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**Organised By**

**Govt. Arts College (A), Salem-7, TN, INDIA**



**सर्वे भवन्तुः सुखिनः**

**"THINK BEYOND TO CREATE MIRACLES"**

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ENGINEERING & PHARMACEUTICAL SCIENCES**

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**“THINK BEYOND TO CREATE MIRACLES”**

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## Editorial

*Culture is the endeavour to know the best and to make this knowledge prevail for the good of all humankind.*

-Matthew Arnold

As this International Conference convened by the PG & Research Department of English, Government of English (Autonomous), Salem-7, Tamilnadu, INDIA could reach a larger academic audience and has opened up new horizons in the research sphere, we take immense pride in adding another **Volume II** towards the publication of the selected articles.

The **Second volume** further adds enrichment to the significance of Cultural Heritage and has emphasized the need of the hour. The two volumes present timely issues such as acquisition, education, ethnology, historiography, integrity, legislation, memory, ownership, preservation, human rights pertaining to Cultural Heritage in Literatures across the globe. The goal was achieved as the conference could integrate **244** participants from varied universities and research institutions nationwide. Against this background as editors of **Volume II** of the remaining selected **55** articles presented at the International conference, we thank all the presenters, academicians, theoretical experts for their invaluable contributions.

This great academic endeavour could be accomplished only with the integrated effort of the members of our department. We owe our sincere thanks to the Peer Review committee- **Dr.K.Tamizharasi, Dr.T.Gangadharan, Dr.P.Mythily, Dr.R.Sheela banu, Prof. K Anbazhagan & Dr. T.Alagarasan**, to the organizing secretaries- **Prof. P.S.Shanmugavel, Dr.D.Balasubramaniam, Prof.T.Govindarajan, Prof. Y.Raja** and to the organizing committee members – **Prof.K.Niranjana, Prof.K.Gomathi, Prof.K.Nithyakalyani, Prof.Geetha Rajagopal, Prof.K.Ravichandran & Dr.J.Jayakumar** for the successful completion of this holistic venture.

It is with immense gratitude we commend the **IJHEPS journal publication** associated with the release of the proceedings of **VOLUME II** of this “**International Conference on Contextualizing Cultural Heritage in Literatures.**”

Hope these **two volumes** will provide invaluable reading and will inspire both thought and action.

*Dr.V.Kundhavi & Dr.V.Anbarasi*  
**Proceedings Editors**

# **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

S.NO	TABLE OF CONTENTS	PAGE NO.
1.	<b>Creation Myth - Mystiq in Australian Aborginal Stories</b> <i>Dr. A. Ajmalkhan.</i>	10-12
2.	<b>Preserving Culture Through Literature –The Ramayana</b> <i>P. Angayarkkanni.</i>	13-16
3.	<b>Social Marginality in Sashi Deshpandae’s <i>That Long Silence</i></b> <i>Mrs.S.Anuradha.</i>	17-20
4.	<b>Cultural Transformation of an Immigrant Indian Woman in Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni’s <i>Clothes</i></b> <i>Dr. S. Ayyappa Raja.</i>	21-23
5.	<b>“Reflection” in Lorraine Hansberry’s <i>A Raisin in the Sun.</i></b> <i>Ms. Betsy Bower.</i>	24-25
6.	<b>Culture and Tradition Viz- Viz Contemporary Psychology: A Study of Sudha Murty’s <i>Gently Falls The Bakula</i></b> <i>Dr.G.Bhuvaneswari.</i>	26-29
7.	<b>The Depiction of the Cultural Dominance in Bharati Mukherjee’s <i>Wife</i></b> <i>S. Deepa.</i>	30-32
8.	<b>Jaya as Culture-Specific Protagonist in Shashi Deshpande’s <i>That Long Silence</i></b> <i>S. Devashanthi.</i>	33-34
9.	<b>Cultural Imperialism in Ngugi Wa Thiongo’s <i>Devil on the Cross</i></b> <i>A.Dinesh. &amp; Dr. S. Thirunavukkarasu</i>	35-37
10.	<b>History of Feminism and the Predicament of an Afro-American Individual in the novels of Gloria Naylor</b> <i>P. Duraisamy.</i>	36-40
11.	<b>Parsi culture in Rohinton Mistry’s <i>Such a Long Journey</i></b> <i>R. Elaveni.</i>	41-44
12.	<b>Multicultural Perspectives in Amulya Malladi’s <i>The Mango Season</i></b> <i>D. Ghayathry.</i>	45-46
13.	<b>Myths of Heritage: Culture, Enlightenment and Hegemony.</b> <i>C. Gireesh.</i>	47-50
14.	<b>Auto Ethnography in the writings of Bama.</b> <i>S. Gopinath.</i>	51-52
15.	<b><i>THIS PAPER HAS BEEN REMOVED DUE TO PLAGIARISM COMPLAINT</i></b>	53-58
16.	<b>Contextualizing the Concept of Joint Family in Manju Kapur’s <i>Home</i></b> <i>James Joseph.</i>	59-61
17.	<b>Indian Literature as an Expression of Indian Tradition and Culture</b> <i>Dr. J.Jayakumar.</i>	62-65
18.	<b>Contextualization of Language and Culture in Rajam Krishnan’s Novel, <i>Kurinchi Then</i></b> <i>Dr. G. Jeyashree.</i>	66-68
19.	<b>Cultural Myths – An Encomium on Folklore and Tradition</b> <i>L. Jenniffer.</i>	69-71
20.	<b>Man’s Image as God: A Thematic Study of Zora Neale Hurston’s <i>Moses, Man of the Mountain</i></b> <i>V. Kannan.</i>	72-74
21.	<b>Language and Culture in Aravind Adiga’s <i>The White Tiger.</i></b> <i>G.Karthiga &amp; Dr.R.Shanthi.</i>	75-77

22.	<b>Contextualizing Marginalization in Indian Literature with Reference to Bama's <i>Karukku</i></b> <i>D.Kavitha.</i>	78-80
23.	<b>Depiction of History and Politics in Vikram Seth's <i>A Suitable Boy</i></b> <i>Dr.P.Madhan.</i>	81-84
24.	<b>The Subaltern Concept: Oppression of Untouchables in Arundhati Roy's <i>The God of Small Things</i></b> <i>Dr. M.Madhavan</i>	85-86
25.	<b>Myth and Folklore in Shashi Deshpande's <i>That Long Silence</i></b> <i>S. Mahalakshmi.</i>	87-89
26.	<b>Ed Bullins' "A Son, Come Home" – A Play of Lost Relationship</b> <i>G Manivannan.</i>	90-93
27.	<b>Marginalization in African Literature: Vulnerability and Poverty in Rural Africa.</b> <i>Mrs. Manoharan Anitha &amp; Dr K.S.Thirunavukkarasu</i>	94-97
28.	<b>Marginalization in Shashi Deshpande's <i>The Dark Holds No Terrors</i></b> <i>Mrs.S.Mariammal</i>	98-101
29.	<b>Exploration of the Silent Suffering in Shashi Deshpande's <i>A Matter of Time</i></b> <i>P. Mohana &amp; Dr. U.Sundarajan</i>	102-103
30.	<b>Acculturation versus Cultural Resilience in August Wilson's <i>Radio Golf</i></b> <i>A. Muthukumar.</i>	104-106
31.	<b>Affliction of Women in Shobhaa De's <i>Sisters</i></b> <i>C.Muthukumar.</i>	107-108
32.	<b>Maya's Psychological Marginality in Anita Desai's <i>Cry The Peacock</i></b> <i>AR. Praseetha. &amp; Dr.Anuradha</i>	109-110
33.	<b>Globalization through Culture of Convenience with Special Reference to Chatan Bhagat's <i>2 States</i></b> <i>N. Radha</i>	111-114
34.	<b>Manu Dharma: Interrogation of Socio-Cultural Integration through the Postmodern Lens with Reference to K.A .Gunasekaran's <i>The Scar</i>.</b> <i>Y.Raja</i>	115-117
35.	<b>Culmination of Culture in Anita Nair's <i>Mistress and The Better Man</i></b> <i>M.P.Rajeshwari</i>	118-119
36.	<b>Caribbean Culture in Selected Poems of Derek Walcott</b> <i>S.Ramesh</i>	120-123
37.	<b>We are a Pure Persian Race: A Study of the Ethnic Atrophy of Parsis as Reflected in Rohinton Mistry's <i>Family Matters</i></b> <i>P.M.Reena Mohamed.</i>	124-126
38.	<b>Self-Identity And Homelessness In Ruskinbond's <i>The Room On The Roof</i></b> <i>R. Sakthipriya</i>	127-130
39.	<b>Pestilence And Endurance: A Study of Bhabani Bhattacharya's <i>He Who Rides A Tiger</i></b> <i>L.Sangeetha</i>	131-133
40.	<b>Third Space Hybrid Identity in Bessie Head's <i>Maru</i></b> <i>V.Saranya &amp; Dr.V.Kundhavi</i>	134-138



41.	<b>Marginalization of Women in Nayantara Saghals <i>The Day in Shadow</i></b> <i>M.Sathya M.A.,M.Phil</i>	139-142
42.	<b>Cultural Hegemony in Wole Soyinka's <i>The Lion and the Jewel</i></b> <i>Sarojram S.M</i>	143-145
43.	<b>Counter Culture: Culture as Assertion in sharankumar Limbale's <i>The Outcaste (Akkarmashi)</i></b> <i>P. Shanmugavel, M.A., M.Phil.,</i>	146-150
44.	<b>Traces of Afrocentricity in Wole Soyinka's <i>The Lion and the Jewel</i></b> <i>R.Senthilkumar, M.A, MPhil &amp; D.Mohana priya, M.A, MPhil</i>	151-154
45.	<b>Women as a Victim and Exploit of patriarchal society in Vijay Tendulkar's Plays: <i>Silence! The Court is in Session and Kanyadan</i></b> <i>Sudha Murugan</i>	155-158
46.	<b>Inhumanism and Disillusionment in Paul Maeshall's <i>The Chosen Place, The Timeless people</i></b> <i>Dr.V.Suganthi</i>	159-161
47.	<b>Culture: Fragrance and Claustrophobia in Ameen Merchant's <i>Silent Raga</i></b> <i>S. Suganya Karpagam</i>	162-165
48.	<b>Women as a Victim of Patriarchal Culture in Alice Walker's <i>Possessing the Secret of Joy.</i></b> <i>Ms. S.Sumathi</i>	166-168
49.	<b>Fashion and Fancy: The Popular Culture of Fitzgerald's <i>Era</i></b> <i>S.Sureshkumar.</i>	169-171
50.	<b>A Rendezvous with African American culture through Maya Angelou's <i>Autobiographical Narratives</i></b> <i>Dr.Susan Roy</i>	172-175
51.	<b>Depiction of Women Cultre in Bernard Malamud's <i>The Assistant</i></b> <i>M. Umaiyarasi</i>	176-177
52.	<b>An Insight into the African Igbo Culture through Flora Nwapa's <i>Efuru</i></b> <i>R.Vidhya</i>	178-180
53.	<b>Rewriting the Dominant Culture: An Exegesis of Walker's <i>The Color Purple</i></b> <i>Vidhya Viswanathan</i>	181-184
54.	<b>Black Feminist Dramaturgies: Inter Disciplinary Culture in The Gamut of Ntozake Shange's <i>Choreo Drama.</i></b> <i>Dr.B.Visalakshi &amp; Dr. V.Kundhavi</i>	185-189
55.	<b>Post-Colonial Analysis of Joseph Conrad's <i>Heart of Darkness</i></b> <i>Yuvakumar. J</i>	190-194

# **CONFERENCE PAPERS**

## Creation Myth - Mystiq in Australian Aboriginal Stories

**Dr. A. Ajmalkhan,**

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**Abstract:** *This paper deals with Creation Myth in Australian aboriginal stories. Aboriginals were primitive, cleaver and imaginative. They were the children of nature and lived close to the soil. Their Myths and legends are appreciated and accepted even today. They believed Maime, the Great Spirit as a supreme god, Yhi, sun goddess, Nungeena, a faire living in a fertile valley. The Creation Myth is an extract from the legends of Yhi Brings Life to the World, the Strange shape of Animals, the First Man, The Gift Of Flowers, the Plague of Insects, The First Initiation Ceremony And The Wife Of Baiame.*

**Key words:** *myth, Aboriginals, Yhi, culture and Nungeena.*

Australian Aboriginals, who at one time were regarded as so primitive in their outlook and culture as the earliest tales of stoneage. The large number of books describing the life, customs, arts, and skills of the Aboriginals is ample proof of this renewal of interest. The white Australians appreciate the wealth of imagination displayed in Aboriginal legend. It is part of the literature of Australia. As Eleanor Dark puts: "The Australian Aboriginal had great virtues; in a fairly extensive reading I have been able to discover no vices save those which they learned from the white invaders of their land."(9)

Aboriginals are primitive, clever and imaginative people who had to fight to gain their nourishment from the mother earth. It is remarkable that in an environment of desert wastes and infertile soil, as well as in well-watered country, the imagination of the Aboriginals produce tales that are both beautiful and amusing, and that they find human characteristics and poetry in bird and beast, in the sky above them, in sun, moon, and stars, and even in reptiles and insects.

They lived close to the soil, and children of nature. They were dependent on her for sustenance, and in the teeming animal life and in the barren places alike they found evidence of the work of a Creator Spirit, and promise of Bullima, the after – life. The legends have been gathered from many different sources. It is natural that there should be inconsistencies and contradictory elements. This is particularly in the case of Creation Myths. The animals and insects were brought to life at the touch of Yhi, the Sun Goddess, and that man, the final creation, was made in the bodily and mental form of Baiame, the Great Spirit.

Other widespread legends say that all living things first took the form of men, and gradually achieved individual characteristics as animals. This is a reasonable explanation of the origin of totemism, which exercised a considerable influence on Aboriginal life. The presentation of myths and legends in a form which is acceptable to the present day must necessarily depart from the spirit of the Eternal Dreamtime in many respects. As professor A.P.Elkin remarked.

Mythology is not just a matter of words and records, but of action and life, for the cult societies, the totemic lodges, do not spend their time at meeting reciting and chanting only; they also re-enact myths, and do so because the heroes and ancestors were, in their belief, actual persons and totemic beings; what they did in the course of their labours, must now be done in ritual and the places associated with them must be visited and cared for. For the most part, the details of any myth are only important because they enable the present – day men to walk the path with fidelity, which leads into the sacred dreamtime, the source of life (Elikin 244).

In this legend animals sometimes appear as men and at other times in their natural form. Similarly there are several conceptions of the Father- God, the Great Spirit, Baima. In some he is Culture hero, father and creator of his people, towards whom created man aspires; in others he is a great wirinun, plagued by faithless and foolish wives.

The values of this compilation may well lie in its representative nature. With hundreds of languages, there was no homogeneity of nomenclature, but there was a common ethos which can be readily found by sampling the variant legends of different tribes. Aborgins believed Yhi Sun Goddess brought life to the world. In the beginning the world lay quiet, in utter darkness. There was no vegetation, no living or moving on the bare bones of mountains. Yhi stirred in her sleep by Baiame, the Great Spirit. Yhi floated down to the earth and began a pilgrimage that took her far to the west, to the east, to north, and to the south. Wherever her feet rested on the ground, there the earth leaped in ecstasy. Grass, shrubs, trees and flowers sprang from it, lifting themselves towards the radiant source of light and the whole earth was clothed with vegetation. After completing her first task Yhi rested on the Nullarbor plain, looked around her, and knew that the Great Spirit was pleased with her work. Baiame commented "the work of creation is well begun". (Reed 11)

Yhi took the hand of Baiame and called all the things she had brought to life and said :

This is the land of Baiame It is yours for ever, to enjoy. Baiame is the Great Spirit. He will guard you and listen to your requests. I shall send you the seasons of summer and winter-summer with warmth which ripens fruit ready for eating, winter for sleeping while the cold winds sweep through the world and blow away the refuse of summer. These are changes that I shall send you, the creatures of my love. (Reed 14)

At night some of the creatures were frightening because of the darkness, for them, yhi sent moon and stars, making a new glory in the heaven. Aborigins believed that animals were brought to life from the frozen depths of earth by the sun goddess and had the form of men and women and other shapes. Animals were not happy with their present shape and functions and requested the sun goddess for the change of shapes

He was followed by kangaroo, who wanted strong legs for leaping and a tail with which to balance himself. Bat said he wanted wings so that he could fly through the air like a bird. Lizard was tired of wriggling on his belly and needed legs to support himself. Poor Platypus could not make up his mind what he wanted, and ended up with the parts of many animals.(Reed 15)

The changes were granted to the animals by Yhi.

Baiame was happy with his animals and its shapes, he gave a small portion of his power of thought to birds, reptiles, fish and other animals. They were governed by that part of thought which is known to man as instinct. But Baiame was not yet satisfied and said: "My whole mind must be put into something that has life and is worthy of the gift, I will need to make a new creation." (Reed 17) From the processes of thought, the joining together of atoms and microscopic grains of dust, the forming of blood and sinews, cartilage and flesh, and the convolutions of the substance of the brain, he formed an animal that walked erect on two legs. It had hands that could fashion tools and weapons and the wit to use them; above all, it had a brain that could obey the impulses of the spirit; and so Man, who was greater than all other animals, was fashioned as a vessel for the mind-power of the Great Spirit. This was done in secret. No other eye saw the making of Man. Baiame stood before creatures in the form of Man who rules over all creation because he had soul and intelligence of Baiame in a human body.

Then he looked back at the tree. It was changing. The flower stalk grew shorter and rounder. Limbs began to form, and with a shock man realized that the tree was changing into a two-legged creature like himself. But there was a difference. The limbs were smooth and soft, rounded breasts swelled before his eyes, there was a proud tilt to the shapely head. Man held out his hands to woman. She clasped them and stepped gracefully across the grassy base of the tree. Man held her in his arms and together they surveyed the waiting world. The animals danced with delight and then ran off into the distance, satisfied that the loneliness of man ended. Baiame smiled and said "When I show myself to the little thing I have created, "I shall be well content to show myself in the form of a Man" (Reed 21)

Baiame remained for a long while on earth as a man. He Loved Tya, the world. He made his home in a mountain, talking with the animals and the men and women whom he had created. There was communion of spirit between them, for the period of rest after the labours of creation were a refreshment to the Great Spirit. Day after day Yhi smiled at him as she moved across the vault of the sky, while round his earthly home the flowers bloomed in profusion. One day he spoke to the men and women, and to the animals which crowded round him.

"The time has come for me to leave you, my children. While the earth was young you needed me, but now you are fully grown. It is better that you live by yourselves."(Reed 22) Animal murmured "He has left us," Their drooping leaves and petals fell to the ground, and one by one they died. "Look!" the women cried again. "There are no flowers left anywhere!". (Reed 23) Baiame put into their minds a longing they could not resist. Gradually some of the men left their own camp grounds and gathered together at the foot of the mountain where Baiame had once lived as a man.

On seeing the plight of his creatures he set them down on a cloud, and a great sigh echoed through the Milky Way, because as far as they could see there was a glowing carpet of colour, brighter than any rainbow, and with all the colours of the great bow they had seen after the rain. Baiame said;

The stories you have heard were true, Once earth was covered with flowers like these, but never again. Yet my heart is sorrowful for you friends who will never see this sight. Gather armfuls of flowers now and take them back to earth with you. Take as many as you can. They will fruit and their seed will take root, to gladden the hearts of you and your children and your children's children for ever. (Reed 26)

The gentle hand set them down again on the solid ground. Dropping flowers as they went, they ran to their own tribes, and scattered the largesse that the Father Spirit had given them. It could not be expected that the flowers would bloom as they did in the days of Baiame, in the Dreamtime; but never again will Earth be without flowers while the Great Spirit continues to watch over his people. Baiame remained on Tya, the earth, let his imagination run riot. He fashioned mountains, covering them with trees and spreading a blue mist over them; he delighted in sending water spinning and laughing down their sides; he lined the banks with fragile

plants that drank from the streams and bent over them in gratitude; at other times he swept his hand across the land and smoothed it into mallee-covered plains and sandy desert wastes.

On seeing the pride of Baiame Marmoo, the spirit of Evil was not happy and said to his wife; "I can do something better than that. I will spoil his precious world for him." (Reed 25) he strode off into the dark forest where none could see him. In secrecy he made the insect tribe- beetles, flies, bugs, snails, worms, and a thousand other tiny creatures that crawled, burrowed, flew to destroy the beauty of nature. The insects become a devouring host spreading out from the dark forest. They ate the grass, they bit the leaves from the trees, No plant was safe from them. The earth grew bare and ugly, the scent of flowers was replaced by the noxious smell of the plagues that devoured the living things that Baiame had made. Even the music of streams and waterfalls was drowned by the whirr of wings and the clashing jaws of the insect tribe.

The Great Spirit was furious that his fair land was wantonly destroyed, but he felt he could get rid of the plague. He travelled quickly to the home of Nungeena, who lived in a fertile valley in the mountains and said "Come with me and see what has happened to the beautiful land I made". (Reed 26) Nungeena with her fellow spirits created varieties of birds and sent them to eat the insects. That is how the land was saved from the destruction of the evil spirit Marmoo.

The first corroboree and initiation ceremony the world has ever known was held at Googoorewon, the place of trees, while Baiame was still living on earth, and animals were still men. The Great Spirit, who at that time had appeared to the tribes from their distant hunting grounds. Many tribes were there as the representatives of the animal world. There were the Wahn, the crows; Du-mer, the Brown Pigeons; Baiamul, the Black Swans; Makhi, the Dogs; and many others. After several days Baiame summoned the men and addressed them as he stood outside his wurley he addressed;

It is good for you to enjoy yourselves, now the serious business must begin. The real purpose of our meeting together in this place is to prepare the young men for manhood. You know what must be done because I have implanted these thoughts in your mind. First you must make a bora ground. Then the bullroarers will sound, the boys will leave their mothers, and you who are older will accept the responsibility of training them. (Reed 30)

The men spent several days clearing the ground, earthing up the protecting walls and cutting a path through the scrub. Most of them worked quickly and silently, but they were interrupted all the time by the senseless chatter and laughter of Madhi tribe. They laughed contemptuously, swaggered round the workmen making insulting remarks and criticized the work. Baiame observed them very closely and decided to punish them. He shouted:

I am grieved at the behavior of the Madhi, my people live happily because they obey the laws I have made for them. Yet you, Madhi, are proud and rebellious. You have not listened to the wise men; you are making a mockery of this solemn occasion. Very well: you may go on laughing and howling to your hearts content. No longer will I dignify you with the name or appearance of men. Go your way, Madhi, and continue your howling. (Reed 31)

They were turned into dogs and by howling and barking they ran away. Baiame went sadly back to his home in the mountains. The greatest initiation ceremony ever known was ended; but women had been turned into trees, men to dogs, whole tribes to reptiles and birds, and even his own dog had left him and given birth to monsters. Baiame had a hope that the world would be richer because of the plants and animals that had come from his great bora. Before leaving the world to go to his home in the Milky Way, Baiame spoke to his wives Birra-nulu and Kunnan-beili, (they were young and foolish) that he was going in search for honey, meanwhile they should collect some yams and reach the spring at Coorigil and wait for him. He warned them not take bath in the spring because it was used for drinking. They ignored his warning and started to swim in the cold water. Two Kurrias, the crocodile guardians of the pool devoured them and made an attempt to escape from Baiame. He reached the spring and came to know about event, he caught the Kurrias and killed them. From their bellies he saved his wives. They felt sorry for their foolish act and apologized. Then Baiame advised them;

Your adventure has ended happily, may be it will teach you to listen to your husband another time. There is always a reason for the orders I give you. If it had not been for me you would still be lying inside the Kurrias and your bodies would have been eaten away by the juices of their bellies. Will you promise me never to go swimming in any pool or billabong or river without my permission. (Reed 41) His wives accepted it.

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# Preserving Culture through Literature - The Ramayana

P.Angayarkkanni

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**Abstract:** *Ramayana is the treasure of Indian Culture and our civilization. There are so many incidents in Ramayana, which are noteworthy and must be highlighted.*

- 1) Rama & his brothers always respected his elders and parents.
- 2) There was a tradition maintained that the youngsters never crossed the words of the elders.
- 3) The king was the representative of the subjects and to be liked by the citizen.
- 4) People were truthful and were afraid of bad impression.
- 5) Youngsters always saluted the elders everyday.
- 6) Wicked people were given chances to change their nature.

*Like this we can say so many qualities of Ramayana.*

*Today many people read the holy Ramayana, but few understand its essence. They spend their time in acquiring bookish knowledge and superficial knowledge, but fail to have practical knowledge. There are many people who can explain the teachings of Ramayana in a beautiful way, but how many of them obey the command of their fathers in their daily life? Not many! What is the use of reading various texts, if we do not put into practice the message contained in them? Can anyone enjoy the taste of various delicious items such as Mysore Pak, Gulab Jamoon, Jilebi, etc., by merely repeating their names? No. One can enjoy the taste only when one eats them. Mere textual information is of no use. But, man today is interested only in information, and not transformation. Intellect will blossom only when there is transformation.*

**Key Words:** *culture, literature, essence, practical knowledge, information and performance.*

## Introduction

The great epic, the Ramayana, with its universal appeal even today has inspired generations of people even beyond the shores of Bharat. This captivating charm of the epic is because of the fact that the Mighty Supreme Truth, the Godhead indicated in the Upanishads, has descended as a human Avatara, out of compassion for humanity. It is the descent of the Lord for the ascent of Man! In the epic, Rama and Sita take the roles of an ideal couple who, by audio-visual demonstration, have set examples to enable human beings to live a Dharmic way of life in thought, word and deed under all conditions and circumstances. The epic is a charter of duties for husbands and wives, parents and children, brothers, friends and attendants, rulers and the ruled. The intensely human qualities of head and heart of the Divine couple, portrayed throughout the Ramayana, have an eternal content and hence a relevant application to the present day family, community, national and international materialistic life of tensions and confusions. Thus the Ramayana can be regarded as Valmiki's guide to good life and harmony in society.

Valmiki is a poet first and foremost. His language is limpid and style, vibrant. There is no attempt at pedantry. Poetry spontaneously flows from a heart saturated with noble sentiments. He wrote about Rama and Sita, the ideal human beings. So the *Ramayana* has become a model Dharma *Shastra* which exemplifies the Vedic Values, thereby raising it to the status of an *Itihasa*. It is the *Itihasas* and *Puranas* that nurture and nourish the Indian culture and civilization. *Culture is the refinement of the mind and the spirit. When it is directed to the external aspects of man, it is called civilization and when directed inward it is called culture.* It rises up to spiritual dimensions. So Indian culture is considered spiritual in content. The contribution of the *Ramayana* to effect this culmination is immense and immeasurable. It has gone deep down into the racial sub-consciousness.

## Treasure of Culture

Ramayana is the treasure of our culture and civilization. There are so many incidents in Ramayana, which are noteworthy and must be highlighted.

- Rama & his brothers always respected his elders and parents.
- There was a tradition maintained that the youngsters never crossed the words of the elders.
- The king was the representative of the subjects and to be liked by the citizen.
- People were truthful and were afraid of bad impression.
- Youngsters always saluted the elders everyday.
- Wicked people were given chances to change their nature.

Like this we can list so many qualities from Ramayana.

## Significance of Ramayana

The story of Rama teaches us the threefold *Dharma* (code of conduct) pertaining to the individual, the family and the society. One has to make every effort to understand the duties of the individual, the family and the society. Rama is the ocean of compassion. He is love personified. It is possible to understand His divinity

only through the path of love. Love is the undercurrent of human life. Man will be able to manifest his innate divinity only when he develops love within.

The modern society needs to follow the *Dharma* that is contained in the epic Ramayana. What is the reason? Today, the son is not paying heed to his father's advice and the parents are not concerned about the future of the son. Devotion to the *Guru* should be the aim of the students. But, the students are not having regard for their teachers and the teachers are not imparting anything good to them. Women are not held in a respectable position instead they are considered as mere objects of pleasure in many instances. Safety of the women folk is the biggest question? We have come across many ignoble incidents revealing the above mentioned points in the recent time. In such a situation, everyone needs to follow the ideals of the Ramayana. The Ramayana speaks of the true identity of the individual, the real significance of the family and the sanctity of the society. The Ramayana teaches the importance of human values. Today corruption is rampant in all fields such as business, education and politics. Under these circumstances, the principles of the Ramayana are very important. It explains in detail the relationship that should exist between brothers, the father and the son, the preceptor and the disciple.

### **Effect of Ramayana**

Every aspect of Indian culture has been enriched and ennobled by the *Ramayana*. Indian languages, art, architecture, music, painting, devotional movements have all been profoundly influenced by the *Ramayana*. The *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* have been the mainstay of all the Indian regional languages. Tunchan, Tulasi, Krithivasa, and Kamban have installed the *Ramayana* in every Indian heart. It is the name and story of Rama that sustain most of the devotional movements. Temples dedicated to Rama dot the length and breadth of India. Painting, music, drama and other art-forms have the *Ramayana* as their main themes. It is the epics and the Sanskrit language that formed the cultural cementing force of the whole of India even when the country was divided into several political units. It has spread its message and culture to China, Japan, Thailand, Bali, Burma, Cambodia, Siam, Indonesia, far-eastern countries, and other far off places. Even today in the traditional dances of Bali and Thai, we can notice the influence of the Ramayana. The epics and the puranas have eclipsed the earlier literature. Rama and Krishna have become the current coin of Indian culture and none can dethrone them from their supreme eminence.

### **Culture of Our Motherland**

The culture of Bharat says: *Sathyam Bruyath* (Speak the truth), *Priyam Bruyath* (Speak sweetly and softly), *Na Bruyath Sathyamapriyam* (And never utter truth in an unpalatable way). *Sathyam Bruyath* is the moral value. *Priyam Bruyath* is the social value. *Na Bruyath Sathyamapriyam* is the spiritual value. So, the moral, social, and spiritual values are all contained in the above statement.

The Ramayana teaches these values in the simplest way. But, man has forgotten the message of the Ramayana and is leading the life of a Ravana. Ravana did not understand this principle of divinity. There was no transformation in him though he had acquired all forms of knowledge and had done severe penance. He ruined himself on account of excessive desires. Before his death, he gave a message to the people: "O people, with all my skills and expertise in different forms of knowledge I became a victim of desires. I lost my sons, ruined my clan and burnt my kingdom to ashes, as I could not control my desires. Do not become a victim of desires like me. Follow the path of truth and righteousness and be like Rama. Experience divinity"

### **Information Vs Transformation**

Today many people read the holy Ramayana, but few understand its essence. They spend their time in acquiring bookish knowledge and superficial knowledge, but fail to have practical knowledge. There are many people who can explain the teachings of Ramayana in a beautiful way, but how many of them obey the command of their fathers in their daily life? Not many! What is the use of reading various texts, if we do not put into practice the message contained in them? Can anyone enjoy the taste of various delicious items such as *Mysore Pak*, *Gulab Jammun*, *Jilebi*, etc., by merely repeating their names? No. One can enjoy the taste only when one eats them. Mere textual information is of no use. But, man today is interested only in information, and not transformation. Intellect will blossom only when there is transformation.

If your ambitions are not fulfilled, do not waver or get depressed. He is a realized one who is cheerful in the face of all adversities. (Telugu Poem) Therefore, man should cultivate *Daiva Preeti*, *Papa Bheeti* and *Sangha Neeti* (love for God, fear of sin and morality in society). Though Rama and Ravana were equally well versed in all forms of knowledge, sage Valmiki extolled Rama as Divine and condemned Ravana as a foolish one. What is the reason? Ravana did not translate into action the knowledge he had acquired and on the contrary, he used it for wicked purposes. On the other hand, Rama translated all his knowledge into action and gave joy to one and all. *Sarvaloka Hithe Ratah* (Rama was engaged in the welfare of all). *Sarvajnanopasampannah* (He was the master of all forms of knowledge). *Sarvasamudhita Gunaihi* (He was the embodiment of all good qualities). These are the three aspects that manifested Rama's divinity. Whoever has these three aspects is essentially divine. In fact, everyone is divine. But because of attachment to the body, man is not able to understand his divine nature. Man can experience and enjoy divinity only by treading along the path of love. Love is God; God is love. So, live in love.

Start the day with love  
Spend the day with love  
Fill the day with love  
End the day with love  
This is the way to God.

### Man in Many Dimensions

There are four qualities in man - the divine, demonic, animal and human. What is the divine quality in man? *Sarvaloka Hitha Ratah* (engaged in the welfare of everybody). That is the divine nature. What is the human quality? Always undertake meritorious deeds (*Punya*). Never indulge in sin (*Papa*). *Paropakara Punyaaya Paapaaya Parapeedanam* (rendering help to others is merit, harming others is sin). Help ever, Hurt never. What constitutes the animal quality in man? *Jnanena Sunya Pasubhir Samana* (devoid of wisdom man is equivalent to an animal). The purpose of human life does not lie in merely eating, drinking, sleeping and indulging in materialistic comforts. Even animals indulge in such activities. But unlike man animals do not possess the evil qualities of amassing, robbing and stealing. Today man is human only in form, but not in behaviour.

Dasamukha does not mean having five heads on the right and five on the left, with one neck in between. If it were so, think of the traffic jam and think what a calamity it would be if Ravana were to catch a cold - he would have to sneeze ten times! Even to clear one nose is a terrible thing! What is meant here is that the five *gnana indriyas* and the five *karma indriyas* constitute Dasamukha. A totally extrovert man lives in the flesh, for the flesh and by the flesh -- it is the rule of the flesh. Such a man is a sensualist. Materially he can become great as did Ravana who ruled over a prosperous land, Lanka. Compared to this land, Ayodya was underdeveloped and village - like with bullock carts plying on the roads; while in Lanka, the country boasted of Pushpaka Vimana - aeroplanes. In fact, Lanka was so advanced, that even at 8 O'clock in the mornings, the women folk were found drunk! What a situation! Even in Delhi or New York such is not the case. Drunks are rampant only in the evenings. In Lanka, nobody worked and everybody was supported by the Socialist Government. And people from all over the world came to pay homage to Ravana who was supremely powerful.

But does materialism provide anything more than mere physical comfort? It is not a solution to the problems of life. Spiritual and cultural values can alone save the world. This idea is brought out in Ramayana. As Sant Keshavadas says Ramayana is not a mere story. It is the story we live every moment of our lives.

### Moral Values in the Society

*Janthoonam Narajanma Durlabham* (human life is the most difficult to attain of all living beings). The good that you experience in this life is the result of meritorious deeds done in several past lives. This human life is not new. This message is contained in the word *Manava*. *Ma* means 'not' *Nava* means 'new', which means human life is not new. Today man has degenerated to the level of an animal due to excessive desires. Less luggage more comfort makes travel a pleasure. But, the desires (luggage) in man are multiplying day by day. Human life is a long journey. One should lead a divine life (*Divya Jeevanam*), not a mean life (*Deena Jeevanam*). Always be happy. Difficulties do come in life. That is the law of nature. Never get disheartened by them. Difficulties are like passing clouds. Difficulties come and go, but morality comes and grows. Unfortunately, there is decline in moral values in the society today.

Rama stood as a shining example of upholding the moral values in the society. Even when he was asked to leave for the forest at a time when he was supposed to be coroneted, he was not perturbed in the least. *Sukhadukhe Samekruthva Labhalabhau Jayajayau* (he is an equal minded one who treats the dualities of life pain and pleasure, victory and defeat, gain and loss - alike). Rama displayed this virtue of equanimity. Today, man aspires for positions of authority though he does not deserve them. But, Rama relinquished the position even though He deserved it. Rama was courageous in the face of adversities. He never gave any scope for weakness. He led the life of a *Dheera* (courageous one), not a *Deena* (weak-minded). Same is the case of one who is in His company. Hanuman, by contemplating on Rama incessantly, became a *Dheera*. He displayed this quality of courageousness in the court of Ravana. But the same Hanuman stood like a *Deena* (humble one) in Rama's presence. This drives home the point that one should be a *Deena* (humble one) in front of divinity and *Dheera* (courageous one) in the face of evil.

Annihilate the evil qualities of *Kama* (desire), *Krodha* (anger) and *Lobha* (greed). Ravana ruined not only himself, but also his dynasty because of *Kama*. Therefore, to the extent possible control your desires. Today Government has imposed ceiling on land and property through legislation, but what is essential is ceiling on desires. Not only did Hiranyakasipu refrain from chanting the name of Lord Hari, he also insisted that his son Prahlada should follow it. He developed hatred towards his own son for singing the praise of Lord Hari against his wishes. This evil quality of anger led to his doom. Duryodhana was greed personified. He was not prepared to part with even a small piece of land. He subjected the Pandavas to enormous hardships. What happened to him ultimately? He became a victim of his own greed.



Desire, anger and greed are the greatest impediments in the path of spirituality. Render help to others, if possible. Never hate anybody under any circumstances. The essence of 18 *Puranas* is contained in these two maxims: Help ever, Hurt never.

### **Status of Women**

Ramayana presents two dimensions about the status of women during that period, one the ideal held up by Valmiki regarding how one should treat a woman on account of her sex, weakness and so on. Valmiki not only advises people through many characters, as to how one should treat a woman but also stresses the importance of the respect for a woman as a sign of a cultured society. At the same time, he also presents a picture of the status of women in the Aryan culture of Ayodhya, Primate culture of Kishkinda and the Asuric culture of Lanka. One can identify many parallel views in these cultural patterns, even though there were a number of diverse practices also.

The moral sense in Valmiki Ramayana in respect of sex and sexual relationship was so very acute that it was considered to be a sin to cast an evil glance at another's wife. Valmiki is very particular that the people should show kindness towards fair and weaker sex. The men were expected to behave properly and suavely and they should not put on a stern demeanour towards women. And killing a woman is considered to be a great sin.

### **Greatness of Unity**

Ramayana is the Heritage of India. The story of the Ramayana reveals the ideal relationship that should exist between brothers. Lakshmana and Satrugna served Rama and Bharata respectively with utmost devotion and sincerity. When Lakshmana fainted in the battlefield, Rama lamented, "In this world I might find another mother like Kausalya, a wife like Sita, but definitely not a brother like Lakshmana." A brother should be like this - one who respects elders and brings name and fame to the whole family. It is the unity amongst the brothers that brought reputation to the whole family.

The same was the case with the Pandavas also. The five Pandavas could defeat hundred Kauravas as they stood united. Even though Vali and Sugriva were just two, they fell apart because of lack of unity. Rama restored the kingdom to Sugriva as Sugriva completely surrendered himself to Sri Ram. Similar was the case with Ravana, Vibhishana and Kumbhakarna. Any big task can be accomplished if the five fingers are united. Otherwise even a small task becomes extremely difficult. So, everyone should strive for unity.

*Spirituality destroys narrow mindedness and confers unity, cooperation and universal peace.* (Telugu Poem) Unity is very essential. Through unity one can understand spirituality. Then one can become a true human being.

### **Lakshmana's Sterling Virtue**

When Sita was being taken away forcibly by Ravana, she bundled all her jewels and dropped them from above. The *Vanaras* found the jewels and took them to Sugriva. When Rama and Lakshmana met Sugriva, he showed them the jewels and asked if they belonged to Sita. Rama cried in great grief. "Look, Lakshmana, look well at this garment and the jewels; they must have fallen on soft green grass; they look exactly as they used to when they were on Sita's body". Lakshmana's answer to this appeal for confirmation is well known. Lakshmana replied,

"Naham Janami Keyure Naham Janami Kundale

Nupure tu abhi Janami Nityam Padabhivandanat" (Valmiki Ramayana IV – 6 – 22).

"Brother, I don't know whom these earrings and bracelets belong to. But I am sure that these anklets belong to Mother Sita." On being questioned as to how he could recognize Sita's anklets, Lakshmana said, "It was my practice to prostrate at her lotus feet every morning. While doing so, I had noticed Mother Sita's anklets. I have never raised my eyes and looked here in the face. I always saw her feet, to which I bowed in reverence. . Hence I can't identify the armlet or the ear-rings." Rama was pleased with Lakshmana's sincerity and devotion and showered praises on him and said, "He could not find a brother like Lakshmana anywhere in the world." Later, Rama said that it was because of Lakshmana's strength and support that He could defeat Ravana and bring Sita back to Ayodhya.

### **Conclusion**

The Ramayana can serve as a useful reference book for those willing to learn. The Ramayana demonstrates that anything can be achieved through sincerity and devotion. The story of the Ramayana is so enchanting and captivating that one feels like listening to it again and again. Bharatiyas have been singing the story of Rama since ancient times. Everyone should try to understand the essence of the Ramayana. The Ramayana teaches that one should have a good character, one should obey the command of the father and respect the parents, and there should be unity among brothers. If you follow these teachings in letter and spirit, your life itself will become a living Ramayana. The *Ramayana* is the pole-star of Indian culture.

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## Social Marginality in Shashi Deshpande's *That Long Silence*

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**Abstract:** *The problems of contemporary middle class women are the main subject matter of Shashi Deshpande's writings. This paper aims to study the impact of culture in her novel That Long Silence. Through this novel the author echoes the voices of the urban educated-middle class woman who are trapped between tradition and modernity of the culture of Indian society. Her sensitive heroines are fully conscious that they are the victims of uncultured gender discrimination which prevails in a conservative male dominant society. A culture specific approach has been adopted by Deshpande to unravel the modern Indian woman's long suffering existence. Although many women writers tried their hand at expressing these long sufferings, they could only provide psychological depths to their characters but Shashi Deshpande succeed in representing the real life experience. In this novel she does not present men as entirely bad and women as completely good. She is realistic in the sense that her stories are very close to life. The protagonist Jeya's struggle throughout is to attain wholeness, completeness and an authentic selfhood. She bids goodbye to her silence, anger and resentment. She realises her self-worth and decides to give up the pre fixed norms of the society. Thus in this novel the protagonist has raised her voice against the role models of wife and other, and rebels against the suppression of the age-old patriarchal setup. The novel exposes the patriarchal practices in the Indian society which are at length tactfully handled by the protagonist.*

**Keywords:** *Culture, Patriarchy, Feminine, Masculinity, Indiscrimination.*

Feminism in India has taken its shape in relation to historical and cultural realities. Indian women struggle for identity through different hierarchies. Patriarchy is one of them. Women in India also have to struggle with other female members within the families for their identity. Shashi Deshpande is one of the prominent contemporary women writers in Indian writing in English. She has created ripples in the society of male domination by taking women as women seriously in her novels. She takes the readers inside the consciousness of her women characters to present their plight, fears, dilemmas, contradictions and ambitions. She came into limelight in the year 1988 with the publication of her novel *That Long Silence*, and which won her prestigious Sahitya Academy Award in 1991.

As a novelist she is expert in depicting the realistic life of women in Indian society. She makes an attempt to explore the inner self of the modern Indian women who are at the cross lines between tradition and modernity. Her familiarity with Indian philosophy and culture find reflection in all her novels. The social upheavals and the disillusion of modern time are aptly presented in her novel *That Long Silence*. Through her writings she depicts the drawbacks of Indian culture. It strongly advocates the dominance of man in the society and the women are always victimised to be subjugated. And there is also harmonious blending of Indian culture and English language in her novels.

In *That Long Silence*, Shashi Deshpande brilliantly focuses on gender discrimination, impact of patriarchy in the women's life, conflicts in marital life, the inferior position of females in Indian society, and the wrong child rearing practices which is still persisting in Indian society. Since childhood girls are taught to suppress their feelings in order to fit in the frame of ideal woman which is created by the society. Jaya, the protagonist of the novel, is a victim of gender discrimination and patriarchy. After marriage, she becomes voiceless in order to remain happy in her marital life. This paper is an attempt to trace the journey of Jaya, the protagonist of the novel from patriarchal suppression in the Indian culture towards the self-realisation.

*That Long Silence*, by Deshpande revolves around Jaya and Mohan, who belong to a middle-class Indian brahmin family. The novel deals with the life of the protagonist Jaya, which comes apart when her husband is asked to leave his job due to his malpractice in the place where he works. Jaya, a failed writer, is haunted by the memories of the past. She has a lot of differences in opinion with her husband which results out of the dominating features of the patriarchal society in India and these end up in the frustrations in their seventeen-year-old married life. She also has disappointment with her two teenage children, due to the claustrophobia of her childhood. These all begin to surface in her small suburban Bombay flat, Jaya grapples with these and other truths about herself; among them is her failure at writing and her fear of anger.

Shashi Deshpande gives the readers an exceptionally accomplished portrayal of a woman who is trying to come out of the long silence which is begun in childhood and rooted in her and in the constraints of her life. In this novel one can see that Indian patriarchal culture has developed certain norms for both men and women.

Whitehead in his book *The Masculinities Reader* has said that, "Masculinity reflects social and cultural expectations of social behaviour rather than biology" (16). Men were worried about their jobs and family. As they were still considered as 'the sheltering tree', they had to support their family. In this novel there are examples where male characters have got their education through many hardships, and they depend on the benevolence of other Brahmins for resources. Mohan is a true representative of this period. He is typically a salaried man; he knows no other life except the life centered on office, work and family. He is ambitious, fond of prestige and fame in society, and he cares for money and material comforts. He is a materialist and wants to support his family single handed.

Mohan represents the egoistic male character of India. In a way he tries to be a perfect Indian man who considers himself as the sole bread winner and the head of the family. He takes Jaya for granted and it hurts her. When he is caught in an act of malpractice he actually urges her to write something to earn money. Mohan is happy and takes pride in the fact that he is a writer's husband but gets infuriated when he reads one of her stories and he induces her not to write something which would endanger their marriage. He always wanted a wife who is educated and fluent in English. When he saw Jaya he liked her not because she was beautiful but she was talking in English fluently and was intelligent, but after marriage he never allows her to be herself and do what she wants. This diabolic nature of his makes Jaya angry. And this diabolic nature is the main characteristics of patriarchal culture.

Man's greed for money and materialistic things is seen in the character of Mohan. He resorts to illegal and unfair means of getting extra perks to lead a comfortable life and is suspended from the job. In order to escape from enquiry he decides to stay in Jaya's flat at Dadar. The very reasons of his becoming materialist can be traced back in his childhood which was traumatic for him. His childhood was poverty-stricken and like many other middle class brahmin boys he had to depend on a rich old man who offered charity for his studies. As a result of this humiliating experience he had become more greedy and ambitious.

His father had also played a vital role in the development of his psyche. His father had been very cruel, dictatorial and tyrannical with his mother. She tolerated everything in silence and so Mohan had in his mind the definite image of wife thus: "His image of a wife has been created by the submissive woman that he has seen in his family in his growing years" (83). Mohan has seen strength in his mother who suffered silently the tortures of her husband. So with this pre conceived notion Mohan has in his mind that wife must be gentle, quiet, and silent and so he named his wife as Suhasini. The novelist has thrown light on the issues of gender injustice and power structure of patriarchy which is reflected in several characters in the novel, *That Long Silence*. Silence becomes an important theme in the novel to express the gender bias of the society.

Actually there is another hierarchy in the society which goes unnoticed. In joint families women had their own areas where they could exert their own authorities. Women in the joint family play their role according to their age; mother-in-laws always exert their authorities over their daughter in law. And mothers always prefers male child instead of girl baby. In this genre the uneducated women easily accept their fate and ready themselves to endure the pain inflicted upon them by their elder women who can be either their mother or can be their in-laws. In case of educated women like Jaya who were in the state of confusion whether to continue with their traditional role or to revolt against the tradition which puts them in a worst state. They cannot go on with the tradition because they know it is against their ideology of self-respect and they cannot go with modernity because it will put them out of their family.

This state of confusion puts them in shackles. This novel reflects the predicaments and struggles of this type of women. According to Indian patriarchal culture the home has long been considered as the only area of activity for an Indian woman. That is the place where she is supposed to find satisfaction in the performance of her duties in the different roles like daughter, sister, daughter-in-law and mother. Even today, the female child has been brought up with the conventional ideas that a woman's destiny is swirling around in the air of her house. Although parents encourage the education of their daughters, the overall expectation is that it is a daughter's duty to marry and raise a family. They are always instructed to build up the status of the families they belong to.

In this novel *That Long Silence* one can see that Jaya is never allowed to forget that marriage is her destiny. She was given good education through English medium so that she could get well-settled with an educated husband. They have been taking care of Jaya with a plan to marry her off into a rich family. Otherwise they had nothing to do with Jaya's feelings, desires or longings. She had been longing for the true and deep love of her parents but they did not care for it. Her parent's behaviour has deeply sown the seed of hatred in Jaya against the male dominated society. In the novel *That Long Silence* her Ajji along with silence had taught her to 'wait',

For a man waiting brings in restlessness but for woman the game of waiting starts quite early in her childhood "wait until you get married, wait until your husband comes, wait until you go to your in law's home, wait until you have kids. Yes, ever since I got married, I had done nothing but wait (30).

Jaya, the protagonist, is a sufferer of the male dominating society right from her childhood days, which continues even after her marriage. Even in her house she suffers due to the traditional norms of the society. She

nurtured the shame because she could not respond and admire the classical music of Paluskar and Faiyaz Khan like her father. Her grandmother has continuously chided her for her inquisitive nature and further cautioned her saying that “for everything question for everything a retort what husband can be comfortable with that?”(5).Eva Figes says in her article in *Women in Society* that, “Dominance is ...the keynote in an analysis of the man-woman relationship where the male attributes are ones associated with mental thought and positive activity, whilst the woman is regarded as essentially passive, her role to be the respectable of male sexual drive for the subsequent reproduction of the species” (125).

The woman has to follow the dictates of her husband without questioning. The duties of a woman are taught at an early age, and the wife has to dutifully obey the customs of the family. The deep rooted patriarchy culture teaches that “a husband is like a sheltering tree....Without the tree, you’re dangerously unprotected and vulnerable. This followed logically. And so, you have to keep the tree alive and flourishing, even if you have to water it with deceit and lies” (32). Jaya contrasts the treatment in her own home with that of Mohan’s. In her home she used to argue or express opinions over issues, and her family would comply with her ideas. Her mother was often the decision- maker and interferes with the lives of her relatives too. Jaya’s father gave importance to Jaya’s wishes, ambition and desires. In Mohan’s house, matters are different. She notices:

It was when I first visited her home that I had discovered how sharply defined awoman’s role was. They had been a revelation to me, the women in his family, so definite about their roles, so well-trained in their duties, so skilful in the right areas, so indifferent to everything else. (83)

Soon after her marriage Jaya starts to maintain silence since the moment when she knows the fact that to Mohan “anger made a woman ‘unwomanly’” (83). He tells her that his mother has never raised her voice against his father however badly he has behaved to her. Mohan wants his wife to be like his mother. He appreciates his mother behaviour and he sees strength in the silence of his mother. When Jaya came to know about this attitude of Mohan towards women she began to follow his ideology. Thus her long silence began. Jaya’s servant, Nayana tells her about the desire for a male child. When Jaya asks her the reason for this attitude, Nayana tells her that the life of a woman is distraught. Nayana has to put-up with her husband who is a drunkard, and she would not want her own daughter to suffer a similar fate.

Each class in the society has its cultural characteristics and the working class, below poverty line families has to tolerate injustice at the hands of the male folk, who often live at the expense of their wives. Jaya hears a similar story from Manda, the daughter of her servant at the temporary residence. Rajaram, Manda’s father beats up his wife Tara if she does not provide the income for his drinks. The men of the lower income group are forced to subordinate themselves and exhibit subordinate masculinity. Courtenay in his book *Social Science and Medicine* observes that the individual pursues alcohol, smokes, fights, and engages in sexual conquests to compensate for one’s subordinate status in the society. He further states that the rejection of feminine behaviour, oppression of women and less powerful men contributes to the developments of masculinities. This behaviour also proves man’s superiority over woman and of his ranking among true masculine nature.

The women have to put up with such situations in order to keep life going on. Despite torture and troubles, women lack the courage to revolt against traditions. Patriarchy has strong roots that cannot be uprooted easily. According to Gopalan and Shiva in *Voluntary Health Association of India and Development*,

Based on patriarchal institutions and values, women are socialised to be good, obedient and sacrificing daughters, wives and daughters-in-law. They are trained not to challenge discrimination, subordination, exploitation and subjugation at various levels in the system. The term ‘parayadhan’...implies that parents have eventual hand over to prepare them for the guiding principles for socialising girls in the Indian families. (4)

When Mohan realises that Jaya does not want to further go into hiding for the wrong he has committed, he leaves the house to give Jaya the time to think and decide for herself. In his absence, she realises, ‘The thought of living without him had twisted my insides. His death had seemed to me the final catastrophe’”. (96) This projects the extent to which Mohan has controlled her individuality. Jaya, like other women, becomes an introvert and finds it unable to live without her husband. She has the urge to be independent, no doubt, but she lacks the courage to revolt against her husband. Sarala Palkar says, “It is only through self-analysis and self-understanding, through vigilance and courage, they can begin to change their lives. They will have to fight their own battles; nobody is going to do it for them.”

Shashi Deshpande’s works concentrate more on the status of the women in the traditional bound, male-dominated middle class society of the contemporary India. Her heroines are sensitive, intelligent and career-oriented. Study of her novels reveals how poignantly, she expresses the frustration and disappointments of women who experience social and cultural oppression in the male-dominated society. It is a general notion that humans are the crown of God’s creation. Moreover God created Eve, the first woman on earth by taking one of the rib bones of Adam, the first man on earth. According to Almighty, both men and women complement to each other and considered as equals. But the cultural impact in Indian society is such that the women folk are literally marginalised by the dominant patriarchy.

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## Cultural Transformation of an Immigrant Indian Woman in Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's *Clothes*

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**Abstract:** *“Clothes” is a short story written by Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni and it appears in her collection of short stories Arranged Marriage. This study aims at an analysis of “Clothes” so as to bring out Chitra Banerjee’s treatment of the metamorphosis that takes place in the life of an immigrant Indian woman Sumita. The young woman Sumita lives in a village in Bengal and leads a simple life like any other orthodox Indian woman. Her father brings a groom from a foreign land, United States of America. Initially, she has reservation to marry a man who lives in an alien land. She accepts the groom due to the love for her father who has made great efforts to find such a man as her suitor. Fortunately, Somesh Sen, her husband is amiable and he makes her feel comfortable in the foreign soil. She expresses shock when she comes to know about her husband’s profession. Her husband runs a store where all sorts of things are sold including alcoholic drinks. The major share of the revenue comes to the family by selling the hot drinks. She knows from her father that drinking is bad and in her village, there is a toddy shop outside where only bad men go and drink. Her father has said that it is a dark place and only evil men could visit. She has changed her opinion about the drinkers now since drinking is a part of culture of Americans and they may not take it seriously. She starts to wear western dress materials like T-shirt and jeans secretly in home to satisfy her husband’s desire without the knowledge of the in-laws out of respect. Unfortunately, her husband Somesh Sen is shot dead by a burglar one night. The ignominy of widowhood haunts her. In India, widows are treated badly by people and they brand them as unlucky women who have brought misfortune to their husbands. They are compelled to wear white saris, discard the auspicious “tilak” at their forehead and other ornaments including bangles. Sumita takes the bold decision not to wear the white sari as well as not to return to India. She determines to lead life in America independently. Her resolute stand reveals the cultural metamorphosis which she has undergone in the foreign land. Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni has effectively brought out the transformation that takes place in Sumita in the story.*

**Key words:** *Cultural Transformation, Immigrant issues, Orthodoxy, Arranged marriage, Culture, Dress materials, Alcoholism, Widowhood, Cultural shock, Resolution and Self assertion.*

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“Clothes” is a short story written by Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni and it appears in her collection of short stories Arranged Marriage. This study aims at an analysis of “Clothes” so as to bring out Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni’s treatment of the metamorphosis that takes place in the life of an immigrant Indian woman Sumita. The young woman Sumita lives in a village in Bengal and leads a simple life like any other orthodox Indian. Her father brings a groom from a foreign land, United States of America. Initially, she has the reservation to marry a man who lives in an alien land. She accepts the groom due to the love for her father who has made great efforts to find such a man as her suitor.

In Indian culture, arranged marriage is the order of the day. In arranged marriage, the bride and groom have a little chance to know about each other. Both of them abruptly made to come together to begin their new life. The parents decide their wedlock on the basis of social status, matching of horoscopes and huge dowry. There is little chance to know each other. Especially the young woman should leave her place of birth and her parents to lead a new life in the home of her husband. Sumita feels that it is a sort of unfairness in the Indian culture. She says:

Don’t send me so far away, I wanted to cry, but of course I didn’t. It would be ungrateful. Father had worked so hard to find this match for me. Besides, wasn’t it every woman’s destiny, as mother was always telling me, to leave the known for the unknown? She had done it, and her mother before her. A married woman belongs to her husband, her in-laws. Hot seeds of tears pricked my eyelids at the unfairness of it. (19)

Here Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni effectively brings out the difficulty experienced by every Indian woman at the time of their marriage. She should lead a new life in a new environment with unknown people like her husband and his parents. This is the fate of every woman in India. She contends that it is against the interest of woman who is forced to lead life in a totally different set up. For all these years Indian woman accepts this challenge boldly and follows the culture of the nation. Sumita observes it as unfair though there is no other way for an Indian woman. Indian women should marry a man fixed by the parents to start a new life. Here Sumita accepts the groom who has come from California due to her love for her father. She trusts the words of her father: “He’s a good man. Comes from a fine family. He will be kind to you” (19).

Sumita impresses Somesh Sen, her suitor at the bride-viewing ceremony by wearing the most expensive and beautiful sari bought by her father exclusively for this event. Fortunately, her husband is amiable and a good man. After their marriage, they fly to California where he runs a departmental store. In this store all sorts of things are sold including alcoholic drinks. The name of the store itself surprises her. She knows in India, Indians piously name their shops after gods and goddesses like Ganesh Sweet House, Lakshmi Vastralaya for Fine Saris and so on. They believe such names will bring luck for the owners of such shops. She thinks that it is strange to have a name “7-Eleven” for her husband’s shop. It is due to her brought up in Indian environment and culture.

She expresses shock when she comes to know about her husband’s profession. Her husband’s store sells hot drinks too and the major share of the revenue comes to the family by selling them. She knows from her father that drinking is bad and in her native village, there is a toddy shop outside where only bad men go and drink. Her father has said that it is a dark place and only evil men could visit. Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni brings out skilfully the cultural shock experienced by the newly married Indian immigrant woman when she has involved in a private conversation with her husband:

‘The only places I knew of that sold alcohol were the village toddy shops, dark, stinking dens of vice,’ Father called them. A lot of Americans drink, you know. It’s a part of their culture, not considered immoral, like it is here. And really, there’s nothing wrong with it. . . ‘When you come to California, I’ll get you some sweet wine and you’ll see how good it makes you feel. (21)

In this private chit chat, the husband tells her that drinking is a part of American culture and it will not be taken seriously there. Further, he assures that he will offer wine to her. It shows her reservation about drinking at first. Later her acceptance of the habit of foreigners reveals the change that takes place in her. She has not refused the offer of her husband rather she silently listens to it. It obviously displays the change of her cultural stance. Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni adeptly brings out the cultural transformation of an Indian immigrant woman here. Sumita has changed her opinion about the drinkers and even does not oppose her husband’s offer of white wine to her.

After their marriage, she desires to develop a relationship with her husband just like an American couple. She wants to exhibit her love by kissing her husband in a public place. Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni delineates her longing: “He will be standing at the customs gate, and when I reach him, he will lower his face to mine. We will kiss in front of everyone, not caring, like Americans, then pull back, look each other in the eye, and smile” (23). Her desire to display her love for her husband publicly obviously reveals the change that takes place in her. Kissing explicitly in a public place is not a cup of tea of an Indian woman. Here Sumita likes to adopt the foreign style of love making. It shows vividly the change that takes place in her.

Sumita starts to wear western dress materials like T-shirts and jeans secretly in home to satisfy her husband’s curiosity without the knowledge of the in-laws out of respect. Even they plan to move another house from the two-room apartment of the in-laws to get privacy and freedom. She gets immense joy in wearing the western dress materials. Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni depicts her joy:

I am wearing a pair of jeans now, marvelling at the curves of my hips and thighs, which have always been hidden under the flowing lines of my saris. I love the colour, the same pale blue as the nayantara flowers that grow in my parents’ garden. The solid comforting weight. The jeans come with a close fitting T-shirt which outlines my breasts. (25)

Her joy for wearing the attires like T-shirts and jeans clearly reveal the change that takes place in her. The woman who has come from a remote village and orthodox family feels happy by wearing these western dress materials. She is happy to stand before the mirror by wearing these dresses and her husband also glorifies her beauty. After wearing these dresses, she walks here and there just like the models on television. Sumita expresses her joy: “I model each one for him, walking back and forth, clasping my hands behind my head, lips pouted, left hip thrust out just like the models on TV, while he whispers applause” (24). Her joy clearly exposes her love for such dresses and it shows the change in her cultural stance. She experiences the change: “Then I’m ashamed. Mita, I tell myself, you’re growing westernised. Back home you’d never have felt this way” (26).

She wants to help her husband in his job. She desires to serve in the store rather than to act as a teacher as wished by her husband. She knows that her in-laws may not consider favourably for the desire to work in a store. She loves to attract the customers by her pleasing manners which will be helpful to run the business successfully. It shows the change that takes place in her. She says: “I will charm the customers with my smile, so that they will return again and again just to hear me telling them to have a nice day” (27). It vividly shows the change in her cultural stance. No longer, she bothers about the strangers. Now she wants to meet them to help the business of her husband. The conservative Indian families do not permit their girls to work in such places and it is a taboo for them. She undergoes a transformation in America and it makes her to think in this way.

Another occasion, she gets immense pleasure to wear a nightie of the foreign woman. She asks her husband to buy panty-hose too. First time, in her life, she wears nightie and it provides great joy to her as well as to her husband who has glorified her beauty by saying: “The most beautiful woman in the whole world” (28).

She loves the nightie very much which exposes the prominent features of her. Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni aptly brings out the cultural change that takes place in her: "I'm wearing a nightie now, my very first one. It's black and lacy, with a bit of a shine to it, and it glides over my hips to stop outrageously at mid-thigh. My mouth is an O of surprise in the mirror, my legs long and pale and sleek from the hair remover I asked Somesh to buy me last week" (28). She undergoes the transformation gradually due to the stay in the USA. The change is conspicuous in her conduct and attires.

All these changes attain a culmination at the end. Unfortunately her husband Somesh Sen is shot dead by a burglar one night at the store as she has seen in a nightmare some days back. The ignominy of widowhood haunts her. In India, widows are treated badly by people. They brand them as unlucky women who have brought misfortune to their husbands. They are compelled to wear white saris, discard the auspicious "tilak" at their forehead and other ornaments including bangles. Sumita is terribly shaken by the sudden death of her husband Somesh Sen. Her in-laws take a decision to return India. They ask her to come along with them. At that moment, she thinks of the disgrace experienced by the widows in India: "Because all over India, at this very moment, widows in white saris are bowing their veiled heads, serving tea to in-laws. Doves with cut-off wings" (33). Her observation of widows as "doves with cut off wings" clearly reflects the sad plight of the widows in India. She does not like to experience the same ignominy by returning to India. She wants to assert herself as an independent woman. She desires to face the challenge of life in the alien land. She decides to live in America rather than returning to India.

Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni effectively brings out her cultural transformation at the end of the story. Sumita stands before a mirror when others expect her to come out with white sari. She says: "I tilt my chin, readying myself for the arguments of the coming weeks, the remonstrations. In the mirror a woman holds my gaze—her eyes apprehensive yet steady. She wears a blouse and skirt the colour of almonds" (33). Her refusal to wear white sari and wearing of skirt in almonds colour reveal her self-assertion. She wants to live in America and accepts the challenge to lead life in the alien culture. She undergoes the cultural transformation and it is evident from the choice of her dress. In fact, Sumita takes the bold decision not to wear the white sari as well as not to return to India. Her resolute stand reveals the cultural metamorphosis which she has undergone in the foreign land. Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni has brought out adeptly the cultural changes experienced by Sumita gradually from her day of landing in America to the day of her refusal to return to India at the end. Of course the dresses are the indicators of cultural changes in the story and aptly named by her as "Clothes." There are references related to the bridal silk sari, Japanese nylon sari, T-shirts, Jeans, nightie, panty-hose and widow's white sari. They disclose the cultural transformation undergone by Sumita.

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## “Reflection” in Lorraine Hansberry’s *A Raisin in the Sun*.

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**Abstract:** Culture in the broadest sense is a cultivated behavior, a symbolic communication and a cumulative deposit of various factors. *A Raisin in the Sun* is the most sensitive and a true picture of the African – American culture and their struggle for equality. Lorraine Hansberry (1930 – 1965) has brought in a new movement in the American drama with her works. She was the first African – American to win the New York Drama Critics Circle Award. She was also the first playwright to create realistic portraits of African – American life. Her play *A Raisin in the Sun* has autobiographical elements in it. The play focuses on the African roots, importance of equality, 1950’s United States, commercial culture, true value of money and a common man’s dream. The play just does not focus on the tension between the White and the Black society but reflects the inner conflicts among the Black community. Hansberry has put to light the struggle of the black family thus giving a revealing portrait of their life and culture. This paper attempts to discuss on the Reflections of African – American Society by Hansberry.

**Key Words:** African Roots, Struggle for equality, Commercial culture, Value of money and Common man’s dream

*A Raisin in the Sun* can be considered as a turning point in the American Literature. Lorraine Hansberry is the first African- American and the youngest women writer to win the New York Drama Critics Circle Award. She was born in Chicago (1930 – 1965) and was brought up in a family that publicly fought discrimination against the black people. *A Raisin in the Sun* is recognizably autobiographical. Lorraine Hansberry was the first playwright to create realistic portraits of African – American life. Hansberry during her short period of life of 34 years has made a remarkable mark on the American theatre.

*A Raisin in the Sun* is a portrait of African Family, the traditional roots of African society, commercial culture, status of women in Society, the true value of money and the common man’s dream. The play can also be called as a revolutionary work of its time. Hansberry has thrown realistic light on an entire African Family. The play just does not focus on the tension between the White and the African society but reflects the inner conflicts among the African -American community.

The play opens with the Younger family: Lena, her son Walter Lee, daughter Beneatha, Walter’s wife Ruth and their son Travis set in a modest apartment in Chicago after the world war II with their excitement regarding the arrival of their Father’s cheque of Ten thousand dollars. Through various descriptions Hansberry pictures the situation the Younger family is in and how important this money is for them and their plans on their dream House. Hansberry reflects perfectly on how joyous the family is and she also focuses on each of the characters. Mama buying the House, Walter losing the money, Beneatha’s schooling all these are the important factors that are put to trial in the play.

The main conflict in the play is that Walter’s father had died leaving behind just the insurance policy of ten thousand dollars to Lena. “...Child, we got a great big old check coming tomorrow” (26). Each one in the family has a separate and an individual dream about the money. Walter plans to use it for his liquor business, Beneatha hopes that the money would help her in her studies. Mama who is very clear decides to buy a house for the family which has also been Big Walter’s dream.

Lorraine Hansberry gives a fine line about the inner feelings and emotions of the African society through her Younger family. Walter speaks saying “I got to change my life, I’m choking to death. . . I’m thirty - -five years old; I been married eleven years and I got a boy who sleeps in the living room -- and all I got to give him is stories about how rich white people live....” (15)

We also have Mama say, “something always told me I wasn’t no rich white woman”(27). “Seem like God didn’t see fit to give the black man nothing but dreams—but he gave us children to make them dreams seem worth while” (29). The frame that Hansberry places on them is their dream “A Home”, “But Lord, Child, you should know all dreams I had ‘bout buying the house and fixing it up and making me a little garden in the back—“(28). The reality of the society is brought to light when Mr. Karl Linder from the White community come forward to set their offers just to get rid of the African family that would occupy their society.

... And at the movement the overwhelming majority of our people out there feel that people get along better, take more of a common interest in the life of the community, when they share a common background. I want you to believe me when I tell you that race prejudice simply doesn’t enter into it. It the matter of the people of the Clybourne Park believing, rightly or wrongly, as I say, that for the happiness of all concerned that our Negro families are happier when they live in their own communities. (103)

This only white character in the play makes the theme of Racial discrimination prominent. Mr. Linder comes as the representative from the Clybourne Park Association to stop Youngers moving into the White Neighbourhood. Hansberry makes clear that, by doing so the discrimination is evident as the White neighbourhood sees only the colour and the people. The play here at this point takes a very big turning point and Hansberry has also used this opportunity to prove herself as a writer. Emotional Younger family which has to take a decision now, is ashamed of their state. Hansberry crafts her art here, stating, human beings are human beings and all are equal, discrimination maybe wordly but the truth lies within.

Hansberry also tells the readers about the struggles through the characters like Mrs. Johnson. she comes over to speak about the African family who has been bombed out of their home in the White neighbourhood. Mrs. Johnson scares the Younger family and calls them Proud – acting bunch of coloured Folks.

Walter does not accept the offer finally and makes up his mind to live his life. He is ready to face the Whites community and to live one among them.

What I am telling you is that called you over here to tell you that we are very proud and that this is – this is my son who makes the sixth generation of our family in this country, and that we have all thought about your offer and we have decided to move into our house because my father – my father – he earned it!. (138)

He also understands the importance of family, value of money and is now ready to work more hard for the sake of his family, “Walter Lee- it makes a difference in a man when he can walk on the floors that belong to him . . . “(84). There are many places where Hansberry pictures the true colour of the Black and White community, importance of money and their self respect. Hansberry states how even the little boy Travis is ready to work, “Mama, could I please go carry groceries?”(11).

This decision of Walter is due to the pride and ambition that Lena had instilled within him. Being a women even Lena has taken a courageous decision to buy a house in the White neighbourhood. This shows her want to do something big rather than depriving themselves from the society. Thus striving for a higher status. He also puts forth the concepts of assimilation and identity. Through one of her character called Joseph Asagai, who is a Nigerian student and in love with Beneatha. He is very proud of his African heritage and he is the person from whom Beneatha learns about her African heritage. Asagai provides an international perspective throughout the play. He wants to settle in his own country and try to bring positive to the place.

It's Asagai who points out about Beneatha's hair and advices her to keep it natural, that is more of an African look, which reflects to the New African Movement 1960. The interaction between Beneatha and Asagai reveals how serious Beneatha is to find her identity. Beneatha wants to break free and be an independent women. Her search for identity is her biggest quest in life. He brings in the picture of the African people in the play and finally settles along with Beneatha in his own country. Hansberry reveals the African heritage through his voice, his gifts to Beneatha, the topic of native revolt and his love for his homeland. All these picture how one is bound by his/her countries identity. Hansberry also speaks on the role of empowering women in her play. Mama is the most nurturing character in the play. She deeply cares for her children and for Ruth as well and has full faith in God. She always demands the family to respect themselves and take pride in their dreams. Mama's plant represents her care and her dream for her family. It's a reflection of their life, the plant does not get enough light or water but withstands under her care, “Lord, if this little old plant don't get more sun than it's been getting it ain't never going to see spring again” (22). This brings in the hope that one day all her dreams about equality, high status and a 'Home' will come true.

Beneatha, who is an aspiring young women provides the play with the feminist perspective. She dreams of becoming a doctor and this determines her identity – a well educated African women, “I have never asked anyone around here to do anything for me !.” (19). She is nick named as ‘Alayo’ (African name) by Asagai, which means ‘One For Whom Bread – Food – Is Not Enough’ Hansberry highlights the need of an Ambition and also state that marriage is not the only necessity for Women.

Ruth is a simple and a practical women, who is pessimistic. She constantly from the beginning of the play is fighting with poverty and domestic problems. Yet she stays strong emotionally. But then deeply inside she believed that the African people can never overcome their victimhood. Hansberry also speaks about abortion which was considered to be illegal then, “Son- do you know your wife is expecting another baby? I think Ruth is thinking about getting rid of that child” (62).

Hansberry has thus crafted reality with her own personal experience. She being the first women writer to portray African-American life has created an authentic play. The story of the Younger family is the real picture that speaks about the struggle to retain human values, cultural identity and a forcing change into a society where race discrimination and money or wealth plays an important role. A positive end to the play brings hope to the whole society.

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## Culture and Tradition *Viz-Viz* Contemporary Psychology A Study of Sudha Murty's *Gently Falls The Bakula*

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**Abstract:** *It is the general belief that India's rich cultural heritage enables the country to remain intact at the social, political, cultural, economic and psychological planes. However, institutions cumulatively making up current culture of the contemporary society seem to be subject to rude shocks leading to possible dissipation if not disintegration of socio-cultural institutions acted upon by psychological onsets of ambition and self interest that go beyond the compunctions of various social and cultural ethics. This paper studies how Sudha Murty's Gently Falls the Bakula scrutinizes the modern values and work ethics of the corporate sector in general and IT Industries in particular. It is the story of a marriage that is driven to compromise marital obligations from one side pitted against the same obligations betrayed from the other side but the betrayal implicitly being taken for granted despite the cultural implications.*

**Key words:** *Social institutions – cultural heritage – dissipation – betrayal – compromise.*

It is the general belief that India's rich cultural heritage enables the country to remain intact at the social, political, cultural, economic and psychological planes. However, institutions cumulatively making up current culture of the contemporary society seem to be subject to rude shocks leading to possible dissipation if not disintegration of socio-cultural institutions acted upon by psychological onsets of ambition and self interest that go beyond the compunctions of various social and cultural ethics. Perhaps it is the Yeatsian "things falling apart and the centre not being able to hold".

Sudha Murty is a well known modern Indian writer with a prolific output. Tradition and technology and their impact on Indian society find a very good expression in her writings. This paper attempts to study her novel *Gently Falls the Bakula* which scrutinizes the modern values and work ethics of the corporate sector in general and IT industry in particular. It is the story of a marriage that is driven to compromise marital obligations from one side pitted against the same obligations betrayed from the other side but the betrayal being implicitly taken for granted despite the cultural implications.

The story is set in a small town Hubli in north Karnataka. Shrimati and Shrikant are neighbours. They are the best and bright students who got the first and second ranks respectively in the Board Examinations. Though both the family members are not in good terms, they were attracted towards each other and in course of time they get married. Shrimati is more intelligent and talented than Shrikant. She voluntarily gave up her desire to pursue higher studies in history in order to help Shrikant to excel in his IT profession.

By becoming a dutiful, dedicated, sincere and affectionate wife, she enabled him to reach the peak of glory in his IT profession. Very soon they became an ideal couple and friends, colleagues, higher officials, relatives of Shrikant became envious. A few admired, other few became jealous and yet other few appreciated Shrimati's role as a top businessman's wife. Everything went on well for quite sometime. But the real test of love came in the form of Shrimati's longing for a baby, pressure from both the family demanding a child and Shrikant's constant refusal to have one.

The pressure from the family and society, personal longing, a sense of emptiness that arose from constant loneliness, Shrikant's total involvement in his office work and total negligence of family obligations especially to Shrimati – these came as a litmus test to the genuineness of their love for each other. The struggles and sufferings of Shrikant's mother to bring him up and to educate him had left an indelible mark in the mind of Shrikant. Though he realized how his family members ill-treated Shrimati, he always expected Shrimati to ignore, or forgive and forget them. He expected her to fulfill her duties as a daughter-in-law without expecting anything in return. He also failed to recognize her sacrifice for his family and to him. His attitude never changed from the beginning till the end especially in supporting his family members even if they were wrong and even when they ill-treated Shrimati. It is quite natural to every daughter-in-law to expect love and affection from mother-in-law and sister-in-law, at times though not love, at least recognition and at least sense of gratitude or approval when something good is done to them by the daughter-in-law. For Shrimati humiliation was the only response from Gangakka and Rama for all her sacrifices and good deeds which she did as Shrikant's wife. She was in no way different from an ordinary woman and naturally she got angry and questioned Shrikant thus: "I am neither a bank nor a post office to send money to your mother. She is related to me through you. When you do not care about me, why should I care about you? Shri, tell me now. Who is important? Your wife or your profession?" (148).

Misunderstanding due to differences of opinion, failure to fulfill other's expectations, set backs in familial relationship, conflicts of interest in fulfilling the responsibilities to relatives – all these are common to many a married person. However, this ideal couple failed to understand that perfect relationship was to be created and not found. This served as the main cause for these people to separate and pursue their objects of desire. The concluding part of the novel implies that this was going to be a permanent separation though both did not openly state so or sought legal endorsement. It is here that the culture becomes the casualty.

The challenges of integrating work and family life are part of everyday reality for the majority of Indian working families today. While the particulars may vary depending on income, occupation, or stage in life, these challenges cut across all socioeconomic levels and are felt directly by both men and women. As families contribute more hours to the paid labor force, problems intensify, bringing broad recognition that steps are needed to adjust to the changed realities of today's family and work obligations. Most of the workers today, regardless of gender, have family responsibilities and most married workers have an employed spouse. But jobs are still designed as if workers have no family responsibilities.

The culture and organization of paid work, domestic care work and corporate company and many organizations remain predicated on the breadwinner homemaker model. Thus corporate company work, industrial labor, domestic work and many other aspects of contemporary life operate on the assumption that someone is available during the typical workday to care for children after school, during the holidays etc., or to take family members to the doctor or to do household works or to fulfill familial responsibilities to the relatives and to the society at large. The new global economy with its focus on 24/7 availability and long work hours only worsens the problem generated by the lag in the organization of paid work as if workers were without personal interests or domestic care concerns.

In this story Shrikant and Shrikant were from an ordinary family and Shrikant was the one who witnessed the struggle of his mother to provide him basic necessities and education. Naturally he was determined to overcome the poverty of the family through his hard work. His sufferings were due to his unbridled passion for corporate success. Why had Shrikant become insensible to the finer aspects of life other than that of his work? Why did his wife who had been very docile, dedicated, lovable, and who resembled the ideal Bhamati decide to leave Shrikant at the end unmindful of the sanctity of the relationship she had with Shrikant? For all these questions we can find an answer if we can analyse the various aspects deviations from the erstwhile culture and tradition in the context of globalization.

Most of the Indian families adopt the traditional division of labor in which a man provides financial support and a woman attends to family and community responsibilities. However, employers, unions, professional associations, government and communities all have roles to play in integrating work and family life, but none of them can solve this problem acting alone. Each must recognize that ideal worker is the one who can subordinate all other elements of life to the requirements of the job.

Employers alone cannot significantly improve this situation by enacting more formal family friendly policies. Employees must be brought into the process of designing and implementing flexible schedules and practices and firms will need to work with the other actors involved to ensure that each party's efforts complement and build on the initiatives of the others. By doing so, the participants can jointly address the dual agenda of restructuring work and careers to meet both the organizations' needs and employees' personal and family needs and responsibilities.

Reluctance to recognize that the problems of work and family are societal has relegated responsibility for dealing with these issues to individuals and families to solve on their own. Women are already active participants in the work force and men are slowly increasing their participation in the housework and child care. Successful integration of both family and work can only be achieved by changing the practices of the full set of institutions affecting work and family relationships. Now is the time for change. Men and women are struggling to adapt to the new realities and there must be a collective will to change the situation. Work and family have always been interdependent. Service intensive globalizing economy and the trend toward long work hours for some and inadequate family income for others have rendered this interdependence both more visible and more problematic.

The increased number of work hours make the personal lives of the workers under stress and have changed in ways not anticipated by the assumptions, policies and institutions that have previously shaped experiences both work and family life. The stresses that result from these realities affect families at all income levels and at all life stages. Workers find difficulty in providing the ordinary daily attention needed for the well being of family members including themselves. Time to care for children as well as for the aging relatives is becoming a serious concern. Such time pressures also make it difficult to deal with family emergencies or periods of special need such as the birth or child care.

Shrimati sacrificed her personal desire and dedicated her life to her husband wholeheartedly. But Shrikant's inability to spend time with her, or at least to recognize her service to him shattered all her dreams of a happy family life to pieces. Once she wanted to go back to Hubli hoping to regain her husband's love and affection, she insisted that he gave up his job in Bombay. For which he replied thus:

Shrimati, the past is always beautiful because we cannot get it back. Childhood looks beautiful when you are young. Youth looks romantic when you are old. Whatever we lose is always precious. Think of adjusting and looking forward to an ever changing world. Don't get into the past.(p.134)

It was true that Shrikant was hard working and workaholic. He gathered an extraordinary knowledge in many fields through his rich experience. This enabled him to reach the peak of glory at the earliest age. Through the words of his friend Harish, one can understand Shrikant's passion for profession and how Shrimati became the best complement to him as wife.

Initially men work for money but soon money becomes unimportant. It is power. There is nothing like power. Power is like a liquor. Once the intoxication of power catches hold of an ambitious person, there is no escape from it. It is a vicious circle. Like a whirlpool it is difficult to come out of it. More work, more involvement and more power. The individual loses the ability to see and enjoy anything outside his work. He is immersed in work throughout the day. Work is his breath...To achieve that kind of success, one required a supportive, intelligent but docile and unambitious wife. Intelligent women are normally ambitious. Someone like Shrimati, who never ever demanded anything from her husband, was rare....What would have happened if Shrikant had married a person like Prabha, who was not very supportive or Rekha, who was an executive in the company? The answer was simple. Shrikant would have deserted her or she would have deserted him. (p.142)

Shrikant had become totally insensible to finer aspects of life. He had been reduced to the level of machine and once he entered into his work he seemed to forget his mother, sister, wife and they would be replaced by computer, competition and products.

Shrimati slowly understood that their interests, tastes and perceptions were different. The way Shrimati looked at the legendary Basmati, the way she connected history to life, her perceptions and skills in understanding people and their behavior totally differed from that of her husband. In the beginning these differences did not have any impact on her attitude. Slowly she became impatient, angry, disappointed, discontented, and especially whenever her expectations were crudely denied or overlooked she started analyzing the situation and contemplating the next step to be taken. Her meeting of Prof.Collins and her interest in history, her disappointment as a businessman's wife, her childlessness, her husband's denial even for the adoption all these had driven her to choose the role of student of history hoping to find freedom and happiness though not money but at least to find her individuality. These were some of the reasons she found to justify her decision for separation.

... you do your duties to your company because you are paid and given a status. What about my work? And what is my role in this marriage....you have an obligation to your wife. If you do not fulfill it, I will not stay in this house (p. 149)

I used to welcome your guests, keep your accounts, look after the house and fulfill the duties just the way your personal secretary does. I was your valuable glittering ornament in the social circuit.

A house is made up of four walls. But a home is where there is love, affection and a meaningful relationship. When that was not there it was only a house and the best thing was to get out of it.(p.152)

She could become a student again. She felt life had opened a new door for her. This time she was making a decision with her head and not with her heart. (p155)

She had to go to some place where she could get the same joy that Shrikant got from his work. That pleasure was more valuable than money. She was going away not to earn money but to find her own individuality. (p.156)

I don't want a divorce because it is merely a document that permits you to remarry. It has no other significance...You can not change your life style. You are bound by that. Your job requires that kind of commitment and you can live without it. But I can not adjust to that. In the best interest of both of us, this is the only solution.(p.162)

However, both of them fail to understand that genuine love demands its sacrifices and the existence of incompatibility is a challenge to more vigorous effort.

While discussing about the task of the institution of marriage, Prof.Dr.S.Radhakrishnan says,

...recognition of the spiritual ideal of marriage requires us to regard marriage relation as an indissoluble one. So long as we take a small view of life and adopt for our guide the fancy or feeling of the moment, marriage relation can not be regarded as permanent. In the first moments of infatuation we look upon our partners as angels from heaven, but soon the wonder wears away, and if we persist in our passion for perfection, we become agitated and often bitter. The unrest is the effect of a false ideal. The perfect relation is to be created and not

found... Irreducible peculiarities there will always be and the task of the institution of marriage is to use these differences to promote a harmonious life. (HVL, p.61)

Both Shrimati and Shrikant were born and brought up in Hubli. The changes that took place in their approach to the problems of life reflected the current changes that were taking place in the society where the culture of the corporate institutions was brought in. Everyone is subject to the social, political and cultural pressures when there is a cultural transition. Though the modern conditions are partly responsible for disharmony, one should not confuse self expression and self development with a life of instincts and passions. One should not justify one's conduct by setting up exaggerated claims on behalf of the individual will to protest against the discipline. However it is a difficult phase or period of transition where the disguised feelings are masquerading as advanced thoughts. The women who give up their family life for accomplishing power, or pleasure from material objects are being idealized and that weakens the very root of culture and heritage. The truth is that it is the culture and heritage that reminds us that man is much more than a custodian of its culture or protector of his country or producer of its wealth. Social efficiency is not a measure of optimal manhood. What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world but lose his own soul? If everyone understands this and act with total awareness of the inherent power of endurance, the culture and heritage of the society will prevail. As Prof.S.Radhakrishnan says,

The general character of the society is not always best expressed by the mass of its members. There exists in every community a natural elite, which better than all the rest represents the soul of the entire people, its great ideals, its strong emotions and its essential tendency. The whole community looks to them as their example. When the wick is ablaze at its tip, the whole lamp is said to be burning. (HVL, p.65)

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## The Depiction of the Cultural Dominance in Bharati Mukherjee's *Wife*

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**Abstract:** *The Diasporic writings have been received increasingly academic and disciplinary recognition throughout the globe. The diasporic writers are often concerned with giving a voice to the displaced and dislocated. Their nostalgic response to their homeland and reaction to the alien land, leads to a kind of hope for change of the alien land into a new homeland. One of the remarkable diasporic writers Bharati Mukherjee is an Indian-born American novelist. In her fiction she depicts problems faced by Indians and other third world immigrants who attempt to assimilate into North American lifestyles. Using an understanding prose style replete with ironic developments and witty observation, Mukherjee focuses upon sensitive protagonists who lack a stale sense of personal and cultural identity and are victimized by racism, sexism, and other forms of social oppression. In the novel Wife the central plot revolves around the incessant urge of Dimple Dasgupta to seek independence in the form of marriage and to romanticise that marriage would bring immigration. The novel is divided into three parts. The first part is the exposition of Dimple's romantic quest for marriage and immigration both as the mode of freedom. The second part consists of Dimple's experience of immigration in alien land. The third part of the novel is a pathetic exposition of the perverted mental condition of Dimple.*

**Key Words:** *cultural dominance, diasporic, identity, sexism, racism*

The diasporic writings are generally marked by a sense of removal and isolation from the mother country. The words like immigrant, exile and refugee are applied to this type of writing. The word 'immigrant' indicates physical movement from one place to another, a location and a foreign settlement. The term 'exile' evokes the variety of relationships with their own country. The word 'refugee' denotes a person seeking refuge in a foreign land for safety or self-fulfillment. This attitude of texture combines the whole features of diasporic writings. The diasporic writings in English are evidently produced by persons of Indian origin who are presently living outside their country. This type of diasporic writing has a worldwide context and it includes writers of both old and new generations who have left India and settled in abroad. Such writers are listed as Kamala Markandayan, B.Rajan, Santha Rama Rau, Bharati Mukherjee, Anita Desai, Salman Rushdie, Vikram Seth, V.S.Naipaul, Nirad Chaudhari, Amitav Ghosh, Ved Mehta and A.K.Ramanujan.

This paper highlights Bharati Mukherjee's experiences of diaspora in Canada, the United States and her literary productions. They lead to imaginative, textual and cultural negotiations with dominant narratives. The diasporic writings have been received increasingly academic and disciplinary recognition throughout the globe. The diasporic writers are often concerned with giving a voice to the displaced and dislocated. Their nostalgic response to their homeland and reaction to the alien land, leads to a kind of hope for change of the alien land into a new homeland. In her fiction she depicts problems faced by Indians and other third world immigrants. Bharati Mukherjee's second novel *Wife* (1975) conducive to the same phase focuses on the life of Dimple, a middle – class Bengali girl married to Amit Basu, a consultant engineer. After their marriage they migrate to America where Dimple encounters alienation, isolation and a deep sense of cultural shock. Dimple had many expectations from her married life; she believed that this marriage would bring her freedom, fortune and happiness.

Unfortunately, Dimple's dream about happiness was soon shattered. There were conflicts with her mother-in-law and sister-in-law. After sometime, she begins to expect a child which is quite unwanted and decides to get rid of the child by skipping ropes. The self-abortion is liberation from the traditional role of motherhood. Another disappointment comes for Dimple when Amit does not get a suitable job in America. Her dreams had failed:

She was bitter that marriage had betrayed her, had not provided all the glittery things she had imagined, had not brought her cocktails under canopied skies and three A.M. drives to dizzy restaurants where they sold divine kababs rolled in roti (102).

As her frustrations multiply she finds ways to end this torturous existence. She even contemplates the murder of her husband Amit. An Indian wife murdering her husband raises questions. Some critics opine this is not the result of any cultural shock; rather it is because Dimple suffered from neurosis. Regarding the murder of Amit, K.S. Narayan Rao poses a very relevant question: "the novel raises an important question: was the Indian wife happier in India with her limited freedom and greater docility; or does she achieve happiness in her painful search for more individual freedom and in the process of maturing" (98).

Bharati Mukherjee portrays her immigrant women protagonists as the pillar of national identity and moral consciousness. In the background the dilemma of cultural conflict she shares the suffering of woman in the multi-cultural society of America. In the novel *Wife*, Bharati Mukherjee portrays a Bengali Indian wife, Dimple who migrates to America in the hope of a more luxurious, emancipated and glamorous life against the conventionality of Bengali families where the consciousness of conventions is a burden to the identity and freedom of Indian women. However, Dimple's dream goes to shambles when she finds herself insecure, lonely and isolated in the highly technical society of America. Her resistance against the multi-cultural society for America makes her crazy to the extent that she loses control over her own conscious self and in a state of temporary insanity kills her own husband Amit. Prof. Asnani evaluates Dimple's problems as 'dilemma' of cultural conflict. He asserts: "Dimple is entrapped in a dilemma of tension between American cultural and society and traditional constraints surrounding an Indian wife, between feminist desire to be assertive and independence and India need to be submissive and self effacing" (42).

Bharati Mukherjee's creative genius is primarily rooted in the trauma of the analysis and evaluation of transcultural influences in the era of globalization, in the postcolonial phase of literary practices, the problems pertaining to the existence of immigrants and expatriates have become a fascinating subject for the writers of Indian diaspora. In the exposition of cross-cultural sensibility, novelists usually confined themselves to the social life of expatriates and their desperate struggles to seek an identity in a cultural dilate that is alien to their sensibility.

The diasporic sensibility, in spite of being a prominent creative force in the novels of Bharati Mukherjee, appears as a complex phenomenon beyond the issues of migrations, spaces and location. Bharati Mukherjee dwells upon exposing the conditions of postcolonial India, the clash of tradition and modernity, the intricacy of human relationships, the dilemma of human behavior, and paramount of them is her concern with the issues pertaining the question of female identity in Diasporas surroundings.

In the novel, she has tried to explore the order of patriarchy where woman seems to make her futile efforts to carve her own spaces, may it be within her native cultural milieu or in the form of escape in an alien culture. The place and the cultural scenario may change but the horror of patriarchy remains rooted in the female mind. Dimple in the novel wife the female protagonist who, besides being the subject of torture of immigration, represents the burden of patriarchy, and finds it difficult to survive in the rigid inability to experience her real female sensibility, and can be placed in the category of "gendered subaltern". Prof. Sushila Singh observes: "Bharathi Mukherjee's women characters offer a foretelling challenge to patriarchal thought, social organization and control mechanism" (65).

Bharathi Mukherjee asserts that woman's liberation is not only a twentieth century phenomenon but it has been prevalent in earlier times as well. First, it allows women to realise their potential as an individual in the society. Secondly, it is the only means by which one can attain personal recognition. The central plot of the novel revolves round the incessant urge of Dimple to seek independence in the form of marriage and to romanticize that marriage would bring immigrations. The novel is divided into three parts. The first part is the exposition of Dimple's romantic quest for marriage and immigration, both as modes of freedom. The second part is related with Dimple's experience as an immigrant that only brings a greater isolation in her life. The third section of the novel is a pathetic exposition of the perverted mental condition of Dimple and it results out of her failure to adjust to an alien culture and subsequently it affects the harmony of their marital life. Shyam.M.Asnani evaluates Dimple's problem as dilemma of cultural conflict: "Dimple is entrapped in a dilemma of tension between American culture and society and the traditional constraints surroundings and Indian wife, between feminist desire to be assertive and indecent and the Indian need to be submissive and self effacing" (42).

The anguish of Dimple represents an urge for freedom the burden of traditionalism of typical Brahmin origin, the usual weaknesses associated with female psyche the responsibility of family ties in the form of wife, mother, friend and other relations. K.S.Narayan Rao quotes about this in his work as, "The novel varies an important question: was the Indian wife happier in India with her limited freedom and greater docility or does she achieve happiness in her painful search for more individual freedom and is the process of maturing" (475).

About the life of women in general P.Ramamoorthi is of the view: "women in order to achieve her freedom, seeks marriage as an alternative to the bondage created by parental family. She resents the role of a daughter and looks forward to the role of a wife, the hope that her new role will help in winning their freedom". The novel begins with the romantic fantasy of Dimple about her marriage. She conceives the dream of marriage as a process of freedom against all conventional norms of traditional Bengali culture. She has no hesitation in her absolute surrender to her male partner who should be a young man with moustaches, dressed in spotted white, peering into opened skulls; at this stage, she is not conscious about her individuality, female identity, and basic urges of womanhood. She nurtures the dreams, "marriage would bring her freedom, cocktail parties on carpeted lawns, and fund raising dinners for noble charities. "Marriage would bring her love" (3). It highlights Dimple's inherent insecurity, her dependence on male support and the lack of awareness about her own identity and dignity. She is highly conscious for her good physique and beauty to attract a "Divine Husband".



Dimple is confident in her belief that without being good looking and without being a B.A. she won't get a decent husband. She even plans cosmetic surgery in the west and in extreme depression thinks about suicide and calls good photograph as a "half battle" for marriage. Her mother too impresses in her mind. "I'll get you an outstanding boy. I'll make you a real woman" (12.) Finally her marriage is decided with Amith Kumar Basu, a consultant engineer with one year of experience, he has already applied for immigration to Canada and U.S.A. Bharati Mukherjee suggests that in spite of education and economic stability, society is not intellectually equipped enough to give an independent status and self-dignity to woman.

After the engagement, Amit's mother objects to Dimple's name and finds it "too frivolous and unbendable". Irony is obvious; Dimple seeks freedom in marriage but in fact she is bound to lose control even of her own body. Amit's mother wants to call her "Nandini" in Amit's family, Dimple finds everything contrary to her dreams – the congested bedrooms, traditional taboos and absolute dependence on the family. She reveals her pain to her friend Pixie, "The name doesn't suit me".

When Pintu, Dimple's younger brother-in-law, informs that he has started giving maths levies a twelve-year old boy on Rash Behari Avenue so that he can manage his personal expenses, Dimple has her first convulsion of regret that she has not taken the university exams seriously. Secondly, in spite of being educated she had no idea of trivial but serious mutiny works like measuring temperature in a thermometer. She innocently confesses 'I'm too stupid about these mechanical things' (25). Amit dominates and dictates Dimple in her routine course of action. Looking at Dimple with a newspaper in her hand, he becomes annoyed and expresses his strong resentment in her failure to provide him lime water. His accusation gives birth to a sense of guilt in her life. She admits, "His disapproval was torture; all her life she has been trained to please. He expected her, like Sita to jump into of necessary." (29).

If the first part of the novel is related with Dimple's initial quest to seek an escape from her own mother land, the second part of the novel highlights the precarious existence of Dimple as an immigrant. The location changes Dimple as an immigrant. The location changes but it brings no change on the attitude and expectations of Amit, in the strange land and climate, she feels herself more isolated. She realises her helplessness to adjust into an alien culture. Her lack of adaptability, inability to have rich intellectual accomplishments renders her weak and nervous. At this stage, Bharati Mukherjee controls the narrative at two levels—firstly the ordeal of Dimple's immigration and, secondly, the amiss in the relationship of Amit and Dimple, she concludes, "She was bitter that marriage had betrayed her, has not provided all the glittery things she has imagined" (101).

The third part of the novel is the culmination of the crisis of Dimple. In this part, the focus of the novelist is of Dimple and her quest for emotional security in a marriage that was earlier ignored by her. The contradiction of the fantasy of immigration and the reality of immigrants results in the rebellion of Dimple, both in her social existence and personal relationship. Amit dictates to her about the dress code, cooking, living, social integration but never intends to share a common point of interest between them. Mukherjee stresses the need of emotional identifications between male and female to constitute a conducive pattern of man and woman relationship. Dimple confesses: "I feel a sort of dead inside and all you can do is read the paper and talk to me about food you never listen. You've never listened to me. You hate me. Don't deny it; I know you do. You hate me because I am not fat and fair" (109).

In the life of Dimple, immigration brings a greater bondage. In USA her life remains confined to sleeping and cooking. Amit makes a derogating comment. "You women are always so melodramatic" (115). Her frustration increases her bitterness towards him. She feels that her marriage with some other engineer might have given an entirely different type of life. She loses her rational control over her thinking and starts thinking in terms of violence.

Bharati Mukherjee asserts that woman's liberation is not only a twentieth century phenomenon but it has been prevalent in earlier times as well. It allows women to realise their potential as an individual in the society. Using an understanding prose style replete with ironic developments and witty observation, Mukherjee focuses upon sensitive protagonists who lack a stable sense of personal and cultural identity and are victimised by racism, sexism, and other forms of social oppression. She has created "new immigrant literature" that embodies her sense of what it means to be a woman writer of Bengali origin who has been exposed to life in Canada and the United States from a very early phase of her life. In fact, she had to struggle to come to terms with her own identity in an alien land, caught as she was between two conflicting cultures. Like Gloria Anzaldúa, she situates herself in a metaphorical borderland where the migrant who has shifted of discomfort as they try to negotiate between the conflicting forces on the margins where they are located.

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## Jaya as Culture-Specific Protagonist in Shashi Deshpande's *That Long Silence*

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**Abstract:** Women writers like Kamala Markandeya, Anita Desai and Shashi Deshpande delineate culture – specific women in their novels. Shashi Deshpande's women characters are upper middle class educated women tossed between modernity and tradition and ultimately negotiate space within and outside the threshold. The aim of all human being is to acclimatize themselves to the society as it is and survive successfully with fellow beings. In the process of transforming they discover themselves, new ways of living and new ways of functioning. Deshpande's protagonist, Jaya in *That long silence* after thorough self-examination discovers her flaws as well as her lost 'self' in the culture bound society. She decides to embrace the cultural role assigned to women as a daughter, wife and mother assertively. The reason for her contemplation is due to the cultural –heritage that was passed on from generation to generation. They represent the belief of Mahatma Gandhi, "I am firmly of opinion that India's salvation depends on the sacrifice and enlightenment of her women."

**Key Words:** Modernity, Tradition, Cultural heritage

“We will be remembered  
Only if we give to our  
Younger generation a  
Prosperous and Safe India  
Resulting out of economic  
Prosperity coupled with  
Civilizational heritage.”

Dr.A.P.J.Abdul Kalam

Indian women are the embodiment of love, compassion, hope, patience, perseverance, endurance and integration. Women have crossed multifarious ages of tradition and transformation, but her status and voice remain a question of discussion. They are as Ben Jonson said, 'not for an age but for all times'. Indian women underwent transformation throughout their existence and uphold the worth and satisfy of the tradition and culture of a society. Abilas Nayak comments on suppression of women as follows, "Indian women, unlike the western counterparts, have always been socially and psychologically suppressed, sexually-colonized and biologically subjected against a male-dominant social set-up."

The traditional Indian society brainwashed the girl children from their birth to remain non-assertive. They trained the girl children to be the epitome of tolerance and adjustment. They were denied the opportunity to share the available fulfilment of their lives, despite every woman endlessly strive for the development of her family, her husband and children. Hence, after ages of subjugation women have become the synonym of self-effacement.

Deshpande, the winner of prestigious Sahitya Academy Award has always presented the varied role of women in the context of modern Indian society. She explores the multifarious issues around women in a patriarchal society like conflict between traditional and individuality, search for identity, gender oppression. Nevertheless she also delineates in detail the responsibilities that a woman holds in the unit called family, which is the preserving factor of Indian culture. Courageously, she voices out the disappointments and frustration of women, despite her refusal to accept herself as a feminist. She makes a distilled analysis of the problem of women and provides an integral perspective of life through her novels. She is practical in her approach to encounter suppression and attain autonomy. She advocates self-analysis and self-examination as a solution to contemplate reality and survive in current socio-economic milieu.

She portrays modern, educated and career oriented middle class women who are sensitive to the changing time and situations. They are aware of the social and cultural disabilities to which they are subjected in the male dominated society. They want to rebel against them in their search for freedom and identity, but they find themselves up against well-enriched social inertia. Conscious of the predicament of women in a male-dominated society, especially when she is not economically independent, the author presents her women as to become economically and ideologically independent. She finds them caught up in a conflict between their family and professional roles, between individual aspiration and social demands.(19)

The heroines unconsciously make a self-discovery of them through self-analysis and breathe fresh air of life, subsequently they are ready to encounter reality in any form, and get ready to transcend assertively to attain harmony and autonomy. The characters realize the inevitability of change in life, bold and courageous enough to change in order to witness a change in their life. They desire to live their life and wish to move on despite all the issues that surround them in a male-dominated society.

Deshpande's protagonist, Jaya in *That long silence* after thorough self-examination discovers her flaws as well as her lost 'self' in the culture bound society. She decides to embrace the cultural role assigned to women as a daughter, wife and mother assertively. The reason for her contemplation is due to the cultural – heritage that was passed on from generation to generation.

*That Long Silence* expresses the pain and trauma of Indian house wife as a result of suppression. It depicts the inner conflict of Jaya and her search for identity. Jaya is the central character of the novel and the story revolves around her. Jaya leads a silent, happy and contented life with her husband and two children. She is a satisfied house wife. So, to attain satisfaction Jaya has suppressed her personality as a writer and independent woman. Mohan, Jaya's husband involves in malpractice and they move to old Dadar flat in Bombay. Jaya's loneliness in the house allows her to self –examine her life. She recognizes all her suppressed identity after 17 year of their marriage. Jaya's desire to play the role of royal house wife and caring mother has helped to suppress all her feelings. Jaya's upbringing demands her to suppress her 'self' so that marriage can survive. Jaya bound to the traditional code of conduct, accepts everything and remains silent. Her inner voice remains inarticulate even in her writing and her pent up feelings makes her neurotic.

The truth is that it was Mohan who had a clear idea of what he wanted; the kind of life he wanted to lead, the kind of home he would live in, and I went along with him. But I cannot blame Mohan, for even if he had asked me – What do you want? – I would have found it hard to give him a reply. Maitreyee comes to my mind now, Maitreyee who so definitely rejected her philosopher husband Yajnavalkya's offer of half of his property. 'Will this property give me immortality?' She asked him. 'No,' he said, and she immediately rejected the property. To know what you want...I have been denied that. (25)

Jaya is satisfied as a House-wife. She is contented with two children, a comfortable home and material comforts home and material pleasures. She systematically suppresses all her dreams and certain valuable aspects of her personality. She obliges to the culture of changing name after marriage. She remains silent when she was named as 'Shuhasini'. Her inner psyche was so much influenced that in her writing too she reflected the traditional characters like 'Sita'.

When Mohan blames Jaya for the catharsis, Jaya is totally lost. Mohan enrages with Jaya's behaviour at Dadar flat. Jaya, who has killed the silent Suhashini within her, is unable to bear Mohan's accusations. She breaks her silence and retort at Mohan. Mohan is shocked to see the real self of Jaya and leaves. He leaves the house without a word and does not return for while. When Mohan is not around her, she understands the value of marriage and the worth of having husband with her. The thought of collapse of marriage, especially the possibility of Mohan's death haunts Jaya, She feels:

I had lived in constant panic that he would die. I had clung to him at night 'feeling with relief the warmth of his body, stroking his chest, letting my palms move with this even deep breaths. The thought of living without him had twisted my insides. His death had seemed to me the final catastrophe. (96)

Jaya understands the priorities of a woman's life. It is through family that her life has meaning. She wants to revolt but does not. She wants to defy the social norms in order to find her identity, but she does not. She realizes that she can go beyond restrictions and regulations even while living with them; it is a woman who also can assert and change themselves. Jaya discovers the value of culture and its hold in the sanctified unit called family. Hence, Jaya in *That Long Silence* emerges as a strong willed woman, who is ready to contemplate reality of life and accept her responsibilities squarely. They represent the belief of Mahatma Gandhi, "I am firmly of opinion that India's salvation depends on the sacrifice and enlightenment of her women."

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## Cultural Imperialism in Ngugi Wa Thiongo's *Devil on the Cross*

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**Abstract:** *Devil on the Cross* by Ngugi Wa Thiongo's is a compelling and curious novel that examines both the physical and mental journey of a young woman, Wariinga. Along the way she encounters many people and challenges that shape her identity. Eventually Wariinga develops into what Ngugi considers ideal Kenyan femininity to be. She has suffered a series of misfortunes at the hands of some irresponsible men in the society. Moreover, she is a representation of women of African society. She suffers from cultural imperialism and fights back it. The imperialism which put her through inferiority complex has been broken by the experience which she gained and utilized with her brethrens. Seemingly, it is the imperialism that made her to suffer under patriarchal and which again remains as her eye opener.

**Key words:** Identity, Cultural Imperialism, Feminity.

Ngugi wa Thiongo's *Devil on the Cross* was written in secret, on toilet paper, while Ngugi was in prison. It tells the tragic story of Wariinga, a young woman who moves from a rural Kenyan town to the capital, Nairobi, only to be exploited by her boss and later by a corrupt businessman. As she struggles to survive, Wariinga begins to realize that her problems are only symptoms of a larger societal malaise and that much of the misfortune stems from the Western, capitalist influences on her country. An impassioned cry for a Kenya free of dictatorship and for African writers to work in their own local dialects, *Devil on the Cross* has had a profound influence on Africa and on post-colonial African literature.

Ngugi wa Thiong'o is a Kenyan born writer of Gikuyu descent, born in 1938 in Limuru. He attended Alliance High School in Kenya, Makerere University in Uganda, and Leeds University in England. In 1992 He was honored with the Paul Robeson Award for Artistic Excellence, Political Conscience, and Integrity. He received the Gwendolyn Brooks Center Contributors' Award for Significant Contribution to the Black Literary Arts in 1994. Currently he is The Erich Remarque Professor of Comparative Literature and Performance Studies at New York University. However, before achieving this notability, Ngugi experienced life in a colonized country.

*Devil on the Cross* tells the tragic story of Wariinga, a young woman whose parents are arrested and detained while she is still two. Then, she is taken by her aunt as caregiver, but the latter's husband, because of capitalism, becomes Wariinga's executioner and defiler together with the Old Rich man from Ngorika. This old man makes her pregnant and consequently she drops out school and gets deprived from the chance to study, her only key to repay the corrupt society.

Wariinga starts pondering over her misfortune very early and the scary possibility of the end of her studies looms large in her mind to the extent she becomes traumatized. Trauma pushes her to think suicide would be a solution to her plight as she notices that her dearest ideal is trampled upon. But in order to earn her living, she accepts to pursue her studies and learns typewriting and shorthand. She then emigrates from her small rural town to the city of Nairobi but there also only to be requested sexual offer by her boss Kihara so as to safeguard her job. As she refuses to offer sex, she is dismissed on Friday morning. She had no choice as stated by this phrase: "When a bird in flight gets tired, it will land on any tree." (p.33)

Her lover John Kimwana, instead of comforting her, rather abandons her the same day, Friday in the evening, as she can no longer earn anything. The next day, Saturday, her landlord fires her out after having increased the rent. The heroine is therefore overwhelmed by series of ordeals and, and attempts to commit suicide for the second time. Fortunately, she is saved by her inner mind, as this quote shows

A city bus came speeding towards her. Wariinga shut her eyes. Her body shuddered. She swallowed a lump, and her heart began to beat as if to the rhythm of a prayer: in times of troubles, do not O Father, look the other way. Do not hide your face from at this time of tears...Now...receive me... Suddenly Wariinga heard a voice within her: why are you trying to kill yourself again? Who instructed you that your work on earth is finished? Who has told you that your time is up? (P 12)

More to that Wariinga does not like herself. She uses ambi cream to bleach herself. In her nightmares, while at school, she had always seen the devil like the European on the cross instead of Jesus. She faints along the way and is helped by a young man who then invites her to the devil's feast in Illmorog. On the way, they are joined aboard Robin Mwaura's car (the matatu matata matamu model T. Ford) by Wariinga, an old woman, who is a victim of modern Kenya's problems. Despite her sacrifices, the poor woman does not have money to pay

her fare. Robin Mwaura threatens to throw her out: “Elderly one, this car does not move on urine cough the money and let us hear the sweet sound of coins or I will throw you out...” (P15)

Fortunately, other passengers collect money and pay for her. As the passengers make their way to Illmorog, they converse about Nairobi, Kenya’s capital, the Mau Mau, and the modern harambee. Eventually, they make their way to the devils feast, where a competition is on to choose the best thief. The competitors talk about their wives, the cars they drive and those driven by their wives, and how they got their wealth. Meanwhile, Wariinga and Gaturia fall in love after meeting aboard the car (matatu), and Gaturia plans on introducing Wariinga to his parents. However, Wariinga is shocked to find that the old rich man who impregnated her is Gaturia’s father. She takes her revenge and kills him. Ngugi’s message to society especially about modern kareendis is to be hopeful. Just like Wariinga does not give in to life’s problems. Even after giving birth, she strives to get back to school takes up secretarial studies and later ends up as a mechanic.

Jacinta Wariinga is a young beautiful black woman who easily stops “men in their tracks.” Jacinta moves with grace when she is without self-conscious. Underneath all her beauty, she is a suicidal person who hates her blackness. She clearly suffers from Cultural Imperialism. The military has taken over lands for their own personal use, economic stability cannot be reached between classes because the gap between the rich and poor has increased and political power is the only thing of importance.

The people are of no importance because if they were better living conditions and necessary items would be more accessible. Jacintas' color coated thinking has led her to believe that her appearance is the root cause of all her problems. Jacinta analysis's her many problems with a small mirror. Jacinta is using a small mirror for petty problems when she needs to be using a mirror like the one in my room, 7feet tall by 5 feet wide. With that mirror she can examine all the cultural imperialism flaws and not just her materialistic problems. The small mirror depicts her problems to be petty. If Jacinta truly wanted to analyze all of her problems she should a use a mirror like the one in my room, 5' by 7', she can clearly notice all.

The gicaandi player describes Wariinga's mental distress over her image and says:

Wariinga was convinced that her appearance was the root cause of all her problems. Whenever she looked at herself in the mirror she thought herself very ugly. What she hated most was her blackness, so she would disfigure her body with skin-lightening creams like Ambi and Snowfire... Wariinga also hated her teeth. They were a little stained; they were not as white as she would have liked them to be. She often tried to hide them, and she seldom laughed openly (P 11).

Wariinga's past experience at the hands of men has created a self-critic out of a once vibrant girl, full of promise and goals for her future. Moreover, Her experience is a good illustration of exploitation. Wariinga is dispossessed of her piece of land by the Kenyan Economies Progress Bank because she cannot pay back a loan of 5,000 Shillings. Despite her being a former Mau-Mau fighter, she is arrested and locked up in a cell for three nights, and then taken to court for vagrancy while she has been looking for a job in Nairobi:

I was taken to court this very morning, charged with intending to steal and with roaming about Nairobi without being a resident of the city, without a job, without a house and without a permit. Vagrancy or something like that, that's what they called ill. But, our people think: I, Wangari, a Kenyan by birth; how can I be a vagrant in my own country? How can I be charged with vagrancy in my own country as if I were a stranger? I denied both charges: to look for work is not a crime. ( p.43)

As the masses’ struggle only succeeded in scattering the private businessmen and resulted in killings of the marching people, the arrest of Wangarii and Muturi’s clandestine life, the victory is seen as partial. Yet it constitutes a shed of light on Wariinga’s way to the total victory of the devil for thanks to this partial failure, she happened to think more on how to dismantle the devil.

Galvanized by lessons learnt from the past and present experience, the different trials encountered by Wariinga Muturi, Mwireri and all her other duplications, Wariinga takes the responsibility as community spokeswoman and therefore sharpens her forces against forces of evil, gathers means and skills, shows her concern for masses of workers, peasants and students’ welfare above her personal pleasure and satisfaction. She bravely decides to put an end to her betrothal and love with Gaturia (the old Rich man’s son) and chooses a place among the peasants, workers, students and all those who pay by their brain, sweat and body serve the kind of the Old Rich man from Ngorika. She chooses her target and sets up time to shoot at the Old Rich man from Ngorika, mister Gitahi and some of his guests of honour.

Wariinga's experience passes most of the tests of a transformed African woman. She vows never to sell her soul to the Devil for money and never again to be owned by another man. She is no longer "a woman in chains." She has saved herself and her people from the ghost of colonialism. Womanism endeavors to assist black women to see, affirm, and have confidence in the significance of their experiences and to be able to face the challenges of all the social oppressive forces impeding black women’s struggle for survival and for the development of a positive, productive quality of life conducive to women’s freedom and wellbeing.

The role played by women in the African society concludes that Ngugi's message all through his novels is that women can only empower themselves by taking the initiative and devising strategies that enable them to face the patriarchal society. Most of the women in Ngugi's works possess a fighting spirit which can hardly be

expected at the beginning of the novel. Those women who fight without giving up hope, herald the impending change in the position for both men and women as they reconsider their social roles.

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## History of Feminism and the Predicament of an Afro-American Individual in the Novels of Gloria Naylor

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**Abstract:** *The prime object of this article is a pioneering endeavor to critically analyse the first five novels of the eminent Afro-American writer Gloria Naylor. These are: The Women of Brewster Place (1982), Linden Hills (1985), Mama Day (1988), Bailey's Café (1992). The Men of Brewster Place (1998) and Naylor has been a writer immersed absolutely in the African-American formal history of tradition and culture. Her major concern is to reveal the female quest for identity and in her novels she explores a feminine mystique through a series of strong female characters. She treats woman as an individual and not in the accepted role assigned to her by the society. Through this study efforts have also been made to critically evaluate the position and the picture of the Afro-American feminist writers, the focus being set on Gloria Naylor; the feminist movements in the African milieu and the revolution in the thoughts of the Afro-American female writers. The study also traces efficiently the history of feminism and the origin of an Afro-American individual.*

**Key Words:** *Afro-American history of tradition and culture, Female quest for Identity, Individuality.*

For many centuries, Black African women in America have been called "slave of a slave" and had the status of the desolate on the globe. Deracinated from her inhabitant African ethnicity and placed in prevailing white euro-Christian traditions, she was very frequently demoralized by racists. A glimpse throughout the narration of African intimates expose that there was no inflexible compartmentalization predestined on sexual prohibited like she often convoyed men on hunts and on to the battlefield during pre-slavery days. A black woman in Africa enjoyed many privileges and equality with men prior to the chains of slavery. The Black woman's condition in exile was worsened. Her virtues were violated. Her silence was the silence of the oppressed. Initially, the main concern of the Black Women's Organizations was to abolish all kinds of economic and political disparities against them. Now, they are mainly concerned with the issues of black women who are oppressed by both sexism and racism.

This paper is determined to study of the most well-known novels of Gloria Naylor's *Women of Brewster Place* (1980) and *Linden Hills* (1985) from the feminist perception. In order to analyze her works, one needs to reiterate some of the significant canon of Black Feminism.

Black women writers thus uttered their resentment, covetousness, frenzy and disillusionment through books, articles and anthologies in their own way. Francis Harper was the first black woman novelist, who wrote *Iola LeRoy* in 1895. Until very recently, black women writers found themselves in the peripheries of the two literary traditions-American, which is white and Afro-American which is male. Hence, their contribution to American life and literature remained invisible for a long time. In the year 1983, a large number of Black women writers like Maya Angelou, Gwendolyn Brooks, Toni Morrison, Alice Walker, Audre Lorde, Amiri Baraka Toni Cade Barbara and Gloria Naylor emerged who articulated inner and other realities of women's existence in their works.

The widespread subject matter in their works apprehension the character's endeavor to delineate a meaningful self distinctiveness, self-governing of conservative expectations and prejudices, to sustain one's self-dignity in a world of growing alienation, absurdity and moral decay; and nurture individual self-esteem in a hostile social climate.

Black women's domination operates at dissimilar levels like the exploitation of Black Women's labour, the iron pots and kettles, representing the economic oppression. Economic independence was the remotest thing they could have ever imagined. The political dimension of oppression had denied African-American women the rights and privileges routinely extended to white male and female citizens. Her political status was the lowest in the hierarchy. After white male and female came the Black male and then the black female. From social point of view, the justice was denied to her. While she looked after white man's home and children, her own children were often neglected. But the saddest part of the story is that in the journey of life, she found herself lonely with no protector around, because even her own man was reduced to the status of a slave. She not only had to depend him economically and socially but also satisfy his male ego.

Naylor's *Women of Brewster Place* (1983) consists of seven interrelated short stories which tenacity around an imaginary, deteriorating street symbolic of racist and sexist society. The stories deal with the lives of black female characters, who are forced by circumstances of race and gender, to reside in both an urban city, and leaving behind their rural homes. In all the seven stories, the writer gives us a vivid and pathetic account of sexual oppression of her female protagonists, who are more than 'doubly jeopardized'. Naylor, with her deep perceptive mind, delineates the sufferings, and the struggle, the limitations of Black Women in a racist and a

sexist society. Ironically, in almost all the stories, Naylor shows that Black women are not merely an object to gratify white male's desire, black men too are no exception to this.

The first story in this collection "Mattie Michael" is after the name of its protagonist who is raped and later abandoned by a black male named Buch. She is seduced by him in a very clever and calculated manner. Buch had been rebuffed by Mattie- a young unmarried girl several times, but he eventually succeeds in cajoling her into the act. After his lust is satiated, he abandons her for good. Having been impregnated by him, she is brutally beaten by her father, who nearly kills her in a fit of rage. He beats her so mercilessly that she is reduced to a "pile of torn clothes and bruised flesh on the floor" (15). She leaves her parent's house, comes to another town, gives birth to her son, toils, suffers and undergoes all kinds of trying situations to bring him up. But the son Basil grows into an irresponsible, ego-centric, and selfish, who squeezes even the last drop of his mother's blood. She exhausts her hard-earned last penny and loses even her house in an attempt to bail him out of the charges of murder. Knowing well that he is a scoundrel, she insists on standing on bail for him. As is expected of him, he jumps bail and runs away, thus making her life more miserable. What she finally gets is only struggle and sufferings. The image of man that emerges from this story is that of a rapist, an exploiter, a lusty man, a cruel father, a careless husband and an equally good for nothing son.

In a moving story "Luciella Louise Turner", the protagonist Luciella is deserted by her selfish, cruel and faithless husband Eugene who gives her nothing but babies and babies, one after another, whom he never loved. When his wife is in a family way again, a tragedy takes place and their little daughter dies of electrocution. He adds more fuel to the fire by insisting on abortion. To keep the family's happiness intact, Ciel undergoes it reluctantly but it does not move him. Her tearful pleadings fall on his deaf ears and he simply makes an exit from her life for good and thus throws Ciel into a lonely, long, dark path of pain and despair.

The gender oppression of poor, helpless black women by their own male, who would treat her merely as 'sex-object' is further highlighted by Naylor in another very pathetic and poignant story 'Cora Lee'. Cora adored baby dolls as Christmas gift. Her passion for the scent and feel of plastic baby dolls turns into a motherly passion for her children. She suffers at the hands of her men, who would treat her as a means of gratifying their sexual lust, give her babies one after another and would never show their faces again. All her children-Dierde, Daphane, and Soniya, each had their own father, whose names have not been mentioned. She struggles silently and continuously without any male support and brings them up and gives them all a mother can give, assuming the role of Mother Earth, and never asks for anything for herself.

The struggle of black women and ill-treatment which she often gets from her own men continues in the subsequent stories of Naylor. The story "Etta Mae Johnson" begins with a pathetic song, which is a tell-able of entire womanhood".

I love my man  
I'm a lie if I say I don't  
But I'll quit my man  
I'm a lie if I say I don't  
My man wouldn't give me no breakfast  
Wouldn't give me no dinner  
Squawked about my supper  
Then he put me out of doors  
Had the nerve to lay  
A matchbox to my clothes  
I didn't have so many  
But I had a long, long way to go. (55-56)

Unlike many of Naylor's silent female characters, she does not get crushed under the strain of male oppression and has the guts to flee with the car-keys and driving licence of her man, when he does not fulfil his promise to pay for her return air ticket. Etta has a strong mind and strong views against racism and had to pay a heavy price for her revolutionary ideas as her father's barn is burnt by whites. She leads an independent life and does not want to be tied to marriage and children.

Naylor also draws our attention to society's oppressive attitudes especially towards single women. In one of her tragic stories "The Two", the lesbians Lorraine and Theresa come to stay in Brewster place. While the latter is social, outgoing and is keen to be part of the life around, but painfully discovers that people especially women like Sophie have no place or an iota of sympathy for them. She feels ostracized and lonely. The old caretaker Ben is the only person in the street who treats her like his own long-lost daughter and would "talk" to her. The poor lady is gang-raped in the street by a group of hoodlums, who tear her body and mind into pieces. Later on, in a tragic encounter, Ben is killed by Lorraine who mistakes him to be one of her rapists.

In seventies, a group of feminists known as radical feminists advocated women's liberation in terms of breaking all social institutions of marriage and motherhood. Homo-sexuality was taken to be quite normal activity and the least offensive compared to hetero-sexuality by them. The two women in the story try to take refuge in that 'Utopia' and have no mutual unhappiness. But the society at large does not accept their



relationship as normal. As Sophie, one of their neighbours would often publicly disgrace them: “Movin’ into our block causin’ a disturbance with your nasty ways. You ain’t wanted here” (145). The soul-stirring account of the rape reminds us that Lorraine is treated not like a ‘sex-object’ by the men but merely as an ‘object’, as one critic, Laura E. Tanner, points out: “The ‘objective’ picture of a battered woman scraping at the air in a bloody green and black dress is shocking”, and it appears that the victim is not a human being, as an object of violence, but, as the object, itself” (2).

In her *The Women of Brewster Place*, Naylor delineates only the predicament of Black women and their exploitation by Black men. She does not refer to the attitude of white men towards Black women in her novels. As one critic Barbara Christian reports “many black women were being raped by white men, rather than the popular conception that white women were constantly being raped by black men” (3).

However, in her second novel, *Linden Hills* (85), “Naylor has given a moving account of the lives of white wives, who were constantly subjugated, marginalized and oppressed. These women often faced dual oppression as they were ostracized by their own races for their marriage to a Black man and by the Blacks, as the Nedeeds were upper middle class blacks, thus, superior to average Blacks.”

The novel begins with the story of Luther Nedeeds who locks his wife Willa in the basement merely on the suspicion that his son is not his as he does not look like him. While the son dies in imprisonment in the arms of his mother, helpless Willa sustains herself long enough to discover about past Nedeed wives who had no happiness in store for them and silently bore their suffering at the hands of their cruel husbands till death. Willa learns a lot about the history of these socially highly respected Nedeed men. A large number of unsent letters written by these women, or their scribbling on the book-marks kept in the Bible bear testimony women died in exile or in seclusion unseen and unheard by the neighbours.

The women of Gloria Naylor are like any other Black women, doubly oppressed both at home and outside. However, they can broadly be divided into two sections, first who succumb to the male-oppression and others who gradually gain awareness and can raise their voice against their marginalization. By and large, these women are courageous and self-supporting and despite oppressions, they take care of their familial responsibilities single-handedly. Sometimes these women express deep solidarity and support each other in the wake of utter difficulties and share deep sisterhood as Mattie with Ciel, and Lorraine and Kiswana with Cora.

However, most of the Black men are depicted as womanizers, exploiters and extremely selfish beings, who give vent to their anger and frustration on their women which could be partially due to their own slave position. Here the struggle is not merely for equality alone but acceptance as human beings as a Black Feminist Barbara Smith argues: Acknowledging the sexism of Black men does not mean we become ‘man-haters’ or necessarily eliminate them from our lives. What it does mean is that we must struggle for a different basis of interaction with men”.

Gloria Naylor has articulated the anger, the rage and disappointment of Black women in all her novels vociferously and vehemently. She explores the complexities and diversities of man-woman relationship from new dimensions very vividly and pungently depicts the female experience of oppression and exploitation in a male dominated Black society.

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## Parsi Culture in Rohinton Mistry's *Such a Long Journey*

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**Abstract:** Rohinton Mistry, a critically acclaimed Indo-Canadian Parsi novelist. As a Parsi and immigrant in Canada, he looks at him as a double displacement and this sense of displacement is a recurrent theme in his literary works. He presents the realistic conditions and political history of the Indian society in his debut novel *Such a Long Journey*. His book portrays diverse facets of Indian socio – economic life as well as Parsi Zoroastrian life, customs and religion. His characters represent the Parsi community, whose identity is historically problematic. It is a progressive community with a glorious past and a dismal future. He attempts at giving details about life styles and culture of Parsi wherever he gets an opportunity in his fiction. Commenting about this Silvia Albertazzi her companion to Indian fiction states.

“First of all, he tries to show the uniqueness of the Parsi community by focusing on their way of living and their cultural heritage.”

*Such a Long Journey* is a unique attempt novel based on truth Indian fiction in English. The story is set in India in 1971, at the time of the war with Pakistan which ended with the independence of East Pakistan (Bangladesh). Dealing again the members of Parsi community of Bombay, Mistry strikes the opposition between the values of family and tradition and the corruption of the outside world. Indian politics are the uncanny background of Gustad noble's family life. A moral man, the head of a loving family, in his fifties Gustad Noble has to experience a complete upheaval of his life, owing to the sudden blowing up of politics in his smooth everyday routine. The adventures of this bank clerk, whose life is devastated by history are linked both to the situation of the Parsi community of Bombay in the seventies and to a larger horizon of Indian politics, at the same time characterized by a huge return of nationalism. In his journey, Gustad meets sorrow and death, and disillusion for his son's betrayal. Finally at the end of his journey Gustad realizes that for him the real journey has just started or that the certain journeys never end and must go on in any case, even without hope, even without knowing their goal. Thus *Such a Long Journey* describes the different idiosyncrasies and ethno centricities of Parsi community.

**Key Words:** Cultural Hybridity, Parsi Community, Politics, Identity.

Indian literature in English has carved out a distinct identity of its own. It is artistically mature articulation of a distinctively flavored sensibility which has wider ramifications with regard to the vision. It enshrines the art form where it is projected. As a distinct literary form the novel is undoubtedly of recent forms to be evolved and the most dominant in twentieth century. Rohinton Mistry is an important contemporary novelist. He is a socio-political novelist who has emerged as a formidable writer on the world literary scene. He occupies a significant place as an Indian diasporic writer who has written ‘back’ from his place of migration critically about India, Indian political scenario, minorities, regional identities, history, environment, and cultural pluralism. He was born and brought up in the cosmopolitan Bombay, a melting point of competing cultures and communities. He belonged to the Parsi cultural and religious ‘enclosure’, from which he could never really separate himself, emotionally and psychologically.

Mistry depicts the Parsi experience in the metropolitan, multicultural, and multi-ethnic Bombay. His characters represent the Parsi Community, whose identities have been historically problematized. It is a progressive community with a glorious past and a dismal future. Mistry attempts at giving details about the lifestyles and culture of the Parsees wherever he gets an opportunity in his fiction. He is keenly aware of his community predicament. In the recent years, a large numbers of young Parsees have chosen to migrate to the West. Mistry belongs to them and also hopes to recover a life of comfort and pride.

The Parsees are a very small ethno-religious minority in India, living in the west coast of the subcontinent, especially in Bombay. In spite of their small number, Parsees occupy a pivotal position in India's Social, Cultural, Political and Economic history. The name “Parsis” or “Parsees” refers to one of their origins in Persian province called “Fars” which they left over about 1200 years ago to escape from the persecution of the invading Arabs and to save the teaching of Zoroaster from being Islamized by the Arabians (Kulke 13). This Iranian-Zoroastrian empire came to an end with the conquest of Iran by the Islamic Arabians in the 7<sup>th</sup> century; this led to the exodus of the Parsees. The migration of Parsees from Persia is mostly based on the chronicle “Kissah-i-sanjan” written by a Parsee priest, Bahaman Kaikobad Sanjana in Nausai. The king of Sanjan, Jadi Rana allowed Parsees to settle in Sanjan and imposed them certain conditions like: they have to explain their religion to the king; they have to give up their native language and take on the languages of India; their men

should wear the traditional dress of India; the men should lay down their weapons, and they should hold their wedding processions only in the dark (Kulke 28). Hence Gujarat became the native language of the community and sari, the traditional garment of Parsi women. Anyhow, they managed to “clothe their cultural concessions to their Indian environment” (Kulke 29). The Parsees began to settle in other parts of Gujarat towards the end of 10<sup>th</sup> century. Later they moved to the other parts of the country especially to Bombay.

All the works of Mistry foreground the heterogeneity of identity within Parsi community and the dynamic nature of Parsi community itself. Mistry’s *Such a Long Journey* is the first major work, in which he explores indepth the various complex attributes of Parsi life, history, culture and character. The protagonist, Gustad Noble is a middle class man working as a clerk in a bank. The protagonist has the feelings of loss and insecurity with several chastening experiences. His devotion to his family, his faith in Zoroastrianism and his love for his friends and his community are continually tested through a series of adverse circumstances. The sad predicament of Gustad evokes pity in the readers as the experience, fears, traumas and frustrations that he undergoes are those of minority community, and in wider sense, of all ethnic minority communities. Gustad’s dreams and aspirations are quiet modest and when circumstances conspire to deny him even these modest expectations find it hard to accept the fact that things are beyond his control.

*Such a Long Journey* creates a vivid picture of family life in general and that of a close knit Parsi family in particular. It tells a story rich in subject matter and characterization set in the years around early seventies in Mumbai. It deals with the problems of India during India’s Second World War with Pakistan. It takes up the conflict between political and personal realities. Mistry strikes the opposition between the values of family and tradition and the corruption of the outside world. The plot is drawn on the political canvas where Gustad Noble, a citizen of Bombay, the protagonist is striving to become a responsible husband and father amidst his rebellious son Shorab, superstitious wife Dilnawaz, friend Jimmy Bilimoria and death of good friend Dinshawji. The disappearance of his friend Bilimoria from the Khodadad building was the first blow that Gustad felt. He considers him as his friend, philosopher and guide. Only Dilnawaz can sense the depth of his pain because of abrupt departure of his dear friends. Gustad comments upon his friend’s manner: “To leave like this, after being neighbours for so many years, is a shameful way of behaving. Bloody bad manners.”(14)

Mistry’s characters develop gradually from particular to general by depicting their idiosyncrasies, follies and foibles, from individual to family and gradually widening into the social, cultural and political world. The characters change and develop subtly and totally engross the reader. The second tragic blow that deeply affected his mind was his eldest son Shorab. Gustad had full hope on his eldest son. He was very much excited that Shorab has got admission in the IIT. But when he refuses to enrol his name, Gustad’s heart breaks down because Gustad has a great expectation for his son’s future prosperity. But this leads Gustad to anger and bitterness and a break in the relationship between the father and son. At the dinner Shorab states that: “I’m sick and tired of IIT, IIT, and IIT all the time. I’m not interested in it. I’m not a jolly good fellow about it, and I’m not going there.” (48)

Gustad was sad and angry because of his son’s betrayal. As things rush towards a climax, the arrest of Major Bilimoria on charges of corruption is published in the paper. The heavens fall; Gustad’s horizon is completely darkened with fear. Meanwhile Dr. Paymaster reports to Gustad about Roshan’s prolonged illness. Monetary crisis entraps Gustad. Further, in this critical juncture, Dinshawji is also hospitalized after a sudden collapse in the office. His prayer for the lives and recovery of both Roshan’s and Dinshawji doesn’t work. Shortly after, Gustad makes a trip to Delhi to meet major Bilimoria. He tells Gustad that Prime Minister’s office is involved in money scandal. Major Bilimoria is arrested and tortured, when Gustad sees his pitiable condition, it makes him weep. Major Bilimoria is imprisoned for four years. He dies of heart attack before the period of imprisonment. The inhabitants in Khodadad building are all a good representatives of cross-section middle class. There are a few Indian English novelists who have projected the post-independence dilemma of the minorities like the Parsi community as Mistry. The Parsees feel insecure because of growing political power in Bombay.

The loyalty to his own community can also be traced in *Such a Long Journey* when Rohinton Mistry condemns the contemporary government and the then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, alleging her culprit of the famous the Nagarwala incident which took place during internal emergency. In the postcolonial days, the Parsees lost the importance at the national level and it was one more disgrace for the whole Parsi community. This case was sternly outraged by the Parsi community as “the Nagarwala incident that involved a Parsi, jolted the self – image of the community” (Haldar 14). Rohinton Mistry, belonging to the same community, exposes his anguish and strong reaction at this incident by laying bare the corrupt practice at the highest level of the political milieu.

*Such a Long Journey* is believed to be based on the incident of Mr. Nagarwala. Rohinton Mistry has tried to unveil the secret of corrupt system of political supremacy by portraying the fictionalized version of Mr. Nagarwala, being characterized as Major Jimmy Bilimoria. Mr. Bilimoria, in the novel, was trapped by the highest authorities of the centre who got him arrested on the charge of misappropriating sixty lakh rupees from a nationalized bank by imitating the voice of the Prime Minister. It can be noted that “Jimmy is none other than

the fictional counterpart of Nagarwala who was arrested and exterminated during Indira Gandhi's regime" (Selvam 52). This incident was a political scandal of the time and it shocked the whole Parsi community. Through the enactment of this case, Rohinton Mistry has given a political statement in this novel. The Parsees were badly perturbed and had been completely shocked which can be sensed through the following lines:

The Nagarwala incident, because it involved a Parsi, jolted the self- image of the community no less. Having long ago lost their literature to the vandalism of Alexander the Accursed, and their dance, music, art, poetry and even their language to the process of adapting to a new home in India, the Parsees have developed a particularized culture called from a mixture of ancient myth and legend overlaid by a life sustaining sense of recent achievement. The Parsees were deeply anguished by the ambivalent role that Nagarwala had played in the sordid story (Dodiya 72).

*Such a Long Journey* is not only the expression of the author's feelings about his community but moreover it is an endeavour to regain and retrieve the loss of dignity and grace that the Parsees lost in this case. Mistry voices for his community and vindicates the repugnance of his community vehemently when he demands the answers of some questions in the novel as follows:

Assuming that Mr. Bilimoria has the talent of voice impersonation, is it routine for our national banks to hand over vast sums of money if the prime-minister telephones? How high up does one have to be in the government or the congress party to be able to make such a call? And was the chief cashier so familiar with Mrs. Gandhi's voice that he accepted the instructions without any verification what so ever? If yes, does that mean that Mrs. Gandhi's has done this sort of thing frequently? (SLJ 195).

The expose of the political corruption at the national level in his narration presents or indicates the ethnic or identical representation of Parsi community. Through the description of this incident, Mistry shows the margin of a community in minority. Showing the fundamentalism and lack of political and social dominance, he shows his community is in periphery. Illustrating the incident through his art of narrative, he displays the clear idea of the Parsees' condition in the margin. Thus he is turning out a voice of the Parsees locating in an alien land or place.

The centuries of sufferings, segregation and loneliness have developed a vision of life whose nothing is amiss and they are ready for their extinction. The variegated experiences and the hard grind of the Parsees' lives have made them realize that they have to toughen themselves according to life's requirements.

Mistry makes his ink more darken when he keeps going on Indira Gandhi who has been inimical to the interest of the Parsees and who thought she destroyed the hegemony of the Parsees by bringing the system of nationalization in banking system. In *Such a Long Journey* Dinshawji deploras: "What days those were, yaar. What fun we used to have... Parsees were the kings of banking in those days. Such respect we used to get. Now the whole atmosphere only has been spoiled, ever since that Indira nationalized the banks." (SLJ 38).

As a Parsi, Mistry finds himself at the margins of Indian society and hence his writing challenges and resists absorption by the dominating and Hindu-glorifying culture of India. He has experimented with linguistic hybridity and celebrates the use of Parsi language. He focuses on the human condition, location in time and space, the Parsi middle-class in suburban Bombay and rural migrants. The feeling of being left out of the cultural mainstream is uniquely reflected in the way Mistry's character are displaced and search for new identity, through emigration or reinventing themselves through enlightenment.

The central motif of journey sets the tone of the novel right from the beginning in the use of three epigraphs. A significant aspect of this text is the metaphor of journey. In fact journey is a central and most favored motif in diasporic writing. The title *Such a Long Journey* proclaims this motif and is reinforced by the three epigraphs of the preface of the novel. The three epigraphs of the novel together re-erect a universal journey which is a human one from past to present. The first epigraph is taken from Firdausi's 'Shah-Nama'. Shah-Nama is an Iranian epic. The epigraph recalls both the glorious Iranian heritage and the downgraded condition of the Parsees today. The second epigraph is from T.S.Eliot's 'The Journey of Magi' which reminds that Parsi is the ancient Zoroastrian religion and the Magi who attended the birth of Jesus Christ were Zoroastrian priests. The journey is not merely a physical journey but it is a spiritual one. For the quest of spirituality, man has to undergo numerous hardships. The poem emphasizes on the motto "know thyself" because it is essential to attain higher and nobler values of life by knowing one's own self. "A cold coming we had of it, Just the worst time of the year For a journey, and such a long journey." (SALJ-i)

The last epigraph is extracted from Rabindranath Tagore's Gitanjali: "And when old words die out on the tongue, new melodies break forth from the heart; and where the old tracks are lost, new country is revealed with its wonder." (SALJ-I)

These lines depict the way Parsees moved from one country to another and how they settled down in a new environment and practised their faith. Thus the journey from Firdausi's Shah-Nama to Tagore's Gitanjali is a long journey which is in a cold and hostile world. The long journey is already taken by Dinshawji, Bilimoria and Tehmul and is a journey from hopelessness to hope. The hard times are over in the life of Gustad and he

learns that the everyday's life is bound up with some uncontrolled forces over which man has no control. At the end of the novel, Gustad tears off the black paper from windows which symbolizes new beginning and new birth.

To conclude, the novel *Such a Long Journey* describes the different idiosyncrasies and ethno centricities of Parsi community. It also celebrates metaphorically the journey of the richness of life and the indestructibility of the human spirit.

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## Multicultural Perspectives in Amulya Malladi's *The Mango Season*

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**Abstract:** *Divergent culture can coexist successfully only if the existing cultural values are kept unblemished. Making oneself supportive and compatible to new cultures, rather than ignoring them, paves way for a beautiful harmony in their life. Amulya Malladi reinstates this ubiquitous conception of multiculturalism in her novel, The Mango Season (2003). The present paper argues that the novel not just inflates the notion of coexistence in multiculturalism, but also exemplifies the binding cultural and gender divides. The recent diasporic writers like Chitra Banerjee, Anita Rau Badami, Jhumpa Lahiri, Kiran Desai and Amulya Malladi explore the cultural dilemmas, displacement and cultural clashes suffered by immigrants in the various parts of the world. The experience of being caught between two cultures with cultural dilemmas and clashes has remained a prominent theme of their writings. In The Mango Season, Malladi portrays the cultural shocks and clashes that Priya experiences once she is removed from her adopted culture to revisit her native culture with different experiences and values.*

*The Mango Season is a panorama of Indian tradition. It deals with an Indian who moves to America and lives a multi-cultural existence, which goes against the ideology of her extended family. It is about an Indian woman who hides her engagement to an American man from her traditional Brahmin family. Malladi artfully places Priya in a situation between two opposite worlds. She has to go with either dogmatic tradition of her family or with heartfelt emotion. In the novel, Priya is fighting to find the courage to tell her parents that she wants to marry a black American boy. In The Mango Season, Malladi captures a young woman's struggle to make her family happy, respect her past, and follow her feelings.*

**Key Words:** *Multiculturalism, Divergent culture, Gender divides*

Multiculturalism is a diversified subject, pertaining to communities that contain multifarious cultures. Multiculturalism usually refers to the cultural diversity or to certain ideologies or policies that promote the cultural diversity. The ideologies or policies sometimes vary in their recommendations from country to country. The array includes at least any one among the following: advocating equal respect to other cultures in a society, encouraging the conversation of cultural diversity, addressing the people in relation to the ethnic or religious groups they belong to.

Women writers in India have captured the multiple natures of the domestic spaces in changing world, in Diaspora and Multiculturalism. The recent writers like Jhumpa Lahiri, Anita Rau Badami, Sunetra Gupta, Chitra Banerjee and Amulya Malladi are exploring the cultural conflicts, dilemmas, displacement and cultural transformation of both immigrants and natives. Reflection of cultural clashes and Dilemmas, Culinary Aspects, Food and Transnational Identities, Familial relationships, Gendering, Ethnicity, Multiculturalism and the conflict between modernity and traditional values are prominent in the works of Amulya Malladi.

Amulya Malladi has to her credit five novels. *The Mango Season* (2003) is taken for the present study. The novel is analysed from the perspective of culture studies. Malladi's cultural archetype is the mother character who is a strict disciplinarian. She impose stricture on her ward. But as per the natural law, whatever is imposed is rejected. The daughter rebel against the fence.

When Priya comes home, she discovers her family, her mother in particular, practicing traditional customs. She finds no solace in her company. She says in the first chapter. "It had just been three days, but I was already tired of being in India, at home, and especially tired of my mother"(13). Further she describes everyday life in India. As she says,

The road was bumpy and the auto rickshaw moved in mysterious ways. There were no rules; there never had been. You could make a U-turn anywhere. Crossing a red light was not a crime. If a policeman caught you without your driver's license and registration papers, twenty to fifty rupees would solve your problem.(24)

Priya finds everything unnatural which was never to be in the past. In the past, she enjoyed the mango season several times with her brother. She never paid attention on the quality of food, but as she thinks "Now, I couldn't imagine putting that piece of white and green fruit inside my mouth, it was not about taste, it was about hygiene"(9). But after years away, everything looks dirtier to her. She starts sweating as if she has never been through an Indian summer before. She makes a comment power cuts in India by saying that "The electricity was out. For six hours every day in the summer, the electricity was cut off to conserve it. The cut-off times changed randomly but usually around the times when it was most hot"(16). The diasporic experience is very strongly

present in Priya's account. She perceives a split within her. "It was as if there were two people inside me. Indian Priya and American Priya. Ma's Priya and Nick's Priya. I wondered who the real Priya was"(69).

Priya knows how her mother does bargaining whenever she goes for shopping. When Priya goes with her to buy mangoes, She gets the experience of her bargaining culture but here she finds herself fortunate due to not having the culture of bargaining in America. As she says to herself "Thanks to happy memories like that I never, ever, bargained. It was a relief that in the United States. I didn't have to do it for groceries and clothes; everything came with a fixed price tag"(11).

After reaching India, Priya finds her family members in the same condition as they were seven years before. Her extended family often talks about marriage, particularly the marriage of her uncle Anand with Neelima, which is not accepted by them as she is out of their caste. In India, caste is still a fairly important point for marriage, especially among the first – generation immigrants and short term visitors. Priya's family has fixed opinions and they hate inter caste marriages.

Priya belongs to a kind of family where marriage is supposed to be arranged by the family elders, and love doesn't have the place in it. Priya's mother wants her daughter to get married soon. As she says, "If they have a good U.S. boy in mind and he is in India on leave like you, we can probably arrange something. If it works out, you will be married and happy. It will be a load off my chest. An unmarried daughter...what must be neighbors think"(23). Priya's mother does not like the appearance and behavior patterns of her daughter. As she says to her

Why, what is wrong with our way? Doesn't a girl look nice with long, oiled hair with flowers in it? Even when you were here, you didn't want the nice mallipulu, fresh jasmine, I would string. Always wanted to look like those...short hair and nonsense(8).

It means she firmly believe on Indian culture and does not like the way in which Priya keeps her appearance. As she knows that Priya's friends Manju and Nilesh got married happily in India but they divorced once they shifted to the United States. As she says, "same caste, same... real good match. They went to America and now they are getting a divorce after four years of marriage, what happened? If they were in India, it would have never happened"(80). The clash of dress is also mentioned in the concerned novel. Indian women wear saris suited to their culture. But the American women wear tight jeans and t-shirts. Once Priya wants to wear a pair of shorts to ward off the tremendous heat of Indian summer at Monda Market, but her mother objects her by saying that "wearing shorts in Monda Market? Are you trying to be an exhibitionist? We don't do that here"(8). Priya finds it strange to see women in India prefer wearing saris even in summer season. As she says, "I never understand why Indian women were saris in this day and age when alternatives like salwar kameez would not be frowned upon. A sari was uncomfortable"(20).

We see love-hate relationship between Priya and her mother. When Priya finds her mother, not treating her well, she says to her "Then you have to learn to treat me with respect too"(89). Her mother gets angry and responds that "You are too young to gain my respect and you have done nothing so far to gain it. Respect! Children respect their parents...and that is all there is to it. You have to learn to behave yourself. I am not your classmate or your friend that you can speak to me like this"(89). In Indian culture, the elders are always respected even though they are wrong. Younger's have to be very punctual towards their elders.

Traditions play a vital role in India and many take it to a higher level, especially in the case of marriage. These traditions are held so dearly because they are tied to patterns, beliefs, and practices by many of India's ancestors. We see a constant conflict between tradition and modernity through changing times and generations. Marriages are cultural as well as religious obligation in India. It is an important institution. In India, the majority of marriages are arranged by the respective families of bride and groom. While choosing the spouse for their son or daughter both the parents prefer the equality of the family in respect of status, financial position, religion, caste and language. The Indian marriage institution considers the marriage as relation not only in spouses but within the respective families of them.

The cultural clash is also seen in the living styles in America and that of India. Living together before marriage is totally prohibited in India but not in the western culture. Here, we can see that Priya's lifestyle changes when she goes to The States. She has been living together with Nick in the same roof even though they are not married so far. But in India this living together business is simply not allowed before couple gets married according to Hindu marriage institutional norms.

*The Mango Season* is a panorama of Indian tradition. The novel deals with an Indian woman who wove to America and lives a multi-cultural existence, which goes against the ideology of her extended family. The girl, Priya hides her engagement with an American man which is against the strictures of her traditional family. Malladi artfully places Priya in a situation between two opposite worlds. She has to go with either the dogmatic tradition of her family or to abide by her heartfelt emotion. Priya is fighting to find the courage to tell her parents that she wants to marry the black American boy. She wants to make the members of her family happy. At the same time she wants them to respect her sentiment and personal joys. And finally she succeeds in getting the consent of the family. *The Mango Season* is an insight into the working of Indian families and their Hindu rituals, customs and the hierarchies in which the male head of the household prevails. Malladi captures the

predicament of non-resident Indians who are torn between the two cultures of their native and adopted countries. It is also the age – old story of whether one should follow one’s heart or walk on the true and tried path of tradition.

It is a work of soul searching, decision making and capacity building. *The Mango Season* thus presents not story of a resisting sentimental female but a woman who succeeds through the power of deliberation and patience. Malladi beautifully declares that whether People are good and bad, regardless of where they are from the mutual understanding or empathy on each other’s unique, shared and transmitted values, dispositions, behaviours and outlooks within a common socio-political system is what Amulya Malladi, enforces in her novel *The Mango Season*. She insists through her characters that the divergent cultures can coexist successfully, by keeping their existing cultural values unblemished.

Making oneself supportive and compatible to cultures, rather than ignoring them paves way for a beautiful harmony not just in their lives but all over the world. Multiculturalism in literature, asserts Reed way Dasenbrock, includes “both works that are explicitly about multicultural societies and those that are implicitly multicultural in the sense of inscribing readers from other cultures inside their own textual dynamics”(10).

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## Myths of Heritage: Culture, Enlightenment and Hegemony

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**Abstract:** *Heritage is a myth; heritage as a site of struggle needs a political analysis in relation to the tendency of cultural enlightenment in the literary production. Cultural hegemony demands a deeper analysis in the realm of enlightenment ideology of a stabilised order in the cultural ethos of texts. The ideological framework in which the cultural heritage is moulded, may not be always the political side of the other. The paper focuses the formation of cultural heritage as a myth via upholding the neo-enlightenment conception of pseudo-ideological formation in literature, visuals and even in casual communication. From the 'soft' readings of literature as vehicles of culture (Matthew Arnold)-to the need for a common culture (Raymond Williams), there is a wide gulf of a dialectical approach of meanings and ideological shift persists from pure enlightenment to political readings of enlightenment. Enlightenment as value and philosophy provides source of energy to narratives of fiction and reality in an age of myth proliferation. The major objective of the paper is to site the gradual shift from the plural world into the pure realistic realm whereby adhering to the principles of enlightenment values of order and discipline in the cultural matrix. The textual framework of the cultural hegemony often associates unitary sensibility and universal acceptance of common values. The dominant aspect of this sort of 'heritage making' caters the subtle fissures of the enlightenment whereby reduces the possibilities within cultural contexts and even in the very language employed by the cultural situation.*

**Keywords:** *culture industry, enlightenment and hegemony.*

### Enlightenment is totalitarian. (Adorno and Horkheimer 4)

The concept of heritage is commonly defined within the nuances of the culture and tradition and the notion of cultural heritage often becomes the foundation of many texts in our social milieu. It is the liberal attachment of the literatures to the cultural heritage through varied forms of the enlightenment and the cultural myths, makes new forms of hegemony in contexts. The paper is an attempt to read the ways in which the myths of cultural heritage are formed in the literary circles. The construction of the myths of heritage is an ongoing process of the enlightenment aspects of the fixed identity; a form of homogeneous positioning of the texts in the historical contexts. The role of the literary merits and utility is often analysed with particular instances of national or local narratives of the fictional identity. A new sense of cultural appropriation takes place when the heritage- excavation promotes national myths of single identity and homogeneous objects. Heterogeneity is not a single -calculated ideology to dismantle the structures of heritage, rather the languages of heritage need to be deconstructed within the textual frames of cultural heritage.

The narratives of the heritage are the textual frameworks of misinterpretations in contexts. The narratives of the enlightenment regulate, promote and generate varied aspects of the liberal myths in cultural organization thereby produces a textual community of well-intended languages. The formation of the hegemonic structures in cultural heritage always needs new forms of resistance mechanism. The literary representations of reality are the favourite platforms of cultural revolutions in synthesis. Reading literatures to preserve the cultural heritage generally protect the heterogeneous narratives of indigenous cultural meanings. Heterogeneity is taken as the varied levels of cultural organization that even leads to fixing the literary language to the nation building process of the state ideology. Citing heritages in literary representations is a form of cultural fascism; a sort of hegemony in languages in flux.

Heritage is a myth; cultural heritage as a political notion gives birth to hegemony and enlightenment in the new literary circles of representations. . Words as emblems of the cultural representations have to be dismantled – words need to be liberated – in order to bring out the platform for a plural /fluid identity of culture and heritage in our socio- literary circles. Cultural hegemony demands in depth analysis in the realm of the enlightenment ideology of stabilized order in the cultural ethos. Most of the cultural readings become a sort of hegemony on a particular ideology whether it is a notion on eco-critical texts, films and even humanitarian impact of literature and in visuals.

Cultural studies is not a linear study on cultures; but a deep reflection on how languages of cultural notions are conceived in our social interactions. Cultural orientations in the literary productions in our social milieu need to be redefined in relation to the political appropriation of the mass cultural behaviour. In the literary aspects of the texts, contextualizing the figurative language into a tangible social reality becomes an ordinary act of assertion on the texts' existence. The so-called heritage and its contextualization do not allow problematising the represented and making a sound new culture industry of mass deception in view. And a new realistic circles with the death of the theory is highlighted but the association to literature to its myriad

implications in contexts exists.. This neo-realistic conception of words and visuals often respond to the mass consumer ideology of corresponding meaning to the wider realm: a sort of pseudo ideology of the theoretical assemblages in realistic form.

Ecological writings or eco-narratives, documentaries, seminars on globalization are the results of the new enlightenment fabrication of the myth. The myth of heritage is a realistic conception of history ideologically rooted in the literary imagination of the context in which it was carried out through centuries. The fictional representations of history become the cultural stage of realism since it subtly studies the local histories into the front. The massive growth of the technology demands objective growth and offers contextual realism of every sort in fictions/non-fiction and on visuals. In the realm of heritage and its proliferation of myths challenges are from the aspects of the enlightenment and forms of capitalism. The established ideals of the pre-conceived notions of the purely realistic association cater always the state sponsored ideology of the wor(l)d order. An analysis of the plural notion in ideological markings on the text's body is negated whenever the cultural hegemony is situated within the platform of texts and contexts.

Contexts become a traditional tool on the table of the texts, where the heritage stoops to hegemony over the binary of plural /singular notions. The myths of the enlightenment are the cultural productions of every epochs through a variety of calculated prejudices, often lead to the aspects of renaissance. It has a history of valued understanding on the human nature through myriad notions on history. As a result, in the cultural heritage, the enlightenment becomes a tool for linking the tissues of utility. In the contexts of profane aspects of heavy myth making, the existence of the cultural heritage becomes a new language of domination.

Reading literatures, arts and visuals from purely enlightened versions of utility and reason divert the entire textual framework into the gutters of the fixed notions of pure messages and concerns. The myths of the state and its intangible reframes of self-constructing machinery always promote newer readings within the ambit of pure insight and utility. Nation building becomes an agenda. Even the texts materialistically overcome the theoretical-liberal notions in the cultural context but fail to comprehend the political significance. The anxiety to lose the heritage is the mania of the power brokers in the state, academy, and even the power circles, to stabilize the status of literary merit. This merit orientation leads to the sources good/bad literatures in the artistic realm where messages generate pure meanings of tradition. Literature is not a symbolic machine of preserving the cultural values of the particular history. The documentation never yields to its insightful agenda of new notions. These are the common myths of heritage which are to be analysed in relation to cultural industry, enlightenment and hegemony. Cultural heritage as an ultimate essence of the individual /mass development of the society, as the covert attempt, is employed to mystify the pillars of the purity.

This instrumental logic of the cultural situations and its formation of the instrumental apparatus make a liberal humanistic stabilisation in our cultural ethos. The contextualizing of the culture through respective literatures only crystallises the meanings and aims of the state. This is the new form of cultural hegemony carried through the very traits of the cultural 'uniqueness' in our society. The modes of analysis on the languages and literary representation across the world generate a new class of readers in tune with the instrumental logic of the pseudo idealism. The resistance to the literary history represents forms of neo realism in which the renaissance foregrounds criterion of standardization. Heritage as a part of the cultural tradition demands readings from the existence of literary imagination, creative writings and ever new symbols in literature. Heritage narrates rather than it is narrated with words and ideologies. In the context of the neo-realistic narratives, the homogeneous conceptualization becomes a reality of the present.

The ideological shift from the single /plural binary to a heterogeneous platform is covertly maintained but the narratives focus only on the thematic conceptions of the renaissance ideology. Since the concept of hegemony analyses the subtle organization of art and its policies of political appropriation it leads to a further reading of new realism of ardent meaning favoured territories. The textualities of the heritage are tailored with the cultural synthesis and exhibit the social dimensions of the language and literature. Texts become contexts, provided the ideologies sufficiently promote the wider canvas of the heterogeneous notions in cultural situations. In the socio-economic sphere the dialectical nature of the enlightenment problematizes the 'soft readings' of the narratives on the literary languages. The state sponsored classical status to the languages (at present five) in India highlights the heritage making in the hybridity, a celebration of the linguistic heritage of the languages: the spirit of the official tongue.

The age becomes so much obsessed with human consciousness of security and narratives of eco-literature, with messages, emerge and assert the existing voices of the past and the present. Domination on culturally created tastes of the history cannot be resisted with a single binary of the grand/mini narratives or even in the transcendental postponement of the pluralisation techniques. Heritage is a heterogeneous assemblage of the cultural notions on historical identity. In the formation, the contexts predominate and the legacy of one culture specifics that lead to the heritage and the fictitious/realistic representation of the tradition, in the social milieu, produces new ideologies of hegemonical reframe on the enlightenment and renaissance.

The misconceptions of the cultural studies are that whenever pluralities site on the board, discourses become audible in contexts. The subtle formation of the languages of the heritage, enlightenment and the

formation of hegemony never addressed through the transcendental nature of the texts. The possibilities of plurality alone never make a text alive. The language predominates than the skeletons of meanings.

The instrumental logic of the new ideologies of the neo-realism quarrels within the unitary sensibility of ideological formation of the self. Historical representations in Walter Benjamin on the place of memories may be one of the dimensions of larger forms of heritage celebration. Acknowledging Walter Benjamin's aura is the result of the contextualization of literary texts in cultural milieu .Aura is an illusion; the visible trait of the enlightenment vision on the renaissance ideology of the mass reception and preservation. Myths proliferate new dimensions of pluralisms but stick on newer criticism of hegemonical and liberal conception of the enlightenment. Reading literatures in the light of the cultural heritage in contexts only extends the so-called binaries of the texts' identity. The formation is discarded; the industry dominates when the readings focus on the namesake ideology of 'messages and concerns'.

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## Auto Ethnography in the writings of Bama.

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**Abstract:** The paper aims at probing into auto ethnography in the writings of Dalit. It is safe to say that literature is a colorful compendium of insurmountable trends and movements. Auto ethnography is a recent trend in the present literary scenario. It is the study of other culture. It is considered as a new mode of writing. In plain words, it is a documentation of other culture. It is a part of Dalit literature too. Dalit literature emerges as a new brand of literature in the contemporary context. Feminist writers adopt this technique in the dynamics of their writings to ventilate their inveterate feelings. Bama is a case in point. Her novels are a faithful representation of Dalit. She is consummate in adopting the technique of auto ethnography to present the pathetic plight of Dalit women. She brilliantly brings forth the horrors of domestic violence. She runs the real risk of conveying that dalit women face a lot of problems. She holds a veritable view that they find it difficult enough to exercise their fundamental rights in a caste-ridden society. Their freedom is diametrically opposed to the freedom of male. Sangati is a novel which presents the predicament of marginalized women.

**Keywords:** ethnography, Dalit literature, violence, marginalization.

**Autoethnography is a form of critique and resistance that can be found in diverse literatures such as ethnic autobiography, fiction, memoir and texts that identify zones of contact, conquest and the contest meanings of self and culture that accompanies the exercise of representational authority.**

-Mark Neuman.

It is a truism that literature is a consummate compendium of insurmountable forms and emerging new trends. Every trend has its own uniqueness and significance. Biography is an account of one's life composed by other. Autobiography is the biography of a person written by that person. Auto ethnography is a kind of writings that connects autobiographical event to cultural political and social meanings and understandings. There is a thin line of disparity between auto ethnography and ethnography. Ethnography is the study of people and culture. Auto ethnography is a recent trend in the present literary scenario. This particular trend enables us to understand other culture. It is considered as a new breed of writing. In plain words, it is a documentation of other culture. It is a part and parcel of Dalit literature too. Dalit literature emerges as a new brand of literature in the contemporary context. It is a part of post colonial literature.

New crop of Feminist writers adroitly adopt this new technique in the dynamics of their writings to ventilate their inveterate feelings. Bama is a case in point. Her novels are true representation of Dalit. She is meticulous in adopting the technique of auto ethnography to present the pathetic plight of Dalit women. She brilliantly brings out the horrors of domestic violence. She runs the real risk of conveying that dalit women face a lot of problems. She holds a veritable view that they find it difficult enough to exercise their fundamental rights in a caste-ridden society. Their notion of freedom is diametrically opposed to the freedom of male. She advocates social realism in her novels.

Autoethnography has become a staple point of discussion in the contemporary context. Bama emerges as a powerful writer in the realm of Dalit literature. She chooses women protagonists only to voice their problems. She has a realization of the fact that the tag of casteism has an upper hand in India. She presents the trajectory of grief and also adds tapestry of Dalit life in the dynamics of her writings. Her writings unequivocally throw a modicum amount of light on Dalit feminism. She is consummate in presenting the polarity between haves and have nots. She tries to question the polarity of male patriarchal society in the dynamics of her writings. She, in fact, is trying to goad them into true to their salt for the sake of their humanism. She showed a lively interest in the welfare of dalit people. She made her first foray into Dalit literature in the form of her writing. Karukku and Sangati are the finest achievements of Bama. Karukku denotes palmyra leaves with their serrated edges on both sides. It is an autobiographical novel in which she proffers her personal view without any reservation. While it is a fact that Bama concentrates on casteism within the Roman Catholic Church in Karukku, She terrifically touches upon the question of conversion which happened in her grandmother's time in Sangati.

Karukku is a groundbreaking novel in which she presents the tension between self and the community. The narrator leaves one community with the intention of joining another community. She experienced a sense of humiliation for being an Untouchable as a child. During her schooling, Bama was accused of having stolen the coconut and directed to stand outside by the priest for "after all you're from the cheri: you must have done it. {karukku}. She was shell-shocked by this incident. During the holidays, she herself toiled along with her grandmother as a daily wages in the farms of Naickers. With a special view to empowering herself, she studied well and completed B.Ed with flying colors and joined in a school run by nuns. She probed into the life of school and endured harassing experience. The nuns looked down upon her with jaundiced eyes. Bama has a

razor-sharp mind in understanding her pathetic plight. She was astonished to find out that the people of her community did some odd jobs like sweeping, washing the classrooms and cleaning the lavatories. Interestingly enough, most of the children are well off. She had a faculty of understanding the fact that the nuns catered only to the needs of the wealthy children.

She ruefully realizes the fact that education is necessary for her community. In the light of her subjective experience as a dalit woman, she by and large groomed herself. She eventually turns out to be a strong woman with stout mind. It suddenly dawned on her mind that education alone can transform their life. Imbued with her fighting spirit, she makes it a point to work for the edification of her community.

Sangati is an epoch making novel in the realm of Dalit literature. It chiefly concerns with women's movement in India. It gives new impetus into the precious lives of Dalit women who face the double disadvantage of caste and gender discrimination. The entire narrative is divided into twelve narratives. The word sangati means events. Through individual stories, she powerfully presents the pathetic conditions of paraiya women. She adopts autoethnography in highlighting the inner struggle of paraiya women. The sufferings of woman are twofold namely high class people and Dalit male. The narrator Pathima is of the opinion that discrimination begins from the birth of the children. There is a gulf of difference between in treating boys and girls. Boys are the focus of attention at home. They are given unstinted attention rather than the girls who are conditioned to lead a different kind of life. People, in those days, flippantly dismissed the idea of giving importance to girl children. Girls are not on par with boys. The writer throws light on several generations of women. It is a Dalit narrative in which she comes down heavily on patriarchal society. Exploiting woman is tantamount to exploiting country. Gender discrimination takes place in the work place too. Girl children have to compulsorily work in their capacity as daily wagers. They indeed work round the clock to cater to the dire needs of their task master. In spite of their diurnal work, their stamp of identity is not well recognized. With their supernal patience, they pocketed an insult in the battle of life. Though they have the infinite capacity to work harder than man folk, they received meager wages. Pathima's patti says, "If they stay at home, how are they going to get any food? Even their cows and calves will die of hunger than. And anyway, it wasn't just her, more or less all the women in our street are the same..."{Sangati6}

Women's health is given least importance although they are the backbones of the family. She advocated a veritable view that women have the courage to break the shackles of authority with a view to changing their problem-filled lives. Women in every strata of society became the victims of patriarchal society. Bama is hyper aware of the fact that patriarchy has wrecked the precious lives of women in India and eventually it affects the social, political and economic growth. Hard labor paves the way for a culture of violence. In fine, both Karukku and Sangati pinpoint the gospel fact that within the community there is class hierarchy. Karukku and Sangati wield enormous clout in the present literary scenario on account of dalit dynamism. Her writings undoubtedly give impetus for the edification of Dalit community.

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## Contextualizing the Concept of Joint Family in ManjuKapur's *Home*

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**Abstract:** Indian culture has a long tradition of fostering the joint family. In a society where changes happen as per the changing trends of the modern world, it is difficult to keep a joint family in the old frame work. Much of the modern writers are comfortable with the narration of a normal family and the characters therein. In the novel *Home* by ManjuKapur, we can see a joint family consisting of three generations sharing and confronting the worries and troubles of daily life. In modern context, when culture and society takes new diversion in contact with new cultures and trends, ManjuKapur's *Home* offers the reader a retrospective understanding of the yesteryears' social establishment of a joint family in North India. This paper tries to see how a traditional family compromises some of its family rules to accommodate the current demands of the younger generation and those of the changing society. We can see in *Home* the concept of a joint family being contextualized to incorporate the modern Indian cultural scenario.

**Key words:** joint family, hierarchy, manglic, patrilineal, matrilineal.

The concept of joint family is now an old term used in Sociology and Anthropology thanks to modern changes in the society. The concept of single child and nuclear family has eroded the concept of joint family. Much of the modern writers are comfortable with the narration of a normal family and the characters therein. Indian culture has a long tradition of fostering the joint family. The relational bond that exists within the members of the joint family can be both a blessing and a curse in the character formation and personality development of the members. In a society where changes happen as per the changing trends of the modern world, it is difficult to keep a family in the old frame work. In the novel *Home* by ManjuKapur, we can see a joint family consisting of three generations sharing and confronting the worries and troubles of daily life. In modern context, when culture and society take new diversion in contact with new cultures and trends, ManjuKapur's *Home* offers the reader a retrospective understanding of the yesteryears' social establishment of a joint family in North India. This paper tries to see how a traditional family compromises some of its family rules to accommodate the current demands of the younger generation and those of the changing society. The head of the family – BanwariLal – experiences a dilemma while negotiating the old with the new. The traditional cloth merchant has to accept the demands of his sons for a new shop and a new way of dealing with the people. Some other members in the joint family have to adjust to the constraints of a single room for their family. Some others have to do extra work, while others just enjoy the benefit of a fruitful married life. Thus in short we can see in *Home* the concept of a joint family being contextualized to incorporate the modern Indian cultural scenario.

A.M. Shah in his book *The Family in India: Critical Essays* defines 'joint family' as "two or more elementary families joined together" (18). He further explains the concept of joint family: "A simple household is composed of a complete elementary family or a part of an elementary family. A 'complex' or 'joint' household is composed of two or more elementary families, or of parts of two or more elementary families, or of one elementary family and parts of one or more other elementary families" (53). We can find two types of joint family: patrilineal and matrilineal. "It is called patrilineal joint family when based on the principle of patrilineal descent, and matrilineal joint family when based on the principle of matrilineal descent. Frequently the term 'extended family' is used in the place of joint family" (18).

Another description of joint family by J. L. Raina in his book *Structural and Functional Changes in the Joint Family System* gives a detailed list of the members in the joint family and the major features of a joint family:

The joint family is described as a number of married couples and their children who live together in the same household. All the men are related by blood as a man and his sons and grandsons; the women of the household are their wives, unmarried daughters and perhaps, the widows of a deceased kinsman. These definitions emphasise some of the commonly accepted features of the traditional joint family: filial and fraternal solidarity, adoption of women through marriage, common purse, common property, mutual help and mutual obligations. (4-5)

The traditional family in India was joint family. "The principal focus of most of the sociological studies is to study the changes which this institution has undergone and to examine the present form of family in India" (Raina1). ManjuKapur's *Home* offers us a verbal treat of the inter relations and conflicts in a traditional joint family and the gradual change that happens in that family – from the traditional to the modern - to incorporate the demands of the new generations.

Keeping the joint family at the centre of narration ManjuKapur tries to bind the traditional family life with the modern family life. In order to maneuver this process she uses BanwariLal. The hierarchical authority was centralised in the eldest male of the Hindu family who also had the decisive authority in matters of family as well as inter-family relations. "Age and sex are the main ordering principles on family hierarchy. The men have the more decisive authority in the traditional Indian family as compared with women and elders have greater authority as compared with young persons"(Sinha 101).The skills and personal appeal that BanwariLal possesses help him coordinate the various activities of the family and make him a respectable head of the family. As long as he was alive, all the major decisions were taken with his consent and his support was sought for major expenses. As a grandfather he was given all the honour by other members of the family. BanwariLal had the prudence to separate the needful from the desired things. Whenever it was needed he stood with his sons. When there was a demand from Vicky for his portion of share, BanwariLal tactfully avoided his demand in consultation with his sons; because he knew that his sons would never agree to give Vicky any more concessions.

The narration of the lives of three generations forms the content of the novel. "The traditional family roles in the family were organized largely on the basis of authority or what Mandelbaum calls more appropriately hierarchical authority, age, sentiments, feelings of filial love, bonds of fidelity of husband-wife etc." (Sinha 101). The characters in the novel are mainly the members of the same family. The first generation mentioned in the novel is BanwariLal and his wife. They have three children- Yeshpal, Pyarelal and Sunitha. As a reputed and well-established cloth merchant in KarolBagh, BanwariLal was happy living with his three children. But the demon of trouble struck him when his daughter was married to Murali, a drunkard. In order to get the wealth of his father-in-law, he tortured his wife and at the convenient time executed the plan of burning her in the kitchen. Later on Vicky, the child of Sunitha was added to the family.

The family got expanded with the marriage of Yashpal, the elder son of BanwariLal. But unfortunately, even after ten years of marriage, the couples did not have a child to keep the family line on move. For this barrenness Sona, the wife of Yashpal has to suffer mental torture from her mother-in-law. Apart from the daily kitchen works she had to take care of Vicky as an additional duty. It usually happens in the joint family that the 'worker bee' has to work always.

PyareLal and his wife Sushila had the upper portion of the house got ready after their marriage. In that sense they had their free time and they could watch TV and enjoy other facilities which were provided to them by Sushila's family. BanwariLal didn't want to have a separated family; he wished everyone living under the same roof. In the modern context a separate kitchen is not against the concept of a joint family. J. L. Raina writes:

The criteria for a joint family are not confined to a common residence or a common kitchen; the more important criteria, in a changed context are maintenance of common property, relations between the members of a household with the members of other affiliated households, and the fulfillment of mutual obligations. Members of a family may apparently break away from the common roof and kitchen. (10)

The gradual change in the attitude and life style of the second generation is presented by ManjuKapur through highlighting the facilities enjoyed by the new couple living upstairs.

The life in a joint family is always packed with activities. There will be no time to be alone; the young and old are always at home and nobody feels the boredom of loneliness. But there can be elements of neglect and over duty. ManjuKapur brings those two elements by attributing them to Sona. She has to feel the neglect of others as she is barren and she has to feel overburdened as she has to do both the kitchen work and looking after Vicky. Sushila, the wife of PyareLal was blessed with two sons within two years of her marriage. In the context of a joint family, to live like a fruitless stock was unbearable for Sona. Contrary to the life of Rupa, Sona's sister, she had to face the sarcastic remarks from her mother-in-law. Rupa was also childless; but there was no one to make any comment. ManjuKapur writes: "Rupa was childless, but free from torment. She accepted her fate, she didn't spend every Tuesday fasting, she had no one to envy, no one to rub salt in her wounds, no one to keep those wounds bleeding by persistent hurting comments" (17).

The life in the joint family added to the worries of Sona. She had to be responsible to every member. There is less personal time to be spent with her husband. ManjuKapur writes: "In the day small things drove her into a frenzy of irritation. Everyone, she felt, found her defective goods, despite her pale colour, large hazel eyes, small neat nose, red lips, even teeth, and perfect skin. How she wished she did not have to live in a joint family! If she and her husband lived separately, she too could be happy, like her sister Rupa" (16).

The mother-in-law of Sona had her tongue always sharp. After the death of Sunitha, Sona's sister-in-law, Sona wanted to console her mother-in-law. She told her mother-in-law to sleep. But the answer came like this: "You think sleep is possible? What can you know of a mother's feelings? All you do is enjoy life, no children, no sorrow, only a husband to dance around you" (19). There was no one to understand the really of life. It is the high expectation of the family that after the marriage it is mandatory to have children. The mother-in-law

thought that Sona is using some contraceptives to prevent pregnancy. She never tried to understand the mind of Sona; rather she added oil to the burning mind of Sona. If someone lives in a joint family the mental torture comes from anyone at any time.

With the emergence of the third generation the strain and tension increased. The gap between the old and the young, the traditional and the modern widened. The two sons of PyareLal, Ajay and Vijay, and Raju, the son of Yashpal, wanted to establish a separate showroom for the trendy clothes. This was not so easily accepted by BanwariLal. He insisted on going on with the traditional cloth items. But he was not against the proposal of the new generation. Even though BanwariLal belonged to the first generation he had the adjusting mentality and had the prudence to judge the goodness in the opinions of the new generation.

In a joint family, usually the academic matters are neglected. In olden days, the male member in a joint family used to work in the field or did some business. In some families we find them going to school; women in the joint family rarely went to school. ManjuKapur presents the BanwariLals adjusting to the modern times. Here we find men and women in the family going to school. Nisha was a graduate and she engaged herself in teaching the kids in a nearby play school. Vicky and Raju were not so good in studies; yet they were encouraged to finish the tenth standard. The modern concept of 'earning while learning' finds its fulfillment in the life of Vicky. He looked after some of the matters in the cloth shop after coming from the school. This training helped him to stand on his own.

Nisha, a manglic by birth, had the problem of getting married. Her love affair with Suresh was not accepted by the family as Suresh was both economically and socially backward. Added to this frustration she had a skin disease that made her white body appear with black spots. Yet in all these adverse conditions her family supported her and at last found a fitting match for her. This mental support is one aspect of the joint family. She was not alone to suffer the troubles of her life. At the end of the novel we find her leading a happy married life. In her husband's house she was taken care of by her mother-in-law. The member of a joint family moves to another family comparatively small in size. The modern concept of joint family is not only realistic and pragmatic, but is also more sociological. "For what makes a family is not living and eating together of persons related to blood, but the nature of relationships that they maintain, the level of interaction with each other, and the orientation of their actions and behaviour vis-à-vis other members of the family" (Raina 10). The blend of traditional and modern family system makes the narration of the novel more interesting and up-to-date.

After the death of BanwariLal the mantle of responsibility was taken over by the elder son Yashpal, instead of Mrs. BanwariLal. This is in tune with the existing custom of a joint family in India. "As between the authority of an elderly woman and a younger man, sex is the more important determinant" (Sinha 101). Thus another feature of a traditional family is presented to us by ManjuKapur.

J. L. Raina mentions six reasons for the fundamental changes happening in the traditional Indian family system. Industrialization, urbanization and growth of cities, modern educational system, rising status of woman, laws governing the family property, and economic compulsion arising out of growth in the size of the family are these six factors affecting the changes in the family system. When individual needs come to the forefront no one wants to sacrifice the life for the other. The adjustments that are needed in a joint family are not accepted by the younger generation. In the BanwariLal family, as the generation changes, we can notice the demand for individual freedom. After the death of BanwariLal, even though Yashpal was in the hierarchical position, he was not so honoured and consulted with. Though other families lived in the same household, in matters of business and money matters, each one had his/her stand. In order to keep up to the trends in the textile market the younger generation had to adapt the new marketing strategies. In that sense Raju, Ajay and Vijay, the trio of the third generation, are weaving the warp and woof of the modern concept of the joint family.

*Home* presents the relations and the conflicts that usually appear in any joint family. The beauty of the novel is in giving a balanced view of the troubles, pains, joys and jublations experienced by every member in the joint family. ManjuKapur's *Home* transits from the old generation to the new, from the village to the city, from the old business strategies to the new marketing techniques and from the old concept of a joint family to the new concept of an extended family. The novelist thus glides the cultural heritage of the traditional Indian joint family system to the safe valley of a modern joint family. She has succeeded in bringing forward the concept of a traditional joint family system to the new cultural context.

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## Indian Literature as an Expression of Indian Tradition and Culture

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**Abstract:** *Culture implies an integrated personality and neither time nor eternity can be left out of it. The cultured man reconciles the universal with the particular and the claims of time with the claims of eternity. "If European civilization is tending to transform old native civilization in Asia and Africa, the old native civilization of Asia, as W.B.Yeats foresaw, is tending to beget on Europe a new spiritual era in the West. This is how a global culture may come into its own, gathering together the best that has been felt, thought and done in different parts of the world. In Indian soil the pattern of the world culture of tomorrow is on the anvil for being fashioned in all its unity and complexity".*

*Culture is no doubt, a comprehensive term. It is well known that the anthropologists, who claim to have culture as their special field of study, are themselves not agreed on the connotation of the word. Anthropologists like Weber and MacIver are inclined to make a distinction between culture and civilization, restricting civilization to science and technology and culture to philosophy, religion, and the arts. But, one of the well renowned critics Kroeber uses the word "culture" as the customary term applicable alike to high or low products of a society. Civilization is used as term for the larger and richer cultures, carrying an overtone of high development of a specific society*

*Culture implies the pursuit of perfection in all walks of life. If culture is the pursuit of perfection, it stands for perfection in purity of thought, feeling as well as deed. A cultured man is the integrated man. He is not divided within himself and against himself. He has overcome this self-division. His words belie his deeds and his thoughts and his feelings. Culture, therefore, consist in a harmonious and balanced cultivation of all the faculties in man: intellect and emotion, intuition and sense perception, flesh as well as spirit.*

**Key Words:** *Indian Literature, expression, tradition, culture, perfection, civilization.*

Speaking of Indian Literature, one has to think of European literature as a parallel rather than of English, French, or German literature. For we are dealing here with a literature some of whose constituents, like Tamil or Kannada literature, go back to the beginnings of the Christian era. Indeed, Tamil dates back earlier than the Christian era itself. The prakrits prevailed over Sanskrit eventually owing to the impetus given to them by the Buddha and Mahavira and they became the progenitors of many of the modern Indian languages which can claim a literary ancestry more than a thousand years old, Sanskrit, Persian, Arabic, and English during the period of the British connection became the seminal languages that influenced the regional literatures what Greek and Latin have been to European literature. All modern Indian languages are national languages. But they are the vehicles of only one literature-the national literature of India. Sanskrit, Persian, and English have also been the official languages of Indian during their own periods and Indian literature was and is being transmitted through these languages too.

Though Indian literature can be compared only to European literature because of its composite character, it can, in another sense, be compared to any individual component of it. This is so because the Republic of India is one country like the United Kingdom, France, Germany, or the USA. It is composite and harmony at the same time, like Russia. It is true that the Indian literature at the same time, like Russia. It is true that the Indian literature that came after the European Renaissance is not so well developed as European literature, because the middle ages lingered on in India almost till the beginning of the nineteenth century. But the modern Indian languages have been the vehicles of a pre-Renaissance literature that is as full of vitality as the literature of that period in any other country.

The concept of a national literature is part of current critical parlance and so are the concepts of comparative and world literature. I shall concentrate here on the Indianness of Indian literature or the characteristics of Indian literature as the literature of the Indian people.

We may remember in this connection that certain critical opinions are expressed now and then which point to such distinctive traits. For example, Keats has been described by some critics as a pagan or Greek born out of his time. Many of us are also inclined to think that poets like Keats and Shelley appeal more than other English poets to the Indian mind. There is a certain amount of the reality and idealism about their poetry which seems to be very much akin to the Indian manner. It should be possible for us to investigate what we mean when we institute comparisons of this kind.

The Aryan and the Dravidian are the two major races that have contributed greatly to the making of the Indian people. The Semitic and other elements came in later and had their own contribution to make. Indian literature represents the hopes and aspirations of this multi-racial community called the Indian people. Their

approach to reality was marked by certain distinctive attitudes. The early Indian people generally believed in the primacy of spirit as, indeed, many Indians do even today. They affirmed the reconciliation of matter and spirit, earth, the mother, and heaven, the father, as Vivekananda, Gandhiji and Sri Aurobindo have done in modern times. They accepted life in its totality, the temporal and the eternal, the physical and the metaphysical, and sought to include them in a luminous and harmonious synthesis. This, at least, is what the Vedas and the Upanishads stand for. One sees this in the literature and art of the Mauryan and Gupta periods, in the literature that included Patanjali and Vatasyayana. They believed in reincarnation and metempsychosis, a belief that influenced the writings of Roman story-tellers like Ovid. Their mythopoeic imagination was responsible for glorious myths like the churning of the ocean and the love of Shiva and Parvati, Upanishadic parables like those of Satyakama and Nachiketas and early legends like those of Savitri and Damayanti. Heroic characters like Ravana might border on fantasy. But personages like Rama and Sita, Laxmana, Arjun and Draupadi were cast in an archetypal heroic mould that nothing could surpass. There were lovely symbol, *Agni* or fire, symbolizing upward human aspiration, *Usha*, spiritual dawn and the dawn of day, and the Upanishadic pair of birds one of which is a detached spectator and the other an active participant in the cosmic scene. All these are only a fraction of the rich legacy that the Aryo-Dravidian imagination conferred on mankind through a distinctive literature.

The doctrine of *Maya* or illusion, propounded by Shankara and later emphasized in various directions led to the general impression that prevails outside India, suggesting that the Indian outlook on life is otherworldly. Mayavad might have had some such effect on some sections of people in India during the Middle Ages. But this is not Indian Philosophy as it can be gleaned from the Vedas and the Upanishads.

The commingling of Semitic and other races with the Aryo Dravidian people at a later date produced a new language and a new literature: Urdu and the mystical treatises written by the medieval Sufi saints. The British or the European impact brought in a number of new developments in the physical and social sciences of India and new forces and factors like democracy, social justice, and technology. These affected the literature produced in all the Indian languages and the British inspect was responsible for a new Indian literature, Indo-Anglican literature.

The distinctiveness of the Indian setting left its own impress on Indian literature. If Venus is the morning and evening star in European poetry and is frequently written about, Indian poetry speaks of the Pleiades known as the Saptarshi Manadala. The Pleiades caught the imagination of the early Indian poets and a newly married Hindu couple on their wedding night is expected to see the Arundhati star in that constellation. Shelley describes the moon as “the orbbed maiden with white fire laden”. The moon struck the European imagination as a lady. But Indian poetry speaks of the moon in the masculine with the star called *Rohini* as his consort. Speaking of birds, it is not the albatross, the nightingale, or the *bulbul* that early Indian poets spoke of. These came later. Their lyric raptures are aroused by the kokil, the Cagle, the peacock, and the swan. The swan or *hamsa* becomes famous in Indian literature as the symbol of the soul. For example, Sri Rama Krishna was known as “Paramahamsa”, the surpassing or transcendental self. The eagle was supposed to carry god Vishnu on its back. Shyena or the hawk plays a symbolic role in vedic poetry. Similarly, the airavat or white elephant is Indra’s favourite, and vrishabha or the ox is the favourite animal of Shiva. The cow was regarded sacred by the Hindus and the lamb joined it in its sacredness when Christianity came to India. As for trees, it is the aswatha, the mango, the deodar, and the sandalwood tree that are famous in early Indian poetry. The parijat tree and the tulsi plant also developed their own legendary associations. The cleaner was introduced by the Mughals and the maple, the poplar and the oak came in with the British. The lotus, the Champak and the jasmine were flowers loved by early Indian poets. The rose came in with Muslim rulers and the pansy, the daffodil, the poppy and other flowers when the British had settled down to rule India. The Himalayas have moved Indian poets to raptures and Kalidasa has spoken of the Himalayan range as the measuring rod of the earth. The Himalayan and Dandakaranya forests have rich legendary association in Indian poetry. It was the Mughals who made gardens like those in Kashmir, the haunt and theme of poets. The beauty of summer hill-stations entered Indian literature only after the advent of the British. The summer heat of tropical plains in India and the cycle of seasons have been described beautifully by Kalidasa and other poets.

The Indian poets also described gloriously ancient cities like Pataliputra, Ujjain, and Madura and the late medieval cities like Vijayanagara, Delhi, and Jaipur. Cities like Bombay and Chandigarh are described in modern Indian writings.

The great Indian rivers like the Ganges, the Jamuna, and the Kaveri have been celebrated by poets in moving poetry. The Ganga is, above all, the sacred its counterpart in the Milky Way and the subterranean river in the underworld of Hindu mythology. Indian poetry from very early times to Raja Rao’s *The Serpant* and the *Rope* has been full of it and even fastidious poets like T.S.Eliot have invoked it effectively in English poetry.

One has also to remember in this connection the new environment created by industrialization. Factories of various kinds, railway trains, ships, and aero-planes are as much a part of the Indian scene today as of the European. Space exploration is as yet an American or Russian venture. But the world is fast becoming



one in these matters and modern Indian writers have not hesitated to exploit this fact for their lyric effusion and imagery.

Human society is as much a part of the environment of poets as Nature is. The Indian writer has responded to the changing panorama of human society from very early days. The Vedas contain a mention of fierce tribal wars. Valmiki and Vyasa have made the heroic age in India famous throughout the world by their great epics. The Mauryan, Gupta, and Harsha periods have left their mark over Sanskrit poetry, drama and prose. This tradition of mirroring the political and social history of the times was taken up later by poets in the regional languages. The palace intrigues in the court of Kashmir kings have been presented in historical perspective by Kalhana in Sanskrit and there are many pictures of the life in feudal Indian society by medieval writers in various Indian languages. New movements like democracy, nationalism, humanism, and socialism have been changing Indian society. Modern poetry, drama, and fiction give powerful pictures of these transitions. From the agricultural society of early times, as reflected in the Vedas, to the highly literate sophisticated atmosphere in a machine tools factory, Indian literature has held up the mirror to Indian society in all its changing contours and patterns. For example, when the Europeans appeared on the Indian scene in their outlandish dress, Indian poets were not slow in registering their arrival. They spoke of strangers who wore "bodies" for their feet. This was how the socks that Europeans wore struck them.

Indian literature has thus been the mirror held up faithfully to the life of the Indian people with their diverse racial affinities, religions and manners. There are numerous collections of satirical stories centering on rulers, religious men, merchants, soldiers, and the like. Collections of profane stories like Boccaccio's *De Cameron* are not wanting. Indeed, the tradition of such stories might as well be regarded as having started very early in India, and then proceeded towards Europe. Historical moments in the life people have been presented with all their tragedy, pathos, and grandeur from time to time. The historical encounters of Alexander and Porus, Prithvi Raj and Mahmud Ghuri, Babar and Rana Sangram and of Ram Raya of Vijayanagar and the confederacy of the southern Muslim kingdoms have haunted the Indian imagination and have been presented in drama, fiction, and verse. Crucial moments in the history of the nation, like the Dandi March of Gandhi which shook the very foundations of the British Empire and the tragic partition of India, have been sung about by distinguished poets as well as folk balladists.

India, which is the biggest democracy in the world and has stood its ground, as has been proved abundantly in the recent elections to Parliament, is yet the least literate among the democracies of the world. Democracy as a way of life has yet to strike root. No doubt there has been a galaxy of great men in recent years. But how do a few tall pines and oaks count in a forest of furze and briar? It is the dumb millions that matter and they are inarticulate, if not ineffective, because of our power-seekers and the infiltration of politics into all walks of life. China, with its proletarian dictatorship has whipped up a cultural revolution. We have embarked on a much greater experiment: the democratization of the whole of Indian society. And, naturally, this takes time.

Lastly, we are the heirs of one of the greatest cultures the oldest living culture in the world. And yet we were busy learning our first elementary lessons in science, technology, and secularism from the West. There is a great deal of interest abroad in the Indian heritage. It will continue to live in many museums and libraries even if we imagine that it will be supplanted in India. But the exact balance between the East and West has yet to be struck by singling out those factors which make for national acceptance, unlike Japan where this has been achieved in some measure. The result is that this clash of cultures has given rise in India to ideologies that oscillate all the way from mysticism to Maoism. We are living in a welter of ideologies.

This is the four-fold paradox of contemporary India, tragic and comic, moving us now to tears and now to side-splitting laughter. If we imagine an Indian writer with an Olympian vision and a multi-dimensional genius, one whose soul is more comprehensive than even of Shakespeare, how would he be writing today?

He would describe the sublimity of Nature in India—her Himalayan peaks, great historic rivers, rolling plains and picturesque forests, and the pageantry that the cycle of seasons projects against this background from time of time. Contrasting with this, he would paint grim pictures of the poverty and ignorance that enchain a great people, the squalor and misery that is India. He would move his passionate plea for action, instantaneous action to wipe out these evils and usher in a new economic order.

Changing his key, in another mood, he would harp, in an impassioned strain, on the need for reason and sanity, for secular integration. He would give fascinating pictures of tribal life, sing to folk tunes like Burns, describe the tensions suffered by the first generation learners, the conflict between Brahmin and neo-Buddhist, analyze Hindu-Muslim riots, unveil the agony of the dying feudal and middle class that are living and partly living, pull the legs of politicians and the new rich, paint and ghastly life of cities where necessity is supreme and the broken life of the countryside which was a paradise of peace some decades ago, lay bare the edge of rivalry between state and state or take a last lingering look at colonialism and the white sahib of yesterday.

In a graver a more devastating mood, the Olympian writer would turn his gaze full on the political life in the country and speak of the democracy that is yet to come of age. He would strike an ethical note and discourse on the collapse of moral values and the climate of corruption and jobbery. He would caricature ministers and parliamentarians, defectors and presidents of municipalities, district local boards and Panchayats.

He would, as T.P. Kaliasam did, speak of some rule in a home where there is only one master and that is the mistress and the rule that no two municipal councilors should live in the same street so that there will be as many streets lit municipally as there are councilors. He would reveal the impact of great men and women of the Indian Renaissance in his novels and plays. He would sing the chorus of the unemployed, unemployable millions and expose the tragedy of our education-the circus of Saraswati crowded with memorizing animals and mummies. He would dwell on the conflict of generations and the breath-taking fun of fast-changing fashions.

In a more serene moment, the Indian writer with an Olympian vision would contemplate the tragic-comic panorama that is India-the glory, jest, and riddle of the world. He would escape into a world of fantasy and dream, dig up the past in historical romances, turn pessimist, optimist, cynic, surrealist or existentialist and gambol in the theatre of the Absurd. Or he would build up a new theory of human evolution and the millennium. He would explore his own religious tradition and rebel against it even while hugging it.

As for form, the contemporary Indian writer experiments with a number of diseases, mannerisms and modes of expression. He has a touch of literary diarrhea like the romantic or literary constipation like the modernist. Or he takes up a classical literary form like the epic and hammers it into a new shape like Sri Aurobindo. He can be obsessed with folk tunes or folk are-forms. He can float on the stream of consciousness or forge an anti-novel out of sheer cussedness. He can afford to be amorphous or revel in the condition of literary protoplasm.

This, then, is the Indian writer who holds the literary fort, and conditions the literary scene today. Imagine the magic mirror of this Olympian vision splintered into a million fragments and that will give a good idea of the contemporary republic of letters in India. The magic consists in the smoothening of contours in the mirror and in the attempt to hint at solutions. As Indian democracy slowly takes shape, the writer may deal with more radiant themes, groping his way towards national art-forms.

But this does not mean that there is no glory in his vision of the four-fold paradox. Even as he writes, he is an active participant in a great aesthetic adventure, one of untold significance for the future of the human race. For it is here, on Indian soil, that the pattern of the world culture of tomorrow is on the anvil for being fashioned in all its unity and complexity.

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## Contextualization of Language and Culture in Rajam Krishnan's Novel *Kurinchi Then*

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**Abstract:** Literature registers the cultural manifestations of the contemporary Society. Literary scholars through their works lucidly reveal the Tradition and Practice of a particular society. Rajam Krishnan, an eminent writer of Tamil Nadu vividly portrays the colonial and Post colonial Indian society in the novel 'Kurinchi Then' which was published at first as serial story in a Tamil periodical "Kalaimagal", later was published as complete novel by Dhagam publication in the year 1963. She has published more than forty novels and several thought-provoking articles, travelogues dealing with social issues that affect culture and society of India.

This novel depicts the trials and tribulations faced by the tribal community living in the hills of Nilgris in Ooty, Tamil Nadu. Using the blossoming of Kurinchi as a motif for the passage of time, Rajam Krishnan portrays the cultural changes that occur in the tribal society with the advent of modern technology. The novel further reveals how the old and the young generation perceive and react to such changes. Nature and its significant role in the lives of the people of the tribal community is the theme of the novel. The novelist visited the place and lived with the tribes to gain first-hand experience to document their life and culture. Thus this novel certainly occupies a firm place in Tamil Literature. The novel also accentuates the need to eliminate caste and class discrimination for better society.

**Key words:** Culture, transition, tribes, society, nature.

### Significance of the title:

The title of the novel implicitly reveals the gist of the novel. The title *Kurinchi Then* refers to the culture of a tribal society living in Nilgris hills. *Kurinchi* in tamil language refers to hills and its surrounding area. Hence the readers could guess the theme of the novel. The tamil term 'then' refers to nectar of Kucinich. The theme symbolizes wilderness, rustic and unadulterated life of the tribes. *Kurinchi* also refers to a rare flower that blooms once in twelve years in the hills of nilgries. Hence the blossoming of kurinchi is calculated for passage of time by the tribes.

### Language and culture:

"Among science, words are not only the most numerous and important for human communication but also the only ones capable of denoting other sign.... Words transform object(water, bread, wine) into sacraments, turning them into symbols or visible verb" (Formigari 37).

Words are deeply embedded in culture and exploring language with reference to culture is tantamount to study how they refer to things and events. The language of the tribes indicates their proximity to nature and the language used for narration is primarily rustic contextualizing the society.

The novel encompasses three generations and duly unveils the changes that occur in the tribal community along with the passage of time. Jogi, the protagonist of the novel lived with his family in a hamlet 'Maragatha Hatti', at Nilgiris hills, Ooty. The very name *maragatha* in Tamil signifies a gem stone emerald which emits green rays. The name is relevant to the subject as the hilly region in blanked with fertile vegetation.

The name of the place signifies the life of the tribes closely associated with nature. Names play a vital role in contextualizing a subject or theme of a literary work. Greek philosophers of 6<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> centuries B.C., laid a foundation for a question that was to be debated to research whether men are guided by nature and take into account the essence of things in giving names, or derive them instead from usage according to arbitrary conventions. The language of the tribes refered in the novel opens up new avenues for the research scholars to explore its origin. On critiquing the philosophy of language *Lia Formigari*, asserts that names do indeed serve to designate things, but to do this they must first distinguish them according to their essence, in other words, classify and categories them.

Hence while exploring a text, analyzing the language with reference to its cultural context is an essential task for the research scholar. The terms like *Hethappa*, *Hatti* are of Kanada origin. Edger Thurston observes that the name of *Badaga* or *vadugan* means Northener who are believed to be the descendents of canrese of colonists from migrated to Nilgris Hills in the 17<sup>th</sup> century owing to famine, political turmoil of local oppression.

Jogi's mother dreams of a girl escaping from soldiers and taking shelter in Nanchappa temple refers to a similar episode believed to be happened during the reign of Tipu Sultan. Hence the history of the cultural background of Badaga community could be traced.

The novel projects two families with contradicting ideologies. The theme debates between the traditional values and modern culture. Lingaiya, a farmer clings to traditions and teachers cultural values to his only Jogi. Kariamalla, from a rich and powerful family background easily adapts to the socio cultural changes of postcolonial india. His only son Krishnan, a freedom fighter during the colonial rule becomes an engineer in Indian government department, envisages his village being illuminated with electricity. He represents the youth of modern india whereas Jogi represents the tribal community that worship nature keen to protect its cultural heritage and values.

Jogi, as a responsible son of the family shoulders not only the responsibility of his family but also his paternal uncle Mathan's family. Mathan is a gifted singer but indulges himself in wine, music and dance. It is left to Lingaiya, his younger brother to take care of his family. One of the remarkable characters of this novel is Rangan, the elder son of Mathan. He is weak and harbours strong jealousy towards Jogi.

In the culture of tribes 'milking the cow' is an auspicious occasion where the villagers are given a grand feast. This feast is celebrated to inform their fellow neighbours their son has become matured enough to milk the cow and bear the family responsibility. Linjaiya who loves both his son and nephew arranges a grand feast for Rangan. But Rangan who lacks confidence to face the family responsibility runs away and Jogi becomes the head of the family.

The culture of tribes is further illuminated through the marriage of Rangan and Paru. Rangan picks up some common English words and imitates western culture. This lucidly reveals the influence of English language in postcolonial Indian society where people are keen to imitate Western culture. Paru's brother is impressed by Rangan's English feels that he is the suitable bridegroom for Paru. The mutual attraction between Krishnan and Paru dies at a budding stage. Realizing Paru's love for Krishnan, Paru's father conducts a competition with a condition that one that lifts the circular stone kept in front of the *Hethappaa* temple would be eligible to wed Paru. Rangan wins the competition and marries Paru.

Jogi visits *kurumbar* who is believed to be the messengers of god and prays for Krishnan and Paru. He collects holy root from Kurumbar and advises Paru to keep it safe if her wishes to be fulfilled. The reference to kurumbar exemplifies the beliefs of the tribes. The novel further advocates the position of women in the *Badaga* community. Women enjoy certain rights than urban women, for example a woman has a right to divorce if she is harassed by her husband and widow marriage is common among them. Unable to bear the unscrupulous behavior of Rangan, Paru takes shelter at Jogi's house and becomes a surrogate mother to Jogi's son Nanjan. Jogi treats Paru as his own sister and their unadulterated relationship vividly establishes Jogi's moral values.

### Conclusion:

The final part of the novel duly records the socio cultural environment of the village. This part reflects Marxist ideology of a society that is based on economic construction where individuals are no longer appearing to one another as persons but as economic units. Modern commercial world focuses on religion on money worship where humans have become product of changing circumstances.

"The materialistic doctrine that man are product of circumstances and upbringing .... Changed men are products of other circumstances and changed upbringing, forgets that it is men that change circumstances and that the educator[sic] himself needs educating". (Marx, 70)

Moral values and significance of nature wane from the tribal society owing to socio political change. Commercialization creeps through the society and people become materialistic. However the novel asserts the fact that changes are inevitable.

Jogi and Paru are forced to sell their precious land to the government for the development of the village school. The villages become aware of the importance of education and make sincere efforts to educate their children. Nanjan is one among educated youths of their village. Jogi wishes his son to work in his land which becomes an impossible task for an educated youth like Nanjan. Jogi's wrath towards Krishnan aggravates as he suspects that he is responsible for the changes that occur in the village. Jogi aggrieves for their land being held by the government for the village development. Though it is for a noble cause, their livelihood has been robbed and hence bemoans, "had the quality of life been inferior before progress made inroads to Hatti? Had there been difference between rich and the poor? Were they keen to satiate their hunger while others starve? Were they mute spectators to the adversities of their fellow neighbors? What had destroyed their magnanimity? Hadn't the money from tea and potato destroyed it? Hadn't the fashion of wearing shirt and trousers destroyed it? Hadn't the greed for gold and silk destroyed it?" (277-278)

Jogi's reaction to cultural transition confirms the feelings of the orthodox people living in the village. When Nanjan questions about Jogi's resistance to modern changes and he answers indignantly, "could they provide food and clothing to many people? They do nothing but rob our only lively livelihood. The job opportunities are for educated youths like you. They pierce the land and disgrace our mother earth. Can they compensate our sacred land with money? Can money be equated with land?" (336)

Jogi's words reflect the agony and helplessness of the tribes belonging to older generation. The reason is, **Tribal land to enter open market** hit the headlines of DNA news daily echoes this similar sentiment, tribal leader and farmer minister Padmaker Valvi opposed to the move and claimed it would go against the interests of

asivasis, “it is the responsibility of the government tribal land.... tribals have been exploited till now, he said, adding that land is closely related to the culture and history of tribals”

Paru’s love for black soil and the orange tree reveals the tribal communities sentiments of land and nature. Her subsequent death while plucking weeds in her favorite black soil illuminates the significant role of land played in lives of the tribal community. The episode of Nanjan’s marriage with Krishanan’s daughter Vijaya indicates the novelist’s dream of casteless and classless society.

In the end Jogi is amazed to see his village being illuminated with electric bulbs and he hopes for a bright future of the village. The novel concludes with a hope as light dispels darkness, the education of tribal youths would certainly eradicate ignorance.

Trajectories of social consciousness of the author are evident in this novel. Selected passages are translated from Tamil (source language) to English (target language) for better understanding. The novel projects different facets of the tribal community, their doubts and hopes to the changes occur in their society are presented in realistic environment. Her vigorous pleas for the immediate emancipation of the oppressed prove her social consciousness. Her genuine and hard-hitting portrayal of life and culture of the marginalized sections of India stems her from first-hand experience. Her priceless contribution to Tamil literature would always be acknowledged by her readers.

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## Cultural Myths – An Encomium on Folklore and Tradition

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**Abstract:** *Folklore consists of oral history, tall tales and popular beliefs of a culture. ElphinstoneDayrell's 'Folkstories from South Nigeria' is one of the important folklore collections of African Literature. These tales can be categorized under folk narratives and these bring out the African culture blended with their beliefs and wisdom. Animal fables and their excellent characterization make this folklore enjoyable as well as thought-provoking. These stories are similar to 'fairy tales' as they portray rare adventures and fancy lands. This folklore presents us the hereditary names, indigenous cultures, supernatural elements, talking animals, moralities, human follies and nature in a dramatic way. The best part of this work is the combination of good humour and imagination. The ancient myths are related with the cultural beliefs, manners and customs of these tribes. The four major divisions of folklore- artifacts, oral tradition, culture and rituals are well focused in the narrative package of these tales.*

**Keywords:** *Folklore, animal fables of Nigeria, culture, customs, rituals, African folk stories.*

### Introduction

Folklore includes legends, oral history, proverbs, music, jokes and popular beliefs. The study of folklore is called folkloristics. Folklore is normally divided into artifacts, oral tradition, culture and rituals. Folklore has practical elements fused with religious, mythical and social principles. Traditional narrative stories are mostly considered as folklores. The archetypes of mind like the terrible mother, the witch, the scapegoat are also portrayed which evoke emotional response. The genres of folklore are Ballads, Archetypes, Epic Poetry, Festivals, Folk art, Folk belief, Folk magic, Folk poetry, Riddle and Superstition.

"Folk stories from Southern Nigeria" by ElphinstoneDayrell is one of the most important collections of African folklore. These folk stories are creative and adventurous. This book has collection of 25 folkstories which brings the culture through the animal characters. These tales can be categorized under folk narratives and these bring out the African culture blended with their beliefs and wisdom. Animal fables and their excellent characterization make this folklore enjoyable as well as thought-provoking. These stories are similar to 'fairy tales' as they portray rare adventures and fancy lands. This folklore presents us the hereditary names, indigenous cultures, supernatural elements, talking animals, moralities, human follies and nature in a dramatic way. The best part of this work is the combination of good humour and imagination. The ancient myths are related with the cultural beliefs, manners and customs of these tribes.

Cultural myths are pieces of fiction connected with a culture, psychology, social customs and ideals of society. These myths reflect the beliefs and values of a community and are still a significant part of daily life. These folk stories feature tricksters who bring changes and quarrels. Though animal tricksters like tortoise and hare are small and helpless, they trick large animals like elephants and hippopotamus and thus they outwit bigger animals. The cultural myths and beliefs are presented with the following folk stories.

#### The Tortoise with a Pretty Daughter

This story narrates a king who could not make Ekpenyon, his son happy as the latter did not find any of his fifty wives beautiful. The king was very angry and ordered that if any girl finds favour in prince's eyes, she would be killed along with her parents. The prince found Adet, the tortoise girl and he was entranced in her beauty. Though the king was angry knowing this, he was stunned at the beauty of Adet and thus annulled the law. Love wounds of the prince inflamed his heart to persevere in the attempt of winning his love. The ancient fashion of animal parentage is presented. The tortoise is said to have been the wisest of all men and animals. The moral of the story hints possessing beautiful daughters in poverty could bring wealth and riches one day when the king's son falls in love with the pretty girl.

#### The Fattening House

The important tradition of the Efik Community is portrayed here. The first great event in the life of a girl of this community is her entrance into the "Fattening House". A room is set apart in the home of the parents and daughters are secluded when they undergo the process of fattening up. This process is carried out for the wellbeing of the adolescent girls. They are not given any work but are fed up well with healthy food items. They are not allowed to go outside the separated rooms. Thus the girls of Efik community are prepared from maidenhood to marriage. Before a maid steps into the fattening room, a sacrifice is offered to the deity and the following prayer is made.

“Behold! Here comes your child who is about to enter the Fattening-house. Protect her that no evil thing may have power to harm her while she dwells therein.” (Talbot, 77)

### **The Woman with Two skins**

This story resembled a fairy tale where Adiaha, the spider’s daughter had a beautiful skin underneath an ugly skin. The head wife of the king was jealous over Adiaha as she bore the first son to the king. The good versus bad archetype is employed throughout the story. The clash between the tolerance and jealousy was effectively drawn from the female characters of this story. Though goodness was tricked with cultural beliefs of medicine to make the king forget Adiaha, her patience was rewarded in the end of the story. The head wife was also punished according to the ecclesiastical arm of the Egbos. She is thoroughly flogged; burnt alive and her ashes were thrown in the river.

### **The King’s Magic Drum**

Efriam Duke was an ancient king of Calabar. This king was not fond of wars and he retained peace with other kings through his magical drum. Whenever any king declared war, he would invite him for a sumptuous dinner beating the drum. The royal food items are mentioned as fish, foo-foo, palm-oil chop, soup, cooked yams and ocos and palm wine. The king knew if he walked over the stick, the food produced by magic drum not only gets spoiled but also three hundred Egbo men appear, whip and beat the owner of the drum.

The rising point of the story is when the tortoise trickily obtained the magic drum of the king. The tortoise who did not know the bad consequences of the magic drum stepped over the stick one day. He and his family were beaten by the Egbo men. In turn for revenge, he invited his people second time for the dinner and they were thoroughly beaten this time. The king felt pitiful for the tortoise and offered a foo-foo tree exchanging the magic drum. That tree dropped soup every day. Even that tree did not stay with him as the jealous son of tortoise collected much food breaking the JuJu. The tree is hidden now and they made their home under the prickly tree as they did not know the way to get food. The universal patterns of human nature were beautifully represented in this story. The greedy behaviour of tortoise and the son is the reason of their fall.

### **Jujus and food**

JuJu refers to the objects and spells used as a part of witchcraft in traditional West African religions. Jujus are of two kinds-good and bad. The good prospects are termed as ‘ndemn’ by Efiks, while the bad ones are termed as ‘mbiam’. Jujus make the stories interesting as they bring shifts in the stories. Greed corrupts a person, his character and his surroundings. Food plays a central role in all the rituals such as marriage or naming ceremony. Food by this community is preferred eating by hands. This story has a reference to foo-foo which is a staple food made of flour from cassava plant. Foo-foo is eaten with fingers dipping the small ball in soup or sauce.

### **Why the Bat flies by Night**

A bush rat called Oyot had a friend Emiong, the bat. The bat failed to be a faithful friend and he was jealous of the bush rat. The bat lied that he boiled himself in the soup which he prepared every day and thus the soup tasted strong and good. Believing the words of the bat, the bush rat jumped in to the boiling water and lost his life. When it was reported to the king, the bat was searched. Expecting the trouble the bat hid itself in to a bush. The bat changed his habits and thus came out to feed only during night. This is a fanciful story of why bats have a nocturnal lifestyle. Bats are used in voodoo worship in parts of Africa even today. In few cultures, bats are symbols of happiness, demon preventers, fortune, serenity, virtue and long life. They are also portrayed as symbols of the netherworld where people live in the shadows of obscurity.

### **The Disobedient Daughter who Married a Skull**

EffiongEdem had a fine-looking daughter who refused all offers of marriage as she wanted to marry the best-looking man in the country. As most of the men their parents fixed are old and ugly, she disobeyed her parents. The skull in the spirit land grew a desire to possess her when he heard the beauty of Afiong, the Calabar virgin. One lent him a good head, other a body and the third gave him strong arms and the fourth offered him a fine pair of legs. The virgin fell in love with this skull and he married her too. When they stepped in to the spirit land, all the lenders demanded their parts and the ugly skull shocked Afiong. As the new bride was affectionate towards the skull’s mother, she wanted to send her home. First, a JuJu was made which brought a violent tornado and so the mother refused to send this soft, pretty woman. Next, the gentle breeze was blown which deposited Afiong at her home. Afiong was grateful remembering the promise made to the old mother of skull that she will never disobey her parents.

Once the girl was taken to the spirit land, EffiongEdem enquired his JuJu man about his daughter. The JuJu man cast his lots and found that Edem’s daughter will be surely killed as the groom belonged to the spirit land. The parents were worried and they were happy when they got Afiong back. This community never believes in giving daughters to strangers in the bond of marriage. The story concludes when the head chief of the town passed a law that daughters of their community should never be married to strangers.

### **The Woman, the Ape, and the Child**

OkunArchibong, a hunter and the slave of King Archibong married a slave woman of a Duke called Nkoyo and they had a son later. When her husband left the home for hunting, Nkoyocarried the four months old child to the farm. A big ape used to take care of the baby, when Nkoyo was busy clearing the ground for yams. EffiongEdem, the other hunter was jealous as Nokyo never accepted his love and advances even in the absence of her husband. He poisoned the mind of Okun that his wife was seen with a big ape. When Archibong shot the ape, the limbs of child were torn by the angry ape. He also killed his wife. This led to a war between the men of duke and men of King Archibong. Later the false reports of Edem were found and he was beheaded for his cunning tricks. A law was also passed that the slaves from two different tribes should not be married as they may lead to fighting.

### **The Story of the Lightning and the Thunder**

In this story, the thunder was an old mother sheep and the lightning, her son was a ram. The king made them lived on the earth far from other people's houses. The ram showed his anger destroying things and burning houses. Whenever he destroyed things, his mother shouted at him in a loud voice not to damage any more. The people who could not bear the lightning's destruction, complained to the king. Hence the king banished them from the earth and they live in the sky now. Still the lightning is found angry and sometimes it causes damage and the thunder is heard aloud rebuking her son.

### **Why Dead People are Buried**

The creator of the world felt sorry whenever anyone died on the earth. So he sent the dog, his head messenger to inform the people that the dead body would become alive again when it was placed on a compound and wood ashes were thrown on it. The dog who travelled forgot the message when he saw a bone with meat in an old woman's home. The dog ate well and slept off. As the creator did not find the dog returning, he sent the sheep to the earth. The sheep was foolish and hungry and he could not remember the exact message. He told people that the creator had asked them to bury the dead people underneath the ground. When the dog remembered his message and conveyed to the people, they did not believe his words. Thus the dead bodies are buried till today. The dogs are not trusted as good messengers as they can be distracted by bones at any time.

### **Of the Fat Woman who Melted Away**

There was a fat woman who was made of oil. Many people wanted to marry her, but her mother refused as she would melt away in the sun. At last, a man married her promising that she would not be sent to any work. In the absence of her husband, the other wife was jealous of this fat woman and rebuked her to work in the land. The fat woman agreed as she could not bear her nagging. When she went out in the sun to work, she melted away leaving her big toe covered with a leaf. Her sister found that and placed the toe in a pot of water which will bring the fat woman alive after three months. The jealous wife was taken back to her parents and they sold her as a slave. Whenever a wife behaves very badly, she is returned to her parents as a custom. The girl is sold as a slave and that money is reimbursed to the husband for his dowry he paid when he married the girl.

### **Conclusion**

These Animal fables teach us a lesson with a moral. Joseph Jacobs defined the fables as "a short, humorous, allegorical tale, in which animals act in such a way as to illustrate a simple moral truth or inculcate a wise maxim" (Nutt,204). All fables do not bring a specific moral point but often with maxims of universal interpretation. It is a literary genre which is used to exemplify virtuous and moral instructions. These folk stories praise the tradition of a community conveying their customs, beliefs and rituals. These are vehicles of instruction which bring the philosophies and sayings in the mouths of domesticated and wild animals.

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## Man's Image as God: A Thematic Study of Zora Neale Hurston's *Moses, Man of the Mountain*

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**Abstract:** Zora Neale Hurston is one of the illustrious novelists of Afro-American Literature. She is a well-renowned versatile writer; certainly emerged as a foremost novelist with black folk culture of Africa. She contributed much for the development African-American Literature. Zora Neale Hurston is the best known as a major contributor to the Harlem Renaissance literature of the 1920's. Not only was she a major contributor, but "also she did much to characterize the style and temperament of the period; indeed, she is often referred to as the most colorful figure of the Harlem Renaissance. During the 1930's, Hurston produced three novels, all of them are a good evidences for her creative genius, as well as two collections of folklore, the fruits of her training in anthropology and her many years of fieldwork. It is Hurston's interest in preserving the culture of the black Africans that remains among her most valuable contributions. Not only did she collect and preserve folklore outright, but also she used folklore, native drama, and the black idiom and dialect in most of her fiction. Zora Neale Hurston makes it clear from the title of her novel, *Moses, Man of the Mountain*, Which her retelling of Exodus centers on Moses. Although Moses is also a main character in the original version of Exodus from *The Bible*, God is the most important character. God is the source of power for the Israelites and the plot driver; Moses goes along for the ride as God's assistant. Hurston's Moses functions like the figure worshipped in Africa that she mentions in her Introduction to the novel. Hurston's Moses contains greater powers than the Old Testament Moses that do not originate from God. He proves himself to be both a mortal and a deity to the Israelites. She takes a social twist in her version of Exodus as well. Moses and the Israelite speak with an African American dialect. This stylistic choice takes the Hebrews out of a Christian context and places them in a relatable historical context. They take on an "authentic" character as a people, making Moses' job more problematic and therefore making his works more impressive. God becomes a minor character who has less effect on the movement of the plot than Moses. The story of Exodus takes on a different meaning in Hurston's version, one that expresses the trials and tribulations of escaping slavery through the character of the Israelites and the focus on Moses' power. In effect, she takes the story of Exodus and steals God's glory by giving it to a man.

**Key Words:** folk culture, folk lore, exodus.

Zora Neale Hurston is one of the illustrious novelists of Afro-American Literature. She is a well-renowned versatile writer; certainly emerged as a foremost novelist with black folk culture of Africa. She contributed much for the development African-American Literature. Zora Neale Hurston is the best known as a major contributor to the Harlem Renaissance literature of the 1920's. Not only was she a major contributor, but "also she did much to characterize the style and temperament of the period; indeed, she is often referred to as the most colorful figure of the Harlem Renaissance. During the 1930's, Hurston produced three novels, all of them are a good evidences for her creative genius, as well as two collections of folklore, the fruits of her training in anthropology and her many years of fieldwork. It is Hurston's interest in preserving the culture of the black Africans that remains among her most valuable contributions. Not only did she collect and preserve folklore outright, but also she used folklore, native drama, and the black idiom and dialect in most of her fiction. Zora Neale Hurston makes it clear from the title of her novel, *Moses, Man of the Mountain*, Which her retelling of Exodus centers on Moses. Although Moses is also a main character in the original version of Exodus from *The Bible*, God is the most important character. God is the source of power for the Israelites and the plot driver; Moses goes along for the ride as God's assistant. Hurston's Moses functions like the figure worshipped in Africa that she mentions in her Introduction to the novel. Hurston's Moses contains greater powers than the Old Testament Moses that do not originate from God. He proves himself to be both a mortal and a deity to the Israelites. She takes a social twist in her version of Exodus as well. Moses and the Israelite speak with an African American dialect. This stylistic choice takes the Hebrews out of a Christian context and places them in a relatable historical context. They take on an "authentic" character as a people, making Moses' job more problematic and therefore making his works more impressive. God becomes a minor character who has less effect on the movement of the plot than Moses. The story of Exodus takes on a different meaning in Hurston's version, one that expresses the trials and tribulations of escaping slavery through the character of the Israelites and the focus on Moses' power. In effect, she takes the story of Exodus and steals God's glory by giving it to a man.

Although Hurston focuses on Moses from her novel, *Moses, Man of the Mountain*, it still stands that God called Moses and asked him to deliver the Israelites from Slavery. Moses would not have made the journey back

into Egypt without God's calling. However, Jethro played an equal part in convincing Moses to take the journey. Jethro shows up so briefly in Bible version of Exodus and he might as well not be there. Hurston chooses instead to make Jethro an influence on Moses' life that is equal to God's. She strips more power from God's character in this way. Then, there is the matter of power itself. In the Bible's Exodus, all power comes from God. Moses receives his power directly from God – God splits the Red Sea, sends Plagues through Egypt, and kills Egypt's first born sons. God also determines the events of the plot because it is He that "hardens the heart of Pharaoh." In Hurston's Exodus, in keeping with God's minor character, God "leaves most of work to Moses." And, strangely enough, Moses seems to have acquired most of his supernatural skills not from God but from other, more worldly, sources "(117). During the first half of the novel, Moses learns his powers and searches himself for their source. Once he attains them, it is he that performs magical works in Egypt. Like the Bible's Exodus, he receives a powerful rod from God. Moses' most impressive power comes from that "Mighty Hand". The power in his right hand comes from within him, too. He proves this during the battle with Amalekites. When his strength wanes, he asks Aaron and Hur to prop up him up. He says, "Don't let my hands fall. Aaron, you and Hur We're holding up the world with these hands" (Hurston 211). Moses admits here to being in control not only of the battle, but of the outcome of the world.

The Israelites come to understand the power Moses has over the outcome of their lives. They make it clear that do not really believe in God, but in Moses. Miriam goes so far as to ask Moses' permission to die; she cannot do so unless he releases his hold on her. Moses asks her "Do you think that I am God, Miriam?" She replies, "Indeed, I don't know, Moses. That's what I have been trying to figure out for many years. Sometime I thought God's voice in the tabernacle sounded mighty much like yours. But ever since you punished me with leprosy, I knew you had power uncommon to man" (Hurston 263). Miriam acknowledges that she heard God's voice too, but that does not faze her, because she never saw God's power. She had seen and felt Moses' power, therefore she could really believe in him. She does not believe in God as a force in her life.

In fact, Moses and Jethro are the only two characters in the whole novel that claim they believe in God and feel it is right to follow him. The other characters do not acknowledge God, complain about him, or make it clear that they are following Moses. Joshua, who follows Moses up the mountain, comes very close to God. He did not go up to see God, but to take care of Moses. When he runs after Moses, people warn him that he could die. Joshua's response is "My boss man and leader went up there, didn't he" (Hurston 227)? He risks his life to be with Moses and does not spare a thought about being so near to God. Hurston gives us a few self-sacrificing, loyal followers of Moses, but not to God.

Since Moses is the most powerful, influential character in Hurston's novel, he really drives the plot. There are some major changes in the plot because of this. In Exodus, God spends many chapters handing down rules and laws for the Israelites to follow, apart from the Ten Commandments. Hurston gets rid of these rules completely. The "people" that Moses creates, has much less rigid responsibilities than the people of the Bible. Moses does not stress the Ten Commandments to the people in Hurston's novel, either. He only stresses one rule, which is to not worship false idols, such as the golden calf. There is no mention of Moses handing down these commandments to the Israelites as there are in the Bible. Instead, Moses focuses on the ability of the Israelites to stop living as slaves and begin functioning for themselves without a king. He learns that he cannot expect them to be perfect followers of God. He does not stress God's rules, even though God handed down fewer rules than there were in the Bible's Exodus. While he reflects on all he did in fifty years for the Israelites, he comes to this: "His dreams had in no way been completely fulfilled. He had meant to make a perfect people, free and just, noble and strong, that should be a light for the entire world and for time and eternity. He was not sure that he had succeeded. He had found out that no man may make another free. Freedom was something internal (282)".

At the end of the novel, delivering the Israelites from a mind-set of slavery consumes his mind. They have to be able to function without a king before they can purify themselves for God. The Exodus from the Bible does not leave you with this poignant lesson at all. By taking a chunk out of the plot that stresses being a perfect follower of God, Hurston leads us to this imperative detail about overcoming slavery that we miss in the Bible.

The end of the novel solidifies Moses' image as God. He has done everything he could as a mortal with non-mortal powers to bring the Israelites to freedom and to Canaan. When he goes up the mountain, he tells Joshua that "God calls me up there" (Hurston 281), meaning he might die on the mountain. He says this as if it were God who would ask him to die and bring him to Heaven. However, when Moses' death comes, he decides by himself to die and reversely calls on God. "Lord, your people are here." He took his rod in his right hand and lifted it and said "Farewell". Then he turned with a firm tread and descended the other side of the mountain and headed back over the years' (287-288).

It is unclear whether he dies right at this point or whether he simply leaves the mountain, but in any case, he would die without ever seeing the Israelites again. He makes the decision to leave or to die by himself. God has no choice in matter. This is Hurston's final shot of strength to Moses. The reader finishes with solid proof of Moses' power and hopes for the Israelites and none from God. Therefore, Moses ultimately becomes the God of

the Israelites, the figure who gave them the opportunity for freedom and led them to *the Promised Land*. Hurston gives us an Exodus of American Negro Slaves in which God is an afterthought.

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## Language and Culture in Aravind Adiga's *The White Tiger*.

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**Abstract:** Aravind Adiga is an Indian born Australian who travelled to Australia and Columbia. As a journalist and author, he received fame through the novel *The White Tiger* which also received Man Booker prize in the year 2008. Through this novel, he challenges about the true freedom of people in Indian society. From an Indian entrepreneur, the novel is written as spoken letter from Balram Halwai. In the letter he compares the trail of India and China. The Indian government and its capitalism are explained along with corruption and caste system through which chaos engenders the society. Adiga's examination of typical Indian society's mind and its obsession with English language and freight exhibit the prevailing qualities of Indian working and towering society. *The White Tiger* illustrate the journey of the central character, Balram. To become one among the elite class, hemigrates from darkness to metropolitan. The novel hints the extreme differences between culture and politics in India. Adiga uses the Indian subaltern anti-hero as a typecast "Indian" who is uncultured, malicious and devious in his search of supremacy. Aravind Adiga untangles a lot of cultural and social differences which comprise the vast landscape of the modern veracity of India. The universally acknowledged truth is that India is a culturally wealthy country which is reflected in her linguistic diversities. Adiga has used the protagonist Balram to exhibits the dialogic function of language with changes in time and space with immense importance given to culture of Indian society. This paper gives in detail about the language and cultural representation used in Aravind Adiga's *The White Tiger*.

**Keywords:** language, culture, supremacy, capitalism.

Aravind Adiga born in the year 1974 in Chennai grew up in Mangalore in the south of India. *The White Tiger* is his first novel which won the Man Booker Prize for fiction in 2008. The title of the novel is symbolic and it bears a ridicule on contemporary Indian ambience. The novel has different narrative technique and imagery from the animal realm. *The White Tiger* provides a frame into the lives and choices of the rural and urban poor during a period of unprecedented fiscal growth in India. Adiga has created two dissimilar Indias in one "an India of Light and an India of Darkness" (TWT 14).

In the world, people around speak more than 6000 languages. Only few languages are used widely and English is the best and common of them. Adiga in his novel has used Balram as mouthpiece, to assert the fact that insists only a moron will feel they became free and not the whole part of India, even after British had left. Through language Adiga reveals the social issues of marginal clans in the early free Indian villages. Literary theory points out that with language comes culture and agency.

To speak means being able to use a certain syntax and possessing the morphology of such and such a language, but it means above all assuming a culture and bearing the weight of a civilization" (Fanon 2008).

The novel in its dark humor narrative tone, narrates the story of struggle of lower-middle, rural class and lower caste individuals in a globalized socio-economic order of India. The novel shows how the economic divisions are created in India and how people are discriminated in terms of financial strength. From the perspective of its subaltern protagonist Balram Halwai, the language of the rural poor as well as its potential for knowing subversion is expressed. Through Balram Halwai, Adiga also exhibits the dialogic purpose of language which is obvious through his swing of language as text along with alterations in time and space.

*The White Tiger* is the story of Balram, the son of a rickshaw puller from Bihar, who managed to ascend the social ladder from being mere tea seller in the minor Indian village to finally a better-known successful entrepreneur running a taxi service business in Bangalore. The novel is structured as a series of seven letters written to the Chinese Premier, Wen Jiabao on consecutive nights. He finds the deprivation of his family repulsive and decides to break away from it. It portrays the different façades of urban and rural corruption and brings to light various cultural stigmas connected with caste and creed. He receives his name Balram from his teacher until which he was called as Munna. His use of the English language in its modest form by the use of simple sentences restates his position in the society.

Adiga employs English language in its typical Indian dialect in the novel. Balram writes in his very first line of the first letter to the Chinese Premier that "neither I nor you speak English, but there are some things that can be said only in English." (TWT 3) Yet heeding to the baggage of the American and European influence and Americanised globalization, he chooses English as his tool of communication with the Chinese Premier. This choice of language becomes a deliberate attempt and choice by Balram to place himself in the privileged and

higher class society, which is English-speaking, educated and economically powerful community. The imaginative technique lies in the way Adiga has managed to merge in the narrator's story and the strident criticism into one, there by upholding a subtlety and bringing out the dark humor.

The expression through voice of a narration is also a carrier of dogmas that are present in, or acts upon, the society that the novel talks about. The narrative voice is essentially language and the countenance of a certain discourse that has political and cultural creeds associated with it. The narrative of Balram is actively disparate, in voice and philosophy, to the speech of other characters, especially those of the privileged classes. While the voice of Balram always tries to impose itself upon the novel, other voices can be found opposed to Balram frequently rising, only to be pushed back

Culture is strongly reflected through the language used by an individual. Thus Balram's use of English—a foreign and a global language indicates a sophisticated, educated social status. It places him on the upper rungs of the social order. His use of English is raw, with simple sentences loaded with Indian dialects. But the very fact that Balram ridicules the education and employment system in the rural regions of the country in that most urbane language, i.e. English, heightens the irony of the situation.

Me, and thousands of others in this country like me, are half-baked, because we were never allowed to complete our schooling. Open our skulls, look in with a penlight, and you'll find an odd museum of ideas: sentences of history or mathematics remembered from school textbooks (no boy remembers his schooling like one who was taken out of school, let me assure you), sentences about politics read in a newspaper while waiting for someone to come to an office, triangles and pyramids seen on the torn pages of the old geometry textbooks which every tea shop in this country uses to wrap its snacks in, bits of All India Radio news bulletins, things that drop into your mind, like lizards from the ceiling, in the half hour before falling asleep—all these ideas, half formed and half digested and half correct, mix up with other half cooked ideas in your head, and I guess these half-formed ideas bugger one another, and make more half-formed ideas, and this is what you act on and live with.... Entrepreneurs are made from half-baked clay (TWT 8-9).

Balram is an illiterate person because of which he is unable to utter most of English words. When Pinki, Ashok goes to mall, he speaks it as 'maal' Pinky madam repeats, ' itsmal', but he again reiterates it as 'maal'. Later he closes his eyes and repeats sounds "mool, mowll, or malla" (TWT 147). Next word of problem was 'pizza' he always repeats it 'pijja'. Again later he repeats sounds "pijja, pziija, zipjja, pizja" (TWT 155). Sometimes he feels mortified and asks so many inquiries to himself because of the cultural variation. Balram feels himself completely dazed and culturally isolated and broken which is explicitly clear through linguistic questions that he cross-examines, "[W]hy had my father never told me not to scratch my groin? Why had my father never taught me to brush my teeth in milky foam? Why had he raised me to live like an animal? Why do all the poor live amid such filth, such ugliness?" (TWT 151).

Balram is *The White Tiger*- the title is effective in its relevance to classify the protagonist who becomes rarest of his breed, a unique one among the rooster coop, which he defines as "hundreds of pale hens and brightly coloured roosters stuffed tightly into wire-mesh cages, packed as tightly as worms in a belly, pecking each other and shitting on each other, jostling just for breathing space". Unlike most people of his clan who chose to dwell in poverty and deprivation all their lives, Balram defies social conventions of rigid class and caste system, breaks boundaries of rural, impoverished lifestyle and takes a leap to a high class lifestyle and financial status. However, in the process, he also breaks legal decorum of the nation by committing murder, theft and other acts of corruption. Balram, nevertheless, stands emblematic of the blurring or breach of the rich poor divide that dictates any capitalist nation. Adiga in the garb of this fictional writing professes a communist manifesto, pleads strongly for the classless society.

As he writes the letter and tells his story, we come across him as "writing himself", indulging into a creative act, an act which is prerogative of the educated, urban class. He has flouted the boundaries of his rural, lowly class and caste standards and gone beyond the expected and defined. He engages in self-expression, self-justification and self-definition. What is reflected is a freedom of speech, writing and expression. These liberties remain usually denied to the financially-backward and lower section of the Indian society. The novel puts forth the resentment and anger at the injustices of the new, globalised India, which has widened the gap between the rich and the poor.

Balram is a keen listener. He picks many English words like 'red light district', 'replacement', 'driver', 'local', 'start up'. (301) European traders have understood the nerve of Indian mass. People get mesmerized by things simply because those are stimulated and proliferated with a tool named English language. But from the beginning, Balram cannot change his language from the slavery. When he goes to Toyota Qualis dealer in the city and asks in his sweetest voice, 'I want to drive your cars.' The dealer looks at him, bewildered. He couldn't believe that Balram said those words "[O]nce a servant, always a servant: the instinct is always there, inside you, somewhere near the base of your spine. I pinched my left palm. I smiled as I held it pinched and said—in a

deep, gruff voice, I want to rent your cars” (TWT 298). This is one of the prime complications and advantage of the language that the impact of profession, culture and society on language is always heftier than others. That’s why he changes his voice of oppression and starts with the profound, gruff and the oppressor’s voice. He wants to display that he is a businessman. In Bangalore also he is confused to see the cultural differences from North to South India in food aspects.

Balram distinguishes between rich and poor with an instance of ‘Indian’ and ‘English’ liquormen. English liquor is costly and presented as prestigious symbol. The language of these liquors is so captivating that people take vanity in saying the brand names in their vernacular inflections. One can notice that when a normal person is drunk, he starts to mutter in English with conscious or unconscious mind. Adiga has used significant amount of words in native language through Balram such as ‘Sadhus’, ‘namastes’, ‘halwai’, ‘paan’, ‘ghat’, ‘Heyaa’ and many more words. Adiga employs the use of cultural, religious jargons to discuss about the capitalists ideologies based on exploitation and servitude. For instance, Balram apprises the Chinese Premier about the prevalent culture of Hanuman worship in India. God Hanuman is described by Balram as a “faithful servant of God Rama”. “He is a shining example of how to serve masters with absolute fidelity, love and devotion.” He claims how his worship is foisted on Indians. (TWT 16) The concept of servitude and labour-based economy is invoked. He has used metaphors like ‘Lamb’ and ‘Rooster coop’. The title *The white tiger* itself is a metaphor.

*The White Tiger* clearly shows the use of English as matter of regard and supreme need of the hour through the vibrant narration by Balram. There is a message that is clear that the globalised culture and its impact on the language of individuals influenced by the culture are intricately connected in the novel. Adiga has used jargons of Indian culture to define the hierarchical structure and class tensions dictating the Indian society; this has been done to comment on the flaws of the Indian social scene and encourage the drive for change and betterment. Balram at the end of the novel reveals new trend of making money by opening an English medium school where he can invest his money.

After three or four years in real estate, I think I might sell everything, take money, and start a school – an English medium school. (TWT 319)

The novelist has attained a unification of multiple points of view through the use of language as well as presenting the social reality of a particular class of cultural society.

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## Contextualizing Marginalization in Indian Literature with Reference to Bama's *Karukku*

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**Abstract:** Discriminations exist everywhere in different forms. The extent of such discriminations results in marginalization. Dalits were the most affected people of marginalization in Tamilnadu specifically. They were forbidden to enter into temples and to mingle with the high caste people in social and religious functions. Separate glasses and cups were used in tea-stalls to provide tea and coffee to the low caste people. Their dwelling places were isolated from the upper caste people. Literature reflects the contemporary society. The Tamil novelist Bama, who is a Dalit Christian woman, has recorded the on-goings of her society in her 1992 autobiographical novel *Karukku*. This paper attempts to throw light on her emotional waves and the burning anger when she records marginalization in her work. Though she wishes to flourish with the help of education, every now and then she has been frequently reminded of her caste almost everywhere. This paper tries to register how she has contextualized her culture from which she expected a vast change. Her psychological journey with her culture can be substantiated by the Freudian Psychoanalytical Theory. *Karukku* is the culmination of an individual's experience; yet it seems to be the voice of an entire community. The present scenario has changed a lot and *Karukku* assists the society in knowing the past of its culture.

**Key Words:** discrimination, marginalization, caste, psychology, community.

### Introduction:

Bama Faustina Soosairaj is a Tamil novelist. Her debut autobiographical novel *Karukku* (1992) has acquired her fame. *Karukku* appeared in the Tamil version in 1992 and later in 2000 it was translated into English. This novel chronicles the joys as well as the sorrows she came across as a Dalit Christian woman in Tamilnadu. Obviously, her sorrows are registered strongly than her joys. She has tried to give the society a solid physical book through which to remind it of the atrocities committed to an individual community, making it the marginalized. This paper attempts to throw light on her contextualization of marginalization in *Karukku*. Marginalization can otherwise be termed as social exclusion in which either individuals or entire communities of people are excluded from certain rights and opportunities that are available to a different individual or community. It is as old as man himself.

In Tamilnadu Dalits were the most affected people of marginalization. Right from B.R. Ambedkar people have been fighting against this social injustice. Ambedkar had been suffering a lot due to the caste discrimination. He became a Professor in 1918 and was successful among his students. Even then other Professors refused to share the drinking-water jug with him. So later he tried to launch protests against untouchability. He began public movements and marches to open up and share public drinking water resources with the so called lower community. Mahatma Gandhiji also fought against the same issue. Gandhiji named the untouchables as "Harijans" which means "children of God." In September 1932 Gandhiji even went on a fast against this civil disobedience. Even after such protests the discrimination existed. Bama, who herself was a sufferer, used writing as a weapon to make the society realise its folly of untouchability and marginalization.

Bama's *Karukku* is not the replica of an individual's emotions; rather it is the expression of an entire community. It can be stated that *Karukku* is a collective biography rather than Bama's autobiography. In the preface itself Bama has asserted that she speaks for an entire community. She writes, "There are other Dalit hearts like mine, with a passionate desire to create a new society made up of justice, equality and love" (*Karukku*, xiii). In the very beginning of the preface she has set the mood of the novel too by writing, "There are many congruities between the saw-edged palmyra karukku and my own life. Not only did I pick up the scattered palmyra karukku when I was sent out to gather firewood, scratching and tearing my skin as I played with them; but later they also became the embryo and symbol that grew into this book. The driving forces that shaped this book are many: events that occurred during many stages of my life, cutting me like karukku and making me bleed" (*Karukku*, xiii). Through this she asserts how she has been hurt. Pramod K. Nayar says, "*Karukku* is thus both the title of her personal autobiography and an account of the whole community" (Nayar, 87). Bama has described her novel thus: "The story told in *Karukku* was not my story alone. It was the depiction of a collective trauma - of my community - whose length cannot be measured in time. I just tried to freeze it forever in one book so that there will be something physical to remind people of the atrocities committed on a section of the society for ages" (*Recognition For The Language Of My People Is The Biggest Award I Can Win*).

### Being Marginalized Everywhere:

At the beginning of the novel itself, Bama states how discrimination is found in her small village. She states, "Although it's only a small village, many different communities live here" (*Karukku*, 1). Even when she

is about to describe the beauty of her village, its ugly mask compels her to look at it first. She has devoted a considerable space in her novel to describe the village with all its reality. Almost every mountain in the village is named after the community. Separate temples are found for certain sects. The entire village is neatly divided into different territories based on the communities. There comes the upper and lower caste discrimination. Certain communities are considered superior. The upper communities have a “Big School” meant only for their children’s studies where the lower caste children are not allowed. Even the graveyard is separate for the Dalit and the other communities. Afterwards there is a quarrel even on the graveyard as to whom does the graveyard belong to – whether to the Dalits or to the other community.

Bama is blind to the fact that she has been born into a “lower community” until her third standard. She writes, “When I was studying the third class, I hadn’t yet heard people speak openly of untouchability” (Karukku, 11). Once she happens to witness one of the respected elders of her community carrying a parcel by its string in order not to touch it. He hands it over to an upper caste man. When she thinks it a funny incident, her brother makes her understand the trauma. He makes her understand that their community people are considered low so that the upper caste people would not even touch the things which they touch. It is only at this point she realizes the humiliation. She gets anger at it and feels it hard to content it with herself. This marks the beginning of the chain of humiliations that she faces continuously wherever she goes. She feels the horror of being untouchable even at school. Since Bama is from a Dalit family there is an identity confirmed on her and her caste people that they would be the cause for all the misbehaviours at the school. She is insulted and punished at school for a mistake, not of her. To the extent she is scolded by her community’s name by the Head Master.

The curious part of the fact is that the Dalit community people accept themselves as the members of the lower community, calling the upper caste people as “Maharajas”. Even the children of the upper community call the old ones of the Dalit community by their names. The Dalit elders call even the little ones of the upper caste as “Ayya”. People of the upper caste own fields and live comfortably all through the year whereas the Dalit people work for them, toiling in their fields the entire year. The better-off caste people never have any problem. They have got separate lands for them with boundaries marked; they have wells and pump-sets so that they can work their land all the year and be comfortable. Bama has devoted the entire fourth chapter to describe the hard labours of the Dalit people in the fields. To strengthen the fact that Dalits are marginalized Bama brings forth many lived experiences such as the humiliation she receives in the bus, in the hostel, in the college, in her working atmosphere and even at the convent where she is trained to become a nun. The upper caste women inquire her caste if she sits next to them in the bus. After knowing her community either they would ask her to stand or would prefer to stand all the way. The hostel where she stays also insults her. She hopes to get rid of the caste discrimination in college. But even there the discrimination exists. As the crown of all these sufferings comes her humiliation at the convent. Though at the beginning in the convent she is looked as low due to her Tamil origin, later she is ill-treated for being a Dalit. It surprises her that in the Orders there is a separate group for Tamils in general and for Dalits in particular. She feels a burning anger when she witnesses all these atrocities. After a certain extent she writes, “In this society, if you are a low caste, you are forced to live a life of humiliation and degradation until your death... If you are born into a low caste, every moment of your life is a moment of struggle. People screw up their faces and look at us with disgust the moment they know our caste. It is impossible to describe the anguish that look causes” (Karukku, 23).

The way Dalits were treated at the houses of the better-off caste is more embarrassing. Bama’s grandmother worked for an upper caste family. She went to the landlord’s house as soon as dawn broke and did sweep the house and the cowshed, collecting the dung and dirt. Even when she did all these works there she had been ill treated by the women of the house. Bama writes, “Even the way they were given their drinking water was disquieting to watch. The Naicker women would pour out the water from a height of four feet, while Paatti and others received and drank it with cupped hands held to their mouths... After she had finished all her filthy chores, Paatti placed the vessel that she had brought with her, by the side of the drain. The Naicker lady came out with her leftovers, leaned out from some distance and tipped them into Paatti’s vessel, and went away. Her vessel, it seemed, must not touch Paatti’s or would be polluted” (Karukku, 14). After the hard work at the house of the landlord Bama’s grandmother came home with the remnant food from the house she worked. Only later did Bama come to know that the food which her grandmother brought like the nectar was about to be put in the drain.

Bama finds “lack of money” as one cause for their marginalization. As it has been frequently witnessed, the upper caste people own fields and money and lead a comfortable life. But it is immediately understood by her that money is not the actual cause for their inferior state. All her suppressed thoughts come to surface towards the end of the second chapter. She is unable to content herself so that poses a series of questions to the society: “How did the upper castes become so elevated? How is it that we have been denigrated? They possess money; we do not. If we were wealthy too, wouldn’t we learn more, and make more progress than they do? But when it comes to it, even if we are as good as they are, or even better, because of this one issue of caste alone, we are forced to suffer pain and humiliation” (Karukku, 24).



Bama becomes a nun against her family's refusal. She hopes to help the poor children in general and the Dalit children in particular. She works in a school where there are children from wealthy families. The nuns, who are supposed to take care of all the children equally, find themselves obedient to the power and prestige of the wealthy parents, ignoring the poor children completely. Bama gets irritated on seeing marginalization inside the convent and quits the convent.

There are two different divisions in the society – the ones who toil and the ones who sit down and feast. The wealthy and upper caste families suck the energy and hard work of the lower casts. Their children eat well and wear fine clothe to attend good schools. They get high positions in life and earn more money. They “decide” that the Dalits are unfit to be touched and make them marginalized. Even if Dalits become priests or nuns they are pushed aside and are marginalized. Education gives courage and of course, serves as a torch for a healthy path where there is no discrimination among people. It is only Bama's educated brother who gave her inspiration to study well and shine in her education to wipe the dirt framed by the society on them. Bama could apprehend her psychological changes only after her education. Above all it is only her education which has given her the courage to expose her suppressed emotions through her writing.

Freud defined the id as the part of the mind cut off from the external world that has a world of perception of its own. It detects with extraordinary acuteness certain changes in its interior, especially oscillations in the tension of its instinctual needs, and these changes become conscious as feelings in the pleasure-unpleasure series. It is hard to say, to be sure, by what means and with the help of what sensory terminal organs these perceptions come about. But it is an established fact that self-perceptions govern the passage of events in the id with despotic force. The id obeys the inexorable pleasure principle ([en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Freud's\\_Psychoanalytic\\_Theories](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Freud's_Psychoanalytic_Theories)). As Sigmund Freud stated in his theory, wherever she goes Bama could identify her “self” and she finds her psychological changes. Her instinctual needs become her conscious feelings which she expects to be given respect and finds writing as the way to express her “self”.

### Conclusion:

It has to be accepted that the view of the society has changed a lot after all these years. Bama, in her afterword, states that she could gain friends who stand in the way of her success, encouraging her to succeed. She now has learnt how to get experience through pain. Definitely education has changed the mindset of the people. Dalits are not given any separate glasses in the tea shops and are not looked upon as untouchables in the bus. May be in the future there will be no such thing as caste discrimination or marginalization. No one will be judged based on the community they are born in. Rather their talents will be given priority. Martin Luther King said, “I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character” (*I Have a Dream*). As he visualized Bama also has seen a society where there will be no discrimination based on community. Just like King's dream becoming true, Bama's expectations are also becoming true which is witnessed today by the present society.

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## Depiction of History and Politics in Vikram Seth's *A Suitable Boy*

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**Abstract:** This research paper sheds light on the portrayal of History and Politics in Vikram Seth's novel *A Suitable Boy* which runs into about 1330 pages. Before this paper deals with the novelist's description of history and politics in the fiction, it briefly dwells on the life, education and career of Vikram Seth. He was born in Calcutta in 1952. His father Prem Seth was an executive with Bata Shoe company and his mother was the first woman judge on bench of the Delhi High Court as well as the first woman judge to become the chief justice of Himachal Pradesh High Court. Seth had his schooling at Michael High School, Patna and later at Dehra Doon School. Then, he went to Tombridge School in Kent, England to complete his A levels and then he pursued Philosophy, Politics and Economics at the Corpus Christi College at Oxford after which he took up doctoral studies at Stanford University. So far, he has published three novels -- *The Golden Gate*, *A Suitable Boy* and *An Equal Music*. The first and the third novels are set against the backdrop of America and Europe whereas the second novel *A Suitable Boy* is set in the India of early 50s.

**Key words:** politics, philosophy, modernity, religion, culture.

*A Suitable Boy* focuses on the experiences and entanglements of four moderately rich Indian families connected through marriage or friendship at a period of time when India was experiencing her post independence turbulences. It is structured into nineteen well-crafted sub sections that allow Seth to move back and forth while telling the story of four families-the Mehra, the Kapoors, the Khans, and the Chatterjees who are related to each other by marriage and friendship.

*A Suitable Boy* is wholly set in India of early 50s when the process of nation building was taking place under the statesmanship of Jawaharlal Nehru. With regard to the main plot line, it centers on the question of finding a suitable partner for Lata, younger daughter of Mrs. Rupa Mehra. Three candidates present themselves; Amit Chatterjee, Bengal: poet and novelist, sophisticated, rich and a Brahmin. Kabir, a cricketer, Haresh, a youngster determined to make a career for himself in the shoe manufacturing industry. Lata finally settles for.

But the main strength of the novel lies not in the business of matchmaking but in the depiction of social, physical, cultural, historical and romantic faces of India just after independence. Seth manages to interweave in a credible way all the larger themes of politics, culture, romance, society and history with the day to day ordinary human emotions of his true to life characters that have laughed and cried. A multitude of characters and events through novel, the setting moves back and forth between the cities of Brahampur, which is fictional, and Calcutta and excursions to New Delhi, Kanpur and Lucknow and to the remote village in the North India. Indian identity is strengthened and stretched to make Purvapradesh, a fictional state a representative of India as a whole. This paper brings out the historical, political and romantic aspects of India of early 50's that is portrayed in a *A Suitable Boy*.

At first, this paper, of all these fronts mentioned above such as history, politics, and romance highlights the historical and political aspects as portrayed in *A Suitable Boy*. The fiction is set in early 50's as mentioned earlier a few years after independence. Many occurrences of great historical importance have been registered in this work. Some key issues such as Zamindar abolition bill which later paved the way for land ceiling act, the efforts of Nehru in consolidating the nation and the election of Tandon as the President of Congress Party and its consequences and the ambience of first general election in 1952 have got recorded here. This paper unearths and analyses the historical aspects of the then India. The constitution of India came into force in 1950 and it had been just one year old when the events and incidents that are mentioned in the work took place. Mahatma Gandhiji was no more. The nation was totally deprived of his guidance. The responsibility of building the nation was completely on the shoulders of Nehru, who had to play a pivotal role both in the congress party and the administration of the government. And how he had to tackle conventional and orthodox leaders in the party and how he endeavored hard to prevent them from interfering with the administration of the government and in policy making are discussed later.

First, one of the landmark bills of young independent India, Zamindari Bill and its far reaching impact on the nation and the hurdles and the challenges the policy makers had to encounter in enacting and implementing the law have been so accurately recorded in the novel. The main story takes place in an imaginary and fictional north Indian state called Purvapradesh the Chief Minister of which is Sharma and the Revenue and Home Ministers of the state are Mahesh Kappor and Agarwal respectively. Vikram Seth has structured this fictional state Purvapradesh in such a way that it stands for the whole of north India in all aspects such as, culture, religion, society, geography and politics. Zamindari abolition bill is the brain child of Mahesh Kapoor, the revenue minister of the state who is a staunch loyalist of Nehru and a strong supporter of secular principles. In the loosely narrated story of romance between a Muslim boy, by name, Kabir and a young lady Lata, a

Brahampur University student numerous episodes dealing with various other themes have been incorporated without affecting the course, effect and flow of the main story. One such sub theme of historical importance is Zamindari Abolition Bill. In the history of modern independent India, Zamindari Abolition Act turns out to be a mile-stone legislation which played a pivotal role in streamlining land related matters. It is preceded by the annexure of small kingdoms to Indian union, by the then Home Minister of India Vallapai Patel, Known as iron man of India. Even after that, Zamindars were in possession of vast acreage of land and sprawling estates where landless labourers toil hard to earn their livelihood. There is every possibility for the emergence of a situation where people belonging to the lower strata of society have to continue to remain as landless labourers and earn their bread.

In British India, such a Scenario, where the economically, socially and culturally underprivileged sections were denied justice was prevalent. But even after attaining freedom, when some sections of the nation live in absolute luxury and the rest of the nation languish in poverty and starvation, it can not be defended and justified. With a view to equalizing the imbalances, disparities and discriminations among different sects of people in every spheres particularly in economy and agriculture, Zamindari Abolition Bill was introduced. Mahesh Kapoor a strong follower of Nehru and his principles of secularism, and socialism is strongly under the impression that it will bring about equality in the state and the gap between the haves and the have-nots would be bridged to a good extent. Even if it means that very influential landlords and powerful Zamindars are to lose major portions of their estates, fields and land, Mahesh Kapoor does not step behind. One of the affected Zamindars Nawab Sahib of Baitar is a long time and close friend of the revenue minister Mahesh Kapoor.

Notwithstanding that, there is no friction between Nawab Sahib of Baitar and Mahesh Kapoor. The bill, which later becomes a law, imposing a ceiling on the possessions of lands by Zamindars and landlords does not damage the mature and refined friendship between the duo. Mahesh Kapoor in the process has to incur the displeasure and wrath of the likes of Raja of Marh who strongly believes that the minister is responsible for the seizure of their lands. But Mahesh Kapoor is committed to the goals of anti-feudalism, secularism and elimination of Zamindari system. On personal front, he is also a determined fighter against feudalism, the evils of communalism and casteism. At one point, when Raja of Marh attempts to bribe him to prevent the passage of Zamindari abolition bill, he ruthlessly tackles him, by coming down hard on him. And he is a man who is capable of outweighing personal relationship with the Nawab Sahib of Baita also helps him in this commitment, in the sense that Mahesh Kapoor's moral principles do not come in the way of their friendship.

Regarding 'history' in *A Suitable Boy* Zamindari Abolition law, a historically important legislation finds its expression in the work. Under the Zamindari Abolition Bill, five years of continuous tenancy is enough to establish the tiller's right to the land. The agricultural fields of land lords and Zamindars have been ploughed by labourers who are landless and a portion of the yielding they would be given for their labour and the rest would be with the cedrics tradition during British regime. With the implementation of Zamindar Abolition act, agricultural workers without their own land toiling hard and long on others' fields for their survival would be entitled to claim their right over the fields and the owners of fields who happen to be Nawabs, Rajas and Landlords would be severely hit by the legislation. They are up in arms against this legislation and they bend over backwards to prevent it from coming into force. Once it is passed in legislature and the governor gives his assent to it, Nawabs, Rajas and the Landlords losing their properties and struggling hard like other danger they will be in, they challenge the constitutional validity of the legislation in Brahampur high court. Heated arguments are witnessed in the court both for and against the legislation. G.N. Bannerjee, the counsel for the landlords, presented his argument in the following way.

My Lords, the entire way of life of this state is sought to be altered by the executive of this state through legislation that runs in express and implied contradictions to the constitution of the country. The act that seeks, in no citizenry of Purvapradesh is the Purvapradesh Zamindari abolition and Land Reform Act in 1951 and it is my contention and that of other counsel for the applicants that this legislation, apart from being patently to the detriment of the people, is unconstitutional and therefore null and void. Null and void (ASB 686).

G.N.Bannerjee goes on to state that the legislature of Purvapradesh delegated to the executive the implementation of the Zamindari Abolition Act. Further, its date of activation, the sequence if the taking over of the estates of the Zamindars, these decisions are to be taken by junior bureaucrats of government administration. He further states to the judges that it is not a question of merely filing in details, and this is improper delegation of authority and the act even if there are no other grounds will be invalid on these grounds alone. At this point, Advocate general for the government side Mr. Shastri interfered and said that "Your lordship please. A slight correction to my learned friend, date of vesting is automatic with President's assent. So is activated act one" (ASB 691). In addition to this, Chief Justice asks Mr. Shastri for his response to the argument of Mr. Bannerjee that the policy of the Zamindari Act is not a public purpose but the policy of the political party which for the time being governs the state. Advocate General Shastri replied that in accordance with directive principles enshrined in the constitution, this law has been enacted and it has nothing to do with party policy.

On hearing both sides, judges finally give a joint statement that Purvapradesh Zamindari Abolition Act and Land Reform Act do not contravene any provision of the constitution and is not invalid. The main applications, along with the connected applications against it are dismissed. The judgment is a big blow to Raja of Marh, Nawab Sahib and other land lords who jointly challenged that legislation in the court of law. Generally, Zamindars do not have to work hard to earn their bread. They live in luxury on the income derived from their estates where the landless labourers have to shed sweat and blood to shape the fields and draw yielding from it. Major portion of the revenue from the fields would go to Zamindars who spend it on liquor, gambling, whores and other unnecessary things. The working class is deprived of what is due to it. Feudalism is a glaring manifestation of the exploitation of the weak by the strong. Zamindari abolition legislation which aimed at getting rid of this social disparities and strive for social justice and equality comes into force. The architect of the law, and revenue minister of purva Pradesh observed only composure. Feudalism was widely prevalent in British India and it sucked blood from the landless labourers and enriched the Zamindars. *A Suitable Boy* has given a clear account of this and it also portrays how it has been eradicated. What has taken place in Purvapradesh, with regard to Land Reforms Act and Zamindari Abolition Act spreads to other parts of India as well. With the implementation of the legislation a history was drafted and it has been documented in *A Suitable Boy* Vikram Seth. The above mentioned points are only the advantages, Zamindari Abolition law will bring about in the state. It has another negative dimension as well. There are many Zamindars, who apart from looking after the peasants, patronized art, culture, music and language and in the new environment where their position has been reduced to be that of an ordinary agriculturist, and they cannot do anything for them any more. Regarding this, David Myres in his paper *Vikram Seth's Epic Renunciation of the passions: Deconstruction Moral Codes in A Suitable Boy* states that "Zamindari Bill will mean the curtailment of the poor but also patronage of scholarship, architecture and the arts particularly music". He goes on to add "that the elderly Nawab Sahib's watches his historic country place and his ir-replaceable library collection decay and is enraged when his munshi protests at the high cost of the Nawab's patronage of the musician Usteed Khan" (23).

Apart from this, Nehru's letters to Chief Ministers regarding his suggestions, and advice on how the states, where they are chief ministers can be effectively run and how communal elements in all religions can be contained have also been documented in the novel. Nehru's letters, his administrative as well as political activities which have attained great historical importance in the history of modern India have also been highlighted in the work. The researcher sheds light on that aspect as part of analyzing the historical elements in the novel. Neelam Srivastava in *Secularism in Vikram Seth's A Suitable Boy* states that

*A Suitable Boy* addresses India's part as a way of responding to contemporaneous historic-political configurations and in the sense, it can be said to be a historical novel. He goes on to add that a characteristics of the historical novel is that its version of the national past implicitly projects an ideal present and future for the nation. The historical novel becomes a way to make the past accessible to the present and to assert a metonymic contiguity of the past with the present; the assumption being that if we follow the narrative to its beginning, we can reach the point of origin.

In this way, he traces the historical aspects of *A Suitable Boy* (36).

Besides giving vivid picture of the then historical atmosphere of India, the novelist has also dwelt on politics of the day. After the demise of Vallaboy Patel, the Home Minister of India then who played a powerful role in the integration of provincial states to India, Tandon was selected as the President of the Congress Party much to the disappointment of Nehru who was under the impression that people who did not have the values of the secularism were not supposed to come to power both in the party and the Government. Fulminating against the activities of the Congress President, Tandon, Nehru's staunch loyalists Kirubalani and Kidari left the party and launched a new political outfit. In this novel Mahesh Kapoor, the Revenue Minister of the Purvapradesh is portrayed to have been a strong adherent Nehru and got strong faith and belief in secularism whereas his political rival and the Home Minister of the State, Agarwal identifies himself with Tandon. Agarwal vocalizes Tandon's selection as the President of the Party has been the result of the constructive democratic exercise and those who oppose his selection are against democracy. In this regard it would be proper to quote the statement of Mala Pandurang who in the work entitled *Multiple Readings of A Suitable Boy* states "A considerable part of the narrative is devoted to the crisis in the fiction ridden Congress party" (129). The first Prime Minister of India, Nehru was keen on retaining the values of secularism and inclusiveness. Regarding this, Seth says in the following way

The thought of India as a Hindu state with its minorities treated as second class citizens sickens Nehru. If Pakistan treats its minorities barbarically, that is no reason for India to do so. Nehru has personally pleaded with number of Muslim Civil servants to remain India" (Vikram Seth 955).

In this manner the novelist had brought before our eyes the then historical and political atmosphere of India. Though the novel is primarily concerned with the romance between Kabir and Lata, it has incorporated effectively other components such as culture, religion, politics and history.

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## The Subaltern Concept: Oppression of Untouchables in Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things*

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**Abstract:** Today, the word 'Subaltern' has become inevitable in literature. 'Subaltern' is a German word which means 'inferior rank' or 'secondary importance'. Subaltern literature reflects various themes such as oppression, marginalisation, gender discrimination, subjugation of lower and working classes, disregarded women, neglected sections of society.

Even after the Indian Independence, untouchables continue to occupy the lower strata in the social hierarchy. Still they are considered to be defiled creations of this earth having no rights for their reformation. The present paper highlights maltreatments meted to the subalterns in Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things*. It explores the various ways in which the rights and privileges of both these classes are generally ignored or cancelled out even in the present era of post-colonialism.

**Key Words:** discrimination, suppression, oppression, maltreatments and marginalisation

Untouchability is a direct product of the caste system. It is not merely the inability to touch a human being of a certain caste or sub-caste. Untouchability is prompted by the spirit of social aggression and the belief in purity and pollution that characterizes casteism. In general Dalits are considered polluted people at the lowest end of the caste order. In Indian literature, writers have attempted untouchability in the name of 'subaltern concept'. Today, the word 'subaltern' has become inevitable in literature. 'Subaltern' is a German word, which means 'inferior rank', or secondary importance, subaltern literature reflects various themes such as oppression, marginalisation, gender discrimination, subjugation of lower and working classes, disregarded women, neglected sections of society.

Even after the Indian independence, untouchables continue to occupy the lower strata in the social hierarchy; still they are considered to be defiled creations of this earth having no rights for their reformation. The increasingly paradoxical status of untouchables – although they are powerless yet they have an inherent capacity to give power to others – is one of the most contested issues, along with the empowerment of women, which lies central to the field of post-colonial studies. It has been explored the maltreatment meted out to the subalterns in Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things* (TGST). It shows the various methods in which the rights and privileges of both these classes are generally ignored or cancelled out even in the present era of post-colonialism.

Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things* is a novel, which deals with the troubled history of untouchables, and the novel has already received high critical acclaims. Roy has become decidedly one of the leading literary figures in the history of Indian English literature. The novel draws attention to the mental as well as physical exploitation of the untouchables. The contrast between touchable/untouchables is explicit throughout the novel. These unfair and destructive binary divisions disclose the bitter reality of India progressing towards prosperity.

The term "subaltern" has been applied to two groups the woman (Ammu) and the untouchable (Velutha). The third chapter of the novel entitled "Big Man the Laltain, small man the Mombatti" artistically symbolizes their subaltern. Ammu and Velutha represent the Mombatti whereas those opposing their unorthodox love affair represent the Laltain. The other characters – Kochamma, Mammachi, Chacko, Estha, Rahel, Vellya, and Inspector Mathew – are caught up in a complex web of actions and reactions in their daily affairs with one another and with the outer world. Untouchability, the worst form of social rigidity that is still prevalent in India is the outcome of the snobbish *rishis* living in ancient days. It rightly reduces a man of the lower rank of society to nothingness. Even the *Rig veda* has some instances of inter caste marriages of *Brahmanas* with *Rajanya* Women, and of the union of Arya and Sudra. The treatment meted out to the untouchables and Velutha in TGST is a matter of concern for all right-thinking people.

Placed in the southern Indian state of Kerala and divided chronologically between the late 1960s and the early 1990s, the plot of *The God of Small Things* revolves around a forbidden relationship between a Syrian Christian divorcee, Ammu, and a low caste carpenter, Velutha. It is a story about the rights of the women and the untouchables versus age-old restrictions imposed by the traditionalist Indian society, which still remains both heterogeneous and heterodox. The story tells us about Ammu's twins called Estha and Rahel, about the inter-caste affair, about the subsequent beating and killing of Velutha by the police of Ayemenem, a village in Kerala, and about the death by drowning of the children's cousin, Sophie Mol. The entire human drama in the

novel takes place in the context of the division of India through caste and class, polluting thereby the natural beauty of the human world.

The novel also has references to caste conversion of a number of people, including Velutha's grandfather Kelan, and their becoming Christians, such people joined the Anglican Church in the hope of getting freed from the course of untouchables. They converted in order to get some food and money, and in some cases even a job. But this conversion did not efface their problems and they continued to occupy the lower position in the society. They were still discriminated against and were provided with separate priests and separate churches. They were never measured in an equal scale of humanity. Freedom of the nation had not brought much relief to the untouchables. No doubt, they were being given job reservations, but this reservation was in a greater sense, meant only for those people who had some money to spend on education. Roy does not only make the readers cognizant of the colonial past, but also makes the readers look at the shadow of an older pre-colonial history. The word 'caste' is derived from the Portuguese word 'casta', which means pure or unadulterated. The rigid caste system, which provided the individual with different cultural apparel, became evident in India in the early Vedic age. In due course of time different castes emerged in India, setting the ball rolling for the pre-Dravidian of India. They put a ban on the taking of food cooked by the 'Sudras' and the inter-caste marriage was totally banned. It is in this historical perspective that Roy treats the inter-caste love affairs of Ammu and Velutha and of Chacko and Kochamma. The intense anxiety of Vellya Paapen regarding Velutha's unorthodox affair with Ammu should be read in this context. Paapen is an old Paravan and therefore does not dare to disturb the social hierarchy of the harsh treatment meted out to persons who attempt to transgress the rigid social order. Mammachi tells the fraternal twins that 'Paravans' are expected "to crawl backwards with a broom, sweeping away the footprints so that Brahmins or Syrian Christians would not defile themselves by accidentally stepping into a Paravan's footprints" (TGST, 73-74). She still remembers the demonic treatment of the untouchables, who are not allowed to walk on public roads, who cannot cover their upper bodies and who are forbidden to carry umbrella so that they are sun burnt. These untouchables are required to cover their mouth with hands while speaking so that their polluted breath does not contact the high caste persons.

Velutha, on the other hand, is a young man who fails to understand all these nonsensical rules and regulations for untouchables. He is adept in his mechanisms of carpentry and unsuccessfully tries to represent the changing face of India – an India which is marching on the road of progress, but all the same the India where untouchability is still practised. Velutha does not sanction this social discrimination. The subaltern in this novel wants to speak, but Inspector Mathew beats him to death in police lock-up.

In such a rotten society, Roy pleads to the readers to adopt the innocence of the twins – Estha and Rahel who are living in India do not know any caste, religion and boundaries. They are completely innocent in this cruel world. Indian social fabric is a curse for those advocating or practising the rituals of modernity, since time immemorial, it has restricted the romantic movements of lovers despite the fact that Krishna violated this traditional practice, and so did Vishwamitra and many others. Still this society has profound regards for them, but when the same love affair is rehearsed between Ammu and Velutha it becomes hostile towards them. This exposes the dual character of our patriarchal society. Why is it that only man has got the right to (dis) own a woman, to define a protocol for female, and to exploit her femininity? These are vexed issues, which need to be looked at with open minds.

This explicit differentiation is a matter of concern and some measures should be taken to ensure that their rights are protected. This can only be possible when the government ensures that every member of the society gets an equal opportunity to participate in democracy, they get equal rights, and that their human rights are protected. It is here that the institutionalization of subaltern studies plays a vital role. Ever since its inception, this group is trying its best to protect the rights and highlight the cause of subaltern class. Arundhati Roy has (un)consciously also extended the views of this group by highlighting the pathetic condition of these subaltern in India. The Subaltern group has held many Conferences so far, and it is here that new ideas are being churned out so as to protect the rights of this subaltern class.

TGST describes poignantly when Ammu falls in love with Velutha, an untouchable carpenter, and starts having furtive meetings with him across the river in the haunted house. Her daring love affair with Velutha undoubtedly incited a sexual desire in Baby Kochamma to some extent. She cannot digest this affair as she herself is denied the carnal pleasure. Baby Kochamma's sexual jealousy rises to such a height that she obliterates her niece and indirectly contributes to Velutha's castration and death by the police officers. Ammu could not tolerate this loss and consequently she also meets a tragic end.

To conclude, Arundhati Roy's treatment of the subaltern in her novel triggers the condition of a colonial India. By her treatment of the subaltern, she raises a sensible question about their pitiable position in Indian society, but fails in her effort to give them their voice. Nevertheless, she urges them to remove all conventions of the traditional society in order to fetch an identity for themselves.

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## Myth and Folklore in Shashi Deshpande's *That Long Silence*

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**Abstract :** *Shashi Deshpande, a promising contemporary writer, hails from the roots and tradition of Indian culture. Myths and folklore have become the basis for Indian writers in English. This paper focuses on as to how Shashi Deshpande, through myths and folklore has depicted the realistic situation in the Indian family. In the Indian context, once a girl gets married, whether it is a love marriage or an arranged one, the husband takes complete control over her. The novelist through the protagonist, Jaya in That Long Silence has explored as to how she has been reduced to a mere automation due to marital harmony. She realizes as to how she has wasted her time in arranging and rearranging the household things and suppresses her desire as a writer for the sake of family bond.*

Jaya never questions when her husband Mohan gets a job of his choice. She never also questions the means by which he gets it. She is compared with the mythological character Gandhari and utters, "If Gandhari, who bandaged her eyes to become blind like her husband could be called an ideal wife, I was an ideal wife too, I did not want to know anything" (61). She tries to be an ideal wife like the mythical characters Sita, Savitri and Gandhari. But her husband Mohan never understands her and her feelings. As realization dawns upon her she rejects the image of traditional women like Sita, Savitri and utters, "what I have to do with these mythical woman, I can't fool myself" (11).

The themes of domination and cunningness are also illustrated in this novel through a folktale of the sparrow and crow. Here the sparrow represents a woman who has to look after the family. Folktales and fables are used to influence the minds of the readers and infuse a sense of morality in them. Through these tales the people are warned against lying, stealing and cheating as, "Tell lies now and you'll be lizard in your next life, steal things you'll be a dog, cheat people and you'll be a snake"(128). Finally, the words from Bhagavad-Gita 'Do as you Desire' appeals to her. She comes to realize that life can always be made possible. Jaya searches for happiness and self-fulfillment within the family itself. *That Long Silence* authenticates the view that the day is not far off when men and women would be treated and valued equally.

**Keywords:** Tradition, Culture, Mythology, Domination

Shashi Deshpande, a promising contemporary writer, hails from the roots and tradition of Indian culture. Myths and folklore have become the basis for Indian writers in English. This paper focuses on as to how Shashi Deshpande, through myths and folklore has depicted the realistic situation in the Indian family. In the Indian context, once a girl gets married, whether it is a love marriage or an arranged one, the husband takes complete control over her. The novelist through the protagonist, Jaya in *That Long Silence* has explored as to how she has been reduced to a mere automation due to marital harmony. She realizes as to how she has wasted her time in arranging and rearranging the household things and suppresses her desire as a writer for the sake of family bond.

Marriage is an important event in the life of a woman. The importance that our society attaches to marriage is reflected in our literature and it is the central concern of Shashi Deshpande's novels. Simone de Beauvoir's well-known statement that one is not born but rather becomes a woman, is enacted in our society where the girl learns early that she is Paraya Dhan (another's property), and it is her parent's responsibility till the day she is handed over to her rightful owners. What a girl makes of her life, how she shapes herself as an individual, what profession she takes up is not as important as who she marries. Marriage is the ultimate goal of a girl's life.

In *That Long Silence*, the writer has presented this phenomenon through the character of Jaya, who is addressed by two names: Jaya and Suhasini. Jaya, which means victory, is the name given by her father when she was born, and has encouraged her to be resilient and courageous. He has made her feel that she is someone special, and someone different from the other girls who would normally end up becoming housewives. He would dream that Jaya either bags an international award or goes to Oxford. However, his untimely death shatters her dreams and makes her to face the reality that she is after all like any other middle class girl destined to be a wife and a mother.

Male dominance and authority is represented through Mohan, Jaya's husband. Mohan, is an engineer who cares for money, status and material comforts. As the novel unfolds, the reader comes to realize that it is not merely the sage of Jaya's womanly existence in this world; it is the story of a large majority of women transfixed in their peculiar situation keeping silent and blindly following their husbands in Gandhari style. Jaya, who too had accepted her situation silently obeying the dictates of her husband, family and traditional society, comes to realize that under the fine veneer of domestic harmony, she too had resigned to her destiny as a wife.



She is reminded of so many things spoken about the marriage and its implications: “You learn a lot of tricks to get by in a relationship, Silence is one of them: you never find a woman criticizing her husband even playfully, in case it damages the relationship” (76). When Jaya is a bride, her aunt Vanitamami advises her on the importance of compatibility in a marital relationship and the role of a husband, “Remember Jaya ... a husband is like a sheltering tree. Without the tree, you’re dangerously unprotected and vulnerable ... and so you have to keep the tree alive and flourishing, even if you have to water it with deceit and lies”(32). Looking at her life, Jaya comes to realize that she has existed merely as Mohan’s wife, Rahul’s and Rati’s mother, but never as Jaya. Mohan, steeped in the norms he had learnt in his own family says to Jaya, “My mother never raised her voice against my father, however badly he behaved to her” (83). He expects Jaya, his wife, to follow suit.

Jaya never questions when her husband Mohan gets a job of his choice. She never also questions the means by which he gets it. She is compared with the mythological character Gandhari and utters, “If Gandhari, who bandaged her eyes to become blind like her husband could be called an ideal wife, I was an ideal wife too, I did not want to know anything” (61). She tries to be an ideal wife like the mythical characters Sita, Savitri and Gandhari. But her husband Mohan never understands her and her feelings. Jaya has suppressed every aspect of her personality that refuses to fit in with her image as a wife and mother besides a failed writer: As Suman Ahuja observes:“Jaya caught in an emotional, eddy, endeavors to come to terms with her protean roles, while trying, albeit in vain, to rediscover her true self, which is but an ephemera... an unfulfilled wife, a disappointed mother and failed writer” (Ahuja:2).

She endures everything, tolerates all kinds of masculine oppression silently: “... in the emotion that governed my behavior to him, there was still the habit of being a wife, of sustaining and supporting him” (48) A loveless married life makes them to drift away from each other and result in total failure. Her feelings and longings of love are suppressed due to Mohan’s attitude towards her. She keeps quiet and silent suppressing all her sexual desires by responding to his cold and dull call. She surrenders calmly to his demands, supposing that if she demands something more Mohan would misunderstand her or it would hurt his ego. She describes one of her unhappy sexual relations with Mohan in the following way:“We had never come together, only our bodies had done that, I had begun to cry then, despairingly, silently scared that I would wake Mohan up, trying desperately to calm myself.” (98) They have not become one; only their bodies occasionally meet, not their souls. The constant psychological tortures pressured Jaya’s mind to accept these conditions without complaint. Thus, she is the victim of the institution of marriage.

Shashi Deshpande makes extensive use of mythic allusions and parallels in her fiction. The themes of domination and cunning are illustrated in *That Long Silence* through a folktale, i.e. story of the sparrow and the crow one of the earliest tales that Indian children hear with all its appurtenances of a repetitive pattern, stark contrast and a moral at the end. Different versions of the story are told in different regions. The provident little sparrow builds her house of wax and the foolish crow builds a house of dung that melts away in the rain. The crow comes knocking at the sparrow’s door. The sparrow takes time to open the door. She is bathing her baby, feeding it and putting it to bed, and finally, the crow is let in and directed to the roasting pan to warm himself, where he predictably perishes. Jaya’s married life has been led on the same pattern as that of sparrow, to look after all familial needs. Jaya thinks it an ugly sadistic story to be told to children,

I have a feeling that even if little boys can forget this story, little girls never will. They will store this story in this subconscious their unconscious or whatever, and eventually they will become that damanably, insufferably priggish sparrow looking after their homes, their babies.... And to hell with the rest of the world, stay at home, look after you babies keep out the rest of the world and you are safe... I know better now.... You’re never safe (17).

Folktales and fables are used to influence the minds of the readers and infuse a sense of morality in them. Through these tales the people are warned against lying, stealing and cheating as, “Tell lies now and you’ll be lizard in your next life, steal things you’ll be a dog, cheat people and you’ll be a snake”(128).

Jaya is a gifted writer. But because Mohan does not like her writing and nurtures an idea, through Jaya’s writing, public will know their personal life and hence restricts her writing career. Jaya is very faithfully given up her hobby and fits into the traditional role of an ideal wife. She even shuts her eyes to the corrupt practice of her husband. She compromises her creative, talented writing skills and writes silly and non-sense things for a Magazine the ‘Seeta’ column. This Seeta column, in course of time becomes, a likable column for her female readers, Mohan and to her editors, Jaya sees in this Seeta columns a patriarchal construct, she painfully realizes, “Women...I could not write about, because they might resemble Mohan’s mother, aunt, my mother, or aunt. Seeta was safer (P.149) Jaya, deliberately gives up her creative aspect, which is so close to her heart—and ignores even those subjects of woman’s suffering etc. She negates her own self and accepts the role of a traditional housewife.

Both of them are leading their life like “a pair of bullocks yoked together”(8). The one was pretending, as most couples do, to be happy. But in reality, in a real happily married life there is no room for hypocrisies and pretensions. The novelist at this point of the novel exposes the myth of a perfect happy wife & mother. Towards the end of the novel as realization dawns upon her she rejects the image of traditional women like Sita, Savitri

and utters, “No, what have I to do with these mythical women? I can’t fool myself. The truth is simpler. Two bullocks yoked together... it is more comfortable for them to move in the same direction. To go in different direction would be painful...”(11)

What Deshpande had pointed out from the above comment is nothing but the traditional institution of marriage. For the smooth functioning of the marriage life ‘two bullocks’ are expected to move in the same direction, but the fact is that it is the husband who decides the matters and the other ‘bullock’ that is the wife is expected ‘to move’ as per his wishes. By the image of ‘Two bullocks yoked together’ Deshpande has presented the whole panorama of Indian marriage institution.

Aware of the fact that breaking off the bonds of family would result in loneliness and disintegration of the larger social set-up, Jaya looks for happiness and self-fulfillment within the family itself. Deshpande suggests that rebelliousness is not the solution to the problems of life. Jaya understands that she also has contributed to her victimization and that she had to fight her own battle and work out her own solution. Accordingly, she feels the necessity to break the silence, articulate her predicament, and establish her identity. She knows that there is always that there is always room for discussion and compromise.

The critic P.Ramamoorthy affirms, that, “...It is possible for a woman to live in the world where men also live” (38). She decides that she will live from now onwards without sacrificing her identity or individuality. She will make adjustment but it will not be a servile one. Her giving up writing for the newspaper column ‘Seeta’ symbolises giving up her traditional role model of wife, now she will write what she wants to write and will not look up at Mohan’s face for an answer she wants. This makes her voyage of discovery complete. Very appropriately Sumitra Kukreti remarks this:” The realization that she can have her own way – yathechasi tatha kuru – gives a new confidence to Jaya. This is her emancipation” (Kukreti: 197). She remembers the words of Ramukka, “Jaya, the happiness of your husband and home depends entirely on you” (138)

The novel seems to end not on a note of bitterness but conciliation where Mohan seems remains important for Jaya. Unlike Nora in Ibsen’s *A Doll House* who walks out on her husband, Jaya decides to give life a chance because, “We can always hope. Without that, life would be impossible. And if there is anything I know now it is this: life has always to be made possible” (193).

Finally, the words from Bhagavad-Gita ‘Do as you Desire’ appeals to her. Sri Krishna told Arjuna in *Bhagavadgita* that he himself had to make his choice - yathechasi tatha kuru – ‘Do as you desire’, “But now I understand. With this line, after all those millions of words of instruction, Krishna confers humanness on Arjuna, “I have given you knowledge. Now you make the choice. The choice is yours. Do as you desire”(192).It is this harsh reality Shashi Deshpande tries to project through the protagonist Jaya, who at the end, chooses to break the long silence of the past. Jaya understands the truth of life when she follows the path of philosophy. Religion and mythology are part of humanity and one cannot escape it. The solution for all miseries is to turn to God for assurance and solace. The philosophical base runs throughout the novel. This makes Shashi Deshpande’s writing unique.

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## Ed Bullins' "A Son, Come Home" - A Play of Lost Relationship

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### Abstract:

*All their faces turned into the lights and you work on them black nigger magic, and cleanse them at having seen the ugliness. And if the beautiful see themselves, they will love themselves - LeRoi Jones.*

Among the young black artists who have taken the Black Theatre into the black community LeRoi Jones, Robert Macbeth and Ed Bullins were the most important. Bullins (1935 - ) tries to teach the Blacks to build good families. Bullins is one of America's leading and most prolific black playwrights. He focuses on the sordid reality of African Americans. Through the play "A Son, Come Home", Bullins tries to bring out the African American's yearning for familial relationships. The dominant theme of the play ASCH is the family bond, consisting mainly of the bond between mother and son their separation and their union. The play ASCH is an analysis of mother-son relationships. He loses his mother, for a period of nine years – the period, which is very important for a child to be with the mother, a period when he had to be moulded. Rightly speaking, the play can be given a subtitle **A Play of Lost Relationships**.

**Key Words:** black community, familialrelations, separation, reality.

LeRoi Jones, in his poetic essay entitled The Revolutionary Theatre, outlines the "iconology" of the Black theatre movement:

"All their faces turned into the lights and you work on them black nigger magic, and cleanse them at having seen the ugliness. And if the beautiful see themselves, they will love themselves" (quoted in Neal 279).

Among the young black artists who have taken the Black Theatre into the black community LeRoi Jones, Robert Macbeth and Ed Bullins were the most important. Bullins (1935 - ) who has used the above quotation as an epigraph in his first collection, Five Plays by Ed Bullins, tries to teach the Blacks to build healthy relationships, good families, and establish happy, peaceful families. American society is in the process of very rapid conceptual change. The family system in American society is not identical with the Indian family system, for there is more disintegration, less harmony, lack of values, and gaps in understanding. Research on various societies such as China, the Soviet Union, India, the Arab countries, and North Africa, suggests that family systems in these societies are becoming similar to that of the American society.

As Leslie Catherine Sanders observes, the matters Ed Bullins "takes up often are intimate, sensitive, and particular to the black experience." Bullins, raised in the ghetto area of Philadelphia, the chief city of Pennsylvania, USA, is one of America's leading and most prolific black playwrights.

He focuses, in his writings, on the sordid reality of African Americans. The sense of human misery, loneliness and the portrayal of the separation of a mother and a son for years is Bullins "accentuated image". His basic concern is with black people, their values, aspirations, eagerness, desires, sentiments, manners, hopes, aims, their characters and dreams. He has a deep sensitivity, compassion, sympathy, kindness, love and understanding of African American that enables him to evince a truthful presentation of his people. All agree that, in Clive Barnes' words, Bullins "writes like an angel".

Through the play "A Son, Come Home", (1969) (hereafter ASCH) Bullins tries to bring out the African American's yearning for familial relationships. His portrayal of the existing black familial set-up throughout the play ASCH is a picture of the black families in America, which have lost their relationships.

The dominant theme of the play ASCH is the family bond, consisting mainly of the bond between mother and son. It is an important play "because, although Bullins frequently portrays the black family, only in this play does he treat the relationship between mother and son" (Sanders Development of Black Theatre 205).

Although Bullins' mother, Bertha Marie Queene Bullins, was "an intermittent agnostic" when she was young, she "gradually became a fundamentalist religious Pentacostal to such an extent that she alienated and shunned the whole of the family," and is the (autobiographical) subject of Bullins' "A Son, Come Home". His mother believed in her old age that "anything outside of praying and Bible-beating is a sin" (Hay 234). In ASCH, a twenty-four-year-old son, who is rising in the music world, returns to his home and discovers that his "mother has just about completely withdrawn from worldly concerns. She lives in the austere hostel [a place where there will be no pleasures, comforts and will be severely and morally strict] of a religious sect, reserving her only passion to call down retribution [as a punishment that is considered to be morally right and fully deserved] on the defeated man [Andy] who fathered her son but never married her." The play shows both the

good and bad feelings – “ambivalent feelings” – between an African American mother and her son (Hay 225-27).

The play ASCH deals with the “Flashbacks in the lives of a black mother and her son whom she hasn’t seen in years” (Hatch Black Playwrights 37). The story of the play deals with a mother and a son, separated from each other for a long time, and their union. The son’s being sent away, and his attempt to come back to live with his mother, and the mother’s predicament are dealt with in this play.

In general, mothers often assume assertive and self-confident stances. They show a bold and confident manner of self-expression, a strong and self-assured personality that gains other people’s attention and respect, even occasionally dominant roles in family life, securing a strong link with their children. They act mostly as caretakers and sometimes as providers for the family. In black American culture, the mother-son attachment seems to be especially strong. Further, it is in ASCH that there is a dramatic portrayal of the mother’s mental breakdown. She, with striking disclosure, reveals that she has nurtured her son well as long as she could, and has brought for him everything he needed.

Bullins holds African Americans and unites them together so as to make one, and join them by a moral bond in ASCH. In this play, a “son who returns home after a ten-year absence finds that his relationship with his mother has deteriorated beyond repair” (quoted in Peterson 84). After an absence of nine years, Michael (the son) has come to visit his mother (Bernice) who has become a religious fanatic with excessive enthusiasm and often-intense uncritical devotion. She lives “in a tyrannical church-run home,” which exercises unrestrained authority. She lives in a severe and morally strict hostel, having no pleasures and comforts, where a separate group of people shares especially religious beliefs and opinions. She chooses to be there in such a kind of place as a punishment. She considers her staying in that place as morally right, deserving it fully for the reason that she has mothered a son without marring anyone. The stay in “tyrannical church-run home”, too, is one reason for the mother avoiding her own son. Their conversation evokes painful memories in both. Finally, the mother goes backward into her religious environment, and the son returns to his life.

The mother in the play, ASCH, is focused here as a woman who could set aside her grief, taking great pleasure and satisfaction from her music – a new found freedom. She revels in music and songs, especially spiritual songs. She is a soft and tender-hearted woman, a mother concerned very much about her son who has been away from her for too long. She, in this situation, reveals the universally natural attitude of a mother towards her son who is now deprived of shelter and protection. The son is helpless – out on a limb – and exposed to the cold, waiting for a long time trying to meet her after nine years of separation. There is a constant guilt, anxiety and unhappy feeling in the mother, caused by the knowledge of having done wrong, when she states over again “It shouldn’t have taken you three times” (187) coming home to meet me. There is a deep longing, love, joy, and expectation in her, but she is also disturbed, annoyed, exasperated and irritated in this context.

As James C. Coleman says, “The success in a relationship is determined by how well the expectations and demands are fulfilled”. Here, expectations are present, but not fulfilled, and demands are there, but not assumed. This is a family where the mother lives in one place, the son in another, and when the son visits home to meet the mother, she is not there as he expects her to be. Here, the son’s expectation that the mother will be awaiting his arrival is so great that he is equally disappointed when he sees that she is not there. This evinces the failure in the family unit where unity is thwarted. The mother who has made herself totally independent does not seem to be upset. She does not give the impression that she is very worried, disturbed greatly in mind, or waiting eagerly for the son. This is disappointing to the son, and the incident gives us an insight into the type of a disintegrating family that Bullins is focussing on.

The play speaks quietly of something fearful. It reminds us of the “time wasted, and of the blacks’ common losses.” In an interview, Bullins has said, “I was very concerned with the ‘You can’t go home again’ theme – the breakdown of communications among loved ones, and misunderstanding among good intentions. The erosion of time on precious relationships has been a major concern of mine” (DiGaetani 41). The mother and the son are in search of the family and its definition of life. The mother here is portrayed as a loving and concerned person, but as a matter of fact, contrary to the Indian mother. Mostly in an Indian family context, if the mother had been separated from the son for nine years, she would have been waiting eagerly in anticipation, standing, weeping, looking forward to meeting him, and not allowing him to wait for her, even for a moment more than the appropriate time. One cannot declare untrue that the mother, portrayed here in the play ASCH, has real love for the son. She has a considerate attitude and a concern for her son, and feels sad that he had been waiting in the cold for her, but she does not make much about it. She repeatedly points out that he has been “Standin’ all that time in the cold”. The son, Michael says that it was not cold, but the mother repeatedly asks him “Did you get cold, Michael?” (188). Sensing the concern, the worry in her voice, the son responds saying that he had walked Twenty-third Street toward the South to kill time and in a pleading way reveals that he is a bit annoyed at her not waiting for him, even though he already telephoned. The mother very lovingly utters that there was no need for him to wander in the cold, that the home is his own place, and it always has been. She evinces a strong desire to be happy again and reconcile differences with her family. She shows a mark of

authority. At the same time, she looks displeased and sorrowfully feels that she should not have made him wait, but she had informed him. He had come early, so it was not her fault. The son evidently reacts in a spontaneous way and comes early because he is going to meet his mother after nine years. The painful uneasiness of mind in the son who is free, fun-loving, and who has come to see his mother is contrasted by Bullins with the cool and calculated way in which the mother responds. This suggests that the son is the one who is more spontaneous and affectionate than the mother. This behavioural pattern resembles the general pattern of sons observed by James C. Coleman in his book on human psychology, "The son is innocent, spontaneous, and fun-loving; the parent is authoritative. The son is mature and reality-oriented".

While the mother asks her son how long he had been out, he responds "Nine years". Nine years is too long a period of gap for any child to be away from its mother, and the very fact that the son had been away is too much to bear, for he even wonders whether his mother would identify him as her own son now that he has grown up and has become a man. "Nine years it's been. I wonder if she'll know me" (190) the 'boy' says. Further, there is in him a deep longing to stay with the mother for long. According to McConnell, "A human infant, if separated from its mother, may fall into a profound depression" (438).

This incident suggests that the mother and son had no chance or occasion to meet each other for nine years, when the son was away studying. Despite the love for his mother, the son's attitude and speech prove that he is yearning and longing for home, a home where he will be taken due care of, loved, and understood. As James C. Coleman puts it:

For a relationship to be successful, it is important that each individual [here, mother and son] know what is expected and in turn make it clear what one expects of the other person.

Here the son expects so many things, but fails to make it clear to his mother for there is something that prevents him from speaking so openly. The mother seems to be a bit different from what she was before. The son in this scene seems to be an adolescent waiting for and yearning for the attention, the caresses, sweet-talk, and cajoling tendencies of a woman from his mother.

After sending her son to study in a far away place, in order to curb her natural feelings, desires and to have a good life she chooses a religious life, living in an inexpensive way. The only way to survive for the mother here is to live on bread and some fruits. Sacrificing her pleasures and health, she lives on for the sake of her son. But even this living has a different impact on the woman. Due to this type of spiritual living, the mother has become a little detached. When she observes how tired the son looks, standing there outside, she is ready to take him out or prepare some coffee for him. At the same time she is bothered about the religious meeting that she has to attend. As she is involved in religious activities, she has no interest in any of the pleasures in the world. After a long period of nine years, when Michael invites his mother to go out with him for a concert, she refuses and denies him the opportunity:

Son: You mean you wouldn't come to see me play [music] even if I were appearing here in Philly?

Mother: That's right, Michael. I wouldn't come. I'm past all that. (210)

Here the mother goes to the extent of displeasing the son after nine years of separation, because she has become a sort of recluse who leads a secluded life, hidden from view and shunning the society of others. Religion has soothed her in her distress but has imprisoned her in its clutches, not allowing her even to enjoy companionship with her son. It has comforted her distress and has imprisoned her by protecting her from further burdens of the world.

The son responds, "But it's my life, Mother" (211). It is as if he is saying; always you are thinking and talking of the Lord but what about me? Am I not your child, that the Lord created? This is a universal cry of a child, here placed against the indifference of the mother. It is dramatic and seems to say that the mother thinks of God but not her son. This is the exasperated cry of Michael, the adult child longing for the love of his mother. The play ASCH is an analysis of mother-son relationships. He loses his mother, for a period of nine years – the period, which is very important for a child to be with the mother, a period when he had to be moulded. Rightly speaking, the play can be given a subtitle *A Play of Lost Relationships*. Again at this juncture it is worthy to note that Bullins presents the Blacks as a 'lost people,' people who have lost their familial ties, affection and relationships. In the play ASCH, he has dealt with the stiff attitude of a mother towards her son, and against the church, which has made the mother become a religious fanatic. His tirade is not only at the church but also at the people who have been dispossessed, driven out homeless, and the people without special knowledge or experience toward having a well run home.

The mother's only consolation and Bullins' optimism in the end of the play is that the son has something to live for, that is, he has a goal in life, and that is his music. This talent was inculcated in him by his mother. So the mother blesses him in the end, saying that he is a man now and that he has to live his life on his own. She has left him a legacy out of her lost life, and that is music. "Do the best with what you have" (211), the mother's words echo Bullins' message, which is a universal one that one should make the best out of what one has, and not aim for the unattainable. This is a message of hope for the Blacks that they can still weave their lives in a better way.

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## Marginalization in African Literature: Vulnerability and Poverty in Rural Africa.

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**Abstract:** Africa is one of the poorest regions in the world. This paper aims at the vulnerability and poverty suffered in rural Africa and how African Literature has exposed to the world. In recent years, trade in Africa has assumed greater importance as a means of alleviating poverty. Most attempts at the creation of an African language literature have primarily been conceived and bewray the past and present situation in Africa. Marginalization is the social process of being relegated to the fringe of society. One such example of marginalization is the marginalization of women. This paper is also concerned with the depiction of black women's marginalization and oppression.

**Key words:** poverty, culture, stereotypes and marginalization.

While it is widely assumed that disability, poverty and health are closely linked in rural Africa, let us see how the African literature depicts their culture. Many prominent writers and critics have drawn attention to the way in which women have been silenced, stereotyped and marginalized in African literature. This paper consists of an analysis of three works: Alan Paton's 'Cry, The Beloved Country', Chinua Achebe's 'Things Fall Apart' and Tsitsi Dangarembga's 'Nervous Conditions'.

*Cry, the Beloved Country* (1948) established Paton as the most eloquent voice of South African liberal humanism. *Cry, the Beloved Country* chronicles the searches of two fathers for their sons. For Kumalo, the search begins as a physical one, and he spends a number of days combing Johannesburg in search of Absalom. Although most of his stops yield only the faintest clues as to Absalom's whereabouts, the clues present a constantly evolving picture of who Absalom has become. As Kumalo knocks on the doors of Johannesburg's slums, he hears of his son's change from factory worker to burglar, then from promising reformatory pupil to killer. When Kumalo and Absalom are finally reunited after Absalom's incarceration, they are virtual strangers to each other. The ordeal of the trial brings them closer together, but it is not until after the guilty verdict that Kumalo begins to understand Absalom. In Absalom's letters from prison, Kumalo finds evidence of true repentance and familiar flashes of the little boy he remembers.

Jarvis has no actual searching to do, but it takes him little time to realize that he knows little about his own son. Away from Ndotsheni, Arthur has become a tireless advocate for South Africa's black population, an issue on which he and his father have not always agreed. Reconciliation with a dead man might seem an impossible task, but Jarvis finds the necessary materials in Arthur's writings, which give Jarvis clear and succinct insights into the man that Arthur had become, and even instill in Jarvis a sense of pride.

Kumalo's search for his son takes place against the backdrop of massive social inequalities, which, if not directly responsible for Absalom's troubles, are certainly catalysts for them. Because black South Africans are allowed to own only limited quantities of land, the natural resources of these areas are sorely taxed. The soil of Ndotsheni turns on its inhabitants—exhausted by over-planting and over-grazing, the land becomes sharp and hostile. For this reason, most young people leave the villages to seek work in the cities. Both Gertrude and Absalom find themselves caught up in this wave of emigration, but the economic lure of Johannesburg leads to danger. Facing limited opportunities and disconnected from their family and tribal traditions, both Gertrude and Absalom turn to crime.

Gertrude's and Absalom's stories recur on a large scale in Johannesburg, and the result is a city with slum neighborhoods and black gangs that direct their wrath against whites. In search of quick riches, the poor burglarize white homes and terrorize their occupants. The white population then becomes paranoid, and the little sympathy they do have for problems such as poor mine conditions disappears. Blacks find themselves subjected to even more injustice, and the cycle spirals downward. Both sides explain their actions as responses to violence from the other side. Absalom's lawyer, for instance, claims that Absalom is society's victim, and white homeowners gather government troops to counter what they see as a rising menace. There is precious little understanding on either side, and it seems that the cycle of inequality and injustice will go on endlessly.

The novel's descriptions of the beauty of Natal highlight the contrast between the various ways of life in South Africa. The hills and rivers of white farmland are always depicted as being fruitful and lovely, but the land of the black farmers is always shown as barren, dry, and hostile. This contrast between the natural beauty of South Africa and the ugliness brought on by its politics shows the necessity of change. It also, however, offers some hope. The land may be ravaged, but it is clearly not naturally infertile. With the right nurturing and protection, the potential for real beauty seems endless.

As a story about a culture on the verge of change, *Things Fall Apart* deals with how the prospect and reality of change affect various characters. The tension about whether change should be privileged over tradition often involves questions of personal status. Okonkwo, for example, resists the new political and religious orders because he feels that they are not manly and that he himself will not be manly if he consents to join or even tolerate them. To some extent, Okonkwo's resistance of cultural change is also due to his fear of losing societal status. His sense of self-worth is dependent upon the traditional standards by which society judges him. This system of evaluating the self inspires many of the clan's outcasts to embrace Christianity. Long scorned, these outcasts find in the Christian value system a refuge from the Igbo cultural values that place them below everyone else. In their new community, these converts enjoy a more elevated status.

Many of the villagers are excited about the new opportunities and techniques that the missionaries bring. This European influence, however, threatens to extinguish the need for the mastery of traditional methods of farming, harvesting, building, and cooking. These traditional methods, once crucial for survival, are now, to varying degrees, dispensable. Throughout the novel, Achebe shows how dependent such traditions are upon storytelling and language and thus how quickly the abandonment of the Igbo language for English could lead to the eradication of these traditions.

Okonkwo's relationship with his late father shapes much of his violent and ambitious demeanor. He wants to rise above his father's legacy of spendthrift, indolent behavior, which he views as weak and therefore effeminate. This association is inherent in the clan's language—the narrator mentions that the word for a man who has not taken any of the expensive, prestige-indicating titles is *agbala*, which also means “woman.” But, for the most part, Okonkwo's idea of manliness is not the clan's. He associates masculinity with aggression and feels that anger is the only emotion that he should display. For this reason, he frequently beats his wives, even threatening to kill them from time to time. We are told that he does not think about things, and we see him act rashly and impetuously. Yet others who are in no way effeminate do not behave in this way. Obierika, unlike Okonkwo, “was a man who thought about things.” Whereas Obierika refuses to accompany the men on the trip to kill Ikemefuna, Okonkwo not only volunteers to join the party that will execute his surrogate son but also violently stabs him with his machete simply because he is afraid of appearing weak.

Okonkwo's seven-year exile from his village only reinforces his notion that men are stronger than women. While in exile, he lives among the kinsmen of his motherland but resents the period in its entirety. The exile is his opportunity to get in touch with his feminine side and to acknowledge his maternal ancestors, but he keeps reminding himself that his maternal kinsmen are not as warlike and fierce as he remembers the villagers of Umuofia to be. He faults them for their preference of negotiation, compliance, and avoidance over anger and bloodshed. In Okonkwo's understanding, his uncle Uchendu exemplifies this pacifist (and therefore somewhat effeminate) mode.

Language is an important theme in *Things Fall Apart* on several levels. In demonstrating the imaginative, often formal language of the Igbo, Achebe emphasizes that Africa is not the silent or incomprehensible continent that books such as *Heart of Darkness* made it out to be. Rather, by peppering the novel with Igbo words, Achebe shows that the Igbo language is too complex for direct translation into English. Similarly, Igbo culture cannot be understood within the framework of European colonialist values. Achebe also points out that Africa has many *different* languages: the villagers of Umuofia, for example, make fun of Mr. Brown's translator because his language is slightly different from their own.

On a macroscopic level, it is extremely significant that Achebe chose to write *Things Fall Apart* in English—he clearly intended it to be read by the West at least as much, if not more, than by his fellow Nigerians. His goal was to critique and emend the portrait of Africa that was painted by so many writers of the colonial period. Doing so required the use of English, the language of those colonial writers. Through his inclusion of proverbs, folktales, and songs translated from the Igbo language, Achebe managed to capture and convey the rhythms, structures, cadences, and beauty of the Igbo language.

In their descriptions, categorizations, and explanations of human behavior and wisdom, the Igbo often use animal anecdotes to naturalize their rituals and beliefs. The presence of animals in their folklore reflects the environment in which they live—not yet “modernized” by European influence. Though the colonizers, for the most part, view the Igbo's understanding of the world as rudimentary, the Igbo perceive these animal stories, such as the account of how the tortoise's shell came to be bumpy, as logical explanations of natural phenomena. Another important animal image is the figure of the sacred python. Enoch's alleged killing and eating of the python symbolizes the transition to a new form of spirituality and a new religious order. Enoch's disrespect of the python clashes with the Igbo's reverence for it, epitomizing the incompatibility of colonialist and indigenous values.

Achebe depicts the locusts that descend upon the village in highly allegorical terms that prefigure the arrival of the white settlers, who will feast on and exploit the resources of the Igbo. The fact that the Igbo eat these locusts highlights how innocuous they take them to be. Similarly, those who convert to Christianity fail to realize the damage that the culture of the colonizer does to the culture of the colonized.



The language that Achebe uses to describe the locusts indicates their symbolic status. The repetition of words like “settled” and “every” emphasizes the suddenly ubiquitous presence of these insects and hints at the way in which the arrival of the white settlers takes the Igbo off guard. Furthermore, the locusts are so heavy they break the tree branches, which symbolizes the fracturing of Igbo traditions and culture under the onslaught of colonialism and white settlement. Perhaps the most explicit clue that the locusts symbolize the colonists is Obierika’s comment in Chapter 15: “the Oracle . . . said that other white men were on their way. They were locusts. . . .”

Women suffer especially because of oppressive cultural traditions, many of which still persist in modern African societies. The oppressive aspects include, but are not limited to, patriarchy, polygamy, arranged early marriages, sacrificial marriages for the benefit of male children and general subordination of women. Even today, in contemporary African societies it is still widely believed that a woman ought to stay at home, provide for the family and bear children. Furthermore, many women also hope to find inner peace through childbearing.

Tambu was born a girl and thus faces a fundamental disadvantage, since traditional African social practice dictates that the oldest male child is deemed the future head of the family. All of the family’s resources are poured into developing his abilities and preparing him to lead and provide for his clan. When Nhamo dies, the tragedy is all the more profound since no boy exists to take his place. Tambu steps into the role of future provider, yet she is saddled with the prejudices and limitations that shackled most African girls of her generation. Her fight for an education and a better life is compounded by her gender. Gender inequality and sexual discrimination form the backdrop of all of the female characters’ lives. In the novel, inequality is as infectious as disease, a crippling attitude that kills ambition, crushes women’s spirits, and discourages them from supporting and rallying future generations and other female relatives.

The essential action of the novel involves Tambu’s experiences in a Western-style educational setting, and the mission school both provides and represents privileged opportunity and enlightenment. Despite Ma’Shingayi’s strong objections, Tambu knows the only hope she has of lifting her family out of poverty lies in education. However, the mission school poses threats, as well: Western institutions and systems of thought may cruelly and irreversibly alter native Africans who are subjected to them. Nyasha, who has seen firsthand the effect of being immersed in a foreign culture, grows suspicious of an unquestioning acceptance of colonialism’s benefits. She fears that the dominating culture may eventually stifle, limit, or eliminate the long-established native culture of Rhodesia—in other words, she fears that colonialism may force assimilation. The characters’ lives are already entrenched in a national identity that reflects a synthesis of African and colonialist elements. The characters’ struggle to confront and integrate the various social and political influences that shape their lives forms the backbone and central conflict of *Nervous Conditions*.

Underpinning *Nervous Conditions* are conflicts between those characters who endorse traditional ways and those who look to Western or so-called “modern” answers to problems they face. Dangarembga remains noncommittal in her portrayal of the divergent belief systems of Babamukuru and his brother Jeremiah, and she shows both men behaving rather irrationally. Jeremiah foolishly endorses a shaman’s ritual cleansing of the homestead, while Babamukuru’s belief in a Christian ceremony seems to be rooted in his rigid and unyielding confidence that he is always right. As Tambu becomes more fixed and established in her life at the mission school, she begins to embrace attitudes and beliefs different from those of her parents and her traditional upbringing. Nyasha, ever the voice of reasonable dissent, warns Tambu that a wholesale acceptance of supposedly progressive ideas represents a dangerous departure and too radical of a break with the past.

Physical spaces are at the heart of the tensions Tambu faces between life at the mission and the world of the homestead. At first, Tambu is isolated, relegated to toiling in the fields and tending to her brother’s whims during his infrequent visits. When she attends the local school, she must walk a long way to her daily lessons, but she undertakes the journey willingly in order to receive an education. When the family cannot pay her school fees, Mr. Matimba takes Tambu to the first city she has ever seen, where she sells green corn. Tambu’s increased awareness and knowledge of the world coincides with her growing physical distance from the homestead. The mission school is an important location in the novel, a bastion of possibility that becomes the centerpiece of Tambu’s world and the source of many of the changes she undergoes. At the end of *Nervous Conditions*, Tambu’s life has taken her even farther away from the homestead, to the convent school where she is without family or friends and must rely solely on herself.

Emancipation is a term that appears again and again in *Nervous Conditions*. Usually, the term is associated with being released from slavery or with a country finally freeing itself from the colonial power that once controlled it. These concepts figure into the broader scope of the novel, as Rhodesia’s citizens struggle to amass and assert their identity as a people while still under British control. When the term *emancipation* is applied to Tambu and the women in her extended family, it takes on newer and richer associations. Tambu sees her life as a gradual process of being freed of the limitations that have previously beset her. When she first leaves for the mission school, she sees the move as a temporary emancipation. Her growing knowledge and evolving perceptions are a form of emancipation from her old ways of thinking. By the end of the novel,

emancipation becomes more than simply a release from poverty or restriction. Emancipation is equated with freedom and an assertion of personal liberty.

Dual perspectives and multiple interpretations appear throughout *Nervous Conditions*. When Babamukuru finds Lucia a job cooking at the mission, Tambu is in awe of her uncle's power and generosity, viewing it as a selfless act of kindness. Nyasha, however, believes there is nothing heroic in her father's gesture and that in assisting his sister-in-law he is merely fulfilling his duty as the head of the family. In addition to often wildly differing interpretations of behavior, characters share an unstable and conflicting sense of self. For Tambu, her two worlds, the homestead and the mission, are often opposed, forcing her to divide her loyalties and complicating her sense of who she is. When she wishes to avoid attending her parents' wedding, however, these dual selves offer her safety, protection, and an escape from the rigors of reality. As her uncle chides her, Tambu imagines another version of herself watching the scene safely from the foot of the bed.

Tambu's garden plot represents both tradition and escape from that tradition. On one hand, it is a direct link to her heritage, and the rich tradition has guided her people, representing the essential ability to live off the land. It is a direct connection to the legacy she inherits and the wisdom and skills that are passed down from generation to generation, and Tambu fondly remembers helping her grandmother work the garden. At the same time, the garden represents Tambu's means of escape, since she hopes to pay her school fees and further her education by growing and selling vegetables. In this sense, the garden represents the hopes of the future and a break with the past. With a new form of wisdom acquired at the mission school and the power and skills that come with it, Tambu will never have to toil and labor again. Her mother, however, must water the valuable and fertile garden patch despite being exhausted from a long day of work.

For Tambu, the mission stands as a bright and shining beacon, the repository of all of her hopes and ambitions. It represents a portal to a new world and a turning away from the enslaving poverty that has marked Tambu's past. The mission is an escape and an oasis, a whitewashed world where refinement and sophistication are the rule. It is also an exciting retreat for Tambu, where she is exposed to new ideas and new modes of thinking. The mission sets Tambu on the path to becoming the strong, articulate adult she is destined to become.

In the family's lengthy holiday celebration, the ox represents the opulence and status Babamukuru and his family have achieved. Meat, a rare commodity, is an infrequent treat for most families, and Tambu's parents and the rest of the extended clan willingly partake of the ox. At the same time, they secretly resent such an ostentatious display of wealth, since the ox is a symbol of the great gulf that exists between the educated branch of the family and those who have been left behind to struggle. Maiguru closely regulates the consumption of the ox and parcels out the meat over the several days of the family's gathering. Eventually the meat starts to go bad, and the other women chide Maiguru for her poor judgment and overly strict control of its distribution. At that point, the ox suggests Maiguru's shortcomings and how, in the eyes of the others, her education and comfortable life have made her an ineffective provider.

*Nervous Conditions* offers us insight into ways in which womanist and feminist perspectives can be usefully combined. The novel contains some sympathetic insight into certain men's lives. For instance, this is evident in the case of Babamukuru. The novel also focuses on self-actualisation and has a visionary potential, thus highlighting womanist concerns.

Thus a gist of these works shows the marginalization in African Literature which cast light on the ways in which rural African people are oppressed by traditional and cultural norms in African countries.

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## Marginalization in Shashi Deshpande's *The Dark Holds No Terrors*

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**Abstract:** *Shashi Deshpande was born in 1938 in Dharward, a prominent place known for its education and culture in north Karnataka. Her father AdyaRangacharya (Sriranga) was a highly reputed and well-known Kannada playwright. She was educated in Mumbai and Bangalore, and secured her M.A. in English from the University of Mysore. ShashiDeshpande also received degrees in Economics and Law. She is one of the foremost Indian Novelists of the modernity. She occupies an important place among the Indian English Novelists. She is a great lover of the British classical novels in English, especially the novels of Jane Austen. ShashiDeshpande, has emerged as a writer possessing deep insight in the female psyche. Her major concern is to exhibit the conflict of the modern educated women. Focusing on the marital relation, she seeks to expose the tradition by which a woman is trained to play her deferential role in the family. She has dealt very minutely and delicately with the problems of middle-class educated women in her novels. ShashiDeshpande works with ambiguous world that falls between reality and unreality.*

*The process whereby something or someone is pushed to the edge of a group and a crossed the lesser importance. This is predominantly a social phenomenon by which minority or sub-group is excluded, and their needs or desires ignored. Within the canon of ShashiDeshpande's writing the one particular novel *The Dark Holds No Terrors* lends itself admirably well to explore the concept of Marginalization. As such, the paper will explore the elements of Marginalization in *The Dark Holds No Terrors*. This article deals with the novel, *The Dark Holds No Terrors*. The novel focuses on the search for individuality and struggle of the protagonist, Saritha. She is the central character of the story. The story revolves around terror in her life. The protagonist is helpless within her family itself. Deshpande has discussed the protagonist's childhood experiences and marital life. Saritha is obsessed with the bitterness of the memories of the tortures inflicted on her by her mother after the death of her brother. Her mother often cursed her. At one point Saritha, quits home. She studies medicine and eventually gets married to Manohar. Saritha's enormous growth in her career leads to egoistic problem between them. The entire system of her family gets shattered. Darkness enters into her life in the night through Manohar. He takes upper hand and tortures her in sexual activities. However, in the morning he is a kind and loving man. Saritha, continues to have tough time in her martial life also. The second coming to her home makes no big changes, but conversation with her father brings hope and optimism in her decision. Eventually she prepares herself to face the life as it is. At the same time, subconsciously she is deeply rooted to the traditional values of the society. The novel *The Dark Holds No Terrors* shows Deshpande's efficient creative power in dealing with the faces of modern women. The novel also implies a vital symbol that the fear lays not in darkness but within one's own conscience. *The Dark Holds No Terrors* is a tremendously powerful portrayal of one woman's fight to survive in a world that offers no easy outputs.*

*ShashiDeshpande occupies a prominent place among the Indian English Novelists through her vivid portrayal of middle class Indian women and their sufferings. She focuses mainly on the career women and their quest for identity in the male chauvinistic Indian social set up. *The Dark Holds No Terrors* is not an exception to this. Saritha, the protagonist of this novel, goes in search for individuality but feels helpless within the family itself, which excludes her. Though she is an educated woman, she is not exempted from gender discrimination and patriarchal domination. She leads a life of a victim from her childhood days to her married life. Her marital life also places in the endangered space where she is terribly caught. As in most of her novels, the second coming happens in this novel also but it makes no big changes, though conversation with her father brings hope and optimism in her decision.*

**Key words:** *Post colonialism, Feminism, Self-identity, Domination, Egotism, Metamorphosis, Submissiveness, Marginalization*

India is a land of amazing cultural diversity. The south, north, west and east have their own distinct cultures and almost every state has carved out its own cultural niche. There is hardly any culture in the world that is varied and unique as India and it is Indian Writing in English that presents its ancient civilization to the rest of the world. Indian English Literature refers to the body of work by writers in India, who write in English language and whose native or co-native language could be one of the numerous regional languages of India. Indian English Literature has a relatively recent history; it is only one and half centuries old. It is also associated with the works of members of the Indian Diaspora, such as V.S.Naipaul, Kiran Desai, JhumpaLahiri and Salman Rushdie, who are of Indian descent. The present day Indian English writing comes under the broad realm of

post-colonial literature – the production from previously colonized countries such as India. Indian literature in English had begun several decades ago and is still in a continuous process of metamorphosis.

Literature is a truthful expression of life through the medium of language. Its success lies in blending both art and morality in such a beautiful way that art, in the long run, becomes the thought. It reflects not only the social reality but also shapes the complex ways in which men and women organize themselves and their perception of the socio-cultural reality. Over the centuries, literature has been used as a social forum in which gender based discriminations in the society and the torture inflicted on women in general are expressed. The writers who have expressed such problems of a suffering woman are namely Kamala Markandaya, Ruth Jahabvala, Anita Desai, Kiran Desai, NayantraSaghal and ShashiDeshpande. These women writers constitute a major segment of contemporary Indian Writing in English and most of them have used fiction as a medium of expression to present the plight of women.

The feminist's literary criticism has developed as a part of the Women's movement and its effect has brought about a revolution in literary studies. The objective of feminism is to wake up the women gender and it is the right time to come out from the shells. Unlike other writers, ShashiDeshpande shows variations in her novels. The main motive of ShashiDeshpande is to bring out the sufferings of middle-class women by probing deep into the understanding of their known and unknown problems. She has shown the differentiation in a clear manner. Through her novels, she deliberately insists freedom for the Indian women within the Indian socio-cultural value system and institutions. Her feminism doesn't uproot the woman from her background but tries to expose the different ideological elements that shape her. The protagonists of ShashiDeshpande's novels are modern, educated, independent women, and aged between thirty and thirty-five. They search for freedom and self-identity. ShashiDeshpande depicts Man-Woman relations gendered humanism, class-consciousness and quest for identity in her novels. Woman has become a victim of physical, cultural, and social, sexual and emotional brutality by men within and outside relationships, which resulted in the Marginalization of them in every sphere. She strongly admits that feminism is an entirely personalized perception. The prescribed norms of woman are a clear-cut manifestation of patriarchal society. Her characters try to break them and come out of the psychological turmoil.

Shashi Deshpande is one of the renowned novelists writing in English in the sub-continent. She has added a new dimension to the Indian novel in English by expressing the inner reality of women. Her first collection of short stories was published in 1978, and her first novel is *The Dark Holds No Terrors* in 1980. Almost all her novels deal with a crisis in the heroine's life. *The Dark Holds No Terrors* is ShashiDeshpande's master piece. Saru (*The Dark Holds No Terrors*, 1980), Indu (*Roots and Shadows*, 1983), Jaya (*That Long Silence*, 1988), Urmil (*The Binding Vine*, 1993), Sumi (*A Matter Of Time*, 1996), Madhu (*Small Remedies*, 2000), and Manjari (*The Moving On*, 2004). She maintains a unique position among her contemporaries through her vivid portrayal of characters and their inner conflicts. She has won the Sahitya Akademi Award, for her novel *That Long Silence*. Her works also include children's books. In her novels, many men and women live together though they belong to different age groups, classes and they perform different roles. Deshpande firmly believes that a change will take place in the mind of women to fight against the domination of men. ShashiDeshpande is one among the prominent women writers writing in post-independence India. The chief concern in ShashiDeshpande's novel is, evidently self-assessment, which she presents through realistic techniques.

Shashi Deshpande, has emerged as a writer possessing deep insight into the female psyche. Focusing on the marital relation, she seeks to expose the tradition by which a woman is trained to play her role in the family. She writes about the situation of women and their failures in the fast changing socio-economic ambiance of India. She portrays modern, educated and career oriented middle class women, who are quite sensitive to the eternal changing time and situations. Deshpande's protagonists plan to assert their identity from patriarchal society. ShashiDeshpande, through her novels, shows women willing to take their share of the blame of their problems and courageously face the situation. Most of her women characters are able to transcend their identity crisis by analyzing their childhood and the process of their upbringing. Traditionally Indian women have been treated as marginalized figures. ShashiDeshpande's novels can be easily termed as feminist novels because almost all her novels are based on the problems existing in the lives of the women and how they respond to the various problems.

In the Indian social set up, the 'socialization' of a girl for her future part as wife and mother begins in early childhood. This process has been imposed on women through myth, legends, folklores and rituals. Women are forced to accept the patriarchal domination from the childhood to death. This imposition of power becomes more powerful after marriage. A woman is supposed to break up all the ties between her and her family. She cannot claim her right over the family property in reality, as it is a traditional practice of the family to make its male members inherit its property and enjoy it. The reason is that the property should not go outside of the family. This sort of ideal thought was shown in the early novels of ShashiDeshpande. The girl child was asked to practice the household activities whereas the boys have no commands over it. The story of Deshpande's protagonists always start at the critical point where despite 'total' freedom and total surrender to the expectations of their husbands, they stay disconnected and are made unhappy. They wish to fine-tune

themselves. They are in the need of the change. ShashiDeshpande wants her character to give expression to her mind and self. Her characters are not mouthpiece of her, but emerge as real women. ShashiDeshpande's novels are a veritable mirror of the situations of urban middle-class Indian Women.

*The Dark Holds No Terrors* deals with the search for identity through struggle of the protagonist, Saritha. She is born in a conservative Brahmin family. The novel has a double perspective and the narrative shifts from the first person to the third person in every alternate chapter, it moves between past and the present. In this novel, ShashiDeshpande skillfully handles the sensitive character of the heroine Saritha and her multiple roles as a mother, a wife, a sister, and a daughter. She is an ignored baby of her mother. The story highlights Saru's quest for an independent individual. The novel shows her life before marriage and after it. She has a brother called Dhruva. Her mother Kamala is a perfect example of a typical Indian Woman, who takes much pride and efforts to exhibit her love to her son Dhruva. Saru's mother shows only step motherly attitude towards Saru. The incident relates to the drowning of her brother Dhruva who was seven years old changed everything in her life. Unfortunately, Saru is responsible for the misery that took place in her family. Her mother could not resist the loss of her son. The words follow her for days, months, years, all her life, "You did it. You did this, you killed him. You killed him, why didn't you die? Why are you alive, when he's dead?" (TDHNT 191). Sarita articulates her hatred for her mother: "If you are a woman, I don't want to be one." (TDHNT 24). She was hated by her parents especially by her mother. Saru has lost everything finally; she leaves home and moves to Mumbai. There she completes her medicine and becomes a doctor. She chooses her partner who belongs to low caste, who works as a journalist. Soon after marriage, Saru forces him to become a college teacher. Their happy married life is shattered by an interview. In the interview the reporter comments on Manu that, "How does it feel when wife earns not only the butter but the bread as well?" (TDHNT 200) make a drastic change in the life of Saru.

Being a successful doctor she gains more respect than Manohar. Manu is uncomfortable with Saru's steady rise in status, as he feels ignored when people greet and pay attention to her. He starts to show upper hand attitude to her. Saru feels victimized and persecuted by her own mother and husband. The male egotism arouses him to behave as a sadist. Saru is helpless and no let out for her to express her terrific condition. Saru says, "And so the esteem with which I was surrounded made me inches taller. But perhaps, the same thing that made me inches taller, made him inches shorter. He had been the young man and I his bride. Now I was the lady doctor and he was my husband." (TDHNT 42)

Saru, during the daytime, is a bold and competent lady doctor, but at night she is like a trapped animal. "Some time, some day, I thought, the truth will out and I will know I was never loved." (TDHNT 66). Sarita is neither illiterate nor an economically helpless female dependent on her husband. Saru plans to go back to her parent's home on the name of consoling her father who had lost his wife. She grabs this chance to escape from the terrific nights. To her "We come into this world alone and go out of it alone. The period in between is short. And all those ties we cherish as eternal and long-lasting are more ephemeral than a dewdrop" (TDHNT 208).

Deshpande's women are not subordinate or inferior to men. They have the strength to shape their lives according to their potential and their desires and above all to discover their identity. ShashiDeshpande's protagonist move away from the family for a short-term. Then they return to the home by knowing their needs of their family members. Deshpande, in her novels, has adopted feminism as well as humanism. The Indian women need not be rebellious like the Western feminists nor like the meek and submissive Indian wives. The Indian women must seek their freedom within the verge of marriage through mutual understanding without disturbing the Indian socio-cultural values. Woman artists have been echoing the feeling of marginality and expressing their revolt against the purely masculine world. One of the major concerns of the contemporary literature all over the world has been to highlight the plight of women, their increasing problems, their physical, financial, and emotional exploitation and their mental anguish in the male dominated society in every sphere of life.

In other words, men are identified as strong and rational while women are seen as weak and emotional. In this division of traits, those men who are sensitive and those women who are intellectually or athletically inclined are marginalized. ShashiDeshpande, an Indian women writer portrays the universal experience of family relationships in her novels. The suffering that saru undergoes makes her consider of writing to the young students of her friend Nalu. She longs to tell them the rigid rules of tradition according to which

A wife should always be few feet behind her husband. If he is an MA, you should be a BA. If he is 5'4'tall you shouldn't be more than 5'3'tall. If he is earning five hundred rupees, you should never earn more than four hundred and ninety nine rupees. That's the only rule to follow if you want a happy marriage...No partnership can ever be equal. It will always be unequal, but take care it is unequal in favor of the husband. If the scales tilt in your favor, God help you, both of you. TDHNT 137)

The ambivalent stance of women writers can be seen in the construction of all protagonists of Deshpande. Sarita wonders: "Why do we travel, not in straight lines but in circles? Do we come to the same point again and again? (TDHNT 22)

In *The Dark Holds No Terrors*, alienation takes an important role to play in two women characters, Saru (Sarita) and her mother Kamala. Only the concept of alienation puts the names together but both of them dwell in their own isolated world as two different poles of earth. The problem of existence has become a part of Saru's psyche and it is inculcated in her very early by her mother's indifference especially after her brother Dhruva's death and her father's disinterested approach to her. He left it all to her mother and she never cared. For her mother Saru didn't exist but died long before she left home, "We were like the three points of triangle, eternally linked, forever separate". (TDHNT 141)

Though Saru by profession a doctor, a self-reliant and well balanced in thoughts but with all these she lacks something major in her life is a loveable and emotionally attached family. Family is the predominant for any human, at the end of the novel Saru begins her actual journey in to a drab clouded terrifying nightmare to give and receive a genuine love. *The Dark Holds No Terrors* is a veracious traverse of an agitated and frustrated alienated soul of Saru.

Concentration of traditional values Deshpande usually shows her woman seeking the solution of their problems within Marriage. There is the ultimate realization at the end after a prolonged mental dilemma and a long drawn introspection. Her stay in her father's house gives Saritha a chance to review her relationship with her father, husband and her dead mother. There is no change occur till the end. She has the better understanding of herself and others. This gives her the courage to confront reality. Later analyzing her marital relationship she recalls,

but now I know that it was there it began... this terrible thing that has destroyed our marriage. I know this too... that the human personality has an infinite capacity for growth. And so the esteem with which I was surrounded made me inches taller. But perhaps, the same thing that made me inches taller, made him inches shorter. He had been the young man and I his bride. Now, I was the lady doctor and he was my husband. (42)

After an open discussion with her father, she is prepared to meet Manu. Even though she comes back to her home with a lot of determination, she does not feel comfortable. She feels that she has lost something in her life. Deshpande's women are not subordinate or inferior to men. It is the hallmark of Shashi Deshpande's characters that whatever occurs in their lives, her protagonist does not lose hope, and learns to survive finally. They have the strength to shape their lives according to their potential and their desires and above all to discover their identity. Thus, Shashi Deshpande conveys the message that the modern Indian women should learn to conquer their fear and assert themselves.

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## Exploration of the Silent Suffering in Shashi Deshpande's *A Matter of Time*

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**Abstract:** *The early Indian writers in English dealt with the Indian, Social, Political and Economical factors. Shashi Deshpande, a winner of the prestigious Sahitya Academy award, is an eminent novelist with a deep insight into the psyche of middle class Indian women. She firmly believes that family is a timeless and universal institution. She delineates in detail the patterns of a multigenerational joint family system. The present paper is an attempt to study the inner life of the women characters and their suffering in her novel A Matter of Time. In this novel Shashi Deshpande presents a world of women in different roles mothers, daughters, wives. The Matter of Time is an exploration of the silent suffering of three generations of women. Within the confines of the familial framework, the writer strikes a balance between tradition and modernity making her characters attempts to give more meaning to their lives.*

**Key words:** *Exploration, suffering, trauma, incompatibility, self analysis.*

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*A Matter of Time* is a novel of exploration of a woman's inner life. This novel portrays a woman who is more mature and dignified than her predecessors. Shashi Deshpande has visualized the complexities of man – woman relationships especially in the context of marriage, the trauma of a disturbed adolescence and the attempt to break traditional moulds in which women are trapped. The novel, *A Matter of Time* depicts a society in transition with a portrayal of the institution of marriage. The Comprehensive picture of the Indian women belonging to different generation, different educational and economical levels emerge on the large canvas of the novel. This novel explores the inner self of every character who faces sufferings and desolations. The search for self is highlighted through all characters. "Each individual has a 'self' which is different from that of the others and the loss of this 'self' will be the loss of his/ her identity. The realization of this 'self' is the realization of one's potentialities and the strength of a human being lies in the attainment of this self hood (*Fiction and Society* 84)".

Shashi Deshpande places the failed marriage of Sumi and Gopal firmly at the centre of the novel and she compares the failures of others related to their marital life. The author pictures the emptiness in the lives of women of different generation. The relationship of Manorama – Vithalarao, Kalyani – Shripati, Sumi- Gopal end up in despair and they appear as a vision of failures. But Sumi is shown as an epitome of silent suffering and passive resistance. She is different from other heroines of Shashi Deshpande who withstands the trauma which Indu from *Roots and Shadows* or Jaya from *That Long Silence* were not able to. One more aspect dealt in the novel is the exploration of male psyche.

Manorama who belongs to the older generation becomes the visible symbol of failure. She expected a son to inherit her property. But to her disappointment Kalyani was born to her, who was the daughter who never fulfilled the dreams of her mother. Fear of being neglected by her husband Vithalarao she forced her daughter Kalyani to get married to her younger brother Shripati. Kalyani at the age of schooling had to face the upcoming crises in her life. Manorama on the contrary is satisfied with this marriage. "Perhaps, after this, Manorama felt secure. The property (Vishwas) would remain in the family now" (*A Matter of Time* 129). Manorama emerges as an insecure woman who breaks the image of suppressed woman. Both Kalyani and Shripati are forced into a loveless marriage by Manorama. In the traditional and conservative society marriage and son are the only things that matter.

Through the portrayal of the second generation Kalyani and Shripati, Deshpande depicts the predicaments of women who are confined in the framework of traditional marriage. Kalyani's life is an example of forced incompatible arranged marriage in which women has to suffer endlessly. The marital life of Kalyani ends in desperation. Manorama's dream to have a son was fulfilled by Kalyani, but to their disappointment the son turned out to be mentally retarded. The tragedy does not end up, it continued when Kalyani lost her son in a railway station. Kalyani lost her life once for all. Shripati left his wife and daughters Sumi and Premi on the platform and went along as a mad man to find his lost son. His disappointment left the family in despair. Shripati once for all punishes Kalyani and her family.

Shripati gifted his family "The World of Silence" forever. Kalyani finds herself in a situation in which she has no choice but to accept the pain of loneliness. She has turned the very weapon employed against her into her armor. Her silence is a mode of resistance which is highly potent because it does not allow even a glimpse of her feelings or thought process. She brings up her daughters alone. She fears a similar fate to her daughter, Sumi. She fears that in the framework of marriage woman has to suffer silently. She becomes upset when she comes to

know Gopal's decision of leaving Sumi. She never wants her daughter to suffer like her. She cries out, "No.....no...my God, not again" (AMT12). She takes the entire responsibilities of Sumi carelessness and begs pardon to Gopal but Kalyani does not turn pessimistic. She has a very bright optimistic attitude towards life, which we come across after the death of Shripati. Kalyani's hope of reconciliation and her hopeless marriage both come to an end after his death.

Sumi the third generation has a remarkable capacity of endurance. Sumi's marriage is an example of love marriage. Sumi's early marital life was full of happiness and their relationship is based on love and mutual understanding. It was an ideal marriage but some inner emptiness in Gopal induced him to desert his family. Sumi takes Gopal's decision with resignation and moves towards achieving an independent identity. Sumi's happy marital life becomes a failure after Gopal's withdrawal.

"I never been able to cry easily, you know that. And what do I say, Devi? That my husband has left me and I don't know why and maybe he doesn't really know, either? and that I'm angry and humiliated and confused .....? let that be, we won't go into it now (AMT107)". Sumi faces the trauma of a deserted wife and the anguish of an isolated partner. But she realizes that Gopal is "going his way and I have to go mine" (AMT161). A woman's happiness is considered to be dependent on marriage. Sumi revolts against the traditional marriage. ".....the marriage is devoid of any initial romance, but is the inevitable outcome of a matter- of - fact relationship. The contract was easy and its breach even easier. But their marriage cannot be said to be incompatible as their first physical consummation is fulfilling and gratifying to both (A Feminist Study57)".

Sumi brings normalcy back in her life and also in her daughter's lives. She engages herself in writing plays and seeking jobs. *The Gardener's Son* becomes her first successful play. Sumi dies just before she is about to begin a new life. But she has established a new identity. This shows that a woman can also find meaningful existence even outside marriage.

Aru the youngest generation is quite different from her parents' and grandparents'. She is revolutionary and questions everyone. She wonders how her mother and grandmother can hold themselves and remain unaffected by all these terrible happenings in their life. She cannot accept her grandfather's silence and her father's withdrawal from family responsibilities. She demands justice and even goes to contact a lady lawyer to sue her father. "He shouldn't be able to do this and just walk away" (A Matter of Time 137). Aru views her life optimistically she plays the role of a son to Sumi and Kalyani. "She has begun to see a victim in every woman, a betrayer in every man, much to the disturbance of her mother. Seeing her grandparents' and parents' unsuccessful married life Aru at the age of eighteen becomes so bitter of life..... (The Changing Image of Woman 81)".

Deshpande doesn't stop with women protagonist. She also explores the mind of male character like Vithalarao, who is an affectionate father of Kalyani, Shripati a man of strict personality who punishes his wife Kalyani. The other man Deshpande talks of is Gopal who's marital life is well discussed in this novel. Gopal's alienation was justified by Deshpande. Born of his abnormal childhood Gopal is unable to come to terms with the fact that he was born of the union of his father and his father's brother's wife. A conflict rages in his adolescent mind for the reason that led to this marriage.

It was when I read Hamlet, fortunately much latter that the most terrible version of my parents' story entered my mind [.....]. In this story my father became a man succumbing to his passion for his brother's wife, the woman complaint a pregnancy and her child to come and then after husband's convenient death (no, I couldn't I just couldn't make my father poison his brother) a marriage of convenience. (A Matter of Time 43)

After the death of Sumi, Gopal comes to reconciliation. "All human ties are only a masquerade. Someday, sometime the pretence fails us and we have to face the truth" (AMT52).

To conclude, in this novel Manorama, Kalyani, Sumi and Aru emerge ultimately as strong woman who claim and achieve independence. They learn to live harmoniously in the society neglecting neither the family relations nor the modern aspirations for autonomous self. Through the exploration the author comes to a conclusion that self- pity is not the answer. It is only through the process of self- examination and self- searching through courage and resilience that one can change one's situation from despair to hope. Thus Deshpande's heroines do not submit passively or cravenly but rise up with dignity and strength to lead the future generation to a path of success.

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## Acculturation versus Cultural Resilience in August Wilson's *Radio Golf*

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**Abstract:** *The paper aims at exhibiting August Wilson's genuine concern for the affected human kind and in particular, spiritually and culturally affected African Americans. It begins with a note on the playwright August Wilson as chronicler of the African American diasporas and his efforts to account the heart rending happenings in the lives of his black brethren through his "Pittsburgh Cycle Plays," which consists of ten plays each play set in a different decade. The focus of this paper is Radio Golf, the conclusive play of Wilson's cycle. Harmond Wilks, a real-estate developer and emerging politician who is seeking mayoral candidacy in Pittsburgh. His business partner, Roosevelt Hicks is in the radio business as the black minority face for a white man. These two black men involve in a redevelopment project and there standing in their way is legendary Aunt Ester's home, once a sanctuary for the spiritually suffering souls. To protect the deeper values of the home, Elder Joseph Barlow and Sterling Johnson join hands against the demolition. The paper makes an analysis on the aspects that help Harmond to realize his cultural roots despite his partner's intension of material needs at the cost of soul's feed. The paper concludes sighting Harmond's noteworthy metamorphosis from his materialistic cravings to his reconnection to his cultural past. Wilson makes everyone to realize and accept the value of one's past to survive the present and step to the future.*

**Key words :** *diasporas, cultural roots, pathology*

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African American history and life is extremely varied, so too is African American literature. African American history starts in the seventeenth century with indentured servitude in the American colonies and progresses onto the election of an African American as the current President of the United States – Barack Obama. Between those landmarks there were other events and issues, both resolved and ongoing, that were faced by African Americans. They make up the single largest racial minority in the United States and form the second largest racial group after whites in the United States. This group faces a diverse dilemma of whether to assimilate with the dominant Whites or to establish as an autonomous body. Assimilation with the Whites will help in making the great American dream but at the cost of trailing its unique cultural values. Preserving the cultural heritage gets significance over the self-centered people whose concern is materialistic development. This is the very essence of the cultural warriors who endure the agonies of the dominant culture as well as sacrificing their lives for the sustenance of their own community in order to gift them to carry something more valuable than the materials provide. Such a warrior spirit is the African American playwright, August Wilson.

August Wilson, a chronicler of the African American culture, attempts to harmonize the past in his plays. What distinguishes Wilson from his contemporaries is his sensitivity, sharpened by his awareness of and determination to celebrate African American culture. He has a sharp ear for a language that is as colorful as the African American experiences itself. Wilson's awareness of his social responsibility as an artist is reflected both in his efforts to historicize African American experience in the twentieth century and in his interest in using his "Pittsburgh Cycle Plays," also well celebrated as "Twentieth Century Cycle Plays," to record African American culture. His "Pittsburgh Cycle", consists of ten plays, each play set in a different decade and aims to sketch the Black experience in the twentieth century.

The conclusive play of the Pittsburgh Cycle, *Radio Golf*, deals with the clash between the attempt to demolish the home of the legendary Aunt Ester, 1839 Wylie Avenue, a spiritual sanctuary for the disturbed souls, and the struggle to preserve the home from demolition. Aunt Ester's home symbolizes the African American cultural past, like the piano in Wilson's Pulitzer Prize Winning play, *The Piano Lesson*. *Radio Golf* depicts Pittsburgh's Hill District in 1997, a year which marks the critical moment of its possible extinction in the name of progress.

*Radio Golf* presents the conflict between the communal past and the competitive present. The protagonist of the play Harmond Wilks is a lawyer, urban developer and an emerging politician, and mayoral candidate of the Hills district, Pittsburgh. Winning the election will make him the first black mayor, and his wife Mame Wilks aspires and reminds him the opportunities awaiting him, "Mayor Wilks ... That was almost you. You could've been mayor, then governor, then Senator Wilks. All that was ahead for you." (71) The play takes place in 1997 and it is set in a real-estate development office of Harmond Wilks which he shares with his business partner Roosevelt Hicks, a Bank's vice president and avid golfer. Roosevelt is preoccupied with his financial status and he values the end result of a transaction more than the practical or spiritual virtues. These two men plan their fruitful redevelopment scheme, a 180-apartment with an urban mall that will include the usual national chain stores. What disturbs their plan of prosperity is Aunt Ester's home, 1839 Wylie Avenue,

served as a sanctuary for the black community. Aunt Ester is a recurring character in the Cycle Plays. She is a woman warrior, carrier of their cultural history. Her birth dates back to 1619, the year of the first entry of the blacks into America, and she dies at the age of 366 in 1985, the long-lived matriarch, conjurer and visionary of Pittsburgh's Hill District. Her presence is spread wide and deep throughout the Cycle Plays. She dies in *King Hedley II* (1985). But her spirit is still alive in *Radio Golf* (1997), when an urban redevelopment scheme may dishonor the history embodied in her house. The planned demolition is feared when Old Joe Barlow assigns Sterling Johnson, a self-determined warrior, to paint the 12-year-abandoned Wylie.

Painting the 1839 Wylie symbolizes the retrieving of the forgotten glorious past of the African American community that had been preserved by Aunt Ester. Aunt Ester is a griot and spiritual adviser of the black community, and all the characters "are her children," who are expected to preserve the virtues of the community and carry the legacy to the future. Her children who know her better, like Old Joe Barlow or Sterling Johnson, strive to preserve the reserves of their community. But a few children, like Harmond or Roosevelt, due to certain distractions or reluctance, lack to recognize or sustain "the valuable tools" of their lives.

Painting the Ester's House disturbs the two emerging black aspirants. Roosevelt is much annoyed because, "somebody paint that old ugly house," that awaits demolition for their \$200,000 worth redevelopment project (71). Barlow claims that Wylie belongs to him, "They say they was gonna charge me with vandalism for painting my own house" (25). But Roosevelt hands him the demolition order and threatens him further that, "the property at 1839 Wylie is owned by Bedford Hills Redevelopment and is slated to be torn down the first of the month... anybody painting it is trespassing and defacing private property"(25).

Old Joe Barlow has firsthand knowledge about his local and national history, the Hills District, and the lines of force and family that unite its residents in continuity. His contribution to the community is his memory of events. He recalls that 5<sup>th</sup> March, 1978, the day he saw Muhammad Ali in Louisville (20), and 22<sup>nd</sup> January, 1970, the day he pawned his guitar (21). So he knows where to fix Roosevelt and reminds him that a time will come for a rooster to be chicken: "You act like you a rooster. You the King of the Barnyard. You strut through the barnyard during the day. At night you roost high up on the rafters. But when you get to the bottom of it a rooster ain't nothing but a chicken" (26- 27).

In Roosevelt's perception, community has been replaced by the individual. The play derives from his discovery of a pointedly individual game that historically has been the preserve of the white middle class:

ROOSEVELT: . . . What it feels like to hit a golf ball. I hit my first golf ball I asked myself where have I been? How'd I miss this? I couldn't believe it. I felt free. Truly free. For the first time. . . . It just kept going higher and higher. I felt something lift off of me. . . I felt like the world was open to me. . . I never did feel exactly like that anymore. I must have hit a hundred golf balls trying to get that feeling. But that first time was worth everything. . That was the best feeling of my life.(13)

These words of Roosevelt to the glories of golf game seem to signify progress. But in the context of the long struggle for black civic and economic rights, "truly free" or "best feeling" in life is ironic. His understanding of freedom is with the measure of a white man's game and his access to the country club and the backroom deal with white folk like Bernie Smith. His access to the golf ground, from the position of blacks "shined the shoes" to "blacks at the table," his finding "the way it's done in America" makes him think that he has gained access to capitalism's inner sanctum, but fails to realize the fact that what he has become is a black front man for white money.

Harmond Wilks becomes aware of the historical and aesthetic significance of 1839Wylie, and he feels guilty for acquiring the property through a legal loophole that takes advantage of his cousin, Elder Barlow, with whom he has recently become reacquainted. He offers Barlow a cheque for ten thousand dollars as compensation for Wylie Avenue. But Barlow returns him because: That's too much money... wouldn't know what to do with that much money . . . don't want it... got enough troubles (58). In his later visit Barlow hands him a hundred dollar and he "don't want to be a burden on nobody" (63).

Old Joe Barlow's life, too, has been a series of disappointments, but he is determined to win out this time. Barlow may have inherited the house, but one of Wilks' former schoolmates, Sterling Johnson, seems to have inherited Aunt Ester's moral and ethical voice. Throughout the play he reminds Harmond of his responsibility to do not only what goes by the letter of the law, but by a larger code of humanity and justice. A man with a dubious background, Sterling has served time in prison; nevertheless, his priorities are firmly in order. Realizing at last that Roosevelt Hicks is willing to sell his soul for advancement, Sterling accuses him, with his repeated compromises to ingratiate himself to whites, of being unconcerned in the black man's destruction:

STERLING: What? You think I'm a stray dog? I'm homeless? I ain't got no friends? I ain't got no purpose in life? You the big man. You got everything. You got more reason to live than I do. What you got I ain't got? I got good manners and everything. What you got? What makes you special? I got a house. I got everything you got. Plus a little bit more. I got common sense. I know riddles. I can sing. . . What you got I ain't got? . . . I got a gun. I got a knife. What you got?

ROOSEVELT: For one, I got some money.

STERLING: I got money too. You think you the only one got money. Money make you special?

ROOSEVELT: I said money. You don't know what money is. When I go to the bank I need a wheelbarrow. They send me straight to the weighing station. Say they weigh it up now and count it later.

STERLING: You know what you are? It took me a while to figure it out. You a Negro. White people will get confused and call you a nigger but they don't know like I know. I know the truth of it. I'm a nigger. Negroes are the worst thing in God's creation. Niggers got style. Negroes got blindyitis. A dog knows it's a dog. A cat knows it's a cat. But a Negro don't know he's a Negro. He thinks he's a white man. It's Negroes like you who hold us back. (76)

Sterling's cautions fall on fallow ground for Roosevelt, and this argument on righteousness versus power, in terms of money, situates them at opposite standpoints. When the latter threatens showing his power, the former proves his warrior spirit.

Harmond Wilks is inclined to honor his ancestors, their history, and their achievements. He has a conscience, and is genuinely trying to become mayor so he can build a better city. Unlike several of those around him—most notably Hicks—Harmond is neither willing to compromise his integrity or become a toady for white politicians. After visiting Aunt Ester's house, Harmond astonished by the wooden carvings says, "You should feel the woodwork. If you run your hand slow over some of the wood you can make out these carvings. There's faces. Lines making letters. An old language. And there's this smell in the air" (62). Understanding the cultural importance of the Wylie Avenue, Harmond suggests a new plan "of 1839 Wylie preserved with the complex built around it" (62). But for Roosevelt "That's a dead issue... Thursday that house is history. . . . We have to stick to the plan. I got a lot invested in this"(63).

Roosevelt and Mame Wilks suggest him to go on a week tour to San Francisco to sideline him from the project: Ultimately Hicks betrays Wilks and their heritage by serving as a "black face" for white investors, by enforcing the demolition, and by forcing Wilks' removal from the project. Unwilling to compromise his values, Wilks is caught between his worlds. He can save neither Aunt Ester's house nor his role as the project's developer, suggesting that black assimilation and material success require unethical practices and a lack of reverence for one's heritage.

Harmond Wilks discovers both himself and the place that birthed him at a crossroads. On the verge of an almost-guaranteed win as a mayoral candidate, Wilks finds his identity shaken when his morals and ideals are questioned by those around him. Ultimately, he must recognize what the price of his success is and decide whether he is willing to pay it. *Radio Golf* presents Harmond Wilks as torn between the forces of the past that shaped him and a perilously seductive future. Facilitating this process are Sterling Johnson and Old Joe Barlow. The connection between Harmond and Barlow weave a net that is both Harmond's ruin and redemption. Even before his meeting with Barlow or Sterling, when he discuss with Mame, he expresses his concern for his community, that is sensed when he is very particular about naming their Model Cities Health Center after Sarah Degree, who "was the first black registered nurse in the city. Naming it after her fits perfectly"(10).

When things become complicated between Harmond and Wilks, the former reveals the fact that their Bedford Hills had acquired 1839 Wylie illegally. It had bought it from him but he didn't own that. He reveals: "I bought the house before it went to auction. That's against the law. That's corruption. I'm going down to the courthouse and file an injunction to stop the demolition" (70). The final clash between the partners slashes down their friendship and business partnership. They both agree that only their disagreement will provide them a fair play to lead their different paths. As Roosevelt exits, Harmond "takes off his coat and rolls up his sleeves. He picks up the paintbrush and exits" (81). As the play concludes, however, he chooses the side of right over might that Sterling has so consistently advocated. Ordering Hicks from his office, he takes up a paintbrush and rushes out, heading for Wylie Street to confront the bulldozers poised at Aunt Ester's threshold. By this Harmond emerges as an ethical model.

Wilson has not written about historic events or the pathologies of the black community, but presented the unique particulars of the black culture on stage in all its richness and fullness. So it is apt to say that he has written a social history of his time. Wilson's constant theme is – you honor the past to refresh the future.

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## Affliction of Women in Shobhaa De's *Sisters*

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**Abstract:** Indian writing in English is an integral part of, and a significant contribution to postcolonial literature. Though it has its own distinctive of Indianism, it also discourse some of the salient features of post colonialism too. It draws attention to issues of cultural difference in literary texts including issues of gender, class and of sexual orientation. In short, post colonialism in Indian English Literature can be emerged as a 'third world literature' with the concept of self- expression. Oppression of women is the chief concern in the works of feminist writers. Shobhaa De is the best examples on that concern. Her novels indicate the arrival of new Indian women, eager to defy rebelliously against the well-entrenched moral orthodoxy of the patriarchal social system. As a result, her women characters are modern, strong and they take bold decisions to survive in society which makes her essentially a feminist novelist. At an interview in Asia Week Shobhaa De says that "The women in my books are definitely not doormats. They are not willing to be kicked around".

Through her fiction, Shobhaa De asserts that women should be given equal opportunities in all her walks of life. After all, they are in search of their identity can't be ignored by society. The present paper aims to examine the theme of 'A Woman Afflictions in Shobhaa De's *Sisters*. In *Sisters*, Shobhaa De explores the marginality of modern women through a protagonist Mikki and how she finally realizes her freedom – a freedom to live a life of her choice and also at the end De unfolds the truth that 'The rarer action is in virtue than in vengeance.

**Key Words:** oppression, post colonialism, moral orthodoxy, patriarchal

Indian writing in English is an integral part of, and a significant contribution to postcolonial literature. Though it has its own distinctive of Indianism, it also discourse some of the salient features of post colonialism too. It draws attention to issues of cultural difference in literary texts including issues of gender, class and of sexual orientation. In short, post colonialism in Indian English Literature can be emerged as a 'third world literature' with the concept of self- expression.

In the post colonial context, oppression of women is the chief concern in the works of feminist writers. Shobhaa De is the best examples in that concern. Her novels focus the attention on the plight of new Indian women, who struggle to get their liberation from the male-dominated society. As a result, her women characters are turned to be a strong, modern and they take bold decisions to survive in society which makes her essentially a feminist writer. At an interview in Asia Week, Shobhaa De says that "The women in my books are definitely not doormats. They are not willing to be kicked around".

The present paper aims at examining the theme of 'A Woman Afflictions in Shobhaa De's *Sisters*. As a feminist, De throws light on the various difficulties of modern women against the patriarchal society through her works. For example, *Socialite Evenings* and *Second Thoughts*, she explores the marginalization of women in hands of their husbands. *Starry Nights*, she projects the modern women's search of identity, how they compromise with some unconventional demands. In *Strange Obsession*, De reveals the psyche of modern women that on order to getting liberation, hoe she is trapped into the strange life whereas in *Sisters*, for the first time she deals with the psychic of their conflict between a personal- Inner turmoil life and a social- the seamy side of the business life by the self expression of a protagonist Mikki.

In *Sisters*, Shobhaa De unfolds the story of two good- looking and wealthy women, who are driven by ambition and lust, lead their life in corrupt business world. In the beginning they seem to be enemies, but later we find them to be best friends. This paper highly encounters the struggle of Mallika (Mikki), a protagonist against the struggles of being a woman and finally gets her freedom to lead a life of her own.

After Mikki's parents' untimely death in an air-crash compelled her to come back Bombay from U.S.A to take charge of her father's industries which are on a verge to collapse. In reality the demise of her parents causes lonely to her. Having learnt that she has a half- sister Alisha, the illegitimate of her father, Mikki feels rejoice and wants to share her life of both happiness and sufferings with her. But the latter does not accept her feelings and replies bitterly, "So, Miss Hiralal, I don't need to meet you ever. And please ... do me a favour ... don't phone again" (16).

Afterwards Mikki is determined to save her industries from going bankrupt. Advised by Shanay, her cousin, Mikki decides to Borrow from her fiancée, Navin to save her sinking Ship. When he fails to do, she breaks off her engagement with him. Unlike De's other protagonists who generally tend to free themselves from the clutches of married life, Mikki deliberately gets in wedlock. She awares that "there are enough vultures waiting to pounce upon her" (11), Mikki turns to marry a middle aged Binny Malhotra. His uncanny and aggressive manner attracts her very much. By whom only she taught her other side of the personality on rest of

life. Amy, a friend indeed to her says, “May be he lacks finesse, sophistication, refinement. But I’ve known real bastards who’ve had all that and who’ve remained bastards nevertheless. Sometimes the Malhotra groups of men are better- aggressive; take charge fellows, blunt and crude, men you can’t walk all over. Perhaps you need someone like him” (58).

In the beginning, Binny appears to be a good –real husband to Mikki. So she loves very much towards him. Besides his company, she not only gets her real ‘self’ and also feels a sense of security. But in later, Mikki finds her life with him becomes a veritable hell, when she shocked to know the fact that Binny a womanizer has already a married man with two children.

The process of dehumanization of Mikki begins when all her property is transferred to Binny. Besides, she is denied motherhood for she has to keep always fit for him. Being a representative of the oppressive system, Binny does not like Mikki’s desire to be an active partner both in life and business. He says, ‘That’s not how it works in my family. Our women stay at home and make sure the place is perfectly run. They fulfill their husband’s every need and look good when their men get home in the evening. No office- going. No business meetings. And you’d get used to it’ (109).

With the loss of identity of Hiralal industries, she loses her independence too. She has no identity of her own. Afterwards she is not boss for anybody. This indicates Mikki was no identity of her own as a slave. Her situation in the novel explores the harsh realities if the patriarchal society. Though Binny fails to understand her psyche completely, Mikki continuously pleads with him to lead a marital life as a wife. She says, “I can look after you and look after at least a part of the business. We could work together ... I won’t have to wait hours to see you” (109).

These ideas portrays that Mikki seems to be a traditional woman and compromised with her situation. But her continual protest with Binny results for her innate desire to attain the freedom as both an ideal wife and a responsible social being that gives the novel a moral dimension. For mikki, materialistic pleasures without freedom of the ‘self’ mean nothing. So she is constantly at war with herself as a woman and a human being. Unfortunately her struggle to enjoy the marital life is ended when Binny suspecting Mikki’s chastity, turns her out of his home. While all her efforts to live with him are failed, she gets a heavy depression. One fine day, Mikki knows that Binny dies with his family by car accident. Then, she inherits his wealth. Now she is a changed woman. Her experience with Binny gives her an insight into her as an individual and a human being.

In *Sisters*, Shobhaa De explores the marginality of modern women through a protagonist Mikki and how she finally realizes her freedom – a freedom to live a life of her choice and also at the end she unfolds the truth that ‘The rarer action is in virtue than in vengeance.

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## Maya's Psychological Marginality in Anita Desai's *Cry the Peacock*

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**Abstract:** *The present paper aims to study the psychological marginality of Maya in Anita Desai's novel Cry The Peacock. Srinivas Iyengar aptly remarks that "Anita Desai add new dimension of Indian English fiction" "Anita Desai's two novel, the inner climate, the climate of sensibility that clear or rumbles like thunder or suddenly blazes forth like lightening is more compelling than the outer whether, the physical geography or the visible action. Her forte, in other words, is the exploration of sensibility"*

*Anita Desai considered as a writer who introduced the psychological novel in India. Feminine psyche constitute a major part of Anita Desai's "Cry the Peacock". It reveals the harrowing tale of a father fixated young woman Maya, married to an elderly gentleman. Throughout the story shows psychic tumult of a young and sensitive girl Maya, who is haunted by a childhood prophecy of a fatal disaster and also the agony which she undergoes with an insensitive husband Gouthama (although dutiful) leads her to madness murder and suicide of her family. Maya's mind filled with frustration out of psychological barriers, in the form of reality and ethical restraints, which changes her attitude towards self-recrimination and felt guilty. Maya's mind is at the fringe of consciousness. Maya always lives with her own world and this explore the inner world of Maya and demonstrate her fear, insecurity and her strange behavior. This paper specially focuses on the psychological problems of Maya in "Cry the Peacock".*

**Key Words:** *marginality, psychology, frustration, insecurity*

Anitha Mazumdar Desai is a renowned Indian writer, novelist and educationalist and winner of Sahithya Academy Award. She writes only about upper class family. The range of her themes is also restricted to domestic problems like women's city life and women's psychological crisis. She always depicts the inner furies of women and also she write about the feminine psyche. She is considered as the writer who introduced the psychological novel in the tradition of Virginia wulf to India. She introduces the stream of consciousness technique in India. Prema Nandakumar says "Anitha Desai, has in her fiction sensibility adhered to the Lakshman Rekha culture and created her own distinctive imaginative world". Through her novels she reveals the psychological problems which are a predominant issue in contemporary India.

*Cry the Peacock* is the first published novel of Anitha Desai. It published in 1963. The novel is based in the context of contemporary Indian writing in English. It can be considered as a trend setting novel as it deals with the mental rather than the physical aspects of its character. Anitha Desai explore the inner world of main protagonist Maya and she demonstrate Maya's fear insecurity and strange behavior. It is a complex story about Maya and her husband Gautama. Desai uses this story to convey the psychic tumult of a women like Maya is. She always says that she is alone. Maya is childless wife of Gautama. She passed the four years after the marriage as well as she still lives alone with her fantasy and also she is haunted by the childhood prophecy of disaster.

Maya psychic marginality constitutes a major part in this novel. By psyche Jung means "not only what we call 'soul' but the totality". And he says "off all psychic processes, conscious as well as unconscious". These statement Anitha Desai applied here. Maya's character builds from conscious to unconscious. Maya's mind goes out of its margin. The author conveys psychological marginality through this novel.

Maya's character in this novel is like a puppet. She is an immature woman. Maya was born in an old Orthodox family and a motherless girl. She enjoyed her life with her parent's house especially with her father. He is a rich advocate. Her one only brother having gone to America. She get's the most of her father's affection. Whenever she wants anything she is to be provided with it immediately and she says "No one No one else, loves me as my father does" Her world is full of fantasy. But she married to a man Gautama, a lawyer. Gautama much elder to Maya is a friend of Maya's father. But in her husband's house the situation is totally different. Gautama is a detached and indifferent man. He lived in a world of reality and Gautama always criticizing Maya's father as he knows that Maya's suffer from father fixation. She expect from Gautama like her father. She is fond of dance and beautiful things. She want to go to the south to see Bharat Natyam. Both husband and wife had different attitude towards life. The novel presents the characteristic contrasts between the two and they are matchless couple. This problem or this nature causes deep alienation in the mind of the protagonist. The descriptions indicate that Maya is immature wild and insane. She becomes intensely abnormal.

The novel begins with the death of Maya's pet dog Toto. It makes the situation worse. That incident was intolerable to her. Death of Toto throws her in to a deep depression. Maya feels alone due to the death of Toto. Because Toto is everything and the whole world for her. But Gautama does not give any attention to dog's death. He says it is a fact and the death of Toto indicates the eternal truth in human life. But the idea of death terrifies Maya and she is obsessed with it. She felt as Gautama's attitude towards Toto is a carelessness towards her. Because she is a childless lady and Toto was like a child to her. The reason for this kind of behavior on her part is that she explains "childless women do develop fanatic attachment to their pets, they say, it is no less a relationship than that of a woman and her child, no less worthy of reverence, and agonized remembrance" and also Gautama thinks that she has never brought face to face with realities of life. Gradually Gautama devotes more time to his work. Maya turns more and more inward she clings to fantasy as she is unable to relate with reality. She started sitting in the darkness. She says darkness spoke of distance, separation, loneliness. She considers the Gautama's detachment theory as the negation of life and feels miserable. She felt his words as cutting her thoughts away like a surgeon expertly removing a boil.

The death of Toto leads her to neurosis. That means she is always haunted by death. Although the Maya's neurosis is however not her father fixation. It helps to hasten her tragedy. But continues obsession of the prediction by the albino astrologer of death either for her or her husband within four years of their marriage. The words of this prediction haunted her like a drumbeat of Kathakali ballet. She knows that her faith and time has come and four years it was now. It was now to be either Gautama or she. The deep communication between them leaves her lonely to brood over the morbid thoughts of the albino astrologer's prophecy. She had been mentally affected due to the loveless marriage life as well as she is haunted by the black and evil shadow.

Maya's inner needs and outer realities also create a conflicting situation. Besides the prophecy of the astrologer another fact that influenced the psyche of Maya is the myth about the peacock's cry. The peacock symbolizes the Maya's mind. Maya's tragedy is fully articulated in the symbolism of peacock. Cry of the Peacock haunts her whenever she remembers its cry. Like the peacocks she loves intensely and her love is unreciprocated. They danced till its death so she felt that death always follows her this fear of death turns into an abnormal stage. One evening she pushed down Gautama to death and later commits suicide by jumping out of the balcony.

In the third part of the novel shows her in a state of shock and later she suffers from permanent delirium. Consequently she meets with her own violent deaths. Many a time she indulges in self-introspection to find out where the fault lies. She fails to get proper answer. Nila her sister-in-law as well as her mother-in-law have a very positive approach to life. Both of them were extremely opposite to her. In Gautama's family they always made discussions about politics and society. Maya cannot participate in these discussions. With her they discussed about babies shopping meals for she was their toy, not to be taken seriously. These people's good approach affected negatively to Maya. Ultimately her psychic problems increased. There are two more women in this novel, Pom and Liela, who are Maya's friends. Liela's marriage is a love marriage and she had eloped with her lover. She faced all the vicissitudes of life and put up a brave fight as the wife of a patient struggling for life. She does not complain anything. Pom is another character who faces the problem which is quite common in the lives of women in India. Pom shows how women have to live a suffocated life.

Maya monologues herself "My memories came to life, were so vivid, so detailed, I knew them to be real, too real. Or is it madness? Am I gone insane? Father! Brother! Husband! Who is my saviour? I am in need of one. I am dying and I am in love and I am dying". This introspection reveals clearly Maya's mind. She becomes the victim of many psychological predicaments. Maya's predicament can be linked to the failure to find a refuge either in marriage or in the family. Maya is unable to overcome her fears. Maya always wants sympathy from her husband. And she wants a romantic as well as always loving husband. But Gautama is not ready to give this. He does not care these things. This problem leads Maya to a psychological trauma. Maya is obsessed by the childhood prophecy of disaster. Through the author builds an atmosphere of tension, frustration and fear. At last this ends up in some psychic problems. Maya suffers from headaches and experiences rages of rebellion and terror. As she moves towards insanity, she sees the vision of rats, snakes, lizards creeping over her. Her dark house appears to her like her tomb and she contemplates in it over the horror of all that is to come. These problems lead Maya to kill her husband. Maya's unconscious desire to kill her husband is a revenge reaction arising out of her own basic frustrations, unhappy married life, unfulfilled longings and a reaction against her husband's cold unresponsiveness. Through this murder and suicide, she experiences fulfilment and is relieved from the anxiety of past and present dilemmas. This paper has a solution that Maya was not only alienated by her husband and familial condition but also affected by the inner mind of herself.

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## Gloablization through Culture of Convenience with Special Reference to Chatan Bhagat's *2 States*

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**Abstract:** *Culture can be studied through literature and literature can be well appreciated by cultural understanding. The New Britannica Encyclopedia (2007:784) put forth 'CULTURE' as an integrated part of human knowledge, belief and behavior. Culture thus defined consists of language, ideas, beliefs, customs, taboos, codes, institutions, tools, techniques, work of art, rituals, ceremonies and other important components. Burnett Taylor in his 'PRIMITIVE CULTURE' refers that culture includes all capabilities and habits acquired by a man as the member of the society. Every culture has a set of customs and regulations. Especially India is a nation of diverse culture and Indians are very much fond of their culture and in preserving its purity. It is their fondness and attachment to their culture that makes them reluctant to the intuition of other culture. Marriage in India is purely a cultural ceremony irrespective of all the cultures. Almost all the cultures follow the arranged marriage system and the way of conducting the marriage is the exhibition of their status symbol.*

**Key words:** *culture, globalization, custom and rituals.*

This paper focuses on the multiculturalism in '2 States' by the contemporary author Chetan Bhagat. This novel deals with two different cultures, Tamil and Punjabi. Both have their own traditions and customs, mindset, convictions, psyche or attitude for everything around them. It deals with how multicultural ground realities affect 'Generation Y' greatly. The one line of this story is between the lovers who belong to North and Southern parts of India, who fight hard to turn their love to love marriage and who face a lot of hurdles in the form of culture and their geographical location

The title of the novel '2 States' stands for two regions of India: Punjab and Tamil Nadu as well as the mental chaotic state. Both the interpretations are observed throughout the novel. The novel assesses the cultures of the Tamils and Punjabis, their pride and prejudices and the mental states of both the older and younger generations.

The young broadminded characters of this novel did not bother much about their cultural variations when they were in love at IIM campus. They really started considering this as a serious problem when they started thinking about their marriage. They were quite aware of their family and their non-acceptance of their culture. They decide not to elope and convince their parents for their marriage.

Krish and Ananya are the protagonists of the novel *2 States*. Krish hails from a Punjabi family and Ananya from a Tamil Brahmin family. Both the families are different in their culture and customs. They try to convert their love into love marriage and so they decide to impress their in-laws to convince them to accept their marriage proposal. Krish and Ananya plan a family meet during their convocation and express their love towards each other to their parents. This idea doesn't work as well as they expected and their first attempt becomes a total failure. Krish selects Chennai as his choice of work place after his completion at IIM and gets placed in Chennai branch of Citi Bank Ltd. His initial steps to impress Ananya's family were a big failure. He struggles a lot to comprehend the culture of Ananya's family. The silence in their home even threatens him because he is not exposed to such silence even in the funerals of Punjabi families. He struggles to eat South Indian cuisines and he was startled in the beginning with the custom of using banana leaves as plates. Many of his behaviors irritate Ananya's parents. But slowly he wins the hearts of her parents. He begins his impression by coaching Ananya's brother for IIT entrance. He helps her father by preparing a power point presentation which gained her father a good reputation in his office. As a highlight attempt he gives a singing chance to her mother in clients meet of his office. His actions delighted the family and finally he was accepted by Ananya's family.

Ananya then impresses Krish's mother by resolving her relative's marriage problem. Ananya couldn't tolerate the Punjabi marriage custom where the family of the groom dominates and demands a lot from bride's family. Krish's mother with a preconception about South Indian girls embraces her in certain time. They find her different among their preconception because of her fair complexion. Krish's mother being a typical Punjabi thinks her as dominant because she belongs to boy's side.

The real problem begins when the families meet once again in Goa to plan about their children's marriage. The problem of cultural difference takes a real form in this session. According to the tradition of the Punjabis the people from the brides family ought to respect the grooms. Krish's mother expect a lot of respect



to the Boy's side from Girl's side. She becomes upset when Krish helps Ananya's parents in taking their bags. This is what one witness. When she sees her son helping Ananya's parents she feels that her son is trapped by the South Indians. In the same way she expect some gifts from her parents and feels disappointed on seeing them empty handed. She expresses all her disappointments to Ananya's parents. Their cultural differences win the second meeting and this time not only the parents, but the lovers too depart. The typical Punjabi mother who expects a lot from the bride's side and the typical Tamil Brahmin family couldn't bear the domination and the demands from the groom's side. This cultural counters and encounters continue till the end when Krish and Ananya get married. The author somehow tried to conclude the novel with some understandings leaving apart their cultural difference. Even though we could find Krish's mother grins till the last moment. The novel has dramatic end. The young couple begets twins and the couple feels happy to say that their children belong to a state called India. <mailto:Suganthan.Srm@gmail.com>

Cultural studies Is a process says Pramod K.Nayak in his book 'An Introduction to Cultural Studies'. This process finds out power relationship between and within the human beings (Nayar 44).

When the novel explores the differences between South India and North India, it reveals that the difference is primeval which has its roots established for ages when today's South Indians were known as Dravidians and north Indian were known as Aryans. From the very beginning, the Aryan had disregarded the Dravidian culture and gradually conquered the northern part of India, almost in every bit of the poles. Both, Punjabis and Tamils are thoroughly conflicting. First, the very basic difference is the racial differences. The Punjabis and North Indians are termed as Aryans, and the South Indians as Dravidians. In physique as well, there are many differences between the people of the South and North. The North Indians are taller, and more strongly built than the South Indians. The South Indians are a bit darker than the North Indians. In the novel Krish's mother dismisses Ananya as a Madrasi with dark complexion. Later when she sees that Ananya is fair, she doubts if she is really a South Indian. Even when Krish lands in Madras for the first time, he asserts that now visiting South India, he understands the need for 'Fair and Lovely'.

A big difference can be seen in their dressing styles- Salwar Kamize is the widely used dress by North Indian women. They do wear langa studded with gold and rubies for their wedding. On the other hand, women in South India wear sari and Kanjeeपुरam silk for their wedding. While men in north wear salwar and pants, the men in south prefer dhotis. When Krish sees Ananya's father in the photos in her room first time, he says, "We wore a half-sleeve shirt with a dhoti" (TS 13) and Ananya's mother appears first in the novel wearing a Kanjeeपुरam silk sari. When Krish enters in to Chennai for the first time, he notices men and says, "Tamil men don't believe in pants and wear lungis even in shopping districts". (TS 77)

Language is the first code of identity of any culture. As observed by Chris Barken and Dariusz in 'Cultural Studies and Discourse Analysis' language is the central means and medium by which we can understand the world and construct the culture. '2 States' represents two different languages of both the cultures. Krish has been developed around Punjabi language, and Ananya has been grown up in the surround of Tamil language. However, the positive side shown in the novel is, they are affluent with both English and Hindi. As their educational language is English, and national language is Hindi. Then even conflict can be seen because of language throughout the novel. Their family and relatives are used to use native language. Whenever any confusion arises, it is natural on the part of every human to switch over to their natural tongue. For example When Krish is forced to see one Punjabi girl for his marriage, the influence of Punjabi language over English is visibly seen in the language. Two Punjabi families communicate in English, but Punjabi accents occur in between their natural talk:

In their conversations, they frequently use ji. Ji is shown as necessary accent for Punjabis when they talk. No matter in which language they communicate, but this kind of Punjabi accents are natural and unavoidable. Now the focus is on how conflicts can be occurred due to differences of language. Here is an example from novel wherein, conflict initiates due to disparity of Language.

My mother, not to be left behind in asking of questions, turned to the guide. 'Why is it called Dandi March? Because he carried a stick?' (Ts 51)

Ananya's mother turned to her father and spoke in Tamil. 'Something something illa knowledge Punjabi people something.' (Ts 51).

'Seri, seri,' Ananya's father said in a cursory manner, engrossed in the map. Ananya's mother continued. 'Intellectually, culturally zero. Something crass uneducated something'. Therefore, this ambiguity of language makes confusion in the mind of Krish, his mother as well as the Guide whom they have hired. When somebody speaks weird language, it always creates certain doubts to others who cannot understand that language

One could also see that money is the center of Punjabi mindset and Education is for Tamil. There are several points in the novel where tradition and mindset of both the cultures can be observed. Tradition is something that which has existed for a long time. Customs are something that people always do. Therefore, customs and tradition are interwoven.. The novel is a story of the marriage of Krish and Ananya. Hence, traditions and customs related to marriage are given more importance.

The criterion of the groom for Tamil bride are given here Tamils love their community, so the groom should be of their own community. Moreover, they emphasize on educated groom. Carnatic music and Bharatnatyam are priorities, when art is concern. Tamil Brahmins are non-vegetarian and do not drink, so that is also desirable. In a whole, Krish does not have any criteria except he comes from IIT and IIM. They also do believe in horoscopes. When he opposes the nakshatram system, Manju protests it as it is part of their culture, whereas for a Punjabi, money is the only nakshatram to be seen at the marriage.

The psyche of both Tamil and Punjabi people are portrayed. Punjabis are considered to be extroverts who have no check over their emotions. Celebration is all that they know. Tamilians are considered to be introverts. As Krish says in the prologue "Do you South Indians even know what emotions are all about?". Never once Krish was able to identify the emotions undergone by Ananya's parents. The silence that prevailed in Tamil family during their meal seemed to be unusual to Krish as even a Punjabi funeral doesn't possess such a silent atmosphere. The conviction of Punjabi over Tamilian is that they are black people with a spell of black magic. They are very aggressive and clever that they can take anyone totally under their control.

Diversities appear not only in their language, customs, rituals but also in their cuisines like rasam, dal, roti, idly, rice, chicken, dairy products, sweets, paneer, rasgullas, biscuits, pao-bhajji etc. To probe on Punjabi food, food is tagline for Punjabi culture. The novel says "It is cruel to keep Punjabis away from their food" (TS 215). The novel points out that Punjabi people soothe their worry if they get tasty food. Bhagat writes "I ordered panner pao-bhaji with extra butter and a lassi on the side. Nothing soothes an upset Punjabi like dairy products." (44) This is when Krish makes his mother upset and then he comforts her by these kinds of food. This statement also shows favorite food of Punjabi i.e. dairy products. Bhagat remarks, Ananya's mother tugged at Ananya and pulled her away. The guide noticed them leave and looked puzzled. I paid him off and came back to my mother. She finished the last spoons of Topaz's paneer tikka masala under the tree." (52) Finishing the food is the only worry for her rather than her son's love affair. So, Punjabis always think about food and calories as it is clarified in the novel. Unlike Punjabi, Tamils are crazy about rice-based food. It mostly contains Dosa, Idaly and Sambhar. Even the eating habits of Tamil are varied from Punjabi. Krish is been invited by Ananya to her house for the first time for dinner. This incident clarifies food and food habits of Tamil culture, more precisely of Tamil Brahmin.

The diversities in language, customs, rituals, cuisines, attire, occupations, interests, comforts, motives etc and they turn as a boon and boom every other time for the protagonists. It is made clear that these aspects of culture prove to be the causes of cultural conflicts when two different cultures come together. If they remain unsolved, cultural conflict can never be solved. Yet the protagonists of the novel portray a different culture.

Trendy, choosy, stylish Ananya is the most beautiful and most popular girl at IIM-Ahmedabad campus. She is not a typical Tamil Brahmin. Infact she enjoys chicken as well as paneer with the same excitement. She is not only choosy in food and attire but also more conscious in selecting her life partner. She is not at all an emotional fool. She is emotionally sound and rejects thirteen proposals of marriage or love unsympathetically until she develops a relationship with Krish, an IIT-Delhi alumnus and her IIM-Ahmedabad classmate. This good natured, witty intellectual and fun loving Punjabi guy perfectly balances the modern and traditional values. He suggests not to wear unsuitable dress at public places to Ananya, as well as appeals to his mother to behave nicely with Ananya's parents. Millennial are rebellious in their whole life style. The protagonists care for none to make romance and love each other despite of their conservative parents. Their nudity, premarital sex and live-in relationship is completely anarchist for a land of Ramayana and Mahabharata. The fiction depicts the bondage between them and their intense love for each other. Both are loyal to maintain their commitments. This marvelous side helps them to win the other side of mental torture, uncertainty, melancholy, loneliness etc.

The thick bondage paves the way for cultures to submerge in each other and motivates their transmission and diffusion. Krish's mother who rejected Ananya as a Madrasi started loving her along with her clan. She who demanded respect and gifts from bride's family readily ignores the heavy gift that her son was due on the day of engagement. Krish's father who was very particular that he has to choose the girl for Krish, helps Krish and Ananya to get married by convincing Ananya's family.

Even Krish who was not comfortable with Tamil at the initial stage, stands for them saying that Tamil are not arrogant but quite people. He learns the language Tamil, wears dhoti for the wedding, enjoys Carnatic music and Tamil food. The case is the same with Ananya. She takes Krish's family to be her's and goes to the extent of solving the problem involved in their family wedding. She wears the North Indian Lenga to the shock of her aunts for her wedding, dances at the party and compromises with everything that she holds dear to her.

Thus the protagonists prove to the world that the Sanskrit language, the epics like Ramayana and Mahabharata, Gandhian philosophy, yoga, Indian freedom struggle etc keep India intact despite of all the diversities. The novel focuses on liberalization, privatization and globalization as the centre. The novel refers to the transmission of popular cultures and the reasons for this transmission as modern means and advancements. The world is no more a monocultural society rather a multicultural globe.

**Conclusion:**

Bhagat depicts complex, deeply rooted socio-cultural problems of multi-cultural India light heartedly. The aim is to motivate the readers to laugh at themselves, at their follies, their prejudices and their pure wrong doings not as a participant but to help them to realize their faults and provide a chance to correct themselves in the real life.

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# Manu Dharma: Interrogation of Socio-Cultural Integration through the Posmodern Lens with Reference to K.A .Gunasekaran's *The Scar*.

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**Abstract:** *This paper Manu Dharma: Interrogation of socio-cultural integration through the post modern lens with reference to K.A.Gunasekaran's The Scar attempts to view the age old and obsolete concepts like Granthas, Priesthood, Purity, Varnashrama dharma, karma with the light of Justice ,liberty, equality and fraternity as enshrined in the preamble of the Indian Constitution. Dalit literature is a recent new trend emerging in India. It reflects the growing identity awareness and consciousness of the Dalits. It puts a human at its centre and registers a strong protest against the frames of caste ,race and tribe. It believes in human liberty whereas the Hindu society believes in the varnashrama system. Dalit literature rejects this Hindu mentality and affirms freedom and equality. Dalit Literature is nothing but the cause of a social effect as said by Christopher Clod, a Marxian critic.*

*K.A.Gunasekaran's Vadu is a big success in Dalit autobiography placing it among the canonical texts of Tamil Literature. It talks upto Gunasekaran's graduation. It is translated into English by V.Kadambari as The Scar in 2009, has documented the life, customs, cultures, festivals, songs, dances of dalit Parayar community of Tamilnadu. It also registers their poverty ,stuggles, oppressions and exploitations by the hindu hegemonic powers. This autobiography sensitises the readers about the torture undergone by the indigenous people of India. Though The Scar is an autobiography but represents the whole of the dalit community of India. It not narrates the familiar tale of caste oppression but also ridicules the practices of the superiority of upper caste in the name of Hindu caste system. Finally it shows how the narrator empowers himself and emancipates from these unjust practices.*

**Key words:** *socio-culture, Granthas, Varnashrama drama, Karma, caste, liberty.*

## Introduction:

The Manu Smriti is the Hindu code of Ancient India, which dealt with the relationship between social and ethnic groups , between men and women , the organization of the state and the judicial system ,re-incarnation , the working of Karma , and all aspects of the law. It contains 12 chapters of 2694 stanzas . A few chapters of Manu smriti deal with crime, Justice and punishment. The judicial system in ancient india was found to be based on the varna system and the Manu smriti defined crime and punishment for each varna in a hierarchical mode .Manu drew up the Dharmasastra code , about 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> century B.C, which was called as Manu Smriti . The Manu smriti was considered superior to the other Dharma sastras written by Yagnavalkya, Vishnu , Narada ,Brahspati and Katyayana. The Dharmasastra of Manu claimed to be divine in origin. Manu was formed as early as the Rig veda (1200 BC), where he was described as Father Manu, the progenitor of human race .In satapatha Brahmana (900 BC), Manu was depicted as the father of mankind when he followed the advice of a fish and built a ship in which he alone among other men survived the great flood .Afterwards he worshiped and performed penance and a woman , Ida or ila , was produced and he started mankind with her .

## The Varna System :

Without the Knowledge of Varnashrama Dharma one may not be able to understand the nuances of Manusmriti .The 'Varna' popularly known as the 'caste system' in Hindu society . Varna alone means colour.Varna was used to denote groups having different colours. The Aryans were fair skinned and the Dravidians black skinned .Thus white or fair complexion was considered as belonging to Brahmins(priestly), red to Kshatriyas (princely),yellow to Vaishyas(commercial) and black toSudras(sering). Varna also denotes species,kind , character and nature .Racial , tribal and familial solidarity had also a part to play in the origin of the 'varna' system.The divisions may have been made based on religious beliefs, cult , practices, and even eating habits. Above all , there is the theory that the varnas derived their basis from the Purushahukta(Rig Veda) in dividing mankind into four socially separate inter dependent categories. This category classification was incorporated in the Manu Dharma Sastra.

Manu Dharma Sastra expressed and reinforced the 'varna' division . According to Manu , Brahmins were teachers , guides and exponents of law; kshatriyas were the warriors,princes and kings – in short , the nobility ;Vaishyas ,took on the task of agriculture and merchantry; and Shudra included individuals who performed services-manual and agricultural labourers ,artisans ,masons etc. Except Shudras , all the other three varnas were called as Dwija or twice born . The meaning of twice born is that after a birth the three varna's are again born with the investiture with the sacred thread , the symbol of a child's admittance to membership in his

varna .It is believed, that,the varna system was based on the principle of ‘Division of Labour’ and the suitability of the different groups for the different categories of occupations. However , varna system was based on Inequality and each varna was classified in a vertical hierarchy.

### **Crime , Justice and Punishment:**

Manu strongly believed that the ‘danda’ ‘the sceptre’ , a symbol of power and authority was created by God and only fear alone would make the human beings to swerve not from their duties.The punishment for a particular crime was not same for all varnas. Infact , the punishment varied depending on the varna of the victim as well as the varna of the person committing the crime .For the same crime ,the Brahmin was to be given the mild punishment, whereas the Shudra was to be given the harshest punishment of all. Similarly , if a Brahmin abuses a shudra , he is to fined mildly, but if a shudra abuses a Brahmin , he is to be killed. Manu suggests that it is better to tonsure the head of a Brahmin instead of providing him capital punishment ; but at the same time men of other caste shall suffer capital punishment.

Manu has shown utmost care to animal welfare and even trees but one should be fair enough to accept the fact is that he has lowered shudras to animals . Unequal Justice is found to be the base of Manu smriti. This system of Graded Inequality seems to be the very essence of the Varnashrama Dharma. It denies equal respect to all in society .It denies equality before law, whether it is the choice of names, or manner of greeting , or the mode of entertaining guests , or the method of administering oath in the court , or the process of taking out the funeral procession, at each and every step in life, from birth to death , this system of graded inequality is to be applied and observed .

### **The Relevance of the Laws of Manu in the Contemporary Society:**

In the post Independent India , under the leadership of B.R.Ambedkar the Indian Constitution was made and he took efforts to see that no discrimination creep into the Constitution . The Constitution of India has sought to create a more equal and just rule of law between groups and individuals . The Constitution of India strives to eliminate the humiliation that people suffered under the traditional social system of caste and patriarchy , thus creating new ground for realization of human dignity . However, inspite of the provision in the Constitution for equality in justice one can find that Manu’s reminiscences of caste prejudice playing a major role in the society .The caste and gender discrimination continue to cause grave harm that dalits still face all manner of trials and tribulations, and all such social inequalities need to be fought with continued vigour .

### **Post Modern View of Manu Dharma through K.A.Gunasekaran’s The Scar :**

K.A.GUNASEKARAN’S The Scar is a modern Dalit autobiography in Tamil language and was serialised in the magazine Dalit Murasu during 2004.Professor V. Kadambari (Ethiraj College for Women ,Chennai) translated ‘ vadu’ in English in 2009, has documented the life, customs , culture, festivals ,songs and dances of dalit parayar community as well as their poverty ,struggles, deprivations , oppressions and exploitations by non-tribal or non dalit.

Gunasekaran narrates the familiar tale of caste oppression and prejudice prevalent in the Indian society .The narration unfolds his deep pains and sufferings from his childhood itself . The scar is a graphic confronting narrative of the life experience of a paraya- an aboriginal agricultural community and one of the Dalits in Elayankudi village , Ramanathapuram district , Tamil Nadu . Th term ‘Parayar’ is sometime called as Paraiyar, Pariah or Adi-dravidian. They were traditionally farmers and weavers . According to historian R. Deva Ashirvathan , Parayars may be the descendants of Paradadas or Mauryas, who were Buddhists and Jains came to south India after the collapse of Buddhism and rise of Brahmanism in northern India . Due to their Buddhist connection, they refused to adopt Brahmanism..So they were separately distinguished and excommunicated with the rules of Brahmanism . The late Bishop Caldwell derived the name parayar from the tamil word ‘parai’ means a drum, as certain parayars act as drummers at marriages, funerals, village festivals and on occasions of government or commercial announcements proclaimed. The Brahmanic society has given separate hamlets out of the village, separate wells and separate burial grounds.

The literal meaning of the word ‘scar’ is a mark that is left on the skin after a wound has healed. The word also means permanent feelings of sadness as eternal pain that a person is left with after unpleasant experiences. Gunasekaran’s multiple scars are potrayed cleverly or skillfully in their autobiography . They are not the proud medals but they are the history of an Individual and the Community.

Poverty is the cause and perhaps a paralyzing factor for sufferings , harassment and oppression of Dalits in the society . Most of the Dalits do not own any field for farming to produce some grains .Gunasekaran’s father is a teacher and earning some money but it is insufficient to support his large family of six children. His mother works at cinema’s ticket counter or collects cow dungs or woods to sell to Muslims to earn few wages to support her family . Gunasekaran also works to earn some wages in many ways like collecting of cow dung , cutting of bricks in summer , selling of fish and mangoes in the streets of Elayankudi to support his family. All these describe the pitiable condition of his family. Good food is always a dream for a Dalit Family.The autobiography documents the bitter experiences of ‘untouchability’ and ‘caste discrimination’ at the public places of Indian villages. This kind of discrimination is not only experienced by Gunasekaran but also by the whole parayar, chakiliyar or low caste people. At Elayankudi , there is a shiva temple in which

dalits are not allowed to enter. They bow their heads from outside only. Gunasekaran has never entered yet in the temple as he writes; "I have never been inside this temple even today" (Gunasekaran, 1). Article 15(1) of constitution of India says that the state shall not discriminate against any citizen on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth. Article 15(2)(a) says no citizen is restricted to access to the public places like shops, wells, tanks etc. Article 17 abolishes 'untouchability and forbids its practice in any form. In Post Independent India, still dalits are restricted to enter in many temples.

Even in the academic places like schools and colleges, dalits face lot of discriminations. In 'The Scar' a cross-eyed school clerk asks in class; "How many in this class are parayars? put up your hands; How many are pallars? stand up, I will count" (5). This incident shows how the so called upper caste people use every chance to degrade the dalits. The most striking and unique about dalits is that most of them are artists, actors and performers. During the festival at Amman temple many of the Nayandi drummers belong to keeranoor (Gunasekaran's mother's place). When they visit Gunasekaran's family, they keep their instruments in a shop on the way to hide their identity as low caste. It shows how the low caste people are feared of caste cruelty in the post-Independent India.

The evil of 'untouchability' is not limited only to the rural areas like Marandai, Thoovoor and keeranoor but also is same in town like Tanjavur. When the famous dancer Mallika invites Gunasekaran to see her dance at the Big temple at Tanjavur, Gunasekaran counters the same problem of untouchability too. The low caste are not allowed inside the temple and they are permitted to beat the drums from outside only.

This autobiography 'The scar' shows how an eight year old young boy's mind is so poisoned with knowledge of laws of Manu. At Marandai (the original village of Gunasekaran), an eight year old boy hacks the branches of the tree that is full of flowers. Gunasekaran asks him "Dei! why are you cutting always the flowers and tender fruits of our tree?" (51). In a fraction of second the boy slaps Gunasekaran runs away and comes along with some other persons and warns Gunasekaran in front of Karupa (grandfather of Gunasekaran); Dei! Elayankudi boy, it is because of Karupa that you have escaped today otherwise we would have skinned you alive and rubbed salt on you. Do you know to whom you have addressed Dei? we will cut your tongue. Are you aware of your caste and ours?..... be careful before you speak. otherwise we would make you scarce" (51).

Karupa pleads to forgive Gunasekaran by begging full length. Later on, Gunasekaran comes to know that so called upper caste people are to be addressed as 'ayya' or 'sami'. The law giver Manu has not given the choice of names to the dalits. There, Gunasekaran's grandfather is called as Karupa. Karupa means black. Only the higher castes are privileged to have sophisticated names. Dalits are to have only Amangala (impure) names like karupa, munia, muniyandi, sudalai, etc.

An interesting and ridiculous incident is narrated by Gunasekaran. A konar farmer falls down due to fits while ploughing, Doctor Muniyandi (Maternal Uncle of Gunasekaran) takes him off and sprinkles water from his porridge vessel. When he comes to conscious the konar farmer immediately says, "who asked you to touch me? How can you, a parayan touch me?" (60) later, he takes the matter to panchayat. The panchayat punishes Muniyandi machan according to Manu dharma to prostrate before the panchayat to seek their forgiveness. Upper caste people are ready to die, instead of touched or helped by a lower caste. For them, caste is more important than their life itself.

Even the street roads are not allowed to use by the low caste people even during the social functions like marriage. The upper caste people have not only deprived the dalits from basic rights but also they have controlled their personal lives by making oppressive and exploiting rules to them. Though Gunasekaran is suffering a lot from untouchability, caste discrimination and oppressions of upper caste, but gradually he becomes very strong and he realizes his talent is singing and secure first position in inter-collegiate singing competition. He learns Karagam and Kavadi (folk dances) from Om Periaswami during his M.A. Professor Om Periaswami takes him to Delhi for Republic day celebration in 1981. MRS Indira Gandhi, the then prime minister, invites all the artist for dinner at her house. MRS. Gandhi shakes hand with him and enquires in English and advises him to do research in folks arts. He promises to do so and does it so. The newspaper of Madurai are full of his photographs shaking hands with MRS. Indira Gandhi. Later on it takes him to be recognized nationally and internationally.

Manu dharma is the main cause for the poverty and exploitation of Dalits. As Ambedkar said, Education is the only force which can help the oppressed people to emancipate from the bondages of poverty, oppression, exploitation and discrimination. It also helps not only dalits but also the others to perceive the age old laws in the light of Right Justice, Liberty and Equality.

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## Culmination of Culture in Anita Nair's *Mistress and The Better Man*

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**Abstract:** The culture of India is among the world's oldest, reaching back about 5,000 years. Many sources describe it as the first and the supreme culture in the world. India's different regions have their own distinct cultures. Language, religion, food and the arts are just some of the various aspects of Indian culture. Indian cuisine is known for its large assortment of dishes and its liberal use of herbs and spices. Cooking style varies from region to region. Among fine arts, Indian dance has a tradition of more than 2,000 years. The major classical dance traditions Bharata Natyam, Kathak, Odissi, Manipuri, Kuchipudi, Mohiniattam and Kathakali draw on the themes from mythology and have rigid presentation rules. The dynamism of Indian culture can be understood when we realize how despite the severe blows and threats it has withstood to uphold its significance and supremacy. This paper is an attempt to highlight how Anita Nair's novels are a celebration of Indian culture, especially the culture of art and food.

**Key words :** Anita Nair, culture, tradition, art, food and spices.

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Anita Nair is one of the post colonial novelists of the modern India. She has a great fascination to our ancient culture which has been miserably forgotten in the present era of sophistication and modernisation. This state of affairs has urged her to expose and highlight the value and credit of our culture in her works, especially *Mistress and The Better Man*. The novelist has elaborately discussed the art form Kathakali in her *Mistress* and the value of herbs in *The Better Man*. The culture of India is among the world's oldest reaching back about 5000 years. Language, religion, food and the arts are just some of the various aspects of Indian culture.

Anita Nair's novel *Mistress* is a gorgeous portrayal of the Kerala dance form Kathakali. The author tries to establish the indigenous culture which brings meaning into one's life. She is unbiased while showing that such a rich Indian art is at the threshold of extinction due to the surging in of the western arts. The novelist has given so much of importance to this culture of dance that she has made the entire story revolve around the Kathakali artist Koman in the story. She has appeased her strong desire of wanting to revive the pure art form by creating this character Koman.

Koman is the perfect artist to the core. According to Nair, art is the outcome of spiritual, philosophical, and physical experience. The novelist has travelled through the alleys and hallways of Kathakali to make the readers understand the many dimensions of this art form. The ethics of the dance teacher (Aashaan) makes one thrill and adore. The weight of experience of a good Aashaan, his insight into the art form Kathakali are all explicitly portrayed in a kaleidoscopic view in the novel. The success of the novel lies not only in giving elaborate details of Kathakali but also in distinctly focussing the ethics of a real teacher (Aashaan).

According to Nair, dance is a language without words. She transmits her love of this art form to the readers with her subtle language and technique. Using the forehead, the eyebrows, the nostrils, the mouth, the chin and thirty two muscles as the tools, the Kathakali artist fashions the language without words. The navarasas, love, contempt, sorrow, fury, courage, fear, disgust, wonder and peace are emotions that are more than sufficient to express oneself not only in dance but also in life. According to Nair these are the nine faces of the heart.

The author so skillfully narrates the lengthy story by bringing the incidents to group under each Rasa (emotion). The chapters are named after each emotion. Koman, uncle of Radha in *Mistress* has merged his thought and soul into the art form of Kathakali. So he aptly relates the reality to the characters in the dance. Mostly the characters are from Indian mythology. There are abundant references to our epics in the novel.

Koman mentions of Kathivisham in Kathakali. It is the character who plays the villains of Indian mythology. While explaining about it to Radha, he says that the villains of Indian mythology Ravana, Narakasura and Hiranyakashipu are demon kings with noble blood in them but are classified as Kathivisham because they let their one weakness curdle their mind and turned out arrogant, evil and demonic. When Koman sees the love and passion of Radha and Chris for each other he is reminded of Nala and Damayanti. He compares Shyam to Keechakan and Bheema. Sometimes on seeing the craftsmanship of Shyam, Koman thinks of him as the aashaari.

"Not everybody can play the aashaari. I know. It requires an understanding that is beyond the comprehension of a novice. The carpenter is both a fool and master craftsman."

The novel *Mistress* is actually a bildungsroman of a Kathakali artist Koman. He is a combination of three religions, son of Sethu a Hindu father and Saadiya a muslim mother and brought up by a Christian nurse. But he gains identity only as a Kathakali artist. In the course of narrating the dance culture of South India Nair

also tries to show how some fake artists like Sundaram reduce the pure art to the level of commodity. The libretto of a kathakalli always begins with a shloka. We see Nair has adopted the same technique to give the lines from Nalacharitam before book one book two and book three. When koman goes to London his art loses its identity. His pathetic condition is compared to Bahuhan, An impoverished black Nala after losing his kingdom. There is a clash of culture and values between life in India and London.

We can also find the mention of other beliefs and practices in the story, like the wedding in Guruvayur. “A procession of people arrived and another and yet another. Couples climbed on to the dais to exchange garlands. The music of the drums and the nadaswaram flowed, packing itself into the meagre spaces between people”. The temple at early hours in the dawn is described vividly. “The temple corridors were dark. The crowds melted into the shadows and I knew again the sense of serenity, as though I was alone. We could hear the chants of Narayana, Naryana, the devotees’ fervour rising as the doors of the sanctum sanctorum opened and the priests raised the lamp. A fleeting glimpse of the idol’s face and Narayana, Narayana, the God’s name drummed into our ears...” . Thus Mistress is a brilliant blend of imaginative story telling and deeply moving explorations into the search for meaning in art and life.

The vast field of Ayurvedic science is gaining more importance and popularity across the globe because of its amazing therapeutic values. In olden days man lived very close to nature and whenever he got indisposed he cured himself by the resources and materials provided by nature, which is nothing but the herbs. Right from olden days the ayurvedic herbs are supposed to give a solution for all kinds of diseases which was even considered impossible by other field of medical science. The sages in olden days were mainly involved in experimenting the different kinds of herbs and then the preparation of ayurvedic medicine from them. Study of each herb in depth, along with its effects of the doshas is to be considered for designing the Ayurvedic herb formulas. Each herb with its own characteristic features is thus used for specific diseases and its treatment. Nair has reminded the people the value of such divine herbs by discussing elaborately its use in the treatment of many diseases in her novel *The Better Man*.

*The Better Man* is Nair’s first novel of great promise. The Kerala cuisine and herbs and shrubs which are a part and parcel of Indian culture are exhibited in the course of the story. There is one screw-loose- Bashi whose original name is Bhaskaran Chandran. He is a healer and he uses not only herbs and shrubs but also reaches the inner psyche of the patient and cures them. He has a college degree in botany which helps him to know more about herbs. People come to him as a last resort. “They seek me out, coming to me when they have lost faith in everything else. Bringing me bodies and minds that have been neglected, mistreated, and sometimes even abused”.

When Bashi meets Mukundan he smells that he is in a great distress. He wants to help him out of it. Bashi says, “In you I saw a friend, and a customer, A patient. Someone whose healing has to be aided. You need me.” He starts his healing on Mukundan. Bashi understands the fears hidden in Mukundan’s mind. Bashi decides to take Mukundan to a meadow that is in the middle of the forest. He knows that the celestial herb MANDUKAPARNI thrives there. It is with this herb that Bashi has plans to cure Mukundan. Bashi is successful in making Mukundan to expose his inner agony, the hurt that he had carried in him like a secret malignant tumour gnawing at his insides all those years. Bashi talks about a herb SARACAINDICA. He says that it cures excessive bleeding and depression in women. He mentions of the Asoka tree. In mythology Sita was supposed to have sat under this tree when Ravana held her in captive. Another legend is that Buddha was born under this tree.

Bashi mentions of CENTELLA ASIATICA, another divine herb which is called anti-aging plant and which the Chinese use as a brain tonic. With the juice of its leaves various anxieties of human mind shall be unwrapped. There are yet other examples of Bashi using herbs to cure patients of their headaches using SHANKUPUSHPAM plants and cumin. Nair takes great pride in highlighting the value of the herbs which are a part of our ancient culture. Thus *Mistress* and *The Better Man* are the novels where the Indian culture culminates. These novels create an awakening in us about our indigenous culture.

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## Caribbean Culture in Selected Poems of Derek Walcott

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**Abstract:** In West Indies, The Europeans exploited the mines and rubber plantations, and above all their need for labor was fulfilled by the slave trade initiated during those times. These black Africans were forcibly drafted from their native lands to the distant parts of American continent, and to the islands surrounding the American continent. Caribbean island is a group of islands these islands became a hotbed for the slavish Black Africans, these Africans became laborers. These bonded laborers lost their culture respect, dignity language and what not. However, slowly the heat of slavery got reduced, and these people became free, their culture was split for they lost their past and now they loved with the borrowed culture. Derek Walcott was born in this land. He became a poet to lament continuously for the loss of their culture. The present study of Walcott's poem is based on the Caribbean culture will try to collect the beautiful picture of the Caribbean culture. This paper also tries to prove how his related to the Caribbean culture.

Derek Walcott poems are not just representative of an entire generation's experience. In his work, human beings are made of more than one place. He invented both himself and entire kinds of language, one that incorporate into poetry not only his particular ancestry and tongue, but also those of anyone who has felt alienated, bicultural, lost or re-found. Being a post colonial poet Derek Walcott always portrays his culture in his work.

**Key words:** migration, slavery, ulture and tradition.

### Introduction

In post colonial literature the writers use the colonizers language. The purpose of using the language of the colonizer is to reply the colonial legacy directly. In this way the postcolonial literature developed and the colonized people proved their Scholarship to the world. Many colonizer writers had written about colonialism but they did not portray the real feelings of the colonialism. They misrepresented many ideas. They presented Colonialism from their own point of view, and not from the native point of view. In Edwards said's essay "Culture and Imperialism", he analyzed the novel "Heart of Darkness "by Conrad. The colonial period is reported by "Marlowe". In this essay "Edwards said", said that both Conrad and Marlowe are Non-Africans so they are not able to convey the read suffering of the natives. Chinua Achebe in his essay "Home and exile" analyzed Joyce Cary's "Mister Johnson" in which Achebe points out that the Africans are misrepresented by Joyce Cary. After reading "Mister Johnson" the African students raised their voice against the misrepresentation of their country. Writing like this, the westerner did not show the real culture, suffering and feel of the natives. They also defended colonialism.

West Indies is a large of islands that separate the Caribbean Sea from the Atlantic Ocean. West Indian had no land and no language of their own, because they lived a slavery life. The colonial master put the people have to keep plantation labour.They did not give them chance to revolt. Caribbean poetry came into its own during the twentieth century. The postcolonial poets were cautious. They protested against the expressive rule of the colonial, but they saw themselves as British. They were nationalistic. The poet's cofo best represent this period are from Jamaica's Claude mekays, Lausic Benneff, Gcyana's A.J.Seymour, St.lucia's Derek Walcott and Barbados's Edward Kamau Braithwaite. The Caribbean postcolonial poet's became the strongest one's to voice for the Caribbean freedom. Many of their poems exposed British colonialism and American imperialism by using their sonnets as major made of expressions.

Derek Walcott was born in castles, St.Lucia, British west Indies on January 23,1930 to Warwick and Alix Walcott who of mixed African Dutch and English descent. His father, a civil servant died in 1931 leaving Pamela his older sister and Derek and his older sister and his twin brother Roderick Alton in the sole care of his mother. Walcott was already becoming known as poet many of his poems published in the "voice of St. Lucia (1946-48)". His interest in art blossomed and was significantly influenced by Harold Simmons .After graduating St. Mary's in 1948, he continued on for two years as a junior master teaching Latin and art and poetry for extra moral classes at St. Joseph's convent. In the same year "25 poems" dedicated to his mother was published and well received Some of his famous collections are Another Life (1973), Arkanas Testament (1987), A far cry from Africa (1962), Codcill (1965), Saint Lucia (1976), Schooner flight(1979), North and South (1981), Omeros (1990),The castaway and other poems (1965), The Bounty (1992), The Fortunate Traveller (1981), Midsummer(1984), The star Apple Kingdom (1979), Sea Grapes (1976),The Bounty (1997), Tiepolo's Hound (2000).

### Critical Analysis of His Poems

In *Origins* one of the earliest poems in the collection, Walcott evokes myths of the Caribbean. Even though Europe believed that, the starting point of Caribbean history is from Columbus discovery of Americans in 1492. It is believed that Amerindians occupied Caribbean on Columbus's arrival, but there is write a correct evidence to prove the same. The poem suggests an older starting point, the birth of narrating 'I as fetus of plankton'. This origin may be related to the sea, which means the acceptance of the evolution theory. Since there is no written document of Caribbean history, people believe that it can be reconstructed from an imagination reinterpretation of the land and of sea voltages and the remains to be find at the bottom of the ocean. In 1950 and 60, Caribbean artists believed that, the Caribbean beginnings were ticked underneath the sea. For Walcott, who was followed in this by many other Caribbean writers, the sea is history of particular kind. This is the reason why his poetic person says that near the sea, his mind sees, "its mythopoeia coast". The poet Derek Walcott created his own myth of origin, and that too became popular among later Caribbean seas. This is the reason why Walcott refers to the Caribbean people as nameless because of their complex accessing, because the original slaves were cut off, or transported, and their history is one of loss and alienation.

In *Origins* the tragic middle passage is sublimated through the evocation of human beings born out of the submerged skills of coral. The persona of this poem identifies him with life on earth. This enables him to assert the deep bond between ocean, island and its inhabitants. In Section II of *Origins* the poet mentions his natural tendency to interpret Greek myths learnt at school in terms of local equivalents. Thus, the caduceus, the magic wand make of two intentioned snakes round harems staff becomes 'constrictor round the mangrove'. The sibyl is an old black woman who 'gibbers with the cries'. The sacking and billing of troy may evoke the 1948 fire of Castries, which destroyed Walcott's native form. St. Lucia is often compared with Helen, and is called as 'Helen of the West Indies'. Likewise, in the poem *A Sea Chantey*, the palms are shelf of odysseys and volcanoes is called cyclonic. Similarly, the scene in 'two poems on the passing of empire' is complete when a heron perched on a stump in the marsh reminds the persona of the emblem of a Roman legion.

In *Exile*, the poet uses the Indian symbols. While musing over his happy life in Trinidad, he mentions the Indian monkey god Hanuman. Even the pager of Ramayana finds mention in his poem. This is to stress the prescence of Indian community in Trinidad. It emphasized through *The Saddhu of Couva*, a poem in which, according to the narrator, speaking in Creole, the old gods and the Indian tradition are said to be dead:

There no more elders is only old people.  
Suppose all gods too old,  
(The Saddhu of Couva 36-38)

The Indian girl met along the road in section twelve of *Another Life* is the *New Persephone*, perhaps an allusion to the fact that this girl is viewed as a creating of darkness, in the same way as Persephone was the goddess of the underworld. Derek Walcott's first important volume of verse, in a *Green Night: poems* (1948-1960), were a land mark in the history of West Indies poetry, breaking with exotic native tradition of shallow romanticism and inflated rhetorical abstractions. In such poems as *A Far Cry From Africa*, *Ruins of a Great House*, and *Two Hems on the passing of an Empire*, he began to confront the complex personal fate that would dominate all of his work his identity as a transplanted African in an English-Organized society. In *A Far Cry From Africa*, he concluded.

I Who am poisoned the blood of both  
Where shall I turn, divided to the vein?  
I who have cursed  
The drunken officer of British rule, how choose  
Between this Africa and the English tongue I Love?  
Betray them both, or give back what they give  
How can I face such slaughter and be cool?  
How can I turn from Africa and live?  
(A Far Cry From Africa 14-21)

Most of the Black writers suffer from the same inferiority complex. Inferiority complex may be too harsh, so couched words like those that wounded race can be used. This suffering of the Black's ancestor is still alive in most of the writer's minds. Derek Walcott also belongs to the same category for in the above he is confused about the society to which he belongs. His innermost mind supports the English culture. As a person, he believed in the purity of culture and tradition, and that is why he used the word "Poisoned" in the poem *A Far Cry from Africa*. He is unable to turn to anyone direction, and because his grudge for the English atrocities is still alive, he is not able to love them, but at the same time, he is not able to hate them, for them in his blood. However, he does not like the English culture, his love for English as a language crosses all bounds.

Using the English tongue he loved does not preclude. Walcott from feeling outrage at the degradation to which the British Empire has subjected his people, "the abuse/ of ignorance by bible and by sword (qtd.in *Postcolonial Literature* 214)". He calls "Hawkins Walter Raleigh, Oradey/ Ancestral murders and poets (Volume I 211)". For these voyagers laid the foundation for planned extortion from colonial countries. Yet this

rage-filled poem ends on a note of comparison, as the speaker recalls that England was also an exploited colony subjects to “bitter faction”. The heart dictated anger, but intelligence controls and mellow feeling, perceiving the complexity of human experience. So this poem *A Far Cry From Africa* has the theme of the brutality of Europeans on the African life, culture and people. The very title of the poem stands as an example of this brutality. The expression “far cry” may be constructed as a distant cry or ancient cry.

“A Far Cry From Africa” Derek Walcott shows a deep postcolonial feeling. A good writer is one who assimilates both the cultures of his present living and there by achieves universality for his multi-cultural commitment. In Walcott, one is aware of a terrible that of his African origin, the West Indian birth and upbringing and the recent American stay which keep him at a distance from his environment. He is caught in a dilemma of choose between the country of his origin on the other. The dilemma between one’s tradition and medium of expressing is beautifully expressed in “A Far Cry From Africa” .it is a very significant poem for it gives expression to multicultural experience for which he was awarded the Noble Prize for literature .

Colonial Hanover is there in the West Indies poems and the memory of the past haunts the mind end. The opening lines of the poems set tone of the poem. The agony of colonial torture is still fresh and the memory of the past hunts the mind without end the opening lines of the poems set the tone of the poem. The agony of colonial torture is still fresh in his mind as Walcott puts it:

A Wind is ruffling the tawny pelt  
Of Africa, Kikuyu, quick as files,  
(18-19 *A Far Cry From Africa*)

The gruesome picture of torture inflicted by the colonizers is suggested by the image of “Worm” which vitiated the atmosphere this is a recurrent image in Walcott’s poetry. He is pitted against the colonial policy. He revolts against the injustice meted out of natives of Africa. The discrimination against race and color is brought out in the following lines:

Statistics justify and scholars seize  
The salient of colonial policy  
What is that to the white child hatred in bed?  
To savages, expendable as jew?  
(21-24 *A Far Cry From Africa*)

Derek Walcott is a post colonial writer; what had taken neither side. He was not a great loner of native, or exploitation. He is a symbol of assimilation, and histories. A good writer is one who assimilates both the cultures – of his native land and the land of his present living – and makes a multi – cultural commitment to transcend the individual concussion and thereby achieves universality. This Nobel laureate is one such expatriate poet who has achieved universality for his multicultural commitment.

We consider Derek Walcott as a very successful postcolonial Caribbean writer, and his personal background influenced his quest for a Caribbean aesthetic a concept of and poetry grounded in, and committed to, West Indian life and society. In this context full of history, his understanding of memory as a condition for creativity in the Caribbean, and his pursuit of a poetic language has the power to overcome the conflicted legacy of colonialism by fusing multiple meanings and cultural perspectives.

### Conclusion

In Walcott, one is aware of a terrible impulse – that of his African origins, West Indian birth and upbringing and the recent American stay, which isolates him from his environment. Throughout his poems, Derek Walcott has expressed his dilemma to choose between the countries of his origin on the one hand and English language on the other. The dilemma of choosing between one’s tradition and medium of expression is beautifully expressed in *A Far Cry from Africa*. It is a very significant poem for it gives expression to multi cultural commitment for which he was awarded Nobel Prize for literature.

The West Indies poems are largely dispossessed of their last. Colonial hangover is still there and the memory of the past haunts the mind without end. His love for English language, concern

For native country and nostalgia for the African origin combine in his poetry and enable him to fulfill the multi – cultural commitment that makes him a universal part.

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## We are a Pure Persian Race: A Study of the Ethnic Atrophy of Parsis as Reflected in Rohinton Mistry's *Family Matters*

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**Abstract:** Parsis constitute a major diaspora living in Gujarat, Mumbai and Karachi. In India they are a displaced group being the descendants of people from Pars, a province in Iran who fled to India after the Islamic conquest of Iran. They tried to adapt themselves to the Indian soil and flourished because of their honesty, integrity and enterprising nature. After the British left India, they felt insecure because of the changed political circumstances. Moreover late marriages and low birth rate led to a population decline. Even migration to western countries could not help them to gain an identity. This identity crisis has led many Parsis to cling to their religious customs and beliefs. Rohinton Mistry, a Parsi writer who migrated to Canada, in his works tries to portray the identity crisis and ethnic atrophy of Parsis. In his novel *Family Matters*, he portrays some characters who adhere to their customs to maintain a true Parsi identity in the changed circumstances in India. This paper seeks to examine the ethnic atrophy in the novel *Family Matters* written by Rohinton Mistry.

**Keywords:** ethnic, diaspora, migration and customs.

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In his excellent book *Global Diasporas: An Introduction* (UCL Press, 1997) Robin Cohen tentatively describes diasporas as communities of people living together in one country who 'acknowledge that "the old country"-a notion often buried deep in language, religion, custom or folklore-always has some claim on their loyalty and emotions'(9). Communities in diaspora share the following characteristics.

1. Dispersal from an original homeland, often traumatically, to two or more foreign regions;
2. Alternatively or additionally, the expansion from a homeland in search of work, in pursuit of trade or to further colonial ambitions;
3. A collective memory and myth about the homeland, including its location, history, suffering and achievements;
4. An idealization of the real or imagined ancestral home and a collective commitment to its maintenance, restoration, safety and prosperity, even to its creation;
5. The frequent development of a return movement to the homeland that gains collective approbation even if many in the group are satisfied with only a vicarious relationship or intermittent visits to the homeland;
6. A strong ethnic group consciousness sustained over a long time and based on a sense of distinctiveness, a common history, the transmission of a common cultural and religious heritage and the belief in a common fate;
7. A troubled relationship with host societies, suggesting a lack of acceptance or the possibility that another calamity might befall the group;
8. A sense of empathy and co-responsibility with co-ethnic members in other countries of settlement even where home has become more vestigial; and
9. The possibility of a distinctive creative, enriching life in host countries with a tolerance for pluralism. (p17)

The Parsis in India are a diasporic community mainly settled in Bombay and Gujarat. They are an ethnic group who follows Zoroastrianism, the first monotheistic religion in the world. Booted out from Persia following Islamic invasion, they reached Gujarat and were given refuge by the local ruler. Even after remaining in India for one thousand three hundred years they are still reluctant Indians. In the wake of independence, the subsequent return of English people from the Indian subcontinent and growing fundamentalism, the Parsis feel themselves alienated and their cultural practices mocked at. Besides, the Parsis in India face many problems like low birth rate, declining population, increasing rate of divorces etc. Rohinton Mistry, an expatriate Parsi writer portrays the increasing feel of unease among Parsi community in India, their identity crisis and their attempts to remain as "true Parsis" in his fictional saga, *Family Matters*.

Expatriation poses many challenges to a community and they find themselves standing at the border of two cultures. Avtar Brah says, "Where is home? 'Home' is a mythic place of desire in the diasporic imagination. In this sense it is a place of no return, even if it is possible to visit the geographical territory that is seen as the place of 'origin' (192)." The Parsis very well know that return to Iran is an impossibility as the plight of Zoroastrians in Iran is pitiable. According to Veena Noble Dass: "The expatriate struggles to maintain the difference between oneself and the new environment. He has to meet unfriendly surroundings in the new country. He feels alienated and rootless because of the cultural dilemmas and the experienced hostility in the new country." The realization of an impossibility to return to their homeland coupled with the feeling of being natural outsiders creates a kind of insecurity and subsequently a sense of we-feeling among the community

members. In order to create an identity of their own they maintain their own religious practices and rituals which Dharan refers to as ethnic atrophy.

The Parsis were the most westernized group in India during the colonial period. They succeeded in all walks of life and became industrialists, bankers and also held high positions in the government. They were known for their enterprising nature, honesty and integrity and considered themselves superior to Indians. In the novel Yezad is adamant that the refrigerator they buy must be Godrej, a Parsi product. After independence the educated Parsis considered west as their haven and felt they have no future in India. The tendency to migrate to the west was typical of educated young Parsis. Yezad, like his fellow men tries to go to Canada but could not and all his life he has regrets about it.

Even though highly westernized, when it comes to matters pertaining to their religion, they are not so liberal as they are perceived to be. We find the community struggling to balance between tradition and modernity. The Parsis are so particular about maintaining ethnic purity. In family matters, the Parsi community, especially the elders, vehemently oppose inter marriages. Professor Nariman Vakkeel falls in love with a catholic girl Lucy which shocks his family members. His father is disgusted with the son bringing his girl friend home and says: "This son of mine has turned my house into a raanwada bringing his whore home. It's this kind of immorality that's destroying the Parsi community." (267) He said she might be a wonderful person as gracious and charming as the queen of England, but she was still unsuitable for his son because she was not a Zoroastrian. Succumbing to family pressures he decides to break up with Lucy. Later when his grand son Murad has an affair with a Hindu girl Anjali, Yezad expresses his resentment: "Because we are a pure Persian race, a unique contribution to this planet and mixed marriages will destroy that" (482). He further says, "Inferior or superior is not the question. Purity is a virtue worth preserving." (482). Zoroastrianism does not forbid conversion or inter-faith marriages. The objection may have arisen because of the promise their ancestors have made to the local ruler that they will not convert the local population into their fold.

The Parsis stress on purity and considers fire, water and earth as pure elements in nature and to pollute them is regarded as a sin. The dustoorji when he proceeds to the sanctum of the fire temple is shown as lowering the protective square of mulmul from his head to cover his nose and mouth since the fire must not be polluted with human breath. Death is considered as the ultimate impurity and to bury a corpse means to pollute the earth. The body is taken to the Tower of Silence or Dokhma where it is left for the birds of prey. In the novel Coomy's dead body is taken to the Dokhma and there are suggestions of vultures devouring the body.

Founded centuries ago Zoroastrianism had succeeded to the throne of Persia. Now they have become a miniscule community pondering over bygone days of glory. The older people consider young ones as useless dithering idiots and feels the race has deteriorated. Dr. Fitter says: "When you think of our forefathers, the industrialists and shipbuilders who established the foundation of modern India, the philanthropists who gave us our hospitals and schools and libraries and baags, what luster they brought to our community" (51). He finds young ones incompetent to look after even their own fathers. This intense self criticism may be the ego's attempt to cope with loss when the feelings of attachment were highly ambivalent... Confronted with disappointment but unable to acknowledge the ambivalence of his feelings about the loss, the individual simultaneously internalizes the lost object and attacks himself severely (The Good Parsi, 23)

Westernization seems to have influenced Parsis to have nuclear families. They prefer to live as separate families and the inadequate housing facilities prompt many Parsis to delay their marriages. In the novel the step children of Nariman vakkeel, Coomy and Jal Contractor who are in their forties remain unmarried. Declining population as a result of late marriages has become a serious source of worry for this community. According to Dr. Fitter "Demographics show we'll be extinct in fifty years" (51) Inspector Masalavaala is much distressed about the decrease in Parsi population. He says, "Parsis seem to be the only people in India who follow the family planning message. Rest of the country is breeding like rabbits" (413)

Family Matters is mostly narrated from the view point of Professor Nariman vakkeel who is bedridden and the problems resulting thereof but many a times the readers feel that Parsi community is the real protagonist of the novel. The story throws light on the cultural exclusiveness of Parsis. Chateau Felicity and Pleasant villa where most of the characters live are Parsi enclaves. This shows their preference to live in groups and their reluctance to mingle with other communities. The readers are introduced to the Parsi world and their unique beliefs and customs of which majority of people in our country are unaware. Parsi families never keep cats. They consider them bad luck because cats hate water, they never take a bath. They don't kill spiders, they eat only female chicken, never a cock. The Parsis always choose Persian names for their children. When Jehangir tells his father that he wants to change his name to John, his father says: You are a Parsi so you have a Persian name. Be proud of it, it's not to be thrown out like an old shoe." (247) When Coomy dies in an accident the family approaches Inspector Massalavaala to avoid postmortem because delaying funeral rites beyond twenty four hours from the time of death is considered undesirable within Zoroastrian rites.

In the beginning of the novel Yezad goes to the Fire temple only on auspicious occasions like Behram Roze. Later we see him becoming an ardent devotee when he finds it difficult to cope up with the problems he has to face-both financial and familial. It is spirituality which provides him comfort during his hard times. This

gives Mistry enough scope to describe Parsi prayers and customs. We are led to the Fire temple with the smell of sandal wood permeating all around where Yezad recites prayers from the holy book in Avestan language..Detailed descriptions are given regarding Kusti prayers. Kusti is a sacred thread worn around the waist which a person ties and unties several times during his prayers. It is a symbolic gesture of warding off evil spirits. References of Coomy's and Jal's Navajyote can also be found in the novel. It is a ceremony usually performed at the age of seven or nine or eleven when a child is formally inducted in to Zoroastrianism The religion places great emphasis on freedom or choice. So a person can choose to be a Zoroastrian or not. On Navajyote the child for the first time wears Sudreh,a white muslin shirt and Kusti. The Parsi kitchen with their traditional dishes like dhansak,dhandar-paatyo,patra-ni-machhi,margi-na-farcha and laganu-custard is unfolded before us. There are suggestions of Parsi practice of celebrating birthdays on two days-according to Zoroastrian and English calendar.

At first Yezaad goes to the fire temple to get some kind of solace and comfort but later he becomes very rigid in religious matters. The cupboard containing toys is transformed in to a prayer cabinet with pictures of Zarathushtra and other holy items. In Parsi homes there was the practice of keeping pictures of holy figures like Sai Baba, virgin Mary and Budha. Yezad no longer wants them in the prayer cabinet as he thinks they may interfere with the vibrations of Zarathushthi prayers. He wants a proper disposal of these items and keeping in with the Zarathushthran tradition of respect for all religions, offers it to the sea, to Avan Yezat for safe keeping. He asks his son who has come home after a hair cut to keep fifteen feet away from the prayer cabinet. He passes what his son calls 'menstruation laws' .Roxana is not permitted to enter drawing room , she should avoid kitchen and must sleep in a spare bed room. Moreover she has to make sure that the servant does not come to their house during her menstrual cycle. When Yezad objects to Murad bringing home his non -Parsi girl friend on his birthday, the son loses all control and bursts out ,“Do you know the obsession with purity is creating lunatics in our community? Iam never going to accept these crazy ideas.”(486).

Mistry succeeds in portraying the woes and anxieties of the Parsi community which has a great heritage and tradition to boast of .On the verge of extinction and fear of being suppressed by the host society, it is quite natural that they cling to their own cultural practices and religious tenets to maintain an identity of their own. The novelist acquaints the readers with the prayers, life style, diet and all aspects pertaining to Parsi life. Through the conversations of the characters,he highlights the need to sustain the culture of the community. As inspector Massaalavaala says:”When a culture vanishes, humanity is the loser”(415).

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## Self-Identity and Homelessness in Ruskinbond's *The Room on the Roof*

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**Abstract:** *Ruskin bond has won the hearts of millions of readers with his countless charming short stories and introspective novels. From biographical tales about acting as a grand father to children, to tales of unrequited love, the cross-cultural dimensions of Indian society, and the power and beauty of nature, Bond's more than forty novels and short story collections have made him an Internationally acclaimed author.*

*Ruskin Bond is one of the greatest and most beloved story tellers. His works focuses on the themes of nature, children, love, and animals in his novels and short stories. It shows Bond's love for humanity in all its variety, from honourable rogues to proud beggar, heartbroken lovers, and old man and woman. He is the writer for both adults and children. Bond has been writing novels , poems, essays, and countless short stories. His novels focus on the themes following that multi-culturalism in India, his old child-hood experiences in India, and his adolescence. Bond makes readers to Travel with him to the wonderful path of Himalayan's hills and mountains and its foots. It can firmly having its identity of Indianness and Indian culture.*

*Culture is the another word for 'way of Living', Human life should always in accordance with the nature. Civilization is rooted in nature, which has shaped in human culture. The present day world is a world of advancements, hi-tech technology and unimaginable scientific growth and development. People live fast life which has turned them blind towards Nature and natural Surroundings. Bond's novels and short stories naturally depicts the world of the children as well as adults. with Indian cultural background settings. Bond has absorbed the cultural inflicts, dimensions in the contemporary Indian society. Ruskin Bond not only loves India, but also the people and traditions of all the religions of India and gives due respect to them. In his works , Ruskin bond often gives ample descriptions about Indian social customs and festivals and Gods. He finds the roots of the Indian culture.*

**Key Words:** *cross-cultural dimensions, humanity, multi-culturalism*

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The Room on the Roof is an adolescent novel, written by Ruskin Bond, an Anglo Indian writer. This Novel

was first published in 1956. The Room on the Roof was written in Post-war period it explores the concerns of identity , alienation, and rebellion against restrictions, and self-dependence. Room on the Roof is a semi-autobiographical novel in which Rusty, the protagonist of the novel, like Ruskin Bond, seems to have assimilated the Indian culture and made it his own. The Room on the Roof, in contrast, explores the themes of home, of isolation from both England and India being charged between the two cultures. Its primary aim is to analyze the lost identities, labors, languages and cultures.

The concept of nationalism, race, identity, and language, marginality are all being included in it. The identity issue is mostly handled within the sphere of the colonized. the colonizer is victim too, in that he also faces with the same problem. The colonialist identity for the colonizers erupts with their arrival to the colonial lands. On arriving they go into a prompt change of identity. Being an average man in his own country, the colonizer suddenly turns into a dominate state, or superior but they also face with the same problem of identity. The younger generation of the colonizers, born into the colonial state, identified as a colonizer and destined to be superior, Just as the colonized is identified as inferior, timid, and others at their own land. In the colonial system colonizer and colonized both have to struggle for their identity. The colonizers, although living among colonized, actually do not know them and don't bother to know about their own morals tradition culture and life style.

As a writer, Ruskin Bond does not have a sense of superiority over Indians nor does he apologize for Europeans in his stories. He seems comfortable with both of the cultures. There is no sense of tension between the two cultures of East and West. He lived in India in both colonial and postcolonial period and as a result of post-colonialism and globalization, his contacts with different cultures increased with the passage of time which he portrays in his stories. He is not one of the peoples who react in one of two ways, assimilation or syncretism. Assimilation is the full acceptance of the other culture while syncretism or union is a combination of the two cultures which a person chooses which seems him best from each culture. All this concepts he portrays in his postcolonial stories.

Novel Portrays the historical period of the late 20th century as the European empire of the nineteenth and early twentieth century broke up and former colonies achieved their political independence. Critical analysis of the novel throws light on the debates concerning multiculturalism, Diasporas, racism, and ethnicity as the mass migrations in the post-war period by formerly colonized peoples have radically transformed the cultures



and societies of their former masters. The critical analysis undertaken in *The Room on the Roof* also centers on the nature of colonial discourse that how incidents of This paper examines Ruskin Bond, who was born in India shortly before India's Independence (1947).

The focus of this paper is how and why this difference has occurred and how it has influenced their writing. Bond writes short stories about India and Indians, particularly the small towns and villages. While Bond writes because he loves to write, it affects the post-war life of people who were forced to migrate from their own countries by a social hierarchy. *The Room on the Roof* is a combination of determination, success, aloofness, expatriation, abandonment, nationality, traditions, and modernity. Added to these struggles, there is an issue of self-identity.

The issue of classifying literature is further complicated by globalization. There is a trend in modern literary history towards regionalism. At the same time, modern writing is increasingly the expression of a combination of cultures and traditions and transcends regional or national identities. With globalization, increased mobility and migration, and mass communication, people are more and more likely to have multiple identities and ties to more than one country.

Tension of Rusty in *The Room on the Roof* is home, identification of the self and other. The novel is written in first person narration and presents the incidents which the young author was experiencing while writing the novel. In the novel, all incidents and experiences are presented through the story of Rusty, an Anglo-Indian young boy. *The Room on the Roof* attacks the persisting racial and colonial attitudes of the Europe through seventeen-year-old Rusty and his search for his own "identity", "home", and "belonging" in the new India. The same problem through which Ruskin Bond suffered in his early age when he was struggling for his career. Rusty as a young boy, is deprived of parental love, Rusty is brought up by one of his guardians, Mr. Harrison. He studies in a reputed English medium public school in India. Rusty lives in the detached area which was under British Empire in Dehra, because his guardian Mr. Harrison never liked Indian and their neighborhood. This area was isolated away from noisy markets of the city. Mr. Harrison's dominating colonial attitude did not allow Rusty to mix-up with Indians. Mr. John Harrison never considered Indian as his own people, although he lived in India but he always had a dual attitude toward identity and culture, one was his own and another was of others or of Indians. Mr. John Harrison's house was built in an English manner, having a pleasant garden at the front of the house following the tradition of Europe. In the story although India is free now, yet Mr. Harrison never left his domineering nature of racial superiority. He was a strict and unaffected man, who always tries to instigate a sense of racial superiority in Rusty also so that he also began to see Indians as "others" or backward people. Mr. Harrison does not leave India, even though India is no more a colony of the United Kingdom now in 1956. Many British have gone back to make their career. Like so many elder European, Mr. Harrison stays on after Independence either because of business sake or because he is used to the comforts that India can provide. Mr. Harrison represents the domineering nature of colonizers, who always think about their own culture, race and society to be superior to others. Colonizers never considered inhabitants as the owners and never care about their culture, language, and traditions; even they did not bother to call the land with their names, they called the colonies as "New World" for them.

In the novel the character of Mr. Harrison shows this type of domineering nature of colonizers. Rusty was center of attraction in the community because he was the only young boy among his neighbors. His guardian, Mr. John Harrison is one among those rigid British, who dislikes Indians and their way of living. There is a separate market for the Anglo-Indians and Rusty is not permitted by Mr. Harrison to go to Indian bazaar. A sweeper boy, an untouchable, is the only young Indian whom Rusty met and smiled in his life so long. Rusty is keen on exploring the Indian bazaar and the other famous side of Dehra, To fulfill his desire Rusty makes frequent visits to the bazaar secretly and finds some new good Indian friends, but these secret visits are discovered by his guardian. As a result his Anglo-Indian guardian throws him out of the house and he is defined himself before his guardian. He was living a life in which real enjoyment of life was forbidden to him.

It was like another part of India which was still dependent. Rusty was living like a slave everything was forbidden to him. He finds relief and escape from his confined Anglo-Indian world through the dreams. Rusty takes help of defenses of psychoanalysis theory, as Sigmund Freud concluded that our unfulfilled desires come true in dreams in the same way Rusty was dreaming to get rid of his bitter present. He loves to live in dreams as author narrates: "He walked aimlessly along the road, over the hillside, brooding on the future, or dreaming of sudden and perfect companionship, romance and heroics;" (14) Instead, Indian characters were stamped as simple, irrational, dull, and lacking in self-discipline; they are portrayed as they can be loyal and faithful servants only not masters at all, to emphasize that natives are inferior to colonizers and they only fit to serve the superior. But by lampooning Mr. John Harrison, a British character in the novel, Ruskin Bond revokes this tradition of colonial novels and presents a variety of interesting Indian characters like Somi, Ranveer, Kishan, and Meena, and Mr. Kapoor. Rusty's friends are genuinely caring, and their interracial friendship is based on equality and mutual respect. Far from depicting Indians as subservient or dependent, Rusty's only hope of survival away from his Anglo-Indian world lies in the help he receives from his Indian friends and their

families. Somi offers him all the things he possesses when he was alone in the world and ignored by his own people.

The gentle friendship of Somi and his friends not only encourages him to break the barriers between Indian and European section but also the illogical statement of colonials of not to mix with natives. Rusty loves India and its people and wants to assimilate in this culture so he is attracted to the affectionate hospitality of Somi, his mother and his friends in Dehra, and the first time he acknowledges his Anglo-Indian atmosphere from which he was always kept away. Rusty is also a victim of post-independence era, he was struggling between two languages between two countries and between two cultures, he was getting younger and the big question striking in his mind was the question of his own Identity. During the rule of United Kingdom, British had asserted their distinct identity by maintaining their distance from everything Indian, so one of the concepts that Post-colonialism dares to delve into is identity, novel highlights through Rusty how the identity is died down, not vanished but put into position that neither dead nor alive. When Rusty decides to leave India for England he finds himself confused. He is neither Indian because of his color, and language, and nor a British as his guardian has declared in the very starting of the novel. When Somi asked Rusty about his native land he gave rather ambiguous answers: "You are a British subject". "I don't know". "Have you a birth certificate?" "On, no" (135) He suffers from the postcolonial trauma of displacement when he realizes his tentative position in India—loss of becomes a homeless and goes to reside with his newly friend Somi for a few days. When Rusty wants to become financially independent, Somi finds him a job teaching English to Kishan Kapoor, a spoiled child of Kapoor's family, in exchange for room and meal. For the first time in his life, Rusty gets what he desires most—a room of his own, his freedom, privacy, a man of his own and his dream of becoming a writer. He accepts the job and becomes Kishan's tutor.

Novel throws light on the postcolonial era when no one was feeling secure, colonies were announced independent and people were forced to migrate to search their own identity. It was the problem not only of Indian but many other countries were also struggling for regaining their lost identity. Colonizer and colonized both were suffering at this time in different ways as newly dependent people were searching for their own cultures of past and colonizers were suffering from homelessness as they have been living in colonies for longtime or by their birth and they started to assume these colonies as their own home. And Rusty was one of them. Rusty who is also an Anglo Indian, is a diffident and isolated boy who lived an unsocial withdrawn life. He feels disjointed from his environment: he has no friend, neither British nor Indian, and his only acquaint was an Indian who was an untouchable sweeper boy.

Rusty although has a British origin yet he suffer as others not only because he was an orphan but also for his Interest in Indians, in Indian festivals and Indian tradition. He passes his life in his guardian's house as a subaltern he does not have freedom to speak or loss of country, sense of exile, yearning for the security of family and friends, and the loneliness of an outsider. Somi tries to convince him to stay in Dehra, arguing that without a birth certificate and passport he has no legal status or nationality: "You are neither Indian subject nor British subject, and how you to get a passport are" (135) Rusty is aware of the fact that he is different because of his white skin, yet he belongs to his friends, to India, and to the entire universe. When a woman in a ferry boat asks him in the end of the novel: "What are you my son, are you one of us? I have never, on this river, seen blue eyes and golden hair." (171) Rusty replies with confidence. "I am nothing...I am everything" (172). Because he was sure that he was in exile, a refugee from the universe. Where nothing is sure and nothing is his own not even The Room on the Roof.

Yet Rusty, responds to the clash of cultures by moving out of his confined British space to connect with the land of his birth—with the people, places, and culture of India—not in terms of racial superiority but by identifying with the Indian experience; the outsider becomes an insider. Rusty accepts the hybrid nature of his identity. Rusty's initiation into the Indian world is marked by his participation in Holi, the Hindu spring festival, which signifies the regeneration of the earth, awakening of love among people, and wiping away of social distinctions. People abandon social decorum by recklessly throwing colored powder on each other and singing and dancing to forget their problems and enmities. All of creation seems to rejoice in this promise of a new life. Rusty is happy for the first time in his life and he releases his pent-up emotions by responding to the excitement of Holi; it was "something wild and emotional, something that belonged to his dream-world" (28).

Rusty participates in the rituals of an Indian festival, and crosses into that forbidden realm of India. Rusty, like the author, has not had any contact with Indian religions but he believes in the religion of humanism. Worried about his future, Rusty decides to leave India to make his career in his own land in England. He decides to go to the British High Commission in New Delhi to ask a help for an assisted passage to England. During his journey he stops at Hardwar to see Kishan to say him good-by, where he comes to know that Kishan has run away from home and has become a thief after his mother's death, because he was disenchanted when his father remarried within a month of his mother's death. Rusty's brotherly love for Kishan and Meena's faith in him that he would take care for her son when she would be away doest let him go away. He lives his rest life to follow a promise which he made with an Indian. Finally Rusty finds a "Home" and a reason to live a life for others who are not his people. He successfully completes his process of having his own identity, home, and a life of his

own. He resolves his identity crisis; and becomes a mature and self-assured young man, and faces all the difficulties of his life with hope and courage and assimilates in Indian culture in the full acceptance and accepts his status in India from exclusivity to cultural hybridity.

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## Pestilence and Endurance: A Study of Bhabani Bhattacharya's *He Who Rides A Tiger*

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**Abstract:** *Bhabani Bhattacharya is undoubtedly a prominent Indo-English fiction writer. He present pestilence as hunger, not in fragments but in its wholeness. He not only delineates the gruesome scene of famine in Bengal, but depicts its physical and moral aspects in depth. He portrays a positive vision of life. In an interview with Sudhakar Joshi he says that the novel should have a social purpose (1). His stories abound in social and historical realities, quite often bitter and gruesome, such as the Bengal Famine of 1943, the tragedies of the freedom struggle and partition, and the evils of poverty, corruption, etc. Besides them the novelists has a constant faith in life and its worthiness.*

**Key words:** *pestilence, savage, poverty, dexterity.*

Bhattacharya's third novel *He Who Rides a Tiger* focuses on the Bengal Famine, the darkest period in the history of Bengal. A pestilence takes its place on a large scale. The narrator himself says, "A plague took the land in its grip, the plague of hunger, in the wake of war" (2). The worst part of the pestilence is that the peasants sell their lands for food, the weavers sell their looms, artisans dispose of their tools and fishermen sell their boats as firewood. The people of villages are workless. "The plague washed up in fierce tides. Bengal was dying. Jharna was dying... People were flying from the hungry town. Many were going to the capital city to seek a living... The people had exchanged their pots and pans, furniture and trinkets for fistuls of foodgrain. Twenty cartloads of household utensils had moved out of town" (18-19). The whole story moves round Kalo, hero of the novel. Kalo is a poor village blacksmith. He is a hard-working and fortunate fellow who performs a miracle by avenging himself on the wealthy and high-caste people. He has lost his wife in childbirth. Now he lives with his only daughter named Chandra Lekha and his mother. Kalo's daughter Chandra Lekha is not only beautiful but also intelligent. She always stands first in her class. Oppression of hunger drives Kalo to Calcutta to get employment, leaving behind his daughter with her grandmother in the village. On his way to Calcutta, he finds a large number of indigent people lying dead near railway line under the *lusns naturae*. He feels unbearable starvation. In such a state, being sleeping. He thinks that the owner cannot prevent him from stealing the banana" "His eyes were trapped by the fruit. It gave him an unbearable ache. He could not look away. His hunger seemed to grow a hundredfold. He could no longer stand on the footboard; he had to sit or lie down. Lie down, indeed! But he kept his eyes on the bananas, torturing himself" (32). Before he is able to do any work there, he is sent to jail as a common thief hunger, for that magistrate has never felt hunger. After three months he comes out of prison and finds things worse. He has no work to do and nothing to eat. Compelled by hunger, he, against his nature and notion, starts to serve at a harlot-house. But he is shocked to see his daughter there. His daughter Chandra Lekha is also hit extremely hard by starvation and suffers much on account of it. That is why she comes to the brothel as we see at the end of the novel. But Kalo is fortunate to save her just in time from the shameful and bitter life. This gruesome event, together with the painful experience of jail and he influence of Bitten, his fellow-detenu, brings him to this state to take revenge on his enemies-the rich and the high caste.

The novel explicitly depicts how the rich people are savagely indifferent to the hungry men and are greatly responsible for their miseries. For good omen and good fortune the rich people mirthfully offer much milk to the temple and the Ganges. But they do not think a little for the destitute and the hungry. When Kalo and Vishwanath take some bath milk for the starving children, which has already been offered to the temple, they are greatly opposed by the rich people. They take up their voice against the vision of the rich people saying that they are insulting mother Ganga pouring milk into her water while a large number of children are lying and dying on her bank. At this one of the rich men says: "What absurd talk! Tens of thousands have died of hunger. What difference would a few more or a few less make? The issue at state is bigger than those useless lives" (130). In case the opulent people are quite unaffected by the miserable condition of indigent people. They do not pay attention to the procession of the hungry mass crying out: "We demand food for the hungry, 'Food for all', 'Work for all', 'Jail for the rice profiteers'" (155). The police arrest and beat the food demandants and hungry marchers. This play of hunger continues for more than ten months. Innumerable heart-breaking incidents of hunger are seen every day. There is an agonized story of a destitute lost child name Objijit in this way: "The boy had found a half-eaten mango, rotting in its yellow skin. He saw Lekha coming towards him and stiffened. He put the fruit back in the garbage and waited, staring. His mouth opened but no voice came. He could not even whimper or beg for mercy" (190). This child is overlooked by the destitute people removing from the city. This scene touches the heart of Lekha and she feels great regret after seeing the child.

The novelist has tried his best to show that the indigent people or the people of working class do not bend before their poverty and difficulty. They know how to face it. Some immoral traders come to Kalo's village to buy young girls at high rates for harlotry in Calcutta, but the indigent people like Kalo and others spit on their faces. After getting insulted by Kalo one of the dissolute traders mutters to himself: "The lowborn people won't bend but they will crack. God has sent his mighty hunger to teach the lowborn people a true lesson" (117). In such a disastrous situation of hunger they do not kill themselves rather they preserve their lives majestically "For days and months they had prayed hard, prayed to all the gods in temples and in heaven. The gods would not listen. They would not even bless the slow-dying with death's quick thunderbolt. Kill yourself and be relieved?" That would be sinful. You could not take a life, not even your own" (26).

The novel explicates Kalo's confidence and boast in his dexterity and craftsmanship. Once the destitute Vishwanath comes to meet Kalo in his pitiable plight. At this Kalo convincingly states that an honest and competent artisan is as good and dignified as the best of folks viz., "... He can hold his head high because of the skill of his hands, his special knowledge" (110). In this novel the novelist brings out the astonishing fighting soul of Kalo. He has not only a purpose in life, but also the power to achieve it.

Kalo, the central figure of the novel, and his daughter Chandra Lekha suffer a lot owing to the caste system and the economic pattern of society. Kalo is a man whose "strength seemed based on an inner metal" (16). Now he has capacity to be fooled easily by the high-born people and the rich. He feels gay to his success: "How he had fooled these creatures bloated with caste pride" (207). He overturns the age-old social order by investing himself with Brahminhood and attaining to a high social status. He ironically tells the so-called protectors and custodians of society: "A downtrodden Kamar has been in charge of your inmost souls, souls corrupt with caste and cash!" (227). He becomes the champion of the downtrodden and 'a legend of freedom'. The ethnic difference is the worst evil that has been crushing Indian society for ages. Kalo tells his daughter and untouchables are helpless creatures who do not "dare go to the police" (142). He reveals the hypocrisy of caste barriers and advocates their elimination and a sound synthesis of the different races: "Do not dare judge me or call me a swindler. I have been as Brahminic as any of you" (228). Inspired and stimulated by Bitten, Kalo breaks the backbone of caste system. Though a Kamar by race and a blacksmith by profession Kalo rises to the high social status in the guise of Mangal Adhikari, the Brahmin priest of the Shiva temple, to whom even the opulent people bow with respect. He emphatically says to the people of his race: held to be sacred" (153). Another significant aspect of the novel is that the novelist presents a gulf between two different classes the rich and the poor, the high and the low. This is evident when Kalo sees the poor dying miserably under the impact of voracious starvation. Kalo throws light on the tragic lot of the poor: "Were they doomed to haunt the earth forever as specters? ... No Brahmin priest spoke the timeless words from the Veda or applied the holy fire to the fleshless faces on the funeral pyres. Would the hundred thousand dead hover in unseen shapes over the great city eternally" (53).

The novelist adroitly deals with the hunger for food, hunger for mundane pleasures, material possessions, social high status and economic profits. As the pestilence of hunger grows and the masses of people die, the opulent people, for their power, pleasure and possession, know that their "margin of profit increased" (121). Money is everything for them and they are uneasy about how to get more and more money only to satiate themselves and their hunger for mundane pleasures. In this novel, we find one such person who is sarcastically given the name Sir Abalabandhu, means the brother of the helpless and the destitute. Of all forms of hunger, the hunger for food and the hunger for pleasure have been frequently emphasized in the novel: "Two great hungers had struck the land of Bengal in the wake of war: the hunger of the masses of people uprooted from their old earth and turned into beggars, and the hunger of the all-owning few for pleasure and more pleasure, a raging fever of the times. Uprooted women with their own kind of hunger had to soothe the other hunger, had so cool the raging pleasure..." (54).

Kalo's fight is not with man, but with the social forces that make savage and wicked human beings. The evil-doers have nothing to do with good or bad actions; they eat well, utter God's name for show and sleep peacefully. Kalo sees this obnoxious difference in society: "While men died of hunger, wealth grew; and while kindness dried up, religion was more in demand. It was only the outward form of religion, the shell of ritual, empty within" (113). It is beyond doubt that hunger does not make a difference between man and man between man of the highest caste and that of that like a hungry chamar or untouchable boy, "even a hungry Brahmin boy would eat from garbage cans" (208). They indigent and hungry people have no barrier of caste and creed. They have only the problem of how to extinguish the fire of starvation. A large number of people eat together at charity kitchens forgetting and deserting their ethnic backgrounds.

The novelist metaphorically delineates Kalo's triumph over society: "They had come back in time to hear, him, to see him drive his steel deep into the tiger. The scum of the earth had hit back, hit back where it hurt" (231). Chandra Lekha believes that her father is not the only man who can fight heroically; she too can attain the dignity of standing on her legs. She states that fight is a mere means to live a happy and righteous life. She has the confidence that "the way of struggle is the true way. The struggle, first of all, against fear" (165). Lekha and her father combat not against corrupt and immoral men but against the society that makes them so.

No wonder Kalo despises such a society in the strongest possible ways: “Society, red-eyed with rage, had branded him as evil when he had done nothing truly wrong. But now that he was engaged in work truly evil, he was smiled at and paid handsomely. The policeman at the street corner who raged at the sight of the skeleton people had tried to befriend him and had winked at him” saying, “Brother, how is business?” (75). Kalo objects to the long cherished values of society. He decides to fight against “the accuser, the centuries old tradition from which had come the inner climate of his being” (71).

The symbolic title of the novel also present the theme of starvation. To ride on the tiger’s back indicates man’s effort to ride on hunger. Just as the tiger is a dangerous animal and promptly kills man, so is hunger. There are two protagonists in the novel, Kalo and Chandra Lekha who suffer gruesomely owing to hunger and lose their home, peace, profession, morals, honesty and goodness. Therefore, they decide to ride the tiger-indicating savage hunger: “Lekha sat with him on the tiger’s back and they must ride on” (143). Thus, we see that the novelist has skillfully dealt with the pestilence of hunger and its endurance through his protagonists.

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## Third Space Hybrid Identity in Bessie Head's *Maru*

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*Abstract:* A central concern in the works of Bessie Head has been the relations between writer and character. One of her novels has indeed been described as an 'autobiography' rather than a novel. Although theoretical interest in the subject of character has 'old fashioned' overtones the existence of character is a textual fact which depends on the constructive role of writers and readers. The connections between Head's characters and aspects of her own biography are obvious. Recurrent themes and situations in her fiction and her other writings can be read as narrative explorations of the nature of the self. It is in the process of discovering the self and carving out an identity that Head creates characters as a means of exploring her own nature and potential. My study focuses on identifying and acknowledging her perceptions on ideal identity and attempts to demonstrate the need for readers of her work to recognise the complementarity of social and subjective existence; to relate Head's subjective trauma to the external reality in which she was located. Head's characters are frequently shown working out ways of setting up balanced human relationships which are characterised by equality, power-sharing, mutual support and human respect. A definite link exists between the inner and outer domains, and so the state of wholeness or completeness is also recognised and monitored in my analysis of character relationships. The interrelatedness of the private and public marks the route her textual quest takes. The implications of complementarity can be measured in the successes and failures of relationships which are examined in my case studies. The objective of the study is to interrogate the extent to which the writer is committed as a woman and as a Third World individual based on the text *Maru*. The study adopted the analytical research design. The data collected through content analysis was coded according to thematic concerns, stylistic Choices, the mode of characterization and vision of the author. The postcolonial theory was employed in the reading analysis and interpretation of the selected text. The findings reveal that as a woman, Bessie Head is committed to reconstructing a positive image for her female characters by challenging stereotypical perception of women through dismantling of patriarchal structures that previously relegated women to subordinate roles. This is seen in the presentation of the female characters as strong willed, determined, assertive, independent and enterprising. In delineating the experiences of women as women, she explores their most personal convictions thereby presenting their perception of issues as women.

*Key words:* Third Space, Hybridity, Multiculturalism.

### Introduction

Novelist, short story writer and Social Historian Bessie Amelia Head was born in Pietermaritzburg. Being the daughter of a White mother (who was disowned by her parents when she became pregnant and sent to a mental asylum where Head was born) and a Black father, she had a very difficult childhood. Allegedly her foster parents rejected her at some stage because she was too Black and she was then raised in an Anglican mission orphanage.

She was granted Botswana citizenship in 1979. Head started writing extensively in her adoptive country. Some of her works such as *When Rain Clouds Gather* and *Maru* have been prescribed for learners in various schools in South Africa. Her untimely death in 1986 cut her career short. Some of her material was published posthumously and received international recognition.

Bessie Head is one of Africa's most renowned women writers, Head explores the effects of racial and social oppression and the theme of exile throughout her short fiction. In particular, Head's stories focus on the profound impact of racism on the people of South Africa. Head was of mixed race, and she experienced discrimination both in her birthplace, South Africa, and in her adopted land, Botswana. Her work casts a distinctly feminine perspective on the ills of societal injustice and the psychological costs of alienation.

Bessie Head's *Maru*, a romance grounded in Botswanan village politics, is often touted as a novel attacking prejudice. Daniel Gover, in his influential article, "The Fairy Tale and the Nightmare," claims: "*Maru* is the story of racial prejudice conquered by idealistic love functioning as a socially progressive force that advances mankind in the direction of racial equality". His emphasis on the fairy tale quality of the novel is important in coming to such a conclusion. Many see the Cinderella-like relationship between Maru and Margaret, the Tswana prince and the young Bushman woman, as an affirmation of equality along racial, gender, and cultural lines. Though the society that Maru had been expected to lead rejects him and continues to embrace its perceived superiority over the Bushmen, Starfield believes that in the remote quasi-Utopian place that Maru takes Margaret they can "live free from prejudice."

Goddard gushes optimistically of Margaret: "Out of the deficiencies of nature, she brings to bear a wholeness that is evidenced in the way she patterns her life, with the hope of gaining inner moral strength and outward social integrity". He goes on: "In *Maru*, Margaret thus becomes a symbol of motherhood [though she

bears no children] and one of female liberation and power. Head writes about liberation not only from a colonial past but also from the African male's racialistic, sexist and power-seeking tendencies"; for Goddard, then, Margaret and Maru become "harbingers of a new order" . And Craig MacKenzie, in his prestigious Twayne study, claims, "The novel ends on a triumphal note" (49), citing the book's last paragraph, which signals a new assertiveness in the San people. For him, "[t]hrough the union of two equal souls, Maru and Margaret defy the prejudiced world and point to a new world of true racial equality" .

Even Bessie Head herself, called affectionately by Stephen Gray " portly refugee stuck in the Kalahari sandveld," explains, "With all my South African experience I longed to write an enduring novel on the hideousness of racial prejudice. I achieved this ambition in an astonishing way in my second novel, *Maru*" . She justifies this, claiming the ability to "[slip] into the skin of a Masarwa person" to such a level of identification that she was able to build the novel "in blinding flashes of insights" . She writes to Randolph Vigne, "*Maru* ought to liberate the oppressed Bushmen here overnight" . But, the novel, while it certainly addresses prejudice, does not show an understanding of the San culture which Margaret purportedly represents, nor does it provide a satisfactory example of how prejudice is successfully overcome. Rather, perhaps inadvertently, Maru's rescue of Margaret from her despised situation serves only to reinforce Margaret's perceived voicelessness and powerlessness.

Even the collective name shows how these people often are seen without identity. Are they Bushman or Masarwa, as Head calls them? Are they San or Khoisan, terms popular among anthropologists? Masarwa is the derogatory term in the Tswana language for the people known variously as Basarwa, San, Khoisan or Bushmen who live largely in the arid regions of the Kalahari. But the people themselves often do not see themselves collectively, under a single term. A "proper" term has eluded non-Bushmen. Both Robert J. Gordon (4-8) and Megan Biesele ([vi]) have left the debate unresolved, though Gordon retains the Bushman label because of its widespread recognition. Alf Wannenburg claims the naming debate "is a nicety that never concerned the Bushmen themselves" . Ruth Jacobs Spector explains her contrary point of view: "My African side is part 'Khoisan' or 'bushman.' 'Khoisan' is the acceptable term. 'Bushman' is the unacceptable word. We try not to use that term at all." Robert K. Hitchcock and Megan Biesele, in their article "San, Khwe, Basarwa, or Bushmen?: Terminology, Identity, and Empowerment in Southern Africa," have argued the various names; it seems that some group takes exception to whatever label is used. In 1996, however, they point out, some of the major groups agreed to allow the term San represent the various peoples known as Bushmen. But identity among the people is more often simply along family lines. And there are regional differences of opinion. They cannot, then, speak with a single voice, but only as so many whisperings. Ultimately, in *Maru*, Margaret loses her voice as well.

The plot of Head's novel centers on the treatment of a San woman, raised in a white mission, who attempts to integrate herself into the black society of Dilepe, a rural village in Botswana. In Dilepe, though, the Bushmen are slaves. In the minds of the villagers, Margaret comes from this despised group of people. The anomaly of her missionary training has provided her with an educational background superior to other Bushmen, and she has earned a respected position as a teacher. When two community leaders, Maru and Moleka, systematically vie for her affections, it appears that at least in some measure Margaret has been accepted. But, to say that Margaret successfully represents the San culture is false.

The novel fails to account for the San heritage that Head tells us Margaret sought in adolescence. Starfield suggests that Margaret "spends her childhood and adolescent years trying to find out how Bushmen survive as an underclass to the ruling Batswana." In the novel Bushmen are seen as less than human. The narrator tells the reader early in Part One that Bushmen and zebras are more alike in the eyes of non-Bushmen than are Bushmen and humans (7). She generalizes that any group who looks different can become "monsters" (7) to another, but the distinction goes beyond appearance.

Behavior, which is culturally defined, is also important to the perception of a group. For the children at the mission school, that behavior apparently included three concerns: "the wild jiggling dance," living in the bush, and eating mealie pap (13), a kind of boiled corn meal paste. The dance may have referred to something like the healing dance described by Wannenburg, where the Bushmen, during a singing-clapping cadence, begin to "tremble violently" (53). William Ury explains the cultural relevance of this dance. "[A]ll adult members of the community attend. People sing and clap rhythmically while the dancers dance themselves into a hypnotic trance," he explains. But this dance, while appearing to celebrate self-abandonment, in reality, serves a community function. "The trance dance process unites the community behind the common purpose of resolving tension. It also gives participants a broader perspective on the dispute. Bushmen tradition [. . .] emphasizes apologies and forgiveness" (Ury). The appearance of this dancing may be "uncivilized" but its function goes well beyond the outsiders' own cultural coping mechanisms.

The bush location where they live is despised as uncivilized; in fact, many San in the novel, as we have noted, have been brought in from the bush to live as slaves in Dilepe, which is apparently a "better" life for them. Historically, the San were more widespread across Southern Africa. As a site hosted by Washington University in St. Louis points out, "In time the whites encroached upon the San's traditional hunting grounds.



Some Bushmen went to live with them and others moved on west and north in search of land where they could live freely" (Stone). The situation is no different than a dozen other cultures, including the Celts in the Roman Empire and many Native Americans in the American West. To charge these people with inhumanity for choosing freedom over assimilation seems inappropriate.

The food of the Bushmen is notably largely vegetarian (Wannenburgh 28). While mealie pap may be considered substandard food -- it was, as every school child knows, the typical prisoner's meal during Nelson Mandela's stay on Robben Island (Franklin and Hewson) -- it is far from a badge of inhumanity. It is often considered an appropriate side dish at a braai (barbecue). More realistically, Binyavanga Wainaina points out that mealie pap should be considered "Africa's fast food, the culinary equivalent of chips, without the grease. There are at least 100 million people in Africa who eat a version of pap for supper every day." It would seem this food is neither distinctive of the San people nor dehumanizing.

Each of these distinctions is cultural rather than racial. And each is a mark of ridicule from the mission children. And *none* of these characteristics is displayed by Margaret in the course of the novel. Head's narrator claims that the future of the Masarwa is in peril because the only place they were accepted (besides in the bush, presumably) was "as the slaves and downtrodden dogs of the Batswana" . This is the society into which Margaret moves when she begins her professional life, unaware that her identification with the Bushmen will have serious consequences impacting her treatment there.

Margaret's missionary training stripped her of her cultural heritage and left her with only the appearance, the physical trappings of a Bushman. Margaret's adoptive mother of the same name muses on the day of her unofficial adoption about where Bushmen are buried and says, "They don't seem to be at all a part of the life of this country" . For her the Bushmen were curiously present but effectively absent from the land. She raises this outcast baby in a manner similar to the rearing Nora Helmer received in Henrik Ibsen's *A Doll's House*. Nora claims to her husband in a moment of revelation, "When I was at home with papa, he told me his opinion about everything, and so I had the same opinions; and if I differed from him I concealed the fact, because he would not have liked it. He called me his doll-child, and he played with me just as I used to play with my dolls" . Margaret Cadmore the elder, then, raises her Margaret-child, similar to Nora Helmer's father raising Nora as his doll-child; and, she believed that heredity was "nothing" (11). She sees the academic success of her Margaret-child as a point of satisfaction, when in reality the narrator admits the child's "brilliance was based entirely on social isolation and lack of communication with others, except through books," a condition that "was too painful for the younger Margaret ever to mention" . This child was a non-scientific clone of herself, a Bushman on the outside but more likely a peevish Englishwoman on the inside. As Ketu H. Katrak has assessed, "The Englishness in which the mother steeps her adopted daughter Margaret renders the child out of touch with the Masarwa, and her own culture." The narrator tells us, "There seemed to be a big hole in the child's mind ... relative to her relationship to any people, but especially to the Bushmen with whom she was, confusingly to her, identified. Gover suggests that Margaret, in her foster home, "has been sheltered from the sense of racial inferiority that Bushmen are subject to in Botswana" (113). Her only oppression seems to have been the nonsensical (to her) teasing that she received from the other mission children. Not until she takes up her first teaching post in Dilepe does she come to understand the prejudice rife in her country. Because she looks Bushman, she is expected to act Bushman. But Margaret hasn't a clue how to do that. When the narrator claims, "No one by shouting, screaming or spitting could un-Bushman her" (14), the reference is to appearance not culture, for in Margaret's adoption she was un-Bushmanned from the beginning.

While much of the surface narrative addresses the Bushman stereotype, the eventual action of the novel affirms the stereotypes it meant to knock down. Somewhat ambiguously Starfield asserts that the marriage of Maru to Margaret is "more equal along gender and racial lines than those found among the Batswana," but the false comparison of "more equal" is meaningless in a relationship where one culture is silenced. Head herself explains that in preparing to write the novel: "I found out above all that [. . .] exploitation and evil is dependent on a lack of communication between the oppressor and the people he oppresses" ("Social" 15). At the chronological end of the novel, which occurs at the beginning of Part One, Margaret speaks no words. The narration is entirely one-sided, depicting Maru's internal struggle over what he has done. We are simply told of Margaret: "Most certainly, no memory remained in her heart and mind of previous suffering" (4). Perhaps to Maru this is certainty, but to the reader the narration is suspect. We are told: "Most often she felt quite drunk and mad with happiness and it was not unusual for her to walk around for the whole day with an ecstatic smile on her face, because the days of malice and unhappiness were few and far over-balanced by the days of torrential expressions of love" (4). But once the reader comes to the end of the novel, certainly such a statement is a projection of Maru's wishes far more than it is reality for the woman who is dominated and exiled with her prince. Her inability to speak or even apparently leave the house gives new meaning to the mindless smiles that the narrator interprets for Maru.

This reversal is foreshadowed by Margaret being objectified and subsumed by the Western-influenced society of Dilepe. The administrators and children of the village attempt to force Margaret out of the school. Culturally, Bushmen could not be educated; therefore, by Dilepe logic, Margaret could not, despite her

credentials, be qualified to teach the village children. The reasoning is not uncommon. In a Reuters article from August 2000, Kaskorino Viljoen voices similar perceptions he found in the South African army. "We could not rise above the rank of sergeant. We couldn't become officers. They said: 'You are just a Bushman and you can't go saluting a Bushman because he is dumb. He can't read or write'" (Seccombe). Rescued by Maru's sister, who later takes over as principal of the school, Margaret lives at the edge of the village where she becomes identified simply as "the friend of Mistress Dikeledi," and nearly forgotten by the village: "She was not a part of it and belonged nowhere" (89). Katrak points out that Margaret's marriage to Maru places her "within patriarchal boundaries"; Margaret, she argues, has neither voice nor volition at the end of the novel. Rather, she "seems to be sacrificed as an individual for the greater good of the Masarwa people." The narrator tells us that news of Maru's marriage to Margaret has caused the Bushmen in general to conceive of their own humanness and has inspired them to claim their joint human nature with the rest of the world. But it must also be noted that the people of the village "began to talk about [Maru] as if he had died" (122). Village life, including the oppression of the San, seems unchanged in the community.

Rather than her marriage to Maru being a triumph, then, the novel's ending must be read as her defeat. Katrak, again, concludes that Margaret's marriage to Maru is "problematic and particularly uncharacteristic in its sacrificing of a personal for a supposed 'political' end." Before his abduction of and marriage to Margaret, Maru provides her with painting materials with the instruction through Dikeledi to use them in expressing herself. Through her art she releases images with savage unbidden "ruthlessness" (97). It is only through this transcendental experience that Margaret finds personal yet debilitating meaning. Regularly Dikeledi takes the paintings away for Maru.

Rather than giving Margaret a new voice, the artistic process has silenced her. Hardly noticed in the narration is the statement when Dikeledi brings Margaret the art supplies, "That was the last link she had with coherent, human communication." Remarkably, in the exchange leading to this statement, Dikeledi talks to her "like one talking to a child" and Margaret turns her head like "a very young child with its first toy" (96). This is the end of Margaret's chances to rise above her heredity. From this point she is almost preternaturally under Maru's control. Indeed, Yakini B. Kemp goes so far as to assert that Maru's "manipulative and suggestive power lurks behind all significant action in Margaret's life in Dilepe" (156). While there is in the end the verbal threat that the San as a whole may rise up in their new-found humanity, there is no indication that Margaret, who is meant to represent the Bushmen, will ever, in fact, leave her speechless place in a house of exile. MacKenzie points out a concern in Head's fiction in that "the link between personal drama and social resonance is not satisfactorily demonstrated" . It is clear here that the connection between the plight of the Masarwa and Margaret's marriage to Maru is more syntactic than real.

Maru's triumph is really his own self-deception because, as Katrak points out, he "makes a political point by marrying a Masarwa; it is incidental that this Masarwa is Margaret." And his betrayal of his friend Moleka causes his marriage to her to be, as Ola says, "tainted by evil[,] and [. . .] agony follows him all the days of his life" . Maru himself views life differently than those around him. Late in the novel the omniscient narrator reports that the people of Dilepe "knew nothing about the standards of the soul, and since Maru only lived by those standards they had never been able to make a place for him in their society" (122). But while Maru sees differently, he has been unable to cause others to see differently. Maru's cohorts still see Margaret after their exile as a woman "everybody would loathe" . Maru has convinced only himself, and then not completely, that he has made a choice that has benefited both Margaret and the Masarwa.

Neither Maru nor Margaret herself has understood the bi-cultural confusion within Margaret. The Bushman culture attached to her is at best superficial, but she has been made to assume the results of a culture that was never hers. Even to Dikeledi, Margaret's San culture is attractive but unnecessary. Margaret's painting is seen as an extension of herself, but even that is taken from her as regularly as a mother goat's milk. It is interesting that Dikeledi, Margaret's strongest supporter, surrenders her own sense of identity in bedding Moleka, Maru's rival for Margaret's attention, and, impregnated, becomes the controller of their relationship. It is her inadvertent betrayal of Margaret in winning Moleka that precipitates Maru's move to marry Margaret. Dikeledi, unlike Margaret, not only retains her voice but strengthens Moleka's standing in the community.

Margaret has become Maru's prize rather than wife. Despite Gover's optimistic reading of the novel's end, he does indicate that Margaret "becomes the prize in the traditional rivalry and power struggle" that has characterized the relationship between Maru and Moleka. Her final condition in the novel is more objectified than even Nora Helmer's position at the beginning of Ibsen's play. In a foul mood, Maru tells her, "I only married you because you were the only woman in the world who did not want to be important. But you are not important to me, as I sometimes say you are" . Here her identification as a Bushman is only partially implied. It would be just as valid to read Maru's words at face value, identifying Margaret simply as unambitious. Margaret's individual autonomy has been, in MacKenzie's words, "brutally negated" .

The opening, but chronologically ending, scene of the novel, gives us Maru preparing flowerbeds to grow yellow daisies, "because they were the only flowers which resembled the face of his wife and the sun of his love" . But Margaret is really no different from those daisies. She too has been cultivated by Maru's care in

Dilepe society, fertilized by the art supplies Maru provided and finally transplanted into his garden spot "a thousand miles away" . She retains nothing of her Bushman heritage, and possibly little of her Englishness. In conquering the prejudice of society, Maru is left with nothing but a daisy off which he has pulled the petals in a coercive she-loves-me, she-loves-me-not fashion.

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## Marginalization of Women in Nayantara Sahgal's *The Day in Shadow*

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**Abstract:** *Nayantara Sahgal's novel The Day in Shadow, in terms of how her women characters respond to the phenomena of change. Feminism is an expression which connotes a movement for securing equality between the sexes in all walks of life, social, economic and political. It aims at ensuring for womanhood freedom in all respects. At the same time, Sahgal's novels respond to the emergence of the new woman, with acceptance or with resistance. The novel delineates the emotional and economic strains of divorce on the female protagonist, Simrit. She is an independent woman who can make choices. She marries Som, solely attracted by his color, life and action disregarding opposition from her parents and the dislike of her friends. Very soon, she realizes her folly when she is forbidden in his house to have a say even in routine matters like choosing servants or a cook, selecting curtains or sofa covers. Disappointed at Som's attempts to restrict her individuality and the humiliating treatment meted out to her, Simrit resolves to dissolve her seventeen-year-old marriage. Even as a divorcee, she asserts her individuality. In the sight against the outworn traditions, she chooses to start a new life with Raj, a liberal thinker.*

*Women's marginalization is a great impact on Sahgal's novel. Women are still regarded as servile creatures by people like Som. They are regarded as belonging to the sphere of sex and procreation. Men like Som expect them to live under their control. Simrit is an educated woman who yearns for a free communication of ideas with her husband but feels detached and ignored like a piece of furniture used only for physical comfort whenever needed by Som.*

**Key Words:** *Feminism - marginalisation - marital discord - quest for identity - identity crisis - self realization - emancipation.*

Feminism is an expression which connotes a movement for securing equality between the sexes in all walks of life- social, economic and political. It aims at ensuring for womanhood freedom in all respects. Roy, Shobha De, Bharati Mukherjee, Jhumpa Lahiri, Rama Mehta, Manju Kapur and Geeta Mehta have heralded new consciousness, particularly the pathetic plight of the Indian women. Through woman writer's eyes, we can see a different world, with their assistance there is chance to realize the potential of human achievement. This brief survey of Indian women novelists in English clearly shows that women have made their permanent mark in the field of English fictions. The women novelists constitute a major group of the Indian writers in English.

Women writers are now enjoying an increasing popularity and prestige. They have an impressive record of success. Women novelists writing in English attempt to project woman as the central figure and seem to succeed in presenting the predicament of woman most effectively. The work of women writers has given a distinct dimension to the image of woman in the family and society. In most of their writings, they have tried their best to free the female mentality from the age long control of male dominations. Nayantara Sahgal as a woman novelist: In almost every novel, she has a central woman character that gradually moves towards an awareness of her emotional needs. The emotional world of woman is explored and analyzed with admirable insight and sympathetic perception. Her concern for the women who are caught in the dilemma of liberty and individuality or stability and protection of marriage is understandable. She has shown an admirable understanding of the problems and the predicaments of the women and exploited their skill in projecting convincingly the agonized mind of the persecuted women.

Her portrayal of women characters in the novels invariably bears authenticity to their feminist approach, outlook and perspective. Her keen observation of the life of Indian women and their interest in the study of their inner mind are evidenced by their vivid and panoramic portrayal of their plight. Nayantara Sahgal is one of the distinguished Indo-English writers who write in the stream of national consciousness. The first generation of important women writers began publishing their work in the 1950s. During this period, Nayantara Sahgal emerged as one of the most significant voices in the realm of Indian English fiction. Her first book *Prison and Chocolate Cake* (1954), an autobiography was published when she was only twenty-seven years old.

This present paper attempts to explain the analysis of the variety of theme in the fictional world of Nayantara Sahgal. In almost every novel, she has a central woman character who gradually moves towards an awareness of her emotional. Her novels read like commentaries on the political and social turmoil that India has been facing since independence.

Mrs. Sahgal's feeling for politics and her command over English are rather more impressive than her art as a novelist. She is a novelist of politics as well as a successful political columnist for different newspapers.

Her writing is generally characterized by simplicity and boldness. Her writing is also famous for keeping in touch with the latest political ups and downs with a tinge of Western liberalism. Besides politics, her fiction also focuses attention on Indian woman's search for sexual freedom and self-realization. As a woman novelist, Sahgal recognizes that her primary obligation is that of advocating the emancipation of women. She has gone deep into the female psyche in her novels. She describes in her novels how woman is exploited even during the modern times by both the individuals and the society. She tried to portray the sensibility of woman that how a woman looks out at herself and her problems.

Sahgal's novel, *The Day in Shadow* deals with the struggle of a young, beautiful and daring Indian woman trapped under the burden of a brutal divorce settlement and the agony and unhappiness she experiences in the hands of cruel and unjust male-dominated society of India. The novel is a fine example of the female literary tradition in Indian English literature. The Western wave of stream of consciousness technique affected the writings of the novelist and she also plunged deep into the inner world of her characters. Shows that though Indians have got freedom yet it is only on the surface level as in their attitudes to love, morality, sex, marriage, education and religion, but they are still the slaves of the male dominated society. The problem of divorce and disintegration of the marriage in a typical Indian setting are beautifully dealt with.

The use of political genre is one of the main aspects of her novels, the others being the exploration of the religious theme and the problems of women in contemporary society. Her feminist concern is obvious and her fighter spirit quite vocal in her fiction. In all her works, there is a juxtaposition of two worlds: the personal world of man-woman relationship and the impersonal world of politics. In her earlier works, Nayantara Sahgal depicts marriage as an emotionally stifling and tyrannical institution for women. Most of her characters like Rose, Sonali, Simrit, Saroj, Devi are victims of gender oppression. Marriage for a man who "Takes her", means enlargement of his existence. He enjoys both the position that is in home and also in career. It permits him progression and self-advancement. Sahgal envisions marriage as a sweet harmonious relationship based on mutual understanding, depth and truth, women are persons not possessions is the note echoed in all her works. Despite these idealized concepts of marriage, woman in reality is essentially a subservient partner in marriage. Marriage often does not mean companionship or equality for her, rather it is a trap which negates her rights to individuality, independence and self-realization.

She is subjugated, marginalized and sidelined and usually her position is no better than the poor, oppressed and racial minorities like the blacks. The "power politics," to use a phrase from Kate Millett, operates in a subtle manner in the institution of marriage, reducing the status of a woman to merely a "utility item," an object for decoration, for possession and for man's sexual gratification. Marriage turns out to be an institution of oppression for her in various forms rather than of her protection for which it was primarily instituted.

Sahgal delineate with keen perception and sensitivity that the problems and sufferings of women in marriage, who feel entrapped, oppressed and doomed to the care of husband and home, and show their reaction to it in their novels. Some of their women accept their fate unhesitatingly, but most of them gasp for freedom, and gradually reject the stereotype by going in for separation or for divorce to live a meaningful life. However, in the ultimate analysis Sahgal find that the tradition of family is very strong and thus make a strong plea for the preservation of it, by inviting men to involve themselves in it.

Sahgal's marital morality as revealed in her works is based on honesty, mutual trust, consideration, understanding and freedom. She assails selfishness, pretence, self-centeredness which results in schism and subsequently in marital breakdown. Traditionally, her women are taught to stay acquiescent, subdued, silent and suffering, but Rose and Simrit shows sign of awakening, reject the stereotype and speak out the truth. They have lived half of their as submissive and conforming persons; henceforth, they are going to be subversive and "free" beings. The "femininity" is equally imposed upon her women characters.

She projects her heroines struggle for freedom and self-realization in her fiction. She infuses into her heroines the spirit of self-respect and individualism. Her heroines always try to realize their self-hood either unconsciously or consciously and deliberately. In *The Day in Shadow*, she shows how a woman can be criminally exploited, without creating a ripple. The novel delineates the emotional and economic strains of divorce on the female protagonist, Simrit. She is an independent woman who can make choices. She marries Som, solely attracted by his colour, life and action disregarding opposition from her parents and the dislike of her friends. Very soon, she realizes her folly when she is forbidden in his house to say even in simple and routine matters like choosing servants or a cook, selecting curtains or sofa covers.

Simrit finds herself shut out of Som's world. He never consults her in any matter. Unable to withstand his ambitious nature, she longs to isolate herself from his world of commerce. All her attempts to change him ends in failure. Disappointed at Som's attempts to restrict her individuality and the humiliating treatment meted out to her, Simrit resolves to dissolve her seventeen-year-old marriage. Even as a divorcee, she asserts her individuality. In the sight against the outworn traditions, she chooses to start a new life with Raj, a liberal thinker. Simrit plumps, though reluctantly, for the second alternative.

Simrit is prepared to forsake him and all the riches and comforts rather than lead the abject life of a sex-satisfying companion. To live with self-respect is her primary right and for that, she risks the unknown future

with courage and confidence. She demonstrates that individual freedom is so precious that it should not be compromised or allowed to be suppressed. For her, emotional involvement is far more important than the sexual relationship and it is an individual that she seeks fulfillment and expression, not as possession.

Simrit, a sensitive being in her own right, longs for communication and understanding which she is unable to find in Som's world of ambition and money. Som expects her to conform to his ideal of subdued womanhood and considers the inequality of their relations to be the right order of things. Simrit finds this denial of freedom and suffocating experience. Her life with Som lacks continuity and warmth. It is an act with beginning and an end with nothing in-between or even afterwards. Women are still regarded as servile creatures by people like Som. They are regarded as belonging to the sphere of sex and procreation.

The main theme of *The Day in Shadow* is the continued exploitation of the woman by her husband. The continued tendency towards exploitation of woman by man provokes her to revolt against the social system and reconstitute it on her terms. Thus, *The Day in Shadow* marks the emergence of the new type of woman who can present her own terms on which compatible and dignified family life will be possible. The novelist narrates the story of Som and Simrit who seem to get on well during the first few years of their marriage. But Som's inability to understand her, except as an object of physical attraction, fit only for physical pleasure and enjoyment, compels her to seek human communication outside the marital bonds. Som treats her not as a person but as a possession.

In, *The Day in Shadow* also reveals the ever-present pattern of behavior. Som, a business magnate, agrees to divorce his wife for ultimate commercial benefits. Also, in order to take revenge on his wife Simrit, he imposes cruel divorce terms on her in a satanically shrewd way. Simrit, out of ignorance and good faith signs the consent terms without really reading them. Simrit's efforts to get rid of these unfair, injudicious terms – "the document (that) trapped and maimed her" (39). Simrit is a woman who is "bleeding to death with taxes." (146) Even after divorce her husband, in order to save his own income tax, thrust cruel consent terms on her according to which she has to pay "huge taxes" on the shares worth six lacks, which are presently in her name but will go to her son Brij, aged sixteen after nine years, when he attains the age of twenty-five.

Simrit is an educated woman who yearns for a free communication of ideas with her husband but feels detached and ignored like a piece of furniture used only for physical comfort whenever needed by Som. She wants freedom, love, warmth, affection and understanding but Som never bothers about her feelings. Som never understands that money can't give her what she wants. Simrit is fed up with this life and takes divorce from her husband. It is a very common factor that an Indian woman has to struggle a lot to walk out of her husband's life because they are bond to the traditional social set-up. So they need extra courage to break the traditional bondage i.e. marriage. It is with such indomitable courage and strength of conviction Simrit comes out of Som's life.

Simrit's divorce does not bring freedom but confrontation with all that is orthodox in this male-centered society. It is easy to get, easier than a car or a telephone or a license for an industry but it is painful and dislocating in its effect on Simrit. Though the law had changed, attitudes hadn't and Simrit feels uprooted and abandoned in a husband-centered world. It is difficult to begin anew for the past lives on in the present, in the memories of the shared years and the lives of the children. Simrit feels that "a part of her would always be married to Som" (220)

Simrit finds her life disrupted and herself in the midst of a peculiar financial problem. The heavy tax payments are an attempt to enslave her in every way, and divorce instead of being a new beginning is a confrontation with the age old orthodox views regarding the status of women. All her attempts to make others see the divorce settlement from her point of view fail because, people do not see her as a person seeking freedom and fulfillment. As long as it provides for the future of their son, it seems to others to be a fair settlement. Simrit likens her position to that of a donkey whose burden attracts no notice and draws forth no pity for 'loads for donkeys' (56). The divorce settlement is a continuation of their marriage, it pins her down to the role of a victim and attempts to crush her desire to be free in a positive way. The first step she has to take is to face the situation squarely and it is the courage of this stand which frees her from the bonds of the marriage as well as the divorce settlement. Out of this struggle to be free is born a new Simrit-a person who represents entire women-hood.

As a woman novelist, Sahgal recognizes that her primary obligation is that of advocating the emancipation of women. She has gone deep into the female psyche in her novels. She describes in her novels how woman is exploited even during the modern times by both the individuals and the society. She tried to portray the sensibility of woman that how a woman looks out at herself and her problems. They are regarded as belonging to the sphere of sex and procreation. This paper presents in detail the problems faced by woman and their struggle for self-identity and their emancipation from the traditional bondage of the patriarchal society. The portrayal of her memorable women characters and the feminist tone in her fictional discourse make Nayantara Sahgal as one of the most outstanding feminist Indian novelist writing in English.

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## Cultural Hegemony in Wole Soyinka's *The Lion and the Jewel*

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**Abstract:** The present study attempts to delve into the cross-cultural hegemonic counter discourses that can be well explored in Wole Soyinka's play *The Lion and the Jewel*. The multiple issues of cultural intersections, colonial ramifications of the indigenous native culture, tradition, legacies and values; clash between colonizer and colonized, the superior and the inferior; binary oppositions (dominant vs. local resistance, civilized/savage); nationalist resistance and subversion of the alien intrusive culture all can well lead to a very relevant postcolonial scrutiny of the play. The paper investigates the hegemony of British cultural paradigms in African context and the peripheralisation of African national history, culture, tradition, and values, and at the same time, focuses on nationalist resistance against cultural hegemony on the praxis of post-colonial cultural analysis. In other words, it explores the cultural encounter between the hegemonic and the inferior, between the east and the west, and vis-a-vis, local counter resistance against the European cultural hegemony and dominance in the context of the play on the praxis and nature of Post-Colonial literary criticism. In addition, it is intended to explore how the exploitation of cultural hegemony comes off cultural displacement, and nationalist resistance regains ethnic cultural heritage and identity. It would, thus, shed new light on the postcolonial and cultural study in general and on Soyinka criticism in particular.

**Keywords:** Culture, Colonialism, Post-colonialism, hegemony, resistance, binary oppositions.

Wole Soyinka, in his *The Lion and the Jewel* tries to project the dominance of hegemonic culture and local/nationalist resistance in the structural strain of the play through the voice of Sidi, Baroka and Sadiku who represent colonized African natives, and Lakunle who represents the European colonizer and propaganda in the African world.

The play can be placed on the map of Post-Colonial writing in the global context because it censures the Anglo-African cross-cultural encounter. It further talks about the peoples and cultures of a land, which has emerged from subjugation, and domination of colonial rule. The conflict between Sidi and Lakunle is a clash between European and African culture; the conflict between Lakunle and Baroka is a conflict between the colonizer and the colonized, and between the white and the black. The final victory of Sidi and Baroka over Lakunle is the victory of African tradition and the defeat of European imperialism.

Actually, the value of culture as an element of resistance to foreign domination lies in the fact that culture is the vigorous manifestation of opposition to white supremacy and politico-cultural hegemony. This is the vagaries of post-colonial literatures to challenge and to illegitimize establishing Eurocentric power, legacy, hegemony and authority through conquest and invasion, underling their differences "from the assumptions of the imperial centre. It is necessary to define some related terms like 'Post-Colonialism', 'Imperialism', 'Colonialism' and 'Post-Coloniality' before evaluating Soyinka's *The Lion and the Jewel* in the frame of cultural hegemony.

Imperialism is a tool for both political and cultural imposition on the conquered territory. On the other hand, "Colonialism involves the consolidation of imperial power, and is manifested in the settlement of territory, the exploitation or development of resources, and the attempt to govern the indigenous inhabitants of occupied lands."

Soyinka depicts the decolonizing mission of the Africans in the play through the symbolic representation of the characters like Sidi, Baroka and Sadiku. In the history of European colonization, the Victorian era is a marked zenith of western imperialism in the modern world. At that time, Africa became an important venue for European colonization. It was the time when the colonial propagandist (narrative) writings by authors like Kipling, Conrad, E.M. Forster, Rider Haggard, Mary Kingsley and others in great numbers anchored in triumphalism tempering with a sympathetic criticizing look at European imperialist mission of colonialism in the Orient and Africa. They contributed a lot to that mission of occupying and enlightening Africa.

Wole Soyinka, on the contrary, contributed his writings, especially *The Lion and the Jewel* as a sequel to that mission of colonial propagandists. A post-colonial reading of Soyinka's *The Lion and the Jewel* is bound to reflect the discursive mission of decolonization through this text, which questions the inadequacy of white man's supremacy, and attempts to dismantle the colonial subjugation and cultural hegemony, and to re-read the own cultural heritage, religion, history, synchronism, custom and glory.

The play *The Lion and the Jewel* moves from a colonial domination to a postcolonial resistance. The colonial rule has brought historical, social, political and cultural change or erosion to the indigenous people. The indigenous people like Sidi, Baroka and Sadiku, to maintain their own freedom and cultural identity, relentlessly



combat against Eurocentric cultural hegemonizing and hybridizing effort. This attempt can be taken as a form of resistance to the former colonizer.

Lakunle's love for Sidi was infatuated and aggravated in the face of African tradition.

To marry an African girl traditionally the groom must pay 'bride-price', which is opposed to Lakunle's western view. Here lies the crux of the problem. Sidi, the Jewel and Belle of African Yoruba society is adamant not to marry without having lawful 'bride-price'. Lakunle thinks this tradition should be replaced by superior western civilized culture and tradition. To him, traditional African custom as

*A savage custom, barbaric, out-dated,  
Rejected, denounced, accursed,*

In addition, to him, paying 'bride-price' is equal to buying a *heifer* from market place. This is a serious indignation to indigenous culture and it marks Eurocentric racist look. Lakunle attempts to convince Sidi by his aesthetics of love and poetic sensibility along with the pleasures of modern life.

His ultimate mission is to implant the Eurocentric culture and values in African world.

After Sidi being deflowered by Baroka, Lakunle liberally desires to marry her. This approach subtly underlines cultural displacement. Lakunle, on the contrary, encounters a rigid resistance from his ladylove. Sidi, a deeprooted tradition ridden African girl is unmoved by the superficial wind of Europeanization or modernity, and tells him to 'pay the price' if he wants to marry.

She rejects his westernized idea of love-marriage and kissing a 'way of civilized Romance.' Even Sadiku-head wife of Baroka tauntingly advises Lakunle in case of his failure to manage 'bride price': *Take a farm for a season, one harvest will be enough to pay the price...* (1963, p.36).

Further, Baroka—the Bale and lion of Ilujinle, a village of Lagos—the capital of Nigeria resists whiteman's attempt of modernization scheme. He suspects and resists Lakunle's feasible courtship with Sidi and attacks him polemically. Thus, Soyinka in the play develops a counter discourse against British cultural hegemony in profusion.

Meanwhile, Sidi develops self-bloated egoism and narcissistic pride of her own beauty because her photograph appears in the Lagos magazine. Now, her beauty and fame goes beyond Lagos city. Man like Baroka—the Bale of the village, desires her hand in marriage. She rejects Sadiku's wife of Baroka's proposal. Sidi's pride and confidence in her own charm and beauty makes her totally careless about men who seek her hand in marriage. For instance, she has no regard to Lakunle's intellectual calibre and white identity, and therefore, nick names him as a 'bookworm'. Similarly, she shows contrast her own superiority with Baroka's inferiority.

Indeed, Sidi's self-conscious appraisal of her individual potency marks subjective identities of indigenous people and shapes a metaphor for all "marginalized" voices and specificity in deconstructions of "racism" in colonialism. Baroka, on the other hand, feels insulted in Sidi's rejection of matrimonial proposal and designs diabolic trick to sup with her at his bed-chamber. He pretends that he has lost his manhood. Sadiku, now, employs new technique to push Sidi into Baroka's bed. She reports that it is time for woman to rejoice and mock at Baroka's loss of virility and invites Sidi to attend ritual party where only women are allowed. Thus, she arouses Sidi's intense curiosity and she is convinced to torment Baroka over his loss of sexual potency.

Lakunle advises her not to meet Baroka in privacy but she does not pay heed to his precautionary words. She, therefore, meets Baroka in privacy but is finally deflowered by the virile man of sixty. Lakunle feels hurt to see his beloved being deflowered by his rival. His liberal outlook enables him to forgive her for loss of virginity and offers to marry her. But, Sidi who has drunk the nectar of sexual pleasure with Baroka to whom she has surrendered her maidenhood refuses to marry Lakunle. She, who, further, eulogizes Baroka's sexual strength in comparison to Lakunle, engages to national culture.

The play ends with the marriage of Sidi, the Jewel and Baroka, the Lion. Thus, the surrender of Sidi to Baroka is the testimony to the victory of traditional African values, and the defeat of westernized cultural imperialism and colonization at Ilujinle, a deep-rooted traditional African Yoruba village. Actually, Soyinka portrays Ilujinle village "as a metonym for the nation as a whole, for Nigeria..., and indeed, is often read as a metonym for the peoples of the African continent as a whole."

Finally, the conflict between modern European and African values is resolved in favour of the latter. Lakunle, despite his European ways of life, is looked down upon and ultimately rejected by Sidi who conforms to African tradition by marrying Baroka.

Women's position in postcolonial societies and literatures is a matter of debate and inquiry. The integration of women into nationalist and anti-colonialist movements has been an important issue for questioning women's position in most post-colonial societies. Soyinka's women play a surprising role in anti-colonial movement. Their active participation and gender interests within the parameters of cultural nationalism valorize a resistance against colonizers' process of subordination and material feminism. Lakunle, a westernized educated fellow considers women as timid, fragile, subordinate, weaker sex, inactive, ignorant but paradoxically, at the same time terms women as "equal partner in life". He treats Sidi as his supporting element in white imperial mission. This is essentially Western materialistic approach to women and a trick of patriarchal

control over the indigenous women. Furthermore, Lakunle's condemnation of the bride price is an insult to womanhood, especially to African women.

Women in Soyinka's *The Lion and the Jewel*, enjoy unfettered operations of national patriarchy. Interestingly, there is no white woman in the play. The lack of white women may function as a potential escape, by allowing within the parameter of the text, the unspoken displacement of the condemnation of women from women in general and to African women in particular.

On the whole, what emerges from the present study is the conviction that in Soyinka's *The Lion and the Jewel*, it is the consequences of European colonization and cultural domination and perversion in Africa. Culture, in reality, is the expression of the heart of national consciousness. The final triumph of African cultural tradition over Westernization is obviously an objective correlative of Wole Soyinka's philosophy, which recognizes the rediscovery of cultural past, glory, grandeur and heritage.

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## Counter Culture: Culture as Assertion in Sharankumar Limbale's *The Outcaste (Akkarmashi)*

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**Abstract:** *Autobiography, the most important and favourite genre for dalit writers constitutes a significant segment of dalit literature. Dalit writers termed as 'self-stories' are the tales of personal sufferings fused with interpersonal responses and community feelings which they experience in Indian society. So, it is a form of resistance against various forms of oppression, mostly personal. Dalit literature is the document of their struggle for human identity. The hopes and aspirations of the exploited masses, the problems of untouchability, the exploitation of dalit women by higher caste men are the themes of dalit literature. Dalit writers expose the evils of caste system and prejudice done by higher caste. They write what they see, feel and think in the social environment. Dalit literature is the document of their struggle for human identity.*

*This paper, "Counter Culture: Culture as Assertion in Sharankumar Limbale's The Outcaste (Akkarmashi)" establishes Dalit Culture as Counter Culture with reference to Sharankumar Limbale's The Outcaste (Akkarmashi). Akkarmashi is the original Marathi version written in 1984 and it was translated into English entitled The Outcaste in 2003. The Outcaste (Akkarmashi) has portrayed the enslaved, exploited and harassed life of a Dalit woman and her children, who are born from different caste Hindu men. Sharankumar Limbale is the son born to a Dalit woman from a caste-Hindu man. He examines the hypocrisy of the age-old caste system and how its self-entered crimes for their material comforts and luxuries and victimize the so-called untouchables. He disproves the system itself, and challenges its long-held beliefs unequal and discriminatory practice against the downtrodden in India. The counter-cultural practice of Dalits is precisely intended to deconstruct and expose the dominant culture and its alienation from productive labour. Dalit literature challenges the upper castes and elites of the country who try to devise ever-new ways to suppress them.*

**Key words:** *Alienation, Counter-Culture, Exploitation, Root Paradigms.*

Literature is an important ingredient of the culture of people and their identity. History shows that the strategy to dominate a people at length is to use the weapon of culture. The dominators impose overtly and covertly their culture and their symbols on the subjugated people. Oppressed people for emancipation seek new symbols, idioms and rituals, invested with the power of their oppressors. Culture is defined as the shared patterns of behaviours, interactions, cognitive constructs, and affective understanding that are learned through a process of socialization. Culture consists of the symbolic, ideational, and intangible aspects of human societies. The essence of a culture is how the members of the group interpret, use, and perceive them. It is the values, symbols, interpretations, and perspectives that distinguish one people from another in modernized societies. It is not material objects and other tangible aspects of human societies. People within a culture interpret the meaning of symbols, represents itself through its culture that becomes the vehicle of meaning and significance for the particular community. Culture embraces world view root paradigms, dominant values, mythologies stories and metaphors of everyday life.

Culture as a very complex concept to be accommodated under one single universal categorization. The dimension of culture can be understood, in connection with the empowerment of Dalits. Culture is connected with its meaning cultivation. Power and culture intersect. Whose culture is the question raised by Dalits and it is significant for the Dalit community. Dalits and other subjugated people refuse to accept a homogenized understanding of Indian culture and serve the interests of the elite and the upper castes. By understanding and negating the culture of Dalits, the ruling class or and castes want to strengthen their traditional hold. In social life, knowledge is never independent of power and culture. Throughout history, the most effective way, the dominators have found to keep the dominated people in subservience was to deprive them of knowledge. Culture refers to the web of intricate relationship, developed within a society. One of the important dimensions of Dalit empowerment is resistance and it is practiced in the field of culture. The cultural and ideological domination of the Brahmins and the upper castes are challenged by various Dalit movements. As a counter culture, Dalits question the way cultures has been used and interpreted for hegemony over them. They strike at the roots by challenging the culture and ideology based on purity and pollution, high and low, sacred-protant binary. The myths, symbolic system and rituals connected with these are unmasked and exposed by Dalit cultural critique. So the entire corpus of laws and regulations by the Hindu law-giver Manu. The resistance often takes on strong symbolic and artistic forms. The claims of Brahminical and upper caste cultural symbols are counter-posed to Dalit symbols revealing another world view and value system.

The counter culture of Dalits then rightly contrasts this matrix of Dalit culture with Brahminical and upper caste culture, alienated productive labour. The counter-cultural movements of Dalits lay emphasis on the material basis of human life and on its earthliness. Dalit counter-culture challenges the spirit of individualism inherent in the dominant culture in every sphere of life including the religious to the culture of solidarity, togetherness sharing and participation. Values are the fibers with which Dalit culture is woven in contrasts to the cross individualism and social apathy of the dominating culture of the higher castes. It is not identified with the Sanskrit culture. The fact is that the creative force of the Dalit people have been systematically sidelined, denigrated and distorted by the upper castes. Dalits have a culture of high value, and it is imbued by a broad vision of the world, society and nature. It could be sensed when from a theoretical perspective Indian culture is viewed and interpreted from bottom and not from top down as is done for example by Louis Dumont and many others. Ambedkar highlights the role of education, when he repeatedly called on the Dalits to 'educate' organize and agitate'. Caste has become a taboo and it is not discussed openly while in actual life, it is the single most powerful force that determines every department of the nation. The Dalits stand to gain and get empowerment if caste and untouchability are openly discussed and debated.

Dalits lack in political and economic means, they have an important weapon for their empowerment. It is the weapon of culture. It brings out the power locked in Dalits. Dalits will be empowered to claim their rightful place in political and their share in the resources of the country. It calls for a critique of the dominant culture and its historiography. The counter-cultural practice of Dalits is precisely intended to deconstruct and expose the dominant culture and its alienation from productive labour. The counter-culture contrasts the world view and values based on hierarchy, purity and pollution with one of solidarity and participation. Culture implies the whole way of being of a group and what has been accumulated through centuries and millennia of experience and knowledge. The cultural resources of Dalits both past and present are already serving in their struggles. Dalit literature and folklore have been effective in conscientising the community and challenges of the upper castes and elites of the country who try to devise ever- new ways to suppress them.

Dalit literature is the forum and the medium of expression of the experiences of the communities that have been excommunicated, marginalized, exploited and humiliated for ages in the Indian caste-ridden Hindu society. Dalit literature reflects dalit experience and sensibility, attempting to define and assert dalit identity from a primarily dalit point of view. It is a protest literature which faithfully mirrors the stark realities of the dalit situation and becomes an important weapon to strengthen the dalit political movement. Dalits are discriminated against, denied access to land, forced to work in degrading conditions, and routinely abused at the hands of the police and of higher caste groups.

Autobiography, the most important and favourite genre for dalit writers constitutes a significant segment of dalit literature. Dalit writers termed as 'self-stories' (atma katha) most of the autobiographies are the tales of personal sufferings fused with interpersonal responses and community feelings which they experience in Indian society. So, autobiography is a form of resistance against various forms of oppression, mostly personal, yet they narrate their stories with a realization of other members of their community who suffer in the same way. Dalit autobiographies present the reality without any exaggeration, not circumscribed by a writer's life alone but the expansion, extension of social description and an outcry of the soul. Dalit literature is the document of their struggle for human identity. The hopes and aspirations of the exploited masses, the problems of untouchability, the exploitation of dalit women by higher caste are the themes of dalit literature. The aim of dalit writers is to expose the evils of caste system and prejudice done by higher caste. They write what they see, feel and think in the social environment. Dalit literature is the document of their struggle for human identity.

The power of people depend not only what they represent economically and politically; equally important is that they are empowered culturally. Culture is not only the goal of empowerment but it is a very important means of empowerment. When political power and economic advantages eluded them, they have been changing into their cultural weapon. The cultural empowerment of the Dalits begin with the deconstruction of the image of culture projected by the upper castes who have claimed that they are the creators of the culture of India. Dalits challenge the projection of a distorted image of Indian culture. Dalits rightfully claim that they have contributed in no small measure to the formation of Indian culture.

The words of Ambedkar illustrates truth that " the Hindus wanted the Vedas and they sent for Vyasa who was not a Caste Hindu .The Hindus wanted an Epic and they sent for Valmiki who was an untouchable. The Hindus wanted a constitution and they sent for me". Dalit approach to culture deconstruct some of the modern theories which want to read Indian tradition and history in terms of a contrast between 'great tradition' and little tradition. It underscores the fact that Indian culture is not simply the creation of those who consider themselves as pure and twice born castes. It is not identified with the Sanskrit culture. The fact is that the creative force of the Dalit people have been systematically sidelined, denigrated and distorted by the upper castes. Dalits have a culture of high value, and it is imbued by a broad vision of the world, society and nature.

Dalit counter culture is viewed in the following aspects.

1. Living / Thinking / way of life
2. Locale / Living place / Social condition

3. Food / Livelihood /
4. Occupation / Labour / Work Exploitation
6. Festivity /
7. Superstition /
8. Assertion /
9. Identity
10. Interrogation
11. Self and community
12. Rejection of tradition.

Ambedkar highlights the role of education, when he repeatedly called on the Dalits to 'educate' organize and agitate'. Caste has become a taboo and it is not discussed openly while in actual life, it is the single most powerful force that determines every department of the nation. The Dalits stand to gain and get empowerment if caste and untouchability are openly discussed and debated. Sharankumar Limbale examines the hypocrisy of the age-old caste system and how its self centered followers commit crimes for their material comforts and luxuries and victimize the so-called untouchables. It further discusses how the victim and protagonist Limbale disproves the system itself, and challenges its long-held beliefs unequal and discriminatory practice against the downtrodden in India. *Akkarmashi* is the original Marathi version written in 1984 and it was translated into English entitled *The Outcaste* in 2003. Limbale became well-known and popular after his autobiography was published. *The Outcaste (Akkarmashi)* has portrayed the enslaved, exploited and harassed life of a Dalit woman and her children, who are born from different caste Hindu men. Sharankumar Limbale is the son born to a Dalit woman from a caste-Hindu man. Limbale has pointed out in his autobiography that Indian society in general and Hindu society in particular has been extremely conservative, traditional, superstitious, illogical and hypocritical. *The Outcaste Akkarmashi* reveals that since the social order in Hinduism is hierarchical, the members of it at the lowest rung are bound to suffer and get victimized in a variety of ways by the higher rungs of society. Dalits are forced to live life of obedient and submissive slaves who are never supposed to disobey their oppressors. According to the caste system, they cannot try even to meet their basic needs if it is against the system. *The Outcaste (Akkarmashi)* shows that Dalits have been poverty-stricken people and the system is indeed imposed poverty on them, thrown away to periphery which has almost been completely neglected. Poverty makes the poor to steal eatables, makes them to beg and makes them to tell lies. Limbale writes that he himself had to steal food to fill his stomach, to beg whenever necessary and his grandmother had to tell lies. Poverty even makes them to eat what animals eat when there is no way to have food.

Sharankumar Limbale, the protagonist is haunted by his fractured identity? 'Am I an upper caste or an untouchable?' Providing rare insights on the question of identity, *The Outcaste* is considered a milestone in Indian literature in translation that helped publicize the Dalit cause. *The Outcaste (Akkarmashi)* presents dark aspects of the Indian society. Dalits and non-Dalits practice untouchability, the powerless and ignorant Dalits are subjected to maltreatment and excruciatingly humiliation. No one finds any logical behaviour and the supporters of untouchability do not strictly follow it. Limbale records as, "This is Narayan Patil's well. Last year the Mahars dig and built it. The spades and shovels of Mahars were used to dig the well. The Mahars gave their sweat for it. They also used explosives. They, the Mahars, are the reason why there is water in the well. But now the same Mahars are not allowed to draw water from it, not even drinking water." (81-82)

Caste Hindus wholeheartedly love and sympathize with animals, but they are not shown sympathy with the Dalits when they indeed need it. Dalits are regarded as inferior even to animals. Limbale documents: "Hindus see the cow as their mother. A human mother is cremated, but when a cow dies they need a Mahar to dispose it off. The owner weeps when one of her animals dies. The cow-pen looks sad." (14) Limbale asserts that Dalits are branded as inferior human beings in the names of gods, goddesses, religious scriptures, and such metaphysical phenomena. He exposes the illogical code of conduct followed by the members of the caste system: "I used clean clothes, bathed every day and washed myself clean with soap, and brushed my teeth with toothpaste. There was nothing unclean about me. Then in what sense was I untouchable? A high caste who is dirty was still considered touchable!" (107)

The entrenched caste system has determined and maintained the nature and function of the life of the downtrodden. It has made their lives completely dependent on caste Hindus. The root cause of the pathetic condition of the Dalits lies in the unfair structure and nature of the caste system. Being a caste Hindu, Hanamanta Limbale transgresses the code of conduct set by the caste system. He establishes an illegal sexual relationship with Kamble's wife Masamai, who easily falls a prey to his cunning strategies. As a result, the caste panchayat forces Kamble and Masamai to get a divorce. Now, Masamai is left alone and free. Hanamanta Limbale lures her and keeps her as his concubine. He keeps her using for his sexual lust for a number of months. Hanamanta Limbale does not practice untouchability with Masamai for his sexual hunger. But when a son is born to them, he immediately and blatantly disowns his son, Sharankumar himself. Hanamanta Limbale is not an obedient and true follower of the caste system, but he pretends to follow it. he cannot go against the system, he directly states it is not his son, but someone else's. That is how he rejects to take responsibility to bring up his

own son. He is portrayed as a hypocrite and he is not a true lover of Masamai either. But he pretends to be so and exploits her. He is never concerned about the pathetic condition and poverty-ridden life of Masamai. Masamai and her all children have to suffer from malnutrition. Sharankumar Limble is his son, yet he never cares for him even though he is a landlord. His activities show that he is a cunning and wicked man. But the system has branded him as someone superior to the Dalits.

Even the tenets of the entrenched system are not just enough to follow to lead a human live, especially for Dalits. Dalits begin to doubt the sincerity of the caste system and the hypocritical nature of the caste Hindu followers and the system itself. Limbale points out that most of the literate people in India are branded as educated. The highly and well-educated caste Hindu is not able to detach themselves from the influence of the upbringing of the caste system. Most of the time injustice, ill-treatment and atrocities are perpetrated against the so-called untouchables in the rural areas. However, even metropolitan cities like Mumbai, Delhi, Chennai, are no exception to it. Whenever a Dalit happens to search a room for rent, he is asked his caste by the non-Dalit house owners. If he tells his caste, which is untouchable, he will not be given a room for rent. In such circumstances the Dalit has to wander here and there in search of a rented room. If he does not get it, he has to go to the Dalits' locality in the city, rent a room live in an unclean locality. At times, they have to tell lies and hide their castes. The author narrates such an incident,

“However, I went to Latur. I faced the problem of finding a house in a new town and my caste followed me like an enemy. Latur was such a big place with huge buildings, houses and bungalows, but I was turned away wherever I went. They said frankly, ‘We don't want to rent out our house to Muslims and Mahars.’ Should I put this town to the torch? Such a big town-but I could not get a single room. Every town and person was caste conscious. This casteism has dehumanized everyone.” (106).

Limbale focuses that Dalits are ignorant, powerless and unaware of the nature of the truth. They are exploited, subjected to suffering, humiliation and abuses by the caste-Hindus. The non-Dalits always hate the Dalits because they have no fellow-feeling. Consequently, the downtrodden are reduced to the level of beggars to fill their stomachs struggling for their whole life to earn their bread and butter. So they have no time to think of good or bad, right or wrong phenomena in the life. Limbale is one of the victims of the caste system, which is based on the concept of god, yet he is not completely a staunch atheist. He says that he does not approve of this religion, this country and this god. But throughout the autobiography one can find that hardly any character in it is an atheist. It is extremely difficult for the Dalits to get rid of the clutches of harmful elements.

Limbale describes the Dalits students at school who are victimized by his non-Dalit, especially caste Hindu, teachers and schoolmates. In Indian schools it has been a tradition for non-Dalit teachers and students to harass and insult the Dalit students, and subject them to the works, which are supposed to be done by peons. Dalit students are made to work all the while rather than to make them learn how to study. It can be stated that they are deliberately misguided and their attention is diverted from their studies. It is extremely important to bring about a revolution among non-Dalit teachers so that they would stop discrimination and subjecting Dalit students to dire atrocities and injustices. *The Outcaste (Akkarmashi)* exposes that the inferiority complex of Dalits and superiority complex of non-Dalits. As Dalits get comforts, they start suffering. In this connection Limbale documents: “The Hindu community was hurt, because with the facilities given to them, Dalits were getting an education and becoming aware of their rights. A generation of militant youths generated by the movement also threatened the Hindus and the thought of untouchables being contented lives with jobs made available to them, irritated. Dalits refused to do the lowly jobs that they once did for Hindus. Such changes in the Dalit community occurred with their conversion to Buddhism. The thought that the community which had lived the life of cats and dogs for thousands of years was now behaving as equals was unacceptable to the high-caste Hindus. I thought safer to be secretive about my caste in such a terrible situation.” (103).

Though Dalits are the worst sufferers of the caste system, they are unable to discontinue following it. Limbale's wife comes under the category of exception who with no difficulty accepts him as her husband because for her it does not matter if her husband belongs to another caste. In other words, she disobeys the extremely powerful system. *The Outcaste Akkarmashi* represents that when Dalits have got educated in the twentieth century, they sometimes directly and indirectly have tried to disobey the system. Limbale points out in his autobiography that as he got mature, he began to go against the societal norms and practices which were totally illogical and anti-human. Dalits are not allowed to enter temples, his friend and he himself entered the temple in his village when they were young boys. When they were served tea in separate cups meant for Dalits at a village hotel, they complained against the hotel owner to the police. Dalits have not been considered to be addressed with respect, according to the system. But Limbale began to respect those Dalits who were really respected. He remembers: “I stopped saying ‘namaskar’ and started saying ‘Jai Bhim’ instead. I substituted Babasaheb for Ambedkar since it sounded less formal and more respectful.” (86)

He criticizes the system and convention. He disowns his father's caste and wants to get married according to the Buddhist rituals. He realises the importance of the innovative and radical act such as inter-caste marriages. In his autobiography the author asks a number of questions regarding irrational and inhuman beliefs and practices. Limbale has emerged as a revolutionary and awakening intellectual. It can be remarked that

Limbale has disproved the authenticity of the existing caste system. His autobiography points out that the human beings only are enemies of human beings. Through his continuous struggle against all discriminatory forces, however, he has set an example of overcoming such evil trends in the society. Limbale has disproved the system and identified it as hypocritical and guilty. Therefore, he has dared to go against it even if it is extremely powerful and deeply entrenched. However, the very structure of the caste system is quite rigid and has yet to be dismantled forever for the equal social order and wellbeing of all the people in the society. He has created awareness in the minds of radical Dalits in the history of the revolutionary transformation of the caste system by breaking the principles of the caste system. Dalits lack in political and economic means, they have an important weapon for their empowerment. It is the weapon of culture. It brings out the power locked in Dalits. Dalits will be empowered to claim their rightful place in political and their share in the resources of the country. It calls for a critique of the dominant culture and its historiography. The counter-cultural practice of Dalits is precisely intended to deconstruct and expose the dominant culture and its alienation from productive labour. The counter-culture contrasts the world view and values based on hierarchy, purity and pollution with one of solidarity and participation.

Today about 7 billion people live on Earth, and no two of them alike. People can be small and large and in many colors. We wear different clothes and have different ideas of beauty. Many of us believe in one God, others believe in many, and still others believe in none. Some people are rich and many are desperately poor. Have you ever considered why there's not one human culture rather than many cultures? cultural assertion: Self-identity humiliation and injustice: Rejection of traditional Hindu culture and acceptance to buddhist culture. No one can live without a culture. Every one (every society, every group) and every sub-group has a culture of its own, similar and common in many respects with the proximate people, or the group of which they are a sub-group. *Dalit* and caste Hindus in this Country are two such groups living in proximate places all over the Country for nearly three millenniums, but still are different, looking diametrically in different directions in many respects, opposed, antagonistic and cannot digest or accept the presence of each other, even though social necessities make the *Dalit* not only necessary but absolutely essential for the caste Hindus survive. *Dalit* literature is made by *Dalit* experiences. It has developed through the life experiences of *Dalits* in India. It narrates human expressions and *Dalit* experiences.

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## Traces of Afrocentricity in Wole Soyinka's *The Lion and the Jewel*

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**Abstract:** Afrocentricity in literature is a viewpoint that encourages writers to victoriously write about the history and culture of Africa. Thus, an act to free African art and culture from Eurocentrism that often acts as a virus in countries outside the Eurocentric paradigm. This study explores the possibilities and limits of Afrocentricity in a play, *The Lion and the Jewel* by Wole Soyinka. It applies a postcolonial approach and an Afrocentric point of view by arguing that postcolonial literature is a by-product of degradation and pressure from colonial powers onto colonized people, as a result, they have decided to confront the external powers of colonialism. It is also argued, the results of this confrontation are new systems of thought, including Afrocentricity. Wole Soyinka as a playwright who takes advantage of his Yoruba traditions and rituals to self-consciously presents it to the world. *The Lion and the Jewel* is about a beautiful young girl named Sidi who should choose either the young school master or the old village chief as her husband. At first she makes fun of the chief for his impotency, but after some events, she marries him. *The Lion and the Jewel* is a comedy with a message, which puts the Westernized school master Lakunle, against the group's leader, Baroka, illustrating the division between the modern and the traditional. Here Soyinka seeks to satisfy his thirst for Afrocentricity by applying several methods, which are originally African, in his play. He introduces two male characters and by them he introduces two worldviews; the Afrocentric view and the Eurocentric view. Hence, the play turns to be a kind of ideological war between these two poles; and furthermore, Soyinka sugar coats this war by adding another important character who is a female to mediate the conflict.

This paper observes the traces of Afrocentricity and Yoruba culture in selected plays of Wole Soyinka relevant to Molefi Kete Asante's definition of Afrocentricity.

**Keywords:** postcolonialism, Yoruba, culture, tradition

Wole Soyinka is a renowned Nigerian dramatist, who was awarded Nobel Prize in 1986, for his accomplishment in the field of literature. He is a prolific writer and versatile genius of Africa. Being a social conscious writer, he is acclaimed worldwide, yet his home country rewarded him with solitary confinements, sentence to death and many exiles. However, no orders and punishment subdued his strong will. Instead, like a sphinxes, he came out from all difficulties with great energy to enlighten and serve his people. Such a consciousness reflects in his play with more aesthetic in sense and socially instructive. His works are based on society, culture, tradition and politics of Africa. He infuses the western stage with new dramatic possibilities while commenting on Yoruba tradition and Africa's modern political and social realities. He is a keen observer of his land, culture and customs and very eminent in expressing the observance in writings.

The admirable traits of Soyinka writings hinge upon a certain pillars of literary forms such as comedy, tragedy and scathing satire. His laughter provoking comedies have an underlying object of high seriousness of satire. The tragic plays of Soyinka are written in comic vein, though monotonous and grim, very suitable to the atmosphere of the play.

Soyinka's "*The Lion and the Jewel*" is a comical play based on African society, written in 1959 and published in 1963. Jeyifo comments upon the play, "*The Lion and the Jewel*" occupies a unique place in Soyinka's dramas. It is perhaps the only play by him that is written entirely in a comic spirit uncomplicated by a dark, brooding humour and satire. The play portrays a conflict between tradition and modernism. In the play, there is ample use of dance, song and mime. The play is very simple in its structure and it is a poetic drama or musical play. It shows deep familiarity of Soyinka with the various aspects of African tradition and the influence of the modern world on the African mind. Soyinka gives an account of the origins of the play in an interview, in that he mentions about the custom and culture of Yoruba.

### Yoruba Folklore

Afrocentric elements in the works of Soyinka by examining Yoruba folktale, opera theatre, customs, and his victorious notion of Afrocentricity. Yoruba folktales is often an innocent maiden who is charmed by a handsome stranger who later changes to an ogre; he noted that these kind of stories were told to sentimental young girls to warn them from the danger that would happen to them should they be deceived by an attractive young men about whom they knew nothing about. Thus, 'Don't let handsome strangers lead you into the woods' became one of the most explicit morals that could be drawn from these kinds of tales (Lindfors 35). Hence, Soyinka used the theme of 'Don't let handsome strangers lead you into the woods' in



his play, but in a different way. In *The Lion and the Jewel*, the so-called protagonist Sidi is a beautiful girl, who has many suitors among whom there is a middle aged man called Bale, who already has several wives. In order to feed her curiosity and stubbornness, Sidi wants to turn the middle aged man down, so she goes to his house. At first she tries to mock him because of his impotency, but later she turns to be his prey. We might say that this theme has been inspired from Yoruba folktales, and Soyinka changed it a little to fit it to the present time, which somewhat follows the moral that “Do not always follow your curiosity”, curiosity can act as a stranger that is against you.

### **Yoruba Opera Theatre**

Yoruba opera or Yoruba traveling theatre is a very flexible form; it can use traditional music, dance and myth, and at the same time, the latest styles in music and design. In *The Lion and the Jewel*, the dance of the lost travelers draws on Yoruba tradition and many other African rituals; and contemporary events that is often illustrated and interpreted in dances involving costumes and pantomime; Soyinka believes that this kind of ‘street theatre’ prepares a fruitful field for improving African drama.

There are several parts of dancing and drumming in the play that are features of Yoruba opera theatre and African oral literature. The early drama of the period received a great amount of its themes from internal worlds of family, marriage, and relationships, and also from popular and oral traditions of the region. Soyinka has made use of these elements to forward the action of the play. Russell McDougall considers the usage of “dance as the illumination of dramatic form” (102). In the first part of the play, “Morning,” Sidi and her village girls and Lakunle performs a dance and mime of “the dance of the lost traveller”. In the dance, the villages enact the experiences of the western photographer on his first visit to Ilujinle. The second mime is performed by Lakunle to Sidi and Sadiku about the coming of the railway, and of its rerouting away from the village when the Bale bribes the Surveyor. In this episode, Lakunle seeks to expose the wiliness of self-indulgent Baroka by telling them how the Bale has sabotaged all schemes of connecting the village to modern civilization. The next dance is performed by Sadiku after Baroka has confided in her the loss of his manhood. Sadiku gloats over it and places a carved figure of Baroka in the village centre and she performs “victory dance”. The fourth mime is the wrestling match between Baroka and a wrestler. The wrestling motions are mimed in order to impress Sidi with his prowess and virility. Baroka keeps on talking warmly and affectionately to Sidi and defeats the wrestler also. Russell McDougall opines regarding the act of the Bale: “His argument is shaped and timed so as to suggest almost inevitably the descriptive metaphor of dance” (111). The final song, dance and mime are performed in the end of the play, after Sidi has announced to Lakunle that her intention of marrying Baroka and bear his children. Sidi sings and dances the “dance of virility”.

### **Yoruba Customs and Traditions**

Yoruba tradition gives Soyinka an African identity, and also, the use of Yoruba materials provides a nostalgic act which encourages readers with an African perspective to empathize with the play more (767). Hence, getting bride price from the groom and hiring praise singers for the wedding ceremony are some African and Yoruba customs that Lakunle refuses to pay at first, but later in the second situation, he accepts which shows that he could not replace his entire way of thinking with a European outlook. And here, Soyinka tried to mention Yoruba rites and rules as much as he could.

Soyinka’s attitude toward women seems traditionally African wherein his women are basically sources of sex and his characters speak and are spoken to in proverbs, metaphors, images and symbols that express their African experience (Ojaide 769, 767). Soyinka can also be considered as an ethno-centrist, because his works concern a Yoruba centered value system and explain its worldview via the Yoruba culture, and moreover; he has brought up in a Yoruba community and thus traces his memories of ritual and tradition from the Yoruba, although he was also educated in the Western world which involved learning Western forms and literary structures, which he tried to use to introduce his African and Yoruba origin to the world.

### **Victorious Notion of Afrocentricity**

As Asante claims, there are two kinds of consciousness: that are “1) toward oppression, 2) toward victory; when someone says “the white man will never let us be free he’s evil and we know that”, he is conscious of oppression, the victorious attitude shows the Africans on the slave ship winning; it teaches that we are free because we choose to be free” (65). According to Boehmer explorers and colonizers in their description of Africa, considered Africa or generally the colonized land as a feminine entity, and novelists regarded the treacherous and strange features of the unknown land as characteristics of a female and tried to use metaphors to show it (87). So in *The Lion and the Jewel* Soyinka’s attitude is about being victorious, because he makes the Bale who symbolizes tradition, win Sidi, and therefore Sidi can be regarded as symbol of Africa.

### **Mode of Thought, Mythology, Mask Ritual, and Broken English**

In Soyinka’s plays, Yoruba mythology and theology and Yoruba customs and traditions are an obvious requirement, because he believes that if African and Yoruba writers do not write about their traditions and rituals, who will/should do it? Soyinka also believes that African people and scholars should write about their

own myths, legends and customs like Shakespeare did in the Elizabethan age. An African land and observing a lifestyle, a writer cannot authentically write about African people, since the information is abridged and the writer is unaware of the true nature of an African person, hence, the life, beliefs, stories, ethics, sayings, background and other influential factors that take part in one day in the life of an African person.

### **Role of Women in The Lion and The Jewel**

The vision of Soyinka is not clearly present in this play. Till the end it is ambiguous that whether he exalts the customs and tradition of his people or not. To the readers some of the tradition and customs portrayed in the play are new to them. The polygamous society gives importance to the Bale, it allows him to marry as many girls he can, he uses the girls only for his pleasure, and after a new arrival of favourite he sends the last favourite to an outhouse. It shows the society never give respect to women, and they are used to, as Lakunle tells, “pounds the yam or bends all the day to plant the millet ... to fetch and carry, to cook and scrub, to bring forth children by the gross” (“The Lion and the Jewel”, 7 & 9). The custom of dead Bale’s last wife becomes the senior wife to the successor, i.e. son. The custom is very awkward and surprise to almost all the readers, particularly to the Indian readers. However, the playwright does not make any condemn, dislike or rejection of it. Instead, by ending the play with the marriage ceremony of the Bale and the girl seems to show that Soyinka nods approval to this custom. By the marriage of the cunning Bale and ignorant and pride

Sidi, the author emphasizes that chastity is only for female. All these show that the female society is highly marginalized by the males. The female characters like Sidi and Sadiku are the representation of the doubly oppressed in the society. They are the symbol of self-marginality, particularly Sidi:

... she never allows any rational idea into her mind, which is advised by Lakunle.

...greatly supports and argues for her society and its tradition. She does not want to come out of the conventional ideologies. She does not know that she is marginalizing herself for the ideologies of the society. (Kumar, 46)

In the play, Lakunle like a champion of feminism, voices for the females, who are fastened with the traditions of the society. But he is portrayed as a foolish and stupid teacher, who never gets any respect from anyone, Sidi chides his state in the village, “You and your ragged books dragging your feet to every threshold and rushing them out aging as cruses greet you instead of welcome. The village says you’re man, and I begin to understand” (“The Lion and the Jewel”, 5 & 10). Even after so much humiliation he tells his dream of new, improved and modern society to her. But his expectation of development is a mirage. And through the character of Baroka, playwright expresses that the society is not ready to accept the changes, even if it is necessary. By portraying Lakunle as a hallow-modernist, Soyinka presents the stubbornness of society. C.N. Ramachandran concludes his character, “Lakunle represents not western culture but only hallow Westernization, not real but only the image. The play abundantly establishes that Lakunle is a modern version of Don Quixote, a book nourished shrimp “(201). Eldred Jones calls Lakunle “the half-baked Westernized African” (24) rather Florence Stratton posits, “he is a caricature of the alienated African – a ridiculous figure in any case, but not in the latter an object of pity” (539). Onwueme in his article states that Soyinka made “a mild satire against Baroka’s ruthless leadership and brutal force in society” (64). Even the mild satire also made only through the weak character Lakunle. On support of Lakunle, Basavaraj Naiker writes that Lakunle’s protestation against the payment of bride price, instead of cunning ways of drawing Sidi into bed, his rational method of convincing her to marry her, and his aesthetics of love and poetic sensibility have no significance in the tradition-ridden society (112). The society is out of its sensibility, which never heeds to words of educated.

Along with that, the playwright satirizes the educational system in his land through the character Lakunle. Through him, the dramatist brings out the African tendency to imitate the life of the white man. He presents an ironical situation through the depiction of the character. Lakunle is an embodiment of the qualities found in the foreign educated African student. He must be an intelligent herald of the revolution against old customs and blind faith. But he is stuffed with empty bombastic words, and unclear vision to change his society. The sphere of education requires a complete sense of devotion. But pretensions, affection, hypocrisy, lack of depth, have clouded the atmosphere. It is so disheartening to note that in the context of newly evolving nation like, Africa, where the universities do not promote the custodians to upgrade the sphere of education, instead they breed bugs as in any other fields.

The antithesis to Lakunle, Baroka is a very impressive character in the play. He does not sounds like Lakunle, the chatterbox, rather through his actions, he proves himself as a man of action. Physically he is very strong and vigorous. His worldly wisdom keeps him as a head of the village for a long time. He keeps control the village under his rule; he isolates the commoners as far as possible from modern ideas, even modern transportation, like railways. He combines courage with cunning to pursue pleasures. He enjoys the privileges and power with zest, with care and caution. At the outset, he represents tradition, but the study of his character brings out that he represents neither tradition nor modern. He utilizes both the ideologies for his personal satisfaction.

### **Conclusion**

The interest in using African, and specifically Yoruba customs, traditions, and value system in his work incorporates Soyinka as a post-colonialist Afrocentric writer as he details Yoruba traditions and rituals in his work and thus gives them a taste of originality, hence a vibrant African authenticity wherein customs like singing, dancing, rites of passage and ritual becomes alive.

Retrospectively, the development of African literature in English can be considered as a product of British colonialism and a clash of cultures and ideas as colonialism tried to diminish the cultural life in the colonized land, but instead, it succeeded in blooming new styles (Gikandi380). Hence, the intellectuals who were faced with the pressure of the colonizers to change and ignore their origins, decided to write about them, about the details of their traditions, and anything that was not Western. Forthrightly, Soyinka was among those writers that used Western forms and language in order to dramatize and introduce Yoruba and African heritage to the West. Soyinka therefore tried to free the art and culture of his people from the Eurocentric paradigm by writing about the myth, folktales and beliefs of African people, as he writes about several deities of the Yoruba including Ogun (Soyinka's favorite deity), well-known among African deities because of its rebellious spirit. Also, he uses folklore in a modern way to warn his people about the dangers of turning to modernity, especially the youth who are more charmed by the shining of the Western world.

Soyinka positions himself as an Afrocentric writer, since he writes about Africa and African people victorious way. For example, in *The Lion and the Jewel* and *The Road*, it is the African traditional worldview that wins at last which suggest that tradition and ritual rule in African society, and if a person wants to live prosperously and lively in Africa, he or she need to follow the instructions and rules of the society. Tradition, custom and ritual will survive in the modern world provided that they are being used to advance the people, a process that can happen through their writings. Hence, Soyinka used this paradigm in his works to remind the African community that if we want the world to know about our heritage, history and culture, we must first admire and practice it so we can proudly represent our heritage, history and culture to the world.

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## Women as a Victim and Exploit of Patriarchal Society in Vijay Tendulkar's Plays: *Silence! The Court is in Session and Kanyadan*

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**Abstract:** *India has the longest and richest tradition in Drama. The origin of drama can be traced back to the Vedic period. As a manifestation of our national sensibility Indian drama came into existence as a means of exploring and communicating the truth of things. Traditional Indian cultural narratives are insidious and serve to exemplify the individual identity and thereby analyse its intricacies. Indian woman as a wife and mother who is nurturing, obedient, for bearing, soft-spoken, and primary transmitters of the national culture is portrayed through these cultural narratives. Vijay Tendulkar, the modern Indian dramatists and a social realist, he presents the black side of the humanity in his drama *Silence! The court is in Session and Kanyadan*. He projects the image of women crushed under the forces of the patriarchal society. The present paper tries to concentrate on how Tendulkar presents the plight of Indian women in this so-called modern society. The women in Tendulkar's plays has no identity of their own, they are just puppets in the hands of their male counterparts. As a playwright Tendulkar is immensely concerned with the exploitation and victimization of women in a patriarchal society.*

**Key Words:** *Patriarchy, Identity, Exploitation, Victimization.*

### ***Vijay Tendulkar's Dramatic Art***

Vijay Tendulkar has been in the vanguard of the Indian theatre for nearly five decades. His play *Silence! The court is in Session* won him a place among the leading Indian playwrights and his *Ghashiram Kotwal* made a room for him in the international galaxy of the literati. Tendulkar's drama highlights the complexity of human relationships and contains a latent critique of modern Indian society.

Vijay Tendulkar (1928-2008) is undeniably a great Indian playwright who is known for his multifaceted creative genius. As a versatile and prolific Marathi writer he has been honored with several prestigious awards including the Maharashtra state Government Award, the Sangeet Natak Academy Award, Padma Bhushan Award. Tendulkar occupies a unique place in the history of contemporary theatre and he is different from other playwrights experimentation not only with the subject matter but also with the form and structure of drama. Though his innovative dramatic and experimental methods in the presentation of varied themes have brought new authenticity and power to the highly orthodox Marathi theatre, his treatment of socially controversial themes and his unconventional approach to human problems in his plays have made him a controversial writer. In his plays he deals with the themes of love, sex, marriage, violence, gender inequality, social inequality, power games, alienation and individual isolation. While exploring the depths of human life and its complexities he does not fail to expose the hypocrisy, promiscuity and emptiness of value systems found in the traditional Indian middle-class society.

### **A Significant issue**

In this age of globalization, when we are on our way to becoming a developed country, the issues like Gender equality, women's Emancipation and Women empowerment have become very significant. After sixty seven years of independence, are the women really emancipated? Does our society still discriminate on the basis of Gender? Does the education improve women's condition? We can easily find out the answer condition we can easily for all the questions through Vijay Tendulkar's plays. This paper concentrates on explanations of women's status, their humiliation as well as victimization by the male dominated society in Tendulkar's two plays: *Silence! The court is in Session and Kanyadan* respectively. The patriarchal system portrays man as rational, bold, aggressive, dominating, independent, fearless, and having a tendency to rule and control on the other hand, women are supposed to be docile, timid, self-sacrificing, passive, submissive, emotional and dutiful towards their husbands and family members. This system of patriarchy is based up on the concept of hierarchical binaries of genders proclaiming man's superiority and woman's inferiority. It also allows man to assert his authority in all possible forms, seemingly in order to sustain stability in marriage and family.

In the so-called civilized society, women are exploited by their husbands in their houses and men by their masters outside their houses and men by their masters outside their houses. What Rousseau says, "Man is born free, but everywhere he is in chains". This is so because each and every one tries his/her best to suppress others to establish power and authority. Exploitation, dominance, lovelessness, ruthlessness, and violence characterize the contemporary Indian society at large. Gender deformity, power-game and suppression of spontaneity and naturalness are factors responsible for these drawbacks. Girish Karnad points out:

I think anxiety has become part of existence today, triggered partly by the endemic violence. In India, the more we claim we are spiritual people, the more violent we seem to get.

Although violence is attributed to animals, it is usually noticed that human beings are more violent and destructive than animals. Man gets a devilish pleasure in inflicting miseries on others. Tendulkar's Treatment of female protagonists. Tendulkar treats his female as a protagonist with a great comprehension and sympathy. His female characters reveal his intensive treatment of themes like social conscience and complex human relationships. He presents his characters in a natural form. They all are absolutely different in behavioral traits, age, class and character. Through these female characters he exposes the deprivation, humiliation, co modification and suppression of women, thereby commodification and suppression of women, thereby investigating the plight and misery of women in the past as well as in contemporary Indian society, Tendulkar's female characters belongs to different state of Indian society. Though they have different status and background, they are allotted the same ill-treatment in various situations by the male-dominated society.

### **The description of patriarchy**

Leela Benare in Silence! The court is in session is a bold, vivacious, full of life women, a teacher by profession. Jyothi in Kanyadan an educated, young but meet girl belonging to an affluent class both are submissive and sensitive victim of the patriarchal social set up and crushed, deflated and tortured by the males in one way or the other. In Vijay Tendulkar's plays men are highly immersed in patriarchy. Arun Athavale and Nath Devalikar in Kanyadaan, Ramakant, Umakant and Pappa in Vultures, and most of the male characters in Silence! The court is in session, are totally biased against women and staunch believer of patriarchy, which justifies limited freedom for women. Through the society makes high claims of evolution, "it seems to be in no mood to give women equal share" in real life.

#### **Submissive state of women**

Highlighting the submissive state of women in our society, J.M. Waghmare aptly comments: "Women have been standing at the crossroads of history for centuries with tears in their eyes and milk in their breasts. In Silence! The court is in session, he shows how women are exploited, tortured and victimized by the patriarchal society. The play opens with ridiculous and banter of the characters of the actual play. The real play is scheduled to be staged in the night. The characters have a lot of time to kill. So, they want to rehearse the actual drama. A mock trial is staged in which a woman is put to trial for her offence of infanticide. Miss Benare has to perform the role of this woman. All the members of the troupe expect Prof. Damle is present. At first the trial begins with humorous posture, ridicules, laughter and caricature. But in the third act, the play becomes more grave and critical. Miss Benare reveals her secret. She exposed the hypocrisy of some men who uprooted her plant of life. She tells how she was deflowered by her maternal uncle at the age of fourteen "Why, I was hardly fourteen! I didn't even know what sin was - I swear by my mother, I didn't! I insisted on marriage. So I could live my beautiful lovely dreams openly. Like anyone else! But all of them- my mother too- were against it. And my brave man turned tail and ran"(2). After this traumatic experience she felt like a fish out of water. She wanted to commit suicide, but she didn't. She searched for an identity of her own in an entirely adverse society where men have little love for women; where men are hungry for the bodily pleasures of women. In spite of her previous error, once again she falls in love with Prof. Damle, but now love is not unconscious and ignorant as it was with her maternal uncle. But this new life again deserts her. She narrates:

Again I fell in love. As a grown woman. I throw all my heart into it. I thought this will be different. This love is intelligent. It is love for an unusual intellect. It is not love at all- its worship! But it was the same mistake. I offered up my body on the altar of my worship. And my intellectual god took the offering and wants his way. He didn't want my mind, or my devotion-he didn't care about them! He was not a god he was a man. For everything was the body for the body! That is all (3).

Thus this is a tragic story of the plight of a woman who a facing an identity crisis in a male dominated patriarchal framework where even women are not helpful to women rather they needle and pinpoint in the hour of critical juncture of the protagonist.

The play also deals with the latent violence and prejudice towards women in the middle class psyche. Kashikar and Sukhatme in Silence! The court is in session, Jaisingh Jadhav in Kamala Ramakant and Umakant in Vultures represent the violent and disgruntled characters. They turned violent and deviated because of their respective failure in the life. In the Silence .... the worst sufferer is a woman, Miss Benare who has to be the victim of men's lust and prejudice. Her incestuous relation with her maternal uncle creates a sense of life-long trauma in the psyche of the heroine. She recalls:

I was in love with my mother's brother. But in our strict he use in the prime of my unfolding youth. He was the one who came close to me he praised my bloom every day. He gave me love... how was I to know.... If you felt that just being with him gave a whole

meaning to life and if he was your uncle, it was a sin!... I did not even know what sin was  
.... I insisted in marriage. So I could live my beautiful lovely dream openly.(4)

But the height of this tragedy lies in the cold attitude of the mother of the protagonist who turned a deaf ear to the innocent and ignorant adolescent. This shows that the real enemy of a suffering woman in society is not only the social taboos, customs, rites and male chauvinism but also the indifferent and cold treatment of a woman towards a woman.

Well, Miss Leela Benare commits her incestuous relation in an ignorant stage charmed under a juvenile frenzy. But when she comes of age she commits a conscious and adult bodily relation with Prof. Damle whom she worshipped as a god. But this god took the offering of her body and turned his back to her. This dissertation and humiliation was unbearable to a forsaken woman who is in the constant search of an identity of married woman. In spite of all these unbearable physical and mental tortures and humiliations, she doesn't surrender; rather wants to lead a life, a new life. But some men in society are jealous of her.

The story takes a serious turn in the last act in which we see how a helpless bird (Miss Leela Benare) is surrounded by the hungry Vultures (the other characters). We also notice the manifestation of physical violence when Rokde is asked to conduct the accused, miss Benare, to the witness box. Mrs. Kashikar drags her very roughly and rudely to the witness box. Benare on the other hand is dumb-founded. She is unable to speak anything. This shows how a progressive woman has to face several hazards and obstacles silently.

The man, who was equally responsible for the guilt remain acquitted. No one raise a single finger against him Miss Benares is a silent sufferer. She has great patience to suffer. She is the embodiments of innocence and compassion. Though she is victimized at every step; she has dined harm to none. She has fallen victim to patriarchy in this Indian society. The plight and plunder of helpless woman has been best expressed in the apt placements of irony in the play.

Kanyadan

In the play Kanyadan. The protagonist Jyothi is also an education girl who belongs to the sophisticated class. But she also becomes the victim of this social injustice, oppression, dispossession inflicted by the patriarchal society. Through these plays, it becomes clear that even educated women have no right to take their decision independently. Even getting education is not security against oppression and maltreatment in this male dominated society. A woman has no right to challenge and flout its social norms.

Though, Nath Devalikar, an MLA and social activist, wants to bring a social change in society, by allowing his daughter to marry a Dalit man, Arun, he never thinks about his daughter's future of how she will cope up with the different social strata of the Dalits class? Though Jyothi was a love marriage, she denounces all social norms in order to marry Arun. But he turns out to be a man, who seeks vengeance on aristocratic people, whom he considers responsible for the ageless deprivation and degradation of Dalits. She loves Arun wholeheartedly, but in return Arun abuses Jyoti, beats her brutally, and kicks her when she is pregnant. She never takes any steps against her husband's cruelty. She considers him as her "Pati Parameshwar" a tag given by the patriarchal society. She finally tells her father that no one should come to see her in the slum in which she lives as Jyoti Arun Athavale a scavenger, an untouchable. But in a patriarchal society a female has no personal opinion of her won. She has to remain subservient to her husband's decisions.

Jyothi's father preaches that only a woman can change her husband's life and turn him into a good man by her loving and caring attitude. Thus, Jyoti seems to be the embodiment of wrong members of her family. Through Jyoti and Arun's relationship, the playwright also draws attention to the fact that discrimination and oppressive social division in Indian are also few of the important causes for rebellion and violence in society. Vijay Tendulkar in his plays makes it very clear that even educated and self-reliant women like Leela and Jyoti not only humiliated and tortured by their male counterparts but also subjected to various types of violence within and / or outside the home. Even their education has failed to banish these ingrained evils from society.

So, Tendulkar portrays the unfortunate situation of women in male dominated society. All these above discussed play show that even independent, educated women characters are not only supposed, but also forced to fit in, or accept these stereotyped familial tradition, ethical mores and social and, if a woman refused to follow these rules, she has to face the consequences in various forms of abuse, such as disgust, disgrace, violence, and expulsion from homes etc. What Simon de Beauvoir says of women is apt for Vijay Tendulkar's women characters: "They have gained only what has been willingly granted, they have taken nothing, they have only received" (Beauvoir xv).

### **To conclude**

Thus, this brief survey of the play shows that the play is beset with various examples of plights and plunders deliberately engendered by the terrible monsters of the society. It is realist exposure of the hypocrisy, pretensions and male chauvinism of some self centre people who treat woman like flowers in their pot or some self- centered people who treat who treat woman like bodily thirst like a lascivious animal and then desert her to her own fate. This animality or even worse than animality in this play seems to fling an unpalatable irony on our rich cultural heritages where women are worshipped as a deity and imagined as a great source of fertility and heavenly values of life.

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## Inhumanism and Disillusionment in Paul Marshall's *The Chosen Place, The Timeless People*

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**Abstract:** Paul Marshall dealt revealingly with people living under, or escaping from the pressures of society. The essence of Paul Marshall's novel *The Chosen Place, The Timeless People* is found in the epigraph at the very beginning. Marshall tells the history of the Tiv people of West Africa. Once a great wrong has been done, it never dies. People speak the words of peace, but their hearts do not forgive. Generations perform ceremonies of reconciliation, but there is no end. This is a ringing accusation, primary lesson of history regarding the separateness of cultures. Paul Marshall's novel *The Chosen Place, The Timeless People* moves beyond the individual self to the collective self. As its title suggests, it concerns not primarily persons, but ultimately people; its principle theme, the clash of cultures and the necessity for a people to know its heritage. Thus, the divided self, both the individual self and the collective self, finds wholeness. Certainly there is much rage, loneliness, oppression and poignancy due to disillusionment and Marshall is able to focus clearly revealing much about the intentions of those who need the organization and their relationship with the world of their employees and that of other Blacks. These characters' experiences reveal vital cultural differences. Throughout the novel the differences between the two cultures—white and black—are apparent. The impact of the white culture is essentially negative.

**Key Words:** Divided self, oppression, disillusionment

Paul Marshall dealt revealingly with people living under, or escaping from the pressures of society. The criticism of society for failing to satisfy human aspirations was implicit with characters attempting to ignore society and its conventions. Symbolically they represent the problems of modern life, combined with psychological insights and a masterful range of cultural understanding and the mental lives of the characters. The desire for freedom is rising in slave consciousness that has been kindled in the slave. Because, being born of suffering and surviving, and born of a unique inspirational experience, such as a religious vision or a gradual "possession" they have the will to die or to be free. The slave grows in courage and embarks upon escape.

The essence of Paul Marshall's novel *The Chosen Place, The Timeless People* is found in the epigraph at the very beginning. Marshall tells the history of the Tiv people of West Africa. Once a great wrong has been done, it never dies. People speak the words of peace, but their hearts do not forgive. Generations perform ceremonies of reconciliation, but there is no end. This is a ringing accusation, primary lesson of history regarding the separateness of cultures. At Carnivals, in their ritualistic reenactment of their history, the compelling song of the Bournehills people asset the force of the community. Under Cuffee, they sing, a man had not lived for himself alone, but for his neighbour also. "If we had lived selfish, we couldn't have lived at all. They half-spoke, half-sang the words. They had trusted one another, had set aside their difference and stood as one against their enemies. They had seen people" (287).

Human suffering and oppression is based on the social injustice and racial discrimination which is the most common theme in the novels of Paul Marshall. The humanistic approach and critical appreciation of the strengths and weaknesses are brought out in her novels. Having spent her childhood among slavery and oppression, it is but natural for her who was enticed by a sense of tenderness and sympathy towards the downtrodden and has dexterously depicted the characters as reminiscence. She sees the salvation of mankind as dependent on compassion and loving nature. The view-point of her fiction is not the intellectual cross-currents in America, but blacks as experiencing their own condition. The African- American life has been highlighted by setting it within the ambit of a literary structure called novel, adopted and integrated field-oriented black tradition.

Paul Marshall's novel *The Chosen Place, The Timeless People* moves beyond the individual self to the collective self. As its title suggests, it concerns not primarily persons, but ultimately people; its principle theme, the clash of cultures and the necessity for a people to know its heritage. Thus, the divided self, both the individual self and the collective self, finds wholeness. The real protagonist is the community of Bournehills, a remote section of Bourne Island, a Caribbean island obviously patterned after Barbados. The island itself, as seen from the air, is one of a group of little islands that look like stepping stones placed by some giant to link North and South Africa. Bourne Island, however, is slightly out of line, more to the east facing the Atlantic Ocean. It seems in its geographical position to link the New World with Africa; it seems the center of the triangular trade. It is a chosen place. When entered, it seems to be stepping into different dimensions where past



and present somehow converge. At its centre is a hill on which, centuries ago, occurred an event so staggering that it still seems recent.

Pyre Hill, still blackened as if by a recent fire, still seeming to smolder from the flames of that night, was the scene of a slave revolt. On the apex of the hill there stood a splendid estate of the slave holder Percy Bryam. One night the slaves, led by Cuffee Ned, set the castle afire, set the whole hill afire and yoked Percy Bryam to the mill wheel where he suffered torture and death. Cuffee Ned and his followers lived free in the hills for three years, successfully fighting off the white government until finally they were taken. Cuffee Ned was beheaded and his head displayed triumphantly on West Minster Low Road.

Now, generations later, this story is still alive. The blackened hill looks as if it would be hot underfoot. "The people still argue about what happened as if it had happened last night. They are people out of time, linked by place and circumstance with the past and holding key, it would seem to the future"(101). The barter and the sale of human beings by their brothers for thirty pounds sterling, the choice of death over enslavement, the baptism by fire, the destruction of the oppressor on the very instrument of his greed—these events say symbolically a deep human story of struggle and triumph. For although Cuffee Ned suffered physical death, his head on the pike was a symbol of triumph.

It is a story repeated so often in the history of black people that it assumes the proportions of myth and ritual. Into this chosen place, come the white liberals – Sociologist Saul Amron, his wife Harriet, and his young assistant Allen Fuso. Armed with the tools of social research, they are going to study Bourne Hills and improve it. Their key contact is Merle Kimbona, a woman of mixed blood who was educated in England. After her Ugandan husband left her, taking their little daughter to Africa, Merle returned to Bournehills for healing. Merle as a young student in England was drawn into a lesbian relationship with a wealthy older white woman who, long after the affair ended, ruined Merle's marriage by telling the young husband about the affair. Now back in Bournehills, Merle always wears the woman's gift of a pair of earrings which are tiny faces of saints. The earrings are an ironic symbol of the touted superiority, but actual corruption of the oppressed society.

Paul Marshall uses the machine as another ironic symbol of high-tech white culture. Technology, supposed to facilitate the good life, turns out to be another instrument of the oppressor. Percy Bryam, the old slave holder, was murdered centuries ago within the mill, the machine whose appetite was both cause and result of the slave society; the warning is obvious. Now the enslaving machines are in the sugarcane factory, a whole system of machines which not only enslave, but being the constant despair, maims and kills the enslaved. What happens to Vereson is a tragic testimony to the deadliness of the machine. Vereson is a young Bournehills man recently returned from America, where he went to make money. He did, but he also came home with a near-addiction to American automobiles. The promise of western technology is the promise that kills.

Bourne Island is thoroughly westernized. Its people measure their progress by their movement toward American culture or English culture. Only the Bournehills people are, as they see it, behind the times. At Carnival, Bournehills always presents the same display – the reenactment of the slave revolt and the burning of Pyre Hill. Again it is dance that conveys profound meaning. But it is a strange dance indeed. Unlike the other lands, the Bournehills people do not, at first, sing. Above the beat of the steel band ahead, their only sound is the rhythmic tramp-tramp of their feet and the clash of the women's bangles. Carnival is both affirmation and assertion of the independent selfhood of Black people. Marshall has already established Bournehills as a mythic focal point of history. Carnival is the ritual which brings that history to life though disillusioned.

Saul helps to put together an organization of workers. Though he is not able to see the union fully launched, there is the strong prospect that it will continue after he has left the island. Harriet, Saul's second wife, is the cause for his premature exit from Bournehills. Reacting against a mother whose disillusioned life she does not want to emulate, Harriet first marries a young scientist with lots of illusions. That marriage is short-lived. By the time she meets Saul, he is recovering from the death of the first wife. Saul has blamed himself for her death, for she suffered a miscarriage and hemorrhaged while accompanying him on a field trip. Harriet is instrumental in getting Saul the Bournehills assignment and encourages him to resume his career. Unfortunately, Harriet, who has promised to keep out of his way on the expedition, tries to subtly control him. As his experience in Bournehills takes him further from her emotionally, she is threatened. Knowledge of his brief affair with Merle spurns her to hence him transferred back to America. He breaks with her, cut off as he is now from the work so vital to him and she commits suicide.

In this novel Allen Fuso is a master of documentation and statistics. Yet he is also a weak man, mightily attracted to the vitality of Vereson, as Saul is eventually attracted by Merle's tragic loneliness. Vereson, having found neither fame nor fortune in South Florida, returns to work on cars. When he finds the car of his dreams, he works on it religiously. Vereson's mission, the transformation of a useless heap of metal into a gleaming and smoothly gliding machine, mystifies Allen. Allen shies away from any intensity of feeling, and he is most comfortable with his case studies and figures. As a character poised against Vereson, Allen represents a softness, a certainly emotional flabbiness. Vereson dies in a car race, during his moment of supreme triumph. The probability of Vereson's early death was suggested much earlier through the response of Leesy, the old woman who raised him at the first sight of the car brought home by Vereson.

Merle, Saul, and Allen are the survivors. Again Merle seeks her daughter, not necessarily a resolution to her marriage, in East Africa. Alone after Harriet's death Saul continues to fight for the rights of the oppressed, though from behind a desk in America for the moment. Allen remains in Bournehills, attracted perhaps by its vitality, though never able to completely enter into the life of the place. The impact of the island, surrounded by the life giving and life taking sea, is ever present.

Both Merle and Harriet are vital links to the past and present since they confronted the West through church and school. Both are important in tempering the integration of technology and broader political ideas into the fabric of that society. However, Merle makes one more trip away to resolve personal problems. But she returns, hopefully to take a more active role in ending the oppression of the peasants.

Saul flees, shocked that there is so little that he understands about the almost superhuman effort of these workers and is strongly aware now that so little has changed in their lives since slavery. Perhaps the most dramatic use of ritual occurs in the "Carnival" section of the novel. In addition to the many informal allusions to Cuffee Ned, the heroic leader of a slave revolt in the eighteenth century, the natives of Bournehills keep alive the details of this event in the annual island parade. The revolt is reenacted on the slow-moving float. As the scenes unfold, the ritual inspires and invigorates Merle and its participants, confounds Saul and other residents on the island. The ritual suggests much about the fierce independence of pride and self-reliance of the Bournehill oppressed natives. It places in dramatic perspective the memory that motivates their opposition to technological values or any other values imposed from outside.

After the action of Cuffee Ned in murdering the slavemaster in his bed, his eventual capture—after the story has been told as it must be told each year, Harriet, resisting hysterically, is swept up by the mach of the young and guerrilla band towards the sea. Then she is abruptly tossed aside. Significantly the tide of history overwhelms one symbol of a Western mentality that, though it appears charitable, actually seeks to control and define in its own terms. This confrontation in the streets not only reveals much about Harriet's reaction to events she cannot control but also fore-shadows her own death. Soon afterward Allen is introduced to Elvita of the flaring ships. Swept up in the joy of the carnival, she offers herself to him, but he is not up to the challenge. He is thus left alone disillusioned at the edge of intense experience.

Certainly there is much rage, loneliness, oppression and poignancy due to disillusionment and Marshall is able to focus clearly revealing much about the intentions of those who need the organization and their relationship with the world of their employees and that of other Blacks.

The novel is the next step in Marshall's ever-broadening vision of the relationship of the individual with the community. A vision that links Black culture in Western hemisphere with its African past and the promise of the future, it sees this Black culture as different from Euro American culture which has been the oppressor and which itself has been diminished by that role and proposes that the hope for the future lies in honouring this past and using it on the basis of unified action. In this unity there is power: "As the Bouornehills people, joined the rest of the Black people of Bouorne island, sweep past the bank and stores and business, they resembled a river made turbulent by the spring thaw and rising rapidly, a river that if ned wasn't taken and provision made would burst the walls and levees built to contain it and rushing forth in one dark powerful wave bring everything in its path crashing down" (290).

The experiences of the characters in the novel reveal vital cultural differences. Throughout the novel the differences between the two cultures—white and black—are apparent. The impact of the white culture is essentially negative.

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## Culture: Fragrance and Claustrophobia in Ameen Merchant's *Silent Raga*

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**Abstract:** Media has always been a medium and a liaison of culture. Culture depicts the behaviour, knowledge and identity of the people. The environment in which we survive is only by the contribution of culture that makes people socially united and leads to the development of human race. Books depict the culture of the people and society to which it belongs to. Indian Culture encloses hundreds of religions, practices, castes, tribes etc. dubbed as Hinduism. Brahmins, the one among those religions follows distinct traditions, culture, and follow certain principle and practices. Culture sometimes hamstrings the progress and halts the development of human race. In *Silent Raga* Merchant explores the vivid picture of south Indian culture through the two main women characters who are restricted by the name of caste and cultural rules. This paper examines Ameen Merchant's portrayal of the culture of bourgeois Tamil speaking Brahmins as the linguistic identity of south Indian culture.

**Keywords:** liaison of culture, Hinduism, hamstrings, bourgeois Tamil speaking Brahmins, identity of south Indian culture.

### Introduction

Media has always been a medium and a liaison of culture. Culture depicts the behaviour, knowledge and identity of the people. The environment in which we survive is only by the contribution of culture that makes people socially united and leads to the development of human race. Books depict the culture of the people and society to which it belongs to. Literature is an artistic expression of the best that is known and thought in the world. It is a record of man's dream, ideal, his hopes and aspirations, his failures and disappointment, his motive and passions, his experience and observations, his assertion and strife. It appeals to the widest of human interests and the simplest of humanity. Literature acts as a tool in portraying the culture of the society to which it belongs to. Literature is an instrument of culture and the nature and power of the instrument depends upon the culture which forges it.

### Cultural Discourse

Cultural studies assume that "Language is the primary means and medium through which we form knowledge about ourselves and the social world" (Barker 2004:107). The study of any form of Literature in historical or cultural context (that is mainly concerned with different type of culture) is called cultural discourse. Cultural discourse is nothing but making social interaction with different society and exploring different type of culture through the work of art.

There are two types in discourse

- 1) Individually focused and
- 2) Publicly focused.

Ameen Merchant has brought out the culture of Hindu Brahmin society in his *Silent Raga* as both individually and publicly focused one.

### *Silent Raga*

*Silent Raga*, the story compiled of family, tradition, loss and reconciliation is the first novel of Ameen Merchant. Ameen Merchant was born in Bombay and raised in Madras, India. He presently lives in Vancouver where he program's music for the CBC's satellite Indian music channel. He currently is working on his next book. *Silent Raga* tells the story of two bourgeois Tamil speaking sisters Janaki and Mallika. After the death of their mother in a bus accident, the two sisters must negotiate their changing relationship with their father and their mother's sister, who is threatening to take their mother's place.

Janaki is a musical prodigy, sublimely gifted on the veena, but as she grows toward her eighteenth birthday, she becomes fearful of being entrapped in a marriage arranged for her by her father and her aunt. Eschewing the traditions of her family and her caste, she runs off with a Muslim Bollywood Star, whom she marries. Years later Mallika, now a programs counselor with United States information services, receives a letter from Janaki, who is returning to Madras. In prose that resembles the rhythms and progression of an Indian raga, Ameen Merchant weaves a finely wrought story about family, loss and reconciliation. He captures in rich detail the world of these Brahmin Indian women, a world restricted by caste and cultural rules but one teeming with colour, music and food, where dreams of Bollywood love and stardom brighten the spirit and relieve the daily grind. It is a story about the tradition that binds us and the sacrifices; we must take along the road to our own individual destinies.

### Fragrance of culture

*Silent Raga* by Ameen Merchant explores the culture of Indian Brahmin society mainly through the two women characters Janaki and Mallika. The women belonging to this society are pictured as the one who continuously indulge in gossips about other family. And the society does not heed to the opinions of the women, where they are given no chance to decide about their education or marriage, everything is in the control of male. This type of portrayal of Indian Brahmin Society can also be seen in Bharati Mukherjee's novel *The Tiger's Daughter*. In *The Tiger's Daughter*, the tiger's daughter is Tara Banerjee, a Bengali Brahmin of Calcutta and daughter of an industrialist known as Bengal Tiger, schooled at Pough Keepsie, New York and married to an American named David who is a writer. Bharati Mukherjee also portrays Indian Brahmin Society as Male dominated society where women are not given any chance to explore themselves. In *The Tiger's Daughter* Tara is not given any chance to decide about her life (although she chose her husband), she was sent to New York by her father's decision, her schooling though she felt alienated in New York she was sent by her father to study at New York. American life and culture was strange to Tara, the young Indian girl. Her immediate reaction was one of fear and anger. Mukherjee comments on Tara's visit to America as

“For Tara, Vassar had been an almost unsalvageable mistake. If she had not been a Banerjee, a Bengali Brahmin, the great granddaughter of Hari Lal Banerjee, or perhaps if she had not been trained by the good nuns at St. Blaise to remain composed and ladylike in all the emergencies, she would have rushed home to India at the end of her first week”(TTD 13).

This same situation can be seen in Ameen Merchant's *Silent Raga*, suddenly when Janaki's mother dies in a bus accident, without any consideration about Janaki's passion or her desire she was stopped from school by her father and is made to look after all the household works that her mother was doing when she was alive. ““You will take Amma's place, Janaki!” Appa announced with all the benevolence of a king donating a vast acreage of land to some poor farmer in a stage play.”(TSR 41). Thereafter Janaki's work would begin early morning starting from drawing kolam, going to milk depot, cooking breakfast and lunch for her father and Mallika, washing all the cloths, going for veena class, etc.. Janaki says

“ when my days began very early. In fact, to the short, piercing whistle of the Rockfort Express at four. Sometimes I would already be up, drawing water from the well at the back of the house, and I would hear it call.”(TSR 3).

Janaki was allowed to attend veena class. Her father allows her to go for veena class after finishing all the household works. “He added, “You can still go to veena class if you want”(TSR 41). Janaki has a biggest dream to become a star by playing veena. But Janaki's aunt is making continuous effort to put Janaki in wedlock. Janaki says

“By the time I was nineteen I had been exhibited for marriage to nearly a dozen men, from Vathalagundu to Palakadu-shipping clerks, tea-estate accountants, LIC agents, even a mathematics teacher from Dubai-all of whom had one thing in common: arrogance with a price tag. Men who came with their mothers and heard me play a short alaapana on the veena.....demanding motorcycles and Fiat cars. Men with a monthly salary of no more than two thousand five hundred rupees” (TSR 33).

According to Indian tradition, a marriage is not simply a union of two individuals; it is a coming together of two families as well. But in western countries like America, a marriage is only a union of two individuals. This culture difference makes the living different. Because in India when marriage considered to be the coming together of two families, there can not be any importance given for the love between two individuals, soon the marriage becomes trade where the material wealth is considered more important than the love between the two individuals.

Even the mistakes of others would always befall on women in the society. Janaki's close friend Kamala's wedding is called off for the want of five thousand rupees. Even though her brother had paid twenty thousand already, the marriage is called off because the last cheque given by Kamala's brother had not cleared. But everywhere in agraharam people were talking about the canceled wedding as the ill-fate of kamala. Even the family members are not the side of kamala. Janaki says “Sundari mami and Subhadra would have killed her with their chorus of laments, cursing the constellations and blame casting divine space, when all of it was just the casual brutality of man” (TSR 178).No one is ready to understand the wounded heart of Kamala whose dreams about her marriage were thwarted within a short time. Kamala's brother says “What could men do, if women are born with a rotten fate?” (TSR 178).

Janaki and her friend Revathi plans to meet Kamala when they go to milk depot. Kamala after her marriage had been called off, was never allowed to come out of her house and was given all the household works to be done by her. Early morning when Janaki and Revathi stealthily went to meet Kamala, there waited a great shock for both the girls “And then I saw it, too. The pullo of Kamala's sari rustled in the breeze. Her head drooped forward, and her body hung from the nagalingam tree, swaying on the fringes of wasteland”(TSR 182). Thus the mistake to which the brutal men of that community are the whole responsible has been dwelt on the girl and she is the one who commits suicide while the mistakes are on the side of her brother and her so called bride groom and his family. Yet the family considers that all these happened only because of Kamala's ill-fate.

Ameen Merchant has pictured the culture (rather male dominating culture) of Indian Brahmins through the sufferings of the characters Janaki and Kamala. Their culture never ever considers the feelings of women, all they do is to place man as the “centre” and to make the “centre” happy and satisfied they suffer a lot, keeping their desires and passions apart. To keep the “centre” happy and serving to them was considered as the duty of women, while they are not given any importance in any situation yet they have to take the responsibility when something unfortunate happens.

### **Claustrophobia of Janaki**

Claustrophobia is the fear of having no escape and being in closed or small spaces or rooms-an unhappy or uncomfortable feeling caused by being in a situation that limits or restricts you. Thus claustrophobia of Janaki is that she is afraid of being entrapped in an arranged marriage and is made to lead a life where she cannot achieve her dream or passion of being a music star.

The suicide of her close friend Kamala is the main reason that led Janaki to run away from her home. She married a Muslim film star and settled in Bombay. Janaki knows very well about her community, who would have made her run away with the other caste man, head news for gossips. Later when her friend Revathi sends a letter about her marriage, Janaki knows well that the letter is just to inform about her marriage and not to invite. Janaki says,

“It also meant that she would not be writing in the future. She would’ve remained a friend, perhaps, if I had married a Nadar or a Mudaliyar. At least they were meat-eating Hindus. But I had gone a step beyond for her Brahmin imagination. She knew I could never attend her wedding. I had married a man who ate beef but never pork.” (TSR 187).

Kamala, before her suicide has written a note as “*The silent raga will be heard.*”(TSR 192). That stands as the inspirational phrase for Janaki to take a long step to break all her fear about her culture, family and gossips and follow her heart towards her dream and passion. Kamala’s death had made Janaki to win the music competition at least for the sake of Kamala. And winning the competition gave her the strength to withstand all her difficulties and sacrifices that she has to undergo to attain her dream. So in many situations where the community keeps women under its control, the women break up the rules and start moving towards their dream and passion.

This relevance of breaking up the rules to achieve their dream and follow their heart is not only portrayed by Ameen Merchant, Bharati Mukherjee too in her novel *The Tiger’s Daughter* mentioned it. From childhood, Tara was used to a life, where the major decisions, especially those regarding education and marriage, were taken by her father. But she thwarts her parent’s attempt to find a suitable partner and Tara took the decision by herself. It was a gesture of her newly found emancipation. Both Ameen Merchant and Bharati Mukherjee’s protagonists are bold, ambitious and adventurous. They are impulsive and tend to be sensational. They are more prepared for action than thinking. Through the character Janaki, he brings out the feminist sensibility in all its different colours.

Women all over the world suffer similar neurotic and psychic disturbances, because they live in a male dominated world. They try to do away with the past and emerge successful in the new world. Janaki too emerged as a great music star and teacher. Janaki has become a famous music star and music teacher, her students are going to participate in the international competition bringing proud to her as well to the country. Ameen Merchant does not portray male domination alone, he also brings the vivid picture of women against women. For instance when Kamala’s wedding is called off, women in the agharam started gossip that Kamala’s ill-fate is the only reason for the cancel of marriage, while the brutal man community is the real reason for the cancel of wedding. Even Kamala’s mother and her sister do not understand Kamala’s worries about her dreams being thwarted away and curses her for her ill-fate. This leads Kamala to commit suicide. Ameen Merchant not only portrays the culture of Brahmin community but also the sufferings of women by the rules of that culture are portrayed.

Gayatri chitti, aunt of Janaki and Mallika tries to take up the position of their mother. She had relationship with Janaki’s father which Janaki came to know after the death of her mother. Janaki never stands against her aunt; she puts silence as her answer for all the questions and complaints from her aunt. Mallika was not able to understand the silence of her sister Janaki, and she gets angry whenever Janaki makes her quite if she rises against her aunt’s accuse. Mallika at last understands the meaning in the silence of her sister, Janaki against her aunt.

However rich the culture may be, sometimes it becomes a hamstrings for the growth and halts the development and progress of the human race. Same way in the life of Janaki, the culture stands in the way of her development. Janaki’s dream to become a music star is halted by the rules and restrictions of her culture, but once when she broke all the rules and moves in the way of her passion she was able to achieve her dream. Janaki as a achiever of her dream says “I lift the veena onto my lap, and I position my fingers on the strings. When I close my eyes, Amma smiles inside them. My raga is alive”(TSR 446)

Thus Ameen Merchant has brought out his novel *Silent Raga* as a painted tale, picturing the young artist's tale of family, tradition, love, reconciliation and power of music along with the fragrance of Bourgeois Tamil speaking South Indian Hindu Brahmin culture.

“MY RAGA RISES and dips and dances with the dappled gold of the waves.

I am my song, and my song is the red of the sun” (TSR 447).

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## Women as a Victim of Patriarchal Culture in Alice Walker's *Possessing the Secret of Joy*.

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**Abstract:** This paper deals with the most heinous of atrocities committed on girls of some tribes in the name of culture and identity. Alice Walker's Pulitzer Prize winning novel, *Possessing the secret of Joy* (1992) portrays the impact of FGM (Female Genital Mutilation) both physically and psychologically on women and girls. Though it is banned in many countries, it is still practiced in countries like Ethiopia, Egypt, Somalia and Sudan. Eradication of this practice is not easy as it is honored as a cultural ritual. In this novel, Tashi, an African woman is traumatized by the torturous ritual : Female Genital Mutilation. She takes it as an attempt to arrest tribal erasure, as instructed by their tribal leader. But it leaves her thoroughly disillusioned and she reveals that she has destroyed herself and others around her in the name of culture by submitting to it without offering resistance, despite the fact that the ritual had ruined her completely. Her life ends as a psychotic murderer. Walker has written the novel as a crusade against mutilation and it is undertaken on behalf of the victims particularly daughters betrayed by their mothers who perform the ritual on them. Infibulated women face lot of hazards during delivery and it results in babies with damaged brain. Tashi too faces the same problem and gives birth to a son with damaged brain. Walker states that such a dangerous practice is the manifestation of male domination over women. Walker has written this novel as an effort to bring to light the trauma of culture and to put an end to FGM .

**Key words:** womanism, racism, oppression and sexism.

Alice Walker is perhaps the most significant African American woman writer of the post-1960s era. She strongly advocates through her writing and activities, a global brand of "womanism", crusading against the oppression of racism and sexism. In Walker's essays and articles, poems, short stories, and novels, which are widely read and often taught, she alerts to the need for change in the treatment of black women both in the United States and in Africa. She always continues to fight for justice. She crusades against the abuse of women, whether it takes the form of domestic violence or ritual mutilation, the subject of her book *Possessing the secret of Joy* (1992) and of the documentary film and the book *Warrior Marks : Female Genital Mutilation and the Sexual Blinding of Women* (1993). This novel which gradually and circuitously unfolds the struggle of the protagonist throughout her life with the traumas she has suffered as a result of her excision has, in the last decade, helped to stimulate the general public awareness. Although the commotion around *Possessing the Secret of Joy* left the impression that Walker's novel was the first and only literary contribution to the debate on excision, nothing could be further from the truth.

Women are subjected to various gender violence as childabuse, incest, rape and male domination. Other than these they undergo another category of violence in the name of culture. Alice Walker brings to light one of such culture called Female Genital Mutilation in her novel, *Possessing the Secret of Joy*. Though Walker's novels revolve around the African- American women in particular, in this novel, she exclusively portrays the culture and the way it is sowed in the minds of young African-American girls. This novel is an attempt to represent the practices of female circumcision not only as specific cultural practice, but as a metaphor for women's subordination and oppression on a global scale. "Alice Walker reported that over one hundred million women and girls living in Africa have been genitally mutilated and that she feels threatened by media reports on ' the growing practice of female circumcision in the United States and Europe, among immigrants from countries where it is part of their culture'" (Joseph, 273). Feminist and health activists strive hard to eradicate such practice on the female body. Walker as a woman with much concern towards women calls this practice as man's eternal desire to have control over woman. Through this practice he controls both the body and mind of woman. Not only culture but also myth, religion and tradition conspire to keep the ritual in practice.

In *Possessing the Secret of Joy* Walker weaves the story in her imaginary place called Olinka in Africa. The protagonist Tashi is an Olinkan girl. Tashi allows herself to be excised and infibulated as part of her expression of cultural independence from British colonialism. However, although Tashi willingly requests to be "bathed" (circumcised) by the Tsunga, she does not realize what precisely involves. This is partly due to the fact that discussing the ritual is taboo; it is enshrouded in a silence that helps to keep the practice intact. She does not realize either the physical or psychic damage that would result from the ritual. What follows is an intimate description corresponding frames of European and American culture. Her sister dies of the ritual. But Tashi undergoes the ritual on her own wish to acquire the identity as complete Olinkan woman. This reveals the psychological circumcision every girl child undergoes when she thinks of physical circumcision as a part of her upbringing. The ritual is performed when the girl child is too young. In such a practice Tashi's sister dies soon

after the ritual. Aware of the incident Tashi volunteers herself to the camp where the ritual is performed by a woman called 'tsunga'. When a girl fails to undergo the ritual she faces lot of problems in her community. A girl who does not take the ritual is refused for marriage by the men of the community. The girl is considered monstrous by her friends. It also becomes an act against the words of their leader who is in prison and who always insist the female children to take up the ritual. The society ie patriarchal society thus indirectly forces the women into ritual. The pity is that the girl children are taken to the ritual by their mothers. So the male dominated society makes the entire women as a victim to their domination. More over talking about the ritual is a taboo. Again it is a way to prevent the uncircumcised women from becoming aware of the trauma of the ritual. Though the mothers suffer after the ritual, they take their children to the ritual in fear of their community males. But in the case of Tashi she is not forced by her mother. Her blind love for her tradition and culture makes her become a victim of the patriarchal culture.

Tashi's husband Adam accepts her into marriage even after the ritual. Tashi is made to feel little comfortable after her treatment in the United States. The girls and young women who undergo this procedure sometimes die, and medical complications, such as infections and problematic labors, frequently result. Thus this practice results dysfunctional babies. Benny is the son of Tashi and Adam, and his trip through the birth canal is impeded by infibulations. A part of his brain is crushed during the labor. As a result Benny is born retarded. Although he functions fairly well, he cannot remember things and constantly has to take notes on conversations and instructions. Benny is also affected by Tashi's emotional disturbances, constantly rebuffed by the emotional wall surrounding his mother. Alike Tashi there are women who give birth to dysfunctional children thus resulting in unhealthy nation. Tradition and culture should result in healthy and civilized nation but in the case of FGM – Female Genital Mutilation the chance for such a nation cannot be expected. Pathetically the instruments used for the operation are broken glass, ritual knives, tin tops, sharp stones, razor blades etc. As they are not sterilized and used repeatedly it results in infection. It is now performed in some countries by qualified medical personnel in hospitals and clinics, it is most often undergone at the hands of medically unqualified persons, some of whom are traditionally revered older female practitioners, including midwives, and some of whom are men, for instance barbers. So the ritual gives pleasure to none other than men. Exceptional are those who refuse to bear the pain and suffering of their spouse. It affects the women physically and psychologically. Neither the woman nor her family is happy with the culture. Adam too is disturbed on seeing his wife and son who depends on someone for his needs.

Tashi takes up the operation with a sense of deep love for her community. But when she becomes aware of the patriarchal culture she turns against such culture. Tashi wonders that the person who administered her own excision is a woman. The question takes her back to Africa, to her Olinka people and to the resolution of her fate. It's a chilling realization, not simply related to Tashi's own culture, but central to images of female victimization worldwide. Thus Tashi says : “ We are the perfect audience, mesmerized by our unconscious knowledge of what men, with the collaboration of our mothers, do to us” (Walker,131). Cry of her sister at her death bed lingers in her ears. She is psychologically affected. Her anger turns towards the Tsunga who performed the ritual on her. Tashi's agony makes her turn against both the Olinkan nation –state and the Olinkan woman, M'Lissa – both victim and sadist – who circumcised Tashi at her own request. Tsunga, the old lady is honored by their people for protecting their culture and serving their community. She is a monument to the Olinkan society. Legitimization of M'Lissa's position as a socially respected person and the legal authority she enjoys reflects the ideological basis that female circumcision has acquired down the ages among the black people and some others elsewhere around the world. But Tashi has her vengeance against her community by murdering the Tsunga. Tashi has ruined herself and her family by submitting to the tradition blindly.

The Tsunga is a live example of the tradition. She drags her left leg behind her, as the tendons were severed during the operation. Although her body is marked and experienced as a site of male domination, she becomes the next tsunga and thus becomes complicitous with the patriarchy. She learns to stop feeling and becomes callous in the performance of her duty. As this ritual is her livelihood, she decides to ensure her own autonomy at the expense of other women, women whom she sees as fools. She believes the women themselves to be the agent of their own domination; in her eyes, if women are stupid enough to obey this tradition, then they deserve everything they get as a result. Tashi puts this sort of belief as follows, describing its consequences: “If you lie to yourself about your own pain, you will be killed by those who will claim you enjoyed” (102). The tsungas perform the same ritual to the Olinkan girls as they are volunteered by their mothers. The patriarchal society forces them to take up the ritual. Whether willing or not, the tsunga performs the ritual to the young girls. As believed by the tsungas, death of a tsunga is in the hands of a girl who has taken up the ritual in the hands of the tsunga. Thus Tashi has murdered the tsunga who circumcised her. As a result Tashi is executed for murdering the Tsunga. But Tashi accepts it with joy and peace as no more Olinkan girls would become a victim of the culture and face their death at the earliest.

Tashi took up the ritual on her will but on becoming aware of the cause of the trauma , she strikes at the root of the patriarchal culture and female oppression in the name of culture and tradition. Thus Walker says “ genital mutilation of women is really just a part of the global mutilation of women, the terrorization of women,



one of the numerous things done to keep them in their place, under the foot of the dominant patriarchal culture” ( Joseph,275). The pathetic condition is that, at times culture becomes a tool for male power to sustain supremacy over the female. Tashi’s pain and what is called her resistance is seen to be contained within the logic of Olinkan culture whereas her affection, strength and salvation lie within European and the United States. Tashi’s constant expression of her love for the United States leads to a vision of the United States as a microcosm of global empathy, representing and substituting itself for a damaged Africa. Tashi as an African woman is ultimately moved to see herself in an American reflection:

An American, I said, sighing, but understanding my love of my adopted country perhaps for the first time: an American looks like a wounded person whose wound is hidden from others, and sometimes from herself. An American looks like me ( Walker, 200).

Tashi’s names oscillating between, or being hyphenated by, European alternatives – Evelyn and Mrs Johnson – are clearly intended to allow her to represent – and to be represented by – women of different cultures. She becomes the voice of everywoman, articulated within the idealized terms of African- American womanhood, who against the ‘ sliding gait’ (144) of broken African women, become the icons of strength and power (111). The repeated use of ‘ Evelyn’ and ‘Mrs Johnson’ as substitute names for Tashi, and in the final section as progressive points on the road to salvation : ‘ Tashi Evelyn Johnson Soul’ (263) works to destroy Tashi’s loyal support to Africa and indeed the validity or value of her African identity. Walker views this practice as a means through which African women are rendered joyless and spiritually dead. She has constructed the novel with two ideas – one is the betraying mother and the other is betrayed daughters. The conflict is embodied in the relationship between Tashi and M’Lissa, who destroy themselves and each other because of the beliefs in and questionings of ritual female circumcision. Ultimately they destroy Africa in the name of culture.

Walker presents a graphic picture of three generations of tsunga, to show their tenacity in upholding a tradition, which is gradually being transgressed. This transgression occurs in the sensibility of the women designated tsunga, as well as at the ideological level in discussions about something forbidden in the society as taboo. Tashi reflects upon all this and finds her mentally sick to such extent that it affects her marital life. She considers her union with Adam to be useless and unsuccessful. More over Tashi’s mind is over-burdened in thinking about various age old stories and myths, which glorify such impossibilities at the cost of women’s suffering. This is why her psychiatrist is incapable of doing anything positive to restore her mental balance. As a preacher in the church, Adam has the power to help revolutionize understanding of structures of domination, yet he refuses this possibility and becomes complicitous in maintaining a disempowering silence. However, he, too, is hurt by the system of oppression. Although men are not victims of sexism in the way that women are, there are ways in which they are adversely affected by it; many men experience the pain of their mothers, sisters and daughters as they encounter sexism, often experiencing the ramifications of colonization with them. Specifically, Adam acts as an anchor to Tashi’s psychically unbalanced life. He is the caretaker, for instance, when Tashi unconsciously slashes rings around her ankles. He remains with her throughout her voluntary commitments to a mental hospital and her episodic rages. He too experiences the same rupture as Tashi in their marital life. Thus the way in which her body has been colonized as a site of subordination has affected his own existence as well.

Tashi’s ability to gain control over her memory and accuse those responsible for her psychic and physical trauma and for her sister’s death is the key to her recovery from madness and her growth in agency. Whereas previously her madness was self-defeating, once she gains control over her memory and is able to identify those who have oppressed her and other women, she is able to once again experience agency. Militancy is chosen over madness. Tashi returns to Africa and murders M’Lissa, enacting revenge for scores of women. Her act is not only against M’Lissa, however; M’Lissa has become a “national monument” (144) and, in her act against M’Lissa, Tashi acts against the Patriarchy that would subdue womanhood.

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## Fashion and Fancy: The Popular Culture of Fitzgerald's Era

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**Abstract:** America of 1920s has many names: The Roaring Twenties, The Era of Boom and The Jazz Age. It was a period that witnessed wild prosperity. Americans were obsessed with wealth and success and that shook the social mores. It was also the significant era of Fitzgerald's life as a writer and he captured this principal culture of his times in almost all his works. It was a time which also aimed at peace after the end of the First World War. Peace and Prosperity were the prominent elements demanded by people. The booming stock market paved way for increasing capital and the infusion of the new money through illegal means bought moral decadence into the society. The traditional values of the past generations were withered away and prominence was given to modernism. Individual freedom, fashion, alcohol, money and crime flourished and it greatly affected the ethical and moral standards of the society. This paper presents America's eccentric culture and its outcome during the Roaring Twenties as portrayed by F.Scott Fitzgerald in his novel *The Great Gatsby*.

**Key words:** modernism, fashion, crime, fancy, culture.

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The 1920s was a fascinating decade in the history of America. The condition of life in the Jazz Age is an icon that defines the cultural reference points. It was an age of excess during which a whole community of people turned self-indulgent, completely defying the cherished values. It was a time where success appeared limitless. Success was the mantra of most of the individuals. People indulged in activities that gave bliss, marital and material pleasures, and the impulse brought moral consequences. They were impetuous, known to drink, prone to short term obsessions and self – destructive behaviour. The period of 1920s was undergoing a dynamic change. The Zeal of the age was threatened by moral and social culminations. The rise of extra-marital sex, the entry of women into workplace, the increasing craze for fashion, the breakdown of religious mores, and the entry of new immigrants from European countries gave rise to a powerful backlash. The period was actually a cyclone of transformation during which day to day life struggled to hold the flux of modern times.

Fitzgerald is a perfect reporter of his time. In *The Great Gatsby* Nick Carraway, the narrator recalls wistfully the America of his youth. He acts a moral judge to judge the people and events that surrounds him. He is a practical and conservative young man in his thirties. He is born in a small town and moves to the East Coast to learn the bond business. He hopes to find a sense of identity and freedom in New York. He rents a bungalow next to the residence of Jay Gatsby in a fashionable island known as West Egg. In course of time Nick is disillusioned by the lifestyle of the wealthy in West Egg. In his mind the West embodies the generation that is really lost.

Jay Gatsby is a young man in his thirties; an inexplicable millionaire. The culture of prosperous Americans represented in *Gatsby* is defined mainly by excessive material wealth. Jay Gatsby is inclined to gaudiness and his house is the most obvious sign of his status. The narrator is a little dazed as he sees Gatsby's mansion:

The one on my right was a colossal affair by any standard – it was a factual imitation of some Hotel de Ville in Normandy, with a tower on one side, spanking new under a thin beard of raw ivy, and a marble swimming pool, and more than forty acres of lawn and garden. It was Gatsby's mansion. Or, rather, as I didn't know Mr. Gatsby, it was a mansion inhabited by a gentleman of that name. My own house was an eyesore, but it was a small eyesore, and it had been overlooked, so I had a view of the water, a partial view of my neighbour's lawn, and the consoling proximity of millionaires – all for eighty dollars a month. (Fitzgerald 8)

Gatsby's house is mainly for show as it is a popular culture of the 1920s to have towers, swimming pools, lawns and gardens for pompousness. Like his house the parties thrown by him are mainly for show as well. The extravagance of the society is shown in Gatsby's parties. The flashiness, extreme quantity of illegal alcohol, the volume of guest attending is all to showcase his wealth. Gatsby has adopted the new culture. It is his dream to succeed in life.

Traditionally American Dream is a concept that focused on success through hard work. During the 1920s this conception disappeared and the term has been given a new perception that any individual can achieve success in life regardless of family history or social status or hard work. This perception of American Dream made Gatsby to attain success in life, not through hard labour or honourable means but through unlawful ways. Gatsby is not born rich. "His Parents were shiftless and unsuccessful farm people – his imagination had never really accepted them as his parents" (78). James Gatz is his real name and he belongs to North Dakota. He changed his name as Jay Gatsby at the age of seventeen, when he witnessed his growth.

Gatsby symbolizes the new society. This new generation needed excitement, opportunity, and a modern way of living. The change in tradition encouraged decadence. Alcohol flowed like water in homes across the country. Drunkards filled America's prisons as the crime rate increased. Alcohol dependence became a growing problem and to manage the situation a constitutional amendment to ban alcohol sales and production became law in America. While prohibition was meant to eradicate the temptation of liquor the results were in reverse. The citizens despised the law and alcohol became a more desirable and more fashionable drink, as it was banned.

Gatsby represents the extreme of wealth and decadence. He represents the 'new money', and has overnight success without ties to family wealth. It is heavily evident that he earned his fortune through bootlegging as Tom Buchanan in the novel says: "A lot of these newly rich people are just big bootleggers, you know" (86). He devotes his life to accumulate riches in order to attract the attention of his romantic obsession, the lovely Daisy Buchanan. Gatsby puts huge sums of money into these parties yet does not seem to enjoy them at all. Nick observes that his parties have a free flow of liquor with delicious food which symbolizes the indulgent excess of the period:

At least once a fortnight a corps of caterers came down with several hundred feet of canvas and enough colored lights to make a Christmas tree of Gatsby's enormous garden. On buffet tables, garnished with glistening hors d'oeuvre, spiced baked hams crowded against salads of harlequin designs and pastry pigs and turkeys bewitched to a dark gold. In the main hall a bar with a real brass rail was set up, and stocked with gins and liquors and with cordials so long forgotten that most of his female guests were too young to know one from the other. (33)

The guests who attend the parties of Gatsby are all attempting to achieve success as they believe that Gatsby has achieved it. No guest has the ability to understand the emptiness in Gatsby because his life looked too perfect from the outside; however the bareness he felt inside can be filled only by Daisy, the ex-lover of Gatsby, who is now married to Tom.

The spendthrift parties also expose the evil and illicit man woman relationship in the new age. Most of the guests who come to the party are not invited; "People are not invited – they went there" (34). They are simply there to enjoy the glamour. Corruption is easy to spot; "...old men pushing young girls backward in the eternal graceless circles..."(38). The wives and husbands are not satisfied with their married life and they demand pleasure from new partners. Some couples quarrel with each other and some swap their partners as it is a fashion of time. Nick observes this during his first attendance at Gatsby's party:

I looked around. Most of the remaining women were now having fights with men said to be their husbands. ... One of the men was talking with curious intensity to a young actress, and his wife, after attempting to laugh at the situation in a dignified and indifferent way, broke down entirely and resorted to flank attacks – at intervals she appeared suddenly at his side like and angry diamond, and hissed: 'You promised!' into his ear. (42-43)

Tom Buchanan symbolizes the 'old money' who is comfortable and graceful with the established richness. Tom and Daisy are seen as the ideal couple who have sufficient money, and a beautiful house in the East Egg. Tom too organizes parties and the first party in the novel is the get-together at Tom's house. His party sounds simple when compared with the gorgeous ones by Gatsby. Obviously this makes the distinction clear between the old money and new money. While the new feel the need to show off their affluence, the established rich are comfortable and graceful. Yet there is corruption in established rich and Tom is a symbol of it. Tom is not satisfied with his present status and seeks a new companionship. He maintains an affair with Myrtle. His desire for lust makes him to sleep with a woman who is not his wife.

The 1920s also experienced the emergence of a leisure culture insisting entertainment and not productive labour emphasized by work ethics. Amusement is life's main aim. Music is the most popular social entertainment and it sounds well in the parties organized by Gatsby: "There was music from my neighbour's house through the summer nights....By seven o'clock the orchestra has arrived, no thin five piece affair, but a whole pitful of oboes and trombones and saxophones and viols and cornets and piccolos, and low and high drums" (33).

Automobiles were a new fashion during this great epoch. Cars became significant and were seen as a symbol of status and wealth. Gatsby has many number of cars and one is his Rolls-Royce; "On week-ends his Rolls-Royce became an omnibus, bearing parties to and from the city between nine in the morning and long past midnight..." (33). Like his house his cars stand for getting attention. His car is an embodiment of his wealth and shows his new born affluence: "It was a rich cream color, bright with nickel, swollen here and there in its monstrous length with triumphant hat-boxes and supper-boxes and tool boxes, and terraced with a labyrinth of wind shields that mirrored a dozen suns" (51). The car of his richness becomes the cause for his death. Daisy strikes Myrtle to death, on the road when she drives Gatsby's car. Later with the car's colour Gatsby is tracked and murdered by George Wilson thinking that Gatsby has driven the car. Every other character in the novel has cars and the various car crashes in the novel represent the socio-economic and moral collapse of the period.

In spite of the external jollity, modernity and matchless material prosperity the characters in the novel have lost something in their life. They are the 'lost generation'. They lack stability, traditional values and identity. Gatsby beyond his material success, fails in life. He could not keep or win Daisy in his life. When Gatsby first meets Daisy, he is overwhelmed by her youth, beauty and wealth. However Daisy vanished into her richness; leaving Gatsby, she married Tom who is wealthier while Gatsby is penniless. After five years, Gatsby is rich enough to think that he can use his money to win his dream of joining Daisy. Gatsby still desires for Daisy even after she is married to another man. Lust is also a reason for his love towards Daisy. For Gatsby, love and marital life is so simple, naïve and romantic. Evidently he fails in all his attempts and Daisy is lost forever. Since he loses his love he tries to live in a world of fancy and fantasy. When Daisy wants her life shaped without Gatsby, he spends his life living with the illusions of Daisy. For Daisy, life is boring with Tom. She married Tom only for his prosperity. She is not capable of entertaining herself and wonders what she will be doing in course of time. She also fails to be an ardent mother. Earlier she cheated Gatsby by marrying Tom and later cheats her husband by having an affair with Gatsby when she meets him in Nick's house. Throughout the novel Daisy becomes the object of Gatsby's dream but she is not worthy of his adoration as she lives a meaningless and shallow life.

Tom the wealthy husband of Daisy personifies the shallowness and carelessness of the rich. He spends time with cars and race horses. He has a mistress who is gaudy and vulgar, despite having a beautiful wife. He keeps an apartment in the city and meets her there often. Nick the narrator who is practical and conservative find things to be disgusting in New York. He came to the East Coast with great spirits and later realizes that his place is somewhere in the Midwest, a place that stands for morality and conservatism.

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## A Rendezvous with African American culture through Maya Angelou's *Autobiographical Narratives*

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**Abstract:** *Literature is a product of the milieu and has very close proximity with contemporary realities and consequently a writer is directly or indirectly influenced or conditioned by the social patterns. African American authors with utmost commitment and sincerity bring out wonderful literary pieces which are invariably dipped in the typical Black culture and social realities. Among the African American authors, Maya Angelou has carved a niche for herself with her literary oeuvre. It is no exaggeration that the writings of Maya Angelou serve as an index to the typical Black culture. A reading of Maya Angelou will unearth the Blacks' immense faith in God. Though they suffer a lot, they have a firm conviction that a better day will dawn in their life when they will be free and happy. Similarly in Black culture, spiritual songs and music play a formidable role because they draw a kind of joy from them. In the writings of Angelou there are fine vignettes of unique black culture like the Blacks' life in groups, mutual care for each other, the celebrations and festivities. No doubt, Angelou's writings will serve as a document of black culture.*

**Key Words:** *realities, social patterns, Black Culture*

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One of the significant features of post colonial writing is the exploration of cultural patterns and social behaviour. In Homi Bhaba's view, "post colonial criticism witnesses the unequal and uneven forces of culture representation involved in the contest for political and social authority within the modern world order"(34). According to William H. Wiggins, Jr "African American writers have always incorporated the colourful rituals and culturally centered themes of their people's traditional annual and occasional festivals in their literature"(273). This paper seeks to depict the peculiar cultural traits, behavioural patterns and social practices that lie scattered in the pages of Maya Angelou's autobiographical narratives.

Maya Angelou, the African American author, in her autobiographical narratives re-enacts the typical Black culture with its social and behavioural patterns. The term 'culture' evolves from the French word 'cultura' which means to cultivate. Thus, it is evident that recurring behavioural patterns, social actions and the interpersonal affairs of a particular community, a region becomes part of a particular culture. The Blacks in America, being a subaltern social group, carry on their unique cultural practices and social patterns against a multi-cultural American backdrop. Though the major concern of Maya Angelou's autobiographical writings is to reconstruct her past, as well as the past of her racially oppressed clan, she candidly displays the individuality and liberty she had gained by swimming against the tides. Apart from the authorial intention in her six autobiographical novels, she reconstructs the cultural and social patterns of the Black community. Her writings confirm the fact that literature is not a lonely island, but has a close proximity with areas of human experience like culture, philosophy and religion.

The term 'culture' has undergone several changes over the years. Earlier it was associated with art, literature and music. But in the present context it has gained a different meaning. Julie Rivkin and Michael Ryan make an assessment of its function.

Anthropologists have always used the word 'culture' in a much broader sense to mean forms of life and of social expression. The way people behave while eating, talking with each other, becoming sexual partners, interacting at work, engaging in ritualized social behavior such as family gatherings, and the like constitute a culture. This broad definition of the term includes language and the arts, but it also includes the regularities, procedures, and rituals of human life in communities.(1025)

Being a marginalized social group, the Blacks in America adopt certain strategies to encounter the problems and agony which they are destined to suffer. These strategies, in the course of time, become the typical cultural patterns of the community. Again the helpless situations of the Blacks force them to seek solace and asylum in religion as it provides a little hope and temporary ease. So invariably in all Black families, prayer is a regular feature

Faith and religiosity are part of cultural behaviour which differs from society to society. This is predominantly reflected in the pages of Maya Angelou's autobiographical narratives. Church and faith are the two major factors that are well interfused in the Black culture and life. Butterfield observes that the Afro American writings are dominated by Christian thoughts and images. He writes, "Christian imagery drawn from black church and revival meetings, language rhythms from the speech of Negro preachers, religious and political symbols and slogans that had special meanings in a black context"(47). Maya's narratives confirm that the religiosity or spirituality is the master key to Black life and culture. A reading of the autobiographical narratives

of Maya will bring to focus several Biblical allusions and Christian thoughts spread all over the texts. Further, they drive home the ultimate truth, that the Black's life is steered over hurdles only by their steadfast hope in God. In *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*, the novelist narrates how her grandmother begins the day with prayer at sunrise. The grandmother represents the habit of the Blacks to pray early morning before resuming their daily routine and also to pray before they go to bed.

Due to the enormous importance attributed to church, the Black people put on special dresses on Sunday. One fine morning Maya has to go to Mrs. Flower's house. She is in a dilemma regarding the selection of dress to wear for the visit. Maya ruminates "I knew I shouldn't put on a Sunday dress. It might be sacrilegious" (*Caged* 93). Her superstitious fear on wearing the Sunday dress for another occasion is a proof of the Blacks' reverence for the Sabbath.

Language is one of the aspects of culture. Each social group or community has its own idioms, vocabulary, peculiarities of pronunciations and grammatical patterns. The Black American Community in America is no exception. Moreover, the Blacks have their own unique dialect warped in their culture which they use in their day to day life. The Blacks do not have a language of their own, yet they have to register their protest in the English language, the language of the colonizer.

In the works of Maya Angelou, the Black community's language is overtly found. For instance, sentences without auxiliary verb are frequently used in the black community. Uncle Willie in *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* utters "...they mostly scared"(192). Momma says "How you doing, pretty?"(201). In both the above extracts, the auxiliary 'are' is missing. The novelist gives a realist touch to her characters by making them utter words and phrases they are accustomed to. Moreover, Maya in *I know why the Caged Bird Sings* gives an account of the Blacks use of English language. Maya confesses that in spite of learning English systematically in schools, in their day to day life, the Blacks speak and write in a different way.

The Black Americans use certain verbs in an entirely different manner. They combine both words and coin a new word 'gimme'. In *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* one of the Black customers of grandmother's stores uses 'gimme' instead of 'give me'. 'Lemme have a hunk uh cheese and some soddy crackers' 'Just gimme a coupla them . . .' (9). The word 'gimme' is common among the Blacks because in Richard Wright's *Uncle Tom's Children*, a black woman when seduced by a white man declares "The white folks ain never gimme a chance!" (289). Similarly the Blacks use 'aint' instead of 'aren't'. "Die? from what? He ain't sick" (*Caged* 21). When Mr. Freeman's talks to Maya 'aint' is used instead of 'aren't'. "... Ritie, I ain't gonna hurt you . . . but Momma had drilled into my head: 'Keep your legs closed, and don't let nobody see your pocketbook'" (71).

Further the Blacks have the practice of omitting the '-ing' in present participle. In Maya Angelou's works too there are several references to the Blacks deliberately leaving the '-ing' form. In *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*, in a children's song the sentence goes like this. "who all is hid? In follow the leader, . . ." (23). Maya remarks on her grandmother's wrong use of the English language, characteristic of all African American women. When Mrs. Flowers came to meet Momma "Momma would say to me, 'Sister, you go on and play'. As I left I would hear the beginning of an intimate conversation. Momma persistently using the wrong verb, or none at all. 'Brother and Sister Wilcox is sho'ly the meanest...'" (91).

Maya also points out the Blacks using 'this' or 'that' in an odd manner. They pronounce 'dis' or 'dat' instead of 'this' or 'that'. Maya highlights this as a peculiar aspect of Black culture. " 'When you or any white person says 'dis' or 'dat', it is certain that you intend to ridicule. When a Black person says it, it is because that's the way he speaks. There's a difference' " (*Singin* 83).

Like wrong usage of words, the Blacks have certain idioms which are fully immersed in their socio-cultural patterns. Various references to some typical idioms are found in the writings of Maya Angelou. Likewise Black culture, also imbibes a few abusive terms and profane words frequently used by the race. In *The Heart of a Woman*, Billie Holiday, a frustrated Black woman very often uses abusive words. In a talk with Guy, Maya expresses herself thus: "... It means when they take a little nigger like you and snatch off his nuts and shove them down his goddam throat" (14). Billie says regarding life "Yeah, life's a bitch, a bitch on wheels" (12). Surprisingly the Blacks use coarse and vulgar language when angry, but justifies that it is right.

When Maya's son is threatened by a few ruffians she rushes to the spot and shouts at them using abusively. "I would never see those snooty bastards as long as I stayed black and their asses pointed toward the ground. I put a nasty sweet smile on my face..." (40). Likewise the Dalit writers in India use abusive terms in their narratives. For instance, the popular Dalit woman writer Bama in her writings frequently uses such terms. Lakshmi Holmstrom, the translator of Bama's works justifies that this is a suppression of "a woman's only way of shaming men and escaping extreme physical violence" (Robert Gnanamony 60). It is also said that "Dalit feminism seems to encourage Dalit women using a sharp tongue and obscene words as their effective protectional cover from the patriarchy; it includes the Dalit male"(60). This maybe the valid reason for the Black women using profane language like their suffering sister's in India.

One of the most striking features of Black culture is their secluded life in cohesion. The minority cohesion of the Blacks makes them lead a close knit life, mainly in ghettos and they feel secure in that kind of existence. When they are in the group they enjoy security and a kind of solace and fellowship even in adverse

situations. Black families are very close to each other. Love is the guiding principle in these families. The institution of family is very important in Black culture and all efforts are taken to keep the families together. While talking about the highly inter-woven Black family structure, Martin Luther King observes that the Blacks have to strive hard to keep their families together. He says that the Black family “had to fight against physical and psychological horrors to have a family life” (qtd in Uma 10). Maya Angelou mentions with pride that even in an adverse situation the Blacks will not give up family ties. “During the crisis, black people had often made more money in a month than they had seen in their whole lives. Black men did not leave their wives, driven away by an inability to provide for their families” (*Gather* 4).

When Geracimos Vlachos, called Maki proposes to Maya, she turns down the proposal stating that she does not want to break another marriage. She tells him “‘Mister, my suggestion is that you keep the wife you’ve got’ ” (*Singin* 238). She ponders “But I knew I would never marry again, nor would I be the cause of a marriage breaking up” (239). The Blacks believe that marriage is an institution blessed by God. According to the Blacks, breaking a marriage is nothing but distorting God’s will.

It has been a tradition that in many Black families, children are brought up by grandmothers. About her friend’s boyhood, Maya says, “Like many Southern Black children, he lived with his grandmother, who was as strict as Momma and as kind as she knew how to be” (168). Maya’s statement shows that the Black grandmothers bring up their grandchildren as the children’s parents may involve in hard labour to keep the wolf out of the door. Another virtue of Black culture is the encouragement and support they exhibit towards growing children. Friends and relatives offer gifts to children when they show progress in their studies. Almost all the novels exemplify this feature.

Maya in *The Heart of a Woman* attempts a comparative analysis of the Black and White culture. It sums up the Black’s abiding virtues of sympathy, love and care.

Black people could never be like whites. We were different. More respectful, more merciful, more spiritual. Whites irresponsibly sent their own aged parents to institutions to be cared for by strangers and to die alone. We generously kept old aunts and uncles, grandparents and great-grandparents at home, feeble but needed, senile but accepted as natural parts of natural families. Our mercy was well known . . . For centuries we tended, and nursed, often at our breasts, the children of people who despised us. We had cooked the food of a nation of racists, and despite the many opportunities, there were few stories of black servants poisoning white families. If that didn’t show mercy, then I misunderstood the word. (172- 173)

This kind of Black’s service to the Whites is referred to in many writings of African American authors. For instance, in Toni Morrison’s *The Bluest Eye*, Paulina, the mother of Pecola, the protagonist is presented as a woman more committed to the Whites. She serves the White family and nurses their children much better than her own. Such incidents highlight the Black’s honesty and commitment.

Story telling is also an integral part of black culture. They seek solace by telling stories and singing songs of hope. In Maya’s family also, narrating stories is very common. *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* throws light on this practice “As we passed Capistrano she sang a popular song that I’d heard on the radio: ‘When the swallows come back to Capistrano’ She strung humorous stories along the road like a bright wash and tried to captivate us.” (198). In *All God’s Children Need Travelling Shoes* also there is a reference to the practice of story telling. “I said, ‘ . . . I’ll tell you a Black American story and you tell me a German one’”( 166). In some of the stories told in Black families, animal imagery is employed in certain cases with the help of the imagery where the Black and White conflict is discussed.

Maya and her friends indulge in narrating stories about Jews, Germans and others. Though some of the stories are entertaining, a few of them exhale pathos as they expose the torture and excruciating experience the Blacks undergo every day. In *Heart of a Woman*, Maya narrates the story of a slave who wants to earn his freedom with his hard earned money. Though it seems funny outwardly, it unearths the heavy burden of racial discrimination.

Music plays a very significant role in the lives of the Blacks as they derive joy and peace from them and this mitigates the intensity of their agony. So in moments of suffering and pain they resort to music as a way out. They have a great tradition of music and songs. Many of the songs, emanating from the agonizing experiences of the Blacks, offer hope and peace. Maya declares “Music was my refuge. I could crawl into the spaces between the notes and curl my back to loneliness” (3).

Maya Angelou highlights some of the significant aspects of the Black culture through her writings and this familiarizes the readers with some of the vital aspects of the same. Thus the culture of the blacks is exposed to a certain extent through her autobiographical narratives.

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## Depiction of Women Characters in Bernard Malamud's The Assistant

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**Abstract:** Bernard Malamud's depiction of women in his fiction has not drawn sustained critical interest. There is of course of good reason for this: Malamud's fiction is not primarily about women. Critics of Malamud are generally interested in other issues: narrative style, the meaning of being Jewish, art and morality, suffering, the schlemiel, to name several often cited Malamud themes. Insofar as Malamud has not attracted the sort of feminist interest (and contempt) that his peer Saul Bellow has, we might say that Malamud's work has chosen its readers well. His work, I think, has pretty much been read in the humanistic-thematic way that Malamud probably intended for it to be. Still, given that so many male writers are being reread in the context of how their work depicts women, one might be surprised that a writer of Malamud's stature has not received this kind of critical scrutiny. Certainly, this essay to redress that imbalance, but I also hope to show why in many ways the relative lack of interest in this topic makes a certain kind of sense. If one is not committed to tearing down the legacy of Malamud's work (as I am not), then one is limited in what one can say about women in the fiction of Bernard Malamud's without castigating him for giving his female characters short shrift. As we shall see, while his female characters do not displace his male heroes from his imagination's center stage, they do struggle to be more than help-mates for the male character's individual quests. Ultimately, even predictably, the female character is subsumed by what we might call the male character's thematic necessity; yet, something of her voice, the story that she might have had, lingers in the narrative. Reading Malamud's fiction for that "something" will not make him a feminist writer, but it will enable us to see how in depicting the needs and desires of female characters Malamud's imagination was often at odds with itself.

**Key words:** Jewish, morality, feminism and imagination.

Bernard Malamud's first book is concerned with its hero's encounters in the public world, his second novel *The Assistant* (1957), is totally different from the first novel *The Natural* depicts Helen who is the central character of the novel. Helen, dreams of an escape from her father Bober's fate. Bober's entombment makes for a depressing history is clear to all readers of *The Assistant*. Every movement toward freedom and every suffering cry consistently rebounds from the shelves of canned goods to seal the unhappy victims in deeper despair. In the two years which elapse in the narrative, it is only occasionally that any of the characters can escape. Curiously enough, what they encounter in these moments usually sends them back to the store with mixed feelings of frustration and release. For the truth of the matter is that, though they would never admit it and cannot understand it, both Morris and Frankie like the store.

Such refinement of masochism-and there is no other word for it- is in many ways unprecedented in American literature. And even if not quite unprecedented (there is always the darkly affirmative memory of Hawthorne), there still seems no way to classify *The Assistant* with any certainty. Read as a record of life tortured and withering under the weight of walls, poverty, and a hostile world, there has been nothing like *The Assistant* since Mike Gold angrily described the walls coming from New York's ghettos in the 1930's. One of the major differences, however, is that there is no anger in *The Assistant* on the part of the author and little withering on the part of the characters. If the Bober store is a grave, it is one in which, on occasion, people embrace.

Needless to say, little in *The Assistant*, with its fixation on lyrical symbolism and on Roy's world-dissolving will can quite prepare the reader for the suffocating intensities of *The Assistant*. Five years and a volume of short stories separate the two; but, read quickly and in order, one might suspect that the years were eras. As Malamud himself said of the work, "After completing my first novel, *The Natural*, in essence mythic, I wanted to do a more serious, deeper, perhaps realistic piece of work" (2). Despite the timelessness of the "perhaps", he succeeded. If not precisely in the tradition of naturalism. *The Assistant*, still recalls the work of some of the great Jewish realists more clearly than it does the techniques of Joyce Carol Oates.

Unlike the fantastic adventures that accompanied Roy Hobbes's flight through space and time, *The Assistant* depicts life in which space and time seem irrelevant, suspended in the evocation of a gloomy every day. The sense of human energy ground to static despair in a few disconsolate rooms is constant; and though rich in incident, events in the novel are so consistently underplayed by a tone of flat melancholy or ironic brevity that the reader is left finally not so much with a portrait of evolving history as with a blighting sense of routine. If a temporal universe even exists in *The Assistant*, it is hard to discover. Night gives way not to day but only to a night less dark, and the seasons play endless variations on a perpetual winter.

However, it is not alone the obvious contrast in mood and pace and the sense of a tangible environment which quickly tells the reader that *The Assistant* is a different kind of novel than *The Natural*. What persuades him of the fact is the sense of character in the work. Theodore Solotaroff said of the novel: "If *The Assistant* came as a revelation, as it did for me, partly the reason was that it restored a sense of the dynamics of character and of the older intention of fiction to show the ways women change. Despite its small compass and thinness of social reference, *The Assistant* could thus take on some of the power and clarity of the great 19<sup>th</sup>-century novels.

The figures in *The Assistant* have an amplitude and concretion deeper than gesture and more complex than particular passions. Although Frankie Alpine and the Bober are spilled on stage like the dregs of victimization, they pulsate with an ironic spirituality that suggests hope at the very moment their loneliness and frustrations seem beyond endurance. But it is Helen and her progress and change from the day she first robs Frankie Alpine to the day she assumes complete control of the store.

At the heart of Helen's character is a complex, dividing hurt. Dramatically, she unites, Frankie-into a single contrasting unit. But like the group itself, her personality is a shambles. Poverty and an unremitting drabness have induced in her a yearning for some impossible fulfillment, a future outside the store in which her plea-"Life has to have some meaning" can be realized (43). In the state round of work, sleep, and needs unsatisfied, her life turns upon a desperate hunger for an end to a never-ending winter, for a future which robs her of the present. "What am I saving myself for... what unhappy Bober fate?" Helen asks herself (46).

Malamud's manipulation of the Helen-Frankie relationship involves the reader in perhaps the most ambiguous thematic issues in the novel. Unwillingly, Helen finds herself both interested in and repelled by Frankie. His following eyes suggest both danger and a gratifying adoration; and her reaction is further compounded by her mother's attempts to keep them apart, by Frankie's non-Jewishness and by, ironically, the very nature of his reclamation-his future as another Morris. There is also a sense of physical danger; for sex. Helen believes, has betrayed her. She had lost her virginity long ago with Nat Pearl, "handsome, cleft-chinned, gifted, ambitions" who "had wanted without too much trouble a lay and she, half in love, had obliged and regretted". Later, "unwillingly willing she had done it again". In retreat from experience and from her own awareness that she had wanted a stake in Nat's future (for Helen, like Frankie, is inevitably better than she thinks), Helen seeks refuge in an abstract, programmatic assault on her destiny: "... she promised herself next time it would go the other way; first mutual love, then loving, harder maybe on the nerves, but easier in memory" (14). In the meantime, her emotions stalled, she dreams of attending night courses at college and reads endlessly.

However, what Helen retreats from is the disintegrating power of love. Unconsciously drawn to Frank, and recognizing that in the palpable hunger of his spirit there exists resources which Nat lacks she unconsciously manipulates the reality of his person into "possibilities" dead to her father-into a future which might also be hers: "... don't make a career of a grocery", she tells him. "There's no future in it" (96). And, locked in her own dichotomy, she refuses his gifts with a fragment of her mother's wisdom-"For gifts you pay" (112); at the same time she heaps upon him ambitions which deny the very nature of his quest and the very resources which attract her. Confusions such as these dominate Helen's bouts with love from beginning to end. And the mixture in Frankie is doubly intense; for while his need for love is as insupportable as it was for Roy Hobbes, it is marked throughout by the same duality of purpose which undercuts his relationship to the grocery and robber, is matched by the role of lover as luster and lover as provider, by the lover as romantic and as sensualist. In a brilliant scene, devastating in its compression, Frankie one day climbs the dumb-waiter to spy on Helen in her bathroom. Still the voice which tells him that "if you do it... you will suffer", he gazes at a body which before his eyes transpires, or is redeemed, into something more than flesh: "Her body was young, soft, lovely, the breasts like small birds in flight, her as like a flower" At the same time, however, he realizes that "in looking he was forcing her out of reach, making her into a thing only of his seeing, her eyes reflecting his sins, rotten past, spoiled ideals, his passion poisoned by his shame" (74-76).

The collision of images, however, is part of the dialogue of redemption which is constant in the novel; and of Frankie's development through lover there can be no doubt. With remarkable foreshortening, sometimes only a gesture, Malamud indicates that his rebirth through suffering is continued and invigorated by love, which seems finally the only means by breaking through the barriers of self. Nearing the end of his period of punishment, Frankie one day listens to Helen's reminder of what separates child's, heralds the breakthrough of spirit: "So what?" he replies (121). In apparently accidental exchanges such as these, or in the ironic transposition of voices, Frankie's ritual success is artfully elaborated. Moreover, his growth proves to be reclamation of Helen herself, who "despite the strongest doubts" (130) finds herself falling in love with *The Assistant* at the same time that she retreats from Nat Pearl, the symbolic realization of a non-Bober future.

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## An Insight into the African Igbo Culture through Flora Nwapa's *Efuru*

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**Abstract:** Africa – a land of myriad communities with numerous myths and folktales and various rituals, beliefs and cultural practices. One of the popular African tribal communities is the Igbo and the Igbos belong to Nigeria in West Africa. The Igbos cherish their social set up which had set a high standard with long cherished values for itself. It is indeed very interesting to note that most of the prominent writers of Africa hail from the Igbo land. One of the prolific Igbo writers in English is Flora Nwapa, the first West African woman novelist who is rightly called the Mother of Modern African Literature. Nwapa sets almost all her stories in the Igbo land. The Igbo world she portrays brings out the deep rooted tradition and culture of the Igbo community. This paper aims at an in-depth analysis of the Igbo tradition and rituals as portrayed by Nwapa in her most popular novel *Efuru*.

**Key words:** Igbo culture, myth, folktales and tradition.

African Literature which had its origin in the Oral tradition began its written literature after the arrival of the Europeans. One of the earliest of all African oral literature is of the Igbo tribe. The Igbos of Nigeria use both their oral and written literature not only for aesthetic pleasure but also for instruction, culture preservation and self-realization. Their literatures carry for their posterity their tribal origins, myths, legends, and the sacredness of their religious and traditional beliefs. The Igbo written literature emanates from the Igbo life and language. It embraces the social, political, economic and emotional forms through which Igbo life is revealed.

The Igbo community always adhered to the inherent values for which it always stood for parental responsibility, care and upbringing of the young, respect for old age, labour, grace and beauty in women, strength and virility in men, social justice and the spirit of daring especially into the spirit world. The Igbo written literature emanates from Igbo life and language. It embraces the social, political, economic and emotional forms through which Igbo life is revealed. The Igbo life may be approached from a variety of angles.

Flora Nwapa is the first African woman writer to publish novels in English. She is the first internationally acclaimed feminist writer who has championed the cause of the Black woman in Africa. She has set all her novels in the Igbo land where she hails from and which she calls as her motherland. Nwapa delves into the Igbo culture and traditions and recreates the Igbo image which recognizes the Igbo values of love of life, the search for success and the defeat of the self. Nwapa's writings are filled with loads of Igbo values, religious practices, taboos rituals and myths. In her novel *Efuru*, she deftly portrays the Igbo world with the feminist touch. In *Efuru*, Nwapa explores the Igbo mythology of Mammywater or Uhamiri, the deity central to the life of the protagonist *Efuru*.

The female deity is accepted by both male and female devotees expressing equal fervor and credulity. It is also significant that some of the most powerful deities of the Igbo are female and are associated with largesse for devotees and even righteous folks who encounter them or their manifestations fortuitously. According to Chinua Achebe, the Igbo mother water goddess Uhamiri control the entry and exit into and from this world. She is the goddess of crossroads. As a true daughter of Uhamiri, Nwapa uses the Mammywater myth of the Igbo land. She wants the readers to know about the goddess and the great women of her country, their strengths, problems, beliefs and feelings that unite them with the other women of the world.

Igbo women have a history, tradition in terms of roles and expectations within their cultural milieu borne out by the characters of the protagonists *Efuru*. The so-called perfection in her character is there because Nwapa expects these characters to be accepted in the manner in which icons of other cultures and societies are accepted. There are appropriate male and female foils in the novel to highlight goodness of *Efuru*. The old glory of the Igbo woman as seen in myth, culture, and history is engaged in a program of restitution. The fiery Ajanupu, the sister of *Efuru*'s mother-in-law tells us that 'Some men are not fit to be called men. They have no sense. They are like dogs that do not know who feeds them.' Nwapa calls Uhamiri or Mammy water as wild spiritual force yet an afflicter and healer who brings fortune and misfortunes. People worship her for children. Her worshippers wear red and white clothes as a mark of destruction and creation. For the Igbos the red denotes maleness and evil whereas white denotes creativity, peace and birth. The writer speaks of the divine machinery at work in the life of *Efuru*.

*Efuru* is a heroine who is superior to men as both her husbands can't live up to her love, goodness, warmth, kindness and industriousness. Her first husband lacks business skills and success and never does well when compared to *Efuru*. He proves unworthy of her and deserts *Efuru* for another woman. *Efuru* second

husband is equally weak in character. He listens to gossips and accuses Efuru of adultery despite her loyalty and she refuses to take this insult and leaves him after proving her innocence.

The Igbo men and women are expected to have plenty of children particularly male children. A barren woman is considered as failure. Efuru who accepts this when she is not able to bear child in her second marriage willingly accepts her husband to take a second wife. She is happy to take the place of first wife. The basic contradiction of Mammywater is that on the one hand the goddess is believed to give children and is associated with thick hair a sign of fertility. On the other hand the goddess's requirement of abstinence reduces the worshipper's chances of pregnancy. Efuru who begins to worship Mammywater after frequent dreams of the goddess of the lake which is a sign of religious calling, establishes her shrine in her bedroom and keeps the goddess's sacred day holy. Because of her devotion to the goddess, she abstains from sexual relation with her second husband every fourth day thus reducing her chances of consumption. This basic ambiguity is expressed in both the local Igbo myth and in Nwapa's ambivalence about the goddess.

Omirima, the women who condemn Efuru for worshipping Uhamiri later accuses Efuru of adultery which she did not commit. Nevertheless Nwapa ends *Efuru* with powerful, provocative and confusing statement about the goddess and childlessness: 'Efuru slept soundly that night. She dreamt of the woman of the lake, her beauty, her long hair and her riches. She had lived for ages at the bottom of the lake. She was as old as the lake itself. She was happy, she was wealthy. She was beautiful. She gave women beauty and wealth but she had no child. She had never experienced the joy of motherhood. Why then did the women worship her?'

In *Efuru* Nwapa treats the basic Igbo themes of marriage, female economic independence, motherhood, childlessness and the reinvention of the Igbo women in the traditional village. The basic fundamental value of the Igbo society emerges in favour of men by emphasizing the importance of men and de-emphasizing the role of women so that women enjoy only a subordinate status deeply rooted in their role as mother and wife. The reason for placing a special premium on males is that they guarantee the family lineage and inherit the family property. According to E.O. Egbob this practice has led the Igbo society to regard the men as coming first and the women second in the general order of things.

The features of oral literature and the Igbo value systems are dominant influences upon the linguistic structures in Nwapa's fiction. According to Gay Wilentz, Nwapa's decision to devote her writing to women's lives gives it an oral quality in which the voices of the women define the pattern and structures of her novels. Nwapa also says that she is indebted to women storytellers and demonstrates a keen ear that not only catches the nuances, the gossip and the arguments heard in women's speech but also enables her to translate them into an English idiom. The women spoken conversations are interwoven with stories which dominate the narrative. The conversations are sprinkled with anecdotes, oral wisdom, moral judgments, sympathy and folk wisdom.

Naana Banywa observes that Nwapa effectively captures the oral-aural nature of the Igbo world. Her ability to utilize a choric language is also applauded as it enables her to empower the representation of the Igbo women. She deftly manipulates oral conversations and 'interjects celebratory and resistant responses to popular humor to proclaim the contemporary African women.' Nwapa nevertheless exhibits a firm understanding of the moral issues involved: the betrayal of trust, the insecurity of marriage and motherhood, the re-evaluation and re-centering of motherhood and the possibility that women can be economically and emotionally independent. A novelist who writes with sociological emphasis, Nwapa also challenges the opinion that women are respected and honored as wives and mothers.

Although certain women representing deities are endowed with mystical powers and enjoy special status in their community, ordinary women fail to command respect in the patriarchal society. She is the most neglected, exploited and does not actively participate in the decision-making of the community. Through such characters which symbolize passivity, Nwapa portrays the victimization of societal prohibitions as well as certain self-imposed inhibitions. Nwapa's *Efuru* is a collective biography of beautiful, strong Ukwu women and about their majestic lake capturing the complexities, ambiguities and contradictions of their environment as embodied in the force that lies at the bottom of lake. Nwapa openly confesses that she is not a feminist but an ordinary woman projecting the images of African Igbo women positively. She has also admitted that she is a writer committed to her women folk, expressive and communicative with the social purpose.

Nwapa says that her novels are intertwined in Igbo folktales, proverbs, myths, riddles, and local legends which form an integral part of the African literary tradition. The African folk tales are also an important part of the African oral tradition as they are both didactic and help the age-old tradition, practices and native faith intact. In *Efuru*, Nwapa discusses the native practices like the bath of married woman. The 'bath' refers to the painful female circumcision that a woman is expected to undergo after marriage before she becomes pregnant. Efuru's mother-in-law says that 'a baby will come when God wills it. I want you to have your bath before there is a baby. It is better that way. It is safer really.'

Nwapa also talks about the feasting period of a bride after the traditional bath. She says that Efuru ate whatever she wanted to eat. She ate the best that was available in the market which her mother-in-law happily bought for her. The ritualistic visit to the market after the feasting period is also vividly described. Nwapa writes 'So on Nkwu day, Efuru dressed gorgeously, she plaited her lovely hair very well, tied velvet to her waist and

used Aka stones for her neck. Her body was bare showing her beautiful breast. No dress was worn when a young woman went to the market after the period of feasting. Her body was exposed so that the people saw how well her mother or mother-in-law cared for her. A woman, who was not beautiful on that day, would never be beautiful in her life.

Nwapa gives great importance to the traditional practice of bride price which refers to the money and gifts that a groom is supposed to offer to the girl's father to ask her hand in marriage. Though Efurū and Adizua marry without paying the bride price, after a year Efurū is able to save money for the bride price through profitable trading. For the bride price Efurū and her mother-in-law buy the best kola-nuts, many bottles of schnapps, a big jar of home-made zin, many kegs of farm wine and a couple of yams. It is also believed that if the groom fails to pay the bride price to the bride's father, the bride will die during childbirth. The polygamous nature of the Igbo society is also highlighted by Nwapa. It is not only Efurū who marries twice, but it is also seen that in the patriarchal Igbo society, a son or brother inherits the wives of his father or brothers after their death. We find it is surprising when Efurū's father proudly remarks 'as you know I inherited all the wives of my father, but Efurū's mother was my choice.'

Ancestral worship is given great importance in the Igbo society. The Ndiichie (esteemed ancestor spirits) also held a high place in traditional Igbo society. Elders have always been revered in Igbo society, and even more so after they passed onto Be Mmuo (the land of the spirits). The Ndiichie would often be consulted to offer advice to their descendants and appeal to the Alusi on their behalf. Ndi Igbo have never worshiped their ancestors only venerated them, which is no different than what Catholics do to their saints or what every country does to its national heroes. Respect and honor for the Ndiichie was shown in one way by pouring of libations while chanting incantations. Ndi Igbo believed in the concept of reincarnation and felt that the Ndiichie often reincarnated back on Earth. In fact, all Mmadu (human beings) were believed to reincarnate seven or eight times, and that depending on your karma, one either ascends or descends into another spiritual plane.

In traditional Igbo society ceremony and communal celebrations are meant to cohere people. The people of the community actively participate in such celebrations. There is the naming ceremony after the birth of a child, the title taking ceremony when titles are conferred on individuals, the second burial ritual on the third day after the death of an individual. The Igbo's involve their family and neighbours in every ceremony, from the time of betrothal, while settling the bride price to the time of the 'uni' celebration while sending the daughter to her in-laws house.

Nwapa also discusses the traditional Igbo celebrations like the Pumpkin leaves festival, Yam seed festival and the New Yam festival. The Egungun festival is celebrated in memory of the ancestors. During this festival the villagers wear masks in various forms representing their ancestors and perform a ritual dance and in the Igbo community women are also allowed to join the male dancers.

Nwapa also discusses witchcraft is part of the accepted supernatural landscape of Africa and the practicing witch doctors are believed to protect the innocent rural folk from evil spirits. They are the privileged class in the traditional society endowed with mystical powers. The Igbo society also give great importance to their medicine men who are called Dibias. These Dibias are not only healers, they are also visionaries who have the power to foresee the future and they also would suggest means and remedies to pacify the Gods through sacrifice. We find Efurū's Dibia asking her to perform regular ancestral sacrifice and on every Afo day, she is asked to uziza, alligator, pepper and kola from the market. He Dibia asks her to buy uziza on Nkow day and asks her to go to the lake on the Afo day carrying the items in a calabash and to leave it to float on the lake. He promises her that by Owu festival she will become a mother.

Like Achebe, Nwapa also demonstrates her ability to use the style and diction of the English language to suit the Igbo culture without interfering with the capacity of the language. Nwapa emerges an effective Igbo orator through her adept incorporation of the Igbo proverbs, witticisms and aphorisms in the dialogues. The Igbo literature is for the most part written in English and does not detract from its value as art conceived in the Igbo mind according to an Igbo view, Igbo ethics and Igbo standards. Nwapa makes effective use of the Igbo myth, rituals, legends and folklore to make her stories relevant and interesting to the outsider. She also affirms that even the patriarchal African traditional society could be governed by the female principle and has given a special and significant place to the African women in the tradition bound Igbo society. She initiates 'womanisation' in Nigerian literature by creating the first industrious, ingenuine and resilient character of Efurū and thus creating a landmark in Nigerian Women's literature in English through her phenomenal and monumental work *Efurū*, thus carving a special niche for herself in twentieth century African women's writing.

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## Rewriting the Dominant Culture: An Exegesis of Walker's *The Color Purple*

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**Abstract:** *Alice Walker, the spokeswoman of Afro-American literature and a staunch defender of the rights of all living beings, vociferously proclaims the dominant cultural convictions that are pervasive in literature. This governing culture imposes its values and concepts in a society that is a conglomeration of different cultures and subcultures. The dominant culture makes its presence felt through the invisible threads in the domain of life and literature which becomes visible only when there is an apparent violation. Literature which exhibits ideologies, thoughts and existence often poses impediments to women's identity through the codes of patriarchal culture impeded in the text. Against such a literary scenario Walker strains to establish the resistance of the black female community. She writes to rebut the prevalent male dominant ideology that has enforced the identity of women in the post colonial context. This paper is an attempt on how Alice Walker by disrupting the traditionally dominant gender roles focuses on the life of black women in *The Color Purple* and addresses their exceedingly devalued position in the American context.*

**Key words:** *dominant culture, ideology, patriarchy, post colonialism, black identity, color purple.*

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Alice Walker, the spokeswoman of Afro-American literature and a staunch defender of the rights of women, vociferously proclaims the patriarchal cultural convictions that are permeated through literature. For Walker, writing is an attempt to surface the disguised existence of people especially women and her novels, short stories and poems are noted for their discernment of black women and culture. In the main stream literature, women were assigned ornamental roles and were allocated only a peripheral space in spite of having inspired many writers. Women had only a vague vision of their own existence and so their role in society was narrowed down through the eyes of men. The dominant ideologies of race, gender and culture stereotyped them as a result of which they were excluded from the social, political and cultural scenario. Thinking on the same lines with Walker, Barbara Christian makes a pertinent observation that the culture gives the coloured women little space to assert themselves so that their expression becomes limited to muted tones. According to them, women's self creation is influenced, impeded and constrained by language that has embedded in it the patriarchal cultural codes and consequently, Walker has given vent to her hostility through her works. For Afro-American women writers, to quote Barbara Christian, "literature is not an occasion for discourse" (149) but essential nourishment for their people and a way to understand their own lives better.

The traditional African culture and literature was eroded with the onslaught of Colonialism and the history of America confirms this gross violation. The traditional literary outputs of Afro-American literature were re-nurtured during the post colonial period. Unfortunately, in the African literary scenario, the impact of colonialism promoted a male dominated literary tradition in which the African-American women were internally colonized with multiple burdens. Colonialism's early focus on writing as a male dominated activity created obstacles for the education of women and the early exploration of the women centered ways of knowing in the African knowledge base. The early literary outputs by women found limited outlet as the literature of the Blacks included only the male voices even in the 1960s. This resulted in the surge of Afro-American women writers during the 1970s as their minds were torn between the illusive American dream and the dominant cultural reality. Despite the intense writing blocks and incomprehensibility of the "civilized" language, several women writers voiced their thoughts through literature. As a result, black women writers like Maya Angelou, Toni Morrison and Alice Walker protested the dominant literary culture which judged and categorized literature as good or bad. Hence, black women writings, more often than not, are concerned with this dilemma and the dehumanization of women and works like *I Know Why The Caged Bird Sings*, *The Bluest Eye*, and *The Color Purple* bear testimony to this.

Alice Walker's *The Color Purple* is a popular epistolary novel that is read across race, class, gender and cultural boundaries and it has many different meanings for different readers. This work gained immediate public acceptance winning both the Pulitzer Prize and the Book Award for 1982- 83. The novel assumes the bildungsroman – a genre that focuses primarily on the gradual growth and development of a self from childhood to adulthood. According to Bell Hooks, in the novel, "patriarchy is exposed and denounced as a social structure supporting and condoning male domination of women, specifically represented as black male domination of black females"(55). Though Alice Walker assigns the novel to the genre of historical novel, the text works to subvert the male identified category rather than to exemplify it. Rape, racial and sexual oppression

and colonialism which are presented as cultural imperatives are undermined by the end of the novel and as Froula points out, *The Color Purple*, “undoes the patriarchal cultural order and builds upon a new ground”(Allan 130).

Walker’s *The Color Purple* is an epistolary novel about Celie, an African American woman located in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Celie in order to make sense of her oppressed life writes letters to God. She is a victim of domestic violence against women as she has been sexually abused by her step father and forcefully married off to an older man, Albert. She becomes strong by meeting Shug Avery, Albert’s mistress. Celie becomes awakened when Shug packs in to live with her and Albert. For years Celie writes to God and also to her sister Nettie. Celie never receives letters from Nettie because Albert intercepts the letters. Later, Celie discovers these letters and that becomes the catalyst for her self actualization as she becomes angry with Albert for depriving her. She leaves Albert to live with Shug where she becomes a self empowered women who fend for herself by making pants. As a result of her internal growth, Albert learns to value her as a human being and also asks her to return to him. Several other women in the text are engaged in similar self actualizing journey. *The Color Purple* has been the subject of much scholarly analysis and considerable literary controversy. The novel has been approached from various angles like social history, psycho analytic case study, love story and fairy tale. From all different sectors the novel has been considered a pivotal text in the tradition of literature by black women writers who have taken as their theme a young black woman’s journey from silence to voice. While African American men and women have been silenced historically because of race and class, African American women’s silencing is compounded both within and without the black community by gender. The novel, *The Color Purple*, is Walker’s expression to this history of silencing and oppression. In all her works and especially in *The Color Purple*, Alice Walker is committed to exposing the psychic and physical oppression of black women and also exploring the role of women in the patriarchal system in which she emphasizes their desires for love, freedom, spirituality and creativity.

The protagonist of the novel is Celie, who is fourteen years old at the onset of her journey to selfhood. In the novel her life begins with a warning from the man whom she believes as her father and whom she addresses as Pa. He says,” You better never tell nobody but God. It’d kill your mammy.”(1) This double negative order that Celie receives marks the grounds based on which Celie is smothered by not being able to voice her thoughts and feelings. This forced silence makes Celie to conceal the fact that Pa has continuously raped her and that she had two children by him, both of whom he has taken away from her at birth. As Celie is prohibited from articulating her experiences to the outside world, she starts writing letters to God, sharing with Him all the miserable experiences of her life. Unable to understand the issues related to her own life, she writes, “I am fourteen years old. I am I have always been a good girl. May be you can give me a sign letting me know what is happening to me” (3). This first letter to God exposes the smothered inner strength and determination of Celie and the act of writing reflects both, fearful submission and obedience to Pa and also subversion. Following Pa’s order Celie writes letters to God and at the same time she mutely resists the kind of life that is imposed on her. As revealed from her later letters, we as readers understand that Celie is determined to struggle against the emotional and physical mutilation, she says,” I don’t know how to fight. All I know how to do is to stay alive”(17).

Throughout the novel, women are silenced by physical and verbal abuse and Walker is committed to expose this oppression of black women. According to Yvonne Johnson “Her voice explores women’s roles within the patriarchal system emphasizing their desire for freedom, spirituality and creativity” (Johnson 206). Celie is emotionally and sexually abused by the man whom she knows as her father and in one of her letters Celie writes about this man as, “he never have a kine word to say to me. Just say you gonna do what your mammy wouldn’t” (1). After giving birth to two children by this man, Celie is traded like a chattel in marriage to the man whom she calls as Mr. ---. Both Celie and her cow are given equal value in the marriage trade. Just like Celie in the novel, Harpo’s wife Sofia is also a victim of patriarchal society that reduces women to the status of a property or a submissive animal. In the novel she tells Celie about her husband that, “he don’t want a wife, he want a dog” (62). When her husband beats her, Celie survives by refusing to feel and she says “I make myself wood” (23). Mr. ---’s first wife Annie Julia, is subjected to insult by both Mister and his lover, Shug. Annie Julia takes a lover who also taunts her and finally kills her in front of her son. The powerlessness women feel is reaffirmed by the physical abuse they endure in their marriages. In the novel when Harpo complains that his wife never listens to him Mr. --- says that women should be beaten up in order to make them obedient. Again in the novel when Shug announces that Celie is going to Memphis with her, Mr.--- tells Celie that she is worthless, “you black, you pore, you ugly, you a woman. Goddam he say, you nothing at all” (187). Nettie, Celie’s sister who is working as a missionary has a similar experience. She discovers that Olinka people of Africa think very little of women who are not connected to men through marriage. According to them, women have status only as mothers. When Nettie states that she is not the mother of anybody’s children but is still something, she is told: “you are not much.” (141).

In this dominant cultural scenario, Walker’s womanist ideology promulgating sisterhood bonds expressed in *The Color Purple* pose a direct challenge to patriarchal proscriptions of the female self. The

women friends serve as guides and rescuers who provide emotional support for the protagonist to roll on in order to succeed in her quest for identity. The women in the novel form a community that resist patriarchal control. Celie's sister Nettie is the first woman who teaches Celie and provides her the much needed emotional support. Here, Celie also sacrifices her own physical self to the step father Pa, so that he doesn't cast his lustful eyes on her little sister. Seeing the plight of Celie other women tell her to defend herself. "You got to fight. You got to fight" (34) Nettie tells Celie when she sees how Mr. ----'s children ride roughshod over her. It is Sofia, Harpo's wife, who presents an active resistance against physical abuse. Celie refers to her as, "solid. Like if she sit down on something, it be mash" (34). Sofia defends herself from Harpo's attacks. Celie is initially envious of Sofia as she states, 'You do what I can't, you fight' (40). This unfolding of emotional constraints forge bonds of sisterhood which consoles both the women. Sofia tells Celie about her mother, who's life style was similar to that of Celie's. She says, "My mamma under my daddy foot. Anything he says goes. She never say nothing back" (39). It is Sofia who for the first time bombards the patriarchal constructs impeded in the conscience of Celie. Later it is Shug Avery, a singer, Mr. ----'s mistress and mother of his three children who plays a pivotal role in Celie's journey to selfhood. A glance in to the photograph of Shug Avery which falls from the pockets of Mr. ----, evokes the womanist idea submerged in Celie. She says, "Shug Avery was a woman. The most beautiful woman I ever saw" (6). Celie is impressed by the very appearance of Shug and gradually learns that Shug Avery exists beyond the limitations and constraints which suffocate Celie. Later when Shug falls ill, she comes to stay with Celie as Mr. ---'s mistress and Celie impressed by her individuality nurses her back to a glorious life. This cultivates a very intimate mutual bond between the two ladies. Shug enlightens Celie in to the hushed secrets and pleasures of womanhood and also broadens Celie's horizon by exposing her to the out side world of makeup, magazines, cigarettes and the life of the juke joint in to Celie's closed off environment. Overwhelmed by Shug's idea of virginity, Celie transforms herself as a sexual subject rather than the earlier perception of herself as a sexual object. Sexually revived, Celie resists the patriarchal re appropriation of sexuality and firmly expresses that coupling is mainly for mutual pleasure. This cherished scaffolding bond among women is also celebrated in Alice Walker's essay, 'In Search of Our Mother's Gardens.' It is this bond that assists Celie and gives her the moral, physical, emotional and psychological support that was essential in her search for an independent identity.

Various kinds of activities into which the women folk indulge in are also symbolic of their insubordination to the dominant patriarchal cultural construct. Nettie, Celie's sister who leaves home and joins the Missionaries to Africa affirms this fact. Through Nettie's womanist attitude, Walker exhibits the psyche of African woman who believe that a girl is nothing to herself and is some thing only to her husband. Against this existing social system, Nettie encourages the young girls to learn even when their mothers believed that education is meant only for the boys. Similar to this incident in her letters to Celie, Nettie unfurls the truth about Africa. Her words reveal that though Europeans present Africa and its people as backward and mired in poverty, they are the ones who are responsible for plundering the land. Europe is held responsible for not only robbing Africa of its arts and artefacts but also for the enslavement of its nature, culture and human resource. Nettie's letter also reveals certain traditional norms enforced on women. For instance, Tashi Adam's friend in Africa undergoes female circumcision and also makes permanent scars on her face in order to subject and submit herself as a part of the Olinka group of people to which she belongs.

Yvonne Johnson says that the image of woman bonding through work is one concept that is repeated throughout the novel. Sofia and Celie make a quilt together after Sofia confronts Celie for telling Harpo to beat her. Connectivity of women is a strong undercurrent in this novel. Celie who is referred to as a good for nothing person by her father and husband turns out in to an intelligent, creative and independent woman through her relationship with other women characters. In her relationship with Shug Avery, she discovers that she has the talent for designing pants and these unisex pants become the symbol of her liberation. It is only the woman folk around Celie who nurtures her hidden talents while her male counterparts always tampered on it. Through the creation of clothing, Celie is rejecting her past as well as the traditional role of woman that she was forced to play. Creativity turns out to be an artistic as well as liberating experience for Celie. Celie's consciousness and her introvert submissive nature ruptures when she interacts with the women around her. She breaks in to laughter, tearing apart the dominant cultural ideologies. This bonding becomes cross sexual after Mr. --- who was initially devastated by Celie's departure learns how to communicate inter subjectively. Near the end of the novel Celie and Albert make pants together as a symbol of their friendship. By this time, Albert, realizing the importance of family relationships and the inevitable love and respect that women rightly deserve, changes his culture based perspectives.

In *The Color Purple* Walker emphasizes the cause and consequences of dominant patriarchal cultural perspectives which upholds the disintegrating after-math of race, gender and culture. She disrupts the blind internalized concept of patriarchy which assigns status based on difference in a society and the inevitable capabilities of women in society. The novel disclosing the unheard stories of women, transforms the traditional gender roles by encouraging black men and women to support each other. Hence, positioning herself in a treble



victimized situation, Walker strains to establish the resistance of the black female community first as a woman and then as a coloured woman.

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## Black Feminist Dramaturgies: Inter Disciplinary Culture in the Gamut of Ntozake Shange's *Choreo Drama*.

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**Abstract:** Drama has always been the expressionistic form of art in which actors involve in a number of activities to develop the plot. The plot development encompass cast, properties used and setting along with action. This comprehensive exploration of the play's context or the dramaturgy includes dance, songs and music. This symbolic interaction serves as the unifying force in African American dramas. African American dramatist use dramaturgy as a element to recollect and retrieve their past culture and enrich the aspects of it. The dramatic art of the Africans ran off with varieties of dances, songs, music and body movements. All these African culture were followed by the slave of the Americans to enrich their psychological and psychical optimistic activity. The African American dramatist carried on their cultural and traditional resources in their works to exhibit social exploitation. The racial degradation and discrimination suffered by the blacks were clearly portrayed in every black play.

Ntozake Shange was looked upon for the incorporation of African American arts from in her plays. Her dramatic style, which she calls as choreo drama is an African American art from which encompass choreography along with music and dance. This paper discusses vividly about shange's employment of dramaturgies as a feminist element in her plays for colored girls who have considered suicide when the rainbow is enuf (1975); spell # 7: geechee jibara quick magic trance manual for technologically stressed third world people (1981); a photograph lovers in motion (1981);boogie woogie landscape (1981) and From Okra to Greens:a different kinda love story/ a play with music and dance (1985).

**Key words:** African American theatre, Greek chorus, African American music, blues, jazz, gospel, chant, oral art, story telling.

Theatre of a specific time, place and society more efficiently exhibits the general characteristics of the society. Theatre is the reflection of the society by whom and for whom it is presented. The emergence of the black theatre is a socio-cultural phenomenon and must be examined on that point of view. The premises of the black theatre is predicated on a set of aesthetic values and culture that is informed by those values. Cultural values determine the qualitative standard of an art. The aesthetic value of the culture must be understood before the analysis of the art. The religious gathering of the blacks organised secretly without the knowledge of whites allowed for the development of the different type of theatrical ceremony. These various dramatizations of the blacks either being official or secret, in the presence of white or without them, on secular or religious holidays provided opportunities for them to come in contact with their collective expression and serve as a means of reflection about communal life.

The black theatre granted liberties that were usually forbidden among black slaves. The language of the theatre gradually grew bolder, the gestures grew more emphatic, and emotions were exaggerated without fear. The actors also played the duties of director or playwright enacting poked fun at themselves. These productions proved to be the forerunner of contemporary Afro-American theatre. The way in which they dramatized life aroused the audience to react through the use of call and response patterns. The popular genre on the American stage for decades was the minstrel show which was given birth by the slave theatricals. In a minstrel show, the white authors "caricatured blacks with comic and sentimental songs, skits, gits, and shuffles dances" (Wilson 360)

The opening of the theatre in Harlem raised the hope of freeing black theatre from the obstacles that had caused the failure of earlier attempts such as the African grove. The previously unheard possibilities for theatre were provided by the presence of a large Afro-American audience and stage. The Afro-Americans proved their talent by creating spontaneous shows by converting common events into group manifestations, and for contributory ritualized responses like 'Amen' and 'right on'. Their traditions made theatrical expressions familiar and rendered them more apt to decode an oral and a visual message than a written one. All the conditions seemed to exist for strong links between the artist and the actor or dramatist and with the community. Black performers, for many years, could work only by finding ways to perform in minstrel shows, 'in blackface.' This was largely due to the audience expectations created by the white performers. This bizarre

situation strengthened the opinion that the portrayal of blackness and black people on white stages was not real. Even black actors, wearing silly costumes had to execute the ideas of blackness by darkening as prescribed by whites.

In the 1920s and 30s the Black artists, writers and musicians began responding to the racist depictions and created their own artistic representations of black life and philosophy. These black playwrights continued their challenge to create a definite reality theatre, “to demetaphorize the figure of the black and make that of the white metaphorical” (Sharadha 3). Langston Hughes and Jean Toomer were particularly concerned with white representations of blackness in the theatre. Langston Hughes’ famous poem *Notes on Commercial Theater* echoed one of the founding tenets of another critical moment in black theater history of the 1960s.

The observations of W.E.Abrams is remains explicit on the ‘reproductive verisimilitude’ of African art as an analogy for the objectives of Black Theatre in the Diaspora of well-rounded characterization. He says,

Traditional African art was not literary or descriptive, employing conventional devices for effects like a kind of code-language. It was direct, magical, attempting a sort of plastic analogue of onomatopoeia, to evince and to evoke feelings which the subjects induced in one.... The superlative achievement of African art probably lies in the control achieved over deformity and its associated feelings in their societies.(112)

It is this traditional African art that has been employed by Shange in all her works particularly in her choero dramas. Her passion for literature has been channelized through ‘a night journey marked by music, movement, improvisation, and smells of perfume, sweat, and humid star-flickering nights.’ She loves the language of the African’s tongue for which she pays tribute and homage. Shange manipulates Aristotle’s basic elements of drama namely plot, character, diction, spectacle, thought and melody. Dance, song and music are smoothly conjoined not merely to entertain or to amuse, but to communicate a complexity of black experience.

Shange uses the notion of Greek chorus in *for colored girls...*, *spell # 7*, *boogie woogie landscape* and *From Okra to Greens* she insist the significance of the unison. The chorus expressed to the audience what the main characters could not say, such as the hidden fears, secrets and mental ability which is similar to that of the night life companions in *boogie woogie landscape*. In all these four plays all the characters join together at the end as in the Greek chorus and sing the positive aroma of life. In *for colored girls.....* all the ladies join hands together and form a circle to chant their finding of at the end of the rainbow. In *spell # 7* at the end of the play lou signals the other characters to join him for the serious celebration. In the *boogie woogie landscape* the night life companions come to life and join with layla for the holistic chant . In *From Okra to Greens* the five dancers play the role of chorus joining with the protagonists at every part of the play.

Shange expects her choreopoem, to be a new theatrical choice, to be as effective as music and seeks for a musical value contributing its audience a reverie of the type normally relayed during a musical presentation. She suggests in her *lost in language in sound*

...we demolish the notion of straight theatre for decade or so. refuse to allow playwrights to work without dancers and musicians/ ‘coon’ shows were somebody else’ idea/ we have integrated the notion that drama must be words/ with no music & no dance/ cuz that wd take chuckles & scoffs at the notion that all niggers cd sing & dance/ & most of us can sing & dance/ ... this is a cultural reality. this is why i find the most inspiring theatre among us to be in the realms of music & dance. (15)

Blue notes are a part of African American music that was famous in the eighteenth century. Blue notes are relatively emotional and are related to traditional African work songs. This style generally places more importance on words than on instruments. Instruments commonly used in blues music include the guitar, banjo, piano and harmonica. The powerful voices of the blue singers support in the pains and heartaches of life. Popular blues singers include B.B. King, Bessie Smith and Ma Rainey

Crazy Blues. St Louis Blues. Rhapsody in Blue. Blues for Mister Charlie. Blue Moon.

Blue Light. What did I do to be so black and blue? The Bluest Eye. Kind of Blue.

Reservation Blues. My Blue Heaven. Blue Note. China Blue. The blues offers a pervasive and familiar resource of images, sounds, idioms and moods.(Omry, 27)

In *Thriving on a Riff: Jazz and Blues Influences in African American Literature & Film* (2009) the author informs that

Brown and Hughes were among the first poets to incorporate blues form techniques and diction (plus what brown called “blues feeling”) into their work there by collapsing distinctions between so called high and low culture that ultimately derived from Europe.(2,3)

The blues were employed through a whole gamut of modern drama and fiction by authours like Amiri Baraka, Paul Beatty, Xam Wilson, Cartier, Leon Forrest, Gayl Jones, Nathaniel Mackey, Clarence Major, Paule Marshall, Albert Murray, J.I.Phillips, Ntozake Shange and John Edgar Widemen. Shange has incorporated this music form in most of her works to express the sorrows and pains of her chatacters. The post World War II

episode in *spell # 7* that brings out the story of the famous commando Muhammad ali is sung in “a catchy antempo rhythms & blues.”

The jazz an African American music form developed on the heels of the blues. Unlike the blues, jazz music was meant to be danced to. Jazz reached the height of its popularity during a period called the "Roaring 20s" when the mood of the day was more upbeat. This new mood was reflected with the composition of quick-tempo music of jazz. Along with the inclusion of lyrics and utilization of the “call-and-response” style, jazz music places a heavier emphasis on instruments. Popular jazz instruments are the saxophone, trumpet, piano and the drums.

The term jazz, whether referring to a musical style, a cultural phenomenon, an historical period, or a political and social feature, resists any simple definition. The name has been used in innumerable various ways: from the defining term of a very specific musical style within a particular geographical and historical moment, to a board, even rhetorical, conceptualization of culture that crosses centuries and oceans. (Omry, 4)

Jazz music developed during a time when African Americans were more concerned with being accepted by mainstream American culture than connecting with their African heritage. As a result, jazz was ultimately more closely linked to European music in style than to African music. Jazz music was born in New Orleans, Louisiana. It resulted from a fusion of the different musical styles that coexisted in the city including folk music, brass bands and ragtime. Popular jazz musicians include Louis Armstrong, Duke Ellington and Ella Fitzgerald. Shange’s *for colored girls.....*, exhibits the personal empowerment conveyed through dance, and may be discussed in terms of drama, the series of poems that comprise the script calls for an analysis of the work as jazz literature. Perhaps the most evident qualification of this work as jazz literature, is Shange’s rejection of standard form and invention of an artistic expression of identity. Similarly, jazz music, from its very initial stages as blues and work songs, has evolved through an “escape from boundaries” and a creation of its own form and standards.

Shange’s resistance to conformity in *for colored girls...* may be seen in both the structure of her dramatic script, and the poetry that composes it. Specifically, the search for identity within these features reveals Shange’s originality. The presentation of the script through poetry avoids complying with standard dramatic form, offering itself as an individualized expression for each of the ladies while also baring the corresponding attributes of Shange’s writing and the jazz idiom; a feature which elucidates this work as jazz literature.

The likeness between the author’s inventive form and the characteristics of jazz music renders *for colored girls...* as a work of jazz literature, one that arouses a multiculturalist sentiment through the seven ladies’ self-searching. This sentiment is especially demonstrated through Shange’s experimenting “with kinship along feminist lines” (Cooke, 111). Additionally, Shange’s overlook of dramatic and poetic norms in this work provide reason to consider *for colored girls...* “more American than white literature, given [white America’s] traditional use of European forms and need for European approval” (Boan, 105). Corey Michael Taylor elaborates Ellison’s view on blues and jazz as follow:

Ellison formulates a conception of the blues that highlights their musical and extra-musical qualities. The blue are both a mental “impulse” to recognize the “brutal experience” of slavery and its far-reaching consequences, and an active skill (“to finger its jagged grain”) that allows an individual “to transcend” history and recast the relationship between inner (personal, mental) and outer (social, political) worlds. The creation of an everyday reality involves engaging with the blues and / or jazz to comment upon social conditions one’s inner state. (217)

Wilder’s summarises that the art of jazz construction is neither singular nor extradiinary. It is the musicians, critics, and musicologists, all resort constantly and recurrently to language metaphors when they converse the art of jazz. Solos of jazz tell a story, performances are musical conversations and youngsters are admonished to say something with their instruments instead of playing notes.

One of the principles used to justify slavery was that Africans were uncivilized and pagan. In an effort to convert Africans to Christianity and to "save their souls," slave owners made their slaves learn the Bible and attend church services. Nevertheless, African American church services remained segregated from white services. As a result, African American congregations developed a unique style of hymns that would later evolve into gospel music.

Gospel music descended from the original spirituals songs of slaves on plantations. Songs such as “Go Down Moses,” “When the Saints Go Marching In” and “Swing Low Sweet Chariot” included messages of hope, anger and anguish. “Go down Moses” by William Faulkner is an American Negro Spiritual that describes events in the Old Testament of the Bible, specifically Exodus 7:26: “And the Lord spoke unto Moses, go unto Pharaoh, and say unto him, thus saith the Lord, Let my people go, that they may serve me”, in which God commands Moses to demand the release of the Israelites from bondage in Egypt. In the song ‘Israel’ stands for the African-American slaves where ‘Egypt’ and ‘Pharaoh’ represent the slavemaster. “When the Saints Go Marching In,” often referred to as “The Saints,” is an American gospel hymn under the aspects of folk music. The precise

origins of the song are not known. "Swing Low Sweet Chariot" is a historic American Negro spiritual. Oklahoma proposed a bill nominating "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot" as the Oklahoma State official gospel song in 2011. Like the blues and jazz, gospel music also included the African "call-and-response" format. Gospel music utilizes instruments such as the piano and the organ, and includes the use of choirs. In 2009, the African American church continues to be a significant cornerstone of the African American community and Gospel music has grown to achieve worldwide popularity.

Maya Angelou in her *Mom & Me & Mom* (2013) narrates how her grandmother would play piano and train her children sing gospel songs.

Grandmother Baxter played piano in the Baptist church and she liked to hear her children sing spiritual gospel songs. She would fill a cooler with Budweiser and stack bricks of ice cream in the refrigerator. The same rough Bater men led by their fierce older sister would harmonize in the kitchen on "Jesus Keep Me Near the Cross":... The Baxters were proud of their ability to sing. (5)

In spite of these varied types of gospels and chants Shange has also incorporated the term 'music' with the general sense throughout the plays taken for study. Though the different types of music are used to express the mood and mental state of characters, this generalized music form is used to gather the attention of the audience and is played when the characters come on the stage or exit, to make notification on the beginning and the end of the interval and at curtain calls.

Chant is a crucial dramaturgical and poetic feature of Shange's oeuvre. Kimberly Benston sees Shange's and other African-American women writers' use of chant in theatre and poetry as a "movement away from European-American structures and toward African-rooted ones in terms of the shift from *mimesis*/drama to *methexis*/ritual"(85) The chant ritual is one of the primary verse techniques that Shange uses in all the plays except *a photograph: lovers in motion* to achieve a liberating rhetorical self-definition. In *for colored girls*..... the poem "no more love poems #4" provides each of the different colored ladies to involve in chant. The ladies respond to the lady in yellow's lament that her love is 'too delicate to have thrown back on my face' (45). The repetitive responses of the ladies modify this phrase, while each adds her own adjective to build on 'delicate':

*everyone (but started by the 'lady in brown')*  
and beautiful  
and beautiful  
and beautiful  
*everyone (but started by the 'lady in purple')*  
oh sanctified  
oh sanctified  
oh sanctified (48)

the climax chanting in *for colored girls*..... "i found god in myself & i loved her/ fiercely" is a feminist ritual.

In *for spell # 7* as Lou indicates all the character come together to form a circle and chant "colored & love it/ love it bein colored" a communal ritual. In *From Okra to Greens*, Okra chants in French the song of liberation for which the chorus dance. In each play the chant continues on with each getting a turn and an opportunity to lead the chorus, thereby transforming each character into an artist figure, who achieves self-expression in her ability to verbalise her experience. Additionally, the chant form unites the ladies in their agony, initiating a cathartic process by which they release themselves from the pain of their love relationships while rhetorically liberating themselves of the oppressive tradition of the genre of love poetry.

This chanting episode in the plays of Shange could be paralleled with *flyin' West* of Pearl Cleage where the women conspire to eliminate a physically abusive husband through the expert conjuring of food preparation. Before the dramatic decision is reached the woman form circles had start for the ritual and chant

*Fan and Minnie.*

Because we are free Negro women... Sophie. Born of free Negro women...  
both (fan and Minnie).

Back as far as time begin... Sophie. We choose this day to declare our lives to be our own and no one else's ... and went west together to be free women as a sacred between us with all our trust ... and all our strength ... and all our courage ... and all our love. (63)

Benston argues further that the ritual does not only create a sense of community, but it also breaks the traditionally barriers that have existed between the performers and the spectators. Ritual not only allows Shange to innovate rhetorically, thus removing her text from the hegemonic influence of Euro-American structures of conventional drama, but it also creates a sense of community in the sharing of the characters awareness of pain and their feelings of dislocation.

Traditionally, Africans have been revered as good storytellers, as have most past and present people around the world who are rooted in oral cultures and traditions. Ancient writing traditions do exist on the African continent, but most Africans today, as in the past, are primarily oral people, and their art forms are oral rather than literary. In contrast to written 'literature,' African 'orature' is orally composed and transmitted, and

often created to be verbally and communally performed as an integral part of dance and music. The Oral Arts of Africa are rich and varied, developing with the beginnings of African cultures, and they remain living traditions that continue to evolve and flourish today.

Shange uses the art of storytelling in her works with the help of monologue. *The Newyork Times* criticizes her for her ability of telling story as “Miss Shange is superb story teller who keeps her eyes on what brings her characters together rather than what separates them...”. The story of crystal and beau willie brown episode in *for colored girls.....* and the story of seau jean in *spell # 7* not only create sympathy for them but also serves as a best example of Shange’s art of story telling. Story telling is also used by Shange in the mode of flashback. Shange in her preface to *Lost in Language & Sound* explains that she has been ‘twirling & crooning through the placenta & the water I’d yet to break’ in her mother’s womb for all the nine months. Her parents were ‘quite light on their feet’ and they were ‘taken with jazz, rhythm & blues, bebop, & the high life.’ Whenever and wherever the black people celebrated Shange’s parents 189eneralize189 them. Her mother also gifted her with poetry for her recited, by heart, Laurence Dunbar, Sterling Brown and many others. Thus Shange was born a blessed child.

Shange presents religious and cultural values of the African Diaspora, through her use of chanting, and various other forms of ritualized enactments, many of which have traditionally not been seen as drama. The many facets of African American life is incorporated by Shange in the theatrical arena to create a sensual experience that she explains in one of her *lost in language and sound...*

the fact that we are an interdisciplinary culture/ that we understand more than verbal communication/ lays a weight on Afro-American wirters that few others are lucky enough to have been born into. We can use with some skill virtually all our physical senses/ as writers committed to bringing the world as we remember it / imagine it and know it to be that stage we must use everything we’ve got. (16)

Shange ignores traditional boundries of the stage when she writes as a black artist particularly about black people of their experiences, mannerisms, tastes, music, dreams, fears and uses black language all towards demonstrating and documenting the complexities of the black’s exsistence and affording a fuller range of African American experience.

Shange has carved for herself an enduring and classical place in American theatre history. She has successfully expanded and redefined American theatre to include the choreopoem as a satisfactory, legitimate dramatic form. Not only did she 189eneralize the choreopoem but she has brought to the Americans theatre an art that is definitely African. Shange’s choreopoems are comprised of chants, poetry, dance and rituals in company with the traditional African theatrical expression of story-telling, rhythm, physical movement and emotional catharsis.

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## Post-Colonial Analysis of Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*

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**Abstract:** Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* tells the journey of Marlow through the African jungle and his search for the European Kurtz who exploits the natives by imposing violence on them. It is mainly based upon Conrad's own experience in Congo when he learned how Europeans exploited and traded the natives for their own benefits during his own journey. The book is regarded as an attack on imperialism and criticizes immoral treatments of the European colonizers in Africa in the 19th century. Keith Booker states that "the book deals with issues such as imperialism, capitalism, race, and gender that were very much at the forefront of the turn-of-the-century European mind. Conrad's ambivalent treatment of these issues is extremely representative of the way they were treated in any number of European discourses of the time" (217). Besides, Chinua Achebe in his *An "Image of Africa: Racism in Conrad's Heart of Darkness"* comments that "*Heart of Darkness* projects the image of Africa as 'the other world', the antithesis of Europe and therefore of civilization, a place where man's vaunted intelligence and refinement are finally mocked by triumphant bestiality" (338). Although Achebe puts forward that the novel displays colonialism, I consider that Conrad does not intend to write it to appreciate colonialism and therefore the purpose of this paper is to approach Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* from post-colonial perspective by taking European imperialism and colonialism over Africa into consideration in order to clarify how Conrad has deconstructed binary oppositions of colonialism by subverting the general idea of the Europeans towards Africa in the 19th century.

**Key Words:** Imperialism, Colonialism, Civilization, Binary, Capitalism, Race, Gender, Deconstruction.

Colonialism is about the relationship between colonized people and their colonizers. According to Lois Tyson, "colonialist ideology was based on the colonizers' assumption of their own superiority, which they contrasted with the alleged inferiority of native (indigenous) peoples, the original inhabitants of the lands they invaded" (419). The colonizers examine that the culture of their ancestors was extremely civilized and that is why they define native people as savage or untamed. In other words, the colonizers see themselves as superior to the colonized people. In addition to this, colonizers think that they set up examples for the colonial people, so the colonized people "were considered 'other', different, and therefore inferior to the point of being less than fully human" (Tyson 420). That is the reason why, colonized countries divide the world into two different parts. While they are named as "us" (the civilized), the natives are called as "them" (the others or savages). These binary oppositions are clearly reflected throughout Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*. The book communicates the writer's own ideas and experiences through Marlow who is one of the most important characters of the novel. Marlow would like to hide immoral activities of the Europeans from his listeners since colonialism proves the corruption of the Europeans in Africa.

In *Heart of Darkness*, the natives remain an element of fantasy for Marlow until he meets them. These natives represent the interruption of European fantasy for a moment, that is, they are real and a shock for Marlow (Brannigan 145). He describes the natives as;

They were not enemies, they were not criminals, they were nothing earthly now— nothing but black shadows of disease and starvation, lying confusedly in the greenish gloom. Brought from all the recesses of the coast in all the legality of time contracts, lost in uncongenial surroundings, fed on unfamiliar food, they sickened, became inefficient, and were then allowed to crawl away and rest. These moribund shapes were free as air—and nearly as thin (*Heart of Darkness* 19).<sup>1</sup>

Marlow cannot exactly define the natives; however, the only thing he is sure is that they suffer under the control of the Europeans. Besides, he is aware that the Europeans also give harm to nature in order to earn more. In other words, Marlow realizes that Europeans destroy not only the natives but also the jungle. He states, I've seen the devil of violence, and the devil of greed, and the devil of hot desire; but, by all the stars! These were strong, lusty, redevyed devils, that swayed and drove men—men, I tell you. But as I stood on this hillside, I foresaw that in the blinding sunshine of that land I would become acquainted with a flabby, pretending, weak-eyed devil of a rapacious and pitiless folly. How insidious he could be,

too, I was only to find out several months later and a thousand miles farther (18).

The repetition of the word “devil” underlines the brutality of colonialism and imperialism that the Europeans imposed on the natives in Africa. They dominated nearly all parts of Africa to benefit from the natives. In his *Culture and Imperialism*, Edward Said puts forward that:

In Europe itself at the end of the nineteenth century scarcely a corner of life was untouched by the facts of empire. The economies were hungry for overseas markets, raw materials, cheap labor and profitable land. Defense and foreign policy establishments were more and more committed to the maintenance of vast tracts of distant territory and large numbers of subjugated peoples (8).

In the extract above, Said criticizes the dominance of powerful countries over African countries in order to exploit them. Similarly, Marlow is against European colonialism. When for instance he falls in a moral dilemma before meeting Kurtz’s Intended, he explains this dilemma in the book as “It was a moment of triumph for the wilderness, an invading and vengeful rush which, it seemed to me, I would have to keep back alone for the salvation of another soul” (HOD 95). Marlow as a European feels ashamed of what Kurtz has done in Congo when he learns his immoral acts, and that is why he cannot put them into words in his meeting with Kurtz’s Intended. Marlow says that it is impossible to reveal the truth that he experienced during his journey, “No, it is impossible; it is impossible to convey the lifesensation “of any given epoch of one’s existence, — that which makes its truth, its meaning — its subtle and penetrating essence. It is impossible. We live, as we dream — alone...” (32). Marlow means that minority of the Europeans is critical about the idea of colonialism in spite of the fact that they get benefit from it. That is, they do not approve immoral acts of their citizens, since it is not appropriate to give harm to the other people for the sake of monetary issues.

The violence is indispensable part of colonialism for the Europeans and it constantly occurs throughout the novel. For example, Marlow tells that a native, thought to cause fire, has been beaten harshly: “[a] nigger was being beaten near by. They said he had caused the fire in some way; be that as it may, he was screeching most horribly” (HOD 27). This event is just an example of European violence against the Africans. Besides, it shows the subversion of the novel, since Conrad introduces their own cruelty to English people through an English man. The European chooses to beat the Africans to prevent probable “conflagrations” as stated in the novel;

Black figures strolled about listlessly, pouring water on the glow, whence proceeded a sound of hissing; steam ascended in the moonlight, the beaten nigger groaned somewhere. ‘What a row the brute makes!’ said the indefatigable man with the moustaches, appearing near us. ‘Serve him right. Transgression—punishment— bang! Pitiless, pitiless. That’s the only way. This will prevent all conflagrations for the future (HOD 30).

Marlow feels pity for the natives unlike other the majority of colonizers. Through the end of the novel, the African “others” are presented as the dark side of Europe. Their situation is shown as the consequence of historical distance. This explanation may seem to strengthen the concept of the Europeans “as civilized, enlightened, at a more advanced state of intelligence and ability than the African” (Brannigan 146). However, I claim that there is no distance between Europe and Africa contrary to various scholars as Conrad attempts to deconstruct this common belief in *Heart of Darkness*. Additionally, the natives are even addressed as black shapes or shadows to dehumanize them in some parts of the novel, in that; none of the natives has proper names. The real purpose of Conrad is that he wants to remind the inadequate attention his citizens pay for the natives, since they are no more than a creature or a cannibal for the Europeans. The prospect of cannibalism appears when a group of men save Marlow on the river. These people are called cannibals by the Europeans rather than by their names. Marlow does not know whether they are cannibals or not since he has not witnessed any instance of humans eating in Congo. Although there is no act of cannibalism, it is a common belief that it exists and this is enough for Marlow to fear. He tells,

Their headman, a young, broad-chestlike black, severely draped in dark-blue fringed cloths, with fierce nostrils and his hair all done up artfully in oily ringlets, stood near me. ‘Aha!’ I said, just for good fellowship’s sake. ‘Catch ‘im,’ he snapped, with a bloodshot widening of his eyes and a flash of sharp teeth—’catch ‘im. Give ‘im to us.’ ‘To you, eh?’ I asked; ‘what would you do with them?’ 83 ‘Eat ‘im!’ he said curtly, and, leaning his elbow on the rail, looked out into the fog in a dignified and profoundly pensive attitude. I would no doubt have been properly horrified, had it not occurred to me that he and his chaps must be very hungry (HOD 50).



Although Conrad is sure that the natives cannot be cannibals, he gives evidences of cannibalism in order to manipulate the Europeans through the main character of the novel. Booker asserts that “[t]he characterization of Africans as cannibals make the European loss of life ‘civilizing’ the continent seem worthwhile, while at the same time it justified European rule of Africa by demonstrating the superiority of Europeans to their primitive African counterparts” (223). The Europeans deliberately regard the natives as cannibals so as to justify their colonialism. However, Conrad does not talk about the concrete evidence of

cannibalism throughout the novel, and this is one of the best examples of deconstruction of colonialism. In other words, cannibalism is produced as the proof of the savagery of the natives by the Europeans according to Conrad.

Marlow’s relationships to imperialism are just devices with which to work more effectively in the interests of imperialist power. Said says that “*Heart of Darkness* works so effectively because its politics and aesthetics are, so to speak, imperialist, which in the closing years of the nineteenth century seemed to be at the same time an aesthetic, politics and even epistemology inevitable an unavoidable” (Said 24). Said implies that colonialism is inevitable through the end of 19th century; however, Conrad clearly criticizes the brutal application of England.

*Heart of Darkness* reveals the violence and brutality through Kurtz who is the chief of Inner Station. Interestingly, Kurtz has a lot of abilities from art to music although he is a cruel man. Marlow says that, “[...] Kurtz was a remarkable man. He had something to say. He said it. Since I had peeped over the edge myself, I understand better the meaning of his stare, that could not see the flame of the candle, but was wide enough to embrace the whole universe, piercing enough to penetrate all the hearts that beat in the darkness” (HOD 91). Kurtz as a European thinks that he has the right to control all the natives and Marlow is critical about his meaningless authority over black people, since he does not approve of European violence brought about by European colonialism.

Kurtz is a strong symbol of order because of the fact that he is the most influential medium of European colonization. He is sure that “the ivory trade which he is responsible for is more productive than in any other region” (Brannigan 137). However, his methods are brutal. For example, his hut is surrounded by the skulls of men who do not obey him. He deliberately turns the faces of these skulls to the house since he wants his power to be recognized by the natives. When Marlow sees them for the first time, he cannot understand what they are. He explains this confusion as “Now I had suddenly a nearer view, and its first 84 result was to make me throw my head back as if before a blow. Then I went carefully from post to post with my glass, and I saw my mistake. These round knobs were not ornamental but symbolic” (HOD 74). Later on, he finds out that they are human skulls. Kurtz uses these skulls to threaten the others and this shows his brutality against the natives.

On the contrary, Marlow hates the cruel treatment against the natives and he respects them as humans. He is shocked by the events he has witnessed, that is, Marlow is highly affected by the cruel treatments imposed by Kurtz on the natives that he cannot forget what he experiences when he returns back. Marlow clearly describes Kurtz’s mistreatments and greediness via his physical appearance;

I had a vision of him on the stretcher, opening his mouth voraciously, as if to devour all the earth with all its mankind. He lived then before me; he lived as much as he had ever lived—a shadow insatiable of splendid appearances, of frightful realities; a shadow darker than the shadow of the night, and draped nobly in the folds of a gorgeous eloquence .

Additionally, Kurtz sees himself responsible for education of the natives besides exploiting them and says that “Each station should be like a beacon on the road towards better things, a center for trade of course, but also for humanizing, improving, instructing” (HOD 40). However, Kurtz tortures them rather than educating and Conrad shows this reversal in his novel.

Kurtz imposes imperialism on natives to gain more; however, his greediness and cruelty lead to his death. About Kurtz’s horrifying character, Marlow states “I had to deal with a being to which I could not appeal in the name of anything high or low. I had, even like the niggers, to invoke himself - his own exalted and incredible degradation. There was nothing either above or below him, and I knew it. He had kicked himself loose of the earth. Confound the man!” (85). Kurtz does whatever he wants because there is nothing to restrict him. He also prefers to spend his time in the jungle and thus forgets his civilized life in order to earn more. Kurtz is so corrupted for ivory trade that he even loses his connections with Europe. According to Homi Bhabha, colonial mimicry “is the desire for a reformed, recognizable Other, as a subject of a difference that is almost the same, but not quite” (122). Based upon this, Kurtz can be accepted as a mimic man since he turns into a savage which is one of the criticisms of African people.

Conrad criticizes the cruel treatment against the natives and imperialism through Kurtz. Kurtz has led a horrible life due to his passion for ivory trade. He treats the natives so violently that he regrets what he has done and cries twice as “The Horror! The Horror” (HOD90) before he dies. These words reflect his feeling of remorse despite the fact that he writes “Exterminates all the brutes” (63) in his report about the future guidance

of the natives. I 85 believe that Conrad has chosen these words on purpose to criticize colonialism implicitly. Moore expresses that “Conrad hated imperialism in central Africa because of its savageness, selfishness and devastation. Kurtz’s final words, ‘the horror’, ‘the horror’, are about how a civilized man can change to savagery when there is no restriction” (127). In fact, the horror does not stem from the savagery of the natives. Therefore, Kurtz can be considered as corruption brought to Africa from Europe (Booker 223). Marlow supports this idea by stating that “I saw him open his mouth wide—it gave him a weirdly voracious aspect, as though he had wanted to swallow all the air, all the earth, all the men before him” (77). Kurtz’s image of savage, greedy colonizer can be regarded as the subversion of European colonialism, and his death proves that colonialism gives harm both to the colonized and the colonizer.

*Heart of Darkness* meets Europe with Africa, in that, Marlow talks about the futility of European colonialism. Said puts forward that “the whole point of what Kurtz and Marlow talk about is in fact imperial mastery, white European over black Africans, and their ivory, civilization over the primitive dark continent” (29). However, the liberal image of colonial adventures is subverted by the violence of colonialism in Europe (Brannigan 143). The natives’ views and pains are represented in a European book. For example, the worth of European modes of representation is obvious when Marlow finds a book, *An Inquiry into some Points of Seamanship*, in a deserted hut. He says,

Not a very enthralling book; but at the first glance you could see there a singleness of intention, an honest concern for the right way of going to work, which made these humble pages, thought out so many years ago, luminous with another than a professional light. The simple old sailor, with his talk of chains and purchases, made me forget the jungle and the pilgrims in a delicious sensation of having come upon something unmistakably real (*HOD* 47).

This implies that the Europeans dominate the natives’ lands and the book stands for European discourse. Brannigan indicates that “Africa is merely the fictional projection of a European fantasy in which Europe is the only truth” (144). The natives are seen as inferior when compared to the Europeans and there cannot be any other truth for them, however, Conrad implies that this is unacceptable throughout the novel since his own experiences in Africa contradict with the common belief about colonialism in England.

Conrad chooses Marlow to explain the realities of European colonialism, that is, the situation of natives is narrated through Marlow who is also a European. In other words, he prefers a fictional character to reveal the truth rather than himself. Booker states that “Conrad’s Charlie Marlow is openly critical of much of the European activity that he observes in Africa, especially of the brutal treatment of many of the Africans by their European masters” (Booker 219). Conrad writes with English readers in mind and does not let the natives speak. However, their silence can be interpreted as silent defiance against the European colonialism since Marlow does not regard the natives as savage unlike traditional colonizers and on the contrary, he is angry with Kurtz due to his mistreatments against the natives.

Furthermore, the title of the book is open to various interpretations. At the beginning of the novel, Marlow calls Africa as “one of the dark places of the earth” (3). In fact, it can be said that the real darkness is in Europe rather than Africa due to European’s mistreatment against the natives. Conrad gets benefit from metaphors such as “When the sun rose there was a white fog, very warm and clammy, and more blinding than the night” (*HOD* 49) to indicate the real darkness in Europe rather than in Africa since the Europeans close their eyes to the suffering of the natives. According to Said, both Kurtz and Marlow refer to this darkness, “the former as he is dying, and the latter as he reflects retrospectively on the meaning of Kurtz’s final words” (30). It is clear that Conrad regards colonialism and imperialism different from that of his citizens since he witnesses what the Europeans do in Congo during his journey and that is the reason why; it is possible to call *Heart of Darkness* as subversion of European colonial discourse.

Obviously, Conrad writes this novel so that the Europeans can see the reality since colonialism is just like a robbery or a murder for him. That is, he condemns the evil of colonial exploitation. Thus, it can be said that *Heart of Darkness* is different from traditional Victorian novel since the novel leads the readers to think realistically and reflects the truth of colonialism imposed by England in Africa.

In consequence, a post-colonial analysis of *Heart of Darkness* shows the readers Africa’s suffering and pain caused by European colonization. The novel generally focuses on the moral conflicts of European exploration of Africa. Brannigan summarizes that the analysis of *Heart of Darkness* “enables to locate the novel in the complex system of power relations and cultural representations which form the discourse of colonialism” (153). Conrad also shows how a civilized man turns into a savage when the profits are taken into consideration. His novel reflects the realities of the world in the 19th century, that is, the Europeans regard Africans as primitive and immature to colonize them. Briefly, it can be easily claimed that *Heart of Darkness* is one of the best examples of the subversion of European colonialism since it clearly shows the brutal relationship between the Europeans and the natives.

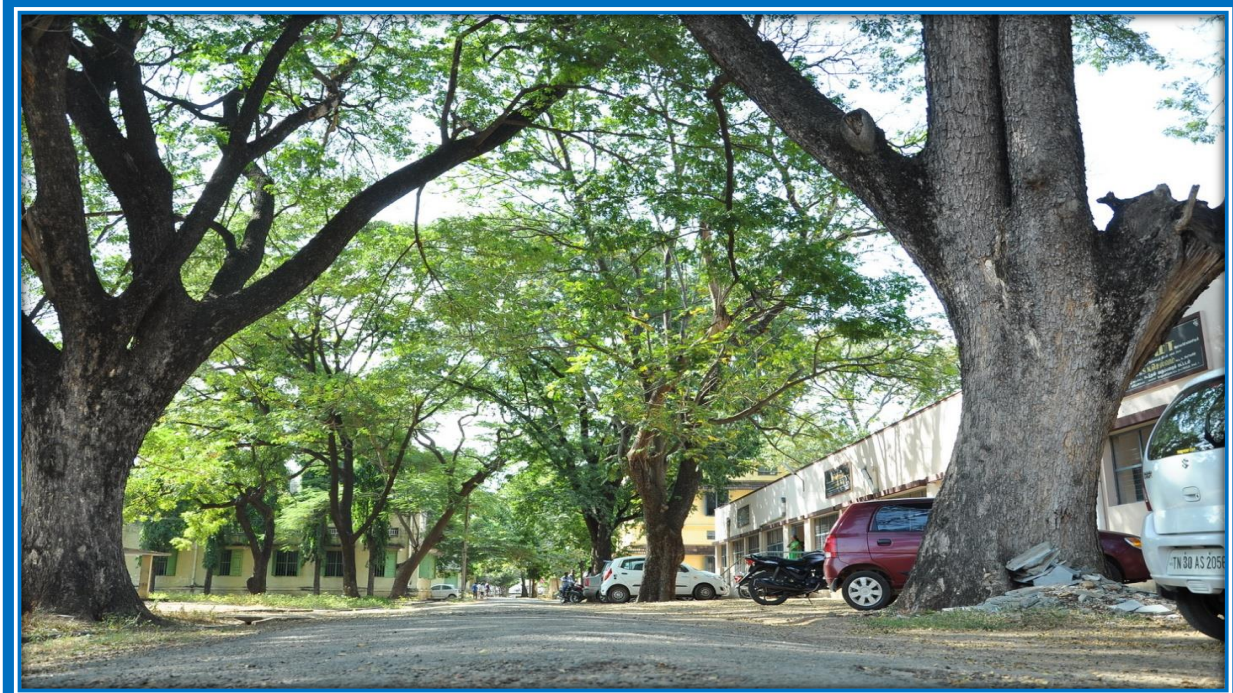
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