s bone / Sits at Cair Paravel in throne, / The evil time will be over and done*” (90). The four human beings two sons of Adam and two daughters of Eve from the real world overthrow the White Witch and rule the world of Narnia. The underlying cultural industry that produces an ideological consent of accepting the dominance. The human beings are the exotic creatures of Narnia but they are at the centre of the power structure. The indigenous creatures are portrayed as subservient beings. Aslan, the lion which is a god like figure gives the throne to the four children. The cultural industry is projecting the human intruders as saviours and with their intervention the order in Narnia is restored, if not it will be under the clutches of the White Witch.

In fact, the ideology of dominance is manufactured by these discourses of over rating and over glorifying the human beings. It is depicted that the ‘Other’ creatures of Narnia are voluntarily accepting human beings as their Kings and Queens. Edward

Said argues in *Orientalism* that “. . . a kind of western projection onto and will to govern over the orient.” (95) His statement is absolutely mirrored in the novel. Instead of western projection, it can be considered a western projection of authority to govern over the ‘other’ – here it refers to subservient beings. If the binary; west vs orient is assumed as reality vs magical realm, then the human beings of real world is projected as dominant and the other creatures of Narnia are portrayed as subservients and to be ruled by the dominant community.

Bhabha discusses the radical thoughts of Frantz Fanon which elucidate the division of the dominant cultural supremacy and the subjugated community with a binary ‘Self / Other’. He delineates the ambivalence nature of the binaries as:

Fanon is the purveyor of the transgressive and transitional truth. He may yearn for the total transformation of Man and Society, but he speaks most effectively from the uncertain interstices of historical change: from the area of ambivalence between race and sexuality; out of an unresolved contradiction between culture and class; from deep within the struggle of psychic representation and social reality. (40)

Ben Agger proclaims in his book *Cultural Studies as Critical Theory* that, “The feminist critical project is dedicated to exposing male hegemony in culture as well as opening a space for women to make (and evaluate) culture” (114).

There is a strong illustration how a female figure must be or how she must be projected to the society. At that concern there is no discrimination between the human figures as well as the animalistic figures represented as subjugated ‘other’. The male hegemony is subtle and it is governing the cultural industry. Most probably, the production and circulation are done by the dominant male but the consumption is done by the subservient female. The patriarchal cultural construct retains women in the subordinate positions by attributing stereotypes. In the novel, Lucy noticed “as she went in was a burring sound, and the first thing she saw was a kind-looking old she-beaver sitting in the corner with a thread in her mouth working busy at her sewing machine” (81). The old she-beaver working in her sewing machine is a typical portrayal of gender role attributed to women.

The next stereotype is the depiction of women serving as a cook but men go out for other activities that are forbidden to women. The expression of Mrs. Beaver quoted here is very subtle. “The potatoes are boiling and the kettle’s singing and I daresay, Mr. Beaver, you’ll get us some fish” (81). It seems to be an order from his wife but it is a product of cultural industry. In the novel, Mr. Beaver and Peter went out for fishing “Meanwhile the girls were helping Mrs. Beaver to fill the kettle and lay the table and cut the bread and put the plates in the oven to heat and draw a huge jug of beer for Mr. Beaver from a barrel which stood in one corner of the house, and to put

on the frying-pan and get the dripping hot” (82). This is a patriarchal cultural production which attributes cook role to women and places them in the kitchen.

The portrayal of this idea ingrains in the mind of young readers and at last it creates an impression about gender roles and its stereotypes. This shows that women are brought into accepting the gender role attributed by patriarchal dominance. They believe it as their identity, that is why women are happily engaged to perform the role. The stereotype depicted as “Susan drained the potatoes and then put them all back in the empty pot to dry on the side of the range while Lucy was helping Mrs. Beaver to dish up the trout” (83) is itself a product of dominant cultural industry which produces a sort of ideology to prepare women to accept it. This is clearly stated by Simone de Beauvoir in her *The Second Sex* as “Woman is shut up in a kitchen or in a boudoir, and astonishment is expressed that her horizon is limited. Her wings are clipped, and it is found deplorable that she cannot fly. Let but the future be opened to her, and she will no longer be compelled to linger in the present” (731). If the women cannot understand the reality that their identity and gender role are just a product of patriarchal cultural construct, they cannot come out from suppression.

In the patriarchal cultural construct, women cannot get what they plan for them. they receive things without being consulted. In the novel, Santa Claus’ words and actions manufacture patriarchal dominant ideology. Santa Claus who is also called the Father Christmas says to Peter, ““These are your present’ was the answer, ‘and they are tools not toys. The time to use them is perhaps near at hand. Bear them well’. With these words he handed to Peter a shield and a sword.” (118). Father Christmas also gave Christmas gifts to Susan and Lucy that would be useful for them to fulfill their presence in Narnia. It is resolved that how a war tool must be handled by masculine and how it must be in hands of feminine are thrustured with the same dominant nature. By analyzing the nuance of cultural dominance, it is clearly projected through the words of Father Christmas to Peter “bear them well” (118) registers to the young readers that a man should hold a weapon as warriors whereas woman must use it for the purpose of protection but not to fight in the battle.

Father Christmas insists Susan as well as Lucy not to involve in war as it is the nastiest thing for women to participate. It is perceived that men expect women to be soft, tender, feeble and subservient in nature and treat women as fixed figures to do fixed roles like catering, nursing, caring with love but not with valor to express their power. Only soft concern works are attributed for them whereas contribution to battle is considered an ugly thing. This novel portrays women with stereotypical roles like cooking, seeking help, healing and care taking which are boon to women but fighting in battle or indulging in war is treated as bane even in the fantasy world (Narnia). Father Christmas is very stubborn in expressing his patriarchal views. It is as follows,

"But battles are ugly when women fight." (119). Actually, he decides for women in general through convincing words that dominant narrative allow women to instill a kind of accepting mentality.

Father Christmas gives a dagger to Lucy just like bow and arrows to Susan but not to use in battle like men. They are supposed to use only for defense. Lewis puts forth Father Christmas' conversation with Lucy as:

"Lucy, Eve's Daughter," and Lucy came forward. He gave her a little bottle of what looked like glass (but people said afterwards that it was made of diamond) and a small dagger. "In this bottle," he said, "there is a cordial made of the juice of one of the fire-flowers that grow on the mountains of the sun. If you or any of your friends is hurt, a few drops of this will restore them. And the dagger is to defend yourself at great need. For you also are not to be in the battle." (119)

In Narnia, except Edmund everybody has got their Christmas gifts. In one of the chapters of the novel, Lewis depicts the image of slavery and colonialism. Edmund, being a betrayer of his siblings becomes the possession of the White Witch. The White Witch orders the dwarf to illtreat Edmund. She says, "Do as you're told. Tie the hands of the human creature behind it and keep hold of the end of the rope. And take your whip." (130) Edmund is treated as a slave to the White witch. He experiences both physical and mental torture as, ". . . the dwarf gave him a curse and sometimes a flick with a whip" (130). It is shown as the evil nature of Edmund is punished with the experience of slavery. Towards the end, he is given a throne like his siblings after overthrowing the White Witch.

Lewis' *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* is overwhelming with similar cultural tropes both in the real world and the magical realm. It is found that being a medium of cultural industry, this novel manufactures ideologies in favour of patriarchal cultural construct. Even though a new identity is offered to the children in the third space of the magical realm, the cultural hegemony remains the same and there is no shift in fixity as pointed by Bhabha. Hence, it is not only a fantasy literature but also a cultural industry that produces, circulates and instills dominant ideologies in the minds of the young readers.

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***HALF A LIFE* -THE NOSTALGIC SEARCH OF HALF WHICH REMAINS INCOMPLETE (HALF A LIFE)**

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Abstract

V. S. Naipaul is regarded as a literary giant allover the world. The majority of his works are based on his real-life experiences. They revolve around the themes of displacement and exile. As a diaspora writer, his works are obsessed with issues of isolation, alienation, displacement, dispossession, homelessness, a sense of rootlessness, memory fragmentation, and continuous search for self-identity. *Half a Life* (2001) illustrates an individual's suffering and predicament. This chosen novel deals with the narration about three generations of an Indian Brahmin family. There are two sets of characters in this novel. This paper aims at analysing the unique challenges encountered by the protagonist of *Half a Life* in the process of searching his identity.

Keywords: Diaspora, Isolation, Displacement, Dispossession, Homelessness, Rootless, Immigrant.

V.S.Naipaul is a British writer of Indian heritage who is mostly recognized for his pessimistic books set in impoverished nations which focuses on existence and tradition. He has written over 30 works of fiction and non-fiction. He was knighted in 1990 for his contributions to writing. He acquired the Nobel Prize for literature. His portrayal of third-world cultures is highly praised. *Half A Life* was released in 2001. Naipaul's works depict his own exile and identity crisis. In a conversation with Rahul Singh, Naipaul admitted, "I was born in Trinidad. I have lived most of my life in England and India is the land of my ancestors. That says at all. I am not English not Indian, Not Trinidadian. I am my own person" (Times of India Feb. 19, 2002).

Willie Chandran is the protagonist of the novel *Half A Life*. He is continuously deported to England, Africa and Germany, three of the most imperative international areas in the world. He searches for his identity wherever he goes but ends up in vain. He was born to an educated father, a follower of Mahatma Gandhi who shunned materialism and ambition. His mother was a poor woman from a lower caste. His first foray into figuring out who he is begins with a question to his father regarding his middle name, Somerset. He has a nunclear name. He eventually finds that his middle name comes from Somerset Maugham, a famous British writer who had paid a visit to his father. While his first name is Christian, his surname betrays his paternal ancestors. Moreover, he felt uneasy knowing his mother's social and financial status as an adult.

As a result, he begins to act like someone he is not or someone he does not need to be ashamed of. His resentment of his own existence is palpable.

Willie travels to London with the hope of discovering himself. He studies literature and aspires to be a writer in order to establish himself. Initially, he feels insecure during his stay in London. He is unable to make significant progress in his education or his personal life. Meanwhile, his sister also travels to the campus and stays in a tiny hotel nearby. She pays Willie daily visits and prepares lunch for him. She would ask him a series of questions about his degree and his plans for the future. Willie would consider recounting a thousand horrific incidents at this point, but he would remain silent in order to avoid discussing his life in London and the impacts of colonialism.

"I don't know where I am going. I am just letting the days go by. I don't like the place that is waiting for me at home for the past two and a half years I have lived like a freeman. I don't like the idea of marrying someone like Sarojini. The trouble is I don't know how to go out and get a girl on my own. No one trained me in that. I am like my poor father. All men should train their sons in the art of seduction. Nobody talked about sex and seduction at home, but I discover now that it is a fundamental skill all men should be trained in..." (Half a Life, 117-118). Another factor that made Willie feel out of place is the sexual degradation that he is subjected to. He considers leaving London after seeing a prostitute to whom he had given a half-allowance, going out with someone. "Humiliation like this waits me here. I must follow Percy. I must leave" (121).

Willie is waiting for a response to a novel he has written while fretting about not having a secured identity in London. He meets Ana for publishing his book. He recognizes after completing his school that he will not be able to obtain a job in London. As a result, Willie and Ana make the decision to leave England for Africa.

Willie has a new obstacle in Africa which is learning a new language. He is in the dilemma of choosing a language to learn. When he was at the home of one of Ana's acquaintances he keeps telling Ana, "I am not staying here. I am leaving I will spend a few nights here and then I will find some way of going away" (133). Ana enrolls herself in a language school of England in order to overcome her feelings of alienation in London. Willie, as a new writer, recognizes the importance of language, as a writer's basic survival is based on it. Ana's explanation to her family demonstrates the importance of language in diaspora culture, "I wanted to break out of the Portuguese language; I feel it was that had made my grandfather such a limited man. He had no true idea of the world. And I didn't want to learn South African English, which is what people learn here. I wanted to learn English, English" (154, 155).

The sorrow of losing one's tongue is something Naipaul understands well. Immigration poses a threat to the preservation of cultural heritage. An immigrant makes valiant efforts to maintain his culture, food, and language. In the colonized's mind, language plays a significant role. "Existence is meaningless unless it is expressed appropriately and language is the tool and power of expression, displacement brings dispossession of this power which aggravates the sense of alienation" (Asha Choubey, 232).

Willie is recognized and referred as Ana's London man in South Africa. Soon after, he encounters Correia, who urges Willie to join in the book industry. Willie confesses, "I found myself amazed at how little I knew of the modern world and amazed at the same time at the ease with which Correia was picking his way through it." (171). After settling in Africa, Willie learns that losing one's identity is a serious problem. Both the colonizers and the colonized are affected by this unavoidable aspects of colonialism. On a rainy day, after eighteen years, in Africa, he resolves to stop being a fool himself. He wants to break free from being Ana's London man which is imposed onto him without his consent. He has made up his mind that he will not make any more mistakes. He tells Ana resolutely, "I mean I've given you eighteen years. I can't give you any more. I can't give you any more. I can't live your life any more. I want to live my own." (136). Ana is in a similar circumstance, therefore she may easily let him leave the marriage if he desires. She tells Willie, "Perhaps, it wasn't really my life either" (128).

Willie has no sense of belonging in Africa after spending nearly two decades there. He is "nowhere," and he feels like a "nobody." In London, he was known as Willie Chandran, a writer, but in Africa, he is simply known as Willie Chandran "Ana's London Man" (145). His solace is that he discovers an ant affinity with him, which is ironic, "half-and-half friends" (169) in this "half-and-half world" (160). Willie's sense of loss, uncertainty, and dereliction is shared by the exiled people. He has an epiphany and realizes that by using the "other's" perspective, he becomes even more stuck. Furthermore, because of the loss of home language, immigrants develop a sense of not belonging in a new and strange world.

In his Nobel Lecture, Naipaul describes how it felt to lose his native tongue as a result of migration, "as English penetrated, we began to lose our languages" (Two Worlds 483). A man's identity is expressed through his language. Losing one's native language also means losing one's native culture and identity. Willie is continuously moving from one place to another. He loses his home language while migrating.

Finally, he decides to face the future with courage. As a result, he moves from Africa to Germany, where his sister resides. In Germany, he encounters young Tamil boys on the street, raising money for the Great Tamil War. He realizes something when he sees them, "they have proclaimed who they are and they are risking everything for it. I have been hiding from myself. I have risked nothing. And now the best part of my life is over" (138).

To summarize, Willie's struggle for identity is clear throughout the narrative. He moves from one location to another, attempting to find a home. Ironically, he cannot locate a place to call home. Furthermore, he tries to bury his genuine identity or who here ally is while searching for an identity. He discovers after a half-life that he could not find a place for himself anywhere.

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THE INCONVENIENCE OF THE BOURGEOISIE IN THE MODERN CORPORATE AMERICAN WORLD IN GEORGE SAUNDERS' "PASTORALIA" AND "SEA OAK"

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Abstract

The goal of this research paper is to examine the short stories "Pastoralia" and "Sea Oak" by George Saunders, which rail against the blatant brutality of corporate America and advocate the advancement of the working class and the middle class. Despite the darkness of his writing, he manages to give his characters a sense of humanity and tenacity, which offers them a glimmer of hope for the future. The main characters' predicament is so horrible and their labour is so humiliating because of the obligations placed upon them, yet they do it since it is what that keeps them alive. They are driven to continue in their careers because of their dire financial situation. In addition to capturing the suffering and absurdity of the American service industry, the stories uphold the dignity of those who work there.

Keywords: Working Class, Sacrifice, Humiliation, Consumer Culture.

In a financial website "Investopedia", Will Kenton described working class as, "Working class is a socioeconomic term used to describe persons in a social class marked by jobs that provide low pay, require limited skill, or physical labour" (1). These individuals are employed in service-related fields and do not possess a bachelor's degree. The working class primarily works in service-related industries such as restaurants, auto mechanics, construction, and other industries. Linkon, in Georgetown University's website on Working-Class Perspectives says, "a focus on work, accurate representation of the material and social conditions of working-class life, validation of working-class culture, resistance to existing power structures, rejection or critique of the standard middle-class narrative of upward mobility" (1). In the article "Electric Lit", Tobias Carroll says,

Writing is about capturing the rhythms of real and everyday life, which means questions about class were often at the forefront or in the undercurrent of great fiction, like Charles Dickens, George Eliot and Émile Zola all explored the dynamics of class in their work, in the first half of the 20th century, American fiction abounded with sharply recorded observations about money and society from acclaimed writers such as Zora Neale Hurston, John Steinbeck, Margaret Mitchell, W. E. B. DuBois, Betty Smith, Lin Yutang, and Richard Wright. (1)

An American author, George Saunders has written novels, essays, novellas, children's books, and short stories. The ridiculousness of corporate culture, materialism, and the role of the media are common themes in his works. In addition, his work poses philosophical and moral issues. Saunders has been compared to Kurt Vonnegut, whose work he has found inspirational because of the tragicomic quality of his writing. His writing is a vein of satire reminiscent of Pynchon, Kurt Vonnegut, and Carl Hiaasen. *The Literary Review* commends him for his vivid style, timed with captivating deliberateness and laden with figurative potential.

The short stories "Pastoralia" and "Sea Oak" from *Pastoralia*, which highlight the struggles of the working class in American are the primary subjects of this essay. It lists the hardships faced by the poor and illustrates how each person must give up a little of his/her humanity to exist. The short story narrators have odd jobs; occasionally, they even take on ludicrous roles like those of a living caveman, a large, foolish impostor, or a male stripper. The anecdotes illustrate how capitalists treat the working class unfairly. The main characters' circumstances and predicament are incredibly pathetic due to the obligations placed upon them. They continue with their humiliating nature of job because of their dire financial situations. In the journal "Monthly Labour Review", December 2019 Robert Kent says, "Income inequality is only one of the many predicaments faced by American workers. The authors also show that, despite their best effort and determination, these workers have been unable to break class barriers and achieve upward mobility. In general, the class in which most Americans are born is likely the class in which they will remain for the duration of their lives" (2).

In the first short story, "Pastoralia", the unnamed narrator plays the protagonist, who lives in an exhibit park and is tasked with entertaining the tourists by pretending to be a prehistoric stone age man and by skinning a dead goat with a sharp flint that the park authorities provide him every day. He must avoid speaking in English inside the cave. His sick son, Nelson and his wife depend on him for their living. "Nelson is six. Three months ago, his muscles stiffened up. The medicine they put him on to loosen his muscles did somewhat loosen them, but it caused his muscle to swell. Otherwise, he is fine, only he's stiff and swollen and it hurts when he moves" (17).

The narrator is not happy with Janet's performance because she does not give her best. She speaks in English while acting in the cave which is very annoying when visitors suddenly poke their heads inside. She is a middle-aged woman who acts with the narrator in the cave. "She told a guy where you folks pooped. In English. In the cave" (20). The main character is aware of the importance of his employment, and to meet the park owners' standards, he always gives his all. On the other side, Janet is careless with her work, and the park administration as well as visitors have lodged numerous complaints against her. "Greg

Nordstrom the manager of the park has the evidence with documentation he says he had read about Janet talking in English in Client Vignette Evaluation” (20).

The narrator also removes the trash bags, the bag from the bottom of the sleek metal hole where Janet stores her used feminine items, and the human refuse bags. By doing this, he receives an additional sixty dollars each month and he can move out of the cave, meet people outside, and engage in casual conversation with them. “This morning I empty our Human Refuse Bags and the trash bag and the bag from the bottom of the sleek metal hole where Janet puts her used feminine items. For this I get an extra sixty a month. Plus, it’s always nice to get out of the cave” (9). When the narrator and Janet were working together in the cave, the narrator constantly caution Janet to exercise caution because the authorities are watching everything they do. At first, Janet takes the warning seriously and starts working perfectly, but later, she again becomes reticent, which infuriates the narrator.

After several days went by, the Park Manager, Greg Nordstrom, who oversees the area, pokes his head inside the cave and invites the narrator to brunch. They talk about Janet’s horrible performance. The narrator does not complain to Greg about her in order to save her, even though he is aware that trying to save Janet might put his job in grave danger. He starts telling Greg the truth about her. Later, he sends Janet a message informing her of what he has told Greg and emphasizes the need for her to work honestly.

Janet is kicked out of the park as her performance falls short of expectations. Linda takes over Janet’s position. Linda is an honest worker who executes her job well. She even makes her eyebrows look like a real cavewoman. The narrator held her hand with a smile but she scowls back at him because cave dwellers never shake hands. She squats and pretends to capture and consume little bugs as soon as she enters the cave. The narrator’s financial situation makes crucial for him to start performing at the top of his game. However, nobody looks inside to see their performance.

The second short story, “Sea Oak”, is written in a very different way and centers around the pitiful circumstances of the anonymous protagonist. Saunders conveys a dismal outlook on the state of futuristic society in this novel. Although the narrator’s work is extremely demeaning, he is driven to do it because of his lack of money. The story opens at Joysticks’ place of employment, where he works as a waiter and a stripper. His pay check depends on the tips that his customers leave.

The protagonist and his six siblings reside in the Sea Oak housing development. His sister Min and her son Troy, his cousin Jade and her kid Mac, and Aunt Bernie, the family’s mediator and the eldest who is single, have devoted their lives to the family’s well-being. “At SEA OAK there’s no sea and no oak, just a hundred subsidized apartment and a rear

view of FedEx” (93). The people in this novel have grown numb to sorrow and adversity. The two sisters have no job because they are studying for their GED and are taking care of their kids. They are content with their possessions and have no desire to advance in life. They smoke, watch TV and buy canned food for their lunch.

Aunt Bernie and the narrator are putting in a lot of effort to improve the family’s situation. Unexpectedly, one day, during a home invasion, Aunt Bernie passes away. The plot dramatically changes once Aunt Bernie passes away. Father Brian informs the family that someone has vandalized Bernie’s grave, and the narrator becomes extremely concerned about what would have happened to Bernie’s lifeless body. Upon his return, he finds the door wide open. Min and Jade are gazing at the rocking chair. “At home the door’s wide open. Min and Jade are sitting very still on the couch, babies in their laps, staring at the rocking chair, and in the rocking, chair is Bernie. Bernie’s body” (112).

To his surprise, he notices Aunt Bernie seated on the rocker. She was a perfectly passive figure while she was alive. She was contented with her life and pleased to be a slave to her father for the entirety of her existence. She also had no regrets about not getting married. “She never got married, because Grandpa needed her to keep house after Grandma died. Then he left all his money to a woman none of us had ever heard of, but she’s not bitter. Sometimes she is not bitter it gets on my nerves” (95).

Aunt Bernie’s character drastically changes after she comes home from the grave. She regrets forhaving wasted her life. She advises the family to increase the income. She gives Jade instructions to work, to wear nice and attractive clothes, to stop smoking, to learn how to cook, to stop spending money on canned goods, and to babysit. “My life was shit! I was never even up in a freaking plane. But that was that life and this is this life. . . Bernie shouts. You ever been in grave? It sucks so bad! You regret all the things you never did. You little bitches are gonna have a bad time in the grave unless you get on the stick, believe me!” (113, 115).

The following day, she yells loudly, telling Jade to get ready for work, Min to make breakfast at home, and the narrator to do everything in his power to obtain more money. With her parts falling off and her body growing too feeble, Aunt Bernie does not have much time left. The family is initially offended by Aunt Bernie’s actions, but they eventually come to understand the truth. The TV broke, the refrigerator toppled over, and Bernie’s parts were all over the living room like she has been shot out of a cannon. She calls the narrator and tells him put a stone on her tomb. “I’ve got a place picked out at a complex called Swan’s Glen. They’ve never had a shooting and the public school is great and every Saturday they have a nature walk for kids behind the clubhouse” (125).

The narrator assured her that he would provide her all she wants. After packing her parts in a heavy sack, he returns to the grave, buries her, and prays that she would never return. Following his return, the family moves to a better location where there would be no shooting; they start living a peaceful and thankful life, always appreciative of Aunt Bernie. They start working hard. For every \$100 the author makes, he sets aside \$5 for Bernie's stone. "For every hundred bucks I make, I set aside five for Bernie's stone. Bernie Kowalski, it's going to say: BELOVED AUNT" (124).

The working class people in these two short stories above; despite their best efforts, are unable to realize their goals and fulfil their desires. To overcome their struggles and provide their families with good finances, the characters are compelled to resolutely withhold their dissatisfaction with the embarrassing work. It addresses the insanity of the consumerist society of today, the role of mass media, and the ridiculousness of the materialistic world. Readers can easily grasp the prevalence of American consumer culture by looking at the traits of Aunt Bernie and the protagonists of these two short stories. For their family's well-being, the characters were willing to endure all hardships. As a result, these two short stories effectively capture the state of the oppressed working class in contemporary American culture.

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THE BANALITY OF EVIL IN ROBERT CORMIER'S *I AM THE CHEESE*

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Abstract

Administrative or institutional evils refers to the actions or decisions made by those in officially sanctioned positions of authority that cause harm, suffering, or injustice, either intentionally or as a result of neglect or disregard for the consequences of their actions. One of its key features is that individuals performing everyday routinized professional tasks may partake in wrongdoings without even realizing the harms caused. This paper aims to examine the pervasiveness of these passive evils and the lack of moral agency, specifically in the context of bureaucratic organizations in Robert Cormier's Young Adult novel, *I am the Cheese* (1977). Cormier's fictional world is seen through this lens to analyse the kind of implacable systems his characters are pitted against and the organizational conditions that restrain them from being active moral agents and justify their inaction to the point of normality or banality.

Keywords: Institutional Evil, Banality of Evil, Bureaucracy, Functionary, Moral Agency, Diffusion of Responsibility.

From the 1930s to the 1960s, books for children and adolescents mainly prioritized happy endings, aiming to comfort them. However, in the late 1960s, a new trend, known as the "Problem novel" or "New Realism," emerged, addressing serious issues like suicide, drug abuse, and divorce. Despite dealing with heavier themes, these stories continued to end with a positive or hopeful note, maintaining the two unwritten rules of focusing on the protagonist's personal development and ensuring optimistic endings (Keeley 30). When American YA fiction writer, Robert Cormier tried his hand at writing for teenagers, he broke this mold. In 1974, when he published his first YA novel, *The Chocolate War*, it departed from the standard models, breaking some of the most fundamental taboos of this genre. It broke the happy ending rule and offered neither a solution nor a way of coping with the problem that the protagonist faced. Rather than focusing on the protagonist's personal issues, he directed his attention towards the engagement with Ideological State Apparatuses in the form of social institutions such as educational environments, government, religion, political beliefs and ideologies, that possess a self-sustaining interest in maintaining their supremacy over individuals.

In *The Chocolate War*, this institution is a private school. In *I Am the Cheese* (1977), Cormier delves into the shadowy realm of a corrupt government entwined with organized crime and the interconnected functioning of these entities to serve their own interests. This

novel is inspired by a newspaper article about the emerging Witness Protection Program, a covert operation of the U.S. government providing new identities to witnesses against powerful criminals during the 1970s, making it seem more fictional than factual.

The story revolves around Adam Farmer and his family who have entered the Witness Protection Program after his father, a reporter, testified against the Federal government and criminal organizations. Despite evading multiple attempts to expose their identities through the years, Adam's parents are murdered in a car crash. Adam survives and is taken to a government-run facility, where he is interrogated annually by Brint, who appears to be his therapist but is a person working for an undisclosed agency. For three years, his mission has been to determine whether Adam possesses more knowledge of his father's testimony or the identity of his parents' killer. Failing to extract any useful information for his organization, Brint ends his last session with Adam recommending that he be 'terminated'.

This paper will mainly examine the character of Brint in the novel as a representative of the cold, faceless system that he works for and the kind of relationship dynamic he shares with his "subject", Adam Farmer. It goes on to show that despite his harmful actions, he is merely a functionary, performing tasks that is professionally expected of him for the organization he is a part of. Exploring these aspects of the novel will help in highlighting the issue of passive evil and lack of moral agency in an individual, specifically in the context of large bureaucratic settings.

In the self-regulatory process of moral agency, people establish certain norms that act as guidelines and deterrents for behaviour. People monitor their behaviour and the settings or circumstances in which it occurs, assess it in light of their values, and govern their actions by the consequences they apply to themselves (Bandura 5). They do things that give them a sense of gratification and self-worth, and avoid doing things that breach their moral code. Moral agents therefore, are people who can discern right from wrong and act accordingly. Despite knowing the appropriate response to institutional wrongdoings, one often struggles to find the agency to act on that knowledge in real-world situations. Donald Menzel terms the complete lack of this agency in individuals as a condition called "morally mute manager", a metaphor invoked to describe administrators and other functionaries in an institution or organization who allow themselves to be seduced by a sense of duty. They are neither moral nor immoral. They become "moral mutes" (6). One basic outcome of the absence of moral agency is the apathy that is maintained by people observing unjust behaviour or in other words, the failure to respond properly to everyday acts of cruelty and the moral shortcomings occurring within the ranks of administrators and officials. The

conditions that either limit moral agency or rationalize inaction are what lie at the core the banality of passive evils.

Out of all the villainous characters that Cormier has crafted to represent his ideas on evil, Brint in *I am the Cheese* embodies the concept of moral ambiguity in the most striking manner. He appears as the therapist or psychiatrist who questions Adam about his past during interrogations. Initially, he appears compassionate and friendly, giving the impression that he might be trying to help Adam. However, as the story progresses, the reader becomes aware of his true motives – his cold and calculating side emerges as the representative of the oppressive system he works for. He embodies the passive evil that arises from individuals blindly following the immoral directives of an organization.

Clad in a sharp suit and tie, Brint stands out from the other doctors and nurses in the facility as a drone who never questions the institution he works for, even though it engages in psychological torture of its subjects and would not hesitate to even kill a child. If it were not for the protocols followed by the advisory board of his organization, he would have recommended ending Adam's life much earlier. He lacks any sympathy for him or any of his other subjects and has no qualms about his job. He takes his profession very seriously and is always on call and ready to serve even during unconventional hours. As an ideal functionary, he carries out his duties without question. Brint is the ultimate 'organization man', a concept that was developed by William Hollingsworth Whyte in the mid-1950s. Such individuals do not simply work for the organization, they belong to it. They willingly submit their individualism to the institutional norms and requirements and let their individuality and sometimes even their personal life be dominated by the system they serve.

Brint's characterisation can be paralleled with what political philosopher Hannah Arendt's described in her book *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil* (1963), which remains a fascinatingly important work, diving deeply into the systems that influence or control our moral standards and subsequent behaviour. It is not only applicable to the grave atrocities done under totalitarianism, but also to the minor routinized wrongdoings committed by individuals like Brint on a daily basis in contemporary society which cannot be easily discerned. The book is an account of Adolf Eichmann's trial, a German Nazi official, who was one of the major organisers behind the Holocaust. He carried out his murderous duties with calm precision not because of an awful, distorted worldview, but because he had so thoroughly internalised the Nazi regime's beliefs that he merely wanted to further his career and ascend its power ladders. His acts were driven not so much by thought or reason, but by their absence. Arendt saw his case as perfectly exemplifying the banality of evil: "The trouble with Eichmann was precisely that so many were like him, and that many were neither perverted nor sadistic, they were and still are, terribly and

terrifyingly normal” (241). This concept emphasizes the idea that evil neednot necessarily have the Satanic or monstrous appearance that one may attribute to it. Instead, it is sustained when immoral ideals become normalised by unthinking ignorant people. By blurring the lines between good and evil in his works, Cormier highlights how ordinary individuals going about their daily lives become complicit agents in evil-perpetuating societal structures.

The above idea is hinted in *I am the Cheese* when an old man warns Adam on how it is a terrible world outside, how nobody is safe and one doesn't even know whom to trust anymore: "...Because you can't tell the good guys from the bad guys anymore. Nobody knows these days. Nobody" (17). This quote almost foreshadows all the events that unfold in the novel and comments on 'organization men' like Brint, who "are everywhere in the world, in schools and offices, in theatres and factories, in stores and hospitals" (73-74).

At the end of this novel, Brint's final report on Adam with its cold, bureaucratic verdict highlights that the organization's smooth functioning is made possible by the collaborative efforts of various departments or sectors. It relies on a vast network of seemingly ordinary individuals engaged in diverse professions. In such situations, one's moral control becomes weakened as personal agency is blurred by the diffusion of responsibility. Adam's termination was the result of dozens of individual actions by different people, no one of whom felt the slightest responsibility for the lethal outcome. Brint's own role is that of a technician, and his tasks are a mere formality.

The detailed report in the novel, mentions a "Medical Unit Group", whose job would have been to administer drugs and pills to various 'subjects' at the facility, a "Psychiatric Profile Plus Analyses" unit that would maintain psychiatric reports, "Department 1-R" and "Department B-2" that had annually interrogated Adam in the last two years. The agency also has an advisory committee to come up with recommendations on what can be done with the subjects post their annual interrogation sessions. There is at no point a sense of personal responsibility for, or even involvement in, the murder of another human being. Each participant merely feels like no more than a small cog in a vast, officially sanctioned institution. This is precisely the reason for the existence of maze structures of authority, systems into which deniability is already built in.

In this novel, Adam is labelled as "Subject A", and his father is referred to as "Witness #559-6". The organization deems them devoid of individual identities, stripping them of their humanity. This depersonalization influences the way events are perceived and shapes the thought processes that guide individuals like Brint in their actions. The description of tasks can also significantly alter the personal and social acceptability of certain activities. Notably, when Brint suggests Adam's 'termination,' it is a euphemistic term for his death.

The underlying nature of bureaucracies is therefore very impersonal. There is a blind adherence to committee decision-making and the super-ordinates. It is especially problematic since their expedient ethos and mindset lead one to perceive others in an objectified manner, labeling them by function and impairing one's capacity for moral conscience. It could be argued that in Brint's understanding of his profession, some emotional detachment could serve him constructive purposes. Selective detachment is an important aspect of contemporary organizations since it is a key condition for efficient involvement in bureaucratic procedures, basically ridding one of conscience and empathy (Bernard et al. 104-106, 109). His sessions with Adam, therefore, get merely reduced to wearisome routines and it becomes all too easy for Brint to slip into an indifferent, depersonalized mode to the point where people are treated like objects. This dehumanising feature of large organizations and institutions fosters a certain mentality, which Howton describes as "creating a new kind of man, one who is morally unbounded in his role as functionary" (5-6).

Administrative or institutional evil of this kind, therefore, is essentially a type of passivity by those who are morally stunted, in effect walking through the world morally unconscious. When this happens, institutional ethics lose their substantive meaning and get reduced to nothing more than a set of puppet strings used to control individuals working for a system in order to achieve a certain organizational goal or purpose. One of the most insightful thinkers on passive evil, Simone Weil, observes that the primary risk does not stem from the collective's inclination to limit the individual, but rather from the individual's inclination to sacrifice oneself within the collective (qtd. in Miles 78). In other words, the existence of administrative evil is not possible without the toleration or complicity of others.

Though it seems from Cormier's novels, that it is only his protagonists who lack the agency to do the right thing or stand up for themselves, in a sense, even Brint who is seemingly portrayed to be in control of the situation, has no agency. He is answerable to his superiors and as a person carrying out orders, he simply becomes indifferent to the content of his work while perceiving it as a mere means to an end. Mark Moore contends that bureaucratization results in a heavy dependence on procedural and substantive rules as portrayed in *I am the Cheese*, which lessens any sense of urgency about the moral character of officials (3). Brint's virtue then seems to lie in being considerate of the rules that circumscribes his actions and in demonstrating upright personal conduct in his day-to-day tasks. He therefore sees himself only as a performer of a role and not the originator of evil.

In conclusion, administrative or institutional evil holds the ability to politicize an ethos to an extent where resisting orders from higher authorities would most often only lead to alienation and condemnation from colleagues or peers, without deterring the unethical

operations of the system in the slightest. Cormier realistically portrays how the bureaucracy and its functioning continue unabated; the institution becomes impermeable to the wishes of the individuals within it. And so, there is a strong urge to engage in its functioning, or risk jeopardising the support and acceptance that one needs for survival in such a system, resulting in an individual's passivity or inaction. Since the means through which these structures operate are standardized, they ultimately prevent normal and even basically decent individuals from being active moral agents. They become incapable of individual thinking and acting with regard to what is right or wrong. The fundamental thrust idea that is projected in most of Robert Cormier's work is this moral complexity, cautioning young readers that in the actual world, the mere functioning of such systems may not always provide them with a choice, but to conform or remain as indifferent bystanders.

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INTERSECTING BOUNDARIES: DECODING HUMAN-ANIMAL HYBRIDITY AND THIRD SPACE IN CONTEMPORARY INDIAN GRAPHIC NARRATIVES

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Abstract

The study explores the portrayal of human-animal hybrid entities in contemporary Indian graphic novels, specifically in Malik Sajad's *Munnu: A Boy from Kashmir* and Rajesh Rastogi and Syamantak Gupta's *Chhotu: The Tale of Partition and Love*. Analysing characters with human bodies and non-human faces, the research navigates an in-between state, prompting inquiries into the necessity of these prototypes for expressing oppression and trauma. Decoding the intentional use of animal metaphors, the paper incorporates Third Space and the elements of hybridity, to examine the multifaceted identity dimensions within the graphic novel medium. The portrayed human-animal hybrids become a lens for understanding power dynamics, cultural interactions, and identity reconfigurations in contemporary Indian graphic narratives.

Keywords: Graphic Narratives, Human-Animal Hybridity, Third Space, Identity.

The symbiosis of human and animal analogy in visual narratives serves as a ubiquitous expression of abstract concepts deeply embedded in a variety of spheres and has integrated into the collective memory in many different cultures. To manifest this analogy, animal symbolism has served to be expedient to draw attention to the relationship, the similarities and the differences between humans and non-humans. Encircling several impressions of animality to signify various facets of human conditions, it is fundamental to observe the rendering of "human-animal" as a hybrid entity in contemporary literature and art. Through the incorporation of the postcolonial concepts of Third Space and hybridity, this paper contends that the depictions of human-animal hybrids in selected graphic novels, namely, Malik Sajad's *Munnu: A Boy From Kashmir* and Ayushi Rastogi and Varud Gupta's *Chhotu: The Tale of Partition and Love*, offer a multifaceted lens for understanding and navigating the intricate interplay of cultural, social, and political landscapes, contributing to a more profound discourse on identity and power dynamics of the world that we all exist in.

This study begins with the question: why do the authors and artists incorporate human-animal hybrids in diverse works of art, literature, and cultural productions across all ages? In his essay, "Why Look at Animals?" (2009), art historian John Berger sets up an inquiry into the interpretation of such symbolism in cultural representations as he attempts to transcribe a parallel perception of animal experience. His opinion is that "[animals] are the

objects of our ever-extending knowledge”. He establishes the human-animal interrelation as evolutionary and exclusively figurative (Berger 7). Using animal metaphors as a communication tool has served to be extremely powerful and efficient due to its automatic cognitive association and its “focus on entities to which we preferentially attend, [opening up]... the wealth of thematic and literary universals that drive narratives” (Hart and Long 62). Therefore, the ‘animal’ as a composite entity, rather than a fantastical appendage, provides enormous scope for multi-faceted, florid metaphors derived from distinct concepts of humanness which are shaped by different socio-cultural systems. To think of animals in the present where humans are slowly accepting the precarious conditions where the environmental catastrophes originate and worsen, the human-animal associations are taking a deliberate direction towards coming closer to one another to exist as an interwoven part of the universe in which each species is reactive to the other.

As observed in most contemporary settings, the portrayal of altered human bodies as a loss of dignity is deeply rooted in cultural shaming, othering, and dehumanisation prevalent in discourses of colonialism, racial bias, gender inequality, caste disparities, class divisions, and political domination. Philosophers like Nietzsche and Sartre, along with psychoanalysts like Freud, recognise that representations of human-to-animal metamorphoses often signify the loss of humanity, a process of becoming subhuman as individuals grapple with their bestial instincts and societal expectations of civilised behaviour. In 1980, Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari introduced the concept of “becoming-animal” as a dynamic and interactive process of human conceptual transformation into animals. This process, outlined in “A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia”, involves expansion, propagation, occupation, and contagion, leading to the continuous renegotiation of one’s identity (Deleuze and Guattari 238-239). Therefore, “becoming-animal” transcends mimicry, embodying a process of radical alteration and continuous negotiation that defies fixed identities and conventional classifications. Moreover, this conceptual transformation is particularly significant for minoritarian communities at the margins of societal power structures, offering a means of resistance and a parallel perspective on collective conditions of denial and oppression (Deleuze and Guattari 106). The juxtaposition of these theoretical perspectives offer an analytical framework to study the prototypes of human species portrayed in the selected graphic texts.

The representation of human-animal hybridity in graphic narratives, *Munnu: A Boy from Kashmir* and *Chhotu: The Tale of Partition and Love*, adds a visual dimension to these theoretical explorations. Graphic semiotics, encompassing panel placement, panel and page compositions, rhythms of sequential construction, frame transitions, spatial complexity, narrative motion, iconology, iconography, structured onomatopoeia, idealised gestures, and the comprehensive visual language itself becomes a crucial aspect of conveying the

complexities of human-animal representations (Marran 40). The aesthetic choices in graphic narratives, often characterised by distortions of the human form, facilitate a nuanced exploration of trauma, identity, and resistance, creating a visual language that transcends traditional storytelling methods.

Graphic narratives often blend diverse elements, including cultural symbols, linguistic cues, and visual representations. Such an interaction between components of a graphic narrative creates a spatio-temporal feature that goes beyond the conventional boundaries of language, allowing for the negotiation and redefinition, renewed meanings and interpretations of cultural identities within these narratives expressing social realities. The concept of Third Space, as developed by Homi K. Bhabha, involves the merging of different cultural elements to create a hybrid, ambivalent, transformative space (Bhabha 36). By considering these implications, the coalescence of visual and textual elements can generate a Third Space that provides a platform for negotiation, redefinition and reinterpretation of cultural identities and historical narratives. Therefore, visual narratives have the capacity to function as Third Spaces within which the human-animal hybridity offers a varied perspective that goes beyond conventional dichotomies and embraces the complexity and “a willingness to descend into that alien territory,... the in-between space that carries the burden of the meaning of culture” (38).

The correlation between Third Spaces and human-animal hybridity in graphic narratives constitutes a compelling argument that challenges established norms erstwhile found in traditional forms of expression and redefines cultural representations at several levels. According to Bhabha, Third Spaces serve as “hybrid sites of cultural negotiations” and resistance, disrupting traditional binary oppositions, such as human/animal, or, Self/Other (178). In the context of human-animal hybridity, this disruption is particularly relevant as it challenges preconceived notions of identity, blurring the boundaries between human and animal. Therefore, it is observed that visual narratives, constituting such hybridity, leverage Third Spaces to explore the complexities of human-animal relationships. The incorporation of hybrid characters in a narrative itself symbolises cultural symbioses, transcending any simplistic categorisations. The Third Space, thus, becomes a dynamic arena for negotiating the intricacies of identity, subverting power dynamics, and presenting an alternative perspective that defies conventional norms. Through a deliberate engagement with Third Spaces, visual narratives offer a dynamic and argumentative exploration of human-animal hybridity, inviting the readers to re-consider and re-conceptualise their understanding of these intricate relationships.

Munnu: A Boy from Kashmir and *Chhotu: The Tale of Partition and Love* both designate characters with human bodies and non-human faces, existing in an ambiguous realm that blurs ontological boundaries. These hybrid entities become vehicles for expressing and recounting narratives of oppression, trauma, violence, and subjugation that extend beyond individual experiences to encompass entire communities. According to the existing research on the representations of such kinds of human-animal hybridity in the narratives of socio-political marginalisation, the transmutations of humans and animals symbolise the complex consequences of life-threatening situations arising from violent histories, social upheaval, and geopolitical calamities (Gymnich and Costa 71).

Munnu: A Boy From Kashmir is a graphic narrative that intricately interlaces autobiographical elements with geopolitical history, shedding light on the pervasive violation of civil liberties in everyday life. Drawing parallels with Art Spiegelman's depiction of subhuman figures in his Pulitzer-winning *Maus* series, Sajad similarly crafts his central characters with animal heads on human bodies. Notably, Sajad employs a varied approach; these altered hybrids do not uniformly convey subhuman status but rather delineate their existence among other characters existing within the shared social sphere. Symbolically choosing the Kashmiri stag or hangul deer, Sajad presents a subtle representation of Kashmiri identity, emphasising its secular and regional dimensions, encompassing all natives regardless of their religious affiliations. Against a backdrop of contested geopolitical conflicts, Sajad maintains a transparent political stance, seeking to amplify the muted voices of his ethnic community amid ideological tumult, curfews, necropolitics, and media surveillance. Consequently, his characters are metaphorically labelled as an "endangered species", symbolising the loss of habitat and fundamental rights of the Kashmiri civilians due to centuries-old colonial invasions (Sajad 201, 334).

With cross-species representation, the reconstructed space encapsulated within the panels in *Munnu* occupies a unique position as a Third Space, challenging established notions about the conflicted territory since the times of imperialism and the eventual partition, offering a parallel perspective on the complex socio-political landscape of Kashmir. The spatial storyworld of this narrative resonates with Bhabha's hypothesis of the "symbolic representation" of the Third Space; he writes, it "is always occupied by ... despot, heathen, barbarian, chaos, [and] violence" (Bhabha 101). In addition, the "ambivalent repetition [of these symbols] makes them the signs of a much deeper crisis of authority" (101). Therefore, it can be established that the human-animal prototypes, existing in the visual realm, challenge readers to reconsider preconceived notions of power dynamics and engage with the narrative at a sensory level, while embodying the essence of Third Space as a space of sensory experience and cultural negotiation. It is also observed that each one associated with the graphic novel navigates these liminal or in-between spaces where cultural, political, and personal narratives converge, offering a complex and multifaceted understanding of the

human-animal hybridity and the Kashmiri experience. It seems that the diegetic (visualised) and extra-diegetic (non-visualised) space of graphic narratives conjures a corporeal portal for all the stakeholders of this novel to converge, communicate and interpret the ambiguities of such spatial representations (Lefèvre 157-158).

Likewise, *Chhotu: The Tale of Partition and Love* offers another compelling lens to examine the representation of human-animal hybrids. This graphic novel, like *Munnu*, navigates complex themes, intertwining personal narratives with historical events, specifically the partition of India. Chhotu, the central character, becomes emblematic of the human-animal hybrid, navigating the tumultuous physical and mental landscapes in the times of Partition. Apart from the protagonist, a multitude of trans-human prototypes are utilised to capture the public diversity who then inhabited Chandni Chowk of Old Delhi. Chhotu serves a student and a aloo parantha cook, and while investigating the missing alooos from his town, he gets himself involved in several complications involving corruption, crimes, local underworld in the backdrop of an impending partition of the nation (Lochan). His story unfolds as a narrative of love, loss, and identity, woven against the backdrop of a fractured nation. As an embodiment of the consequences of geopolitical turmoil, Chhotu's hybridity transcends the physical realm, symbolising the complexities of identity and the enduring impact of historical trauma on millions of common citizens like him. Therefore, Chhotu's existence, marked by a human body and a monkey's face, captures the multifaceted nature of identity during the socio-political turmoil caused by events leading to the partition. His hybridity becomes a metaphor for the fragmented identity of a nation torn apart by political decisions. The partition is not merely a historical event but a transformative force that shapes the characters' very essence, blurring the boundaries between human and animal. This representation echoes the broader impact of geopolitical events on individual and collective identities. The hybrid identities become a reflection of the postcolonial condition, where the remnants of the political past continue to influence and shape the quotidian lives.

In conclusion, the observation and study of the human-animal hybrid characters from contemporary Indian graphic narratives, such as, *Munnu: A Boy from Kashmir* and *Chhotu: The Tale of Partition and Love* open an inquiry into how the characters make readers conscious of what the graphically-rendered animal thinks and what, in thinking of it, readers are permitted to see in themselves (Chaney 145). These graphic narratives seem to serve as a platform for destabilising hierarchies, renegotiating identities, and reimagining what it means to be human in the aftermath of a macroscale structural violence. They become a conduit for empathy, allowing readers to resonate with the struggles and experiences of a hybrid character, navigating and constantly renegotiating their cultural identity in the realm of Third Space laid out by the medium of visual representation.

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IDEOLOGICAL CRITIQUE OF NEW HISTORICIST KEY CONCEPTS

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Abstract

In human sciences, there are no freestanding disciplines but only discrete structures that oftentimes buttress one another for greater signification. Foucauldian 'archeology' traces a 'discontinuity' in general linguistic thought, which is characterized primarily by the shift from understanding language as 'representation', to the study of historical changes in the forms of language. The necessity to see through the obscuring contradictions of meanings in the existing paradigm of New Historicism, arises as time changes with its effect on the discourse of history. This paper intends to revise and interpret a number of New-Historical key concepts under the lens of psychoanalysis.

Keywords: Grand Narrative, Psychoanalysis, New-Historicism, Hypertext, Ideology.

Language has been a significant object of learning ever since the symbolic system entered humanity. Humanity always thrives for effective betterment, which oftentimes requires a constant and robust quest for inquiry on its qualities and impacts on the lives and the living. Throughout the history of mankind, the perception of the world, specifically on the humanitarian aspects, has gained massive shaping, in its minute natures, ways, and limitations. It is necessary by large for the betterment of a global wellbeing, especially in the milieu when the boundaries are being radically erased and retraced beyond cultural, social and national differences. When it comes to the perception of the world, the culture acts as a lens through which one looks at the complex systemic environment and gets comprehended of the complexities, despite its ambiguous nature, gets fixed to a single observable acceptance of a meaningful perception. The question of credibility of the fixed significance arises, more often when the single accepted perception of the world meets another dissimilar or contrasting perception on the same object of observation – for instance, here, the perception on humanity and its meaning.

In the realm of critical theories, almost all the time, one finds a constant overlapping of ideas and thoughts from various schools of thought and disciplines. It has always been that way, even during the birth of Structuralism. The main influential factor that distinguishes the main axiom of each discipline is the language. Critical language is a key notion that embodies every theoretical discourse, especially in the academia. For instance – the discourse of New-Historicism consists of a number of nodes that connects and make possible the collaboration of several theoretical standpoints and presumptions. The agency of language that facilitates the articulation of complex amalgam of ideas,

opens up the possibility to get hold of the otherwise incomprehensible and inconceivable thought.

Ideology on the one hand, is some superfluous active political standpoint for a few, but on the other hand, it acts as the most necessary thing that keeps every social being functional. To look at the idea, from the perspective that the change in functionality of the ideology changes the nature of it, is to gain more clarity over its analysis. In practicality, the sociological and linguistic key terms, such as discourse, register, culture, the self, the other are build upon a specific paradigm that presupposes certain ideological axioms on which the possibility of analysis emerges.

Firstly, ideology is, by simple definition, a system of ideas or beliefs regulated by a specific, often dominating, group of people. Furthermore, it gets in touch with reality and gains the ability to alter them through culturally categorized discourses. The discursive practices, of the interpellated subjects influence the ways in which the subjects think, act and make judgmental decisions. Now, critical theories often problematize the notion of 'common sense', that nothing is common or universal when it comes to cognition and assumptions. They are in fact ideologies which have already took a material manifestation within communities and thereby influence their mode of perceptions or simply put the way they grasp reality.

Secondly, ideologies are manifested as credible way of thinking and are naturalized by several discursive practices. The discourse on identity, structures a system of values within cultures which are appropriated only through language. Cultural subjects who contest the dominant ideologies are identified and categorized as deviants. In the process of categorization, they get room to voice their resistance and in doing so, they transgress the dominate ideology with the identity they are rendered with. Now, with repeated citational processes and reiterations of the once derogated term, they now find pride in identifying themselves as deviants.

Ideological critiquing of any key concept demands the thorough analysis of its critical vocabulary. The fact that the logic of the conscious mind always lies on the logic of its ideological communication is unquestionable. The conscious mind works in a way that it produces meaning only by social interactions through semiotically recognizable groups. As all the basic psychoanalytical and post-structural premises concludes, it is the language that creates and contains all. As Eagleton puts it, "if we deprive consciousness of its semiotic, ideological content, it would have absolutely nothing left (194 *Ideology*)."

The central ideology on which the New Historicism is built up comes originally from post structuralism and to be more accurate, it from one the resultant of post

structuralism – the psychoanalysis, which inquires so deep the influence and the supremacy of language over everything social and ideological. It is the discourse of language that ordains the agency to a historicist to perceive the nuances of historical narratives with a demystifying and defamiliarizing subject. To conclude, all the key concepts of New Historicism such as ambivalence, hybridity, objective narrative, textuality of history and the historicity of the text, have a common ground of theoretical axioms on which they work in order to make things conceivable.

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NAVIGATING THE SPECTRUM OF VULNERABILITY AND RESILIENCE: AN EXPLORATION OF WOMEN'S VULNERABILITY IN ROXANE GAY'S *AN UNTAMED STATE*

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Abstract

Vulnerability Studies explores and examines human vulnerability. In literature, it analyses how the authors depict characters' emotional, physical, or societal vulnerabilities which contribute to the organic meaning of the text. Being a woman and a rape victim ends up in her double marginalization. Roxane Gay's *An Untamed State* (2014) deals with the life of a rape victim who has undergone a traumatic event that reverberated in her mind for a longer period making her more vulnerable. This research analyses how the author portrays the victim's struggle, vulnerability and its impacts, and resilience.

Keywords: Rape, Women, Vulnerability, Resilience, Trauma.

Vulnerability studies centers on a cross-discipline analysis of the idea of vulnerability and how it affects individuals, groups or communities. Various subjects, such as sociology, psychology, political science, anthropology, and cultural studies, are often involved in this area of study. When it comes to the setting of women's literature in the context of Vulnerability Studies, the hardships, experiences, and vulnerabilities that women face in their course of life are explored. This interdisciplinary topic examines the expectations of society on women, the role of genders and also the concept of power which affects the strength of women in many situations and makes them vulnerable. This study includes many literary theories like feminism, gender studies, psychoanalysis and other related areas of concern with literature for its study.

The chosen novel *An Untamed State* (2014) is the debut novel of the American author Roxane Gay which talks about the life of a rape victim named Mireille Duval Jameson who has lost her fairy tale life and has become weaker due to the traumatic event. Living in the 21st century, many women still reside in the marginalised section of society as male domination soars even now. Women undergo many difficulties inside and outside their homes starting from basic rights to sexual assaults. The vulnerable beings are made more vulnerable due to these day-to-day difficulties they face. According to 2023 Sexual Assaults Statistics conducted by Charlie Health, 50% of women have experienced sexual violence in the world. Out of these women, 34% go through Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. As a result, women become weaker both internally and externally. They are

doubly marginalised as society places the women rape victims a bit distanced from the centre. These women take decades to regain their normal state.

Roxane Gay in her book *Hunger: A Memoir of (My) Body*, discloses that at the age of twelve, she was gang raped which traumatized her for thirty years. She struggled with that event and became weak mentally. She was resilient and sprung back to what she is now, but the travel of springing back was harder than one expected. She says that she started overeating out of that stress. Gay says, “I was swallowing my secrets and making my body expand and explode. I found ways to hide in plain sight, to keep feeding a hunger that could never be satisfied — the hunger to stop hurting. I made myself bigger. I made myself safer.” (61). “I didn’t ever want to be overpowered again”, says Roxane Gay in the *People magazine*. The protagonist of the chosen novel partially represents the author herself.

Mireille Duval Jameson, the protagonist, had horrible thirteen days in her life as she was abducted and raped in demand of money. She was tormented which made her completely weak. The Commander who captivated Mireille, beat, abused and burnt her with cigarettes. The bruises and wounds made her physically vulnerable and the trauma made her psychologically weak. Mireille once had a fairy tale life as mentioned in the novel with her husband and the child, however, everything changed in a day as it happened to the author. There are several instances which made Mireille more vulnerable day by day. The first thing was that she was kept in a cage-like room where one could not even breathe or see a ray of sunlight. She remained there with all strangers who had spoiled her life and mental peace leaving her with no option to escape. She recalls, “I was in a cage, the first of many” (12). The vulnerability of Mireille began at this point.

“To be a woman is like becoming a prey, her every move watched by hungry predators. Every glance of man is a violation. No one is spared. No one. Not mother, not sister, not daughter” (163), says Devdutt Pattanaik in *The Pregnant King*. As mentioned by Pattanaik, Mireille became a prey to the men around her within the four-walled cage. She started hating being a woman as she could not stop those strangers from hurting her. She reveals, “I was a mass of desperate need. I needed to step out of my skin, abandon my body” (106). She felt like her body was being broken and became meat for the merciless animals. She was left with bruises all over her body which made her physically weaker. While spending her time all alone, doing nothing and befriending the extreme loneliness, Mireille’s hope and strength started fading away.

Sebastian, Mireille’s father is the major reason for making her so vulnerable. He never reacts to anything. He maintains his composure all the time. In the case of Mireille, this composure kills her strength. During her seizure, Mireille believes that her father

would pay the ransom and save her from the abductors. Her expectation is shattered into pieces as her father refuses to pay. Throughout the thirteen days, she pleases with her father over the phone to fulfil the abductors' demand, but his patience and composure while speaking over the phone weakens the most. Here, he fails to fulfil his duty as a father and abandons his daughter at the direst need.

Another factor which made Mireille break into pieces is the memory of her abduction. The human memory is the powerful tool that could make one the strongest or the weakest. The traumatic memory always crushes one's confidence. Roxane Gay struggled a lot with the traumatic memory of her sexual assault. She says in one of her books, "With each passing year, I became more and more disgusted with myself. I was convinced that having been raped was my fault, that I deserved it, that what happened in the woods was all a pathetic girl like me could expect. I slept less and less because when I closed my eyes, I could feel boy bodies crushing my girl body, hurting my girl body" (Gay, 82). In the case of the victim, the painful memory drives her towards self-pity which is yet another degradation of her personality.

The vulnerabilities made her feel inferior which ended up creating an utter hatred of men in Mireille's mind. Here, the men break her normality. Firstly, the Commander and Ti Pierre, the two males who had forcefully raped and overpowered her. Secondly, her father Sebastian, who was powerful yet did not do anything to save her from the abductors. She could not face her father after her seizure. She became so vulnerable that she could not face her husband and her son as she felt herself filthy. The thought of being raped and the image of the thirteen horrible days made her feeble. She felt like that she was dead. Mireille regrets, "Once upon a time, my life was a fairy tale and then I was stolen from everything I've ever loved. There is no happily ever after. After days of dying, I am dead" (207).

The Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) of the rape survivors leads to further psychological consequences. Mireille is the representation of sexually assaulted women all over the world. The ruthless behaviour of men lingered in her mind which ultimately resulted in the PTSD in her. In addition to that she developed claustrophobia as any closed room reminds her of the cage in which she was locked in. Anorexia Nervosa is a psychiatric disease in which people binge eat or remain empty. Mireille stopped eating after her seizure mentioning that she had already had more than her ability. This eating disorder is similar to that of the author's. In Gay's case, she ate a lot which she used as a coping mechanism in managing her memory that made her weak. All these medical issues made Mireille the most vulnerable being in her later part of life.

Some women usually display a sign of strong courage and resilience. Each woman's traumatic experience is different and so is the effect of her trauma. Resiliency is the spirit or power of the survivor to cope with the difficult situation and return to normalcy concerning sexual assaults. Roxane Gay has used Mireille as her mouthpiece in the novel. Gay has experienced a very bitter situation at a very early age of her life. However, she had strong resilience to overcome the situation. Though it took thirty years for her to gain self-confidence, she with utmost persistence overcame the truth and inspired many such women victims.

Distracting the minds of the victims help them come away from the trauma. Mostly such victims require an external factor to overcome such difficult situations. In Mireille's case, the memory of her husband and her son gave her hope to withstand and overcome that situation. In the later period of captivity, she had a continuous thought of going back to her fairy-tale life which gave her the strength and power to bounce back to her normal life. One of the main sources of resilience in Mireille's case was her mother-in-law, Lorraine. When Mireille was torn apart and was searching for solace, she found her. Lorraine engaged Mireille with household chores and farm activities leaving her with no space to think of her past. This proves that the rape victims should not be left alone by the family members if they want to come back to normalcy.

This study reveals that Mireille represents many women who are severely affected by traumatic experiences of sexual abuse. It is an undeniable truth that people who have suffered from sexual assaults are left with intense scars in their minds which ultimately make them vulnerable. "You may not control all the events that happen to you, but you can decide not to be reduced by them" (1), says Maya Angelou in *Letter to My Daughter*. Many women victims display an indestructible strength and the spirit of resurrection amidst all the trauma and suffering and they emerge as strong survivors. The story of Mireille Duval Jameson conveys not only the hardships but also the spirit of human beings to strive and not to yield.

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ENGLISH YOUNG ADULT FICTIONS IN INDIA: EXPLORING TRENDS, INFLUENCES, AND SOCIOCULTURAL DYNAMICS

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Abstract

The paper explores the world of English Young Adult Fiction in India by tracing its growth from niche to mainstream. Analyzing themes, genres, and authorial finesse reveals how these narratives reflect, shape, and engage young readers. From contemporary realism to fantastical journeys, novels mirror society's diversity by raising societal and cultural questions, prompting critical thinking, and fostering empathy. Book clubs, online platforms, and educational integration pave the way for a vibrant discussion and cross-cultural understanding, highlighting the genre's growing power to impact a generation.

Keywords: Youth Engagement, Social Impact, Reader Engagement Strategies, Gender Roles, Cultural Diversity, Generation Z.

Introduction

English Young Adult (YA) fiction has undergone a remarkable transformation in India, evolving from a relatively niche genre to a dynamic and influential segment within the country's literary landscape. The genre's rapid growth is emblematic of a broader trend, wherein young adult literature is capturing the imagination of readers across the globe. This research delves into the multifaceted world of English YA fiction in India, aiming to dissect its trends, examine its diverse influences, and illuminate its sociocultural implications.

The allure of YA fiction lies in its ability to resonate deeply with its target audience adolescents and young adults—by addressing their concerns, aspirations, and emotional landscapes. In the context of India, a nation rich in cultural diversity and societal intricacies, the intersection of global narratives with indigenous sensibilities within the YA genre adds layers of complexity and depth to the stories told. As young readers navigate the transition from childhood to adulthood, literature becomes a companion in their journey, reflecting both universal and culturally specific experiences.

Intricately tied to its content is the impact of YA fiction on its readers. These narratives possess the potential not only to provide solace, entertainment, and education, but also to shape attitudes, challenge norms, and encourage critical thinking. Furthermore, the genre's increasing popularity has given rise to a vibrant ecosystem, with book clubs, online

forums, and literary festivals serving as platforms for discussions, debates, and the fostering of literary communities.

The emergence and growth of English Young Adult (YA) fiction in India has drawn attention from scholars, literary critics, and educators who seek to comprehend its evolution, influences, and implications within the cultural and sociocultural context of the nation. While the YA genre has its roots in Western literature, it has rapidly taken root in India, reflecting the shifting dynamics of a youth-driven literary landscape.

The YA genre's introduction to Indian readership coincides with a broader trend of globalization, where cultural boundaries blur and diverse narratives intertwine. Rao (2017) notes that English YA fiction serves as a conduit for both global and local voices, with narratives that resonate across borders while retaining elements of Indianness. This fusion of the global and the local reflects the complexity of modern Indian society, where traditional values coexist with the aspirations of a young, interconnected generation.

Scholars like Chakraborty (2019) emphasize that Indian YA fiction often grapples with themes pertinent to the nation's youth, ranging from identity crises in a multicultural society to the exploration of societal norms and familial expectations. This genre provides an avenue for adolescents and young adults to explore their own complexities, confront societal challenges, and navigate personal growth—a journey both relatable and aspirational.

Furthermore, the rise of Indian YA authors like Anuja Chauhan, Paro Anand, and Chetan Bhagat underscores the genre's evolution. These authors, as explored by Patel (2020), craft narratives that straddle the fine line between entertainment and social commentary, thus resonating with young readers while subtly raising awareness about critical issues. The thematic range spans from romance and coming-of-age stories to dystopian worlds, each serving as a mirror to the multifaceted concerns of India's youth.

It is noteworthy that the impact of English YA fiction extends beyond entertainment. Malhotra (2018) discusses its role in addressing gaps in education, offering stories that reflect the realities of contemporary India. The genre's accessibility and relevance have led to its integration into educational curriculums and library programs, harnessing its potential to foster critical thinking and cultural awareness.

The literature review reflects the rich tapestry of English YA fiction in India, highlighting its evolution from a Western import to a genre intertwined with the cultural fabric of the nation. The interplay of global influences and indigenous narratives, coupled with its impact on societal discourse and education, underscores its significance in shaping the perspectives and aspirations of India's youth.

The various aspects of Young Adult fictions are dealing with:

Empowerment and Representation

The significance of diverse characters and narratives in English Young Adult (YA) fiction cannot be understated. Authors have embarked on a crucial endeavor to provide representation that promotes inclusivity and reflects the multifaceted identity of India's youth. This commitment to diversity extends beyond mere tokenism; it aims to reshape societal narratives. Authors like Anuja Chauhan and Paro Anand have crafted protagonists that defy conventional norms and challenge stereotypes. By portraying characters of various genders, backgrounds, and abilities, these authors empower young readers to embrace their own individuality and navigate societal expectations with resilience.

Socioeconomic Accessibility and Digital Influences

The digital era has transformed the accessibility landscape for English YA fiction, transcending geographical and socioeconomic limitations. E-books, digital platforms, and audiobooks have democratized access, allowing young readers from diverse backgrounds to engage with literature that may have been otherwise out of reach. Moreover, the role of social media in fostering literary communities cannot be overlooked. Online forums and platforms have evolved into spaces where readers engage in vibrant discussions, fan-driven content creation, and virtual book clubs. These platforms not only democratize literary discussions but also blur the lines between author and reader, providing an interactive dimension to the reading experience.

Cultural Capital and Education

The integration of English YA fiction into educational settings has far-reaching implications for literacy development and critical thinking among students. By introducing narratives that resonate with contemporary issues, educators harness the genre's potential to stimulate discussions on identity, diversity, and societal challenges. Beyond fostering critical thinking, these narratives also play a pivotal role in promoting cross-cultural understanding. By exposing students to diverse perspectives and narratives, the genre contributes to the cultivation of empathy and a broader worldview.

Literary Communities and Reading Habits

The rise of literary communities dedicated to English YA fiction has transformed the landscape of reading habits among India's youth. Book clubs, both physical and virtual, offer a sense of camaraderie and shared passion for literature. Additionally, literary festivals have embraced YA fiction as an essential part of their programs, attracting young readers and providing them with direct access to authors and discussions. These spaces foster not only a deeper appreciation for the genre but also a sense of belonging within a literary community.

International Influence and Indigenization

English YA fiction in India exists at the intersection of international trends and local storytelling. Authors navigate a delicate balance between adhering to global conventions and preserving cultural authenticity. While global themes and tropes are often present, they are seamlessly interwoven with indigenous elements such as mythology, folklore, and cultural nuances. This indigenization not only gives rise to uniquely Indian narratives but also allows young readers to explore their own identity within a globalized context.

Potential for Social Change

Beyond entertainment, English YA fiction in India has demonstrated a remarkable potential for sparking social change. Authors adeptly address sensitive issues, from mental health to social justice, presenting young readers with nuanced perspectives. Novels like *When Morning Comes* by Arushi Raina, which discusses the Soweto Uprising, or *Moojag and the Autocop* by Anitha Balachandran, which explores environmental activism, have initiated dialogues among Indian youth and prompted them to become agents of change. The multifaceted discussions surrounding English YA fiction in India highlight its capacity to empower, educate, and inspire the nation's youth. By embracing diverse representation, fostering literary communities, and engaging with pressing societal issues, this genre resonates more than as a mere literary phenomenon; it emerges as a force shaping the thoughts, attitudes, and actions of the next generation.

In tracing the trajectory of English Young Adult (YA) fiction in India, it becomes evident that the genre has evolved into a dynamic and influential force within the nation's literary and sociocultural landscape. Through the fusion of global narratives with indigenous sensibilities, this genre mirrors the complexities of modern Indian society, offering young readers a space to explore universal emotions while remaining grounded in their cultural context.

As authors navigate the fine line between international influences and local authenticity, English YA fiction has taken on a transformative role. It has transcended the boundaries of entertainment to become a powerful tool for representation, empowerment, and social change. Diverse characters challenge stereotypes, allowing readers to embrace individuality and question societal norms. Moreover, the genre's resonance with contemporary issues encourages critical thinking and empathy among the youth.

The accessibility of English YA fiction has been greatly enhanced by digital platforms and the rise of literary communities. These platforms democratize access and facilitate engaging discussions, creating a sense of belonging among young readers. Within educational contexts, the genre not only nurtures literacy but also sparks conversations about identity, diversity, and the challenges faced by the youth.

The potential for English YA fiction to catalyze social change is evident in the narratives that address pressing issues, from mental health to environmental activism. By offering nuanced perspectives and encouraging open dialogue, these novels motivate young readers to challenge the status quo and become advocates positive transformation.

In conclusion, English YA fiction in India transcends its role from being a mere source of entertainment to a conduit for expression, understanding, and societal progress. Its ability to reflect diverse identities, inspire critical discourse, and instigate social change solidifies its place as a catalyst for shaping the beliefs, values, and aspirations of India's young generation. As the genre continues to evolve, its potential to ignite meaningful conversations and foster a sense of agency among readers remains an enduring testament to the power of literature in molding the future.

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EXPLORING THE EVOLUTION OF SCIENCE IN KAZUO ISHIGURO'S *NEVER LET ME GO: A LITERARY ANALYSIS*

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Abstract

The research paper delves into Kazuo Ishiguro's novel, *Never Let Me Go* by examining the evolution of science and its impacts on humanity. Through the literary lens of post-humanism, the paper investigates Ishiguro's portrayal of scientific advancements, particularly human cloning done within the walls of the fictional school for cloned children at Hailsham. This analysis explores the interplay between scientific progress and its consequences on the characters' lives and relationships.

Keywords: Post-humanism, Scientific Progress, Cloning.

Hugo Gernsback, an American publisher, popularized the term "science fiction" in 1920. Science fiction became popular all over the world after World War II. Post-humanism denotes a concept that is after or beyond humanism. There are ethical ramifications in creating beings for the purpose of organ harvesting and genetic engineering.

Never Let Me Go is a novel written by Kazuo Ishiguro, a British author with Japanese ancestry. Ishiguro was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature in 2017. The novel *Never Let Me Go* examines how science and technology impact the lives and relationships of characters. It is set in the late 1990s England. The story follows the lives of three friends; Kathy, Ruth, and Tommy. Their lives have been affected by scientific advancements. These children are not like other children; rather, they are clones. At Hailsham, an English boarding school, the clones grow up together. 'Hailsham, I bet that was a beautiful place' (NLMG, 5). They are going through three very important life stages: completion, donor, and caregiver. Kathy H, the thirty-one-year-old female protagonist, tells the story from her point of view. These three friends are cloned students from the boarding school at Hailsham. In this novel, Ishiguro illustrates the scientific advancement of cloning.

Kathy shares the story of Hailsham, a peculiar boarding school. The teachers there are referred to as "guardians," but in a regular school, instructors are called teachers. Guardians, in this context, refer to those who have no parents or family. The cloned students are raised like plants in this school. The guardians teach the students not to develop any negative habits as the intention behind creating clones is to produce organ donors. You've been told about it. You're students. You're ...special. So keeping

yourselves well, keeping yourselves very healthy inside, that's much more important for each of you than it is for me (NLMG, 68).

The clones challenge the traditional boundaries between humans and non-humans. As organ donors, they are valued as products rather than being acknowledged for their distinct characteristics and individuality. "We're modelled from trash. Junkies, prostitutes, winos, tramps. Convicts may be, just so long as they aren't psychos. That's what we come from. We all know it". (NLMG, 164) These lines reveal that the clones are aware of their history and the way society perceives them.

The concept of post-humanism is evident in the novel *Never Let Me Go*. Clones are a unique kind of human being created by scientists using cutting-edge genetic techniques. They serve a special purpose of donating their organs to others. This process goes against the usual way human reproduction. It shows how technology can change what it means to be human. The clones are informed by Miss Lucy, a guardian from the boarding school that their lives are predetermined.

Your lives are set out for you. You'll become adults, then before you're old, before you're even middle-aged, you'll start to donate your vital organs. That's what each of you was created to do. You're not like the actors you watch on your videos, you're not even like me. You were brought into this world for a purpose, and your futures, all of them, have been decided. So you're not to talk that way anymore. You'll be leaving Hailsham before long, and it's not so far off, the day you'll be preparing for your first donations. (NLMG, 80)

The above lines clearly show the role of clones. Miss Lucy directly talks about clones predetermined fate. The clones also want to live like 'others'. However, their destiny and goals have already been decided. They are viewed by society just a little more than organ donors. Ishiguro draws a parallel between the clones and actors on video, suggesting that like actors playing assigned roles, the clones exist for a specific purpose. The comparison highlights how the clones are treated as tools for achieving a predetermined societal goal and how they suffer from a lack of individuality. They are made to grow and then, at a relatively young age, they are made to donate their organs. The quote of Miss Lucy shows how the existence of clones is a result of deliberate genetic manipulation, challenging the traditional idea of human reproduction.

Ishiguro alludes to the clones Tommy, Kathy, and Ruth in this quote. The river is a metaphor for how time passes and how social forces mold the clones' lives. The fast-moving water symbolizes the pressure which shapes the lives of clones to predetermined destinies. The above lines show two people desperately trying to hold onto each other

and it reflects the efforts of clones to maintain connections and relationships as per societal expectations. The clones, like the two people in the water, are destined to drift apart. It draws attention to the clones' emotional struggles as they come to terms with their predestined fate. "Which was that none of us could have babies" (NLMG, 72), reflects the controlled and manipulated nature of the clones reproductive capabilities. The inability of the clones to have babies is a result of intentional genetic engineering and societal control over their bodies. The society prioritizes the production of clones for organ donation rather than using them for the natural experience of forming families and having children. It illustrates a dehumanizing feature of post-humanism, in which people are viewed more like tools than like sentient entities. Even though Tommy, Kathy, and Ruth are clones, they are developing profoundly meaningful relationships and are feeling real human emotions.

Hailsham emphasizes the importance of creating art as a way for the clones to express their individuality. The institution where the clones are raised, marks significant emphasis on art as a form of self-expression. Art is a means for the students to express their feelings and uniqueness. The importance of art lies in giving a purpose for clones to live. It becomes a medium through which they can convey their emotions and make sense of their existence. The act of engaging in artistic endeavours challenges the dehumanizing nature of society, where they are primarily seen as organ donors. Through art, they reclaim a sense of humanity. For the clones, art becomes a means of independence. Through artistic expression, individuals in society where many aspects of their lives are controlled can exercise some degree of personal agency and create identities distinct from those assigned to them.

The concept of deferrals and Tommy's hope represent a post-humanistic perspective as they explore the desires of characters for autonomy and a chance to control their destinies within society that predetermine their roles as organ donors. The concept of deferrals, in which characters think that they can put off giving their organs if they can demonstrate that they are genuinely in love, speak for independence and the set nature of their existence. "Kathy, listen," Ruth said. "You and Tommy, you've got to try and get a deferral. If it's you two, there's got to be a chance. A real chance" (NLMG, 228).

Through the literary exploration of post-humanism, the analysis has revealed how Ishiguro challenges traditional boundaries and perceptions of what it means to be human. The narrative promotes reflection on the ethical implications of scientific progress, particularly in the realm of genetic engineering, as it shapes the destinies of the characters. The character's struggles for identity, autonomy, and meaningful connections reveal the tension between the technological advancements that shape their existence and their inner human desires for individuality, agency, and connection.

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DYSFUNCTIONAL FAMILY IN THE NOVEL *SHARP OBJECTS* BY GILLIAN FLYNN

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Abstract

Sharp Objects by Gillian Flynn presents a dysfunctional family through the protagonist Camille Preaker. The story explores the dark secrets, psychological wounds and unresolved trauma which affect the Preaker's family. The impact of this dysfunction, on the characters is skillfully explored by Flynn, who creates a mysterious background that heightens the psychological tension throughout the novel. This research paper aims to study the conflicts of dysfunctional family in the chosen novel.

Keywords: Dysfunctional Family, Psychological Wounds, Mystery, Grievance.

A dysfunctional family is one in which there is disagreement, bad behaviour, and frequent abuse or neglect of the children by one or both the parents. In some cases, children raised in these households realize that this kind of arrangement is typical. Families in dysfunction are generally the products of two adults, one of whom is usually overtly abusive and the other co-dependent. Addictions, such as substance abuse (e.g., alcohol, drugs), or occasionally an untreated mental illness, may also have an impact. Parents who are dysfunctional may be overcorrecting or imitating their own dysfunctional parents. Sometimes a dominant parent will mistreat or neglect his/her child.

There are some principle characteristics for a dysfunctional family. Some defining traits in a dysfunctional family includes lack of empathy, poor communication, emotional or physical abuse, drug or alcohol abuse, fear and unpredictability, disrespect of boundaries, control and excessive criticism. There are four common roles in a dysfunctional family. They are enabler, trouble maker, scapegoat, and the hero. When a child lives in dysfunctional family, he or she may experience isolation, behavioural disorders, low self-esteem and development of psychological state issues like anxiety or depression. Due to unhealthy parenting signs such as unrealistic expectations, conditional love, disrespect and emotional intolerance, a family becomes dysfunctional. One of the main themes of Toni Morrison's two fictional works, *Song of Solomon* and *Sula*, is dysfunctional family.

Gillian Flynn, was born on February 27, 1971, Kansas city, Missouri. She is known for her dark entertaining tales of murder. The younger of two children, Flynn grew up in Kansas City. Both of her parents were teachers. She attended North-western University and graduated from the Medill school of Journalism with a master's degree.

Though she initially intended to become a crime reporter, Flynn found herself unsuited to the intrusive nature of the job and so worked as a stringer for the periodical *U.S. News & World report* before accepting a position as a staff writer for *Entertainment Weekly* magazine. For the latter publication, she reported from film sets and she eventually became a television critic.

Dysfunction is one of the major themes in *Sharp Objects*. The author shows how dysfunction and abuse caused by parents is long ranging and far reaching. Adora's mother, Joya mistreated Adora and Adora now mistreats her own daughters and even kills one of them. This dysfunction is a result of lack of connection with one another. Adora expresses her love for her children only when they are ill. She gains prestige and attention from outside world due to her care for hersick children.

In the beginning of the novel, the protagonist Camille Preaker is physically and emotionally away from her home town. She does not even know what is happening there and also avoids the chance of getting there. Her past memories with her family are dark and are not something to cherish. She is the least favourite daughter of the wealthy cruel mother Adora and she feels she is ugly, unloved and unwanted. She feels that Adora's house is not her home.

As a child, I don't remember ever telling Adora my favourite color, or what I'd like to name my daughter when I grew up. I don't think she ever knew my favorite dish, I certainly never padded down to her room in the early-morning hours, teary from nightmares. I always feel sad for the girls that I was, because it never occurred to me that my mother might comfort me. She never told me she loved me, and I never assumed she did. She tended to me. She administrated me. Oh, yes, and one time she bought me lotion with vitamin. (Flynn 122)

As a child, Camille never felt close to her mother as Adora did not know anything about her, such as her favourite colour or cuisine. She never went to Adora for solace. Adora tried to control Camille by interfering in her reporting work. Camille is aware of her mother's abuse and control over her. When it came to Ann's murder and Natalie's disappearance, Adora used to protect herself and Camille's step- sister Amma from unnecessary questions.

Camille has not seen her half -sister since she has been in Wind Gap, which is odd for her and feels that she has been in a familyof secrecy. Adora's friend, Jackie is more influential in Camille's development than that of her mother. When Camille was in Adora's home, she would be frequently reminded of her traumatic experience and her early days with Marian. She was aware as a child that Adora and her stepfather Alan were

hypochondriac as they worried excessively and unreasonably about having a serious illness.

Camille has the habit of carving some words. Flynn does not mention any medical term for this habit. She is suppressing her pain by carving words. Her body is forcing her to do against her will.

I am a cutter, you see also a sniper, a slicer, a carver, a jabber. I am a very special case. I have a purpose. My skin, you see, screams. It's covered with words—cook, cupcake, kitty, and curls—as if a knife-wielding first-grader learned to write on my flesh. I sometimes, but only sometimes, laugh. Getting out of the bath and seeing, out of the corner of my eye, down the side of a leg: baby doll. Pulling on a sweater and, in a flash of my wrist: harmful. Why these words? Thousands of hours of therapy have yielded a few ideas from the good doctors. They are often feminine, in a Dick and Jane, pink vs. puppy dog tails sort of way. Or they're flat-out negative. Number of synonyms for anxious carved in my skin: eleven. The one thing I know for sure is that at the time, it was crucial to see these letters on me, and not just see them, but feel them. (76)

When Camille was young, she saw Adora abusing a child and later on, she believed that she is the cause of Marian's death. Adora comes from the wealthiest family in Wind Gap, and her family owned the factory that butchered hogs, which served as the town's primary employment source. She used to hide the dark truth of her pasts. She was raised by an abusive mother named Joya. Adora became pregnant with Camille when she was just a teenager, and concealed the identity of her father—a man from Kentucky. She would not talk about her father with Camille.

Adora appears self-destructive and anxious at the beginning of the book, pulling hair from her own eyelashes. She attempts to control Camille after confronting her reports on Natalie's and Ann's deaths. She is surprised and especially not happy about Camille's visit to Wind Gap. From early childhood on, Camille rejected Adora's care and guidance.

When I was a child, I remember my mother trying to prod me with ointments and oils, homemade remedies and homeopathic nonsense. I sometimes took the foul solutions, more often refused. Then Marian got sick, really sick, and Adora had more important things to do than coaxing me into swallowing wheat-germ extract. Now I had a pang: all those syrups and tablets she proffered, and I rejected. That was the last time I had her full attention as a mother. I suddenly wished I'd been easier. (74)

Camille avoided becoming a victim of Adora's cruel acts. Camille revealed the truth about Ann, Natalie, and Marian. When Amma was at home, she would always dress

nicely and be the ideal daughter, designing her dollhouse to be an exact replica of her mother's home. Her life away from home was completely different: it is full of drugs, sex, and cruel interactions with her schoolmates. She was always trying to control everyone around her. Adora attempted to harm Amma in the same way that she had hurt Marian, but Camille rescued her.

Adora, who is suspected of killing Ann and Natalie, is taken into custody after poisoning her own daughters. Camille moves to Chicago with Amma where she misses Adora and asks Camille to take care of her like Adora did. Following Amma's first friend Lily's passing in Chicago, the Wind Gap case is reopened, and Amma is found guilty and is sent to a juvenile detention center. Camille also discovers that she has flooded Adora's room in her doll house with the teeth of Natalie, Ann, and Lily.

Amma killed Ann and Natalie for getting closer to her mother, just as she had killed Lily for getting closer to her sister. Amma killed Lily; she cut her hair, pulled her teeth, stunned Lily with a rock, and strangled her. She had developed into a character that would do anything to get love, care, and attention. As a result, she is presented in the book as a brutal character.

A family is a social system and if that system is dysfunctional, the ramifications for the children growing up within it are grave. In what is known as generational drug addiction, the adult children of drug addicts and alcoholics are quietly suffering all over the world. By the time the children have grown up, dysfunction has been deeply ingrained in mind, body and brain. (Dines 56)

There are many secrets, mistreatments, lies, disguises, disputes, misconduct, untreated mental illness, as well as drug and alcohol addiction in this family. This fits the description of a dysfunctional family in every way. This dysfunction is primarily caused by the mother's toxic relationship with her daughters.

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GENDER PARADIGMS IN CHARLOTTE BRONTE'S *JANE EYRE* AND THOMAS HARDY'S *TESS OF THE D'URBERVILLES*: A COMPARISON BETWEEN EDWARD ROCHESTER AND ANGEL CLARE

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Abstract

Queen Victoria ruled England from 1837 to 1901. Coventry Patmore's phrase, 'angel in the house', describes the status as well as limitations of women during that age. Women were treated as 'second class citizens' to men. After the middle of the era, women were allowed to work but with wages less than that of men. They were controlled by the male centred cultural norms in all facets of the patriarchal society. This research paper studies the novels, *Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Bronte and *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* by Thomas Hardy to identify the gender paradigms in the novels with particular reference to the characters of Edward Rochester and Angel Clare. Edward Rochester in *Jane Eyre* is modelled as a Byronic hero and Angel in *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* is modelled as a rich gentleman. Both of them aspire to get into the institution of marriage and face challenges in the process. In their aspiration to achieve an ideal marriage, they reveal hidden gender stereotypes and the set gender paradigms of the Victorian society. This research paper uses theories of feminism to identify these paradigms and their portrayal in the select novels.

Keywords: Patriarchal Norms, Gender Inequality, Gender Stereotypes, Gender Paradigms, Feminism.

The problems of gender inequality prevail through the Victorian period in England. Gender discrimination and patriarchy that existed during the period are portrayed in the Victorian novels. Since literature mirrors the real life, characters like Edward Rochester from *Jane Eyre* and Angel Clare from *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* portray the cultural and social paradigms. This research paper identifies the issues concerning gender paradigms woven into the conventional cultural background and socio-economic status of the Victorian society as represented in the fiction.

Jane Austen begins *Pride and Prejudice* with the line 'It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife' (1). Jane Austen is a representative novelist of the Romantic era. The class order implied in the line, continues in the Victorian era also. Jane Austen expresses that a man who is wealthy must have a wife. Rochester and Angel Clare are wealthy men and they propose marriage to Jane and Tess respectively. Though men as well as women seek marriage as a prospective future endeavor, it does not mean the same to both the parties. To a man,

marriage is a mode of acquiring emotional support, social company and a caretaker whereas to a woman, marriage is the only future prospect whether or not it offers any of the above.

It is evident that in the Victorian society a man chooses his wife. In contrast if a woman exhibits her desire to marry a man the social structure questions and she may be labeled a characterless woman by the patriarchy society. When it concerns the matter of choosing attachment or affection, through social formalities and proper marriage, a woman's role is supposed to be passive. Any woman who openly or freely acknowledges or expresses desire, attachment or affection will be dubbed characterless or unwomanly, unfeminine and hence undesirable. The passivity of a woman is expected as the ideal feminine behaviour.

The Church invites monogamy. A married man cannot have another wife unless his wife dies. The Church rejects extramarital affairs and second marriages. If a man wants to get a divorce, he should get it through the parliament by the passing of an act. Rochester's desire to marry and have a relationship, is very ardent, but he does not pursue divorce. This seems to imply a stigma around divorce or religious or cultural objections at that time. The very word, divorce is nowhere mentioned in the novel. Rochester, despite his proclaimed pursuit of rightness and honor in all that he does, proceeds with numerous casual affairs including the one with Celine Varens. It is ironic that Rochester criticizes Celine Varens's character, when he narrates Adele Varens's background to Jane Eyre.

The concept of chastity is expected as an unquestionable attribute in women of the Victorian society. A Victorian man of the higher class may have casual sexual affairs with other women. Though his character is criticized sometimes he would never be condemned as a person. A woman on the other hand had to be extremely scrupulous in being 'chaste'. In estimating the character of a woman by the patriarchal standards, class also comes to play.

Women in the Victorian age attach their husband's name in the place of father's name after marriage. Women consider that as their right while the husband considers it a matter of pride. This is however denied to Bertha Mason, Rochester's wife. Rochester considers Jane his wife. So, he calls Jane as Mrs. Rochester or Jane Rochester even before marriage. "It is Jane Eyre, sir." "Soon to be Jane Rochester" he added;" (Bronte, 217). However, he does not call his first wife Bertha Rochester instead he calls her Bertha Mason. He does not give the authority or status to Bertha Mason as his wife.

Rochester has casual affairs with Celine Varens and other women even though his wife Bertha Mason is alive. He flirts with Blanche Ingram and everyone thinks that he would certainly marry her. He wants Jane to be his wife even when his first wife is still alive. "Never fear that I wish to lure you into error – to make you my mistress" (Eyre, 305). Similarly, Angel has an affair with a lady before his marriage but he condemns his wife as

an impure woman and spurns her. Tess had not sinned, however she is persecuted. "O Tess, forgiveness does not apply to the case! You were one person; now you are another, My God – how can forgiveness meet such a grotesque-prestidigitation as that!" (Hardy 264). He calls Izz Huett to come with him to Brazil after the marriage. After that he changes his mind. If a man is unchaste he may be considered immoral, but if a woman is unchaste she is considered impure.

Rochester married Bertha Mason for her beauty, accomplishment, family connections, wealth and social status. He then accuses her as an unchaste and immoral woman. When he met Celine Varens, Giacinta and Clara, he justifies his actions. "Yet I could not live alone; so tired the companionship of mistresses. The first I chose was Celine Varens...She had two successors: an Italian, Giacinta, and a German, Clara; both considered singularly handsome" (Bronte 312-3). Rochester was not satisfied with them. It is after all the experiences that Rochester decides to choose a virtuous woman who comes from below his class and who is unremarkable for her appearance. Finally, he selects Jane Eyre as his match.

In the novel Rochester marries Jane after the death of Bertha Mason. Likewise, Angel unites with Liza-Lu after the death of Tess. Men are allowed to choose women from any class or status they prefer. Blanche Ingram is considered the best match for Rochester and she is described as, "Recall the august yet harmonious lineaments, the Grecian neck and bust; let the round and dazzling arm be visible, and delicate hand; omit neither diamond ring nor gold bracelet; portray faithfully the attire aerial lace and glistening satin, graceful scarf and golden rose; call it 'Blanche, an accomplished lady of rank'" (Bronte, 162).

Despite these desirable attributes, Rochester rejects Blanche and woos Jane Eyre. He marries a governess who is not his equal in age, status or wealth. He marries her for her character. Ironically this does not recommend Rochester's character. Similarly, Angel rejects Mercy Chant who was considered a good match for him "The young lady was Miss Mercy Chant, the only daughter of his father's neighbour and friend, whom it was his parents' quiet hope that he might wed some day." (Hardy, 189). Angel Clare on the other hand chooses Tess who is a dairy maid from a different class as his wife. These two characters break the class order by marrying women from lower classes.

Rochester and Angel are pleasure seeking and self-centered and they want their wives to meet their expectations, so that they can fit into the construction of marriage as they wish. When they do not get the expected life, they escape from that life. Rochester identifies Bertha Mason as a mad creole and unchaste woman.

Bertha Mason is mad; and she came of a mad family; idiots and maniacs through three generations! Her mother, the Creole, was both a mad woman and a drunkard! -as I found out after I had wed the daughter; for they were silent on family secrets before. Bertha, like a dutiful child, copied her parent in both point (Bronte 260). Rochester hates Jamaica and he wants to escape from Bertha. Similarly, after realizing the true history of Tess, Angel wants of escape from Tess and he moves to Brazil "I am going to Brazil alone, Izz," said he. I have separated from my wife for personal, not voyaging, reasons. I may never live with her again" (Hardy, 308).

Rochester and Angel are intellectually stronger than Jane and Tess. Men in most of the families in the Victorian Era are more educated than women. Women are not allowed to explore various academic fields. They are allowed to study History, French, music, sewing and household works. They are not allowed to explore the fields like Anatomy, Geography and Science. In the novel *Jane Eyre*, Jane and Adele are allowed to access only one shelf of books and the rest is locked up by Rochester. "Most of the books were locked up behind glass doors; but there was one bookcase left open containing everything that could be needed in the way of elementary works, and several volumes of light literature, poetry, biography, travels, a few romance &c." (Bronte, 104). This explains that there are different fields for men and women to explore and men's fields are considered superior. Similarly in the novel *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, Angel is more educated than Tess. The age has gender discrimination in accessing education, and this can be seen in the novels.

Jane and Tess are morally and spiritually stronger than Rochester and Angel. The spirituality reflects on the morality. Jane's relationship with Helen strengthens her spirituality. Helen teaches "God is my father; God is my friend: I love Him; I believe He loves me." (Bronte,82). In the case of Rochester, his spirituality is buttressed by a woman. A woman is expected to follow all the cultural, social and religious norms. Angel, a protestant is spiritual but his spirituality does not make him take a correct decision after his marriage. His continuous temptation makes him say, "God's not in heaven: all's wrong with the world!" (Hardy, 292), but Tess's spirituality makes her forgive her husband and this signifies the power of her spirituality.

Women are expected to be virtuous. Rochester's affairs with many women like Celine Varens, Giacinta and Clara questions the morality of Rochester. He wants to marry Jane before the death of his wife which is not allowed in his society. He requests to have Jane as his wife. The important duty of a woman is considered to direct her husband in a righteous path. If a man is distracted from his moral values, he is usually not challenged. If it is a woman, she is penalized and persecuted by society. Jane declines the proposal of Rochester even though he is her only master, lover and hope for her survival at that time

which signifies her moral strength and integrity. Bronte portrays strong virtue of Jane Eyre that changes Rochester. Finally, they reunite and virtue is rewarded in the novel. Rochester has got Jane to liberate him. All seems happy for everyone but Bertha Mason. Bertha is still locked up in the attic as a mad woman. She is not accorded the space to liberate herself in the novel.

Similarly, Tess shows more moral integrity when compared to Angel. Angel is not truthful to his wife. He falters. He confesses this to Tess. "He then told her of that time... tossed about by doubt and difficulties... he plugged into eight-and-forty hours' dissipation with a stranger... I have never repeated the offence." (Hardy, 261). Tess is raped by Alec D'Urberville and bears a child, Sorrow. After getting to know Tess' past, Angel spurns Tess as an impure woman. Readers of that age would have considered Tess as a fallen woman. However Hardy in the novel, thinks beyond the time. The subtitle of this novel is "A Pure Woman Faithfully Presented". In the novel, the concept of chastity pertaining to virtue is challenged.

To conclude, the novels *Jane Eyre* and *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* are true to the age in representing the gender paradigms with reference to the characters Edward Rochester and Angel Clare. The prominent characteristics of gender paradigms occur in the conceptions of marriage, class divisions, education, relationships, spirituality and morality. This research paper brings out some of the gender paradigms from the chosen novels. These novels are rich with the portrayal of gender discrimination, and stereotypes, and have an extensive scope for gender-based analyses.

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HYPERTEXTUALITY IN KAZUO ISHIGURO'S *WHEN WE WERE ORPHANS*

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Abstract

Ishiguro's novel *When We Were Orphans* is set in the interwar period which is profoundly postmodern, and defines both personal identity and national identity through history. The story centres around the protagonist named Christopher Banks, a detective who aims to find his parents and fill the gaps between the past and the present through his childhood memories. Gerard Genette, the French structuralist casts light on the term "Hypertextuality" and he defines it as any text derived from a previous text either through simple transformation or through indirect transformation which shall be called imitation. In *When We Were Orphans*, he uses the interwar detective fiction genre which contributes to the construction of the English National Identity and here constructs the 'notion of identity of English' at present. This paper focuses on analysing how the textual imitation is done and how the genre of interwar detective fiction is carried out through this novel.

Keywords: Hypertextuality, Genre Reconfiguration, Imitation, Unreliability.

Kazuo Ishiguro, a famous contemporary British novelist, was born in Nagasaki, Japan in 1954. At the age of five, he moved to England with his family as his father was offered a temporary job in the National Institute of Oceanography. Ishiguro's family wanted to go back to Japan but that did not happen. At home, his family followed Japanese culture. He got his education from English schools. Sometimes he felt that his attachment towards the Japanese culture was weakened by the English culture. Hence, he says, "Japan was a very strong place for me because I always believed I would eventually return there, but as it turned out, I never went back. This very important place called Japan which was a mixture of memory, speculation, and imagination was fading with every year that went by" (Krider 150).

Ishiguro's first novel was published in the year 1982, and was included in the Granta's list of Best of Young British Novelists in the year 1983. He took English Citizenship and so he considers himself as the international writer: "because of not knowing Japan very well, I was forced to write in a more international way... I had no obvious social role, because I wasn't a very English Englishman, and I wasn't a very Japanese Japanese either" (Oe 58). He was tucked in between two cultures and hence he deals with the issues of memory, trauma, nostalgia, history and national identity in his works. Wong indicates that "His own status as an immigrant in the early years of his life probably shaped emotionally exile of his

characters” (Wong 6). As Ishiguro claims himself as an international writer, critics call him a ‘displaced’ person having homeless mind.

The concept of hypertetuality was focused by Gerard Genette, the French Structuralist in his work *Palimpsests: Literature in the Second Degree* (1997). He throws light on the basic classification of textual imitation and transformation. Hypertext according to him is “any text derived from previous text either through simple transformation ... or through indirect transformation which shall label imitation” (Genette 7). He moreover says, “it is impossible to imitate a text..... one can imitate only a style: that is to say, a genre” (Genette 83). Hence, imitation is done in the form of genre. Ishiguro in most of his novels, uses various literary genres which are predominant in British Literature. In *The Remains of the day*, Ishiguro employs the country house genre, in *The Buried Giant*, he uses Arthurian Romance genre and in *When We Were Orphans* he uses interwar detective fiction genre which are much popular in British Literature.

Detective fiction emerged with Edgar Allan Poe’s short story titled “Murders in the Rue Morgue”, which was published in the year 1841. It features a detective, C. Auguste Dupin. T.S. Eliot proclaims, *The Moonstone* (1868) by Wilkie Collins’s was considered “the first and greatest of English detective novels” (Eliot 426). The renowned detective Sherlock Holmes short story series by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, published in 1887 was much popular which went to the extent of calling Doyle the father of detective fiction. Critics classified the period from 1920 to 1940 as the age of Classical detective fiction and interwar detective fiction. Detective fiction was popularised in the 20th century by famous authors like Agatha Christie and G.K. Chesterton. Todorov says, “the classical detective fiction which reached its peak between two world wars is frequently called the whodunit” (44). Thus, the detective fiction genre proposed and prospered between two wars is considered ‘The Golden age’ of Detective fiction.

Ishiguro’s Interwar detective fiction aims to draw attention to the fictionality and the constructiveness of the English Imperial Identity. Detective fiction has general characteristics such as the presence of a detective, which is mandatory as he should solve crimes in an intellectual manner rather incidental, the accused should be a normal person who is not a detective and the presence of a victim, who is among the major characters. The other themes like love, psychological and supernatural elements are not supposed to be entertained. When comes to narration, ‘fair play’ is mandatory, which means the narrator should be reliable. “A reliable narrator who will provide all the details as he or she sees them. As part of the ‘game rule’ structure, this narrator must in fairness reveal everything he knows in order for readers to arrive at a solution on their own” (Owen 78). The detective fiction genre is considered an unavoidable literary genre in British Literature.

In Ishiguro's *When We Were Orphans*, the backdrop in the Sino - Japanese war of 1930s. Christopher Banks, a famous English detective traces back the routes of his disappearing parents. The narration starts with the setting of London. The period from 1930 to 1958 is covered. Banks moves to Shanghai in between these periods to search his missing parents and to unravel the mystery. His parents lived in Shanghai International Settlements when his father worked in an opium trade company. His mother was a fierce oppose to opium trade. She campaigned against opium with the help of his Uncle Philip. After his parents' disappearance, he was sent to his aunt's house in England. He was educated at England and he became a famous detective who solves critical cases like "Mannering Case" (Ishiguro 19) and "The Roger Parker Murder" (Ishiguro 30). He was popular at that time and hence, he was invited to several social gatherings. At one gathering, he met Sarah Hemmings who was also an orphan like him and became attracted towards her. Christopher decided to investigate the mystery and so he moved to Shanghai. During that time, Sarah married Sir Cecil Medhurst, a diplomat. When he landed in Shanghai, he could find that everything had changed and China was under the attack of Japan. Everybody including the officials believed that Christopher was the 'savior' who was going to stop the war but Christopher moved to search his parents. He could not follow the clues as many years had passed. In the war place, he mistook a soldier who was Japanese to be his old friend Akira. He finally met the Yellow snake, the double agent, which was his Uncle Philip. He came to know about his parents from Uncle Philip. He learned that his father ran away with his mistress and later he died of typhoid. His mother was taken as a concubine by warlord Wang Ku and he tortured her for campaigning against opium trade. She endured all the tortured and suffered a lot for the sake of Christopher, as his education was sponsored by Wang Ku. Finally, at the mental institution at Hong Kong he met his mother after the war. As his mother could not remember him, he left her there and he moved back to England. He started to live with his adopted daughter, Jennifer.

The subversion of the interwar detective fiction genre in *When We Were Orphans* could be witnessed throughout the novel. One of the characteristic features of the detective fiction genre is a reliable narrator. Here, the narrator Christopher is unreliable. Firstly, he is unreliable because of the vagueness of his memories, that is he himself says about his memories "I am sure these impressions are not accurate, but that is how the evening remains in my mind" (Ishiguro 13). In another incident he says, "I do not remember much about" (Ishiguro 105), "My recollection is a little hazy now as to" (Ishiguro 230). He confesses that "My memory of these moments is no longer very clear. But I have a feeling it was at this point....."(Ishiguro 273). He could barely remember things, and hence he is aware of his poor memory. Secondly, there is a discrepancy between the ideas and thoughts about himself and the impressions of other people on him. This could be witnessed from an incident, when he met his school friend Osbourne. They had a conversation about their good

old days and Osbourne said “Don’t Pretend you’ve forgotten! You used to interrogate me mercilessly.....My goodness, you were such an odd bird at school” (Ishiguro 5). Christopher’s idea about himself differs from Osbourne’s idea, and Christopher expressed his idea with surprise “In fact, it has always been a puzzle to me that Osbourne should have said such a thing of me that morning, since my own memory is that I blended perfectly into English school life” (Ishiguro 7). By these words, one can understand that he is trying to prove that his memories are clearer than that of others. Thirdly, he is unreliable because of misremembering few incidents from the past. This is evident from the conversation of his mother with the health inspector. At first, the health inspector said, “Are you not ashamed, sir ? As a Christian, as an Englishman, as a man with scruples? Are you not ashamed to be in the service of such a company? Tell me, how is your conscience able to rest while you owe your existence to such ungodly wealth?” (Ishiguro 60). Later he confessed that he could not recall the conversation.

This incident is quiet evident of his unreliability. As a narrator, he ought to be aware about his narration as he has a duty to deliver truth. Through the first person narrator, Christopher Banks, Ishiguro undermines the interwar detective fiction with unreliability. British Imperial Identity is consolidated by the use of literary genres and characters for ages. Through imitation of the genres, Ishiguro deconstructs the British Imperial Identity.

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MULTICULTURALISM AND THE FEELING OF OTHERNESS OF PARSI COMMUNITY IN ROHINTON MISTRY'S *FAMILY MATTERS*

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Abstract

Rohinton Mistry is a prolific Indian-born Canadian Parsi writer. He portrays the cultural conflict experienced by the Parsis in his works. India is a land of diverse culture and ethnicity where riots can traumatize the Parsi minorities. The Parsis found it difficult to interweave with the other race which made them alienated in their host nation. The novel *Family Matters* portrays the conception of Parsis through its major characters. Cultural conflicts and their aftermaths have been explored throughout the novel. The present study focuses on the sense of otherness elucidated by Rohinton Mistry in the novel.

Keywords: Parsi, Otherness, Trauma, Culture, Minor.

Rohinton Mistry is an Indian born Canadian writer. He settled in Canada in 1975 and started writing novels. His three novels *Such a Long Journey*, *Family Matters* and *A Fine Balance* were shortlisted for the Booker Prize. His novels talk about how Parsis are treated and considered outcasts. He also portrays the trauma of Parsi generations in his works.

The Parsis came to India during the 8th century to safeguard themselves from the persecution of Muslims. They sought shelter in India, hoping that they can live peacefully with the Indians and can interweave with them like sugar in milk. Initially, the Parsis led an independent life along with Indians but their freedom was reciprocated by the departure of British people from India. So they felt it was difficult to lead their day-to-day lives in the postcolonial period. Parsis led a peaceful life during the British rule, but they suffered a lot at the hands of Indian politicians after independence. The Parsi customs and traditions seemed strange to the Indians and it became impossible for the Parsis to mingle with the Indian people. They were not considered Indian citizens and were labeled as 'outcasts' by the native Indians. This phenomenon led to the falling phase for Parsis in India. Most of the Parsis in India migrated to other countries to settle there.

Family Matters is the third novel of Rohinton Mistry, published in 2002. The setting of the book is Shiv Sena-ruled Bombay. NarimanVakeel, a 79 year-old Parsi

widower who suffer from Parkinson's disease. His past life incidents give him mental trauma and restlessness. He was residing in his apartment with his stepchildren Jal and Coomy. After he broke his ankle, he was forced to be with his biological daughter, Roxana and her husband Yezad. Yezad found difficult to balance the financial condition of the family because of the prolonged stay of Nariman. During Nariman's stay at Yezad's house, Nariman's mind was preoccupied with his past and memories of his first love, Lucy. The cultural differences between Nariman and Lucy made them to end their relationship. Being a Parsi, Nariman was powerless to marry a non-Parsi girl. He was forced to marry Yasmin, a Parsi widow with two children whom he did not love. After the marriage, he could not forget Lucy, so he used to recollect memories about his love. Soon, this habit started giving him mental trauma and he began to murmur in his sleep. His physical pain was accompanied by his mental agony. Yezad on the other hand found it problematic to move to Canada. He was fed up with Indian political dramas and the cultural differences that prevailed in India. His dreams were shattered by the immigrant officer who scolds Yezad and his family at the Canadian High Commission interview. These two central characters in the novel considered themselves failures because they were unable to cross the cultural barrier. In both of their lives, the cultural differences led to their mental restlessness.

The term 'Multiculturalism' characterizes society where people of different races, ethnicities and nationalities live together as one community. People tend to share their cultural differences in a harmonious way. Through multiculturalism, people can understand about the various cultures and their beliefs. As stated by Panchal, "Multiculturalism is the key to achieving a high degree of cultural diversity. Diversity occurs when people of different races, nationalities, religions, ethnicities and philosophies come together to form a community" (22).

Nariman loved Lucy, but he was forced to marry Yasmin, a Parsi girl. His parents did not accept Lucy as she was a non-Parsi girl. The Parsis are not allowed to marry anyone except a Parsi because they call themselves a 'pure Persian race'. They want to preserve their purity by not marrying non-Parsi people. It has been stated, "Because we are a pure Persian race, a unique contribution to this planet, and mixed marriages will destroy that... Purity is a virtue worth preserving" (482). This cultural barrier made Nariman suffer throughout his life. When Nariman's parents saw Lucy in their house, they blamed her by saying that no Parsi girl will commit a moral mistake and they were proud about their religion, "This son of mine has turned my house into a raanwada, bringing his whore over here! It's the kind of immortality that's destroying the Parsi community!" (267). He could not lead a happy married life with Yasmin as Lucy never wanted to leave his apartment. His helplessness towards Lucy and Yasmin led to

their fatal falls and their deaths. The whole incident was recollected by Nariman in his sleep which made him murmur and cry in his sleep. The failure in his love as well as in his marriage life was because of the cultural differences experienced by him. His mental pain was intolerable which makes him groan in pain. Mistry uses Nariman's mental pain to showcase the false agenda of the Indian Parsis. Nariman's parents never wanted to give up their cultural traits. They never bothered about the pain of Nariman because they wanted their family's tradition to be fulfilled by the upcoming generations.

Yezad, the central character of the novel always wanted to move to Canada, as he felt no future for Parsis in India. "The generosity of the Canadian dream makes room for everyone, for a multitude of languages and cultures and peoples. In Canada's willingness to define and redefine itself continually" (249). On the day of the interview by Canadian High Commission, his dreams were shattered by the Immigration officer. The officer was very rude to them and he even started scolding Yezad and his family by mentioning them as a nuisance to Canada. Yezad could not keep his mouth shut for a long time so he started giving his reply as,

You sir, are a rude and ignorant man, a disgrace to your and country. You have sat here abusing us, abusing Indians and India, one of the many countries your government drains of its brainpower, the brainpower that is responsible for your growth and prosperity. ... Canadian citizens, put in camps like prisoners of war- you, sir, might be expected, more than anyone else, to understand and embody the more enlightened Canadian ideals of multiculturalism. But if you are anything to go by, then Canada is a gigantic hoax. (253)

As a Parsi, Yezad could not accept India as his mother nation and wanted to move to Canada. At the same time, he was unable to control his anger towards the officer who talked poorly about the nation. Nevertheless, he never mentioned India as his own country. The feeling of 'otherness' has always been felt by Parsi people in India. As stated by Asha Kumari: "The Parsi becomes the 'other' because s/he is depicted as a traditional, even conservative, religious minded person in an Indian modernity that is supposedly secular" (484). Yezad, being the prime example, never said 'in my country' as Parsis never felt India as their country.

The cultural conflict has also been experienced by the other minority communities in India. In *Family Matters*, Husain is a Muslim who lost his whole family in Babir Masjid riot. After the loss, he could not lead a normal life and could not move on with his life. He often seemed to spend his days ideally. He shared his agony with Yezad and Mr. Kapur:

Sahab, in those riots the police were behaving like gangsters. In Muslim mohallas they were shooting their guns at innocent people. Houses were burning, neighbours came out to throw water. And the Police? Firing bullets like target practice. These guardians of the law were murdering everybody! And my poor wife and children... I couldn't even recognize them...(155)

Even the police department, which was supposed to safeguard the people targeted particular people and showed their enmity. The political restlessness in Bombay was led by the Shiv Sena party which always created turbulence by looting and burning in Muslim localities. They corrupted the police and Shiv Sena became the government. It created social unrest and discrimination among the people.

Rohinton Mistry's Parsi characters could never accept India as their second home. The sense of alienation and displacement is deeply rooted within themselves. Cultural diversity plays a vital role in their sense of alienation. The majority of the community could not maintain a healthy relationship with Parsis. Thus, the role of cultural practices and rituals play a major role in the fiction of Rohinton Mistry.

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MODERNITY CRUCIFIXES ECOLOGICAL AFFINITY: A REFLECTION ON THE FICTION OF CECELIA AHERN'S *LYREBIRD*

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Abstract

The paper elucidates the cunning human actions that make people escape from reality resulting in a miserable outcome. Cecelia Ahern, is an Irish writer whose artistic expression and mesmerizing characters provide an enchanting aroma to the readers. Her notable work, *Lyrebird* insists on the truth of life, especially the necessity of the environment and how it is inevitable in human progression. Arguably, the author defines reality and modernity to analyze the destruction of humanbeings. This paper aims to explore the crucial state of modern human nature that chops off ecological affinity which creates great havoc in lives.

Keywords: Reality, Modernity, Nature, Ecological Affinity, Environment.

The life of man is entangled mostly with environment. The environment serves as the heart of mankind. Glamour acknowledges Ahern's writings as, "An intriguing, heartfelt novel, which makes you think about the value of life". *Lyrebird* talks about the importance of overcoming the challenges of the machinery world. In some instances, humans are more self centered in their thoughts and actions. This is well portrayed by the writers through her thought provoking characters. The author, Cecelia Ahern elucidates in her novel *Lyrebird*, the reality of the human world and the natural world. The novel notices the importance of forest and picturizes modern life.

Forest life seems to be absurd but in real they follow up nature's utmost benefit. Ahern confronts in *Lyrebird* the mythical creature with environmental aroma and later enters into the aroma of a nasty world by inhibiting several changes around her. Laura was a young girl who was talented with mimicry. Her voice created an alarming effect on the forest which made the document crew turn their attention towards her. The protagonist, Laura was, "Trapped in a cottage, on the top of a mountain, cut off from the world" (*LB* 73). At the beginning she was excited to encounter the adventurous world and after a sequence, she felt the real warmth of the environment. The French sociologist and philosopher, Jean Baudrillard critically confers reality as, "no longer real, but of the order of the hyperreal and of stimulation. It is no longer a question of a false representation of reality (ideology), but of concealing the fact that the real is no longer real, and thus of saving the reality principle"(120). Aherns mythical character is not aware of the rustic modern world as she is more likely comfortable with her forest life.

In *Lyrebird*, when the protagonist stepped out of the mountain hoping for a better life, her dreams were shattered because her first encounter with society did not work well. She said, "On Saturday morning, the four sit going to the hotel restaurant for breakfast. Laura looks around, not exactly as a Martian would, but with the eyes of someone who has not been around this kind of social situation before, if ever"(LB 106). Ahern states the difficulties faced by the protagonist on her first encounter with the modern world. Laura, after leaving the forest faced the nasty world with confidence and her first encounter was in a restaurant immediately after returning to the city. Laura is shocked to see the other people and their behavior made her feel uneasy. Her eyes were popping out with fear. Here Ahern describes Laura's life in the city, where the document crew and Laura are in a restaurant and it's completely new for the mythical creature. The famous American poet, Langston Hughes in his poem "Dreams" states that,

Hold fast to dreams
For if dreams die
Life is a broken-winged bird
That cannot fly.

Hold fast to dreams
For when dreams go
Life is a barren field
Frozen with snow. (1-8)

This poem vividly pictures the necessity to hold the dreams. The dramatic change in the life of Laura could shatter her dreams. Similar to this poem, in the life of Laura, when she vacates herself from the mountain and enters the modern city she faced many challenges. The author indicates that Laura's eyes define the complete trap around her; it also depicts her inner quest to return to the mountain.

The author beautifully captures the enigmatic life of Laura, being a mysterious mythical girl. She is a girl of innocence. Ahern's writing reflects the emotions and hardships she faced while she leaves the mountain. After Laura leaves the mountain she seems to be obsessed with the environment because, "The past two mornings she has enjoyed sitting on this balcony and thinking. At least she has all the noise with fresh air. It makes it easier to handle, it seems to blow the headache away"(LB 185). While Laura is exposed to fresh air her headache seems to blow away and this shows the medicinal value of nature. The renowned playwright, William Shakespeare states in his Sonnet 18 as,

"Shall I Compare thee to a summer's day?
Thou art more lovely and more temperate
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May...."(XVIII,1,2,3).

In this sonnet, Shakespeare's vocabulary vividly pictures thorough winds. Laura also feels energetic when she thinks of the gentle breeze hitting her psyche. Humans easily get adapted to the new environment but they feel empty while they are feeling disturbed due to the course of events.

The typical human life has two faces, one is when a person hopes for a change and the other is one when the person does not change under any circumstances. Here Laura falls under the first category. She hopes for a change in her life. She says, "Change happens all the time, even on the mountain. You have to change with change" (*LB* 105). Laura rushes to make a decision but she is not aware of the external world. The fantasy realization theory explicits mental contrasting as a self-regulation strategy that leads people to utilize their expectations of reaching the desired future (Oettingen 736-753). Laura's entire life revolves around the foraging for mushrooms, chirping of birds and mimicking. The entry into the external world does not give her enough pleasure and serenity: "She forages for herbs; wild garlic is plentiful along the streams and shady areas, she picks the larger leaves and flower heads that have blossomed" (*LB* 81). Laura's life in mountain was filled with peace as she depended upon nature for her living. However, in modern life she can no more rely on environment, instead depends on the fellow humans to prepare or buy her food.

Ahern certifies that the protagonist in search of freedom lost the real freedom of her life by provoking the fellow humans. The name of the protagonist defames due to press reporters. "From anonymous mountain girl to internet superstar, it seems the pressure of her newfound fame is finally getting to Star Quest favorite Lyrebird," (*LB* 307). Though she is happy to stand high before the audience she feels disgusting due to the misleading activities of toxic humans. Laura is extremely confused about her life. Shakespeare in his play *Hamlet* connote as such, "To be, or not be, that is the question" (Act III, Scene i). The procrastination faced by Hamlet in the play *Hamlet* is faced by Ahern's character Laura. She faces struggles and humiliation throughout her life outside her world. She overcomes cruel treatment of humans and she is exposed to romantic tryst. Laura never retches her down; she fights for her own. Ahern explores the reality of modernity which makes humans blindfolded. The hectic day in the protagonist's life is when she is abused verbally by the reporters. This issue seems to be serious and her emotions are well described by the author as such, she takes the papers from Bianca.

In this scenario, she is a newbie in the field of entertainment and is not aware of the conditions around her. The document crew are self-centered people and they get fame out of Laura. Laura seems to be a girl who is away from all the worldly pleasures but when she steps into the city she begins to drink. Ahern extremely narrates the bad deeds made by the document crew and explains that they take everything for granted. This attitude of the Crew

shows how they are trying people to elevate from their thoughts and emotions. Humans juxtapose things in their lives, to have clear thoughts over their decisions and they modify the content according to their wish. Ahern never forgets to reminiscence about the environmental qualities and their benefits. She urges the readers to distinguish between the natural world and calamity world. In the novel, the author brings a connotation of another work named 'Rooted'. It vividly depicts the soulful ecosystem. A member of the document crew named Solomon reads out the following passage from the book 'Rooted':

There's a tree in a park. A busy city park. It's hundreds of years old and it watches people every day. Children playing with a ball, mothers walking their babies in prams, people jogging, couples arguing. Life. As time goes by, the more she absorbs the life around her, the more human the tree becomes. Her bark turns into skin, her leaves to hair, her branches to arms. She shrinks. Until one day she is no longer a tree, she's a beautiful young woman. She uproots her feet from the soil and she walks out of the park (*LB* 85-86).

The above lines are compared with the life of Laura and according to the crew members she is going to have a carefree life as soon as she steps out of the mountain. They compare Laura to a tree in a park. She watches all the happy faces around her each day. The crew members want her to experience the life around her.

In this work, Ahern insists on the concept that if anybody escapes from nature and immerse into the corrupt world, his or her peace and solemn living come to an utmost end. Laura is unable to find 'real' freedom once she mingles with the human world. The real freedom that one feels is associated with nature. It brings forth a sense of satisfaction in all the deeds. The cunningness and vices of the corrupted world dehumanizes the people. It takes decades to realize the fact that they are chained. Ahern advises her readers to be aware of the natural environment and try to be one with them.

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LITERATURE AND DIGITAL TOOLS: AN EXHAUSTIVE STUDY OF THE THEMES, STYLISTIC ELEMENTS AND NARRATIVE STRUCTURE OF SHAKESPEARE'S *MACBETH*

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Abstract

Analyzing a literary work using digital tools paves the way for the dissemination of nouvelle ideas concerning its themes, stylistic elements and narrative structures. The frequency and intensity of themes in certain literary outcomes can be examined by Litcharts' theme wheel data visualization. *Macbeth* is one the finest tragedies of Shakespeare which revolves around the eponymous character. The hamartia of Macbeth, the over-vaulting ambition is given much importance in this tragedy. Nevertheless, when this work is analyzed thematically using a digital tool it would provide a different dimension. This research scrutinizes the intensity of the major themes such as ambition, fate, violence, nature and the supernatural elements, and manhood in each scene of the play *Macbeth* with the chosen tool. It also attempts to analyze the stylistic elements and the narrative structure of *Macbeth*.

Keywords: Digital Tools, Data Visualization, Stylistic Elements, Narrative Structure.

The world has become an abode of science and technology in the twenty- first century. In the era of digitization, digital technology drives all the fields around the globe including literature. Under the concept of Digital Humanities, any work of art can be interpreted using digital tools. A literary text studied under the lens of a digital tool provides a unique understanding of its themes, stylistic elements, and narrative structure. In this research paper, the play *Macbeth* by Shakespeare is analyzed.

William Shakespeare contributed several tragedies, comedies, and tragicomedies to the realm of literature. The plots of his works are well-knitted. He employed real life situations to characters. His style of writing includes no affectation. He is known for his use of quibbles. He hardly follows the rules of writing and the three unities of time, place and action for which he is highly criticized. One of his tragedies which gained him much name and fame is *Macbeth*. It is a five-act play which centers around the title character, Macbeth. Macbeth, an ambitious General kills King Duncan and the aftermaths of this action unfold the plot.

According to Aristotle, the protagonist of a tragedy possesses hamartia or a tragic flaw. Freytag's pyramid structure of tragedy consists of 5 parts namely Introduction or Exposition, Rising Action, Climax or Crisis, Falling Action, and Conclusion. Applying Aristotle's concept of hamartia to Freytag's pyramid structure of tragedy, it is clear that the falling action of the drama is the result of the hamartia of the protagonist.

The protagonists of Shakespeare's tragedies also possess hamartia. The tragic flaws of the protagonists in his renowned four tragedies *Hamlet*, *Othello*, *King Lear*, and *Macbeth* include procrastination of Hamlet, the suspicion of Othello, the arrogance of King Lear and the over vaulting ambition of Macbeth respectively. The narrative structures of all these plays are designed in such a way that the protagonists meet their ends because of their tragic flaws. So far, the analysis follows the traditional way of understanding a text.

It is interesting to note how the use of LitCharts makes a difference in understanding *Macbeth*. According to LitCharts, the play *Macbeth* is divided into 5 acts and 31 scenes. The five major themes of this play *Macbeth* discussed by Litcharts are Ambition, Fate, Violence, Nature and the Unnatural and Manhood. It also provides a symbol for each theme. In *Macbeth*, the theme of ambition is evident in 23 scenes, fate in 26 scenes, violence in 25 scenes, nature and unnatural in 16 scenes and manhood in 12 scenes. The following image portrays the themes of the play *Macbeth*, each with a symbol and a unique color.

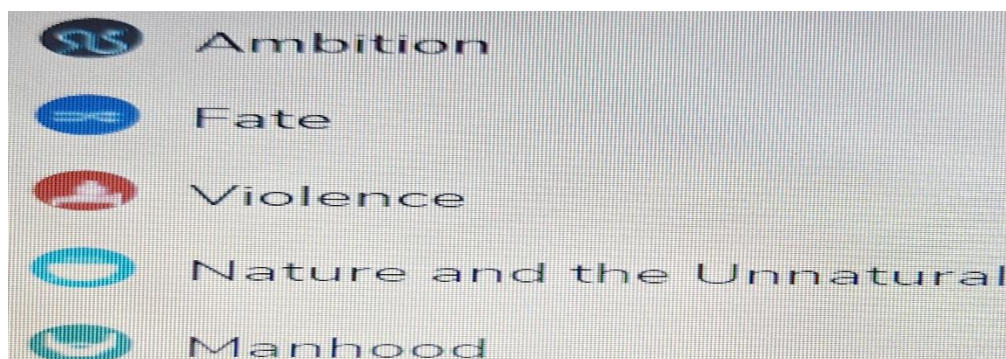


Fig:1

The following image shows the data wheel visualization of the themes of the play *Macbeth* as provided by LitCharts. Each color in the wheel represents a theme as per the previous image.

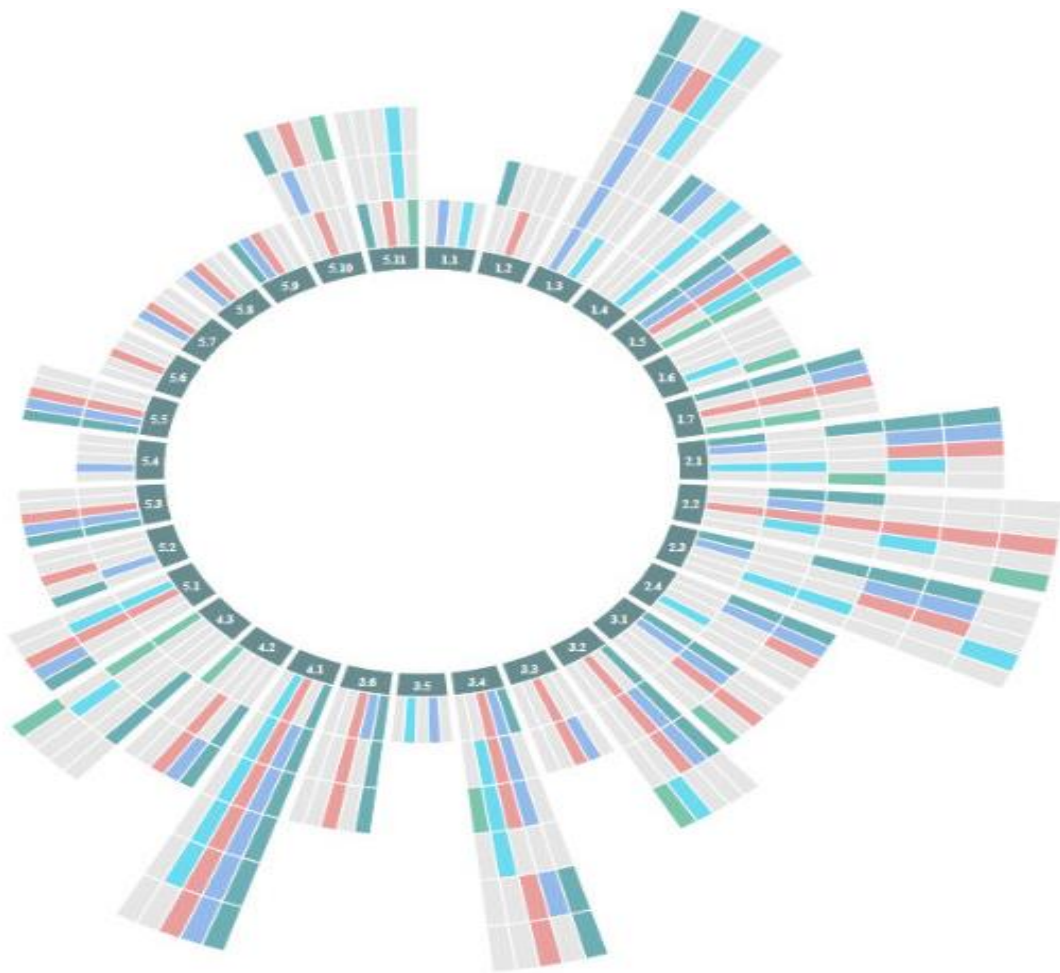


Fig: 2

The following table gives the details of the themes, important references with regard to the themes and the literary devices used in each scene of every act as provided by LitCharts.

Act and Scene	Themes	Important references mentioned	Literary Devices
1.1	Fate Nature and the Unnatural	1.1.4	Paradox
1.2	Violence Ambition	1.2.22	Allusions Foreshadowing

1.3	Fate Nature and the Unnatural Ambition Violence	1.3.30 1.3.47 1.3.134-136	Foreshadowing Motifs Imagery Metaphors Paradox Ethos Logos Pathos
1.4	Nature and the Unnatural Fate Ambition	1.4.22 1.4.28-29 1.4.51	Foreshadowing Irony Situational Irony Imagery Metaphors Motifs Personification
1.5	Nature and the Unnatural Ambition Violence Fate Manhood	1.5.39-46 1.5.63	Metaphors Motifs Imagery Personification Foreshadowing Irony Allusions
1.6	Nature and the Unnatural Manhood	-	Irony Imagery Motifs Metaphors Situational Irony
1.7	Nature and the Unnatural Ambition Violence Manhood	1.7.10 1.7.46-47 1.7.56	Allusions Foreshadowing Soliloquy Style Dramatic Irony Ethos Foil Irony Logos Metaphors Motifs Pathos

2.1	Nature and the Unnatural Ambition Violence Fate Manhood	2.1.7-8 2.1.50	Motifs Personifications Allusions Foreshadowing Imagery Metaphors Personification Soliloquy
2.2	Nature and Unnatural Violence Manhood Fate Ambition	2.2.34 2.2.65	Metaphors Motifs Imagery Allusions Hyperbole Irony Situational Irony Foreshadowing
2.3	Violence Nature and Unnatural Fate Ambition	2.3.52	Allusions Dramatic Irony Irony Motifs Foreshadowing Hyperbole Metaphors Personification
2.4	Violence Nature and Unnatural Fate Ambition	-	Allusions Metaphors Motifs Personification
3.1	Violence Manhood Fate Ambition	-	Allusions Foreshadowing Imagery Metaphors Motifs Ethos Lagos Pathos

3.2	Violence Nature and Unnatural Manhood Fate Ambition	3.2.15 3.2.25 3.2.37 3.2.45	Irony Situational Irony Allusions Motifs Personification
3.3	Violence Fate	-	-
3.4	Violence Nature and Unnatural Manhood Fate Ambition	3.4.121 3.4.135	Allusions Motifs Dramatic Irony Irony Foil Imagery Situational Irony Metaphors
3.5	Nature and Unnatural Fate	3.5.29	-
3.6	Violence Fate Ambition	-	Motifs
4.1	Violence Nature and Unnatural Fate Ambition	4.1.14 4.1.62 4.1.95-96	Motifs Foreshadowing Irony Situational Irony Allusions Metaphors
4.2	Violence Manhood Fate Ambition	-	Foil Metaphors Motifs
4.3	Nature and Unnatural Manhood Ambition	4.3.223	Allusions Dramatic Irony Foreshadowing Irony Metaphors Personification

			Motifs
5.1	Violence Nature and Unnatural Fate Ambition	5.1.30 5.1.33-34 5.1.61-62	Allusions Irony Motifs Situational Irony Hyperbole Imagery Metaphors
5.2	Violence Fate Ambition	-	Imagery Metaphors Motifs
5.3	Violence Fate Ambition	-	Irony Situational Irony Tone Metaphors Personification
5.4	Fate	-	-
5.5	Violence Fate	5.5.18-27	Allusions Metaphors
5.6	Violence	-	-
5.7	Violence Fate	-	-
5.8	Violence Fate	-	-
5.9	Violence Fate Ambition	-	-
5.10	Violence Manhood Fate Ambition	5.10.16	Metaphors Motifs Allusions Foreshadowing
5.11	Violence Nature and Unnatural Manhood Ambition	5.11.35	Imagery Metaphors Motifs

Fig: 3

The five major themes of this play *Macbeth* discussed by Litcharts are Ambition, Fate, Violence, Nature and the Unnatural and Manhood. Fate drives the life of Macbeth. The Thane of Cawdor being a traitor, the stay of King Duncan in Macbeth's castle, the escape of Fleance are all incidents of fate. When analysed using LitCharts theme tracker, Act 1 Scene 3 where the witches prophesy and Act 4 Scene 1 of the three apparitions use the theme of fate widely. Act 4 Scene 1 play a prominent role in inculcating ambition in the minds of Macbeth and Lady Macbeth to a greater extent. The ambition of Macbeth leads to violence and it is evident that violence further leads to violence. The murder of King Duncan in Act 2 Scene 2 and the three apparitions in Act 4 Scene 1 have violence as the major theme. Manhood is an important theme in this play. Lady Macbeth values manhood more than anything else. She persuades Macbeth to kill Duncan by kindling manhood in him. In Act 1 Scene 7, she tells Macbeth, "We fail? But screw your courage to the sticking-place, And we'll not fail." In Act 4 Scene 3, the manhood of Macduff is questioned. The role of the natural and unnatural elements is yet another crucial theme. The witches, the ghost of Banquo, the apparitions are unnatural elements in the play. The beauty of nature is also described in this play. The wicked characters Macbeth and Lady Macbeth desire to move away from nature which is evident in Act 1 Scene 4, "Stars, hide your fires! Let not light see my black and deep fires."

Macbeth is over ambitious but this exceeding ambition is a result of his fate. His fate mingled with ambition makes him violent. In other words, fate is the cause and violence is the effect of the over-vaulting ambition of Macbeth. The causation and aftermath of the hamartia of the protagonist Macbeth is worse than the hamartia itself. Nevertheless, when this work is read or studied manually the theme of ambition is largely focused.

Literature is the subject of perspectives. Each reader may understand a text from a different perspective. The readers of literature may not be good at comprehending various literary devices employed by a writer in a text. The textual analysis of a literary work using a digital tool will lead to a better understanding of the text.

LitCharts provides the various literary devices employed by Shakespeare such as paradox, allusion, foreshadowing, motifs, imagery, metaphors, ethos, logos, pathos, irony, situational irony, dramatic irony, personification, soliloquy, foils and hyperbole which elevate the aesthetic essence of his work with his diction. Shakespeare used mythical and Biblical allusions in *Macbeth*. The murder of Duncan, the murder of Banquo and the attack on Lady Macduff and her son are ideal examples of dramatic irony. The prophecies of the witches serve as instances of ethos, logos, and pathos. Duncan and Macduff are

portrayed as foil characters in contrast to Macbeth. The prophecies of the witches and Banquo's warning to Macbeth against these prophecies are best examples of foreshadowing. The metaphorical use of Scotland, seeds and roots, clothes, milk, birds, disease and medicine add beauty to the text. The motifs of sleep, seeds and roots, prophecies, (un)natural happenings, strange garments, muddled senses, light and dark, birds, serpents, milk and blood, false appearances, water, disease, and medicine go hand in hand with the themes of the play. The paradoxical statements elevate the mystery hidden in the play. Shakespeare personifies light and dark, murder and the country Scotland which are the crucial elements of the crux of the play. He employs imagery of seeds and roots, and sensory images to beautify the scenes. Macbeth's confidence, his notion on Life and death, death and peace, views on delicate air and water form the backdrop of situational irony. Macbeth and Lady Macbeth use hyperbole to confess that the blood in their hands cannot be washed away. The soliloquies "If It Were Done" and "A Dagger of the Mind" reveal the inner turmoil of Macbeth. These literary devices contribute to the explicit portrayal of the themes of the chosen work. The setting, style, mood, tone, and genre are designed to have a well-knitted plot and to produce a tragic effect.

Analyzing the important dialogues given by LitCharts shows the language style of different characters. The words used by the characters reveal their character and inner desires. Macbeth's hamartia is revealed through his own words when he tells,

"I have no spur
To prick the sides of my intent, but only
Vaulting ambition, which o'erleaps itself
And falls on the other." (1.7)

Macbeth undergoes various emotions in the play. He is initially portrayed as a man of valor with ambition. The fate of ambitious Macbeth makes him witness the witches and their prophecies. The same fate plays a pivotal role in making Lady Macbeth his wife who persuades Macbeth to kill King Duncan. He commits crime after crime not to get caught. His bloody hands on killing the King fills him with guilt and so he comments, "I am in blood / Stepped in so far" (3.4.135). The most treacherous witch itself calls Macbeth wicked, "Something wicked this way comes" (4.1.62). To make matters worse, he becomes over-confident that the sayings of the apparitions would hardly take place especially when a bloody child appears and says, "no man of woman born / Shall harm Macbeth" (4.1.95-96). Poor Macbeth is unaware of the birth process of Macduff who is "untimely ripped" from his mother's womb" (5.10.16). Finally, Macbeth realises that life "is a tale / told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, / signifying nothing" (5.5.18-27). The emotional appeal in the dialogues of Macbeth changes with respect to his situations.

Lady Macbeth says, "unsex me here... and take my milk for gall" (1.5.39-46) before murdering Duncan. She seems to believe that manhood is the ultimate symbol of power. She is barbarous enough to be considered as a wicked witch. She advises Macbeth to "Look like the innocent flower, / But be the serpent under it." (1.5). Unfortunately, being guilty of King Duncan's murder, she meets her own end. The language used by Lady Macbeth exhibits her character and inner motives.

This research paper throws light on the themes of the play from a different perspective. It also focuses on the stylistic elements and narrative structure of the chosen play. Many literary outcomes can be analyzed in such a way which will aid a literary scholar to deconstruct a literary work and unearth new meanings. The understanding of literary texts by humans may vary from that of machines. It is mandatory for the lovers of literature to read and analyse a literary text from different points of view. However, technology helps an individual reader to approach a literary text in a different way which may reveal wonders of literary classics like *Macbeth*.

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WOMEN IN EXILE, MIGRATION AND LONGING: MAPPING GENDERED SPACES AND QUEER SUBJECTIVITIES IN BLACK FEMALE EXPERIENCES IN DIONNE BRAND'S *IN ANOTHER PLACE, NOT HERE*

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Abstract

The paper attempts to examine how Dionne Brand in her novel *In Another Place, Not Here* challenges, negotiates, and redefines gender and sexual ideologies in the Caribbean global socio-political and cultural context. In her treatment and representation of Afro-Caribbean women and the lesbian desire, she unveils their subaltern state within the hegemonic structure of heteropatriarchy, capitalism, neocolonialism as well as heteronormativity, while concurrently re-mapping their experiences of dispossession, non-belonging, and methods of resistance against the sanctioned notions of gender in the Caribbean and its diaspora. In doing so, the concepts of home, internalized exile, and queer time and space emerge as new dialogues of negotiation with the post-colonial subjecthood while the reimagination of spatiotemporal spaces of geography, society, culture, and body seeks to return them their 'stolen' agency.

Keywords: Diaspora, Gender, Neocolonialism, Queer, Hegemony, Racism, Patriarchy.

When self is understood in relation to a place, the diasporans are enmeshed within a double-identity which Trinidadian-Canadian poet, film-maker, and novelist Dionne Brand in her momentous book, *A Map to the Door of No Return: Notes to Belonging*, describes experiencing as a child in the Caribbean: "We were inhabited by British consciousness. We were also inhabited by an unknown self. The African" (16-17). In her widely-acclaimed first novel, *In Another Place, Not Here* (1996) Dionne Brand critically negotiates and re-envisions the notions of gender and homoerotic desire in the sociocultural context of the Caribbean and in the multicultural site of Canada. Elizete, the narrator of the first part of the novel, describes her throes of existence and longing as a sugarcane cutter on the island of Trinidad. Little has changed for these labourers since the harsh days of sugarcane plantations. When Verlia, a cosmopolitan Marxist, returns to the island to organise the field hands and spread the word of her Black Power Movement, she captivates Elizete's imagination - and her heart. Thenceforth, the love between two women not only complements their respective worlds of passion but paves new ways of enduring them. In the second part of the novel, the narrator, Verlia, recounts the harrowing experiences she endured as an immigrant in Toronto. She experiences the privations of island life, captures the loneliness and the constant fear of deportation.

The multicultural characters of Toronto insured by a meta-narrative of its utopian-mythic qualities itself disintegrates to expose the limits of transnational belonging owing to its racialized, gendered, sexually-conservative treatment of the immigrants. It aptly figures as a “queer diaspora”, an illusion of freedom, as Johanna X. K. Garvey explains, “rather than invoking an imaginary homeland frozen in an idyllic moment outside history, what is remembered through queer desire and the queer diasporic body is a past time and place riven with contradictions and the violences of multiple uprooting displacements, and exiles...”(487). These considerations of diaspora indeed argue for a reiteration of the essence of ‘home’ - a space of freedom, safety, intimacy and belonging - which Brand in fact turns upside down in her novel. Advancing the figure of homelessness, a characteristic postmodern condition as theorised by Homi Bhabha in *The Location of Culture*, superimposed by what feminist historiographers would identify as a “gendered telling of violence”. Brand reveals how Elizete, Verlia and Adela descend into a wistful longing for a release from their violent past centering around the prisons of their home however, ultimately end up in all unhomely spaces.

Described as a “stray” child (Brand 38), Elizete after being abandoned by her biological mother, suffered maltreatment under her surrogate mother and passed as an object between the different ‘owners’ who abused her. Viewing her body as an object to be traded according to the masters’ will when she was given to Isaiah before she even reached adulthood (Brand 10), Elizete’s sense of homelessness intensified after moving into that “devil’s” house (Brand 13). Trapped in an oppressive grid of class and gender relations through sexual violence and work exploitation, Elizete further draws acoustic parallels between Isaiah’s whippings and her master’s in the field, both leaving marks on her legs (Brand 55). Her sexual, physical, and emotional traumas forced her to run away, sometimes “nowhere in mind except not here” (Brand 9), Verlia, whose Caribbean home-spaces are marked with suffocation and confinement, critically mediates on how the colonial history of the Caribbean has transformed her family into moving spectres as the visible physiological and psychological markers of the intergenerational trauma of exile from the African homeland continue to pass on as a “disease” (125). For instance, like her grandfather, Papa Ti, who had a sore foot to remind him of the pains of his past, Verlia also becomes insomniac and bears heavy body stress, thereby supporting Caruth’s proposition that trauma “is never simply one’s own [...] [but] precisely the way we are implicated in each other’s traumas” (24). Thus, unlike Elizete, Verlia, who initially perceives herself as moving from the margins to “the center of life” (134), arrives in Canada as a legal immigrant to pursue her studies but the domestic spaces in Canada arouse the same feelings of suffocation and suppression as her family house in the Caribbean.

Elizete narrates the story of her ancestor Adela, a woman who survived the Middle Passage, endured enslavement, and decided to sink into a life of silence to overcome the pain of uprootedness and dislocation. "The place she miss must have been full and living and take every corner in she mind" (20), comments Elizete about Adela whose connection with her home, Africa, remains stubbornly unthwarted but her relationship with the Caribbean is one based on estrangement and personal dissolution - she emphatically refuses to name the new place, her present reality, and calls it "Nowhere" (20). In this "Another Place" ridden with communal memories of historical violence and violated bodies, Adela believes there's nothing for her to see, to recognize, to name, and consequently, she loses her own sense of sight and "forget she true name and she tongue" (20). Looked upon as a motherly-mythic figure of black female resistance, Adela's forgetting and denial indeed became not just an effacement of the present but a return to the irreparable past since "it is always in the present, finally, that forgetting is conjugated" (Augé 78). On the one hand, Brand tells us of people in Adela's position who, according to James Clifford, went through the "poetics of displacement" under the grip of global capitalism and suffered a major shift in their group identity; for whom "belonging was too small, too small for their magnificent rage. [. . .] They were not interested in belonging. It could not suffice. Not now" (42-43). On the other hand, their paradigmatic resistance towards "belonging" leaves a substantially frustrated historical gap for future generations to reconnect with their past heritage and forgotten heroic struggles. In contrast, Brand shows her descendant, Elizete, filling up this "emptiness" (71) by naming everything in Adela's Nowhere and taking its ownership in an attempt to reverse the flow of her matrilinear history. Through the act of naming, an essentially Western, masculinist enterprise, Elizete re-inserts the presence of Black female subjectivities in the dominant discourse of the history of displacement and negotiates a new politics of resistance as well as representation. Nevertheless, all the three characters experience "internalised exile."

Brand's emphasis on belongingness continues when she moves from Adela's to Elizete's story revolving around the sprawling urban landscape of Toronto, a place that challenges Elizete's affinity for naming and self-creation, complicating her identity further: "this place resisted knowing. When she tried calling it something, the words would not come. [. . .] What could she call a place that could disappear or that did not exist without the help of people?" (69-70). As the city grows more silent and uncomfortable for Elizete, it implicates Adela's "Nowhere," a place she "had no feeling for" except "the feeling of escape" (70-71). Brand in her novel further illustrates the experiences of the Black immigrant in the "maze" of a neoliberal Canadian society through the words, "you hesitated before going in and got swallowed upon entering, without a trace, into their grey persistence" (63). As an illegal immigrant, Elizete's body balances between being "nothing and something," between being invisible and hyper-visible(47). Realising that

(hyper)visibility would lead to her potential deportation and persecution, she ends up hoping that her existence would gradually ‘fade’ if she constantly slithers within the urban spaces and fits silently in the Canadian society by accepting the social roles ascribed to her. Since all the available spaces for people “like her” (181) is highly racialized and gendered, economic sustenance boils down to menial labour and prostitution. Helen Scott, in her book *Caribbean Women Writers and Globalization: Fictions of Independence* (2006), also notes how (neo)colonial, capitalist, and heteropatriarchal practices shape gender perceptions and exclude women from public life by associating them with menial labour, domestic work, and heterosexual relationships (7-8) which is particularly true for women from the Third World whose sense of “womaness [is] quartered over kitchen, factory, men’s dicks” (Brand 109). Similarly, a sense of suspicion and distrust as a residual of the neo imperial practices gnawed at the relationships of diasporic women who couldn’t expose their fragility until they “felt safe from each other” (58). Moreover, Brand exposes the tactics of global sexual politics which a woman of diaspora has to adopt for survival. “Jocelyn pregnant for papers,” says Elizete, underscoring the inevitable fact that for immigrant women to acquire a social status in the diaspora they have to become pregnant (82).

Perhaps, the politics of (hyper) visibility of (black) body attains a significant discussion in the novel of Brand which makes it a source to negotiate the power within the discourses of oppression and exploitation. As Elizete choose to “steel [her] Black woman self to bear the street” (83) by altering her names, physical appearances, and body language and movements, she not only exercises control over herself by creating disparate identities but also deconstructs the hegemonic attitude of stereotyping, mystifying and naturalising all black female bodies as generic: “all the same, whores, sluts” (89). Besides, a bodily response is complemented with a lyrical black tongue given to Elizete as the first voice in the novel, empowering her with “a speech through which to speak her [peasant] life” (Brand, *Dionne Brand in Conversation* 91). Further, acknowledging the individual body as a material and narrative conduit to bring a collective change socially, Brand makes Verlia’s body symbolic of “historical moment” (*Dionne Brand in Conversation* 92) - the moment of Black politicisation which had impacted Black lives across diasporas. Nonetheless, all the corporeal spaces are rendered ontologically fragile for these precarious bodies except in the singular, utopian space of “Elsewhere,” a metaphorical home for lesbian desire and homoeroticism shielded away from the predatory, multivalenced histories of oppression and violence. Challenging the “vision of Canada as the ultimate safe space in which visible minorities could survive and even flourish” (Chancy 81), Brand demonstrates how the younger generations travel across spaces to escape the sense of unbelonging in the Caribbean only to find out that this sense is regenerated in the places of diaspora, that no tremendous sociocultural changes have occurred since then (230). This is particularly shown through Verlia’s lover in Canada, Abena, and her relationship with her mother.

In Another Place, Not Here, queerness therefore transcends the realm of homoerotic desire to exquisitely display the traces of resistance against the linear, capitalist, imperialist, and patriarchal narratives of power, seen through both Adela's story-line and Verlia's adolescence. Additionally, Brand queer characters' practices seem to generate queer time and create queer spaces not exclusively in their adult lives but their 'inclination' was evident in their actions during adolescence or other liminal stages of coming-of-age where they are found to be in conflict with the established gender and sexual identities. Brand also tacitly avoids any kind of categorization that adheres to any social vocabulary of sexual identification and creates a new potential for the discourse of sexual love and homoerotic relationships: "Love was too simple and smooth and not a good enough name for it" (75). The female protagonists are not only secret lovers but also sister-comrades developing an affective bond. Hence, 'Elsewhere' as a sense of belonging remains always deferred, suspended in longing until it is consecrated through a public affirmation of love between Verlia and Elizete. In her explorations of queer diasporic desire in the novel, Brand therefore simultaneously reveals a network of relations in terms of sex, gender, race, class and ethnicity as resisting the oppressive structures of patriarchal hegemony, and lays open the wounds of colonial history that still haunts the posteriority.

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DIASPORIC CONSCIOUSNESS IN ZADIE SMITH'S *NW*: AN EXPLORATION OF IDENTITY CRISIS

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Abstract

London is a multicultural land where people from many countries experience the rich cultural diversity. Zadie Smith's novel *NW* focuses on the life of Leah Hanwell and Keisha Blake. The setting of the novel is in London where the immigrants face a lot of issues regarding their race, gender, and class. The concept of diaspora is evident in *NW*. Smith's portrayal of female characters who try to climb the social ladder faces a lot of struggles. This paper aims to deal with the diasporic consciousness of the characters in the novel *NW*.

Keywords: London, Diaspora, Immigrants, Race, Culture.

London is a multicultural land. It plays a dual role where it tries to preserve the old tradition as well as gives way for more culture to emerge. People from various cultures reside in the city of London which adds a rich tapestry of diversity. The cultural diversity in London has a multitude of religious festivals and celebrations. The people from various traditions try to assimilate themselves in the multicultural land. In such cases some may assimilate whereas some will try to preserve their cultural identity. Immigrants in the multicultural land can suffer due to language, customs, tradition, the urban setting, food, race, class and gender. They should overcome all the obstacles in the society to climb the social ladder in the diverse land.

Zadie Smith is a contemporary British diasporic writer whose writings focus on the life of immigrants. London is the main setting in most of his works. Smith serves as the voice of immigrants. In her debut novel *White Teeth*, Smith portrays the life of immigrants from different cultural backgrounds. Smith belongs to a mixed-race family; her father belongs to English whereas her mother was a Jamaican, and this mixed race was reflected in most of her works.

Smith's portrayal of race, religion and class adds beauty to her works. In a multicultural land like London, people from various countries come together. Differences of race and class result in the difficulty to survive and expose their identity. Immigrants are the people who migrate from their home land and settle in a distant country by leaving their own culture and language. British diasporic writers serve as the voice of voiceless

immigrants. Smith excels in the description of the life of the immigrants in London. The narrative technique of Smith adds more uniqueness to her novels as it explains the richness of diasporic experiences. It serves as a bridge to learn about cultural diversity and the problems of immigrant's identity.

Smith's novel *NW* deals with the second-generation immigrant whose life falls into a challenge of overcoming the societal expectation in which they live in. *NW* refers to the northwest of London where the novel takes place. The novel deals with the issues of class and the quest for identity. They navigate the tension between the complexities of growing up in the diverse land. This opens up to the challenges related to their identity and cultural integration. Identity is a development that is always in process and it never completes. (Hall 222). Diasporic consciousness reflects the dual longings of both the home land and their cultural community. It often indicates the impact of migration on identity and their shared experience. They navigate the complexities of belonging to both the country which they belong and to the foreign country which they try to adapt to.

The novel shifts among the four characters who narrate their experience in the northwest London. The four characters grew up in the same council estate. The novel *NW* deals with the life of Leah Hanwell, Keisha Blake later called as Natalie. It exposes the life of the people in the northwest of London. Leah was an Irish immigrant who married Michel a French Algerian immigrant. Keisha a Jamaican immigrant's daughter married an Italian immigrant and a successful lawyer. Her life collapsed when she started to have casual affairs with strangers. Felix Cooper's life was not as same as Leah and Kesia. In a train argument he was killed without any reason. Later they found Nathan Bogle, their old schoolmate was the reason for Cooper's death. Leah and Natalie suffer due to sexism and racism.

Leah Hanwell, the central character, is a White Irish woman who lives in the multicultural land in the northwest of London. Leah's husband Michel, a Black man works as a Hairdresser. Although he helps Leah with her social work, they have contrasting ideas with their culture and community. The contrast of ideas and behaviours arose the conflict among the couples. Michel tried to teach his language French to his wife Leah but she was not interested in learning the language. Leah was very much interested in social work. She always cares for other people's wellbeing. She did not wish to satisfy the needs of social expectations. Shar, the trickster, told a false story to get money. In those areas people will not open their doors for help but Leah was so kind and at the same time gets into the trap of Shar.

Leah's husband Michel wishes to have children with Leah. He cares for his family and he works hard, but Leah had other wishes. She does not want to get pregnant and so

she consumes birth control pill. Even after taking the birth control pills, she becomes pregnant. She goes to the clinic and aborts the baby. When Michel comes to know about Leah's abortion, he was not angry at Leah but he was worried and felt betrayed. Although Leah felt guilty for aborting the baby, she does not want to fulfil the societal expectations. Society wants a woman to get married, have children and take care of the family, but Leah was against this idea. Leah's mother was not happy with the marriage life of Leah because of the difference of opinion by Michel and Leah. She does not involve much in Michel's life but criticises Leah for aborting the baby. Leah rejects the image of normal woman, whereby woman is understood as an essentialist category and the "institution of motherhood as compulsory for women" (Butler 118).

Leah's mother says that Leah is selfish as she wants to fulfil only her expectations and does not care about the wishes of her husband and her family. She wants to do her social work and finds fulfilment with it. Leah does not want to be involved in the social construction that will force her to shape her life. She resists to adapt to them. She questions her own choice and belief whether she was living her own life. Michel was confused about the mentality of Leah. Leah's mother and her husband's talk of having a child depicts the discrimination against Leah.

Leah often feels that her identity was lost in the place she lives in. She feels she lives in a black dominant area, where she does not actually belong. She was not able to mingle with her husband Michel's family members. She was always unique in her way. The society mocks her for always being different. Leah does not want to have children, she is not religious, she feels alienated as she was the only white woman in the black family. She isolates herself from the society as well as from her own culture and community. Natalie Blake, friend of Leah Hanwell, is totally different from Leah. Natalie was a black woman who married an Italian immigrant and adapted to live with the white community.

The immigrant tries to identify their cultured roots and preserves them especially by their name. By living in the foreign land, they try hard to preserve their culture and identity. Females face a lot of hardships and challenges in the otherland. "You can be anything," and we heard, "You have to be everything" (Martin 18). Keisha Blake changes her name as Natalie in order to adapt into the white community. She feels her identity with black suppresses her from evolving in the white society. She feels ashamed for being black and belonging to the working class community. The name change of Keisha is the way of rejecting her own identity as a black woman and trying to assimilate in the white dominated society. She not only changes her name but changes her appearance, lifestyle, accent to fit into the white society.

Leah and Natalie play a significant role in the novel. The female characters fight against their identity. Leah was affected by sexism and Natalie suffered due to racism. Natalie was hiding her true self as black whereas Leah wants to live her life. Natalie during her early stage of marriage was happy with her children but later she finds no happiness in her life. She tells, "They were of the belief that people are willing them to reproduce" (Smith 268). She feels that she lost her self-identity. She finds no common things with her husband. She was a successful lawyer but she had no inner peace. At last, she was into self-destructive behaviour like having affairs with many people, getting addicted to drugs to escape from reality. She feels that she lost herself in the world, but Leah was not like Natalie as she did not lose her identity.

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THE ANIMAL AS AGENT: AN ANTI-ANTHROPOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION OF HEMINGWAY'S *THE OLD MAN AND THE SEA*

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Abstract

Literature has always been analysed, almost solely, from the viewpoint of its human *dramatis personae*. While this kind of anthropological approach to literature furthers our understanding of human actions, drives and desires, it is restrictive and exclusionary specifically to the texts' animal characters. This paper seeks to study Ernest Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea* to reveal the benefits of an anti-anthropological approach to literature. In this endeavour, the paper will make use of animal studies a discipline that calls for the acknowledgement of the presence, relevance, and rights of animals by employing one of its seminal concepts, viz., agency.

Keywords: Agency, Animal Studies, Anti-anthropological, Subjectivity, Passivity.

Animal studies focuses (which can be merely analytical or harshly critical) on the complex relationship between humans and animals. It calls into question the anthropocentric attitude that humans generally adopt towards animals. In spite of clear ontological and phenomenological differences in the realities of humans and animals, Animal Studies argues that animals deserve to be treated with as much ethical and humane consideration as would be accorded to a human.

There are many critical concepts that have emerged as the cornerstones of animal studies. One of these is agency. According to the Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy, "an agent is a being with the capacity to act, and 'agency' denotes the exercise or manifestation of this capacity" (Schlosser). This definition can be expanded to include "a cluster of closely-related ideas like free will, ability, rationality, mind, and subjectivity" ("Defining Animal Agency" 0:46-54). Being assigned agency is also an implicit acknowledgment that the agent possesses additional qualities such as personhood and sentience (other fundamental concepts in animal studies).

Ernest Hemingway's Pulitzer Prize winning novella *The Old Man and the Sea* (1952) is a classic in the man vs nature staple of literature. Hemingway weaves a tale of perseverance, optimism, sheer will, and hard work as he pits an old, experienced, determined fisherman, Santiago, against a formidable and magnificent marlin. At the beginning of the story, Santiago, a resident of a small Cuban fishing village, returning empty handed from the sea for the 84th day. Unphased by whispers that he is now *salao* ("which is the worst form of unlucky"), he sets forth fishing on the 85th day with

renewed hope and vigour (3). Sure enough, he manages to snag a big fish, a marlin. However, his plans to capture it and bring it triumphantly ashore go awry as the mighty fish unexpectedly proves to be a formidable opponent. In the end, after days filled with exhaustion, uncertainty, pain, and gruelling work, Santiago manages to kill and secure the fish to the side of his skiff, only for its huge body to be attacked and devoured by sharks. In the end, he has to return to his village with nothing to show for his great adventure but the skeleton and the head of the once great and vital fish.

While studies have been done focusing on the novella's characterization and Hemingway's thematic and stylistic choices, none so far have analysed it from the perspective of the co-protagonist of the novel, the marlin. In attempting to fill this gap, my paper will focus on the marlin with the hypothesis that this fish epitomizes the animal as agent. In doing so, The researcher argues that this novel, notwithstanding Hemingway's authorial intentions, is anti-anthropological in that it consistently robs Santiago of his agency and, instead, assigns it to the marlin.

When analysing the marlin in *The Old Man and the Sea*, it is important to keep in mind that he is a male fish, and, thus, belongs to a long line of Hemingway's famous, or perhaps infamous, hyper-masculine characters. This fact alone absolves him of being a weak and easily-caught fish. Masculinity and indefatigable strength in the face of harsh, almost insurmountable difficulties are themes that run ostensibly through Hemingway's narratives. His male characters are always "physically strong, silent, and capable" (Chung). Hemingway, through Santiago, acknowledges the undoubted masculinity of the fish: "He took the bait like a male and he pulls like a male and his fight has no panic in it" (35). However, this is not to do injustice to Hemingway's characters by caricaturing them as overtly egotistical, infallible, brash stereotypes who show no signs of weakness. Instead, his male characters do recognise and accept their flaws by "exhibit[ing] vulnerability, struggl[ing] with their emotions, and confront[ing] their own limitations. While they may embody physical strength and courage, they also grapple with fear, doubt, and inner conflicts" (Ballan). The marlin, for all the will and strength that he displays is, in the end, captured and killed. However, this does not, in any way, diminish the exemplary agential activity that the marlin displays.

It is just after the first quarter of the story that the marlin is introduced. He alerts Santiago of his presence in the deep sea with a couple of tugs — first faint, then getting stronger — at the baited tuna that Santiago had lowered into the sea from his skiff. The marlin, however, does not immediately take the bait. It is this that creates the reader's first impression of this fish: he is cautious. Santiago immediately comments to himself that the marlin must remember being hooked before, and, hence, his caution. Right from

the start, it is clear that the marlin is not going to make it easy for the old fisherman to catch him. This is important as it shows that the marlin is in control of not only the outcome of the fishing but of the novella's narrative as a whole. The marlin is a kind of structuring agent, so to speak, as he builds the conflict, the rising action, the climax and the falling action of the story. The control and influence that he exerts on Santiago is noticeable throughout the whole ordeal. Indeed, a major motif of the story is the striking contrast between the marlin's activity and Santiago's passivity.

Santiago's quip about the marlin remembering getting hooked before is hypothetical at best in the context of the story. However, this is still an admissible conjecture of the marlin's agency. Animals definitely possess the faculty of memory and this is something that is borne out by their real-life behaviour. For example, while there are certainly animals that innately know how to escape predation, in many more, this escape mechanism is developed only through experience. Researchers have determined that "[i]f animals don't share space with a large carnivore, they don't fear it as much...." (Krankling). An extreme dramatization of this is the phenomenon called fisheries-induced evolution which is "a process by which anthropogenic fishing efforts become the dominant selective force on fished populations.... the continual targeting of large individuals over time has reduced genetic diversity in targeted species and actively selected for smaller genotypes to proliferate" (Baker). Memory, and its impact on subsequent behaviour, thus, is a proven trait of animals and this precludes any claims of the impossibility of the marlin being wary of the fishing bait due to previous experience. However, what does memory have to do with agency? This is best answered by the following line from Beata Stawarska: "Memory affirms my personal identity, ... it appears therefore as a privileged context for inquiry into subjective life and possibly even as the ground for upholding the contested notion of 'the subject.'" Considering the marlin's capacity for recall and his caution and evasiveness, he is very much acting as a subject, and, thus, an agent in his own right.

Another assertion of the fish's agency is made obvious through the story's motif of the contrary. Throughout the story, the author takes pains to inform and remind readers that Santiago is an expert fisherman. He is no stranger to the sea or its inhabitants. In spite of this, the fish never acts in a way that Santiago expects him to. When Santiago first baits the marlin and tries to do his usual routine pulling on the fishing line, bringing the fish close to the surface and gaffing it nothing happens. The fish, instead of coming closer to the boat, inexplicably starts moving away. When Santiago expects the marlin to tire out in a couple of hours, the fish proceeds to tug him and his boat around the sea for the better part of three days.

Most interestingly, this motif of the contrary is manifested in the reversal of the very process of fishing. There is a clear turnaround in direction compared to what usually happens during fishing. Instead of the fisherman drawing the fish towards the land, here, the marlin draws Santiago far out into the sea. Santiago comments on this himself, "I'm being towed by a fish and I'm the towing bitt" (32). In this way, the marlin is a subjective agent, making his own decisions contrary to Santiago's expectations.

Referring back to the definition mentioned at the beginning of this study, an agent is someone who has the capacity for action. In this sense also, it is the marlin that more clearly has agency vested upon him. In fact, he is the only significant character in the story who, at least for a majority of it, moves freely in whichever direction he chooses to go. The marlin, despite the heavy drag of the fishing line and the skiff, is constantly on the move. At no point does he completely stop. Thus, he has the freedom to move. Santiago, on the other hand, in a bid to keep the fishing line from snapping, is forced to restrict his movements for the majority of the story. Santiago's restricted motility is exemplified by the cramping up of his left hand, something that causes him no end of vexation. In fact, the fish, through his movements, actively controls and influences Santiago. At one point, when Santiago lets down his guard, the fish makes a sudden "surge that pull[s] him down on his face and ma[kes] a cut below his eye" (38). The fish's movements also drive Santiago to delirious exhaustion. Santiago, towards the end has "no thoughts nor any feelings of any kind" and feels that "[h]e [is] past everything" (93). The marlin, in pulling the fisherman far away from land and any human contact, also makes him experience extreme loneliness, as seen in his frequent iterations of variations of the phrase "I wish I had the boy..." (37). The boy here refers to Manolin, the other major human character in the story. He is a young boy who was taught to fish by Santiago. Interestingly, even in Manolin's case, he is unable to go where he wishes.

Here, readers must inevitably acknowledge and admire the strong will of the fish. The main undertone of this story is the battle of wills between the fish and the human. Even though it is the marlin that is baited and loses his life in the end, it is from Santiago that we get a sense of helplessness. Even in death, the marlin deprives Santiago of his agency. The skeletal remains of the marlin symbolize Santiago's ruin. It is not out of the realm of possibility to say that corpses too have agency. According to Zoe Crossland, "remains are thematized as agentive" and "[d]ead bodies are said to act as 'witnesses' and 'testify' in the service of truth." Applying this idea to the dead marlin, his carcass "testifies" to Santiago's utter defeat. Santiago is forced to accept that he has failed as a fisherman, an occupation, which he had earlier described as "[t]hat which I was born for" (28). He admits to Manolin, "I am not lucky anymore" (97). The marlin in relentlessly and determinedly drawing Santiago out into the sea finally beats him.

There is also, undoubtedly, a strong causative linkage between free will and decision-making. The occurrence of the latter necessitates the pre-existence of the former. The existence of the facility of decision-making in animals is something that has been validated: “not only do some animals have a subjective take on the suitability of the option they are evaluating for their goal, they possess a subjective, internal signal regarding their confidence in this take that can be deployed to select a number of options” (Kever). Santiago believes that the fish has a plan and even ascribes cunningness and mystery to his actions. The marlin certainly seems to have a plan and a destination in mind, seeing as he never deviates from his course northwest for the first two days. Even on the third day, it is only from lack of food and the strain from drawing the skiff, that the marlin slows down and starts to drift with the current. Despite Santiago’s literal prayers and entreaties, the fish takes his time before biting down on the offered bait and deigns to come up to the surface to finally reveal himself only on the third day.

It is at this point that a possible site of aporia might present itself in this study. One could argue that assessing the agency of the marlin by studying his interactions with Santiago defeats the very purpose of animal studies, namely, its insistence on considering animals as subjects in their own right, independent of humans. However, I argue that it is actually imperative that the marlin’s agency be studied through his behaviour towards Santiago. This is because, according to Despret, “there is no agency that is not interagency. Rather, ‘agencing...is a relational verb,’ which connects different narratives, beings, things and contexts” (qtd. in Wadham). Thus, studying the agency of the marlin through an analysis of his interactions with a human has little to do with any anthropocentric leanings and everything to do with fact that no agent inhabits an existential vacuum.

In conclusion, it is clear that Hemingway’s short but powerful tale features one of the most striking examples of animal agency in literature. The assignation of agency to the marlin can be seen in his capacity for memory and caution, his exercise of control and influence over Santiago, his contrariness, his activity, the assertion of his free will and his ability to make decisions. The paper has revealed the advantages of studying well-known texts from the perspective of their animal characters. Such studies will help reveal the nuances of interspecies relations. Such an anti-anthropological literary approach also unveils the possibility that animals are also capable of possessing certain attributes (like agency) that are traditionally only associated with humans. In the interest of honouring the broadmindedness towards animals that is demanded by animal studies, it is necessary to undertake such literary analyses which raise the powerful and discomfiting question of where ‘humanity’ ends and ‘animality’ begins.

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CRITICAL PERSPECTIVES ON JOGINDER PAUL'S *SLEEPWALKERS*

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Abstract

The research paper aims to explore Joginder Paul's poignant novella, *Sleepwalkers*, through the lens of the profound impact of displacement and exile on the lives of Urdu-speaking Muslims (Mohajirs) who migrated from India to Pakistan following the 1947 partition. It delves into the psychological scars of uprooting, the agonizing loss of a familiar homeland, and the relentless struggle for belonging in a new and unforgiving land. Through haunting narratives of characters like Deewane Maulvi Sahab, *Sleepwalkers* portrays the Mohajirs caught between two worlds, forever haunted by the shadows of their lost Lucknow. Their clinging to memories and nostalgia becomes a "cage of nostalgia," hindering their ability to fully embrace the present reality of Karachi. The researcher attempts to throw light on the novella's celebration of the human spirit's resilience in the face of adversity. As they adapt and transform, the Mohajirs create new communities and traditions, forging hybrid identities that transcend rigid national borders and traditional notions of belonging. Joginder Paul's fragmented narrative style mirrors the fractured nature of the diasporic experience. It is through storytelling and the sharing of memories that the characters find solace and attempt to piece together their shattered identities. The present critical study highlights that *Sleepwalkers* itself becomes a testimony to the enduring power of story telling in shaping our understanding of ourselves and the world around us.

Keywords: Partition, Displacement, Exile, Identity, Nostalgia, Diaspora, Resilience.

Forced from their former lives, the refugees of Joginder Paul's *Sleepwalkers* drift, lost in the sea of Karachi, Pakistan. Torn from their roots by the 1947 partition that ripped India and Pakistan apart, they wander a barren landscape of loss, their dreams filled with ghosts of vanished homes and communities. *Sleepwalkers* is not just a story about the partition of India and Pakistan; it is a deep dive into the emotional scars of displacement, the agonizing loss of home, and the relentless quest for belonging amidst the ashes of the past. As they navigate the uncharted waters of their diasporic existence, *Sleepwalkers* becomes a beacon of human resilience in the face of rootlessness, a scorching exploration of the quest for home amidst the ashes of the past.

Joginder Paul's novella, *Sleepwalkers*, first published in Urdu as "Khwabrau," crossed the border to India in 1991. English readers got their turn in 1998 with a translation by Sunil Trivedi and Sukrita Paul Kumar. The story unfolds in Karachi's

"Mohajir's Lucknow," a Pakistani replica of the Indian city built roughly fifty years after the Partition. It is a powerful tale of lasting scars etched on communities torn apart by that historical upheaval. With a close-knit group of characters, the novella explores the intricate challenges of Mohajir identity, highlighting the various ways people deal with the ache of a lost homeland. By creating a simulacrum of Lucknow, they were not just bringing Lucknow to Karachi but also turning Karachi into Lucknow (Rawat 27).

The story revolves around a family of refugees displaced from their beloved Lucknow in India. The central character, Deewane Maulvi Sahab (formerly Nawab Mirza Kamaluddin), has tragically lost his mind, unable to cope with the loss of his past life. He lives in a world of his own, reliving memories of Lucknow and refusing to acknowledge the present reality of Karachi. "While the other mohajirs have created another Lucknow in Karachi, Deewane Maulvi Sahab believes that he continues to live in the old Lucknow, just as before." "No matter where he went, his journey was always from Lucknow to Lucknow." (Paul 15). Even the mohajirs couldn't come out of their memories left back in Lucknow and so they create the exact copy of Lucknow in Karachi. "Here it has acquired such splendour that any visitor to Karachi is repeatedly asked, "Have you seen Lucknow in Karachi?" (Paul 13).

Deewane Maulvi Sahab's wife Acchi Begum, grappling with her own grief, shoulders the responsibility of rebuilding their lives in Karachi. She works tirelessly, ensuring their survival while trying to hold onto hope for a brighter future. Amidst the transplanted streets of Karachi's "Mohajir's Lucknow," Deewane's sons, Nawab Mirza and Ishaq Mirza, struggle with fractured identities, caught between the echoes of Lucknow and the harsh realities of Karachi. Memories of their ancestral home, a fading mirage across the border, clash with the harsh realities of this new land. Belonging feels like a foreign word, displacement their constant companion.

Karachi bore the daily burden of terrifying bomb blasts, leaving lives shattered and a dark cloud of fear hanging over the city. This senseless violence tragically touched Deewane's family, their home ripped apart by an explosion that extinguished their lives. Life had become a gruelling fight, but the community's spirit remained unbroken. They grappled with their pain, each sunrise bringing a renewed determination to keep moving forward. Ishaq Mirza and Hashim's exchanging of letters in *Sleepwalkers* becomes an intimate act of sharing the same feelings of homelessness and alienation (Rawat 28). Ishaq Mirza, in a poignant letter to Hashim Ali, captures this raw resilience. He writes, "Even if there is no hope of returning home, one does lock the house properly before leaving it." (Paul 47). Through his words, we glimpse the profound suffering, the unwavering courage, and the faint embers of hope that flickered amidst the devastation.

As the novella draws to a close, the simmering tensions between the native residents and the Mohajir community in Karachi erupt in a devastating act of violence. A bomb destroys Nawab Mahal, killing Acchi Begum, Nawab Mirza, Chand Bibi, and Suraiya. This leaves Maulvi Sahab heart-broken. He could not handle the sadness, so he pretends as though it didn't happen and lives in a world of illusions instead of facing the truth.

The central characters in *Sleepwalkers* are Mohajirs, Urdu-speaking Muslims who migrated from India to Pakistan due to partition. This forced migration signifies the loss of their homeland, culture, and familiar way of life. They carry the ghosts of their lost Lucknow- a vibrant city which is forever etched in their memories. The characters grapple with a sense of rootlessness, existing in a liminal space between their past and present. They are haunted by memories of their lost home, yet struggle to fully integrate into their new surroundings. The characters cling to memories of Lucknow to preserve their identity and connection to their past. They reminisce about the Haveli, their ancestral home, and the vibrant cultural life of their old city. This nostalgia becomes a double-edged sword, offering comfort and solace but also preventing them from fully embracing their new reality. They are trapped in a state of "sleepwalking," unable to fully wake up to their new identities. In their inability to reverse the lost time, they become sleepwalkers, reversing the time in their dreams (Akshatha 9).

The novella vividly describes the devastating impact of the partition on individuals and families. It delves deep into the psychological scars of displacement, the trauma of uprooting, and the loss of identity. Despite the hardship, the story celebrates the human spirit's unwavering resilience. Deewane's obsession with the past highlights the powerful hold of memory, both as a source of solace and suffering. The characters' struggle between cherishing the past and moving forward becomes a central theme, exploring the complexities of grief and acceptance. "When a cousin of Deewane Maulvi Sahab came to visit him from the Lucknow in India, his mind split open in wonder. Quibla Maulvi Sahab, what can I say? I am beginning to feel that the real Lucknow is, in fact, here. And it is not you who have migrated from our place to this, but it's we who have moved from here to there" To which Deewane answers, "we haven't moved anywhere, Bhai! ... Our Lucknow is the only Lucknow. We don't recognize any other Lucknow" (Paul 18). The refugees were trapped into their "cage of nostalgia" (Ghosh 19). Torn between two worlds, the characters in the novella navigate a new land, each grappling with their own questions of identity and yearning for a sense of belonging. As they forge a new sense of self, the narrative delves into the complexities of identity and the challenges faced in the wake of displacement.

Though displaced and hurting, the characters adapt and change in their new home. Blending Lucknow traditions with Karachi customs, they forge new communities. This "hybridity" seen in language, food, and habits shines light on the ever-evolving nature of diasporic identities. Challenging rigid borders and traditional belonging, the novella portrays characters existing in a transnational space, blurring the lines between India and Pakistan. This critique suggests diaspora is not just about loss and displacement, but also about the potential and belonging beyond nation-states. Caught between their heritage and new surroundings, the Mohajirs in *Sleepwalkers* inhabit a liminal space of identity. Their struggle to define themselves reveals the internal conflict they face. They are existing in a liminal space, not only in between the two nations and the national identity, but also in a liminality between the reality and the dream (Ghosh 2).

Paul's fragmented storytelling mirrors the shattered life of his characters. He weaves oral tradition into his prose, giving voice to their memories and stories. *Sleepwalkers* itself becomes a powerful act of storytelling, reminding us of its ability to heal, connect, and shape our understanding of ourselves and the world. In Joginder Paul's haunting novella, *Sleepwalkers*, people who left their homes after partition are not just in a new place, but they also feel deep sadness like they do not belong anywhere. Paul's writing is beautiful and honest about the hard realities these people face. He paints detailed pictures of people who are lost and confused, like pieces of a broken puzzle, trying to hold onto memories of their old home. More than just historical fiction, *Sleepwalkers* is a universal tale of loss, resilience, and unwavering quest for home. This poignant meditation on the refugee experience stays with us long after the final page, urging us to contemplate the meaning of home, the power of memory, and the enduring strength of the human spirit in the face of adversity.

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EFFECTIVENESS OF NATUROPATHY REBOUNDS HAWAIIANS IN ALAN BRENNERT'S *MOLOKA'I*

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Abstract

American Literature is a unique literature, predominantly written or produced in the United States of America and its preceding colonies. Alan Brennert an American author exhaustively screen out the nineteenth-century untold Hawaiian leper colony. Brennert's powerful and scrupulous fiction *Moloka'i* encapsulates the horrors of the disease to build up the enticing story on the Hawaiian Island. Nature is beautiful not only because it meets one's several needs and paves the way to render the feeling of bliss but it also helps people to connect with their true 'selves'. Through different dimensions, it focuses on how nature stands as a healer in a Pacific paradise. The people of Hawaii spin with an exile, widowed, orphaned, legally dead, and physically dying with Hansen's disease struck root in a new community, Kalaupapa. In the novel, Brennert conveys the effects of Hansen's disease, instead of living in a co-dwelling family men and women live in separate colonies, whose children are removed soon after birth to prevent diseases. The present paper explores the touching account of a seven-year-old Rachel who undergoes sterilization when she rises above the imitations of a devastating illness and isolation within the Kalaupapa community.

Keywords: Hansen Disease, Healer, Illness, Segregation.

Naturopathy is a drugless therapy that involves the use of the five great elements of nature to restore, to build-up, and to maintain health. Naturopathy means "a system of alternative medicine involving the treatment or prevention of diseases by diet, natural drugs" (Waite 604). The treatments footing enriches with natural herbs, sunlight and freshwater which balances the entire body and heals. Naturopathy stimulates and improves one's ability through transforming and cures various ailments in the body. This paper aims to explore how natural herbs heal men from the Hansen's diseases in Kalaupapa community in Alan Brennert's fiction *Moloka'i*.

Leprosy or Hansen's disease can permanently damage one's skin, nerves, arms, legs, feet, and eyes. The skin sores are pale in colour. The island of Hawaii is situated in North America which once symbolized as a paradise for the people, but now it is like a hell in which people are filled with horrible pains. The lepers are forcibly removed from

their homes and are transported by boats to the Kalaupapa community placed in shacks far enough to stop the disease from spreading. Thousands of sufferers are between 1865 and 1930, and many were buried in unmarked graves. Though Kalaupapa brings so much pain, to its inhabitants now converted as a place of joy. In the *Holy Bible* leprosy is described as plague and unclean “All the days where in the plague shall be in him, he shall be defiled; he is unclean: he shall dwell alone” (Lev. 13: 46). The disease has long been feared to be highly contagious and its symptoms include skin sores and nerve damage. In severe cases, one’s limb becomes disfigured and deformed. In the Kalaupapa community the patients of Hansen’s disease, live like a normal human being but their life time remains mystery in the annals of history.

In the novel *Moloka’i* Brennert narrates the problems faced by a seven-year-old protagonist Rachel Aouli Kalamain fighting against the leprosy disease. Hansen, a Norwegian scientist predict, “leprosy to be an infectious disease that these bacteria were indeed the causative agent for leprosy is neither a hereditary disease nor a curse given by god that lepers must suffer for their sins” (Ghosh and Soumik 220). Through this passage it can be identified that leprosy is resembled to be an infectious hereditary disease. In the novel Rachel’s father Henry Kalama is a trader in the Honolulu Harbour and her mother is Dorothy Kalama. The plight of Rachel is described as: “Dorothy quietly extracted from a pin-cushion, the tip of which she now touched to the rosy spot on Rachel’s thigh poke the pin all over the blemished skin” (*Moloka’i* 26). One day, Rachel’s mother Dorothy examines the site of the wound, and quietly touched the rosy spot on her thigh and realised that her daughter gets symptoms of Hansen disease and applies a fresh bandage to cover the blemished skin. Also, Rachel’s mother Dorothy instructs her not to tell anyone at school due to the underlying cause of the harmful disease.

Kalaupapa is a small unincorporated community situated in the island of Moloka’i, within Kalawao community in the United States of Hawaii. The Hansen’s disease patients remain at the isolated Kalaupapa, a leprosarium which is a hospital for leprosy patients established in 1866 on a remote, but breathe taking beautiful spit of land on the Hawaiian island of Moloka’i. The protagonist Rachel Kalama’s harmful sores by leprosy get reflected in the novel through the following lines:

The harbour to Kalihi, is a marshy triangle land jutting into the sea west of the harbour. A thick grove of algarroba trees obscured the Receiving station from the sight of both tourists and residents. It was nothing more sinister than a neatly landscaped complex of dormitories, cottages, schoolhouse, hospital and an infirmary encircled by a tall wire fence. The iron gates swung open to admit them and Henry struggled to maintain his composure as the carriage, coming to a halt was quickly surrounded by curious patients. (*Moloka’i* 39)

The above lines focus Kalaupapa land, scarcely landscaped with complex of dormitories, cottages, hospital, and infirmary, encircled by a tall wire fence. Rachel has separate dormitory to live and take treatment to get cured from the Hansen's disease. Rachel is to the isolation room, the doctor pokes with a metal instrument seeming to see her not as six-year-old girl but as a teeming culture of bacillus lapraein the shape of six-year-old girl. Thus, it shows the isolation of a little girl Rachel in the land with pathetic way. The patients are unable to get united with their respective families with freedom rather they were seen as like an untouchable.

Sister Mary Catherine Voorhies serves as a nun in the Bishop Home arrives to Kalawao, from the order of St. Francis charity. The nun shows her concern towards Rachel through her genuine warmth smile towards Rachel and welcomes her to Moloka'i. Ambrose Hutchison a resident superintendent, frames that Rachel cannot live with her uncle Pono and she needs to be shifted to the Bishop Home. The sisters prefer that all girls under the age of sixteen should reside in their care at Bishop's Home. Sister Mary Catherine Voorhies is a kind hearted woman who helps the patients with commitment which is represented through the following lines:

Sister Mary Catherine Voorhies was gruesomely ill. She had spent the better part of an hour here in the infirmary, dressing the sores of leprous girls and women, outwardly exhibiting nothing but compassion and good cheer. With thick swabs she cleansed pus from ulcers as though she were polishing tableware, scooped maggots of dead flesh like ants, snipped away skin as if cutting cloth for a dress pattern. She smiled into ravaged faces, said prayers with the devout or merely frightened and made a small talk. Somehow she managed to keep the bile from rising too far up her throat. (*Moloka'i* 78)

The above lines focus that Sister Mary Catherine Voorhies as a dedicated woman in the Bishop home who takes care of children who are infected by the leprous disease. She always has a smile on her face towards the patients. Lindamae Maldonado, of Kalaupapa her birth mother who has lost during her birth is a leprous patient in Kalaupapa who is of the view that the discovery about the place Molokai is heartbreaking and uplifting. Maldonado's most of the pain is about thousands of children who are probably born to patients in Kalaupapa, children grow up without an intimation about their past because of custody laws and stigmatization. The children are estranged from their parents, entire bloodlines and all are potentially erased.

The stains of leprosy in the protagonist Rachel make her to feel panic with pain. The former physician for the Moloka'i Leprosarium, Dr. George Fitch opens up that: "leprosy is actually a fourth stage of venereal disease. Syphilis was a great scourge of our nation in the early years of this century and now this disease born of impurity and immortality festered into deadlier plague" (*Moloka'i* 35). The doctors in Kalaupapa are of the view

that leprosy is a deadly disease which makes manugly, terrible pains and intake of medicines. Thus, the Hansen disease festered as a deadlier plague in Hawaiian island and threatens people with extinction.

The pain of isolation is very much severe in the life of Rachel when she gets separated from her family as all the love had shattered due to the disease. Her mother Dorothy goes to church on every Sunday, while that particular day the sermon in the church by Reverend Waiamau was on “Leprosy and the Hawaiian People” (*Moloka’i* 34). the history of the disease in Hawaii and also, he denotes the value of the Hawaiian family and community. The people believed that leprosy is more than a physical ailment; it is considered a moral disease as well. Leprosy is a chronic, curable infectious disease mainly causing skin lesions and nerve damage. John Tayman a writer and columnist says that “Leprosy is not a fatal disease. Neither is it highly infectious. It is chronic illness caused by a bacterium and communicable only to persons with a genetic susceptibility” (*Colony* 2). Leprosy harms one’s own health and leads in to the risk factors. The disease begins with a small reddish ring and ruin each day in a state of frantic worry and helpless depression. The protagonist Rachel’s body has sores and Dorothy terribly panics if the doctor identifies it as leprosy reporting it to the Board of Health. Dorothy goes to a Kahuna to meet a thin bony old wise man and naturopatist Ua and tells about the blemish on Rachel’s skin, its colour and insensitivity of pain. Ua as a healer with nature herbs explains about the medicines as:

Began taking down jars from the shelf, jars filled with leaves and powdered herbs, yellow flowers and narrow seed pods. It is used to clear disruptions of the skin. He put them in a large bowl along with four sea urchin shells, a teaspoon of salt, and papaya and kukui-nut juices. As Ua entered and poured the yellow fluid into the bowl there was no mistaking the familiar pungent smell. He wrapped the pulp in coconut fibres and squeezed the juice into another jar, presented to Dorothy. Apply this to the blemish three times a day for five days. (*Moloka’i* 27)

Ua prescribes the medicine to Rachel three times a day for five days also directs her to pray each night to the Lord God Jehovah to add his love and power to this medicine. Dorothy takes the jar and gratefully pays Ua two dollar as fee. Dorothy dutifully prays and applies the medicine to Rachel. Miraculously, at the end of fifth day the blemish disappears and Dorothy thanks God for his goodness in saving her daughter. Thus, the trauma of the child dafes away as the rosy spot vanishes out through the natural herbal medicine from the Hawaiian island.

The agony of Hansen's disease can be seen in every leper remained in Kalawao. Their struggles cannot be overlapped with joyous streams but instead it causes severe scratch in to one's psyche. The lepers are snubbed into too many things. Around Haleola's settlement the neighbours are stiff with lot of pains. Haleola is a healer and a resident physician, who helped many people in Kalaupapa. Harriet Chu's asthma is greatly improved since taking herbs which grew abundantly on Molokai. The character name Jose Dominguez, is running a high fever, Haleola gives him some of the tamarind seed to reduce his temperature. Few patients died of leprosy and mostly weakened by diseases. The people are the prey to their own diseases like dysentery or pneumonia.

In order to improve and maintain one's life, herbal plants play a vital role. The protagonist Rachel redeems and gets cured through the natural herbs available in the Hawaiian island. The researcher has brought the intertwined relationship of human and nature to light through the representation of leprosy, and nature as its cure in the land of Hawaii.

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A STUDY OF GENDER INEQUALITY AND THE "FREE WOMAN" IN DORIS LESSING'S *THE GOLDEN NOTEBOOK*

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Abstract

Doris Lessing has become synonymous with crusaders-for-woman emancipation. Lessing has certain similar experiences as women in their respective married lives. The personal agonies and traumas are reflected in the works of both the writers. Dissolution of marriage is one of the major themes in their works. Further, Lessing excels in delineating the political, psychological and personal turmoils of their protagonists. It is their almost uncanny grasp of human relations, their concern about gender oppression and their subtle exposure to the marginalized and repressed position of women in a male-dominated society that brings them close to each other. Lessing was deeply sensitive and is alive to women's predicament within the patriarchal society. In *The Golden Notebook*, the protagonist struggles in the whirlwind of personal betrayals both emotional and sexual. The action is set in London in the 1950s and the plot hinges upon a novelist named Anna Wulf who is a struggling writer. It is perhaps the mode of personnel diary kept by Anna Wulf which has been used as a narrative technique. In this novel, Doris Lessing has a special accent in representing the fractured feminist psyche. She expresses Anna's voice which is a voice of protest patriarchal social order and against the norm of calling the women the weaker.

Keywords: Gender Discrimination, Patriarchal Society, Male Culture.

The best-known work of Doris Lessing is *The Golden Notebook*. Lessing defies conventional sequential narrative writing techniques in this work by presenting the life of the heroine, Anna Woolf's Freeman, from a variety of perspectives and facets that contribute to the description of a young woman's experiences as a mother and lover. Millions of individuals have used this narrative as a manual for strong, independent women as a result. The Golden Notebook is the narrative of a writer named Anna Woolf who kept a journal of her life in four different notebooks and tried to compile them all into a fifth notebook that was coloured gold. The incidents from "Free Women" were scattered across each notebook, which was revisited four times [1], resulting in nonchronological, overlapping portions that communicate with one another. One of the novel's well-known aspects is its post-modernistic design, which gives readers and characters plenty of freedom to "play" and engage with one another. The pursuit of independence by two Free Women (Anna and Molly) is illustrated in this story. They meet the requirements because they are financially

independent, have an open mind, are free from the constraints of marriage and the family, and lead a life of freedom that many married women find admirable. Their lives appear to reveal a layer of the stunning ring, but upon uncovering the enigmatic aura, Anna and Molly's uncommunicable bitterness, perplexity, and helplessness are clearly visible.

Social roles entail that a certain person experiences and bears different responsibilities in the sexual role; hence, the combination of those roles makes life more difficult for women. However, a society would allow everyone if the duties were performed in accordance with its values and standards. A man's job in a traditional society is to pursue success and locate a suitable wife.

In the same way Jane Austen stated in her novel "a man without a wife who owns a sizable fortune must require a wife." For women, on the other hand, the norm has been to remain at home and be "good mothers" and wives. The female characters in *The Golden Notebook* are all bound by different roles, and they confide in the male character who trap them at home with their thoughts and feelings. Men, who deny women's "subjectivity," have long kept women in the background. Furthermore, conventional women present themselves as "The Other" or "Objectivity" in their lives, deferring to men and lacking the desire for independence or an autonomous life, regardless of their emotional or financial circumstances. Even though she has encountered difficulties and confusion, Anna, has a strong woman's conscience and demands autonomy and liberty in a society ruled by men. Anna and Molly lived alone in a London flat, and their acquaintances thought highly of them for their defiance of conventional morals. These, however, are the modern-day embodiments of the sophisticated western feminist, struggling with the responsibilities of motherhood and wifehood.

Women in patriarchal cultures are considered an object who seeks men's attention and scrutiny. Women's eyes are frequently used by Anna as a yardstick to judge and reject men. The male character in the book, Willie, is disliked by Anna because he is the most callous person. A year after Paul's marriage, Anna divorced him because George wanted a woman to respond to him. In addition to his gentle affection and empathy for women, Paul was also "a self-hating, unchecked, and merciless wandering public" [6]. When Anna eventually realised that Paul had damaged the innocent and bright Ella, she made the decision to sever all ties with him. Because of Nelson's violent attitude towards women and his frantic cursing against them, Anna stopped considering him to be a lover. Nelson seemed like a steady and peaceful man. Anna finds Sol, a cunning and uninspiring American friend of Nelson. In their fight, Anna is seen as the centre of attention by Sol, who also refers to her as "The Other." Sol uses forceful language to emphasise the significance of "I," "Me," and "Myself" throughout their exchange. It demonstrates how firmly the male-centered

consciousness holds the position of authority. This disgusts Anna so much that she feels unable to communicate with him, therefore uses silence as weapon. Women's longing for the ideal guy is mirrored in Anna's persistent search for a real man in her life, as well as Anna's subjective awareness of valuing her own dignity.

The "Other" status of women in society According to Simone Beauvoir, "Those who aspire to be individual liberated women frequently make absurd and frequently tragic attempts to find enlightenment in the confined life, or to understand the meaning of life in a limited situation" [7]. According to *The Second Sex*, "The Other" refers to "those alienated people who have lost their subjective personalities and/or lack self-awareness due to environmental or other influences, completely in the "Other" status." Furthermore, women's issues could not be resolved in the absence of a resolution to the larger social contradictions. Nevertheless, as a free woman, Anna is still unhappy and striving against the entrenched social positions of women and men in gender interactions. She is reluctant to stay on a trajectory of resentment and complaint. Though the struggle inevitably fails, facing reality and embracing it is a sign of maturity. It is better to fight than not to fight, and to exist than to not fight. The process has grace and dignity even though it is full of loss and compromise. With a great sense of enlightenment, Anna finished the section of "Free Women" in *The Golden Notebook*, where many despondent modern women find an identity.

Anna's representation of modern women is not quite that of "Free Women." All of them believe that they will be free and independent, by terminating their loveless marriage, but in reality, it is hard to overcome the intense emotional requirements of the other sex. Women's attempts to free themselves from the constraints of conventional morality and concepts in order to become independent, however, after a time of struggle, they were forced to fall in love and eventually marry, just like Molly, Anna also understands the reality after encountering the conflict of freedom, identity confusion, and political ideals. Ivor, a gay student at the university, paid for his friend Ronnie's accommodations when she let out her spare room to him. He shared a room with Ronnie, which would negatively impact Janet as Ronnie presents a poor example of an adult to her. Although Anna was unable to eject them straight away, the two boys began making light of her after a little provocation, which horrified her. It was women's internalised fear of masculine hostility.

In order to identify the methods of achieving true freedom, this study combined the modern feminist theories of "otherness" and "subjectivity" to examine women's status as "The Other" in society and conduct a thorough analysis of their bewilderment. There are two primary causes of confusion: First, today's women are emotionally dependent on males; second, they have many identities or social roles, which causes them to divide themselves and get confused about their job as mothers. This study has examined the various life

situations that shaped Anna's persona and her strategies for making progress in her quest for self-awareness. Wives' passive resistance to existence is not the subject of complaint; rather, Free Women's active effort to end the object status of "Otherness" and create the status of female "Subjectivity" is. Therefore, the first step in realising freedom is for women to transcend their inner selves and develop an awareness of their independence in both the psychology and economy. Women should reject stereotypes and cease identifying as "good mothers" or "good wives," and they should focus on fostering a harmonious connection between the sexes.

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PERSECUTION RECAST IN ANITA RAU BADAMI'S *CAN YOU HEAR THE NIGHTBIRD CALL?*

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Abstract

Anita Rau Badami's historiographic fiction *Can You Hear the Nightbird Call* is a heart-rendering reminiscence of partition and many other political upheavals that the Sikhs endured before, during and after independence. A part of the novel depicts three generations of a Punjabi family, Gurpreet Kaur, Kanwar and Nimmo that survive agonizing bereavement one after the other. The novel exposes cruel massacres that follow insurgency and the trauma and anxiety that continue to torment common men for no fault of theirs. The psychological and emotional anguish sowed in the mind of Nimmo, transforms into an everlasting fear of losing dear ones, which later comes true and proves that they are not still safe even after so many years of Independence. History throws light on happenings and incidents, whereas literature that emerges out of human emotions successfully records the pain and feel of the common man. The novel succeeds in doing so, by picturizing the agony of the victims and the plight of survivors.

Keywords: Persecution, Partition, Insurgency, Trauma, Loss, Psychological, Fear.

"In memory of the man on the bridge in Modinagar and the victims of Air India Flight 182"
—thus begins the story of pain and fear.

Anita Rau Badami's *Can You Hear the Nightbird Call?* gives a realistic portrayal of the excruciating forbearance of Sikhs who had been victimized, afflicted and subjugated by various political policy makings of the government in the history of India. She gives a chronological narration of historic events that had happened from 1912 starting from the *Komagata Maru*, one after the other that had its dreadful impact on the Sikh society. The novel is a delineation of the holocaust experience undergone by Harjot Singh and his wife Gurpreet Kaur and their generations that followed.

Incidents in the history are remembered and recorded, but the ordeal inflicted on common man and the irrevocable damage it creates in them for generations often goes unnoticed and at times even easily forgotten. The novel is the cry of an unknown bird which has gone unheard amidst the multitude. A catastrophic fall hovers over the family of Gurpreet Kaur when the *Komagata Maru* is denied entry in to the Canadian Waters in 1912.

Harjot Singh, who had boarded the ship with dreams to settle off his family and build a new house, returns back so dejected and frustrated. He remains a useless idle man contemplating for the rest of his life, losing the spirit to venture again. "It had taken him two years and all the money he possessed to get on board the *Komata Maru* in Hongkong. And yet here he was, denied entry into Canada, denied a chance to make a better life and finally accused of treason" (17).

Failure gave Harjot the greatest blow that he was never able to recover from it. The one who dreamt of uplifting his family lied down all day pondering over the loss. The guilt of not being able to help his family made him walk out of it. Gurpreet Kaur brings up her two daughters successfully and married them off. Sharanjeet Kaur, who marries Khushwant Singh or Pa-Ji moved and settled in Canada as a successful owner of a beautiful home, an apartment and a restaurant. Kanwar Kaur got married to Pardeep Singh, a peasant from Dauri Kalan and begot three children two boys and the young daughter Nimmo. The family that had lived peacefully for a very short period of time, never thought that the nation they lived would get divided into two. So far, Kanwar's family in Dauri Kalan had lived in peace and harmony with their neighbour and she had been communicating to her sister who is in Canada about her wellbeing.

The villages contained people belonging to all religions, but so far, they had been taught to live in harmony and never had they experience indifference or hatred. When the news of partition falls like a thunder bolt, fear and suspicion creeps into the village that had so far celebrated brotherhood and oneness. "He has known the Mussalmans in our village from the time he was a baby. They are like his family; he says they will protect us if there is trouble" (50). Kanwar writes to her sister about her fear, not knowing that it would be her last letter,

Across our land hearts are filling with anger and hate... so far there was calm here in Dauri Kalan, but hate is like an infectious disease and can become a plague very soon if something is not done to stop it. I too am becoming suspicious of every Mussaiman in this village. Now I notice there are more of them than of us Sikhs....but I have a bad feeling about this partition business. I am afraid. (50)

Kanwar's apprehension came true. Neighbours themselves turned to be murderous enemies. Rumours about killing spreaded like forest fire, and as a result of that natives become strangers, fire of hatred spreaded all over so rapidly transforming men into ruthless blood thirsty animals, savagely killing their own kind. Frustration and fear of losing their own land instigated them to become monstrous. The place that had so far been a safe home

turned out to be insecure. Families vacated the villages and got shattered with hope that others would be safe. There was chaos and commotion everywhere

Entire villages – Hindu, Muslim and Sikh had been burned to the ground. Women had been killed by their men to preserve their honour, for it was feared that if they remained alive, they might be abducted or raped. Trains loaded with dead bodies came and went across newly established borders, and ten million people lost their homes, their families, communities and memories. (52)

The pathetic situation of shattered families and the cruel sight of ruthless killing that took place during the time of partition had been pictured. The author gave a heart-wrenching narration of the plight of civilians who were caught in between and crushed due to the decisions made by the government, which at times failed to foresee the consequences that it led to.

After partition Punjab got torn apart West joined with Pakistan and East stucked on to India, Dauri Kalan got erased from the map. Sharanjeet, having not received any letters from her sister Kanwar, since the Partition, became worried. Being helpless in a far away land, she took all initiatives to locate them, not knowing if they were in India or had been moved to Pakistan. “Dauri Kalan, appeared to have been vanished leaving no trace” (5).

After a search for twenty long years, Sharanjeet happened to trace out Nimmo her niece and youngest daughter of her sister Kanwar. Nimmo had been a five-year-old child when the partition happened. The act of partition had not only ruptured the geographical map of the nation, more pathetically it had ruptured the human emotions and their relations. In the name of religion, it had torn apart the peace and harmony that had prevailed there earlier. The anxiety that Nimmo had experienced at the time of partition remained with her throughout her life. The insecure feel and fear of losing her dear ones always crept in to her normal life. The entry of her aunt Sharanjeet Kaur back into her life after twenty long years pulled her back to what had happened to her in the past as a five-year-old child. She had forgotten the names of her two elder brothers but remembered the name of her parents. She vaguely remembered the three hand prints on the wall, the smell of lavender soap and things that had happened on the final day of her life with her mother. “She picked up Nimmo and lowered her gently in to the large wooden bharoli of grain that sat in the dark corner of the house “Don’t make any noise” She said “Don’t even breathe loudly. I will come and take you out in a little while” (154). Nimmo tried to put together the fragmented parts of her memory, as she even doubted if she was Nimmo the niece, whom her aunt was looking for. Everything had been snatched and erased from the life of Nimmo including her memory.

Nimmo remembered the final moments that she had spend with her mother. She vaguely remembered how she came out from the bharoli. Did she creep out or was it her mother who helped her out? She doubted her own memory. Then, she had marched towards New Delhi along with the crowd. “They passed burning villages and villages that were unnaturally quiet... she saw men weeping for their losses. Bloated corpses floated in the canals... lost-eyed children like herself begged pitiful for food and water” (157). The child was adopted by a Sikh family and she grew up and was married off to Satpal in New Delhi. The nation is the same she had lost her roots and settled down in a new land. Her family, her land, her past, her memory, when everything has been totally erased from her life, the fear of loss alone gets deeply sowed in to her psyche. Nimmo, is a representative of all victims who survive.

Yet the chalky taste of fear, that had clogged her throat since her mother had thrust her in to the wheat bin remained with her even now.... Her fear was a monstrous, silent thing that often woke her sweating and shaking, from troubled sleep. It made her suspicious of everyone, even neighbours, she had known for many years, the woman who sold her mangoes, the milkman, the owner of the bidi shop, the electrician, the policeman – every single one of them was a threat to her security, her peace of mind. (158 – 159)

Events happen one after the other, the onlookers tend to forget it, but the victims are the ones who survive with the curse of memory. The loss is so big and indelible that it sticks to them forever. The past creeps in to the present and extends its cruel hold in to the future. The pain of loss and fear of losing can neither be explained nor understood. It is a nightmarish anguish that could never be cured.

But inside her own heart she carried other darker certainties: that she would never be able to rid herself of the dying dog sound that a woman had made one night while a child sat uncomprehending and cramped in a bin of grain... Nimmo could not rid herself of the memory of a pair of feet dangling above a dusty floor, their clean pink soles smelling delicately of lavender soap. (159)

The partition had mercilessly snatched everything from Nimmo and had drilled in to her mind an insecure feel, which made her restless all the time. Even the smallest disturbance, created an uneasy fear in her. She became more vigilant and overprotective towards her loved ones because she never wanted to lose her family for the second time. “How could she explain to him what it was like to have your life pulled out from under your feet, to wake up one day and find you had no family or home in the land your people had tilled for a hundred years” (159).

Now Nimmo with her husband Satpal lives in the capital city of India. It is her own country, she has voted and selected her leaders, still she fears and suspects like her mother had done once in a far away land. The anguish and turmoil that Nimmo had undergone as a child peeped back. A situation that she had feared should never repeat – repeated in 1984, the family she had so far protected from evil hands gets caught in the ruthless massacre that happened after the assassination of Indira Gandhi. And for the second time, for no fault of hers, she lost her beautiful family. She plays the role of her mother. This time, it is in Modi Nagar, she locked her daughter Kamal in a steel cupboard thinking that it would be the safest place as her mother had done to her once in the past by placing her inside a bharoli. The mad mob set the place ablaze. “Nonono! She tried to bat the fire down with her bare hands. Kamal I am coming... Kamal KamalKamal where are the keys? Where is the bowl with the key? Must get to Kamal... the bastards have stolen the keys, the murderers, the bastard murderers” (361).

The novel is the cry of many unknown birds, which goes unnoticed and insignificant in history. Those voices have to be heard, felt and healed. Political decisions when taken must be given utmost care and it should be the responsibility of the government to see to it that people live in peace. Our nation holds a cluster of multi-cultured citizens, which has to be handled with care to retain and propagate harmony. The ones fallen apart can never be easily brought together but it is the policy makers, who should see to it that there is no further damage caused to this multi-coloured vase which needs to be held up with lots of care and delicacy. A small crack in it, might shatter the whole nation. “Hate is like an infectious disease, it can become a plague very soon if something is not done to stop it” (50).

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GENDER REVERSAL AND IDENTITY: A SOCIO-CULTURAL STUDY ON NAOMI ALDERMAN'S *THE POWER*

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Abstract

Inequality between men and women is one of the most persistent patterns in the distribution of power. Gender relations led to power relations. Often what it means to be a 'woman' is to be powerless, quiet, and obedient. A man, by contrast, is powerful, outspoken, in control and can impose his will, particularly in relation to women. These gender roles tend to perpetuate the power inequalities that they are based on. The brilliance of *The Power*, an award-winning speculative-fiction work by Naomi Alderman conceives of a way to flip this power dynamic entirely upside down. This paper analyzes Gender reversal and identity in the select novel.

Keywords: Gender, Patriarchy, Identity, Inequality, Power Dynamics.

Naomi Alderman is a British novelist and a feminist advocate. Being brought up in an orthodox Jewish family she is familiar with the norms of Christianity, and her novels revolve around Biblical characters as in *The Liars Gospel* and *The Power*. Her meeting with Lesbian orthodox Jews and the way they are restricted to live their lives must have influenced her, and is reflected in her works. The novel begins with a letter written by the fictional author Neil Adam Armon to his mentor Naomi Alderman to give her suggestions on his book titled *The Power: A Historical Novel*. Neil opens his book with an excerpt from the *Book of Eve*, an apocryphal portion in the New Testament. It alludes to the shape of power, implying the shapes of tree, rivers, and lightning. The excerpt shows electricity's desire to take form in a living body with nerves and blood vessels and comes into the conclusion that human beings are electrical. The excerpt concludes, "She cuppeth the lightning in her hand. She commandeth it to strike" (4).

The novel moves through scenes that happened long before when men were dominating the world and reaches through a countdown from 10 years to the contemporary world of Neil. The novel focuses on four major characters: Allie Montgomery Taylor, a 14-year-old American girl who faces sexual abuse by her foster father; Roxy Monke, the teenaged daughter of a British drug dealer; Margot Cleary, an ambitious Midwestern politician; and a young Nigerian man Olatunde Edo, an investigative journalist in social media and the male protagonist of the novel. The readers could identify the changing world through the perspectives of each character in the adjacent chapters.

Dystopian fiction highlights an unimaginable matriarchal world where the rule by women will be no less a macabre than the current society. Alderman in *The Power* reversed the evolutionary attainment of power through her speculation. The very first line of the letter in the beginning of the novel, starts with the indication of the term, 'Men Writers Association'. Neil Adam Armon is the anagram of Naomi Alderman. In her letter to Neil in the end of the novel she writes, "Men have evolved to be strong worker homestead-keepers, while women-with babies to protect from harm-have had to become aggressive and violent" (333). Patriarchy is the mental and physical control of female by male authority which in turn affects the psyche of female. This novel terrifies those take advantage of women's suppression.

The characters Roxy, Allie and Margot uplift their standard after they find the power in themselves. Aimee Dexter in her review on *The Power* says, "Alderman equips her three female protagonists with a powerful, innate, biological advantage" (2020). Roxy takes revenge over the culprits who kill her mother. Roxy's childhood trauma surrounded by gangsters shows domination. Roxy being locked in a cupboard becomes the symbol of oppression in the first chapter. In spite of being a daughter of a gangster, only the power developed inside her helped her survive the fight.

Women are expected to be taken care of by men of any age. This idea is banished when women acquire power in their hands. Society has completely erased the idea that women also can do something worthy. The whole crime cannot be forced over patriarchy as few women are also responsible for the oppression faced by their fellow women. In this novel, the same thing is portrayed when Allie's foster mother is careless on what Allie endures in the name of discipline by her foster father. This is clearly evident in the presumption on Mrs. Montgomery Taylor's reply to an interviewer about her husband's sexual abuse on her foster daughter, "You know how men are" (31).

The crucial role of a mother is well depicted through Margot. The way she feels happy that Jocelyn could share her secrets unlike young Margot who shares her mother about boys. Allie and Roxy instead have a different story. As this support lacks here, it is instead given by the mind voice of the female characters. The voice which Allie and Roxy hear are actually a feminine one. The lines, "Its saying: you can do it. It's saying: you're strong" (9) show that the voice is sort of inner conscience aiding the women in the novel and this voice which almost invariably accompanies every major character supports Roxy too. Though her mother is not in the state of saving her girl the voice in Roxy's mind tells her to run. The voice in Allie's head raises her as God's messenger. It motivates her from the beginning like a mother. The shapeless ominous voice makes

Allie a renowned person in religion. This shows that a woman does not always need motivating words from others but it can be from her subconscious mind itself.

Tunde is one of the few major male characters in the novel who brings 'the power' to its limelight. His first experience of the electric current happens through Enuma, his girlfriend. He records in his mobile the first incident where a young girl is being disturbed by a man. A woman feeling uncomfortable, being cat-called or abused is usual in our contemporary world. This act is overcome here when a woman gets her own power. When a woman takes revenge for whatever trouble made against her the impact would be double the thing that happens now in the patriarchal world. It is his video which is uploaded initiates the day of the girls. The prominence of female power is vivid here.

Margot, being a mayor rises her designation as a governor. Her thoughts about the winged ants, their waiting, the right temperature and their surge, manifest her desire for empowerment. The wait is always worth it for a woman aspiring to empower. Alderman makes it evident through the character of Allie, an orphan turned a religious ruler who compiles new rules to be followed by women. Allie again becomes a woman who orders her lightning to strike. The author's empowering dialogues is once again heard by the readers through Allie's ears from the voice, "You are strong you will survive this" (31). The omniscient narrator also does her job perfectly while she says, "This is how a girl becomes a grown woman" (31). A woman always yearns for appreciation from someone. In this sense, the voice in Allie's head appreciates her actions while guiding her. When Allie chooses to call herself as mother Eve the voice says "Good choice, the first of women; excellent choice" (42). Here the narrator goes hand in hand with the characters especially the females who try to break their obstacles step by step. To the readers, the voice, on the other hand, may seem to be distracting from the good path instructing Allie to own the place as Mother Eve. This can be taken as an example of the perpetrators who are in the disguise of a feminist.

Roxy in the first half of the story resembles any other daddy's girl as mentioned in the novel as, "Her dad's body is a castle for her. A shelter and a weapon" (47). She prefers egalitarian ways as she had close connection with boys from her childhood. It is the familial support that Roxy gets which Allie does not. Roxy's family respects the power she has and helps her to improve. This notion is evident when Roxy says her father's words, "My dad says that. If there's something you need, something you really have to have- not just want to but have to, you'll find a way to get it" (110). The narrator answers, "She has this whole day in her fingers" (49). The narrator instils whenever possible, about how needless an extra effort is for a woman when the power is within her.

When Ricky offers Roxy the drug, the narrator says, “She doesn’t need it. Everything belongs to her, anyway” (50).

The narrator does the same thing with Allie when she remembers, “aside from cutting her dinner she really has no need for a knife, no need at all” (33). Women are mostly being suppressed from expressing themselves. And if they do so, they put them under locks. However Alderman knows what to do. She has no one to stop her now, just as how power is unstoppable. One among the reasons for girls being tortured physically or mentally is fear. The fear to face men makes them more vulnerable and every woman directly or indirectly is practiced to it. Allie in her childhood is warned about the violence she would face if she crossed her limits. She is terrified as she finds the chickens send through electrified water bath. Alderman’s characters on the other hand stand against this common belief.

Any girl who shows her true power is termed ‘bossy’ or is tried to be accused and put in chains. Alderman’s characters here with the help of power stand as a revolution against these usual practices. On one side as women grow in power, the male protagonist, Tunde, feels his important role, his war and his revolution. He says, “I’m the one who’s going to turn it into something. I’ll be the one who’ll tell the story” (55). Unlike any other young man going for parties, he concentrates on the change happening in the world. His role in the story shows Alderman’s way of showing male feminists. The concept of gender reversal and its pathetic plight on a man is well reflected through Tunde. His excitement to reveal different events had made him forget his fear as mentioned in the novel as, “This revolution feels like his personal miracle” (60). Again, Aimee Dexter in her review says “Alderman’s appraisal of female denigration of men, as she remains mindful of the trials and tribulations of the fourth protagonist, the male, Nigerian journalist, Tunde” (June 16, 2020).

The author’s portrayal of women in Saudi Arabia can be connected with any age. This is because this condition is experienced by Afghan women by the Taliban in the present Afghanistan and what the media is not showing is the internalized patriarchy. When Noor says the meaning of her name, she connects her with the other women and together calls it “we are the ones who bring the light” (59). Alderman highlights the urge a woman has under suppression and how she controls it under the patriarchal influence. The power, transferred in hands is not limited to one woman but Alderman shows how all women irrespective of their age deserve it. The way it is transferred shows how empowerment brings women together.

The passing of power among the women from hand to hand represents the branching and debranching of nature and its sources as mentioned in the *Book of Eve*. In

the same way, in a house in Moldova, there are women who desperately ask, “Leave us a light” (92) and finally, “In the dark, they were sent light” (93). Even today there are women who long for their escape from darkness of sex trafficking. The power in hands which spread like static electricity, united women throughout the novel.

Women can excel in any field, but in politics women are thought to be not up to the level. This notion is challenged through Alderman’s Margot. Margot’s male counterpart, Daniel says, “I’m not brave enough for this” (70). Everyone has fear but people just hide it to show that they are brave enough. This happens always with men and they find it very easy to accuse a woman’s intelligence as low. Even after becoming the Governor of the State, she feels guilty about it but she deserves it as the narrator says. The Senator Margot Cleary after seeing her injured daughter says, “The most important thing is that our enemies, both global and domestic must know that we are strong and that we will retaliate” (326). Though there was least hope in defeating Moldova, Margot encourages the President of the country and says, “Believe me, at a moment like this you need to appear stronger than ever” (326) and “They want their stories told” (93).

Men can be feminists too and this is evident through Alderman’s words. This is the need of the hour in every family and there should be male revolutionists to bring women to limelight. At the same time like Jocelyn, women do not want to be loved out of pity or for their weaknesses. The reproduction rights which men thought, they only deserved, takes turns after this great change. It is the women who are now the decision makers regarding their sexual desires in the novel. Naomi in the last lines of the letter, stabs Neil with her words. She tells Neil to publish his writing under the pseudonym of a woman. This parallels the current society where women need to face more struggles when they publish their work in their own name. Feminism must be spread to every nation and must reach out the unreached women who never know that the oppression they undergo is an injustice. Just like the spread of power like electric current, one can interpret how every human with humanity needs to join hands together for the fight for equal rights.

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SCRUTINY ON GENDER RECOGNITION IN SHASHI DESHPANDE'S *THE DARK HOLDS NO TERRORS*

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Abstract

The novels of Shashi Deshpande contain a diverse array of protagonists. In Deshpande's fictional universe, narratives are drawn from nearly all facets of existence. They are employed as servants, artists, medical professionals, and homemakers. They work both with and without formal schooling. Adding to this are the universal problems of deprivation and loss. Women as a gender experience specific type of grief. Deshpande depicts the range of anguish that a woman must endure with sympathetic empathy. Women may be forced to endure torment to maintain their quietness for the benefit of familial esteem. But social conventions may also have a huge role in their suffering. In her written works, Shashi Deshpande frequently discusses Indian women. This paper explores Deshpande's astute grasp of interpersonal relationships and her meticulous observations of women and their surroundings.

Keywords: Women, Problems, Anguish, Esteem, Quietness, Gender.

The Dark Holds No Terrors is about discovering oneself. It promotes the notion that women are self-sufficient individuals. The key truth, that every individual must figure out it for oneself, untainted by the limitations imposed by culture, societal norms, and circumstances. Also freed from their personal anxieties and shame is finally acknowledged by women as a prominent gender.

Ambiguities and absurdities are commonplace in today's society. In this case, women are viewed as an irrelevant member of the household. Both at her spouse's and her parents' houses. She feels terrible and uncomfortable since she always experienced trouble in identifying her ethnicity. The female child of the family also feels insecure. Female child is the one who is more connected to her mother. *The Dark Holds No Terrors* centers on a mother-daughter bond that is rife. The bond that is troubled with indifference and discrimination based on gender.

The little girl of the family, Sarita is also called as Saru. She has rarely encountered affection or concern from her biological parents. Shashi Deshpande's protagonists are against traditions that are remnants of times gone by. They give up on their parent's ideas. They give away the meaningless traditions like encircling the Tulsi herb. Saru decline to take delight in those traditions. Those traditions are meant to extend the life of their spouses.

Refusal is evidence of their freedom and capacity to live independently. Independent, especially of their mom and the familial history followed. Since they are adolescent girls, these protagonists have become indifferent to their physical appearances. They find few typical physiological behaviors of women as unpleasant. Mainly those that are associated with their mothers. When it comes to a woman's parent's principles it takes a different light. Shashi Deshpande's protagonist are left with no choice but to search for a new place. A place where her biological mother cannot enforce her will.

In order to achieve her absolute freedom, woman views matrimony as a means of breaking free from the ties that connect her family. She believes that her newly acquired position as a wife might allow her to ensure their freedom. This makes her pine for the title of a wife of a man and despises remaining a daughter.

Similar trauma is experienced by Saritha in *The Dark Holds No Terrors*. Eventually confronts actuality. Later realizes that the darkness no more terrifies her. She survives in a world wherein men dominate. Women don't have easy routes out. Rather than yielding in to it or attempting to avoid it, she approaches the responsibility. She deals with it by being her own personal mentee with incredible courage.

By the end of the novel, Saru has come to the important realization that her profession as medical professional is entirely hers. She gets to decide in which way she desires to utilize it. She will no longer be an instrument of control. Her marriage became a fantasy. She remained in the marital relationship because she wanted to show her mother wrong. She believed that her own self is her sole haven. There's no need to give anything out. Every individual is on their own. This could be summed up by saying that Shashi Deshpande's novels frequently focuses on the terrible and depressing circumstance of women in a world where men rule. The novelist's offering is shown in the fresh viewpoints which she brings to the well-known situations and shapes. The occurrences are most probably triggered by an issue in a family with middle-incomes.

The honest heart of the tale lies in the deep functioning of Saru's thoughts. Especially through her apparently ordinary life at the residence of her father. She explores every nook and cranny of her being. She assesses the situation she lived in. She evaluates every relationship she had and her everyday life. One can get to find the true her when she peels back the numerous layers of recollections in her mind. This process takes a lot of labor. She puts enormous effort into getting back the self-esteem she formerly cherished. She puts huge work into overcoming her emotional and psychological fears. Fears are concealed within self, like betrayers. They come out to bite and claw whenever they are least expected.

The understanding of Saru's personality is contingent. This is built upon an understanding of behavioral theories. She is, an innocent victim of the gloomy effects of inequalities happening between genders. In the field of social psychology, stereotypes regarding the two distinct genders are studied. Saru's feminism is a reaction to the discriminatory psychological structure. The structure within the community at large as well as Saru's parents specifically. Furthermore, Saru thinks like a deeply wounded child. Researchers in psychology have researched an unwanted child's psychological makeup in detail. Thirdly and maybe quite cruelly, a terrible bodily trauma has damaged Saru's state of mind. She lives a life of spirituality at her father's house. It's the reaction to her dirty physical experiences. She began seeing anything material as filthy.

Saru had numerous shortcomings and difficulties. Despite them, she succeeds in reaching an excellent degree of self-realization. She soon achieves a stage where disputes and societal disapproval does not overwhelm her. The concept is that, an individual must keep developing into a more expansive, flexible, and open-minded version of themselves. They must keep moving toward self-realization. Saru's circumstances contradict the feminist premise. It is that women gain stability upon achieving economic independence. Saru yearns for psychological security and intimacy. Manu's brutality has emboldened her. She wishes her papa to support her. She realizes that attempting to escape would be ridiculous. There is nowhere to hide but within oneself. She realizes that absolutely nobody else can make her happy. Not even her husband, parents, or kids. She had that capacity to reach psychological tranquility on her own. Tranquility comes from within and not from anywhere. It seems beautiful and vivid to see Saru in her final picture. She is brave, free of discomfort, and fearlessly awaits her spouse. She was willing to await peacefully for the thing that scared her the most. She became ready to take him on. She was ready to face the reality head-on.

The primary objective of Shashi Deshpande's writing is to depict the suffering of learned women. She depicts the conflict felt by modern and learned Indian women who must choose among asserting their individuality. According to the author, women must express themselves by upholding convention and oppression. Her narrator explores how women pursue fulfillment in their lives and how they succeed in pursuit of identities other than those of wives, mothers, and daughters. She has examined several common home circumstances that prompted the inquiry.

For the major part, Deshpande is empathetic. She is concerned towards women in general. The writer tactfully highlights the different kinds of repression that women experience in the community. This happens while they try to reveal the struggle of women to maintain their sense of oneself and dignity. This also involves mistreatment of women sexually.

Shashi Deshpande was entrusted with giving the female protagonists unique places. The places that corresponded with the changing socio-cultural standards and principles of the postcolonial Indian culture. This saw an intersection among the traditional and the modern values. As newer generation of women emerged, they embraced the revised standards. This offered them an opportunity they were previously deprived of for many years. Modern female writers portray their characters as self-reliant. They are also portrayed as capable of autonomous decision-making, independent from the influence of men's tastes. However these newly developed female identities are not identical all over. As a consequence, issues surface.

In Deshpande's literary realm, there are protagonists are from nearly every background. They work as servants, learned or uneducated homemakers, writers, and doctors. Apart from the usual challenges such as destitution and bereavement, women face particular types of anguish. Deshpande portrays empathetic understanding on the spectrum of suffering that a woman has to go through. Occasionally women are compelled to undergo torment, because they are suppressed for the purpose of their family's esteem. At other occasions the anguish is connected to societal conventions.

The goal of Deshpande is to draw attention to various ideological elements. These elements are not the ones that comprise of both cultural and religious aspects (such as fables, narratives, practices, and ceremonies). Psychological and social elements (which are referred as a woman's subordinate position within the household and her restricted libido) also add to the contribution. The main characters in Shashi Deshpande's books are usually self-reliant women. They are in their pursuit of self-realization and individuality. They progressively experience an episode of introspection and self-actualization.

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RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN WOMAN AND FAMILY IN *THE LOVELY BONES* BY ALICE SEBOLD

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Abstract

The Lovely Bones written by Alice Sebold, an American writer deals with a true tragic incident, happened a long time ago on a December evening. The main themes focused in this research paper are the relationship between woman and her family and how girls or women are treated in the society. These themes are explained through the main character, Susie who faces a fatal end after being raped by her neighbour. Susie's relationship with her family and friends can be understood by the way they suffer as they could not accept what had happened to her. Even after her death no one was able to overcome the tragedy. This paper analyzes the social condition of women and their problems in the chosen novel.

Keywords: Fantasy, Sexual assault, Trauma, Semi-Autobiography, American Literature.

The Lovely Bones is a beautiful novel with a twist written by Alice Sebold, an American Writer. Alice Sebold was born on September 6, 1963, in Madison, Wisconsin. She is the daughter of two academic parents, Sebold grew up in a household dominated by dysfunction. Her mother, Jane, was an alcoholic, who suffered severe bouts of panic and anxiety. Sebold's father, a Spanish professor, eventually relocated his family to Paoli, Pennsylvania, where Jane worked as a journalist for a small newspaper and he taught at the University of Pennsylvania.

After high school, Sebold, in an attempt to distance herself from her family, enrolled in Syracuse University in 1980. During her first year at school, she was brutally attacked and raped in a tunnel. Sebold eventually made it back to her room where friends took her to the hospital. After reporting her case to the police, one of the officers said that she was lucky to be alive. Not long before, another rape had occurred in the same tunnel.

After a failed attempt at graduate school in Texas, Sebold landed in New York City, where she started experimenting with heroin. She also continued to write, a novel about the rape and murder of a young girl that she tentatively called *Monsters*. After some time, Sebold enrolled at University of Irvine, where she met a writer Glen David Gold. She graduated with an MFA in 1998. Now, Alice Sebold lives with her husband Glen in San Francisco.

The story of Sebold's rape became the subject of her first book, a memoir called *Lucky*. Its name was inspired by the policeman who had remarked that she was fortunate to be alive after her attack. Broader fame came in 2002 when *The Lovely Bones*, a revised and edited incarnation of Sebold's earlier novel about the rape and murder of a young girl, was published. The narrator of this book tells her story from beyond the grave. It is in the top of most "best" lists in 2002, earning ebullient praise from critics and outpacing the sales of works of established authors, like Tom Clancy and Stephen King. Some even dared to call it the most successful debut novel since *Gone with the Wind*.

Susie, from heaven, observes the difficulties that her family undergoes after her. She learns that, with her desires she could even bring changes to the lives of her loved ones on earth. Susie seeks for revenge. She wants Mr. Harvey to be dead. She teleports herself into her friend's body, with her permission to live the life that she had wished for with her childhood crush, Ray Singh. Ruth becomes her major connection on earth. She was the girl who was touched by Susie's soul while leaving her body after she was murdered. *The Lovely Bones* is in first person narration as it is narrated by Susie herself from her heaven.

The relationship between woman and her family can be seen in this novel. When Susie was raped and murdered and it mainly affected her family. Susie's, sister, Lindsey Salmon, faces troubles caused by her fellow students at school. Her sister's stuff and her pictures, reminiscences their time together and lays in her bed. She helps her father in investigating Mr. Harvey. Here the bond between the two sisters can be seen. When Susie's brother Buckley claims that he sees his sister after her death the readers do not know whether he has really witnessed the spirit of Susie or was it just his imagination. Nevertheless, it purely shows his love for his sister and his longings to be with her.

The father of Susie, Mr. Salmon is a major character in this novel. He holds a special love for his daughter. His hobby is to make ships inside the bottles and set it to sail. Susie is the only person who loved it as much as her father did. This shows a special bonding between her and her father. He has a room full of bottles and ships which he has collected since a long time back. When the news of Susie's murder reaches him, it hits him like a hurricane. Later, he is found smashing and destroying all the ships and bottles from his collections. He even breaks the ones that he has made together with the help of Susie. This shows how much he is broken. He faces psychological trauma when Susie's murder is confirmed. He tries to call the police to let them know about Susie's murderer. He suspects his neighbour, Mr. Harvey. No one believes him at first, but eventually the police find out that Harvey is the one who brutally raped and murdered Susie. The police could not arrest him as he had already left the town.

The relationship between a woman and her family could be seen not only through the connection that Susie has with her family, but also through the relationship of Susie's mother Mrs. Abigail Salmon's relationship with her family. As a mother she is not able to digest the truth that her daughter is raped and murdered. She cries whenever she sees her husband but controls herself in front of her other two kids. She expresses her pain through her silence. She decides to move on as the grievance bounds her from pursuing her dreams. As she could not move on and come out of the tragedy she decides to leave the house and her family. She continues her life with the police officer who investigates Susie's case. She finally returns to her family when her husband is hospitalised.

Harvey's violent actions stem from his troubled childhood. He has brutally raped and murdered many women. Towards the end of the book Harvey is killed when a falling icicle causes him to slip and fall into a snow-covered ravine. Susie ends her narration, wishing a very happy long life to the readers. Through magical realism, the author has beautifully portrayed the relationship and the bond that Susie has with her family. Based on psychoanalytic theory and Trauma studies, Sebold has defined the love that Susie's father had for her and his determination to find out the one who is guilty of her murder. She has also explained how the childhood trauma faced by Mr. Harvey has turned him into a monster. He stands as an example of men who treats women badly in every possible way and ends up blaming their bitter past.

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IMPLICATIONS OF IMBIBED NORMS IN POSTCOLONIAL REALITY

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Abstract

Culture encompasses the entirety of a region's existence, comprising its language, customs, and traditions. Past experiences significantly influence an individual's current beliefs and behaviours. Colonial powers undermined the identity and dignity of people from third-world nations. This paper tries to explore the influence of colonial power in the identity, language, lifestyle, mannerisms and internalized norms of the indigenous people. The paper examines the colonial impact on native culture through the lens of various postcolonial theories proposed by renowned theorists and discusses hybridity, mimicry, rootlessness, identity crisis and exploitation from a different perspective.

Keywords: Culture, Language, Identity, Mimicry, Hybridity, Rootlessness, Exploitation.

Culture is a complicated subject that is being discussed over years by different theorists. No specific culture is inherently recognized as superior or inferior, yet there exists a prevailing inclination to view Western culture as superior and Eastern culture as inferior. Colonialism sought to establish distinctions between superior and inferior cultures. Colonial discourses aimed to analyze the impacts of colonialism in the Third-world countries. Postcolonial Theory emerged in the US and UK in 1980s as a quest for new wave of knowledge and perspectives. Edward Said, Homi. K.Bhabha and Gayatri Spivak are considered as the inspiring patron saints of Postcolonial Theory and Discourse. Postcolonial literatures come from Britain's former colonized countries including the Caribbean, Africa and India. Theories of colonial discourses draw attention to the role language plays in getting people succumb to a particular way of seeing the world.

Colonial discourses form the intersections where language and power meet. Language is more than simply means of communication but it constitutes our world view by cutting up and ordering reality into meaningful units. The meanings we attach to things tell us which values we consider are important and how we learn to choose to differentiate between superior or inferior qualities. (McLeod 18)

Language has great power to manipulate and transform one's view on world. Language can create new norms, correct one's beliefs and manipulate perspectives. It has the power to enter into one's mind. So language has creative as well as destructive power. According to Lacan, language cannot be considered an innocent medium. Kenyan novelist Ngugi waThiongo explains on this point:

Language carries culture. And culture carries, particularly oral literature carries, the entire body of values by which we come to perceive ourselves and our place in the world. How people perceive themselves affects how they look at their culture, at their politics and at the social production of wealth, at their entire relationship to the nature and to other human beings. Language is thus inseparable from ourselves as a community of human beings with a specific form and character, a specific history, a specific relationship to the world. (16)

As Ngugi stresses, language not only reflect reality, but also influences a person's understanding of the world. It carries the whole culture. So, colonizers tried to get into the lives of native people by imposing their language. Under the influence of Colonialism, colonized people are moulded to believe that they are acquiescent to the ways of regarding and representing the world. A particular value system is taught as the best and truest world-view. The cultural values of the colonized are looked down as lacking in value and even as “uncivilized” from which they must be rescued.

If the internalization of colonial sets of values is an effective way of disempowering people, it was a source of trauma for colonized peoples who were taught to look negatively upon their people, their culture and themselves. In the 1950s, some theorists attempted to record the psychological damage suffered by colonized people who internalized these colonial discourses. Frantz Fanon is one among them who tried to elaborate upon this. The psychologist Franz Fanon wrote extensively and passionately about the damage French Colonialism has wrecked upon millions of people.

Fanon explains about the most scorching and provocative analysis of the link between the colonized and the colonizer in *The Wretched of the Earth* as well as in *Black Skin, White Masks*. He speaks about the violence perpetuated by colonialism and the way colonized can be made to reclaim his self-conscious agency. Fanon considers violence as an inevitable and necessary factor to reclaim one's agency. He argues that one has to move from reaction to the construction of something new including overcoming the binary oppositions imposed on the colonized by the geographical structures of the cold war. The internalized norms of the colonized and the colonizer have to be decolonized. Colonialism is perpetuated through propagating the idea that it is right and proper to rule over other people and by making colonized people accept their lower ranking through the process of internalizing certain Eurocentric norms and “colonizing the mind”.

Postcolonial condition is characterized by identity crisis, hybridization of cultures, mimicry, hybridity, fluid identity, disillusionment, rootlessness, oppression, exploitation, suppression, displacement, dislocation, quest for identity, segregation and marginalization.

Colonized subjects are deprived of their self-worth and colonizer succeeded in convincing them that they are inferior ones. The colonized minds tend to believe what the colonial master imposes on them. Many postcolonial theorists and philosophers like, Homi K Bhabha, Frantz Fanon, Gayathri Chakraborty Spivak, Ashcroft Bill, Edward Said, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin tried to alter the collective unconscious ingrained in third world people. In his work *Orientalism*, Said elaborated upon the tendency of Western world to consider East an “exotic other”. Occident describes Orient with negative attributes such as wild, dark, uncivilized and savagery. He says that East has an enchanting power to attract occident towards their exoticism. In his book, *Culture and Imperialism*, Said speaks about the improvisation of power. West manipulates the East through narrations. Since they are powerful, they are the ones who possess the power and authority to narrate ideologies. They manipulate narrations to their favor and false ideologies are transferred over generations. Both Said’s *Orientalism* and *Culture and Imperialism* include long sections which explore the Neo-colonial dominance of Western nations such as America and contemporary modes of resistance.

In postcolonial condition, the identity of individual is being questioned. Colonizer is the one who tries to define the identity of the colonized, which is truly impossible. When the powerful one assumes a sort of identity to an individual, he/she would be confined to the boundaries set by him/her. Erik Erikson coined the term “identity crisis” to denote the instability and disillusionment experienced by individuals when going through adverse conditions of life. Colonialism had a great impact on defining the identity of the natives of the region. Colonizer imposes double identity on them. They are made to believe in their inability to rule themselves. Simon During points out in his essay “Rousseau’s Patrimony: Primitivism, Romance and Becoming Other” on this notion. “The rejection of patriarchy as a mode of familial and political existence returned Enlightened thinkers to patriarchy as a state of nature only by passing through a problem concerning the nature of identity. The problem can be started quite simply in theoretical terms: if identities are neither to be inherited nor naturally given but to be open to choice and change” (60).

This “self othering” is two-fold: a self- othering that is propagated through foreign education and the self- othering by the natives themselves to get acceptance in the society. In either ways, the real identities of the individuals are being subjected to alteration. A new hybrid of double- stranded identity is formed in such situations.

In a postcolonial condition, people experience sense of rootlessness and dislocation as a result of prolonged suppression. They are being uprooted and dislocated from their native self through force and oppression for prolonged period which prompt them to forget the worth and source of their roots. *The Empire Writes Back* asserted that postcolonial

writing was always written out of “the abrogation of the received English which speaks from the centre, and the act of appropriation which brings it under the influence of a vernacular tongue, the complex of speech habits which characterize the local language” (39) “The absence of, or gap, is not negative but positive in its effect. It presents the difference through which an identity can be expressed” (62). Through this book, Fanon writes back to the Empire with his full vigor.

Colonial period has made influence in all walks of life. Through English education the colonizers taught indigenous people that Western culture is universally accepted. They placed themselves in superior position. Colonizer taught his language claiming to make natives like them, but the reality was otherwise. Indigenous people lost their own language and failed to get complete access to the foreigners’ culture. Hence the cultural imperialism appeared in masked form. The natives tried to imitate European mode of life, hence losing their own culture. Macaulay’s pronouncement was that knowledge is deemed the enriching possession of the scientific West and must be taught in India. Nevertheless, an Orientalist hierarchy is asserted between a knowledgeable, civilized West and an ignorant, savage East. Though they claim to make natives like West, they never want them to be equal to them. The natives who imitate English are left helpless as they are left in ambivalence.

Hybridity and Mimicry are important traits of postcolonial condition. Hybridity is the state of amalgamation of different cultures, languages and ideologies among people belonging to different ethnic groups in Postcolonial reality. The subordinate groups have an admiration towards the dominant ideology and their ways of life. So, they try to adopt certain elements into their life deliberately or accidentally. Later this becomes a part of their culture. Homi K Bhabha’s notion of hybridity occurs as result of colonizer/ colonized relationship. “It is significant that the productive capacities of this Third Space have a colonial or postcolonial provenance. For a willingness to descend into that alien territory. may open the way to conceptualizing an international culture, based not on exoticism of multiculturalism or the diversity of cultures, but on the inscription and articulation of cultures’ hybridity” (Bhabha 38).

Colonialism had a great influence in the attitudes of the people towards their mother land. Some people tried to resist like in the character of Okonkwo in *The Things Fall Apart*. while others adopted and assimilated to the foreign culture as evident in the novel *The Inheritance of Loss*. Westerners succeeded in convincing the Third World people to internalize the notion of oriental inferiority. They portrayed everything that belongs to Eastern as inferior. So they imitated and mimicked English culture, but they forgot the fact that through imitation they can never become Western native. They will be thrown to a

hybrid state where they lose their true identity as Indians and they can never become English in true sense. The result of imitation will always be ambivalence.

Neo-colonialism is the new method of dominance excreted by the Western world over Third world countries under the disguised forms of economic and social developments. They try to regain Western dominance through various governing policies, Multi National Co-operations, Scientific innovations and Global Policies. Very often the natives will be unaware about the consequences of these hidden motives. Western countries never allow the developing countries to reach up to them. So, the foreign policies are in a way restricting the freedom of Third world people. They are in a way closing the path of development.

Post colonialism reveals concealed impacts of colonial rule. Indigenous people lose their original selfhood as the internalized norms of inferiority rules over their sub-conscious. For them, identity is kept as a concern of question to be answered by the powerful ones. Third World natives open up themselves for any sort of assimilation and adaptation. They become “hybrids” of language, culture, life style, mannerisms and even thought process. They have to come out of the confined boundaries set by the colonial masters to realize their self-worth. Each language and culture has its own value. Third space should be respected and considered universally accepted as they also had a great lineage which was erased by colonial rule over the period of time. They have the right to claim for deep roots in their native lands. The influence of the foreign imperial power made them rootless. Only powerful roots can enable one to reach the zenith of his destination. Resuscitate the roots of past splendor to accelerate the enthusiasm to embrace the future with its full vigor is the most appreciative way to decolonize from the internalized norms.

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IMMIGRANT EXPERIENCES AND CHALLENGES IN “MRS. SEN’S” FROM JHUMPA LAHIRI’S *INTERPRETER OF MALADIES*

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Abstract

The research paper aims to shed light on the struggles faced by the first-generation involuntary woman immigrant Mrs. Sen to America through an arranged marriage and to interpret Mrs. Sen’s sufferings. Mrs. Sen experiences the loss of her identity and the feeling of rootlessness which leads to emotional conflicts. Mrs. Sen, the female protagonist of the short story ‘Mrs. Sen’s’, begins to build a microcosmic world of India through food, dress and behaviour in the small quarters in America. The research paper aims to uncover the struggles faced by the first-generation immigrant in America. Jhumpa Lahiri’s short story, “Mrs. Sen’s” is taken for the discussion.

Keywords: Isolation, Rootlessness, Identity Crisis, Malady, Memory.

Immigrant experiences are invariably the experiences related to displacement, cultural crisis, rootlessness, a feeling of alienation and marginalization caused due to triple disruption: loss of roots, linguistic diversity, and social dislocation. This movement of people is not free from conflict and violence. Immigrants have suffered the agonies of isolation and up-rootedness for generations and their tales have part of diasporic writing. The first-generation immigrants find it hard to mentally adjust to the alien culture and to form the new set up in the foreign place. They try to survive in their adapted land by creating alternative worlds in the form of nostalgia of the past and avoiding in all possible ways the process of socialization by clinging to their own culture. Their psyche craves for a space to be called as their homeland. They spend their time by indulging in nostalgia, for nostalgia sustains memory and it prevents the influence of the new culture.

Jhumpa Lahiri was born to Indian parents of Bengali descent in London. She was shifted to Rhode Island, USA along with her parents, at the age of three. Her education, marriage and profession happened in USA. Now she resides in Italy. Her timely visit to her ancestral home in Calcutta made her to know more about her roots and culture of Calcutta and the struggles and difficulties in surviving in America as an immigrant. She is the second-generation immigrant in America that enabled to shape characters in her fiction. Being born to an Indian family, she has to play two roles in America, inside the house as Indian and outside the house as American. She felt easy to adapt to the American lifestyle since she was acquainted with American way of living. Her mother insisted her to learn Bengali language and Indian culture in terms of food, dress and

behaviour. Lahiri emerged as a renowned diasporic writer with her debut collection of short stories *Interpreter of Maladies* written in 1999 which won her, the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction in 2000.

Jhumpa Lahiri's feminist narratives contain diverse female subjectivities, with gendered and the generational contexts of migration at the centre. Hybrid identity, cultural conflict, transnational survival, alienation and displacement are the common themes discussed in her works. Individualism and Collectivism are the two key dimensions of cultural variations. Harry C. Triandis, in his book *Individualism and Collectivism*, quotes in the preface that "In Collectivist cultures, people think of themselves as parts of their collectives and in most situations subordinate their personal goals to those of their collectives" and "In individualistic cultures people are more detached from their collectives. They feel autonomous, and their social behaviour maximizes enjoyment." Mrs. Sen, the eponymous character lives in the collectivist culture in Calcutta which embraces personal independence, shared responsibility, social harmony, and meeting social expectations.

Jhumpa Lahiri exposes the struggles and challenges of the first-generation immigrant, Mrs. Sen, a housewife living in America. Her migration to America is involuntary and she lives in the quarters of American University since her husband is always away from her. She advertises about her willingness to work as a babysitter outside the supermarket. She tries to fill the space of loneliness by taking a home job as a babysitter for Eliot, an eleven-year-old boy in her apartment. The central character in the short story "Mrs. Sen's" identifies herself as "Professor's wife, responsible and kind," she exercises no autonomy and self-defined identity. She introduces "Mr. Sen teaches mathematics at the university" (112) to Eliot's mother. Throughout the story from the beginning to the end she is mentioned as Mrs. Sen, an immigrant spouse. Mrs. Sen misses her motherland which is very obvious in the narrative. She tries to exhibit Indianness in every possible way. Food gives her agency and subjectivity to be an Indian in America.

Mrs. Sen represents Indian culture through her way of dressing and her etiquettes in the host country and enacts a role as cultural custodian. She decorates her quarters in the university in America in Indian style. "The TV and the telephone were covered by pieces of yellow fabric with scalloped edges" (112). She wears sari with different patterns in all occasion and she could perfectly centre part her braided hair which was shaded with crushed vermilion. Eliot wondered that she had cut her scalp. She explains that the vermilion must be on her forehead for the rest of her married days. Eliot compares vermilion to a wedding ring. The conversation between Mrs. Sen and Eliot creates a place to the interaction of two different cultures.

In Asian American Literature, food as a metaphor helps to radicalize subjectivity and reflects the issues of authenticity, assimilation and desire. It becomes a metaphor for the unspoken emotional bonds and aids to vocalize the emotions. “Food rises above its mundane function as a nutrient and becomes cultural sustenance” (Kunow 151). Mrs. Sen prepares food and distributes snacks which make her construct her own identity and assert her subjectivity as an Indian. Eliot enjoys watching Mrs. Sen while chopping the vegetables. The act of chopping vegetables and culinary preparation maintain a good relationship and disseminate culture across continent. She uses the blade from India which looks “like the prow of a Viking ship, sailing to battle in distant seas” (115).

The noiseless apartment makes her feel isolated. She bottles her emotions and lacks good sleep, “Here in this place where Mr. Sen has brought me, I cannot sometimes sleep in so much silence” (115). Eliot’s previous babysitters are inappropriate in their food preparations. The first babysitter sipped whiskey from the thermos and the second caretaker did not provide food for Eliot. Lahiri differentiates former American babysitters of Eliot from Mrs. Sen. Eliot enjoys her story and admires Mrs. Sen’s love for abundant communal gathering. She crafts her identity through culinary performance and her ability to carry ethnic identity of connecting with others.

In *Culinary Fictions: Food in the South Asian Diasporic Culture*, Anita Mannur points out that the culinary preparation creates “a discursive space able to critically interrogate the nostalgic and affective rendering of food in relationship to racial and ethnic identity” (12). The immigrants experience food as their symbolic value. The culinary preparation enables the person to experience agency in the midst of a new environment. The two things that make Mrs. Sen happy are receiving letters from India and cooking fish. She explains Eliot’s mother about the preparation of a dish with bhethki fish while serving a tuna croquette to her. Mrs. Sen has grown up by eating fish twice a day. “She added that in Calcutta people ate fish first thing in the morning, last thing before bed, as a snack after school if they are lucky” (123). Eliot and Ms. Sen had a bad experience in the public transportation while carrying the blood lined fish bag between their feet. The smell bothered the other passengers.

Mr. Sen adapts easily to the host country’s culture and fits in the individualist culture. As a Maths Professor in the local university in America, he insists his wife to get driving license. The driving license will provide a freedom and mobility to Mrs. Sen. “Mr. Sen says that once I receive my license, everything will improve” (119). He tries his best to make his wife independent. Mrs. Sen remembers her life in Calcutta where she has a driver in her home. Eliot encourages Mrs. Sen to secure a driving license which will provide her autonomy to go anywhere. Mrs. Sen’s immediate reply to Eliot that she could

be able to drive to Calcutta, proves that she remains unconvinced by the legal document. Mrs. Sen understands her spatial difference between her homeland and her host country.

The cultural displacement of the diasporas consciously or unconsciously creates the search for home in their host country and tries to build it with similarity as left behind. Memory evokes nostalgia of the homeland and the promise of finding it again in the different space makes life possible. Said articulates the pain experienced by the dislocated beings, "It is the unhealable rift between a human being and a native place, between the self and its true home: its essential sadness can never be surmounted" (173). The cooking of fish in America makes her feel home. The love for cooking even supersedes her fear of driving. Mrs. Sen receives a call announcing the arrival of tasty halibut in the market. She is busy in his work. She plans to buy the fish by herself. She answers Eliot that they are going to get the fish. With excitement she starts the car and a minor accident occurs. The relationship with Eliot cuts off when she tries to liberate herself from her fear of driving.

Lahiri deliberately misses the noun in the title "Mrs. Sen's" to indicate the voidness of the eponymous character, Mrs. Sen. The dominancy in the form of culture and her patriarchal husband suppresses her. She depicts painful experience of the first-generation immigrant. Being an immigrant herself, Lahiri focuses the emotional turmoil of immigrant's life in the new world and interprets maladies in the dislocated individuals. Mrs. Sen lacks the strong support system when she is dislocated in the individualist culture to withstand the obstacles. Thus, the moral support is needed to find home in the dislocated place.

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HEGEMONIC HYBRID ATTITUDE OF CONTEMPORARY YOUTH IN CHETAN BHAGAT'S *2 STATES: THE STORY OF MY MARRIAGE*

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Abstract

Chetan Bhagat occupies a unique place among the contemporary Indian English writers. He portrays the present-day scenario in its true colour through his hyperactive postmodern youth. He voices forth the integration of values and cultures by focusing on the hybrid culture and hetero topics pace in which the materialistic youth of today indulge themselves in quest of final solute ions for their untold miseries and undefined destinations. Bhagat, a creative writer with social concerns, brings out the depressed mindset of common men who ruin their own indigenous culture, tradition and lifestyle in their lust for power, privilege and wealth. Marriage, the wedding lock, locks not only the two families involved but also the whole cyber-age society with new issues at all levels. Like old wine in a new bottle, the issues of alienation, rootlessness, resentment and quest motif are again and again born out of happy occasions like love and marriage. Fear of discrimination and demarcation forces the hyperactive pragmatic youth aspiring for a better position to put up himself in a hegemonic space and hybrid culture. The present paper attempts to analyse the issues of the cyber-age youth who lost himself in a heterotopic space through his hegemonic hybrid attitude while making important decisions in his life with special reference to Bhagat's novel *2 States*.

Keywords: Hybrid Culture, Hegemony, Cyber Age, Indigenous Culture, Heterotopic Space, Postmodernism.

Chetan Bhagat is one of the most prominent writers of the present contemporary period who combines social realism and psychological conflicts of the postmodern men in his fiction. The ground realities of today's India are very harsh and bleak, where men and women do not find any time to stand and stare at the finer aspects of life. The indigenous culture, tradition and ruling class in the name of materialism are corrupted. The lust for power, authority and money makes others suffer. The pragmatic men find themselves in a heterotopic space where they must undergo so many crises in their attempts to find fulfilment and meaning for their life. Heterotopia is an idea in human geography elaborated by philosopher Michel Foucault to describe places and spaces that function in non-hegemonic conditions. He uses this term to describe spaces that have more layers of meaning or relationships. The modern society and changing social values

often throw up challenges at the human attitudes and the behavioural pattern of individuals as well as groups which are against the norms and expectations of the society.

The postmodern characters develop a sense of alienation, rootlessness, resentment and quest motif that a pragmatic man undergoes in the contemporary cosmopolitan Indian society. To escape from the stressful longing for love, compassion, and commitment the contemporary men want to be cynical. This attitude of pragmatic men is a common thread binding all the works of Bhagat. The present paper attempts to pivot on the aspiration, hope, ambition of the postmodern men along with their affliction, torture, discomfort that cause mental and emotional suffering to them. The feeling of rejection by society is deeply rooted in their minds and how to overcome these challenges in order to fix their identity in this contemporary world is a question. The characters with enormous pressures imposed by the frantic and competitive forces, subsequently suffers from psychological disorders and imbalances.

In *2 States: The Story of My Marriage* Krish, the protagonist is always in a predicament of choosing what he really wants. He is designated in Citibank and sent to Chennai. However, he wishes to become a writer. He is not much satisfied with his current job. This quest for self is a characteristic of a pragmatic youth in the postmodern context. Though the official time is seven-thirty, Bala, Krish's boss forces him to arrive at seven regularly. The boss says, "yes, but when I was your level, I came at seven" (2S 84). Krish has to obey his boss's words even though he is cleverer than his boss. Professional life becomes more challenging when one gets terminated for not achieving his fixed goals. Krish writes "I remembered how we'd finish lunch in campus and snuggle up for our afternoon nap. It is official, life after college sucks" (86). The term "feeling nostalgic" is more commonly triggered by something that reminds an individual of an event or item from their past.

Both North Indians and South Indians experience cultural differences in their professional lives. Ananya's father is not promoted just because he is a South Indian. His North Indian boss, Verma, forces him to prepare company plan presentation that he has never practised in his life. In Citibank, Bala, a South Indian finds himself in trouble due to his misguided plan that resulted insignificant loss. and therefore, he is to be punished by a North Indian manager, Anil Mathur.

Krish stays at Ananya's home to make a presentation. Ananya's father provides Krish with his own night clothes. It takes him back to his past experience of wearing Neha's father's shirt. Krish pleads his father "Dad, please. I want your cooperation. If you meet her father, he may reconsider... 'Because I love her. And I don't want her to go away'" (165). He blows Krish for arguing and also beats his mother for defending Krish.

Soon the characters develop a sort of resentment on one another. In *2 States*, Bhagat creates an eagerness to know about Krish's father as he generally avoids the topic of his father. Until he meets Guruji in Pondicherry Ashram the question remains unanswered. Guruji transports him to a different realm and asks him to release the heavy chapters of his father by using the technique of story within a story to explain the mystery of son – father relationship in the postmodern setting. The heterotopic space that these pragmatic contemporary men face mirrors their condition and at the same time distort, unsettle or invert other virtual spaces they have to face in their attempt to find fulfilment and meaning in their structureless life.

The fiction shows how in today's India, identity of an individual is determined through the expectations of society. Bhagat is undoubtedly a gifted writer in handling the major issues that are related to youth and their concern in particular. These novels are now considered as a must read novel of all ages. Bhagat induces positive spirit through his works. He also influences a lot of youngsters by producing a positive vibration in their minds and conveying a message through his works as destiny is not existed but created. It is also about how one can succeed even when life takes a completely different turn from the original plan.

The postmodern youth portrayed by Chetan Bhagat depict the contemporary socio-economic culture of hegemonic hybrid society and its far-reaching impacts on the coming generations. They have stressed the necessity of regenerating the dead spirit and self-respect and shedding off the oppressive influence of corporate world. Bhagat thus stands unique in handling the present-day issues of cyber age youth in his creative works of art entitled with some numbers implying the materialistic world of today.

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FROM PRECARIITY TO POWER: VULNERABILITY AND RESISTANCE IN OCTAVIA BUTLER'S *PARABLE OF THE SOWER*

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Abstract

This paper deals with vulnerability, precarity, and resistance in Octavia Butler's *Parable of the Sower* with the help of Judith Butler's and Martha Fineman's theories. In analyzing the characters manoeuvre through the dangerous life and overthrowing the dominant narratives, suggests that being aware of the vulnerability, whether for an individual or the society as a whole, is a powerful instrument to fight against oppressive structures. Combining theoretical approaches with the accounts of the novel, the paper argues that embracing vulnerability leads to defiance and strength in an unpredictable universe, thus adding to the discussion about resistance, vulnerability, and social change. Furthermore, the paper also analyses the way people experience precarity as a result of vulnerability.

KeyWords: Vulnerability, Power, Resistance, Precarity, Social Change.

In the book *Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence*, Judith Butler explores the concept of precarious life. Butler explains the connection between vulnerability and precarity thus: "the vulnerability to dispossession, poverty, insecurity, and harm that constitutes a precarious position in the world itself leads to resistance" (23). She reviews the fragility and vulnerability of life as a result of violence, especially within world wars and terrorist activities. Butler delineates precarity thus: "Precarity also characterises that politically induced condition of maximised precariousness for populations exposed to arbitrary state violence who often have no other option . . ." (*Frames* 34). Butler questions who is considered human and whose lives are deemed valuable and grievable. Judith Butler suggests that overcoming precarity can be achieved by accepting vulnerability and embracing the interconnectedness with others. She contends that vulnerability does not make one weak but it is an essential part of being human. By accepting our defenselessness, we admit that we are dependent on others and the outer world. As Pramod K. Nayar articulates, "each of us is constituted politically in part by virtue of the social vulnerability of our bodies—as a site of desire and physical vulnerability" (*Ecological* 65). As Butler argues, vulnerability is not merely being open to hurt or abuse but also the ability of intersubjectivity; it includes our ubiquitous capacity to

influence and be influenced. It is through such openness and receptivity that people are able to act, or interact with the world. Butler challenges the dichotomy between agency and vulnerability, emphasising that they are intertwined and mutually constitutive.

In the context of resistance, Butler suggests that public gatherings and protests can embody the demand to end precarity by exposing the vulnerability of bodies to failing infrastructural conditions. By coming together and collectively expressing their vulnerability, individuals can challenge oppressive systems and demand change. By accepting vulnerability and recognising the interconnectedness, Butler argues that one can build solidarity and create spaces for collective action. She notes, “An acknowledgement of vulnerability, both shared and produced, can open a space of interconnection as well as a platform for responsiveness and resistance” (*Vulnerability* 80). Rather than relying on paternalistic institutions or victimhood narratives, she encourages initiatives that empower individuals and offer alternative resources for self-determination. This paper argues that the ideas of Judith Butler such as Precarity and Vulnerability in Resistance are exactly reflected by Octavia E. Butler. To prove this, the study analyses *Parable of the Sower* in three sections: ‘States of Vulnerability’, ‘Realising Vulnerability’, and ‘Interconnectedness as Resistance’, that denotes the three steps in which the characters move from precarious conditions to powerful positions.

As Pramod K. Nayar notes, vulnerability is a “biological condition, the result of our corporeal nature that makes it possible for us to be open to injury. That we are all equally vulnerable in the age of terrorism and weapons of mass destruction” (*Extreme* 130). In *Parable of the Sower* by Octavia E. Butler, several instances of precarity are vividly depicted, reflecting the instability and vulnerability of the characters’ lives. These instances align with Judith Butler’s concept of precarious life and vulnerability. The present study categorises the states of vulnerability resulting in precarity into Destitution, Violence, Decline of Health Care, and Environmental Disasters.

A dystopian future is depicted in Octavia E. Butler’s *Parable of the Sower* as a landscape that embodies despair, violence, and struggle for survival. It paints the picture of people living on society’s fringes a pair ragged, terrified and filthy poor which implies the rampant poverty in town. The narrator vividly illustrates the plight of the precariat in the description: “Where had this pair of ragged, terrified, filthy people come from?” (204). This image of barrenness highlights the harsh conditions that are now standard living for this dystopian future. Butler describes how there are no basic necessities and hygiene in this world of dystopia. The adjectives used to describe the characters and their possessions as filthy, stinking would underline a very poor hygiene standard with which these people are surrounded. She describes the people in the following manner: “Almost

everyone was filthy. Their bags and bundles and packs were filthy. They stank” (204). This picture highlights how a struggling society could not even meet the bare minimum requirements. The description, “there were still plenty of poor people around—local paupers and refugees . . .” (204). Also reveals the precarious conditions under which the people live.

In the novel, scarcity of food is another precarity that the characters have to face. Children fell prey to an awful situation that made them cry, play, sit on their haunches or do anything else but eat. Very few ate while walking. Two individuals drank water from canteens. They gulped rapidly, in hiding as though they were doing something forbidden or outrageous. It is revealed as the narrator describes a pathetic scene where “Children cried, played, squatted, did everything except eat. Almost no one ate while walking. I saw a couple of people drink from canteens. They took quick, furtive gulps, as though they were doing something shameful—or something dangerous” (127). This reveals the shortage of food and water, as well as shame by just surviving on basic living needs.

Butler’s narrative is full of repeated instances of violence. Aspects such as the sound of gunshots and dog threats not only indicate a society that is dangerous but one in which danger lurks at every corner. The narrator mentions that the sound of gunshots and menacing dogs are perpetual causes of terror. She mentions, “I heard a lot of gunfire—individual shots and short bursts of automatic weapons fire. That last and the dogs worried me, scared me” (135). This constant atmosphere of violence also contributes to the feeling that no one is secure and threatened with danger on a daily basis. The novel also reveals the theft and abuse, most specifically among its weakest members. The dread of being robbed, including by children is a living proof what an atmosphere of desperation prevails in this society. The protagonist’s anxiety regarding being assaulted and robbed in the sentence, “Nobody’s safe... Little kids, skinny and big-eyed will make off with all your money, water, and food!” (130) indicates the pervasiveness of a survival mentality in social life.

Parable of the Sower also deals with a constant need for personal safety vigilance. The characters’ attitude towards travelling, always alert for possible attacks is indicative of the pervasive dangers in their universe. The protagonist reveals the precarious life by her descriptions of the streets: “We ride down the middle of the cracked street, and the kids come out and stand along the curb to stare at us... I think if there were only one or two of us, or if they couldn’t see our guns, they might try to pull us down and steal our bikes, our clothes, our shoes, whatever.” (11) The prospect of ambush and robbery, especially by local kids is symbolic to show that their condition was constantly tense. The normalisation of violence is also depicted by the narrator as she mentions,

“Strange how normal it’s become for us to lie on the ground and listen while nearby, people try to kill each other” (195-196). This shows the precarious condition where violence is a normalcy where people murder each other for food, money, and safety.

Butler’s *Parable of the Sower* describes the poor healthcare system in dystopic future with the image of diseases and injuries that are spread over a society where medical attention or even basic hygiene is severely lacking. Butler describes the suffering of street poor in his novel because they cut each other from ears to arms and legs thus: “They cut off each other’s ears, arms, legs . . . They carry untreated diseases and festering wounds. They have no money to spend on water to wash with so even the unwounded have sores” (11-12). This passage highlights health condition, where even simple wounds remain without treatment that results in the outbreak of abscess conditions. The scarcity of resources necessary for basic hygiene, including water makes the already existing sores and infections worse to sign how indifferent people are towards human needs. The novel also reveals the consequences of a cholera epidemic in general suggesting how miserable people’s life is. Butler brings up: “There’s cholera spreading in southern Mississippi and Louisiana . . . There are too many poor people—illiterate, jobless, homeless, without decent sanitation or clean water” (40-41). This definition indicates a significant public health epidemic that is attributed to the lack of clean water and proper sanitation as cholera spread. The situation is aggravated by deep poverty, unemployment and lack of shelter creating a haven for such diseases to prevail.

Collapse from exhaustion or illness is an occurrence that happens frequently through the novel, thus making this brutal environment a serious physical burden on many of its inhabitants. For instance, Butler outlines a scene where “A woman alongside us collapsed... The woman sat where she had fallen for a few seconds, then lurched to her feet and began walking again” (127). This incident reveals the ceaseless stress on people as they struggle to stay alive in an environment, where such holiday or medicine is unavailable. But such images show a society that has reached its physical limits where collapsing from exhaustion or sickness become common. The recurring cases of diseases, like measles in the novel’s environment demonstrate how critical is a healthcare crisis. According to Butler, “In New York and New Jersey, a measles epidemic is killing people. Measles!” (41). This revelation is especially remarkable because measles, a disease that can be prevented by vaccination in most cases puts lives at risk as healthcare systems fail due to the population’s failure to access basic medical support. This revival represents one step backward in the public health progress, emphasising even further that living standards have declined.

Additionally, the novel discusses malnutrition and birth defects especially in regards to drug addiction. Butler describes, “Most of the babies did die from the drugs or accidents or not having enough to eat or being left alone so much . . . or from being sick. They were always getting sick. Some of them were born sick” (138-9). This passage gives insights into the dismal predicament of most vulnerable who are born in an environment where they receive no attention, nutrition and fall sick more often than not aggravated by abuse to substances. Malnutrition and poor care result in a high infant mortality rate as well as an abundance of congenital anomalies.

Ecoprecarity is one of the types of precarious events, the characters in the novel experience, which paints an apocalyptic picture of earth that has been destroyed by environmental degradation leading to human society. Pramod K. Nayar defines ecoprecarity as “the precarious lives that humans lead in the process and event of ecological disaster, and the increasing precarious state of the environment itself” (*Ecoprecarity* 2). The novel vividly demonstrates some essential aspects of this ecological instability, giving an acute analysis of an environmentally despairing future. The scarcity of water along with the ensuing violence is one of what is typically known as key elements regarding ecoprecarity in this novel. In turn, Butler states that “The cost of water has gone up again . . . Peddlers sell water to squatters and the street poor . . . Peddlers are being found with their throats cut and their money and their handtrucks stolen” (16). This passage evokes vivid images of water scarcity and the anguish this brings, where by then life-giving element turns into a commodity, making violence and crime commonplace. The sudden spike in the price of water demonstrates a major distortion on resource distribution and indeed turning this natural source into an expensive commodity capable of causing social disorder, rampant violence as mode survival.

The novel also discusses the increased danger of fire incidence within its dystopian foundations. Butler describes a scene where a young child inadvertently starts a fire: “People worry so much about fire, but the little kids will play with it if they can. We were lucky with this fire. Amy Dunn, three years old, managed to start it in her family’s garage” (24-25). This example shows that in the case of a high-risk malo environment, dry and unstable conditions make it much easier to catch fire. A significant problem that contributes to the worsening of fire hazards is a combination between environment damage and ignorance towards safe conduct around fires or lack thereof education even more in cases with children often resulted into regular, dangerous raging events within this word changing at any time. The earthquake is mentioned as taking place on Friday 27 August, in the year 2027. The narrator characterises the earthquake as a powerful one, when the ground is rumbling and shaking. As the quake rocks people yell and some fall to

thier knees or even down. The protagonist assists an elderly man who had fallen down after the earthquake as she mentions, "It hit early this morning just as we were beginning the day's walk, and it was a strong one. The ground itself gave a low, grating rumble like buried thunder. It jerked and shuddered, then seemed to drop. I'm sure it did drop, though I don't know how far" (163). This implies that earthquakes are frequent in the novel.

In *The Parable of the Sower*, there are cases when characters become conscious that they are vulnerable. For instance, when the main character Lauren thinks about hazards and uncertainties on their journey that demand caution she notes: "Nobody's safe... Little kids, skinny and big-eyed will make off with all your money, water, and food! I know" (130). She also notes that predators present a never ending danger, and therefore must be ready to prepare for defense. Lauren explains the vulnerability thus: "Predators. They looked around a lot, stared at people, and the people looked away" (128). She also recognises the dangers of illness or injury where there is no medical attention yet a slow death due to lack of care. This consciousness points out that the protagonists are vulnerable to even when they find themselves in an unfavorable and unpredictable environment.

Another example is when Harry puts in question the concept of presuming guilt even before its innocence has been proven. He also doubts the necessity of being careful around other people and suggests that they cannot prove their innocence. This indicates that he has foreseen the danger and is wary of entrusting others. These cases show that the novelesque characters are conscious of their frailty and disease to which they may be exposed in a post-apocalyptic setting.

In *The Parable of the Sower*, characters interact and appear to be connected through their actions and relations. In spite of the differences, however, they depend on each other for support and survival in a cruel world. They organise, barter resources and collaborate to overcome obstacles. This interdependence can be seen in many ways. The theme of interdependence plays an important role in the story as it comes up at every turn. Even in a dystopian world of the characters living amidst anarchy and grim life, community spirit thrives between them. One is viewed as supporting fellow populace while one relies on another for some assistance or solace from pain which characterises their lives. This interdependence is seen multiple times throughout the text.

The society's spirit of mutual help and sympathy was embodied in the assistance given to Mrs. Sims by her neighbours. After the robbery, as Lauren mentions, "Everyone brought Mrs. Sims things after the robbery, in spite of the way she is. Food, clothing, money. ... We took up collections for her at church" (19). In even a world full of threats and lack, this act of kindness marks the common recognition in vulnerability as well as

the necessity to be there for each other during difficult times. Lauren's establishment of the Earthseed community exemplifies humans deep desire to belong together, with similar convictions even during hard times. The concept of "God is Change" binds the population of Earthseed, providing a reference point to understand whatever happens in their ever-shifting world. Lauren explains the rules of Earthseed in the following manner: "All successful life is adaptable, opportunistic, tenacious, interconnected, and fecund. Understand this" (91). The community provides a place for deliberation, knowledge exchange and mutual help rightly demonstrating humans' ability to form ties of solidarity in response to existential threats.

Thus, Octavia E. Butler's *The Parable of the Sower* undoubtedly serves as an excellent reflection with Judith Butler's theories on precarity and vulnerability especially regarding acts that are resistance in nature among vulnerable people. In Octavia Butler's narrative, the community is depicted as closely connected and supported by each other even under conditions of collapse to society and a heavy struggle with extreme suffering. The interdependence of characters is not only responsible for survival; it also amounts to defiance against the depersonalising powers inherent in a totalitarian society. Judith Butler's idea of communal action and resistance from shared vulnerability is captured in the common struggle, suffering, as well as foundation of Earthseed community. These features emphasise the innate human tendency to interact and work with others, showing that what can be viewed as a weakness is actually capable of building strength and endurance. The novel is, therefore, an eloquent image of the principle that seeing through our vulnerability together can build sustainable safe unions and consequently emphasise how power comes from empathy as well as interconnectedness.

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INTERPRETATION OF INDIA'S MULTI-SECTOR SOCIETY IN THE NOVELS OF VIKRAM SETH: AN APPRAISAL

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Abstract

Preserving history, representing contemporary culture, and predicting the future; all depend heavily on the writer's societal stand point. Seth's essays often deal with broken relationships and a lack of confidence in human potential. Vikram Seth is fully aware of the actions and situations that have threatened the system's ability to maintain social cohesion. His writings paint a picture of the contemporary world in the twenty-first century. In addition, he is drawn to intimate partnerships and reciprocal understandings among friends, family, and lovers. This article explores the multicultural perspective seen in the writings of Vikram Seth.

Keywords: Multi-plural Society, Contemporary World, Social Life, Cultural Outlook.

The fields of culture and society are referred to as "socio-cultural" together. A society consists of a collection of individuals belonging to the same species. Furthermore, a civilization's collective behavior is all that constitutes culture. A particular civilization's language, psychology, sociology, gender issues, racism, hierarchy, economy, culture, tradition, custom, belief, and values are all examined from a socio-cultural point of view. To investigate these concepts, one can apply Marxist theory, socio-cultural theory, cultural psychology, and queer theory. These concepts are employed in Vikram Seth's *A Suitable Boy* to depict the sociocultural perspective of India.

Interaction with various others helps a person to pick up on their language, manners, behavior, and lifestyle, and as a result, he acts in accordance with that information, which is known as inter-psychology. Unlike inter-psychology, intra-psychology allows a person to talk and educate themselves. He takes action driven by his own knowledge, wish, and expectation. Indian culture and its cultural significance are authentically depicted by Vikram Seth.

The novel *A Suitable Boy* features characters that exhibit both intra- and inter-psychological traits. Thus, the study makes use of socio-cultural theory to investigate how Indian culture is portrayed in the book *A Suitable Boy*. This theory could account for the rational conduct of Muslims and Hindus in Indian culture. Language, racism, culture, belief, political system, and prejudice are only a few of the sociocultural elements of this tale that are vividly and multi-dimensionally projected in this book. *Suitable Boy* is a historical narrative that aids readers in understanding the social and

political life of India. According to Pandey, this much-discussed work is among the longest novels ever written in the English language in a single volume, combining social, political, and historical observations.

Purva Pradesh is a made-up town that is reminiscent of Malgudi and is situated in post-independence India in the novel. Brahmpur, the capital of Purva Pradesh, as well as Delhi, Calcutta, Kanpur, and Lucknow serve as the novel's settings. In the Purva Pradeshi district of Brahmpur, it portrays the lives of four interwoven families. Seth delves into the cultural, religious, and social customs of four Indian families: the Khans, Chatterjis, Mehra, and Kapoors. Of the four families, the fourth is Muslim while the first three are Hindu.

Language is very essential in society since it expresses the identity of the community. No one can reach the pinnacle of achievement worldwide without language. Vikram Seth does a fantastic job at capturing the unique lexicon and dialect of each character. English, Hindi, Bengali, and Urdu were all commonly spoken during the post-independence era. The author may underline the significance of language, and when the story calls for it, he employs real language to give the readers an accurate image.

In order to portray India's sociocultural life which is renowned for its diversity, the author thus introduces the four different families and their respective tongues. Regional flavor is added to the languages by Seth. Bengali, Urdu, Hindi, and English words are frequently used by *A Suitable Boy*. English also has the character of regional languages. In *A Suitable Boy*, Khan the Nawab of Baitar plays the role of Zamindar. Through the character of Khan, Vikram Seth has portrayed the difficult circumstances faced by farmers and lower-class individuals. A true picture of India is offered by presenting both the Zamindari system and the Indian political system simultaneously. The greatest viewpoint for outlining the living situations of farmers is Marxist. They worked hard, but nobody seemed to be paying attention. The little money they received was not enough to cover their expenses for the day. The Zamindar's royal birth, ethnicity, and religion make them heirs to the throne.

Following independence, there were numerous attempts by authorities to dismantle the Zamindari System; Mahesh Kapoor's acts demonstrated this attempt. The Zamindar's designated clerks kept poor land records, which led to the abolition of the Zamindari system. The Indian government and the Zamindars were both duped by the dishonest clerks.

Poor farmers were forced to plow the land by the landowners, known as zamindars. They gave them a really meager pay. Mahesh Kapoor tried to take the zamindar's land because they were not making any effort to develop it. Mahesh

Kapoor, therefore, took advantage of his position to stop Zamindars from exerting their democratic authority against the lower classes of peasants. Along the way, he forfeited some people, including his Baitar comrade, the Nawab Sahib. Mahesh Kapoor thought it was a price he had to pay because: "He had witnessed firsthand the lack of output and resulting hunger, the lack of investment in land renovation, the worst types of feudal arrogance and subservience, and the arbitrary persecution of the weak and the unhappy by the average landlord's agents and muscle-men" (ASB 283).

The situation, as portrayed by Vikram Seth, was advantageous to the lower working class and disadvantageous to the royal Zamindars. Landowners of the upper class felt that their throne had been usurped by the Congress Party and its supporters. After Gandhiji's passing, the Congress party which had emerged victorious in the previous election strove to contain the mob. They did, however, succeed in giving the lower classes their independence. India's lower classes comprised the majority of the population in the 1950s. Consequently, Nehru and other independence warriors battled valiantly to grant complete liberty to the underclass.

In India, the wealthy take part in a range of celebrations. Lower caste members are not allowed to participate in or attend those celebrations. In Indian marriages, people from lower castes are frequently overlooked. Hindu marriages involve a number of customs, to which all relatives are cordially welcomed. Aristocratic families throw extravagant parties for the wedding ceremony, but the lower classes are not allowed to attend the feast held at the marriage hall. Unaware of it, Lata's husband Haresh asked shoemaker Jagat Ram to attend his wedding.

Living circumstances for lower-class individuals were appalling, and caste discrimination kept them from interacting with upper-class individuals. During the wedding, Jagat Ram was there. Kedarnath, Veena's husband, saw him and urged him to come along. He requested Kedarnath to congratulate Haresh Sahib on his behalf and to offer him a small shoe box wrapped in brown paper as a gift. Jagat Ram knew himself well, both his decency and his limits. Only a short while he was there. As quickly as possible, he returned from the wedding. Most social events, including weddings and festivals, are reserved for the elite. Knowing all these details, scheduled caste member Jagat Ram left the spot where the upper class people were having their feast celebration without further ado. Due to their lower caste status, Jagat Ram and Kachheru suffered humiliation.

At Misri Mandi, a popular Brahmpur site, the Ramlila was well-known. Jagat Ram argued before the Ramlila committee that reserved castes and lower castes were only allowed to play supporting roles, while upper castes were allowed to play heroic roles. Kedarnath warned in the following year that all jobs might be filled by members

of lower castes. Jagat Ram understood nothing will be resolved from his first political venture. During his early years, he had experienced a lot. Everything that he went through in this world shaped him into a philosopher. Jagat Ram believed that people like him being excluded from religious rites was only one of the many atrocities that occur in the violent and cruel world.

After independence, women found it difficult to leave the house, even though many of the women who had fought for freedom had lost their lives in the conflict. Vikram Seth depicts the misfortune of women in Indian society with exquisite representations of female characters. He depicts women from other social groups as prostitutes in addition to mothers and daughters, such as the wife of Kachheru, Muslim ladies, and Hindu women. Vikram Seth brings to life a faultless cast of 1950s women, including Mrs. Rupa Mehra, Mrs. Mahesh Kapoor, Lata, Savita, Veena, Malathi, Veena, Begum Abida Khan, Saeeda Bai, and Meenakshi Chatterji. Talking about feminism without taking into account of the patriarchal culture seems to be fragmenting the notion. The patriarchal system is prominent in *A Suitable Boy*.

Indian culture allows courtesans to go anywhere, meet anybody, live with a huge number of people, and do everything they desire. This is in contrast to the constraints placed on family women's activities. Landlords valued and took advantage of courtesans. This reveals the cruelty of the patriarchal culture. Protecting their own women behind the four walls, the men exploited the lives of the silent female in public. Receiving entertainment from a courtesan's singing is a common custom in India. The well-respected person takes pleasure in showing off his wealth by hosting prostitutes at home. All the males complimented her every time she sang because she was a courtesan. She was hated by women who believed she was seducing their sons, brothers, and husbands. Gazing down through the holes in a stick-screen, the ladies chatted about Saeeda Bai's exquisite attire and jewels.

A courtesan was never accorded a position of dignity in society, even though she was skilled in many artistic endeavors, like singing and dancing. Courtesans were now viewed as money-making machines in modern India, where brothels had taken the role of sophisticated houses. Both men and women in society treated them cruelly and humiliatingly. Having a mistress was a source of pride for a wealthy guy, who could readily tell others about his affair. In patriarchal society, women who were in relationships with men were viewed as wonderful and were so avoided. It's fantastic how Vikram Seth depicts prejudice and exploitation in the role of Saeeda Bai.

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INTRICACIES OF INSTITUTIONS, IDEOLOGY AND POWER: A MARXIST ANALYSIS OF MARGARET ATWOOD'S *THE TESTAMENTS*

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Abstract

Margaret Atwood's Booker Prize winning novel *The Testaments* (2019) reveals the complex relationships between institutions, ideology, and power in a dystopian society and serves as a powerful platform for Marxist critique. This article draws on Marxist theory to examine how Atwood's novel reveals the intricate interactions between institutionalized ideology, ideological state apparatuses (ISAs), ideological constructs, interpellation, resistance, class struggle and power dynamics as proposed by Louis Althusser.

Keywords: *ideology, power, resistance, constructs, subjects*

Introduction:

The theory of ideology and the Ideological State Apparatus (ISA) developed by Louis Althusser provide a framework for understanding how societies replicate and maintain their prevailing ideologies. By using this theory to examine Margaret Atwood's *The Testaments*, readers may discover how writers use their stories and characters to interact with and subvert ideological frameworks. In order to analyze how Atwood's novel illustrates the complex relationships between Louis Althusser's theories of institutionalized ideology, ideological state apparatuses (ISAs), ideological constructions, interpellation, resistance, class struggle, and power dynamics, this article relies on Marxist analysis and it sheds light on the characters' intricate negotiations inside a repressive ideological context.

Althusser's Theory of Ideology and Ideological State Apparatus:

Ideology as a System of Representations: According to Louis Althusser, ideology is a system of representations that shapes people's views of reality rather than just a collection of ideas. Authors of modern novels often illustrate and question dominant beliefs via the use of characters, places, and events. He postulates three stages of ideology: 1) "Ideology represents the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence" (Althusser 162). 2) "Ideology has a material existence" (Althusser 165). 3) "Ideology interpellates individuals as subjects" (Althusser 170).

Ideological State Apparatuses (ISA): According to Althusser, ISAs are organizations that support and help propagate ideologies. The non-physical elements of the ideological state apparatus include the political, legal, trade union, religious,

educational, familial, and communication systems. These systems operate on the basis of ideas. The physical structures that make up the repressive state apparatus - the courts, the administration, the army, the police, the government, the prisons, etc., - all rely on violence to carry out their functions (Althusser 143). Within the literary setting, ISAs may be seen as the many establishments that are portrayed in the novels, including the media, education, family, and religion.

Interpellation: Althusser presents the idea of interpellation, the process by which people pick up and assimilate ideological cues. The goal of society is to shape us into what is known as its "ideology." It assigns a role to the subjects, which is what is meant by the word "Interpellation." In novels, characters may undergo a process of interpellation, acknowledging or resisting the ideologies imposed on them by society. The characters in the novels react to societal expectations either conforming to or challenging established ideologies.

Class Struggle: Inherent in ideologies are contradictions and class conflict, according to Althusser's thesis. According to Althusser, the conflict between social classes occurs within the framework of ideology. Novelists often use characters who struggle with opposing beliefs or social expectations to examine these paradoxes. The characters in the novels deal with issues of power hierarchies, socioeconomic differences, and ideological disagreements.

Individuals as Subjects: Althusser suggests that individuals occupy subject positions within ideological structures. According to Althusser, the process of interpellation involves the person being recognized and addressed as a free subject, with the purpose of willingly obeying the commands of the Subject. This means that the individual voluntarily accepts their subordination and independently carries out the acts and behaviors associated with their subjection. (Lenin 123) In novels, characters can be analyzed in terms of the subject positions they occupy and how these positions shape their identities and relationships. This article presents these concepts analyzing the novel *The Testaments* by Margaret Atwood.

The Testaments, authored by Margaret Atwood and published in 2019, functions as a continuation of her renowned dystopian novel *The Handmaid's Tale*. The characters provide insights on how they navigate their roles within an ideological framework. "The government of Gilead uses the guise of sacrifice to justify its oppressive rule and political agenda, enabling it to promote itself as a superior nation" (Christou 415).

Institutionalized Ideology: Gilead is a civilization characterized by a well established ideology that regulates all aspects of existence. According to Althusser's theory of ISA, institutions have a role in transmitting and strengthening ideology. *The*

Testaments portrays Gilead's institutions, such as the Aunts, Eyes, and Commanders, as explicit illustrations of ideological state apparatuses. The Aunts indoctrinate and exercise authority over the handmaids, so contributing to the continued propagation of Gilead's ideals. *The Testaments* portrays Gilead, a dystopian state, as a striking example of institutionalized ideology. The Aunts, Eyes, and Commanders serve as the Ideological State Apparatuses (ISAs) that uphold and strengthen the ideals of Gilead. According to Althusser, ideology exists in a tangible form. Gilead's institutions play a role in spreading and making the regime's repressive ideology seem normal.

Interpellation and Subjects: The principle of interpellation, as proposed by Althusser, is clearly seen in Gilead, as people are called upon to assume their respective subject roles. The Handmaids, Marthas, and Wives have distinct duties within the hierarchical hierarchy, and their identities are determined by their respective positions. The characters engage in a process of negotiating their roles and places as they struggle with the expectations placed on them, which demonstrates their adoption of Gilead's ideology. The principle of interpellation, as defined by Althusser, is clearly observable in the society of Gilead, as people are summoned into their predefined subject roles. The Handmaids, Marthas, and Wives are assigned particular responsibilities and their identities are influenced by their places in the social order via a process called interpellation. The process of individuals internalizing roles demonstrates the effectiveness of Gilead's ideological state machinery in influencing and changing their personal identities. Atwood writes, "You are a transitional generation, said Aunt Lydia. It is the hardest for you. We know the sacrifices you are being expected to make" (*The Testaments*, 15). Aunt Lydia's statements demonstrate the characters' recognition of their changing positions and their ability to adapt within the growing ideological environment.

Resistance and Rebellion: Althusser recognizes the potential for opposition to exist within ideological frameworks. Characters such as Aunt Lydia exemplify this opposition in *The Testaments*. Aunt Lydia says, "Fly well, my messengers, my silver doves, my destroying angels," on the last pages of her work. "Fly safely, land safely" (*The Testaments*, 392). In other words, take the information you have gathered over the years, your doves of freedom, and the knowledge that may demolish Gilead with you with you. Aunt Lydia, although enforcing Gilead's ideology, participates in subversive operations, skillfully exploiting the system to further her personal agenda. This dual position demonstrates the subtle navigation of personal influence within a restrictive ideological system. Characters like as Aunt Lydia exemplify the capacity for defiance and rebellion within the strict confines of Gilead's ideology. Aunt Lydia, while a supporter of the dictatorship, participates in covert acts of defiance, skillfully exploiting the system for her own advantage. Althusser's concept highlights the idea that resistance might be present inside the same systems that aim to exert control.

Characters as Ideological Constructs: People are inherently influenced by ideology, which shapes their subjectivity. This ideology can be constructed through various means such as language (Lacan), discourse (Foucault), or ideology (Althusser). Individuals often adopt and advocate for these ideologies because they provide a sense of identity and security within their family and society. In *The Testaments*, Agnes and Daisy as the characters, provide viewpoints from both within and outside the oppressive society of Gilead. Their divergent experiences emphasize the influence of ideology on individual perspectives. Daisy's revelation of the truth and defiance against Gilead's narrative illustrate the process of navigating one's identity inside an ideological structure.

Agnes and Daisy, the characters in Atwood's novel, serve as perspectives through which readers see the process of navigating one's sense of self inside the ideological structure of Gilead. Althusser's notion of persons as ideological creations is shown by their divergent encounters. Agnes, who was brought up in Gilead, represents the process of internalizing ideology, while Daisy, who was reared outside Gilead, aggressively scrutinizes and contests the enforced narrative. "But still, she's here now, in a dress the colour of blood, but with her own hair – neither veiled nor snipped" (*The Testaments*, 441). Daisy's clothing represents her rejection of the conventional societal conventions of Gilead, emphasizing her exploration of her own identity outside the set standards.

Class Struggle and Power Dynamics: Althusser places significant emphasis on the existence of contradictions and the role of class struggle within ideology. The hierarchical structure of Gilead, where Commanders hold the highest position, exemplifies the power dynamics that are inherent in ideological systems. The characters engage in a process of negotiating their places within this hierarchical structure, whereby some individuals question and challenge the existing order, while others uphold and continue it. This negotiation reveals the intricacies of power dynamics inside Gilead. Steven Lukes defines power as the ability to exert control and influence over others, so limiting their options and ensuring their obedience. A possesses authority over B to the degree that A is capable of influencing B to engage in actions that B would not otherwise undertake (Lukes 16). According to David Carter, our actions that we perceive as being driven by free will are really in line with the prevailing worldview (63).

The structure of Gilead, where Commanders hold the highest position, incorporates aspects of class conflict and power dynamics. Characters engage in a process of navigating their roles within this hierarchy, where some characters uphold and support the existing order while others question and contest it. This negotiation, which is often filled with contradictions, exemplifies Althusser's focus on power

conflicts that are inherent in ideological frameworks. Let's look at some of the characters who represent the ideological state apparatus and ideological constructs with resistance and rebellion.

Aunt Lydia: Aunt Lydia has a significant part in the harsh rule of Gilead in *The Testaments*. In *The Testaments*, Aunt Lydia and two other prominent characters recount their experiences in a series of testimonials. These testimonies provide light on the inner workings of Gilead and the strategies it used to maintain its power. Additionally, they provide insights into the perceptions of Gilead's harsh government from the perspective of the outside world. Aunt Lydia, being fundamentally human, did succumb to physical cruelty. However, she had been meticulously devising a plan for vengeance from the beginning, which served as her anchor of sanity. She envisioned possessing an additional sensory organ, a metaphorical 'third eye', through which she saw without shedding tears. Behind this figurative eye, a part of her that was distinct from her core self strategized for the arduous journey that lay ahead. Her only objective was to seek retribution against those who had caused her harm.

Aunt Lydia convinces herself that she must persevere; she must feign her faith, exhibit intelligence, and use crafty tactics. She engages in all of these actions because she is aware that she has just two options available to her, and she choose "the path that is most commonly taken." However, there is a price to pay for it, as she clarifies, "it was filled with dead bodies, as roads of this kind often are" (*The Testaments*, 66). She plays a dual role as both a victim and a perpetrator while enforcing the ideology, skillfully managing the intricacies of her position. The narrative delves into her inner struggles, uncovering instances of defiance and rebellion as she tries to manipulate the system in order to ensure her own survival. The process of assigning responsibilities within the broader ideological framework exemplifies Althusser's concept of people functioning within and resisting ideological systems.

Agnes and Daisy: Agnes and Daisy are two adolescent females maturing in the Gileadean society, both navigating their positions within the established ideological structure. Agnes, who was brought up in the system, first adheres to the expectations established by Gilead. Conversely, Daisy, who was brought up outside of Gilead, aggressively endeavors to reveal the truth and question the ideology. The individuals' experiences exemplify diverse strategies for navigating their positions within the broader ideological framework.

Commander Judd: Commander Judd exemplifies a position of power in Gilead, demonstrating how those in high-ranking positions navigate their responsibilities. The intricacies of maintaining authority within an ideological structure are exposed via his conduct, choices, and engagements with other individuals. Judd's persona epitomizes the internal conflicts and concessions made by those in positions of authority.

Conclusion

The Testaments by Margaret Atwood provides a compelling examination of Althusser's theories of Ideology and Ideological State Apparatus in the totalitarian government of Gilead. The story explores how people navigate inside an oppressive ideological framework via institutionalized ideas, interpellation, resistance, and power relations. By analyzing Gilead's ideological framework, Atwood encourages readers to thoughtfully consider the wider significance of Althusser's ideas within the context of modern literature.

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WOMAN – A CULTURAL SUBALTERN: A PANORAMIC STUDY OF CULTURAL PATRIARCHY IN PERUMAL MURUGAN'S *PYRE*

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Abstract

Perumal Murugan's *Pyre* is a strong statement against the social discrimination and the cultural patriarchy in the caste driven society. This paper is an attempt to study the cultural discourse around the gender discrimination in the novel *Pyre*. Saroja is fragile woman who enters into a regressive rural setup due to her marriage and faces the heat of patriarchy and caste discrimination. Fellow women taunt her every day and her brittle character fails to resist the abuses around her. She lacks a resilient support from her husband to counter attack the heat around her. These stereotypical problems push herself as a cultural subaltern in the mainstream society and she becomes a prey to the cultural construction based on caste and gender. This paper tries to identify the means to fight against the cultural turmoil of a woman.

Keywords: Cultural patriarchy, Gender discrimination, Cultural construction, Cultural turmoil.

The conflict between gender and culture prevailed over the pages of History. Culture is defined as the customary belief system, thinking pattern, moral values and social traits of a crew with regulation and restrictions. Likeminded people club their hand together with similar ideologies form a set of rules and regulations for their social life. This process is a double edged sword. Though this process tries to bring the human existence into a framed structured, the hypocritical nature of culture corners the voice of voiceless. Most probably, gender becomes the key area of concern in culture. The holistic concept of culture tends to treat women in left hand. The left handed approach of the cultures questions the credibility of the society in treating women. The androcentric culture neglects women from the main stream discussions of the socio political constructions of the society. According to Raymond Williams Culture is a complex word. He says "culture is one of the two or three most complicated words in the English language"(87). The complicity of the culture drives unbalance in the life of the people inside its own structure. Woman becomes the second citizens in the hands of culture. The hard core set of rules and regulations of the culture strangle the independence of women. Women become cultural subaltern and she befalls as a prey to the heat of patriarchy which is the regulation of the cultural construction.

Pyre is one of the effective novels of Perumal Murugan. This acts as the portrayal of caste discrimination and hatred. This novel depicts the demerits of caste

culture in Tamilnadu and also questions the independence of a woman in the patriarchal society. Saroja is the female protagonist of the novel, she becomes one of the subalterns in the patriarchal society. She is born and brought up in a city and the institution of marriage pushes her into village. She falls in love with Kumarason who works in a soda company. The family of Saroja is completely against this marriage. The couple fights against her family and gets into marriage. After the marriage, Kumarason takes her to his village. Displacement is one of the horrible gifts of women in the concept of marriage. Women are forced to displace from their comfort zone after marriage. The androcentric culture encourages the displacement of women which causes psychological problems in her. Clara chambers in her paper *Feminism, Liberalism and Marriage* says:

One way marriage might cast women as inferior is by constraining their appropriate options and ambitions. Thus Susan Moller Okin argues that “marriage has earlier and far greater impact on the lives and life choices of women than on those of men”, with girls less likely to aspire to prestigious occupations or feel able to contemplate being happily independent. Anne Kingston also investigates the symbolic aspects of marriage, arguing that marriage continues to exert a grip on women who feel compelled not only to marry but also to conform to ever more costly symbolic standards. Pierre Bourdieu describes this form of symbolic effect as “symbolic violence”. (4)

The limitation of marriage on the independence of women is portrayed. The institution of marriage strangled the choice of women. Saroja also loses her choice because of the marriage. There is no second option in front of her; she is forced by the situation to move to village with Kumarason.

Saroja does not receive a warm welcome in village. People in the village are caste driven and their culture revolves around communal consciousness. As a girl from a city, Saroja cannot digest the communal disparity which has been thrown towards her by the regressive cultural system. Every one in the village is curious to know the caste of this modern girl and it automatically creates an alienated effect on her. She feels herself isolated in the crew and does not know to react to the awkward situations. One of the relations of Kumarason says: “You have done something unexpected, bringing a girl from elsewhere. What caste? Can’t I tell by her face, this is not a face from our caste, Mapillai. Does a face that wander over fields and rocks look like this? This is the face of someone who hasn’t toiled, a body that hasn’t suffered summer’s heat. All right, tell me the truth-whatever it is...Is she from our caste?” (12). These kinds of infuriating questions do not allow her to lead a peaceful life. Though Kumarason is only solace to her, the passive nature of him does not help Saroja to fight against the cultural construction which accuses her in all possible means. She questions her existence and that leads to marital disharmony in her life. People around her move to the extent of verbal abuse by

mentioning her caste. As per the words of Pierre Bourdieu, marriage becomes the symbolic violence in the life of Saroja.

Kumarason's mother is a serious threat to the mental peace of Saroja. She is an old lady with conservative thoughts and she has a firm belief in the communal marriages. She does not accept the fact that her son has married a girl from another caste. By adding fuel to the fire, people from the village question the power of the mother. This infuriates the temper and she shows the anger to her daughter in law. Here, mother in law is the direct reflection of the patriarchy. She says: "I am patient only for one reason. I don't want any harm to come to him. He has talking back to me now! He used to be such an obedient boy; she has changed him. I have endured all these days only for his sake. Otherwise, I'd have cut her throat with the sharp edge of the palm frond and ended it all long ago'" (180).

These words of mother in law question the basic humanitarian values of caste driven people. The disparity between her son and daughter in law is evident and also it shows the awful hatred on her daughter in law. Saroja is terrified with behaviours of mother in law as well as other women in the village. All other women try to break the confidence level of Saroja by questioning about her caste as well as the love life with Kumarason. Women of the village tend to assassinate the character of Saroja. It is one of the sharp tools of the regressive people, they always assassinate the character of a woman to show their anger. In this communally polluted environment, she becomes voiceless. Even Kumarason does not fight for the rights of Saroja instead he tries to pacify her and pushes her to adjust to the atmosphere. Saroja feels terribly bad about the behavior of the village people towards her husband. One of his aunties says: "'How did you bewitch Nondi? Some four or five girls here tried to reel him in, but he wouldn't budge. . . What did you show him that has him so enchanted? . . . Tell me, Aaya. My husband is a ruffian. I ask you so that I too can try to bewitch him. Don't be shy. . .'" (52).

These comments drive her crazy and she does not fit herself with the crew. The social gathering of the village meets to find a solution for this problem. The villagers decide to keep them out of the gathering and do not allow to use the common well. It shows the negative side of the cultural construction. The whole village turns against a young girl and attacks her mental peace. In the absence of Kumarason, the people of village even try to kill Saroja. "'Uncle! The entire bush has dried up. It is only the thorns that look lush on the outside. Why don't we set fire to the bush? We will smoke her out of there . . . And if she doesn't get smoked out, she can burn and die inside. Yes, let's set fire to it! That's the best idea'" (195).

The young woman becomes a cultural subaltern of the cultural patriarchy and the communal consciousness of people tends to take the life of the little girl. Caste and gender are two disharmonic structures that break the importance of human traits. Culture

is the bottom line of these problems. It is important for the civilians to understand the evolution of the social life in the environment. It will be a absolute disaster when one follow the scripted culture without interrogating its limitations. This paper tends to show the cultural turmoil of a woman in the patriarchal society. Saroja tries to resist the heat of the patriarchal society but fails miserably which causes her life. Economic empowerment and educational elevation would have given the edge to Saroja in the war against patriarchy.

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UNVEILING THE MIND'S DEPTHS OF BLACKS IN *AT NIGHT ALL BLOOD IS BLACK*: A CAPTIVATING EXPLORATION

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Abstract

This study examines the psychological factors driving retaliatory behaviors among individuals of African descent during World War I. It focuses on the symbolic act of hand severance, representing the suffering experienced during the colonial period in Senegal, as portrayed in the novel *At Night All Blood is Black*. Utilizing an interdisciplinary approach that incorporates behaviorism, psychodynamic theory, and social psychology, the research highlights the unique characteristics of the main characters. By applying these theoretical perspectives, the study aims to elucidate the relationship between the characters' behaviors and their motivations, societal pressures, and suppressed conditions. This qualitative research methodology guides the investigation's objectives. Additionally, the study emphasizes the lasting cultural influences shaping the characters' experiences, regardless of their geographic location or specific contexts. Ultimately, the research seeks to uncover David Diop's true intent of advocating for African society by examining the development of these characters despite their participation in the war under the command of white forces. This exploration provides insight into the complex factors influencing their actions, reflecting Diop's thematic focus on African societal representation.

Keywords: cultural studies, behaviorism, social psychology and psychodynamism

For African-descended authors residing in predominantly Caucasian nations within the Western world, the discernible and genuinely significant impact of Black self-awareness or subjectivity is evident (Wright, 2004). From a literary lens, their intellectual ability is prominently exhibited in their written works (Collins, G., 2022). This study examines the translated version of the novel *At Night All Blood is Black*, authored by David Diop. It is noteworthy to acknowledge Anna Moschovakis, who diligently and thoughtfully translated the book into English because it has been translated into 13 different languages (Collins, G., 2021). The investigation employs a range of psychological theories, integrating behaviorism, social psychology, and cognitive psychology, and culturally identical concepts to establish a comprehensive framework.

Its objective is to reveal the intricate psychological dynamics that shaped Senegalese individuals' attitudes, whether characterized by optimism or pessimism. Through examining shifts in their behavior, it becomes evident that their cognitive mechanisms outwardly displayed resolute determination despite enduring humiliation

and disrespect from colonizers who dehumanized by labeling them as animals and barbarians. Two research inquiries have been formulated to delineate the objectives, employing a qualitative methodology and nuanced sampling techniques. These techniques play a pivotal role in elucidating Diop's mindset concerning African issues from both cultural and psychological standpoints. Drawing upon these conceptual frameworks, the primary objective of this inquiry is to shed light on the unique characteristics that are inherently present in the masterfully depicted black protagonists found in *At Night All Blood is Black*.

Literature Review

The fundamental essence of *At Night All Blood is Black* is centered on juxtaposing its profound and distressing narrative with the exquisite artistry employed in its expression (Marshall, 2021). Antonio Munoz Molina describes this literary work as a blend of classical French literary traditions with rhythmic patterns drawn from oral African languages. Notably, although written in French, the inherent rhythmic quality of the text is rooted in Alfa's native Wolof language (Collins, 2021). Diop's extensive analysis elucidates the repercussions of Alfa's unrestricted deliberate choices interwoven within the storyline, culminating in his descent into a profound state of mental instability (Arshaad et al., 2022). He challenges prevalent stereotypes surrounding the perceived primitiveness of African societies, simultaneously highlighting the violent actions perpetrated by European colonial authorities. This critical assessment illuminates the inherent violence ingrained within the structure of colonialism and its broader connection to warfare (Ali, 2022). Despite sporadic, fragmented instances akin to fleeting gunshots in obscurity, *At Night All Blood is Black* engrosses the audience with an immersive portrayal of distress and rage. Anna Moschovakis, through her translation, adeptly delves into the novel's essence, surpassing a superficial interpretation of words, and effectively communicates the profound lucidity and intensity of these sentiments (Eleanor, 2021). The narrative steadfastly portrays the human cost resulting from a colonial enterprise that led to the loss of young Senegalese lives in distant territories while serving under the French banner (Calhoun, 2021).

A comprehensive review of existing literature and a gap in research about *At Night All Blood is Black* has been identified. While numerous reviews are available, primarily focused on the book's thematic exploration, more in-depth research should be needed. The literature review highlights the novelty of the chosen research, as it identifies a gap in current studies by focusing on the utilization of psychological theories to investigate the distinctive cultural and biological capacities of Africans in the context of individual rescue and sustained dedication to continuous learning. This study aims to support the concept of inherent African traits, such as steadfast

determination, emotional connections, compliance, enduring nostalgia, and socially shaped characteristics, employing a theoretical framework for substantiation.

The current investigation utilizes a purposive sampling methodology for participant selection. The analysis centered on examining the psychological condition of Alfa Ndiaye, predominantly drawing from excerpts found in *At Night All Blood is Black*. The analytical process was structured into four segments to explore the following research inquiries: (1) how significantly does a behaviorism stimulus Ndiaye's trait? (2) Do societal factors exhibit any correlations with the mindset of Ndiaye?

Behaviorist Analysis: Traits of Alfa Ndiaye

The term behavior analysis is progressively employed to delineate the practical application of Skinnerian principles among practitioners (Moore 66). Historically, during the 1920s and 1930s, behaviorism was characterized as "radical" (Diehl, 1934). A specific offshoot, radical behaviorism, operates on the premise that behavior can be elucidated by examining an individual's historical and contemporary environment alongside its reinforcements. These elements can wield positive or negative influences on behavior (Cherry, 2022). Skinner's radical behaviorism framework (1989) is utilized to examine the changes in the traits of Senegalese soldier Ndiaye before and after the passing of his close comrade, Mademba Diop. Ndiaye's witnessing of Mademba's protracted agony notably impacts his behavioral tendencies. The intense distress following Mademba's passing contrasts with his expected outcome and marks a pivotal moment in Ndiaye's behavioral evolution. His inability to honor Mademba's plea to end his agony creates internal conflict rooted in cultural norms. Moreover, witnessing Mademba's grievous state intensifies his desire for revenge against their adversary. Confronted by Mademba's death, he grapples with profound self-reproach, recognizing his own perceived weakness. This recognition highlights the paradox of humanity, as it both hinders him from ending suffering and should theoretically empower him to do so (Collins, 2021).

The opening passages of *At Night All Blood is Black* captivate the reader, engaging with a narrative that examines the disturbing presence of the deceased, potentially presenting an illusory element (Obioma, 2020). In a flashback sequence, Ndiaye exhibits a remarkably calm demeanor, avoiding actions that might draw attention from his peers. A significant change in his behavior is observed only after the loss of his close companion. As noted by Heward and Cooper (1992), this approach seeks to thoroughly elucidate human behavior by analyzing both public observable actions and private hidden responses, in relation to their functional connections with environmental stimuli. The excerpt from Diop's *At Night All Blood is Black*, as narrated by Ndiaye,

When I leave the belly of the earth, I am inhuman by choice, I become a little inhuman. Not because the captain commanded me to, but because I have thought it and willed it. When I leap, shrieking, from the earth's womb, I do not intend to kill multiple enemies from the other side, but to kill just one, in my own way, calmly, deliberately, slowly. When I emerge from the earth, my rifle and my left hand and my machete in my right, I'm not concerned about my trench-mates. I don't know them anymore. (Diop 17-18)

Portrays a vivid image of a mindset focused on deliberate and calm action, detached from the concern for comrades or external enemies. It encapsulates a thematic exploration of personal intent and resolute pursuit of individual objectives amid a conflict-ridden scenario. As the narrative progresses, Ndiaye's evolution becomes evident, with the gradual integration of the concepts of redemption and personal fulfillment into his psyche, compelling him to seek solace for the departed soul of his dear companion, Mademba.

Despite initially believing he acted in alignment with moral principles, Ndiaye now grapples with remorse for disregarding his friend's wishes. He seeks redemption by pursuing retribution against his adversaries, as depicted in *At Night All Blood is Black* (Review – IBP 2021, number six) (2021). The death of Mademba triggers his desire for revenge, prompting him to adopt the role of an avenger, an observation made by Diop (2018). This adoption influences his behavior, leading to his failure to recognize his comrades during the attack. This failure stems from Ndiaye's disinterest in harming multiple individuals or serving French interests. Instead, his focus lies on committing a singular act of murder to ease his conscience.

It is imperative to underscore the profound implications of the lack of acknowledgment experienced by Ndiaye among French soldiers, extending far beyond the initial attack. The absence of recognition gradually shapes his behavior within the trench, drawing from past encounters and the loss of Mademba. This transformation leads to a noticeable emotional detachment. As he approaches the elimination of his adversaries, his perception of them evolves beyond viewing them as individuals with negative traits, instead seeing them as embodiments of the derogatory characteristics attributed to Africans in the narrative conveyed to the French (Diop, 2018).

Initially, Ndiaye's superiors express approval as he assumes a persona that instills fear in their opponents. However, the unfolding events cause fear to pervade every one, including his fellow African soldiers, who perceive him as an ominous figure capable of consuming souls (Obioma, C., 2020). Both white comrades and peers from West Africa explicitly recognize this behavioral metamorphosis. The comprehensive alteration in behavior becomes evident and spreads throughout the

camp, evident in his interactions with others. Accounts distinctly recount his ruthless actions, such as slitting the throats and severing the hands of blue-eyed individuals to demonstrate his vengeful acts to his comrades in the trench (Diop, 2018). It becomes apparent that various traumatic factors can significantly affect the human mind. The loss of Mademba profoundly impacts Ndiaye's cognitive and behavioral patterns. The substantial psychological strain experienced by him after Mademba's demise becomes unmistakably evident

While numerous definitions exist for radical behaviorism, the most pertinent and recognized is that “what people think or feel, or how they act, does not exist independently but rather is the result of their experiences and environments” (Master of Science in Applied Behavior Analysis, 2023). Despite his initial impulse to seek revenge by leaving the safety of the trench, his psychological state undergoes a profound shift upon encountering the gaze of his adversaries. The symbolism of the blue eye, as elucidated by Diop and Toni Morrison (2014), extends beyond mere racial connotations of white supremacy. Morrison's narrative of Pecola Breedlove, an eleven-year-old African American girl navigating a society where bias favoring individuals with blond hair and blue eyes holds sway, exemplifies this broader thematic resonance. Pecola yearns deeply for a transformation in her eye color, longing for the societal acceptance and privilege of possessing blue eyes. Morrison examines the adolescent protagonist's intrinsic mindset and behavioral patterns as she observes the societal treatment of her racial identity and the reverence attached to blue eyes. Conversely, Diop explores the innate psyche of Black individuals, highlighting the profound impact inflicted by the perceived superiority associated with blue-eyed symbolism.

Diop elucidates the inferiority qualities of Africans as per the view of the people who possess the blue eyes. As narrated by Ndiaye “Looking into the enemy’s blue eyes, I often see a panicked fear of death, of savagery, of rape, of cannibalism. I see in his eyes what he’s been told about me, and what he’s believed without ever seeing me” (Diop 19). Diop contends that the blue eyes of the adversaries symbolize the shared experiences and surroundings (Master of Science in Applied Behavior Analysis, 2023) of individuals of African. Throughout World War II, most colonized Africans lived in constant fear of death due to coerced migration and conscription into the French Army to fight on behalf of France (Echenberg 363).

Diop reiterates the perception held by the blue-eyed individuals that cannibalism is inherent to all Africans. The accusation of cannibalism retains significant relevance within African contexts, both historically and in contemporary times. Western scholars are encouraged to engage in discussions surrounding the myth of cannibalism, given its enduring presence in indigenous witchcraft beliefs and oral

traditions. Consequently, any sincere exploration of African local history necessitates an examination of this phenomenon (Herrmann 755).

The utilization of Diop's narrative style and techniques, coupled with the portrayal of Ndiaye as a rebellious figure against both adversaries and, to some extent, his peers, serves to illuminate significant behavioral shifts. The narrative, juxtaposed with flashbacks portraying Ndiaye's initially gentle demeanor, lies the stark contrast between his adversaries' brutality towards his trusted childhood friend, Mademba, and his subsequent inability to fulfill Mademba's final wish. This transformative experience manifests in Ndiaye's behavior, transitioning from a soft-spoken disposition to one characterized by resilience and firmness. Scholarly discourse often associates blue eyes with dominance, particularly within colonial power dynamics. However, Ndiaye's behavioral evolution subverts this connotation, leading to adverse consequences for his opponents.

The Dynamics of Societal Influences on the Psyche of Alfa Ndiaye

Social psychology is the systematic investigation of how individuals' cognitions, emotions, and actions are shaped by the actual or perceived existence of others within various social contexts, encompassing relationships with family, acquaintances, authority figures, educators, and unfamiliar individuals (Allport, 1985). Given that the definition pertains to the influence exerted by perceived others in shaping the attributes of an individual of interest, it is pertinent to explore this phenomenon within the life course of Ndiaye, whose traits are molded by the presence of Mademba, serving as a significant perceived entity. Social psychology further elucidates that the social context could easily influence an individual. Mabanckou highlights that elders in African societies demonstrate a steadfast commitment to cultural traditions, conscientiously passing down these principles to subsequent generations. A key aspect of their instruction emphasizes the importance for Africans to prioritize their moral compass over external pressures, stressing the importance of loyalty to one's community and avoiding behaviors that undermine the trust of fellow community members (Vijayan, R, 2022).

Ndiaye grapples with the dilemma of adhering either to the prevailing social norms of blacks or to honor the final desires of his close companion, Mademba, who persistently implores him. "I beg you a second time to slit my throat. Do you enjoy hearing me moan like a little boy? Watching as my dignity is chased away by shame?" (Diop 26). The act of killing Mademba represents a departure from his established social norms, contradicting deeply ingrained ancestral values that vehemently oppose betrayal or violence against one's community. As Ndiaye contemplates the act of terminating the life of his close companion as a means to grant perpetual liberation from suffering, "But I heard a powerful and commanding voice that forced me to

ignore your suffering. “Do not kill your best friend, your more-than brother. It isn’t for you to take his life. Don’t mistake yourself for the hand of God. Don’t mistake yourself for the hand of Devil. Alfa Ndiaye, could you stand before Mademba’s father and mother knowing that it was you who killed him, that it was you who finished the work of the blue-eyed enemy?” (Diop 26-27).

The resonant and authoritative voice reflects the ancestral lineage whose societal framework dictates that Ndiaye should not fulfill Mademba's final request. The directive from his forebears to ignore Mademba's dying wish exemplifies social pressure, as he believes that complying would not only result in Mademba's death but also undermine the complex structure of social conventions. Collective identity involves individuals' self-perception in relation to their group affiliation, demonstrated through cultural symbols, practices, attitudes, beliefs, and emotions (Ogbu, 2004). Thus, societal influence prevails, allowing him to disregard the plea. This highlights the steadfast adherence to black social norms, even in challenging situations.

In the context of adversarial relations, the societal norms within the black community diverge significantly, resulting in a transformation of Ndiaye's persona following the demise of his companion due to the absence of stringent guidelines and regulations. Fanon (1963) noted that individuals from colonization often exhibit aggression initially directed toward their community. Having been subjected to colonial oppression, colonized people imbibe violence against others as a norm. Distinguishing between 'us' and 'them' has psychological implications for individuals who have experienced colonization. Ndiaye's inclination towards aggression primarily manifests in his interactions with societal norms, particularly in his engagements with his ancestors, saying, "No, I know, I understand, I should not have shut it up while there was still time. I should already have been thinking for myself. I should, Mademba, have finished you off out of friendship” (Diop 27). Due to Ndiaye's inability to perceive auditory stimuli, he exhibits a lack of empathy towards his friend, instead conforming strongly to societal norms. During the initial stages of investigation into individual behavioral variances, personality theorists posited that individuals could be delineated by their positioning along a spectrum of enduring traits (Allport, 1937). Identifying the key characteristics that delineate an individual's personality significantly contributes to the ability to forecast their behavior within a novel environment (Heydari M, Xiaohu Z, Lai KK, and Wang SB, 2019). While many African diaspora writers assert that Africans typically do not endorse violence as a means of personal retribution, Diop's perspective diverges slightly. Through Ndiaye's validation, Diop argues that African Diasporas transform in response to their respective environments. They prioritize maintaining peace and refrain from causing disturbance unless provoked to the utmost extent.

The evolution of Ndiaye's demeanor unfolds gradually after the demise of his intimate comrade, not solely propelled by the loss of adversaries but also by the solidarity of his fellow trench companions. His expeditions beyond the trench to seek retribution for his companion's passing are spurred by the provocations of his foes and the supportive environment in which he finds himself immersed. Supported by the novel environmental conditions, he actively engages in the act of homicide.

The white soldiers were beginning to say – I could read it in their eyes – “This chocolate is really strange”. The others, Chocolate soldiers from West Africa like me, began to say - and I also read it in their eyes –“Alfa Ndiaye from the village of Gandiol near Saint-Louis in Senegal is strange. When did he become so strange?” (Diop, 2020, p. 31-32)

The term "whites" signifies the societal adversaries, while "Chocolate soldiers" denotes Ndiaye's companions. Nevertheless, both groups represent entities distant from Ndiaye's native social milieu. Their opinions, stemming from societal perspectives, impact Ndiaye's character. Initially, he derives pleasure from engaging with societal discourse, which catalyzes his character evolution. Because of Ndiaye's peculiar conduct, both factions are inclined to perceive him as exhibiting signs of mental instability, possibly attributing his behavior to witchcraft or associating him with the archetype of a soldier-sorcerer (Diop, 2020, p. 33). The evolving atmospheric conditions surrounding Ndiaye undergo a transformative process, shifting his perception from an outsider to an accepted member among his trench comrades as they assess him based on predetermined, perhaps disingenuous, criteria.

Conclusion

In the context of the research, the resonant and authoritative voice serves as a reference to Ndiaye's ancestral lineage, which has established a societal framework compelling Ndiaye to refrain from fulfilling Mademba's final request. This directive from his forebears signifies the embodiment of social pressure, illustrating that adherence to these ancestral mandates takes precedence over individual desires. Ndiaye perceives that complying with Mademba's dying wish would not only result in Mademba's death but also disrupt the intricate fabric of social conventions upheld by his community. Collective identity is defined as the self-perception of individuals in relation to their affiliation with a specific group. This identity is expressed through cultural symbols and practices, as well as through shared attitudes, beliefs, and emotions (Ogbu, 2004). Consequently, societal influence exerts a dominant force, enabling Ndiaye to disregard Mademba's plea. This scenario underscores the profound commitment to black social norms, highlighting that even in moments of profound personal challenge, the allegiance to communal standards and values remains steadfast. This research seeks to establish that Ndiaye's behavior is significantly

influenced by social psychology, thereby leading to a notable transformation in his attitudes towards society.

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THE GOOD AND THE BAD: MIRA NAIR'S ADAPTATION OF VIKRAM SETH'S *A SUITABLE BOY*

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Abstract

A Suitable Boy (2020) is a visual adaptation of Vikram Seth's novel *A Suitable Boy* published in 1993. Seth's novel is one of the longest novels published in single volume. It is a text that reflects simple living situations of the characters in the pre-independent Indian surroundings, dealing with surreal, experimental and satirical social abnormalities. The miniseries version of *A Suitable Boy* is directed by Mira Nair and adapted by Andrew Davies, telecasted on BBC and Netflix. It is BBC's first ever periodic drama starring people of colour (Indians). It beautifully justifies the deeds of Seth describing the stages of life which are quite influenced by the text. Seth's novel highlights character transformation/experiences over a period of time dealing with the quotidian whereas Mira Nair's series portrays the chief events connecting protagonists with the main theme set by Seth. And it also shows the insights of the visual art such as fervencies and vehemence which some where a reader miss in the textual form of art, it is also the focus of the paper to discuss the pluralism in India and the politics of marriage. The contrast between the two artefacts is explored in this paper.

Keywords: Adaptation, Textual, Visual, Pluralism, Society, Marriage.

Vikram Seth a prolific writer in Indian Writings in English marked his domain with *A Suitable Boy* in 1993, a journey of 1349 pages full of drama. The novel is one mile stone of Seth in creating a post-independent India by describing the families and their progenies. *A Suitable Boy* is the longest novel written in a single volume that deals with the idea of post-independence and post-partition situations of India. The central theme of the story revolves around the search of a 'suitable boy', a perfect suitor for Mrs. Rupa Mehera's daughter, Lata. The post-colonial approach to critically study the novel of Vikram Seth will help the readers to understand the concept of social and personal lives of the characters from a different perspective. The artifacts vividly present a simple form of the chaotic life amidst the puddle social conventions after independence.

Sudipta Datta published a reviewed article on 'A Suitable Boy' by Vikram Seth on 27th July 2020, 11:49 IST remembering the publication of Seth's book in the year 1993 with the cover page showing a gorgeous red Varanasi silk saree and gossamer pages palpitating the excitement of the readers. With Seth's mentioning that his book consist of 1349 pages with a price of rupees 500 at that time a rhyming

word of thanks was provided by him saying, “Buy me before good sense insists/ You’ll strain your purse and sprain your wrists.” It was later offered by Meera Nair in form of a mini series of six episodes.

To fulfill the visual representation and acceptance of the Seth’s *A Suitable Boy*, Meera Nair has skillfully adapted and directed a mini series *A Suitable Boy* to give the audience an optic pleasure. The mini series published in 2020 at OTT platform gave the viewers a visualized understanding of Seth’s work. It was first telecasted on BBC on 26th July 2020 and later on Netflix on 23rd October 2020. It is the first adapted drama written by Andrews Davies which has all Indian cast along with an Indian filmmaker Meera Nair. It is also one of the most expensive BBC series ever made.

The series does not follow the trajectories of Seth’s novel but it moves around the main theme of issue that are faced during the pre-independent India and the search for Lata’s ‘suitable boy’. The paper aims to discuss the pluralism in India and the politics of marriage which lacks in Nair’s series. Andrew Davies the screenplay writer issued an apology to Seth’s fan for the novel *A Suitable Boy* as he failed to encapsulate the whole of it but tried to replicate the book on-screen for a modern audience.

Adaptation of an artifact from one to another is very much different from translating it into a new one. Adaptation refers to the application of different methodologies and it consists of diverse viewpoints regarding the matter. It also analyses the mechanism to seek and scrutinize the hidden emotions out of the textual one and try to avoid the shortcoming in the textual way of communication. In the article ‘History as Adaptation’ (2015), Thomas Leitch has pointed out that ‘the writing of history amounts to the adaptation of earlier histories.’ (Leitch, 10) (Leitch. “History as Adaptation.” *The Politics Adaptation: Media Convergence and Ideology*. Pp.7-20.) The reconstruction and recreation of the ‘original’ is a creative approach towards the dominance to examine the source in search of ideas. Ideas are chiefly regenerated and re-enactment to the key nodes of the traditional art form to understand the structure and it helps interpret from page to screen. The adaptations are self-reflexive and perennial in nature. This adaptation from page to screen also creates illusions as well as evident assessment for the viewer. The screen versions are extensively popular among the audience and have an uncanny resemblance to the original version of the text. For which it is able to attract more audience against the benchmark of the traditional one. But the adaptation marks a parameter to coherent the dialogues, opinions and sensibilities with respect to the audiences’.

So on focusing Leitch's ideology on Nair's adaptation of Seth's novel tries to justify it to a much extend. Nair tried to get hold on to the central storyline of Seth's with the search of a suitable boy for Lata. Similar to the novel the series begins with Savita and Pran Kapoor's wedding where the Mehras, Kapoors, Chatterjis and Khans joins all together to bless the newlyweds. The series tries to justify Seth's work to its full credentials. Nair tried to set the whole scenario in terms of post- independent period. The choices of actors are also minutely scrutinized as to give proper justice to Seth's family drama. Disha Ramnath Shanbhag in Youth Incorporated Magazine reviews that Vikram Seth inspired BBC's 'A Suitable Boy' is worth a watch and it talked about the challenges that the periodical faced from the audience, "As per public opinion, the first two episodes have a hard time holding the audience's attention. According to my understanding, the initial context setting for the novel takes a lot more time than any other usual series, evidently because off its intersecting plot points and the huge number of 'round and important' characters." To which she further adds that "This story has all that an audience asks for and can be counted in the list of those to which one constantly goes back to seek solace and happiness." But there are some instances when a reader finds that there are some limitations while imagining but in course of an adapted series audience finds the visual representations very appealing as it helps to showcase the intriguing emotions. For example, Nair represented the relationship of Mann Kapoor and Firoz Khan a bit sexual and sensuous rather than a brotherly one as a reader approaches the text, as it lacks visualization. The shuttle representation of Mann Kapoor and Firoz Khan friendship grows into a homo erotic tension between the two as the way they both look at each other or the gentle touch to brush the fallen flower over Man's coat by Firoz or the way they hold hand. While in the text a reader will find it difficult to understand the relationship of Firoz and Mann as Mann being engaged to the Banaras girl and was involved with the Saeeda Bai and his passionate and uncontrolled love for her.

The very nearness of Saeeda Bai in these last few minutes, delightful as it had been, now created a small problem for Mann. Before he got up to change places with her he had to make a slight adjustment to his clothing in order not to let her see how aroused he was. But when he sat down again it seemed to him that Saeeda Bai was more amused than ever. She's a real sitam- zareef, he thought to himself- a tyrant with a smile. (143-144)

One of the most intriguing scenes is when Lata proposes Haresh at railway station. Where as in textual form Lata did not propose Haresh publically; it was all done through a series of letters and she rather accepted the fact that Haresh is the 'suitable boy'. The romantic declaration of Lata is questionable which particularly leads to selection of her life partner because in 1951 it was difficult for a child to

declare the wild, passionate love in front parent's will. But Nair skillfully gives the opportunity to the audience to fulfill the subtle desire through Lata.

You too will marry a boy I choose,' said Mrs. Rupa Mehra firmly to her younger daughter. ... 'I know what your hmms means, young lady, and I can tell you I will not stand for hmms in this matter. I do know what is best. I am doing it all for you. Do you think it is easy for me, trying to arrange things for all four of my children without His help?' (3)

It is difficult for a reader to imagine and to understand Lata's declaration as she was not clear about her future and she was forced by her mother to marry a boy of her choice. So the theatrical version provides that liberation to the audience to have an imagination of free and wild desires.

With a little research one can find the novel *A Suitable Boy* has its own features of boldness, romance and even the characterization of each element by Seth has its own trace of reality. But the cinematic representation of the novel has whitewashed the Indian realities and the social prejudices of the post-independent India. The fun part is kept intact as Nair has a Western approach to things to entertain the white audience while erasing Indian sense of realism. For example, the clothes that middle class women wear or smearing of color or the way upper class English educated women spoke in front of men or the rehearsal of the Shakespearean play in college, all complies to show the successful execution in cinematography lagging the decency of the text. The series is colorful, cheerful and entertaining in context of a white audience but for an Indian audience it consists of misinterpretations and misleading social predicament which are quite deceptive for Indian social realities, customs and culture.

The cinematic representation by Nair has created an orchestrate effect on Seth's *A Suitable Boy*. The adaption from the textual to visual is appealing but it also lags in the credibility while building up the historical fathom as it is not that much impactful. The cinema is driven by the aesthetics of entertainment while the artistry offers a less scope for reader's imagination which one find in Seth's novel. It is difficult for the Indian audience to understand the bilingual nature of the series as it juggles between realism and cinematography. The predefined Bollywoodness is caricaturized and typified in Nair's representation of characters as they have openly showcased their romance, affairs and the kisses. The free mingling and the exchange of kisses between Lata and Kabir at the temple and Amit kissing Lata on sideway of the road at midnight full of people shows Nair's anglicizing Seth's novel for mere entertainment. On which a wide wave of anger has revolted among some Indians who thinks the scene played by Lata Mehra (Tanya Maniktala) and Kabir Durrani (Danesh Razvi) is outrageous as a Hindu girl is kissing a muslim boy in a temple. One of the

television personalities Rahul Mahajan on Twitter tweeted his displeasure on the scene and expressed himself by tweeting “A Muslim man kissing a Hindu woman during the Ram Aarti was ‘creative freedom’. But when a Hindu man and Muslim women would kiss in a mosque during Azaan, this creative freedom would go missing.” This shows the displeasure that the audience received which originally is absent while reading the novel.

As Nair adapted Seth’s novel with the same name trying to set it up at a backdrop of newly independent India in 1951 it still misses the essence of it as it primarily focuses to please the audience by binding them with romance and delusions. For example, the meeting of Lata with Amit being indulged in Tango for the very first time during a family gathering of Chatterjis is quite unrealistic for a girl like Lata doing Tango in front of her mother who belongs to a conservative society. On contrary Seth’s representation of the first meet is distinctively different from Nair’s pictorial representation. While Seth representation of Amit was a less sociable member of Chatterji family to which his sisters Meenakshi and Kakoli always teases him. And he was also introduced to Lata by his sisters in a very playful and formal manner. ‘You should go up to your room, Amit,’ said Meenakshi, ‘and settle down on a sofa with Jane Austen. That way you can avoid all your admirers.’ ‘He’s very peculiar,’ said Kakoli to Lata. ‘Jane Austen is the only woman in his life.’ ‘But half the bhadralok in Calcutta want him as a match for their daughters,’ added Meenakshi. ‘They believe he has brains.’ Kakoli recited, ‘Amit Chatterji, what a catch! Is a highly suitable match’ (436). Another example one can find in the series which is very different from the textual interpretation is of Meenakshi and Billy Irani’s affair which is shown quite erotic in the series to showcase an extra marital affair. While Meenakshi’s aborting her second child as she was not sure of the child’s father shows her carefree and reckless nature and it is not pointed out on the adapted version of Seth’s *A Suitable Boy*.

The characters in the series are highly intrigued by the material history than the aesthetic one which is presented by Seth. For instance, the Raja of Marh who belongs to an upper-class is a well educated person and is presented as exceedingly inappropriate in the series. Even though he was lewd and bawdy he represents the authorial power of the kingship. The traditional and the typical Indian perspectives are seriously misinterpreted by Nair while making a series based on the grim social and cultural realities of India.

The Raja, whose look resemblance those of a huge water buffalo, pawed the earth dangerously for a while. He suspected duplicity and fell into a drunken and- literally- bloodshot rage; probably the main factor that prevented his hiring someone to get rid of Saeeda Bai was the knowledge that the British, if they discover the truth, would

probably depose him- as they had other Rajas, even Maharajas, for similar scandals and killings. (135)

Thus the adaptation fails to anticipate the challenges faced by the Indian audience as the series struggles to find a right balance between the universality and traditional aspect of the characters and their representation during the post-independent India. The series also fails to convey the religious tension that brewed between the Hindus and Muslims in the post- independent period. While the series missed a number of characters such as Dipankar Chatterji, Veena and Kedarnath Tandon, Priya Agrawal, Imtiaz Khan, Sunil Patwardhan, Zainab and many; it really does not affect the series as it focuses on the central story line of finding a ‘suitable boy’. But the series *A Suitable Boy* by Nair stands out with its grandiloquence representation of magnificent settings, locations like havelis, offices, temples and mansions. The architectural resemblance is quite similar to that of Seth’s representation which boasts about the heritage and past.

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WHEN ACCUSATIONS OF METAPHYSICAL MISOGYNY COME UN(DONNE): A FEMINIST AND BAKHTINIAN READING OF JOHN DONNE'S SELECTED WORKS

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Abstract

Widely celebrated for his metaphysical conceits, the contentious representation of women in John Donne's poetry has often led critics to re-examine his works through the lens of gender studies. Noted poet John Dryden vociferously condemned Donne for objectifying women in his writings. While Virginia Woolf and Janel Mueller held that accusations of misogyny levelled against Donne are unmerited since his poetry represents "the man and the woman as equals in love" (146). Taking a cue from Woolf's views, the study offers a feminist and Bakhtinian reading of Donne's selected works, especially "The Bait" by highlighting their polyphonic nature.

Keywords: Gender, Metaphysics, Mikhail Bakhtin, Parody, Polyphony.

Introduction

The literary critic Kenneth Muir called Donne an "egocentric sensualist" who took pleasure in relegating women into the demeaning status of "an inanimate prop in the speaker's dramatic scene" (Bell 114). Janel Mueller, in her work *Women Among the Metaphysicals: A Case, Mostly, of Being Donne For* held that accusations of misogyny levelled against John Donne are unmerited since his poetry represents "the man and the woman as equals in love" (146) and we often catch a "glimpse of a dynamics of gender and power" (142) in Donne's works.

Not only did a host of Donne's metaphysical poems feature women as subjects of admiration but he also earned the patronage of a string of powerful women readers such as Magdalen Herbert, Elizabeth Drury, Countess of Bedford, and Countess of Salisbury. Critically acclaimed author Virginia Woolf did not term it prudent to dismiss Donne's works in line with Dryden's harsh censure of his poetry's tendency to "perplex the minds of the fair sex with nice speculations of philosophy, when he should engage their hearts, and entertain them with the softness of love" (Dryden). A closer analysis of Donne's verses reveals that when it comes to the treatment of women in his works there is indeed more than what meets the eye.

A scrutiny of the selected works reveals that Donne presented his female characters as autonomous, independent and capable of challenging the patriarchal dictates that they were expected to comply with back in the day. In most of John

Donne's works, the self-other dynamics transgresses the familiar and recognises the separate identity of women. He often employed metaphysical conceits to go beyond conventional gender roles by using similes and farfetched metaphors.

There is, thus, some truth in the observations of Virginia Woolf and Mueller, who found genius in Donne's portrayal of women. Woolf stated in her work *The Second Common Reader*, "Donne's poems reveal a lady of a very different cast. She was brown but she was also fair; she was solitary but also sociable; she was rustic yet also fond of city life; she was sceptical yet devout, emotional but reserved — in short she was as various and complex as Donne himself" (Woolf 29). Mueller held that Donne is "perhaps the only metaphysical poet whose depiction of women became positive over time" (148). Ergo, while some critics and readers of John Donne's poetry argue that the poet treats women with disrespect and distrust, a closer study reveals that the poet actually accords an exalted position to women in many of his works.

In the light of the aforementioned perspectives, the study aims to present a new outlook of Donne's selected works especially by offering their Bakhtinian analysis as an endeavour to exonerate Donne of all the hitherto accusations of misogyny made against him. In doing so, the paper also borrows from Mueller and Woolf's aforementioned works to posit the view that contrary to popular belief, John Donne's amorous verses quite frequently offer a positive portrayal of women.

Russian formalist critic Mikhail Bakhtin emphasised upon the power of parodies to turn the mainstream literary productions on their head by bringing forth fresh outlooks on a diverse range of subjects. He acknowledged the catalytic ability of parodies to function as "a decrowning double; it is that same world turned inside out" which reframe the dominant narratives of the world (Bakhtin and Emerson 127). Taking a cue from Bakhtin's views, the present paper probes into John Donne's selected works, especially "The Bait" in order to highlight the presence of polyphonic voices and multiple points of view which emerge in the poem.

A close reading of the aforementioned work reveals that women in Donne's works do not fall under the ambit of what critically-acclaimed author E.M. Forster defined as "flat characters" (Forster 73). In fact, to borrow the essence of Virginia Woolf's words, Donne's poems endowed women with separate identities of their own. Their characters have depth, variety and colour. Owing to the fact that his poems open themselves up to dialogic interactions counterposed to monologic single-thought discourses à la Bakhtin, it becomes evident that the poet never used his voice to subdue the voices of his female characters.

A Bakhtinian reading of "The Bait" reveals a set of polyphonic voices where one hears the points of view of the woman, the fisherman, the poet and the persona.

Far from dominating the other voices, the poet's voice seems to make way for the woman who takes centre-stage as her responses and reactions determine the course of the poem. The Bakhtinian analysis of the said work also makes it evident that Donne must be given credit for "visualising and portraying personality as another, as someone else's personality, without ... merging it with his own voice ...[or] reducing it to a materialised psychic reality," (Bakhtin and Emerson 12–13). Women thus feature not just as marginal figures but as the very fulcrum of most of his works, to whom he professed immense adoration and Goddess-like devotion.

"The Bait" also renders itself fit for launching an inquiry along the lines of Bakhtin's notion of parodies because the said poem mocks the pastoral idealism by utilising parody as a medium. While the pastoral world which Christopher Marlowe introduced in his work "The Passionate Shepherd to His Love" was replete with the quintessential image of shepherds and lush green fields, John Donne dispensed with them and talked about fish and pristine waters instead. Utilising the fisherman as a motif, the poet makes several entreaties to the woman who is the object of his affection. It is here that Donne introduced another noticeable difference from Marlowe's "monologic" poem. While the woman's "consciousness" was clearly absent in Marlowe's poem; it pervades the very spirit of Donne's work. John Donne tries to persuade the woman rather than commanding her to "come and live with him (me)" unlike Marlowe (Donne 1). He empowers the woman instead of objectifying her when he chooses to convince her that he will bring something "new" to the table rather than "all" the conventional things which other men lure women with (Donne 2).

The woman takes the centre-stage in the poem and her features are described in great detail by Donne especially when he mentions her "golden sands and crystal brooks" and stresses upon the idea that the river is "warm'd by thy eyes, more than the sun" (Donne 6). This again is in clear contrast to Marlowe's conspicuous forbearance to describe the woman in his poem as he chooses to focus on the scenery and other imagery of pastoral life. Donne, on the other hand, chooses to infuse the scenery with the warmth of the woman's "presence." It would be safe to say then, that in poems such as "The Bait" Donne grants agency to the woman by presenting her as autonomous and unattainable or what Bakhtin labels as "unfinalizable" (Bakhtin and Emerson 68). She does not succumb to societal conventions and exercises her will rather freely. Towards the end of the poem, Donne even goes on to admit that the woman is "far wiser than I" (28).

According to Woolf, Donne's treatment of women was in absolute contrast to their classic portrayal and that since Donne portrayed women as equals in love, that "is one of the reasons why we still seek out Donne; why after three hundred years and more we still hear the sound of his voice speaking across the ages so distinctly"

(Woolf 39). Despite Donne's exalted treatment of women, however, literary critics Malcolm Bradbury and David Palmer were rather critical of John Donne's stance on women. Bradbury and Palmer seemed to believe that to Donne, woman is not a goddess; she is a creature, desirable indeed but not adorable. Calling Donne out for what appeared to them as his attempt to gag women into oblivion, the duo observed, "So much of the man: What of the women? There is less to be said of her, since . . . all this poetry is composed exclusively, even domineeringly, from the viewpoint of the man. The woman is the partner in the sexual dance, and that is all she is" (Bell 22).

Donne often presented his woman as one who exercises equal control in a relationship, which was at variance from the stereotypical patriarchal portrayal of a coy "man's woman" (Zhang). Donne's metaphysical conceit of "two better hemispheres" culled out from the third stanza of his poem "The Good Morrow", sees the poet decentralizing the power dynamics of a man-woman relationship. This image of a round hemisphere in turn stresses upon the independence and interdependence of the man and woman in equal measure. From the perspective of ecological holism, both the ends of a hemisphere are indispensable and hence it stresses upon the equal importance of both, man and woman in any relationship. There is thus the crucial attempt of "decentralization. Donne does not choose to promote a certain part of the whole. Instead, he advocates the whole instead of a small part, because the stress of edges implies the establishment of centralism" (Li 115).

Similarly, in "The Flea", Donne appreciates the woman's quick wit to understand the allegorical euphemisms he directs at her by metamorphosing the flea as something sacred and not mundane. The woman knows better than to fall for his pleadings to "three lives in one flea spare" (Donne 10). She kills the flea and thus vociferously indicates her disapproval of Donne's suggestion albeit coming across as "cruel and sudden" (Donne 19). Another work which merits closer attention here is "The Sunne Rising", where Donne chastises the Sun for being a "Busie old foole, unruly Sunne" (Donne 12) but calls his woman "She's all states, and all princes, I, nothing else is. Princes do but play us; compared to this, all honor's mimic, all wealth alchemy" (Donne 12). His attitude towards women is nothing short of worshipping. While in some works he showers his love interest with a lot of praise for the ethereal beauty she possesses, his other poems praise women for their intellectual and emotional vitality. His oft-quoted lines from "A Valediction of My Name, in the Window" exemplify this characteristic, when he states, "All my soules bee /Emparadis'd in you" (Donne 27). He thus posits the view that true love transcends the realm of mere physicality and reaches its ultimate spiritual fulfillment.

The critical study reveals that contrary to the popular misconception that in John Donne's poetry, women are projected as lesser and inferior to men. Textual

evidence shows that although John Donne did not outrightly issue the clarion call for equality of both the sexes, nonetheless, a feminist and Bakhtinian reading of his works suggests that far from being presented as flat characters, the treatment of women in Donne's poems assert their distinct identity.

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