

**Special
Edition**

Conference Edition

**INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH JOURNAL OF
HUMANITIES, ENGINEERING & PHARMACEUTICAL SCIENCES**

(An International Registered Research Journal)

Organised By

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



सर्वे भवन्तुः सुखिनः

"THINK BEYOND TO CREATE MIRACLES"

**INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH JOURNAL OF HUMANITIES,
ENGINEERING & PHARMACEUTICAL SCIENCES**

(An International Registered Research Journal)

IMPACT FACTOR: 2.889

Volume-01

CE-01

January,2015

UGC Funded
International Conference On
“Contextualizing Cultural
Heritage in Literatures”

Organised By

“Govt. Arts College (A), Salem-7, Tamil Nadu, INDIA”

Held On

“January 30, 2015”



“THINK BEYOND TO CREATE MIRACLES”

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Editorial

The mode of being of the new intellectual can no longer exist in eloquence, which is an exterior and momentary mover of feelings and passions, but in active participation in practical life as constructor, organizer, 'permanent persuader....'

-Antonio Gramsci
From the Prison Note Books.

Anthropologically, human beings are transformers of nature into culture. The notion of culture comprises of an intellectual transformation- from the 'tangible' to 'intangible.' It is this process that we term as 'Tradition' or in a slightly different perspective as "Heritage." In this respect to create an awakening of the existing cultural heritage documented in Literatures from time immemorial by writers around the globe, an academic conference has been aimed at by the PG & Research Department of English, Government of English (Autonomous), Salem-7, Tamilnadu, INDIA.

The aim of the conference was to create a cultural space where academicians, research scholars, eminent theoretical experts could meet, share and discuss the significance of varied cultures and its heritage. 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 I** of the selected **82** articles presented at the International conference, we thank all the presenters, academicians, theoretical experts for their invaluable contributions.

As editors, we were supported by the Peer Review committee in the selection of articles for publication. We sincerely thank **Dr.K.Tamizharasi, Dr.T.Gangadharan, Dr.P.Mythily, Dr.R.Sheela banu, Prof. K Anbazhagan & Dr. T.Alagarasan.** As members of the peer review committee they reviewed, evaluated, and selected the research papers based on the established procedures and guidelines.

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

We wish every reader a culture enduring experience.

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

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CONFERENCE PAPERS

Theme of Fortitude in Isabel Allende's *Eva Luna*

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Abstract: Life shrinks or expands in proportion to one's courage. An acclaimed novelist, memoirist and humanitarian Isabel Allende from Latin America strongly believe that the destiny is a name given in retrospect to choices that had dramatic consequences. In her third novel *Eva Luna*, Allende through the character Eva picturises how the people and the events that surround us shape our life. It is the story of a strong woman who is an inspiration for strength and change. The purpose of the paper is documenting a personal journey of Eva that has a message about strength for all people. The protagonist Eva takes strength from within. She does not lie down and accept the storyline laid down for her. Even her ending is uncertain and unexpected; she makes her own stories, implying that she retains the freedom to change at her will.

Keywords: Fortitude, Self-Determination, Moral Fibre, Vigour, Resilience.

Our identity has already been chosen for us; but it is up to us to accept it, or fight and change it.

- Isabel Allende.

Isabel Allende from Latin America is one of the world's most beloved author, best known for her unique representation of the strength of mind. She has written novels based her own experiences. Allende's true strong point is the depiction of courage of people who often try invisibly to change the course of events and whose power is very different in nature. She gives importance for characters that care for others and support their surroundings more than their personal lives, even while struggling with poverty and abuse.

From this point the paper present the fortitude of characters in Isabel Allende's *Eva Luna* and examine their girt through their deeds, their answer to the surroundings- social or physical, their inner life and the process of their search for identity.

Allende created most subtle characters in *Eva Luna*. It is a tale filled with battles and passions, rebellions and reunions. It serves as a semi-autobiography of the author, giving an insightful look into the strength of mind. Allende has written with the heart of a true romance and at the same time with an acute sensitivity to social and political conditions.

Eva Luna is the story of determination of the main character Eva and the people and the events in her life that shape her. She was born to a servant in a South American country. Eva lives a diverse life, sometimes exciting, sometimes frightening but she never lets any hardship keep her down.

Eva is the symbol of fortitude. She is the daughter of Consuelo, a woman rescued by missionaries in the jungles of South America. Eva is conceived when the gardener for Consuelo's employer is bitten by a snake and Consuelo tries to help. Consuelo is helped by the cook during her child birth who becomes Eva Luna's madrina, or godmother.

Life for the girl is filled with love and adventure, growing up in the home of Professor Jones, surrounded by beautiful things and the mummies that the professor creates. Consuelo creates tales for her daughter about the mummies so that she will not be frightened. This is the first taste of fiction for Eva, something that will carry her through life. Eva is secure in her mother's love, able to call her on the memory of her mother when life gets too difficult.

The tragic death of Consuelo, followed by the death of the professor, changes Eva's life completely. Eva's godmother accepted the responsibility of taking care of her welfare and immediately placing her into service. She spent several years working in one home where she became close to another servant, Elvira, who was like a mother to her. Elvira taught Eva Luna an important lesson: "You have to fight back. No one tries anything with mad dogs, but tame dogs they kick. Life's a dogfight" (*Eva Luna* 69).

Eva Luna took this advice to heart and grew up as a strong and independent woman. She worked in a variety of situations, from a red light district to a remote mountain village. Throughout her life she had been an expert storyteller and as an adult she returned to the city and was able to use this talent to make a living. *Eva Luna* is an individualist novel, documenting a personal journey that has a message about strength for all people.

Throughout her life, Eva overcomes many obstacles, always working to live to help the people around her. Though her life is difficult Eva never questions the things she dealt with. She simply does the needs to move on. Eva stands up for herself when she was underestimated by others. This ability of Eva makes it almost impossible for her to fail in her life. As a result in the end, despite all the difficulties Eva experiences, achieves her dreams and stand as a symbol of fortitude.

Other important characters in the novel show great fortitude are Mimi, Rolf Carle and Riad Halabi. Eva's best friend Mimi is a beautiful transsexual that Eva knew as Melesio when she was a young girl. Mimi left

his home and his vicious father to move to the capital where he taught Italian. Melesio begins working in a cabaret and realises that performing is what he loves.

Life takes a turn when Melesio is arrested and taken to Santa Maria Prison and he spends a year on the island being abused by the other inmates. After his release, Melesio recuperates and transforms himself into Mimi, a beautiful woman and actress and she achieves great fame. "I looked my friend, so dear, so familiar, the features designed with pencils and lipsticks, the rounded hips and breasts, the sleek torso, innocent of maternity or pleasure, each line of her body won with unyielding tenacity" (EV 254).

Eva's lover Rolf Carle shows fortitude when he leaves the pain of his youth behind him and travels to South America to stay with his uncle and aunt. The horrors of his youth and the abuse of his father made Rolf a weak man, but with strength of characters he triumph, pursuing his dreams.

Rolf learns about life from his uncle and aunt and learns about love from his cousins. He meets his mentor, Senor Aravena, a journalist who encourages Rolf in his documentary skills. "Mimi maintained that each of us born with a talent, and that happiness or misfortune depends on discovering what that talent is and whether there is a demand for it in the world, because there are remarkable skills that go unappreciated...a gift that was of absolutely no use to him" (EV 249).

Rolf learns the art of documenting history in the country, learning about the people and their struggles. In his journey Rolf meets Eva, a woman like no other and she became a breath of fresh air to him. Eva's surrogate father Riad Halabi does the same. Cursed with a cleft lip, through his spirit he creates a life for himself in sales and cherishing the interaction with his customers. Halabi shows fortitude by not allowing himself to avoid people, instead he seeks them out. The only concession the man makes to his disfigurement is to cover his face when among others. Even this is not for his sake, but for the sake of others "... his imperfection as a gift of birth, something that made him different from others-unique in this world" (EV 137).

Allende wanted the story to be read not only as a picaresque novel, but also as a story about valour of heart. Strength of mind allows one to endure pain or adversity with courage. Eva Luna again confirms the model that Allende establishes in her works. The above characters face the reality of life with wholeheartedness. Instead of questioning the reality they accepted their destined life. The fortitude of these characters inevitably helps them become independent and empowered on their own terms, not the ones defined them by the society.

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Cultural Hegemony in Shashi Tharoor's *Riot*

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Abstract: *Culture refers to what has been grown and groomed (from Latin colere; to cultivate). Language expresses cultural reality. Language embodies cultural reality. Language symbolizes cultural reality. Tharoor says that in writing of Indian culture, he is very deeply conscious of his own subjectivity; arguably, there is more than one culture and certainly more than one view of Indian culture. The culture of every country determines the food, cloth, music, likes and dislikes and every aspect of a man's life. Despite one's education and social contact his traits of culture come to the fore at the time of crisis. Tharoor is widely acknowledged as an experimental novelist. Novelty is the watch-word in his works. He says that novel should be read like an encyclopedia. It may consist of all the nine emotional elements – love, hate, joy, sorrow, pity, disgust, courage, pride and compassion as suggested in Natyasashtra. The Riot is an experimental novel with the traits of postmodernism. It highlights the contrasting features of two cultures – Western and Eastern.*

Keywords: *Neocolonialism, Indigenous culture, Postmodernism.*

Neocolonialism is a synonym for contemporary imperialism. It suggests an indirect form of control through economic and cultural dependence. Shashi Tharoor's post modern novel, *Riot* is a bonafide record exhibiting the worst form of imperialism. The invasion of colonialism has been identified with four forms in *Riot*: i) the clandestine love affair of Priscilla on Lakshman, ii) the crude animal of Rudyard with his Indian secretary, Nandini, iii) the services of non –governmental voluntary organization: HELP-US to the innocent poor, iv) and the intrusion of coke. Unlike the old ways, these are new ways of invasion exploiting the minds and bodies of middle class young Indians. Leong Yew considers that it is “colonialism in disguise in the postcolonial times” (qtd. in Pradap 27).

HELP-US is a non-governmental organization whose initials stand for Health, Education, Literacy, Population – United States. The objective is to inform poor rural women of family planning techniques and to educate them about the facts of life. It is considered as the best Indian project since it supplies baby powder, contraceptive devices and makes clinic visits.

If historically colonialism sought to openly dominate, govern, and materially exploit the colonies, neocolonialism “suggests an indirect form of control through economic and cultural dependence of erstwhile colonies or the third World,” according to Yew (qtd. in Pradap 27). Many powerful Neocolonial countries such as the US, Masquerade are the poor and middle class Indians with their sly weapons of economic hegemony like the World Bank, WTO, and IMF. Such countries have double faces. They are infiltrating into other developing countries through voluntary organisations and indigenous NGOs, under the disguise of humanitarian activities such as health, education, poverty etcetera. The corporate sector backing the US government uses these data for formulating its market strategies in this country, while the US government uses it to bend the country's government to its political will. These NGOs also act as cultural ambassadors of the US by surreptitiously propagating an ideology of its cultural superiority through the sheer enthusiasm they exude in solving the economic and social problems of the masses through apolitical means. One effective way of destabilizing the socio-political fabric of a nation like India with a democratically formed government at the centre and the states could be so falsely convince the people at the grass root level that their economic and social problems can be solved apolitically and without governmental interference. In fact, it is now widely accepted that NGOs sponsored by America propagate neo-liberalist ideology which seeks to minimize the role of the state in health, education and poverty eradication etcetera to make way for its multinationals to invest in these sectors.

The love stories of Lakshman and Priscilla is an instance of a ‘riot’ where passions run high. People violate the usual norms of moral contact and end up destroying each other. In this story of adultery, it is curious to notice that both the parties involved in the affair are ideologically oriented towards the concepts of adultery even before they step into it. When Lakshman is torn between his duty and his passion, he confirms: “My role as a husband and father is central to who I am; it concerns my rootedness in the world: it is inextricably bound up with my sense of my place in the cosmos. I have been brought up to believe that such things-marriage, family are beyond individual will, that they transcend an individual's freedom of action” (*Riot* 201-02). Thus as a man who gives a lot of importance to family responsibilities and filial obligations, he is already equipped with moral armour against adultery. To Lakshman, Priscilla remained catharsis from the beginning. She kept on providing him the ventilation he so badly needed.

Evidently, the novel invests the reason for existence in the theme of the culturally colliding love/sex relationship between the Indian IAS officer, V.Lakshman who is married and is also the father of a little girl and the unmarried American girl Priscilla, a volunteer with the American Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO), set in an imaginary obscure district called Zalilgarh in North India. It is the narrative's overt purpose to throw into relief the irresolvable cultural disparity between these two protagonists. The story of the failed relationship between the morally orthodox and socially high place South Indian Brahmin and the sexually free individualistic American girl takes an unexpected turn in the mysterious murder of the girl in the location of a ruined palace during the chaos of the riot.

Tharoor poses question about cultural identity and presents an impassioned plea for understanding and tolerance among cultures. Priscilla questions the very foundation of the traditional Indian marriage system where the elders of the family map out and arrange the marriage of the grown-up adult children. She is unable to swallow this marriage as the life time commitment between a boy and a girl. Even though Lakshman feels a great level of perfect wavelength with Priscilla, he is not bold enough to come out of the niche of traditional marriage and declare that she is a better, more fulfilling and satisfying match for him. This highly significant comment reflects how the construction of social identities in inter-personal relationship is at odds in Indian and Western cultures. Naturally, he is helpless to challenge the marriage imposed upon him by society and this leads to the estrangement in their relationship.

Tharoor believes in the Vedas the Puranas and the ancient sacred texts that sexual desire is the primordial urge and the first seed of human motivation. It is the progenitor of thought and the first of the four major goals man- before wealth, religion and salvation. He asserts that "kama is even a god because desire is a sort of sacred energy" (157). But the so-called social taboo, discrimination and social norms disharmonize his relationship with Priscilla. When Priscilla demands Lakshman to wed her, he retorts: "I've agonized over the pain and disruption this would cause, to my family, my daughter, my work, my place in the world" (217). He is a typical Indian telling Priscilla "In my culture, no man with any self respect gives his mangalsutra, his ring, his name, to women who's been with other men before" (218).

In America, marriage is a bond between two lovers but in India, marriage is an arrangement between families, one of the means for perpetuating the social order. Tharoor's alter ego Lakshman opines "The West believes that love leads to marriage, which is why so many marriages in the West end when love dies. In India we know that marriage leads to love, which is why divorce is almost unknown here, and love lives on even when the marital partner dies, because it is rooted in something fundamental in our society as well as our psyche" (103).

Gurinder Singh, a police officer, considers the love affair between Lakshman and Priscilla as a kind of exploitation. He equates this to the exploitation made by the British on India. He says, "The Brits came to exploit us, took what they wanted and left, and in the process they changed us" (170). Then he finds fault with Priscilla and accuses "You come to change us but in the process you also take what you want. Isn't that just another form of exploitation?" (170). Gurinder condemns Hart for thrusting the coke in India. It is a kind of exploitation of the Americans. He praises the indigenous cool drinks such as lassi and nimbu-pani for their supremacy for more than thousand years. He accuses "The friggling East India Company came here to trade and stayed on to rule; we don't want history to repeat itself with Coke sucking Cola" (255). Tharoor blames the commercial intrusions in the form of multinational companies, coke, Amway products which may destabilize Indian economy and democracy.

Without knowing the Indian history, geography, art and culture, Americans want to establish their culture through NGOs and this is strongly criticized by Tharoor. Hart accuses and complains the drawbacks in the postal system, water supply and services of air-condition in the hotels. It is so vivid from the words of Priscilla, an American when she accuses her father Mr.Hart who is the managing director of the coke in India: "... he never put his foot in a bazaar, he never visited the servants' quarters, he never saw the inside of a temple or a mosque, he never saw an Indian movie, he never made a real Indian friend" (32). He wanted to win over India through coke. As a typical imperialist, he wants to enjoy the power and practices it but not ready to shoulder the responsibility.

Priscilla rates down the profession of the managing director of coke company whereas the coke had created a myth among the middle class innocents that it was a rare and precious product. It is clear from the opinion of the classmates of Priscilla that they had a very high esteem on Mr. Hart since he was the managing director of Coke. Tharoor attacks on the American imperialism on Indian economy. Indian politicians mock at Coke as a joke. Tharoor blames: "drinking your Coke was a way of exploiting the exploiter....Americans ... have no history" (87). The attacks on coke in India are particularly bizarre. Indian MPs in the Parliament accuse coke as "looting the country" (31) and "destroying the health of Indians" (31). One firebrand socialist, George Fernandes, demanded to know, "What kind of a country is India, where you can get Coke in the cities but not clean drinking water in the villages?,"(31) and one of his comrades stood up and asked in Parliament, "Why do we need Coca-Cola?" (31). Rudyard Hart says, "... we at Coke don't care about history; we don't worry too

much about the past. It's your future, we want to be a part of" (205). The casual attitude of Americans toward the "past" is the shock to that of the Indians who are deeply immersed in reimagining their history.

Hart says that his present visit to India has thought him a lot about India. He admits that in his previous visit "I saw a market, not a people. At my work, I saw a target, not a need. With Nandini, I saw an opportunity, not a lover" (263). Rudyard finds an excitement of discovering a woman's body in Nandhini. Unlike Katharine, she allures Hart with her buxom beauty. Nandhini, a femme fatale is an exotic. For Hart she comes as a source of pure and unqualified satisfaction. The love between Rudyard and Nandini is crude animal sex- 'LUDUS'. Instead of the expected coyness in an unmarried Indian girl, what is seen is a sexual aggressiveness reminiscent of Western porn stars. S.K Prathap considers Nandhini "a subaltern with a loosely formed identity who sells her sexuality to her white boss to go up in the social ladder" (34). Nandhini convinces herself and takes the liberty of a wife when she shares the bed of Mrs. And Mr. Hart. Of course she is confused with bedding well for wedding bell.

Mr. Hart was involved in an effort to revive the operations of the Coca-Cola company, which was expelled from the country in 1977. In 1976 Rudyard Hart was named the Marketing Director of Coke for India. Coke had opened its first plant in 1950. Late 79 there were 22 plants with about 200000 distributors selling about 35 million cases of coke a year in India. Hart plans that India is a country with a middle class about a hundred million strong and one could not get each of them to drink just one small coke a week? He argued that with the right approach they should be selling 200 million cases in India, not 35 million. That was a conservative statement. Coke became an object of political controversy. The Indian MPs in parliament accused of "looting the country" (31), destroying the health of Indians. The sale of Coke in India was encouraging in even in Janatha Dal government. India showed a better growth rate compared to coke in Japan.

It is obvious from the words of Priscilla that Hart's sexual exploitation of Nandhini is mere a compensation of his failure in promoting the business of coke in India. His exploitation is seen in Priscilla's words: "Don't you realize you were just trying to make up for not being able to penetrate the Indian market? What was he doing in India? Trying to sell Coke. For God's sake, it is not as if he was bringing in medicines, or new technology, or clean drinking water, or electrification" (77). He didn't construct dams, or power stations or even an underground railway – useful things, necessary things. He was reduced to spending his time trying to explore schemes to get it back into the Indian market. Indians are being deprived of a wonderful product, and we're being deprived of a chance to lead in this country too, as we do in so many countries. You'll have American products, American ideas, American values all spreading throughout the land.

Tharoor says that in writing of Indian culture, he is very deeply conscious of his own subjectivity; arguably, there is more than one culture and certainly more than one view of Indian culture. The culture of every country determines the food, cloth, music, likes and dislikes and every aspect of a man's life. Despite one's education and social contact his traits of culture come to the fore at the time of crisis. When the Americans tried to infiltrate their culture on their Indian counter parts, the traits of Indian culture come to their rescue.

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Fantasied Scientific Cultural Transcendence in Octavia Butler's *Fledgling*

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Abstract: Octavia Butler's final standalone vampiric novel *Fledgling* published in 2006 is chosen for study of this paper. As the title suggests the paper tries to analyse the cultural aspects set in a world of fantasied reality induced by Butler in *Fledgling*. Butler as an authentic science fiction writer, in all her writings has presented the problems of varied alien cultures mixed with human community in the existing earth. The paper begins with a brief introduction of the writer Octavia Butler and a short summary of the novel, *Fledgling* chosen for study of this paper. She projects a similar vampire-human symbiotic 'Ina culture' in the novel *Fledgling*. Butler shows her brilliance in the possibility of bringing reality into fantasy by weaving varied distinct themes of human culture like cultural conflict, cultural hegemony and racial discrimination into the realm of Ina culture. The present paper tries to give a microcosmic view of these cultural themes that lead to the evolutionary path of intellectual progress of culture from its basic form to the state of transcendence attained through the ladder of scientific advancement. Thus the paper justifies the title through its vivid analysis of Butler's *Fledgling* with various citations referred from the novel and projects the novel, as a cultural lighthouse that throws light on distinct and varied concepts of culture which leads the reader to an understanding and enlightenment towards them.

Key words: scientific fantasy, genetic engineering, cultural hegemony, racial discrimination, cultural transcendence.

Octavia Estelle Butler (June 22, 1947 – February 24, 2006) was an American science fiction writer. A recipient of both the Hugo, Locus and Nebula awards, Butler was one of the best-known women in the field. In 1995, she became the first science fiction writer to receive the MacArthur Fellowship, nicknamed the Genius Grant. Her works include three series such as Patternist Series, Lilith's Brood and the Parable Series: wherein the Patternist series include five novels under the titles Patternmaster, Mind of my Mind, Survivor, Wild Seed and Clay's Ark; Lilith's Brood series include three novels such as Dawn, Adulthood Rites and Imago; and the The Parable Series include two novels such as Parable of the Sower and Parable of the Talents. Apart from these series she is credited for the publication of two great novels such as Kindred and *Fledgling* and a short story collection titled Bloodchild and Other Stories.

Octavia Butler's final standalone vampiric novel *Fledgling* published in 2006 is chosen for study of this paper. As the title suggests the paper tries to analyse the cultural aspects set in a world of fantasied reality induced by Butler in *Fledgling*. Butler as an authentic science fiction writer, in all her writings has presented the problems of varied alien cultures mixed with human community in the existing earth. She is indeed sharp and skillful in directing the social issues as well as the individual advent to remain stable against desperate odds that might crop up in such fantasied alien-human mixed community cultures. She projects a similar vampire-human symbiotic 'Ina culture' in the novel *Fledgling*.

Butler shows her brilliance in the possibility of bringing reality into fantasy by weaving varied distinct themes of human culture like cultural conflict, cultural hegemony and racial discrimination into the realm of Ina culture. The present paper tries to give a microcosmic view of these cultural themes that lead to the evolutionary path of intellectual progress of culture from its basic form to the state of transcendence attained through the ladder of scientific advancement.

Fledgling is the story detailed in first person narrative by a young black vampire-human who awakens in a cave in dark woods with extreme hunger and badly mutilated to cause traumatic amnesia; seeking food and answers. This led her of no memory of what might have caused her such an injury or what she is or her past life before the mutilated awakening. The first half of the novel slowly unravels the answers to all her mental dubiousness; her past and the events that led to her desperate situation. When Shori is able to walk, she unwittingly returns to a burned-out village; unaware of where she is or why she walked there, she begins to sift through the rubble, looking for survivors and salvaging what she can. Shori feels a connection to the burned rubble but has no idea why and cannot remember anything of her past, including her name.

She is accidentally picked up by a twenty three year old man named Wright Hamlin in his car who believed her to be an abused child of ten to twelve years old escaping from her home. He asks her several questions and finds that she doesn't know where to go and remembers nothing about herself in spite of her serious injuries, so he decides to take her to his home and gives her a name as Renee by himself and calls so till he comes to know her real name as Shori. The bodily fragrance (scent) of Wright was more inviting for her as

she quenches her thirst by feeding on his blood near his neck that is taken aback at first but quickly succumbs to Shori and begs her not to stop. Wright takes Shori to live secretly in his home, soon after they reached he realizes that although Shori looks like a child, she is much older than she appears and the two begin a sexual relationship. This is the first glimpse Butler offers the reader into Shori's true identity; through her recovery, Shori gradually will discover that she is not human. She eventually wanders at night near his residence to find others to feed on so as to avoid taking more blood from Wright and as a matter that it may drain his health as she was emotionally and physically acquainted to him.

She feeds on four to five people irrespective of their age and gender but chooses one fat old woman named Theodora Harden to be her symbiont since she really enjoyed the pleasure she felt when the young vampire sucked blood from her and eagerly wanted to spend her remaining life with the stranger who bit her. Wright along with the young vampire later finds that she is a 53 year old young vampire named Shori Matthews, from her father Iosif Petrescu whom they met during their second visit to a burnt rubble near the cave of her injurious awakening. She and Wright are taken in a helicopter by Iosif to visit the living place of her father's family which included her brothers their human symbionts and other workers. Shori learns her identity to be a short and dark skinned vampire belonging to a specific vampire community named 'Ina' and that she had been born as an experimentation of genetic engineering to possess the human qualities especially to bear the heat of sunlight and to be diurnal in habitat while all the other vampires of her kind are tall, thin, pale and nocturnal in habitat.

The second half of the novel reveals that her father's family was cruelly executed with fire, gasoline and guns by a group of secret perpetrators. Shori eventually adopts two surviving human symbionts of her father's family named Brook and Celia as her own. Shori and her symbionts Wright, Brook and Celia took refuge at Gordons, another Ina family in North California wherein she takes one symbiont named Joel from the Gordons and gathers Theodora as her symbiont with the help of the Gordons and forms a family of her own with five symbionts. Shori, her symbionts and the Gordons encounter a similar attack by the same perpetrators and managed to escape; they had executed all the attackers and have caught three men alive to know the details of the attackers. Shori along with the Gordons learn from them that yet another Ina family named 'Silks' were responsible for her present desolate state and the destruction of both her father and mother's family. They discern that Shori and the ones she loved were wildly hunted to be killed by the Silks who were motivated by their extreme disdain for the genetic experimentation that created Shori.

Consequently the family of Gordons summoned for a Council of Judgement on Shori's behalf inviting thirteen important families of the Ina community. The Council proceeds for three days, and all the members of thirteen Ina family gather at a big hall and watch the crime details presented by both the accuser and the accused. The elderly people of Ina community give the judgement based on Ina law listening to and counting the majority of opinions given by each member of every family present in the council. In the morning of second day of the council Shori is shocked to find Theodora her favourite symbiont to be killed by a human symbiont named Jack Roan of Katherine Dahlman, the advocate of the Silk's family. The council members were intelligent, experienced and honest to admit that Shori was innocent and the Silks along with Katherine Dahlman were punished. The family of Silks were scattered so that they had their sons taken from them, to be adopted by other Ina families and the Silk line will die out; Katharine Dahlman is sentenced to have her legs amputated, however, is consequently executed as she refused to accept her punishment. The story ends with Shori being adopted by the Braithwaites, a mature female Ina family to teach her the history, customs, lifestyle and law of the Ina community for two to three years.

It is more evident from the story of *Fledgling* that all the events, thematic facts, settings and plot construction built by Butler are greatly based on the theme of 'culture'; as the sole struggle of Shori Matthews, the protagonist of the novel is laid on the most challenging task of finding her own identity and the communal society to which she belonged to and after knowing a little about herself from her father, she constantly strives hard to get herself fit within the community of 'Ina' amidst her loss of memory and communal identity along with her added disadvantages of genetic and racial difference from that of the other vampires. Though Shori gradually learns everything and regains her identity as a typical vampire of 'Ina' community during the course of the novel, in the beginning she finds herself removed from her community and feels more guilty when she is unable to perform duties like honouring the dead members of her family and in protecting and nurturing her symbionts with the vampiric knowledge of developing a customary symbiotic family of her own.

Culture is defined in different ways in different fields of study such as psychology, anthropology, social history etc. and the meaning of the word culture had undergone many changes right from the time it has been introduced. A very common and fundamental understanding of the term is sought through the definition of culture by Macmillan Dictionary which states that "Culture is a set of ideas, beliefs, and ways of behaving of a particular organization or group of people." Accordingly Butler introduces the 'Ina,' a vampire community that has a set of ideas, beliefs and ways of behaving characteristic of its own. Iosif the father of Shori explains to her about their community as, "Our kind. We are Ina. We are probably responsible for much of the world's vampire

mythology, but among ourselves, we are Ina” (66). Butler presents the Ina community scattered all over the world and their histories goes ten thousand years back.

“No, they’ve been scattered all over Europe and the Middle East for millennia, or so their records say. They claim to have written records that go back more than ten thousand years. Iosif told me about them. I think he believed what he was saying, but I never quite believed him. Ten thousand years!” She shook her head. “Written history just doesn’t go back that far. Anyway, now Ina are scattered all over the world. You just happen to be descended from people who lived in what Iosif used to call ‘vampire country.’ (130)

Butler is mythopoeic in presenting her Ina vampires a bit different from that of the classical vampires described in books and movies; as they function as a normal community separated from the everyday humanity by feeding only on human symbionts who have accepted to live with them. Shori and Brook, the human symbiont of Iosif describes the long believed myth of Ina to be as,

“He told Wright and me that there is an Ina theory that claims the Ina were sent here from another world.”...“... For a while, there was an idea that Ina were angels of some kind. And there’s the old standby legend of the Ina being sent here by a great mother goddess. You’re all supposed to be stuck here until you prove yourselves,” she said. (130)

“It isn’t, really,” Brook said. “They’re not supposed to go home in some spiritual way after they die. Some future generation of them is supposed to leave this world en masse and go to paradise—or back to the homeworld. It might be mythology or it might be that you and I have finally found—and joined—those extraterrestrial aliens that people keep claiming to spot on lonely back roads.” (131)

The Ina are the nearly immortal nocturnal vampiric species who derive sustenance from the drinking of human blood and live alongside of the human community for several centuries. They appear tall, thin, pale and more human except for their sharp front canines. Iosif gives the details of similarity of the Ina with humans as, “We’re too genetically similar to them for any other explanation to be likely. Not all of us believe that, though. We have our own traditions—our own folklore, our own religions” (67). Though they are physically superior to humans, both in strength and the ability to heal from injury, the Ina depend on humans to survive. Iosif describes their healing power as,

“We do,” Iosif said. “But for Ina, that tends to mean someone to fix badly broken bones so that they heal straight or binding serious wounds so that they’ll heal faster.”...“You don’t want to see what they mean by ‘a serious wound,’” one of the men said. “Intestines spilling out, legs gone, that sort of thing. (72)

Each Ina develops what they call a symbiotic relationship with a group of humans choosing based on the impact of their own scent felt over them, usually numbering seven or eight which involve frequent contact, intense intimacy, and the sharing of blood and pleasure. The saliva of Ina is addictive to human as the Ina’s venom provides significant boost to their humans’ immune systems extending their lives up to 200 years, and within a few feedings, a human is bound to its Ina; the benefits of longer life and better health to humans serve the Ina as well by providing a long-term food source. No matter how much the Ina may claim that the relationship is mutual and symbiotic, the Ina can and does exert ultimate control.

Though *Fledgling* is a story about vampires and Ina community, Butler had not escaped the insertion of socio-cultural issues of our own world of reality like cultural hegemony, racial discrimination, scientific advancement etc. being intertwined into her Ina culture. The Ina are a species who are intelligent, just and democratic in managing aspects of social-cultural issues. They do have a process like ‘Council of Judgement’ to practice law and order in order to maintain peace and justice. Daniel Gordon, the elder son of the Gordon family describes the details of such a Council of Judgement to Shori as,

...We can see that our Councils aren’t games like the trials humans have. The work of a Council of Judgment is to learn the truth and then decide what to do about it within our law. It isn’t about following laws so strictly that the guilty go unpunished or the innocent are made to suffer. It isn’t about protecting everyone’s rights. It’s about finding the truth, period, and then deciding what to do about it. (220)

It is based on a specific ‘rule of seven,’ on which the case of Shori is handled. Hayden, an elderly member of the Gordons family call for a Council of Judgement on behalf of Shori as she had no one alive in her family.

First, what Hayden called “the rule of seven” had to be satisfied. Seven families with whom both the Silks and I share a common ancestor within seven generations of the oldest living Silk or Matthews had to agree to send representatives to Punta Nublada for a Council of Judgment that would judge the accusations that I and the Gordon family were making against the Silk family. (197)

Despite the maintenance of just, peace and democracy through intellectual means like Council of Judgement, there are certain vampires who dare to commit serious crimes as in the human community. Such a

serious crime seems to be the plot of the novel *Fledgling*; the family of Silks who dared to exterminate both the father and mother families of Shori.

Socialistic critics like Karl Marx and Italian Marxist, Antonio Gramsci have contributed a lot towards the concept of Cultural Hegemony. Cultural Hegemony results when a set of ideas, beliefs and perceptions of an individual or a group of individuals try to impose their ideals or create a damaging effect over the other group of individuals without their consent since because they are weaker to be dominated or because they possess an opposing ideal towards their imposing dominator.

In the case of Ina community represented in the novel *Fledgling*, the Ina doesn't have any particular political sector to rule over them rather they rely on the elder most living vampires of their community to preside as judge to solve various social issues that creep in their community. Consequently Milo Silk, an elderly member of the Silk family seems to be the elder most living vampire of the Ina community. The age of Milo Silk is stated in the novel as,

Ironically, the oldest person present was Milo Silk. He was 541 years old—ancient even for an Ina. According to the world history I had been reading, when he was born, there were no Europeans or Australia. Ferdinand and Isabella, who would someday send Christopher Columbus out exploring, were not yet even married. (231)

The family of Silks possessing Milo Silk has a dominating hand in the Council of Judgement of the Ina community. Knowing the fact, Katherine Dahlman, the advocate of the Silks and the family of the Silks bravely indulged themselves to the extreme of attacking and killing the families of Shori and her symbiont Theodora Harden. Alice Rappaport, a member of the council proves this by stating that, “Katharine and the Silks are liars, people who use murder but never think to use the law. They know better than anyone here that we can't let them go unpunished” (295). The Silks and Katherine neither gathered any Council of Judgement nor notified the families of Shori, to solve or clarify their disdain towards their attempt of genetic engineering. Zoë Fotopoulos, another member present in the Council of Judgement states that, “...It seems that all this killing was done because Shori's families were experimenting with ways of using human DNA to enable us to walk in daylight. And it seems that no legal methods of questioning or stopping the experiments were even attempted.” (294)

It is clear that the Silks had the courage of hiding the involvement of their family in the attack, or they had the hope of convincing the entire Ina community to believe that what they did was to maintain the Ina culture to exist as pure bred vampires. This insidious act of the Silks is more evidently present in the real world of human community, as political tactics used by great politicians to hide their wrong doings and in maintaining a good image before the public which is completely deceptive. Their act rightly suits the speech of Noam Chomsky, an American linguist and political activist who states that, “The only justification for repressive institutions is material and cultural deficit. But such institutions, at certain stages of history, perpetuate and produce such a deficit, and even threaten human survival.”

Similar to the existence of cultural hegemony, the prevalence of racial discrimination is also apparent in the Ina community. African-American Civil Rights Movement leader and activist Martin Luther King, Jr. defines discrimination as, “a hellhound that gnaws at Negroes in every waking moment of their lives to remind them that the lie of their inferiority is accepted as truth in the society dominating them.”

Shori is a dark-skinned vampire born out of the genes taken from a black woman chosen on purpose to endure the heat of sunlight and walk during the day by covering her body. Shori comes to know about her mother through Stefan, her brother and son of Iosif as, “...I had been right to believe that one of my mothers had been a black human” (76). Shori is the mixture of three mothers one human and two Ina,

Our mothers were three sisters,” Stefan said, “and one human woman who donated DNA. Also, there were two elder mothers—our mothers' surviving mothers. The two elder mothers were the ones who made it possible for us—you in particular—to be born with better-than-usual protection from the sun and more daytime alertness. (77)

The other vampires of the Ina are pale and white-skinned which is not susceptible to heat and burns under the sun. This great difference of Shori is both a blessing and a curse in her life as she is adored as a celebrity by some of her community while at the same time is being ignored and hated as ‘other,’ ‘dirty little nigger,’ ‘mongrel bitch’ etc. Stefan informs Shori that,

Shori, our people have been trying to do this for generations. If you could remember, you'd know what a celebrity you are. People traveled from South America, Europe, Asia, and Africa to see you and to understand what our mothers had done. (78)

It is not the fact that Shori is black or dark-skinned that turns some of her people against her; it is the fact that she is not pure. She is not wholly a member of the Ina species. She is a hybrid, a miscegenated other who is the same yet different. She functions like the Ina, but she looks different, with dark skin and small features. The pride of some Ina makes them reject her because she isn't like them.

Butler compares Shori's lack of cultural memory to the experience of young slaves brought to America from Africa, ripped off from their families and tribes. In a lot of respects, it's really not the same. Slaves had families on the plantations to teach them all about that culture. But it's not the same as the community they were

part of prior to coming to America. Like Shori, they were cut off involuntarily and violently from their heritage and have little way to connect with that. But in Shori's case, it doesn't last very long. She eventually does find her vampire people and they were beings teaching her how to be Ina.

Apart from the aspects of cultural hegemony and racial discrimination Butler cleverly inserts modern technology and scientific advancements like genetic engineering to keep the characters, plot and setting of her novel more realistic, non-supernatural and human like. The novel stands as a motivation for scientific advancement in this aspect. Shori is an experiment, and the experiment works. The Ina species can be made better through science. While much of our society rejects human genetic experimentation as an usurpation of the Creator's role, *Fledgling* suggests that it can be an important part of saving our species. The results may be different, but they can help build a better humanity, one that can withstand diseases such as cancer and AIDS. *Fledgling* on the whole is an implicit treatise on why science is so important and why we should not set up barriers against its progress.

In spite of the existence of socio-cultural issues like cultural hegemony, power politics, racial discrimination, bigotry, scientific and technological advancement etc., in each and every community real or fantasy; every individual is supposed to understand what is culture to live in it and transcend himself/herself/itself with elevated divine thoughts and actions that cater to living a life at complete peace and serenity. Italian Marxist, Antonio Gramsci defines culture as "exercise of thought, acquisition of general ideas, habit of connecting causes and effects ... I believe that it means thinking well, whatever one thinks, and therefore acting well, whatever one does" (23).

Accordingly, Simon De Beauvoir suggests that "culture must be apprehended through the free movement of a transcendence" (748-749). Every culture is in dire need of transcendence to lead a peaceful life at present and to pass on a model of ethical and healthy life of past to the future. Vaclav Havel, the president of the Czech Republic at a speech made in Independence Hall, Philadelphia on July 4, 1994 states that, "In this postmodern world, cultural conflicts are becoming more dangerous than any time in history. A new model of coexistence is needed, based on man's transcending himself." He also defines cultural transcendence as,

... a deeply and joyously experienced need to be in harmony even with what we ourselves are not, what we do not understand, what seems distant from us in time and space, but with which we are nevertheless mysteriously linked because, together with us, all this constitutes a single world.

Thus the paper justifies the title through its vivid analysis of Butler's *Fledgling* with various citations referred from the novel and projects the novel, as a cultural lighthouse that throws light on distinct and varied concepts of culture which leads the reader to an understanding and enlightenment towards them. The paper also proves the novel as the one which acts as an undying force to self evaluate the pros and cons of the culture in which we live and the one that inflicts a burning desire to extend a fruitful contribution to the enhancement of the culture to which we belong.

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Culture as Ecumenical Philosophy of Life in the Select Works of Paulo Coelho

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Abstract: This article attempts to establish the notion that any culture despite its distinctness, specificity, multi-layered mental programming within itself and difference serves to bring people together and helps them to live happily and harmoniously. Three popular works of the Brazilian writer Paulo Coelho, namely *The Alchemist*, *Veronika Decides to Die* and *By the River Piedra I Sat Down and Cried* are analysed to prove that differences, being aware of the inevitable existence of that and becoming one with that enable one to achieve the most desired end in life namely contentment and happiness. Change of place from the native soil to alien naturally leads to varied exposures and experiences. Attaining wisdom from the cultural differences drives Santiago to realise his long longed and cherished dream in *The Alchemist*. In *Veronika Decides to Die*, the momentous decision of Veronika to court death peacefully turns out to be a vain attempt. Consequently her being admitted in the Hospital brings her close to the inmates of the mental asylum. This throws open fresh light over the behavioural culture of the so called abnormalities and aberrations and the resultant revelations are so awe inspiring that Veronika, who is in the thralldom of death, craves to live. The third work, *By the River Piedra I Sat Down and Cried*, makes it dawn on Pilar that identification with one religious sector will be a possible and feasible source to realise what one's actual desire is and to accomplish that. The writer's portrayals of the cultural and behavioural phenomena in all these three works are examined at the physical, psychological and spiritual levels to substantiate the idea that the role of culture is that of ecumenical.

Key Words: Centripetal, Centrifugal, Cultural Cluster, Ethnocentrism, Relativism, Subjectivity, Identity.

According to the most conventional definition of 'culture', the word refers "to the beliefs, rituals and practices of a given social or ethnic group or nation" (Habib 172). While anthropologists like Levi-Strauss doubted any distinction between culture and nature, psychologists like Freud did insist on opposition between "culture or civilization and unconscious and instinctual life" (172). As per the literary tradition, literature and other arts are deemed "the repository of culture, of a complex of aesthetic, moral and spiritual values which are threatened by the continued advance of a mechanistic and materialistic civilization devoted to the pursuit of wealth" (173). Owing to the importance gained, cultural criticism has designed that the study of literature should include the "economic institutions of literary production, the ideological context of prevailing beliefs, and broad political issues of class, race and gender, and the operations of power" (173). Cultural analysis therefore stresses on "what is specific or unique – in terms of time, place and ideology – to a given cultural and literary moment" (173). Consequently the methodology for the cultural studies has also encompassed in addition to the conventional strategies of reading and research, "field study, empirical observation, interviewing, active participation and interdisciplinary collaboration" (173).

Cultural studies are also classified under various labels viz Marxism, Structuralism, New Historicism, Feminism and Post Colonialism. Culture has been viewed as an instrument of domination or oppression and the Frankfurt school has reduced modern mass culture to a "bland commercialism". Prominent analysts of this school Adorno and Horkheimer have produced an incisive critique of modern culture entitled *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (1994). In a chapter called "The Culture Industry: Enlightenment as Mass Deception", they argue and establish that "culture and monopoly capitalism imposes a sterile uniformity on everything" (174). They very strongly condemn by naming the system of life "culture industry". According to them, this serves not to enhancement or enlightenment or freedom but to "control people's consciousness, impressing upon them their own powerlessness, stubbornly refusing to engage their ability to think independently, equating pleasure with complete capitulation to the system of power, reducing individuals to mere expendable copies of the identities manufactured by the media and film, pursuing the world as essentially meaningless and governed by blind chance (and not by virtues as merit and work)" (Horkheimer, 147). In short the culture industry does not offer any meaningful explanation of life and the ideologies promoted are vague and non-committal.

The bitter repercussions are harvested currently and life does not hold rosy promises. The prevailing beliefs and the operations of power do bring in changes in the attitude of people and the five most important words namely "industry, democracy, class, art and culture" are attributed with new and important meanings. The word, culture quite contrary to its previous meaning namely 'nurturing or training' has expanded to denote first a general state of mind associated with the idea of perfection; then the general intellectual condition of

society; then finally as “whole way of life, material, intellectual and spiritual” and this whole way of life “includes areas of private experience” (Williams 17). Culture specific has its own distinctness, specificity, multi-layered mental programming within itself and sharp contrast or difference with another. These factors of variations though bring to light the existing variety of life styles and attitudes towards life, they also serve to unite people enabling them to forget all their differences and develop a sense of solidarity, identity and belongingness. This cultural relativism nullifies all the prevailing differences and knit people together and makes them live their life happily and harmoniously.

Paulo Coelho, the most popular Brazilian experimentalist, has taken a literary journey which becomes “a truly initiatory experience” and he is himself “transformed forever as he learns to understand the nature of truth through the simplicity of life” (on the blurb of *The Pilgrimage*). Coelho, hailed for evoking “loyalty and emotion around the world” analyses in his works the “mysteries of love and life”. His books are deemed to have a “life-enhancing impact on millions of people” (blurb of *the Alchemist*). His three works entitled *The Alchemist*, *Veronika Decides to Die* and *By the River Piedra I Sat Down and Wept* reiterate the importance of pursuing one’s own dream and reassert that the essential wisdom should guide every individual to listen to one’s heart and follow his/her dreams.

The Alchemist is about the pursuit of not merely Santiago but that of the Englishman and the alchemist. Through this work, Coelho has vividly delineated the life of Shepherds and the life cycle of the travelers. Santiago, a shepherd from Andalusia is a lover of travelling and he roams around in pursuit of his dream. He realises that when people are unable to choose their own destinies and lose control of what is happening to self, they believe that lives are controlled by fate and that is not true. He is also taught not to forget the language of omens and one should follow one’s destiny through to its conclusion. The work, as it teaches most invaluable concepts of life to Santiago, also teaches the readers the vitality of opportunities in life.

Santiago’s contact with the old woman, with King of Salem and his own experiences with the sheep have taught him many things about life. His interaction with the crystal merchant constitutes yet another significant pace of his life as it disclosed the work culture to be incorporated and executed to achieve success in the worldly and personal sense. Experiences in the desert reveal some of the most invaluable lessons of life. Coelho’s description of the culture, beliefs and attitudes of people living in the desert or travelling in the desert are really awesome and awe inspiring. Santiago realises disobedience in the desert means death. When he sets his foot on the desert, the vast stretches of sand impresses him so greatly that its elemental force silences him. He ruminates, “I’ve learned things from the sheep, and I’ve learned things from crystal. I can learn something from the desert, too. It seems old and wise” (Coelho, *The Alchemist* 70). His ability to understand intuition as the universal language that deals with the past and the present of all language naturally is a great revelation. He clearly comprehends, “intuition is really a sudden immersion of the soul into the universal current of life, where the histories of all people are connected, and we are able to know everything, because it’s all written there” (71).

The fear of unknown is unknown to people who are bent on achieving what they need and want as one’s life stories and the history of the world are written by the same hand. Persistence in the pursuit added with courage and patience will make one be alert to see the signs and omens left by God along the path. They are the language used by God to indicate what one should do. Santiago’s experiences with Fatima, the desert woman, the desert culture, beliefs, life style, governance and tradition are real revelations that signify the ethnocentric contribution. This is particularly important in case of global dealings when the individual is imbued with the idea that methods, materials or ideas that worked in the home country will also work abroad. Environmental differences are ignored. While symbols represent the most superficial and outermost layer of culture, values established with lives of heroes and rituals constitute the deepest manifestations of culture. Santiago, hailed from a village carrying its impressions, is able to understand, acquire and adopt the system and culture of all the places he has moved around. From one he has got exposed to multiple cultures and this centrifugal mobility has enhanced and enriched his life in all possible ways pushing him actively forward to achieve his goal.

While Santiago has moved from unitariness to multiplicity, Veronika the young female protagonist in *Veronika Decides to Die* centripetally gets transplanted from the common and regular cultural construct to that of the world of insanity. Coelho’s “intimate knowledge of the world of the mental hospital – the treatments, the relationships between doctors and patients, the comforts and anxieties of living in a place like that” (Veronika 17) results in the exploration into the inscrutable and intricate world of insanity from an entirely different perspective. Zedka, one of the inmates of Villette defines “anyone who lives in their own world is mad. Like schizophrenics, psychopaths, maniacs. I mean people who are different from others... I want to continue being mad, living my life the way I dream it, and not the way other people want it to be” (*Veronika* 30-31).

Coelho clearly states that since because the so called normal people do the same thing that does not mean they are normal. The novel deals with individuals with a distinct issue. Zedka’s conception and longing for impossible love and her astral travel owing to insulin shock provide her the required experience to realize life. A mental asylum is a place where all forms of neuroses and psychoses are accepted. Dr. Igor defines reality. “It’s whatever the majority deems it to be. It’s not necessarily the best or most logical, but it’s the one that has become adapted to the desires of society as a whole” (78). Through this character, Coelho has made a

drastic and accurate analysis of the problems of many in the world. He calls it the disease of the soul. Vitriol is the name given by him to the embittered people. The right condition for the disease 'Bitterness' occur when the person becomes afraid of the so-called reality. Most embittered people, though contrive to live outside constituting no threat to society or others because of the high walls of security they built around themselves and appear to participate in the world, are actually totally isolated from the world. Schizophrenics have their own of separate realities and can move in and out of it.

In the hospital is a group viz Fraternity which is constituted by the cured members of Villeté. Mari, yet another vital character and member poses the most logical but unanswerable question – "wouldn't you say that understanding life was a real problem?" (90). A Sufi master guides the Fraternity thus:

... You have two choices: to control your mind or to let your mind control you. ... Don't confuse madness with a loss of control. ... (The so-called mad) can say whatever he thinks and do whatever he wants. ... That's how it should be with you; stay mad, but behave like normal people. Run the risk of being different, but learn to do so without attracting attention. Concentrate on this flower and allow the real "I" to reveal itself. ... (The real 'I') It's what you are, not what others make of you". (90-92)

Coelho has also attacked upon the existing legal system through Mari, an ex- lawyer. Life outside Villeté is becoming unbearably difficult for anyone owing to an excess of order. She contemplates, "society had more and more rules and laws that contradict the rules and new rules that contradicted the laws. ... The laws had not been created to resolve problems, but in order to prolong quarrels indefinitely" (95). Mari once a successful lawyer determines not to go back to law. She resolves, "I'm not going to spend my time with mad people who think they're normal and important but whose sole function in life is to make everything more difficult for others" (98-99).

Through projecting Veronika's problem, namely the denial of life, to a group of people for whom neither life nor death, space or time existed and to the other which is inclined towards living, Coelho triggers everyone to think "What if that happened to me? I do have a chance to live. Am I making good use of it?" (101). Veronika is quite passionate about being a Pianist but regulations and expectations of the parents imposed on her deny her the chance to blossom into a musician. Mari after her encounter with Veronika gets a clear vision about life and she feels no more stifled or suffocated but highly relieved and liberated. She discloses in all earnestness, "Live. If you live, God will live with you. If you refuse to run his risk, He'll retreat to that distant Heaven and he merely a subject for philosophical speculation" (138). While Zedka declares, "... madness freed me" (148), Mari proclaims, "(I will) teach (my friends) how to be mad too in order to be wise" (138). Coelho's contention in this work is that each human being, with their own distinct qualities, instincts, forms of pleasure and desire for adventure, is unique. The imposition of a collective way of behaving by the society is mostly unquestioningly accepted by the majority lest they should be branded mad. Forcing oneself to be the same as everyone else will cause neuroses, psychoses and paranoia. While God did not create a single leaf the same as another, being difficult is regarded mad.

Eduard, yet another young male inmate of Villeté, is the son of Yugoslavian ambassador. Despite his keen desire to study, good artistic taste, facility with language and genuine interest in politics, Eduard has lacked the vital trait of a diplomat namely to mix up with people. His interests are quite unanticipated. He is drawn towards the lives of those whose encounter with a single magical moment set them off in pursuit of their own vision of paradise. He aspires to undertake a course on painting to show in all colour canvas their visions of paradise and when his wish is disapproved, he has become a deviant showing complete disregard for basic good manners. He vehemently states, "One day, I'll paint a series entitled "Visions of paradise". It'll be a visual history of what men and women have previously only experienced in their hearts" (171). His firm faith is that nothing else in the world will give him joy and pleasure. The denial by parents naturally results in the diagnoses of a rare form of schizophrenia and he is brought to Villeté and is treated with electroconvulsive therapy.

Veronika as is unable to bring in any sea change in her life is highly bored with the monotony and her desire to be an artist is objected by her parents. Despite her youth, beauty, economic stability and freedom, she ruminates that she would gain nothing by continuing to live. Everything around her in the world is wrong and she is utterly powerless to set things right. Though man struggles to survive and not to succumb, ultimately everything ends with death. That is eternal freedom and oblivion. Resultantly she chooses to die peacefully by consuming sleeping pills without any qualms. Her attempt to end her life turns out to be unsuccessful and is brought to Villeté when she has lost her conscience. Dr. Igor has been experimenting to find the cure of vitriol. Veronika, struggling in critical and terrible condition, is used for the experiment. He boldly ventures the elimination of vitriol or Bitterness from her organism. He has successfully established the fact that it is not awareness of life but that of death, that "encourages us to live more intensely" (190).

Unaware of the happening, Veronika is stated that she might live for a week and her experiences with the inmates of Villeté make her comprehend that living is invaluable. Within the shortest duration allowed, she evinces strong desire to live through life thoroughly and to her hearts' content. Her subdued passion and fascination for music floods out in torrent when she plays on the piano on a full moon light. The music bridges

Eduard and Veronika and her love for Eduard bring forth many miracles. She declares as well earns Eduard's love. She believes firmly that the only reason for having come to into the world is to make him go back to the path he strayed from.

Coelho, through his unique mode of exploration into the fundamental question 'Is life worth living?' has very clearly stated that living is blessing. Life should be lived through unmindful of the norms held dear by the society in the name of legal rules, culture, rituals, and so on. People need to brush aside and overcome Freudian castration complex, reframed by Lacan as "symbolic castration" (Paccaud – Huguet 282). Once we allow ourselves to be enveloped by this, we have to "endlessly renegotiate in the tension between our own image and the signifier which represents us" (283). Life attains true meaning and value only when lived as per the hearts' desire of the individual. "Jouissance" which contains connotations of "aesthetic enjoyment, bliss" is the ultimatum that will make one be contended and fulfilled. By probing into the inscrutable psyche of the mad people, Coelho has brought to light the governing living culture amidst them where there is method in madness.

True to the fact that culture and civilization tradition ascribes "to literature the power to shape individuals and instill in them shared understandings and social values" (Gordon 246), each of Coelho's works is endowed with that power. His other work, *By the River Piedra I Sat Down and Wept*, takes his readers to the spiritual realm. He brings together Pilar and her childhood friend who has sprouted into a great religious man capable of performing miracles. The love unpelt but perfectly realized bridges them together not at once but after a lot of scrutiny and battles both internal and external. Coelho has intertwined the two extremities of life namely the mundane love and spiritual asceticism.

Pilar despite hailing from a Catholic family does not cherish religious faith very strongly. Her childhood friend has grown into a handsome spiritual teacher. He has turned to religion as a refuge from his inner conflicts. Pilar is initiated into the religious domain of her friend who has stated that he believes in the feminine side of God. Pilar's encounters with Brida, one of the participants of the sermon, make her sense under the hypnotic effect of music that everything around her is a reflection of her womanhood. Brida declares, "I am what you see me to be. I am a part of the religion of the earth" (*By the River* 21). By clustering cultures through modifiers like language, religion, geographical location and so on, people are integrated owing to similarities in values and attitudes. "Knowledges, subjectivities and social practice are forged within asymmetrical and incommensurate cultural spheres" (MC Laren 54). Pilar's extraordinary experiences with Brida, and subsequently with her childhood friend have been rewarding and revelatory in nature. He makes her perceive that "my world is not as solitary and mad as it may appear. There are others who are part of that world, and they believe in what they say" (75).

Pilar's next significant experience is with the 'Charismatics' in the place where the visions of Mary had occurred. Her love for her friend has grown so intense and deep that when he declares that taking active part in the chant is his life, she instantly responds, "If this is your world, I want to learn to be a part of it" (106). Though she too begins to chant and sing mechanically, within no time overpowered by the hypnotizing music, she feels, "it transported me back to a time when God had felt closer to me and had helped me" (107). To her surprise she feels herself a part and parcel of the spiritual happening and she has ardently prayed like a child believing absolutely that their prayers would be assured. She has felt a sense of freedom and understood beyond doubt that "true love was above (sadness, suffering and abandonment) all and it would be better to die than to fail to love" (113,114).

The priest, whom Pilar meets next, makes her clearly comprehend that to have a spiritual life, all one has to do is "have faith and accept God. From then on, each of us becomes a part of His path. We become a vehicle for His miracles"(130). Through Pilar's conversation with the Padre, Coelho declares, "the world itself has a soul, and at a certain moment, that soul acts on everyone and everything at the same time" (140) and asserts that when a certain number of people evolve, the entire human race begins to evolve. Coelho bluntly points out that mountains unlike men are wise, ancient and in their place, but men can cultivate these traits only through experiences that mould him to retain or develop the qualities due to him. Love is such a concept that purifies and cleanses the soul. "Love is a saviour" (178) and when her friend confesses his conviction to pass on his gifts to someone by renouncing his position in the spiritual realm in order to persevere with Pilar at the physical realm, she is panic stricken. Her mental turmoil is projected by Coelho in moving terms. She is climbing back through the tunnel, "pursued by the multitude of the sick who would die, the families that would suffer, the miracles that would never be performed, the world, and the mountains that would remain in place" (180). Having realized his special virtues, ability and his precious dream, she does not protrude as obstacle in his destined path and she quits him. Her selfish effort to retain him for herself is transformed and resultantly she becomes selfless coming forward to sacrifice or renounce her desire for the sake of the common welfare. Such is the power of true love, establishes Coelho. Through this work Coelho conveys the truth that God is wherever we allow Him / Her to enter. He stresses, "traditional religious practices are important: they allow us to share with others the communal experience of adoration and prayer. But we must never forget that spiritual experience is above all a *practical* experience of love" (2).

From the three works of Coelho taken for analysis, it can be presumed that life when governed by the heart's desire makes life worth living, meaningful and a highly rewarding experience. Culture cultivates a way of life among a group of people revealing or molding their behaviours, beliefs, values and symbols that they accept and are passed along by symbolic communication and imitation from one generation to the next. Culture consists of patterns both explicit and implicit of and for behaviour acquired and traditional ideas and especially their attached values. Culture systems are the products of action and also are the conditioning influences upon further action.

Santiago in *The Alchemist* is though a shepherd from Andalusia moves from one physical realm to the other which includes even the vast desert. Like water which flow into places cultivates fertility, his exposures to and experiences with new cultures enrich him to achieve his dream. The second work *Veronika Decides to Die* analyses the world of the insanity but asserts that in every love lays the seed of one's growth. Denial of one's own dream results in eccentricity but acceptance of peculiarity and realization of love liberate them. All these so called aberrations have formulated their own fraternity and this separateness from the common has paved way for unity, identity and integrity. *By the River Piedra I Sat Down and Wept* deals with the spiritual culture held dear which despite the different notions serves as unifying factor. Pilar's identity with the ways and means of Catholicism not only makes her feel one with them, but also brings back to her, her most beloved childhood friend and also reveals to her and to the universe that those whose souls are illumined by love are truly enlightened. They have been able "to overcome all the inhibitions and preconception of their era" (*By the River* 3).

Coelho's works, observes a critic in an article entitled "Personal Legend and Obligation", have provided him "illumination of much of the tone and tempo of contemporary culture" (1). Cultural and the consequent behavioural phenomena are analyzed at the physical or spatial, psychological and spiritual realms of life. Despite the diversified nature culture only bridges when life is governed by the law of love. Coelho's contention is, to love is to be in communion with the other and to discover in that other the spark of God. Hence culture proves to promote not enmity but unity. In other words it is ecumenical in nature.

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Interiorized Inferiority in Maya Angelou's Autobiographies

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Abstract: Interiorized inferiority is the resultant legacy of the conscious policy of exploitation and brutalization of the 'displaced' by the hegemonic policy of the European settlers in America. Maya Angelou, the African American autobiographer and poet, engages in documenting the harrowing historical hysterical consciousness of the African American Community, in her writings. The Harlem Renaissance and the rise of Black Aesthetics in the Twentieth Century opened up a new vista and gave raw momentum to the younger generation to document their bruised consciousness. The exploitation and brutalization under the 'divide and rule' strategy created a hiatus in the society. The conscious policy of racism by the dominant culture led to marginalization and segregation of a race from the mainstream in the nation of plenty. Thus the institutionalized racist and established discriminatory policies caused immeasurable sufferings in the lives of the individual especially the African Americans. However the black pride, she records, overcomes the illogical hate i.e. the cultural Hegemony of the white Americans.

Maya Angelou portrays not only the racist policy of the hegemonic white Americans but also deconstructs the social paradigm to expose the marginalized status of the African American women too. The double consciousness, double marginalization and the resultant interiorized inferiority and the existential anxieties are graphically recorded in the Autobiographies of Maya Angelou. The Sound of the Silence of the African American Community and the African American women are the focal points in the serial Autobiographies of Maya Angelou. The magnificent poetry of life and the saga resulted in *I know why the Caged Bird sings* (1970), *Gather together in My Name* (1974), *Singin' and Swingin' and Getting Merry like Christmas* (1976), *The Heart of a Woman* (1981), *All Good Children Need Travelling Shoes* (1986), and *A Song Flung up to Heaven* (2002). Maya Angelou's unconscious mind shows deep identification with the victims of Mid passage and records the voice of the voiceless, marginalised and segregated community. The phenomenal woman displays the identity crisis and cultural conflicts of her own and the African American Community. Thus the paper makes an attempt to explore the contextualization of the African American cultural heritage in the Autobiographies of Maya Angelou.

Key words: Hegemony, double consciouness, marginalization.

The phenomenal woman, Maya Angelou celebrates her magnificent life in an extraordinary way in her writings. She focuses on the tragic side and the ugly trail of racism. Born as Marguerite Annie Johnson in St. Louis, Missouri, on April 4, 1928, she has won greater critical acclaim for her serial autobiographical volumes than her poetry and drama. She emerged as a multifaceted personality with a versatile career. Her writings remain a blend of lyricism and harsh social observation of the anguished and often sardonic expression of the black in the white dominated world. Her poem, 'And still I Rise' is a dramatic exploration of black survival and endurance and a totemic tribute to those gone souls and a challenge to those being and unborn.

Following the footsteps of the past serial autobiographers like Frederick Douglas, Richard Wright, she came out, in answer to the challenge thrown to her by the editor at Random House, Robert Loomis, with six volumes namely *I Know Why The Caged Bird Sings* (1970), *Gather Together in My Name* (1974), *Singin' and Swingin' and Getting' Merry Like Christmas* (1976), *The Heart of a Woman* (1981). *All God's Children Need Travelling Shoes* (1986) and *A Song Flung upto Heaven* (2002). The last and the seventh volume *Mom, Me & Mom* (2013) was published before she died in 28 May 2014. She employs the traditional narrative techniques of slave narrative, prison Autobiography, travel narratives, and the spirituals to weave the saga of survival and success of her self as well as the African American community. She voices out the voiceless by portraying the pathetic, marginalized and segregated lives of the African Americans in the south. She speaks about the resultant aspects of the institutionalized racist polices and the established discriminatory practices and the immeasurable sufferings of the African American Community. She makes known the tension of her life by summing up as, "...She is caught in the tripartite crossfire of masculine prejudice, white illogical hate and Black lack of power" (*I know*, 272). The Harlem Renaissance and the Black Aesthetics imparted the necessary momentum for the blossoming of new writers. They almost touched upon the historical, hysterical and harrowing experiences of the community. Maya Angelou experiences double marginalization and double consciousness. As a woman, she encountered both the cultural Hegemony of the settled Whites and the patriarchal paradigm in the social life. The practice of remembering and writing or recording leads to the formation of politicized consciousness and self identity. Thus Maya Angelou's Autobiographies are an act of resistance to those who denied the full humanity of people of African descent.

The cultural hegemony of the white overtly promoted racism that resulted in exclusion and dehumanization. Though Enlightenment displayed concern with social justice and the legitimacy of governance, still it provided for slavery and colonialism. Racism was the outcome of the Europeans' lust for land. Such bigotry resulted in poverty and other social problems. The African-American people, having long since been wrested from their original communities and resources, strived to claim their rightful dignified place in the society they had helped to build. The Autobiographies of Maya Angelou portray the progressive self in a different setting. The social, cultural and historical aspects of racism and its consequences and injustices in the African American Community are recorded in her work.

Maya Angelou reminisces her childhood in Stamps, Arkansas in the first serial autobiography *I know why the Caged Bird Sings* (1970). It provides for recording the interiorized inferiority of the writer as well as the African American community in the 1930's. The title itself has metaphorical undertones. The caged bird refers to the trapped, helpless, imprisoning condition of the black self. The abandoned and displaced Maya Angelou intensely experiences and observes the spirit of the period. The writer has a very poor self image and opens the work with "what you looking at me for? I didn't come to stay..." (1). She recalls that in stamps, the segregated southern part and the Wm Johnson General Merchandise store owned by her grandmother, Mrs. Annie Henderson, which is built in the heart of the Negro area for the people of slavery plantations. The writer records the pathetic condition of the southerners in her own words as 'In cotton-picking time the late afternoons revealed the harshness of Black southern life, which in the early morning had been softened by nature's blessings of grogginess, forgetfulness and the soft lamplight' (9). In the southern community, the two legged and the two armed strong Black Men were able at best to eke out only the necessities of life. The economic impoverishment and hardness are the direct consequences of the political aspect of racism. The prejudiced white caused the fear-admiration-contempt for all the white things except God. Momma, with all wisdom, taught her to waste not, want not. She says, "In Stamps the separation was so complete that most black children didn't really, absolutely know what whites looked like. Other than that they were different, to be and in that dread was included the hostility of the powerless against the powerful, the poor against the rich, the worker against the worked for and ragged against the well dressed" (25). She further records that an independent black man is a sheer near anachronism in Stamps.

The African American community always lived in dread. For any mishaps the visitation and the lynching of Ku Klux Klan was certain. On one occasion, the Sheriff advised Momma about a visitation of the boys.

The Used to be Sheriff sat rakishly astraddle his horse. His onchalance was meant to convey his authority and power over even dumb animals. How much more capable he would be with Negroes. It went without saying. His twang jogged in the brittle air. From the side of the store, Bailey and I heard him say to Momma, "Annie, tell Willie he better lay low tonight. A crazy nigger messed with a white lady today. Some of the boys'll be coming over here late" (17).

This secret organization of the southern white earned notoriety for the atrocities they committed to silence the blacks. They instilled fear in the mind of the Negroes. Though Mrs. Annie Henderson is respected by all the blacks in her locale and venerated by the author, she is mocked at by the prejudiced 'powhitetrash' girls. The writer is enraged at the impudence of mean, dirty, impudent and silly girls, Momma is so considerate towards them. The 'powhitetrash' incident records the arrogance and insolence of the white girls of the locale. The unprovoked verbal assault was coolly encountered by Momma.

The grandmother undertook the task of disciplining the young ones Bailey and Maya Angelou by imparting the traditional communal wisdom and spirituality. Quite naturally the crippled Negro Community relied on Christianity and the God in order to overcome the "life of toil and care" (129) and to remain at peace. They believed that they are 'society-pariah' (129) and "they were going to be angels in a marble white heaven, and sit on the right hand of Jesus, son of God (129). They believed that Jesus was to separate the sheep (them) from the goats (the white folks)" (128).

The Great Depression of 1930's, the writer mockingly records, did not discriminate the Negro Community. It threatened the black economy of the near forgotten hamlet to exchange their unwanted essentials for food for survival. Though Mrs. Annie Henderson was privileged to have powdered eggs and milk everyday, when subpoenaed by judiciary, the Judge, the Bailiff and other Whites laughed at her for introducing herself as Mrs. Henderson. They gaffed at calling a Negro woman with the title Mrs.

The barrenness of Stamps are accurately portrayed in her words as "High spots in stamps were usually negative; droughts, floods, lynchings and death" (91). The whites normally had the habit of calling negroes in derogatory terms such as nigger, jigs, dingies, black birds, crows, boots and spooks. The black people remained self pitying people for all the wants. Though the Civil War ended slavery, racism enveloped the land with more violence in the late 19th and 20th centuries and became a social disease. The writer narrates Mrs. Viola Cullinan's kitchen incident to record how audacious she was to make an attempt to rename and call her Mary. Maya Angelou protested silently by breaking the costly casserole and two green glass cups of Mrs. Cullinan. The adolescence of Maya Angelou asserted her individuality against losing the name and identity.

The interiorized inferiority and the fear are emotionally captured in the Joe Louis' heavy weight championship match. The whole black community in Stamps gathered around the store and glued to the radio. She describes the emotional and desperate mood of the community in the following words.

If Joe lost we were back in slavery and beyond help. It would all be true, the accusations that we were lower types of human beings. Only a little higher than the apes. True that we were stupid and ugly and lazy and dirty and, unlucky and worst of all, that God himself hated us and ordained us to be hewers of wood and drawers of water, forever and ever, world without end (135).

Conversely, the mood changes, and they all feel elated and proud of hearing Joe's victory and celebrated the occasion in their own ways. The writer too feels proud and identifies herself with the community. "Champion of the world. A Black boy Some Black Mother's Son... Joe Louis had proved that we were the strongest people in the world" (136).

The hegemonic attitude of Mrs. Edward Donleavy at the graduation ceremony of Lafayette Country Training School is referred to as 'graduation epidemic' (169). The writer graduated from the eighth grade at the age of 12 and queued up with others for the ceremony. The white speaker, in a nonchalant way, extolled the Central School and exposed the wants of Lafayette School. She dramatizes the painful injustices of a segregate society and an underscoring of the powerlessness of blacks within that society. She recaptures the agony as,

The white kids were going to have a chance to become Galileos and Madame Curies and Edisons and Ganguins and our boys (The girls weren't even in on it) would try to be Jesse Owens and Joe Louises'.... If my brother wanted to become a lawyer he had to first pay penance for his skin by picking cotton and hoeing corn and studying correspondence books at night for twenty years? (179).

The conscientious girl was lacerated and mortified by the exposure and wished to be dead for being an awful Negro and for not having any control over her own life. She concludes the graduation incident by saying that "As a species, we were an abomination. All of us" (181). However she glorifies Henry, her classmate, for singing the Negro National Anthem written by James Weldon Johnson. The poem 'Lift ev'ry voice and sing' is considered the hymn of encouragement. The bruised soul longs for liberty or death. At the end she proudly states 'I was a proud member of the wonderful, beautiful Negro race' (184).

Maya Angelou cites another instance of insult when she approached the white dentist Dr. Lincoln for medical help. He humiliated and insulted the whole black race by saying, 'Annie, my policy is I'd rather stick my hand in a dog's mouth than in a niggers' (189). The racism of the land exhibited utmost vulgarity.

Bailey's adolescence and his eagerness to know the puzzle of inequality and hate in the South made Mrs. Henderson to parcel them out to San Francisco for fear of losing them. The World War II offered an opportunity to move out of the south and work side by side with the whites. It offered a relief to the blacks. Maya Angelou records it as,

The recruits from the desicated farm lands of Georgia and Mississippi by war plant labor scouts breathed fresh air in San Francisco. However the Black exfarmers had not left their distrust and fear of whites which history had taught them in distressful lessons. These two groups were obliged to work side by side in the war plants, and their animosities festered and opened like boils on the face of the city. It is sadly mistaken if it is believed that racism was missing. (213)

In San Francisco, she found employment as the first Negro conductress on the San Francisco streetcars. Genetic research, after all, has demonstrated that "race" within the human species has no biological validity asserts Richard Perry in 'Race' and Racism. Mystification is done to prop up the hegemonic policy of 'haves'. It has nothing to do with reality. Reality is the only antidote to racism.

As a social historian, Maya Angelou captures the vulgarity of the racist politics followed by the American Whites towards African Americans. The hegemonic culture of the dominant race altered the political, social and economical polices of the land to marginalize and segregate the African Americans. This harrowing, hysterical, historical experiences are documented by Maya Angelou. This tension and the interiorized inferiority made her to have double consciousness. She undertakes a journey to Mother Africa to find the roots and this became the subject matter of the serial autobiography *All God's Children need Travelling Shoes*. The travel motif and the diasporic consciousness indicate the unsettled mind and the interiorized tension of the writer. She recalls 'the past' during her stay in Ghana.

Angelou continues to wear an Afro-untreated unstraightened hair and a 1960's sign of black liberation and militancy in the US. Her writings register passive and active resistance and the resilience with which the writer emerged out of the negative socio-economic and political texture of America. Her active participation with the Civil Right activities, interests in the policies of Martin Luther King Jr and Malcolm X ideologies clearly vindicates her active resistance to the racial, discriminatory hegemonic policies of the whites.

Maya Angelou failed not to record the gender marginalization. As she writes about her self and its journey to self actualization, she explores the social construct that made her an object in the patriarchal society.

The saga of struggle and survival and success are chronicled in the autobiographies. The victimization at the age of eight and single parent hood and the three failed marriages are the resultant aspects of gender marginalization. Maya Angelou is not a professed feminist but at the same time she remains the product of the age. The feministic undertones are found in her writings as gender is normally considered as a class or racial formation. In the first autobiography, *I know why the caged Bird Sings* Maya Angelou, in a desperate mood, says ‘The black female is assaulted in her tender years by all those common forces of nature at the same time that she is caught in the tripartite crossfire of masculine prejudice, white illogical hate and Black lack of Power’ (272).

Maya Angelou charts her journey towards autonomy. She is abandoned by her parents, raped by her mother’s boyfriend Mr. Freeman and separated from her grandmother. In such suffocating ambience, she struggles to find her self and identity. The search for the self takes her from ignorance to enlightenment, from silence to speech and writing, from racial patriarchal oppression and suppression to liberation and emancipation. At last, she emerges as a formidable character.

The physical abuse of rape at the age of eight by Mr. Freeman painfully hints at the world controlled by Men. The violation of her undeveloped body and the betrayal of Father- figure muted her for five years. Her inability to find the warmth of love from her father makes her vulnerable at the tender age. The betrayal exposes the neglect of the patriarchal society.

Angelou is greatly inspired by the independence of both the grandmother, Mrs. Annie Henderson and mother Vivian Baxter. The African American Community, out of necessity under racial policy, reoriented the role of female in the household as a co-sharer in providing bread to the family. Besides her artistic pursuits, she held varied jobs as street car conductress, Creole Cook, nightclub waitress, prostitute, and madame. She worked as singer, dancer, actor, political activist, editor and lecturer. Her search for economic independence at once exhibits the double marginalization under the political as well as the gender discriminatory environment. Angelou’s struggle as a single unwed mother with a son, occupies most of the pages of *Gather Together in My Name*. The theme of motherhood binds almost all the volumes of her autobiographies.

The writer meets her first husband, Tosh Angelous, a white sailor of Greek heritage, in the music store. She marries him, in part to please her son. The incompatibility arises over the question of their differences on religion and the marriage turns out to be not workable and ends in divorce. She challenges the prevailing notions of maternity especially, domesticated motherhood and idealization of marriage. Thus she once again becomes a single mother at the end of the serial autobiography *Singin’ and Swingin’ and Getting’ Merry like Christmas*.

Angelou’s ardent involvement in Civil Rights political activities, interests in the ideologies of Martin Luther King and Malcolm X find expression in *A Heart of A Woman*. She happens to meet Vusumzi Make, a freedom fighter recently released from a South African prison. She was drawn to Vus, the electrifying, exciting and beautiful person. They go through the motions of marrying in England. Through him, Maya associated herself with a community of middle class African women who warn her that marriage to an African freedom fighter can often lead to desertion. Vus’ neglect of Angelou proves herself vulnerable to male authority. As his wife, Angelou experienced for the second time the struggle between being a homemaker and being a professional. For him, Angelou should be subservient. He remains culturally insensitive to Angelou’s wish to be a working woman. When she accepted the position of an associate editor with the Arab Observer without his permission he reproaches her. Vus’ infidelity and irresponsibility with money paved way for final separation. Angelou asserts her individuality and self integrity by defying the dictates of her husband. Feminism always insisted that culture spoke most powerfully when it spoke from the periphery.

In *All God’s children Need Travelling Shoes*, Maya Angelou calls Sheikhal from Mali as a real man and erotic, generous and physically satisfying. Further she refers to his insistent proposal to her to become one of his wives. However she checks his dominance and comes out of the relationship as a strong individual. She discards the conventional feminine qualities of submission and passivity and displays a spirit of defiance.

The Autobiographies of Maya Angelou courses through the racial and gender discriminations and document the intensified and interiorized inferiority which was the out come of the hegemonic policy of the Whites in America. The Saga of survival explodes the myth of superiority and asserts the individuality of the writer as well as the African American community. The indomitable Will breaks through the political and social barriers to achieve self actualisation. Maya Angelou in her serial Autobiographies emphatically celebrates the black self as well as the black community.

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(SM)othering the Other: Problematics of Acceptance of the Transsexuals

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Abstract: *The need of creating a space for the transsexuals in a transphobic society needs an immediate attention as their numbers are increasing despite widespread bigotry and hatred, that points to their determined stance of proclaiming their identity in the face of stiff opposition. The American Psychiatric Association's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders I, IV, reckons that 1 in 30,000 males are transgendered and 1 in 100,000 females have identified themselves as showing strong trans feelings. In the USA around 500,000 males have had GRS (Gender Reassignment Surgery) or SRS (Sexual Reassignment Surgery). Actual numbers can never be known since many remain closeted and so they cannot be counted. As per the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, roughly 14 million men are transgendered; the fact that this estimate does not include women leaves room for speculation. Many remain closeted, as the transphobic society looks upon them with ridicule and scorn and often inflicts physical and psychological torture.*

This paper attempts to analyse Mark Rees' Dear Sir or Madam: The Autobiography of a Female-to-Male Transsexual where a young girl Brenda Rees had an awkward adolescence and could not express her predicament since none could understand her plight. Isolation, verbal abuse and misunderstanding dogged her at school, in public spaces and later life. Rees went through hormone therapy and surgery to become the "man" she was. In his midlife Rees went to court to reclaim his true identity and fight for justice. This true account indicates that the transsexual community is not only unacceptable to the society, but also branded as "abnormal" and subjected to gross human rights discrimination.

Key words: *Transphobic, Transsexualism and Transgender.*

The need for creating a space for the transsexuals in a transphobic society needs an immediate attention as their numbers are increasing despite widespread bigotry and hatred, which point to their determined stance of proclaiming their identity in the face of stiff opposition. Minority groups in society are peripheralised due to differences in colour, race, nationality, sexuality and sexual orientation. The predominantly heterosexual society advocates the gender binary norm and refuses to acknowledge the existence of other-sexed identities. As per the Times of India, the official number of the third gender in India is 4.9 lakhs while transgender activists calculate the figure to be almost six to seven times greater than this. The fact that 55,000 of the total transgender in India belong to the 0-6 age group of the population proves that many parents have understood their wards' condition and braved social ridicule to express a fact which many others would not. The transgender activists are elated at the boldness of these parents but they cannot be complacent since there are innumerable others who are still closeted. There is widespread misconception about the queer community which makes them prone to transphobic attacks: harassment and violence are meted out to the hapless victims as the perpetrators do not understand how there can be people *different* from them. The insensitive society looks upon the queer group as mentally sick and prescribes medical treatment and/or psychiatric intervention. Most of the transgender live in rural areas and their literacy rate is very low; many drop out of school when faced with daily mockery and torture. A vicious circle builds up as the uneducated transgender is forced to resort to begging and/or sex work for a livelihood. Apart from social exclusion, the other-sexed are also economically and politically sidelined. It has come as a blessing that in a landmark judgment, the Supreme Court of India has recognized the transgender as the third sex and this might have a positive impact as political parties may be compelled to take up their case.

The first step towards comprehending the condition of the often-shunned and discriminated queer people is to recognize and acknowledge their identity. The homogeneous society legitimizes heterosexuality but a look at the diverse other-sexed individuals shows a wide spectrum. The LGBT group consists of *lesbians*, *gays*, *bisexuals* and *transgender*. *Lesbians* are women who indulge in sex with other women, whereas *gays* refer to men who find sexual gratification with other men. *Bisexuals* are those who are erotically aroused by both men as well as women. The *transgender* is a blanket term to denote the transvestites, the transsexuals and the trans persons. Those who dress like members of the opposite sex are called transvestites or cross dressers; these persons are sexually gratified by the mere act of cross dressing. The transsexuals are those who are born with a mismatched body and mind as far as sex and gender are concerned: they attain perfect happiness once they *transition* to their target sex, either through hormone treatment and/or sex- reassignment surgery. The individuals who simply want to live as members of the opposite sex without surgery are called the trans people. There are also the *pansexuals*-those who are sexually attracted to other persons, irrespective of their gender, like males, females, transsexuals, transvestites, gender bender, hermaphrodite, intersex, androgynous people and so

on. The *pomosexual*, also known as the post modern sexual, defy assumptions about gender and sexuality, while the *intersex* people suffer from a congenital disorder of the reproductive and sexual system which may be external genitalia, internal reproductive organs and/or endocrine system that is quite different from most other people. The group called the *gender queer* feels that their gender identity does not fit into the socially accepted norms that are connected with one's biological sex of birth and then there is the *asexual*, who is not interested in or does not like sexual activity, either within or outside of a relationship but this is however different from celibacy which is the conscious decision to not act as per sexual feeling. An *auto sexual* person feels sexual attraction towards oneself and prefers self-gratification to other forms of sex. These diverse sexual identities are very much alive and a reality so they have to be welcomed in mainstream society even though it may problematize and contest heterosexuality.

As per Gary Gates, the LGBT demographer at the Los Angeles School of Law's Williams Institute, University of California, the number of transgender people is 700,000 which mean about 0.3% of U S adults. The Institute studies sexual orientation, gender identity and public policy. In the USA around 500,000 males have had GRS (Gender Reassignment Surgery) or SRS (Sexual Reassignment Surgery). As per the American Psychiatric Association's DSM or *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, roughly 14 million men are transgendered; the fact that this estimate does not include women leaves much room for speculation. The DSM claims that one in 30,000 males is transgendered and one in 100,000 females have identified themselves as showing strong trans feelings. The exact numbers are difficult to come by since many remain closeted due to public apathy and ridicule.

This paper attempts to analyse the autobiography of Mark Rees and portray how he faced innumerable odds when he was unaware of his gender dysphoria and had a really tough time convincing others of his being born with a mismatched mind and body. Mark Rees' *Dear Sir or Madam: The Autobiography of a Female-to-Male Transsexual* tells about young Brenda Rees who had an awkward adolescence and could not express her predicament since none could understand her plight. Isolation, verbal abuse and misunderstanding dogged her at school, in public spaces and later life. Rees went through hormone therapy and surgery to become the *man* she was. In his midlife Rees went to court to reclaim his true identity and fight for justice. This true account indicates that the transsexual community is not only obnoxious to society, but also branded as *abnormal* and subjected to gross human rights discrimination.

Brenda was twelve when she felt something was amiss: she had gone on a family outing to the Isle of Wight when someone asked her about her sex and she found it very difficult to say that she was a *girl*. In her childhood, Brenda played with different toys like dolls, bricks, toy trains, puppets, soldiers etc. but later switched to masculine toys. At school, Brenda ignored the girls and wanted to join the boys at play and when her mother said that she was like her father, she felt pleased and her hero worship of her father was probably because he was *a man*. She liked to tinker in the workshop of Andrew, her neighbour. Even at the age of eight, Brenda thought that all girls wanted to grow up into boys. She hated her body and disliked wearing feminine attire and the onset of puberty worsened matters: she found her curvaceous female body very repulsive and menstruation and the related bodily discomfort added to her uneasiness. There were frequent rows with her mother over the choice of a career and the usual jobs of a stewardess, nurse, children's hostess etc. were repellent to her. A series of odd jobs, in a hospital, as an insurance office clerk etc. hardly helped Brenda. She applied for commission in the army but her application was rejected as she had spent five months in the Mableton Psychiatric Hospital. Brenda's attempt to get into the Women's Royal Air Force or WRAF also proved to be unsuccessful.

When the neurologist at the RAF Medical Centre asked Brenda why she had been to the psychiatric hospital, she told him that some of the students at the art school had commented on her sex and this had necessitated a visit to a psychiatrist and consequently she had to be hospitalized. The reason for her rejection was given as *Temperamental Instability* but Brenda was not ready to accept defeat and questioned the authorities why she was dropped despite her psychiatrist's recommendation (44). A spate of letters between her psychiatric, Dr. Bram, an ex- Army psychiatric, the RAF and Brenda continued; the matter reached the Air Ministry and finally she had to concede defeat. It may be pertinent to note that in those days even psychiatrists were not aware of gender dysphoria and Brenda's *abnormality* stemmed from the fact that she had confided to the psychiatrist that she was desirous of sexual relations with women; she was not thinking like a lesbian but it was as a man that the idea of intimacy with women seemed appealing. She soon joined the WRNS- the Women's Royal Naval Service and planned to get the necessary qualification for a medical education through correspondence in the meanwhile. At WRNS, Brenda had a satisfying work atmosphere but her personal life was far from smooth. She had become attracted to Emma, a new Wren, and divulged her secret fears regarding her strange condition of body-gender mismatch. At first Emma was sympathetic and understanding but later her hostile behaviour caused Brenda much distress.

After some psychiatric diagnosis, it was finally confirmed that Brenda would not settle in the Service and she was given a medical discharge. Brenda was able to clear Physics but failed Chemistry: she could not go to medical school. She applied to some medical schools, was rejected by them all but a dental school called her

for an interview. The Birmingham Dental School accepted Brenda's application and she started her dental education. Soon she learned that her condition was called transsexualism and that a sex-change was possible for her. Immediately she started hormone treatment and its results were shortly visible: her voice changed, the size of her breasts decreased and she could give up wearing the much hated bra. Brenda underwent a bilateral mastectomy to remove her breasts, which were the outwardly visible parts of her feminine body; since she could not see her uterus, she thought it pointless to risk the surgery of hysterectomy. The legal aspect of Brenda's sex-change to *Mark* was a daunting task; Brenda could change every document except the birth -certificate. In legal terms, Mark was a woman: to himself and to those who saw him, Mark was a man.

The results of the BDS examinations were published: Mark had failed due to a lack of manual dexterity, which is indispensable for a dentist. Mark applied for a social work course, but when his condition was mentioned, his application was invariably turned down. As Mark mentions, "This is a dilemma every transsexual faces: hide all and risk dismissal if found out, or tell all and risk rejection. Whatever reasons are given there is always the suspicion that the real cause for rejection is fear of the transsexual. On an application form we are remote, freaks perhaps, not people" (110).

Bilateral mastectomy helped Mark to become more masculine; physically he looked a man but in his personal life he had no relationship and he was very upset about it. He often wished he were asexual but he was almost always attracted by beautiful women and there were occasions when he would be in a state of arousal for weeks. One of Mark's priest friends advised him against celibacy and was certain that many of his colleagues would conduct a religious ceremony instead of a standard marriage as same-sex union was legally impossible. Mark was however, unsure of such an alliance as he says,

Firstly, I am afraid of rejection. This has been my main experience so far. Since I do not believe that women judge men by their genitals and I am aware that they can have satisfactory sexual relations with female-to-males, then my transsexual state is not necessarily a reason for rejection. My conclusion is that my lack of success must be due to my lack of acceptability as a person (133).

From the *Observer* Mark learnt that Professor Wolf Eicher of Munich and his team had discovered in all male skin and serum tissue the presence of an antigen called H-Y and that in male-to- female transsexuals this was absent. He wondered if he could travel to Munich and undergo the test but when some issues cropped up regarding this revolutionary breakthrough, Mark was disappointed that he could not find out if he did have the antigen in his body. He also thought what would happen if he or anyone else did not get the expected result: he wondered whether he or the other person would no longer be considered as completely transsexual and then be denied treatment for the same. The initial happiness about the new knowledge about transsexualism was rooted in his thought that his condition was regarded as *imagination* by others and the test would prove to everyone that it was not so. "It is hard to throw off the feeling that we must justify ourselves before we can be taken seriously, especially by the law" (138).

Mark refers to Dr. Louis Gooren of Amsterdam, the first Professor of Transsexuality who declared that transsexualism was unlikely to be genetic and more probably developmental and its origin was in the brain. The professor opined that sexual differentiation of the brain takes place around the age of three to four years and once this has occurred, it cannot be subverted. Mark broaches the topic of how most cases of phalloplasty – the construction of a penis- had been disastrous in some cases and some marriages of female- to - male transsexuals who had undergone phalloplasty had failed. His desire for the male organ was strong but he was not willing to have a "few inches of probably numb and non- functional flesh" (149). Mark was unwilling to become a guinea pig for a phallic construction and he says,

Eager as I was to have a penis I had no wish to submit myself to perhaps ten operations, great pain, scarring and risk of infection in order to acquire something which was useless, ugly and without sensation. For the time being I would wait and see how procedures developed and just grit my teeth over the difficulties which I had to face. Even with these practical problems, such as the inability to urinate standing, I never had one moment's regret about my role-change (128).

Mark was very upset by the fact that his sister, Jane, who initially supported him in his role- change, later broke off with both him and his mother and even got a solicitor to send him a letter to the effect that he should not see her children especially the youngest one as he had "an adverse effect" on her (166). Jane was furious at Mark's *coming out* and considered him to have brought notoriety to their family through this act. In spite of his sister's estrangement, Mark had reason to celebrate as he earned his BA (Hons) degree in 1979 and his mother was very proud of his achievement, yet he suffered as no job commensurate with his qualification came his way and he had to take up many low- paying jobs in order to earn a living. Mark also felt humiliated to queue up for the "dole". He started doing some voluntary jobs and had also started his writing career. Mark's inability to enter the Church (since the Church did not ordain women and as per law, he was a woman) compelled him to take the UK Government to the European Court of Human Rights. Even though he lost the case, Mark was unprepared to give up and took great attempts to make the government recognize his male

status. He also started doing programmes over the radio and television to make people aware about transsexualism. He found acceptance in his native Tunbridge Wells when he was elected as the Councillor of the Borough in 1994: he felt indebted to the people who had elected him to represent them on the Borough Council. Yet he experienced verbal abuse when people commented on his sex-change and shouted out obscenities when he appeared on the street. Mark has become reconciled to the verbal abuse around him and is happy that in a small way at least he could fight for the transsexual community. Mark concludes his narration by suggesting that transsexuals can be true to themselves only if they reconcile themselves to their condition. As he says "... a person at ease with himself is a better member of society than the one who, living in an alien role, is so anguished that he or she inevitably becomes self-centered. This can sometimes lead to suicide" (180). He claims that the most important thing that society can give a transsexual is *acceptance*, which is different from *tolerance*. While some may consider legal recognition as the final form of concurrence, he opines that the love of those around is more valuable than an altered document.

Mark's autobiography is a very unsentimental yet frank account of a transsexual who was born at a time when neither the medical world nor society knew much about transsexualism. He had to face torture and ridicule but still he was able to overcome the obstacles in his way and live the life of a man as per his deep conviction. All marginalized sections of society deserve a respectable and meaningful life and it is the collective responsibility of the privileged mainstream society to ensure that all get equal opportunities of education, occupation, shelter and inclusion in public spaces. Differences are to be acknowledged and steps should be taken to bridge gulfs across the various groups of people since denial will never solve anyone's problems but will only worsen matters. Variety and diversity makes the world worth living and human life becomes remarkable only when each individual is given perfect freedom to follow the way of his/her choice.

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Piano and Drums: A study of Cultural Hegemony in the selected poems of Gabriel Okara

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Abstract: *Gabriel Jibaba Okara, the winner of the Commonwealth Poetry Prize is one of the most prominent literary person in the African Literature. Okara was born in Nigeria and is popular as a poet and a novelist. The cultural conflict in Africa forms a major theme in his works. Since colonized by the Britishers, African people face the problem of the domination of the Western culture over their traditional culture. The Westerners who believe themselves as the civilized, looked down on the African culture and considered them primitive. The Africans are struck between the new western culture and their traditional culture. Okara through his poems clearly portrays the sufferings of the African people in the new culture. This paper aims to bring out the plight of the African people who were torn between the dominant western culture and their own traditional culture as portrayed in Gabriel Okara's poems **Once Upon A time, Mystic Drum and Piano and Drums.***

Key words: *culture, hegemony, tradition*

Nigerian literature is one among the most popular literatures in Africa. By its political independence in 1960, Nigeria established itself as a nation. During the colonial period literature started to flourish in Nigeria. Many literary works were written in English because of the influences of the westerners and very few used their indigenous language in literature. The main theme of Nigerian literature of that period was the conflict between the traditional African culture and the western culture. Gabriel Okara is one of the prominent writers in Nigerian literature who portrayed the cultural conflicts faced by the Nigerian people.

Gabriel Jibaba Okara was a Nigerian poet and a novelist. He was born in 1921 in Boumoundi. He won the Commonwealth poetry prize in 1979. The main themes of his poems and novels were the domination of the western culture on the traditional African culture and the sufferings of the common people because of the cultural conflict. His works were filled with symbols, African ideas and imagery. Apart from poetry and fiction, Okara has also written plays and features for broadcasting. Unfortunately many of his works were destroyed during the Nigerian Civil War. His poems *Once Upon A Time, Mystic Drum, and Piano and Drums* spoke about the plight of the African people torn between the dominant western culture and their own traditional culture.

Cultural hegemony is the domination of one culture over the other. The dominant culture believes that their culture is superior and consider others to be uncultured and primitive. In a geopolitical way of thinking cultural hegemony is an imperial dominance over a subordinate state. African countries are one of the victims of cultural hegemony. Since being colonized by the Britishers, Africans face the problem of the domination of the Western culture over their traditional culture. The Westerners believed themselves to be civilized and looked down on the African culture and considered them as primitive. The Africans are caught between the new western culture and their traditional one.

The poem *Once Upon A Time* speaks about the domination of the western culture over the African one and how people are stuck between the two cultures and lose their own self. The poem is a conversation between an African father and his son. The father explains to his son how Africa was earlier and how it changed because of the coming of the foreigners. The father feels sorry that the Africans lost their culture and tradition and are completely dominated by the western culture. He says that the dominant western culture is not sincere. He felt that the African people used shake hands with their hearts and smile with their eyes but now they shake hands without heart and smile only with teeth:

Once upon A time, son,
they used to laugh with their hearts
and laugh with their eyes:
but now they laugh only with their teeth. (OUT 1-4)

This shows the people were genuine and true but now because of the influence of the western culture they are hypocrites. The speaker also says that now the Africans do not feel at home because of the cultural dominance of the westerners. The speaker feels pity for himself and all the other Africans who have completely adapted to the western culture and like the colonizers they too learned to have many faces according to the situation. The speaker wanted to go back to the good old age when everything was true and honest:

So show me, son,
how to laugh; show me how
I used to laugh and smile

once upon a time when I was like you. (OUT 40-43)

The father represents the Africans who are stuck between the traditional African culture which the foreigners treated as primitive and the dominated western culture. They wanted to go back to their tradition but could no longer do that because of the domination of the western culture. Okara has effectively portrayed the plight of the African people who were affected by cultural hegemony in the poem *Once Upon A Time*.

The poem *Mystic Drum* also portrays the domination of the western culture on the traditional African culture. In this poem, the drum symbolizes the African culture because drum plays a very significant role in the tradition of Africa and the outsider represents the western imperialism. When the mystic drum beats, men, women and even the fishes danced in harmony. This shows how in African culture man lived in harmony with the nature. The tradition of Africa bridged the gap between the world of humans and nature. They lived amidst nature along with the animals and trees. Even the dead came to life with the sound of the mystic drum because it was so powerful. But the outsider who stood behind the tree smiled at them. This shows that the western imperialist considered those traditions of the African people as primitive and looked down on them. Slowly they tried to impose their culture on those primitive people.

As a result of forcing the western culture on the Africans they lost their traditional value. The poet says that the mystic drum stopped beating and men and women stopped dancing and the fishes went back to the river and the dead became dead. The harmony with nature was lost and the people became too logical in their way of thinking. The poet says how the imperialists rooted themselves in the African soil and brought all their culture and the logical way of thinking to Africa. The strong hold of the western culture in Africa made the mystic drum to stop its beating forever and all that left was the "blenching darkness". The poet says that he packed his mystic drum and turned away realizing that he can never neat the drum so loud anymore, "Then, I packed my mystic drum / and turned away; never to beat so loud anymore" (MD 34- 35). This clearly shows that the Africans lost their culture and tradition to the western culture. Thus the poem portrays the domination of the western culture.

The poem *Piano and Drums* is another example where Okara shows the domination the western culture. Like the poem *Once Upon A Time*, this poem also shows how people get confused between the western and the traditional culture. Okara has used instruments to portray the different cultures in the poem. The drum represents the traditional African life while the piano represents the western world. The drum gives a "mystic rhythm" and the sound is "urgent" and "raw" whereas sound of the piano is "wailing". The sound of the piano is more complex and multi layered but the sound of piano appears more appealing. This shows how western culture dominated the African culture.

The drum also represents a primal life and the simple way they approached life. They were one with the nature and the sound of the drum represented the effects of hunting. On the other hand the sound of piano gave a complex outlook for life and it showed lands that were new and far to the people of Africa. But, even though piano was complicated it had more impact on the people. The drum carries the poet childhood and he is also reminded that there were no innovations in their culture. But the sound of piano is so appealing that the author could not resist himself from distraction it made on him. This shows how the people in Africa were more fascinated by the western culture and tried to adapt themselves to the it. But since the western culture was too complicated they neither understood it fully nor they were able to comprehend their traditional culture. The poet thus shows how the African people were lost in the dominance of the western culture:

And I lost in the morning mist
of an age at a riverside keep
wandering in the mystic rhythm
of jungles drums and the concerto. (PD 26-29)

Gabriel Okara through his poetry has brought out how the African people are torn between their traditional culture and the new western culture. The dominance of the western culture over the tradition was huge and the people could no longer go back to their tradition but to follow the western culture. Okara's poems give an insight to this kind of cultural hegemony that affected the people in Africa.

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Abbreviation: Once Upon A Time- OUT; Mystic Drum- MD; Piano and Drums- PD

Cultural Sensibility in Badal Sircar's Stale News

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Abstract: India is a land of rich cultural heritage and traditional ethos. But the colonization of the Britishers reduced the earliest Indian cultural and traditional beliefs to the customs of savages. The aboriginals were always subjected to the worst of exploitation and injustice. The Santhal tribe is one of the oldest and largest communities of India, settled in the Bihar-Bengal border. They suffered the inhuman extortion, oppression and torture by British colonists and their Indian stooges, usurers, traders, native princes and landlords. Pushed beyond limits the tribes burst out in revolt. They took their primitive arms –spear, axe, bow and arrow in protest. Badal Sircar, a unique and towering figure in Indian theatre chose this Santhal Revolt of 1855-56 that shook the British imperial hold on Eastern India for nine long months to achieve his ultimate aim of making people aware and bring about a constructive change in the society.

The paper focuses its attention on Badal Sircar's urge for a reformed society. The doyen of theatre linked the Santhal revolt to the present day reality. The educated middle class man is engulfed in his humdrum existence. He is neither conforming nor compromising fully to the norms of society nor has he reached the level of consciousness that spurs him to action. Furthermore he is often confused by the bombardment of a barrage of information, quite often contradictory, full of contrasts and perhaps even the most shattering bits of information come as stale news. This dichotomy gradually leads him to a point of realization. In the play 'Stale News' the playwright juxtaposes the day-to-day accounts of social evils and newspaper reports of poverty, exploitation, injustices against the accounts of the conditions that pushed the Santals to revolt. Badal Sircar, through his Third Theatre, ignites the spirits of the modern man to carve out ways and means of moving towards a better life. The drum beats of the tribal culture conveys the individual responsibility of the people towards the society.

The paper concludes asserting that the tribal war calls 'Hoo-oo-oo-ool' of 'Damini- kos' is a clarion call for the people of today to change a little, make firm decisions, make positive choices and make a move towards the betterment of the society.

Key Words: Social Injustice, Santhal Tribes, Tribal culture, Third Theatre.

India is a land of rich cultural heritage and traditional ethos. But the colonization of the Britishers reduced the earliest Indian cultural and traditional beliefs to the customs of savages. They executed calculated assault on the culture and humanity of the colonized Indians. The aboriginals were always subjected to the worst of exploitation and injustice. The Santhal tribe is one of the oldest and largest communities of India, settled in the Bihar-Bengal border. They were subjected to inhuman extortion, oppression and torture by British colonists and their Indian stooges, usurers, traders, native princes and landlords. Pushed beyond limits the tribes burst out in revolt - the ultimate burst of collective courage. They took their primitive arms like spear, axe, bow and arrow in protest. Badal Sircar, a unique and towering figure in Indian theatre chose this Santhal Revolt of 1855-56 that shook the British imperial hold on Eastern India for nine long months to achieve his ultimate aim of making people aware of their condition and bring about a constructive change in the society.

Badal Sircar is a theatre revolutionary who broke every rule of bourgeois stage and rejected the proscenium to transform theatre into a weapon of mass awareness and uprising. His Third Theatre is a theatre of change. It aims at changing the thought and beliefs of spectators and leading them to action. Theatre for him was the field work that must strategically be used to bring about the desired result. The objective was to raise the awareness about the inept and corrupt system and inculcate a desire for change among one and all. He came out of the proscenium to come closer to the spectators and to take full advantage of direct communication that theatre as live-show offers. This enabled the playwright to share with his audience the experience of joint human action. The medium of expression, agency of exchange and instrument of communication was the actor's body which was trained and honed to become a powerful tool in itself. By recognizing human body as the most important element in theatre Sircar rejected extravagant costume, make-up, set design and lighting and minimized the use of props. He took his productions to the places where masses gather, especially public parks, railway platforms, fields, in front of the factory gates, offices, college premises and by the side of a busy road. Sircar's audience were never forced to pay for attending shows. Hence his theatre is a flexible, portable and free theatre. All the formal innovations engineered by Sircar are to make people aware of the injustices of which they are victims of and create in them a sense of responsibility to bring about a revolutionary change in society.

Sircar believed that theatre should, apart from reflecting human condition, try to make people aspire to change the prevailing socio-political conditions. And to achieve this purpose he employs various techniques like

joining episodes in the form of collage, humour, songs, experimentation with dialogues, and the introduction of stage managers and chorus. Another important aspect of Third Theatre is the workshops that preceded the productions. The actors are encouraged to improvise during the playmaking sessions where each acted on a plot of his own. Sircar's Third Theatre plays have no rounded, clear-cut characters. They are prototypes and represent the entire humanity. The characters in the Third Theatre plays have no names but numbers.

Badal Sircar's theatre group Satabdi created the play 'Stale News' through workshop process. The play was an outcome of Sircar's hobby of making collages. One such collage that he had made could be called Man. It showed 'man' in his different facets as stupid, callous, cruel and genius. This collage of 'man' in his different aspects formed the subject of the Satabdi workshop and the members collected newspaper clippings and notes of their reactions related to these aspects of man's stupidity, callousness and so on. When the workshop began on the basis of these bits of material the members felt that the collage did not express the fact that man could. So the theme of Santhal rebellion, a heroic struggle was introduced as a concrete image of revolt. The members were keen not to give a theatrical representation of the Santhal revolt as their subject was contemporary. So they collected material from newspapers, magazines, survey reports-accounts of poverty, exploitation, injustice and atrocities perpetrated against the poorer communities and the repressive measures taken against those who protested or wanted to bring about a change. These accounts were juxtaposed against the accounts of the conditions that pushed the Santhals to revolt.

The play is presented in the point of view of a contemporary urban, middle class young man. He is born, educated and is constantly bombarded by lots of information from books, newspapers, radio, literature-false, half-true, irrelevant and sometimes he comes across a report of mass killing or gang rape in an aboriginal village by paid hoodlums of the local high caste landlord. At the same time he leads a daily living like appearing for an examination, going to the movies, and searching for a job. He is neither conforming nor compromising fully to the norms of society nor has he reached the level of consciousness that spurs him to action. The 'Dead Man' in the play wanders silently from time to time amongst the chorus of performers, sometimes breaking through, holding his bandaged right palm in front of the eyes of a performer to make him read something about the Santhals of the last century, another time using his left palm for something happening today. The writer whips at us stating that the modern young man is each of us who tries our best to deny the existence of the 'dead man' in our midst and yet fail miserably.

As literature is not only the effect of social causes but also the cause of social effects, the playwright ignites our spirits to live and to be alive for it has got a great meaning. The play Stale News created by the whole group in love and pain was performed as a "state of being" as the performers act out their own feelings, concerns, questions and contradictions and guilt. This stimulates the spectators to jump into concrete actions for the better means of living. The play encompasses Sircar's vision of progress that can be achieved by the people's movement.

As the relation between literature and society are reciprocal a picture of exploitation of the "peace-loving" Santhals by the Indian landlords and British rulers is brought before the eyes of the spectators to make him realise his social responsibility. The modern young man, though aware through the inspiring guidance of the Dead Man of the pathetic conditions of the poor and the need for the social reform, is not ready to come out of the stranglehold of the traditional, routine life and develop a sense of commitment so as to revolt against the social and economic injustices. He is exposed to the trials and tribulations of the historic 'Santhal Revolt' from its beginnings to the end in all its revolutionary aspects.

When the state of Bihar came under British rule, barter-based economy and social life of the Santhals began to crumble under the exploitation and oppression of the British merchants. The land holders of various places of Bihar and Bengal employed Santhals to clear the forest. The part of Bhagalpur in which the Santhals had concentrated and formed a majority of the population was known as Damin-i-ko. The Santhals were cheated and forced out of their property. They were insulted, beaten up and tortured. The chorus in the play comprises eight actors representing prototype of ordinary man. They explicate horrors of brutality inflicted upon the Santhali rebels with an ironic refrain – "Man is the greatest creature on Earth".

A revolution is born out of exploitation, oppression and injustice and it generates its own leadership. The writer makes his performer ONE express this idea as follows : "ONE: Years of limitless exploitation, oppression and rapine had in the meantime begun to change the beats of their drums to the beats of revolt ... Hoo-oo-oo-ool"(111). The peace-loving, poor, illiterate Santhals swore to throw out all exploiters and oppressors from Santhal country and to reclaim all their land. They resolved to establish an independent Santhal state. In Santhali language Hool is revolt and the flames of the Santhal hool spread like a forest fire. Their beats of drums changed to the beats of revolt. As long as their drums rolled, the tribals stood and fought and fell under the rain of British bullets. Though there was a wrecking destruction, the word surrender was alien to them. As long as the revolt raged, the British lived in panic. Such was the spirits of the tribes which is the need of the hour in modern age. The actors describe the nature of revolt through the following observations:

ONE . Martial law. Barbarism rules without a trace of human compassion. Reckless plunder, homicide, destruction, licence, torture and humiliation of women, a fury of horror.

TWO. (jumping up) Hei Hoop.

Four of the men jump up and start marching. The rest on the ground squirming, as if torture.

ONE .A tide of indescribable oppression, destruction and annihilation passed over Santhal Pargana and Birbhum. Thousands of Santhals, young and old, men and women and children lost their lives. Fifty elephants were driven to a frenzy and let loose on the Santhal villages which they trampled to dust along with Santhal men and women and thousands of their huts.

ONE has fallen. THE DEAD MAN takes his hand away.

The Santhal rebels retreated, still fighting, from Birbhum to Santhal Pargana. They died fighting.

The DEAD MAN falls in slow motion.

All the leaders, Chaanrai, Bhairo, Sidho, Kanho, died one by one. They died, but were not humbled. Not a single Santhal rebel surrendered.(P.130)

The Britishers recognised Santhals as a separate tribe and that was the reward they received for the blood of twenty five thousand Santhals. The valour of the Santhals astonished the Britishers and they dreaded that the seed of revolt should not spread further. The Santhal Pragana was declared a separate district as part of the process to keep the Santhals isolated from the mainstream of Indian life. The playwright brings to limelight the atrocities before Indian Independence and the concrete steps taken by the tribes against it to make the modern man to be aware and be sensitive regarding the present day social evil.

Further, Sircar conveys that the social inequality, oppression, and exploitation have not changed even a little until today in Independent India. The doer of the action had changed but the action is the same. For example, in the words of Sircar, it is reported through the actors who perform the role THREE and FIVE

THREE. There were 3019 cases of atrocities on the Harijans in the first nine months of 1978. 175 Harijans were killed, 129 Harijan women were raped, there were 289 cases of arson ...

FIVE.13 April 1978. The police fired on a peaceful demonstration of 500 workers at the Pantnagar Agricultural University in Uttar Pradesh after blocking up the entrance and exit to the place.150 workers were killed, figures for the injured are not available. The dead bodies were later piled up in a sugarcane fields and set on fire (p.135).

As one of the Third Theatre techniques Sircar makes use of pithy, compressed expressions which are like telegraphic language. The following content words present a purview of oppression and exploitation till date ranging from the British oppressors to the native oppressors. For instance, a section of the chorus reports this as , “A SECTION OF CHORUS. The nineteenth century... The Twentieth century ... The fifties...The Seventies... British India... Independent India...” (137)

The people of today – the city-bred, educated, middle-class community leads their life in a fiercely competitive environment. The newspaper accounts of cruelty and brutality, injustice and blind prejudice, ruthless exploitation and senseless killing though disturb them, becomes insignificant as they go on with the humdrum existence – education, examinations, jobs, promotions etc. The disturbing element gradually clashes with the day-to-day activities. So to lead a peaceful life concrete steps have to be taken. The theatre man firmly believed that if a system is inept, unjust and exploitative, it must change. So he wished that theatre plays its role and shares its responsibility to work for a change. All sorts of social injustices, atrocities of men in power were expounded to shake the people out of their complacency and helpless submission to the conditions of life. The content, concern and art of Sircar are practically and pragmatically doing something with an urge of immediacy that should bring about change in people and society. Badal Sircar made the full advantage of direct communication that the theatre offers to be closer to the audience and invites them for joint human action.

The actor ONE says “Death, blood and fear rule over this land. Everyone knows what happens and will happen behind the bars of the prison. Why don’t you scream? Is it still not the time? Is the time still not ripe? (138). These concluding lines of the play give a clarion call for the people of today, to change a little, make firm decisions, make positive choices for the betterment of the society. Badal Sircar asserts that his performers through the workshop process of the Third Theatre play ‘Stale News’ have changed a little, and he positively hopes that his audience too would change a little and further confirms that these imperceptible changes would bring about the long desired change.

The play ends on a note of exhortation. The tribal culture and their drum beats resonate in the soul of the spectators conveying the individual responsibility to attain an ideal life in a reformed society. The playwright draws his audience into the play to the point where they see no difference between themselves and the performers. The journey as well as the destination is important, therefore, the playwright kindles the spirits of the audience to carve out a role for themselves and bring about the desired result. He sets his heart on the common good, to form a new society where man does not want to live exploiting man. The new society should be based on equality, free from the horrors of exploitation, and it should be commemorated with humaneness.

Badal Sircar has laid the foundation of a distinctive tradition in the history of drama by reinvestigating history, legend, myth, religion and folklore with reference to contemporary socio-political issues.

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The Familial Bonds with the Social Issues in Jane Austen and Lakshmi's Select Novels

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Abstract: Comparative study of literatures across cultures is only an extension and intensification of healthy critical procedures adopted by sensitive readers of literatures in all periods and cultures. It is on the basis of these concepts that the present attempt proposes to make a comparative study of the select novels of Jane Austen and Lakshmi. Both these writers differ in their occidental and oriental approach. This article aims at analyzing the occidental and oriental works of literary art with special reference to the select novels of Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* (1813) and Lakshmi's *Penmanam* (1962). Woman novelists have a strong foundation of social awareness and concentration of family welfare. These two novalists have proved and predicated the female psyche to be of the same mould despite belonging to varied cultures. They have proved to be sincerest examples in their literatures of art for art sake. They have kept themselves aloof from the extravagance and modishness which are poisoning the universe.

Both their novels deals the familial bonds with the social issues in the occidental and oriental world, interpreting their variations in terms of poverty, love and marriage. In *Pride and Prejudice* poverty is a future menace, and inevitability is again the cause. In Lakshmi's *Penmanam* the blend of egoistic principles constitute their female characters and have ultimately proved women to be in their homelands inspite of the space being antagonistic and their peace often seems to be ephemeral. This article portrayed the heroines of **Elizabeth Bennet** in Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*, **Chandra** in Lakshmi's *Penmanam*. That the characters depicted by Jane Austen and Lakshmi's are always in the process of development. They deals with various aspects of love, marriage and views them calmly and dispassionately.

Key words: social issues, culture, poverty.

Introduction

Comparative literature is one such force which goes beyond man-made barriers. It establishes that human nature remains the same every where. The central aspect of universality is human relationship. The commonness of the human psyche has been exhibited by all writers inspite of different cultures. Comparative study of literatures across cultures is only an extension and intensification of healthy critical procedures adopted by sensitive readers of literature in all periods and cultures. It is on this basis of these concepts that the present attempt proposes to make a comparative study of the select novels of Jane Austen and Lakshmi. Both these writers differ in their occidental and oriental approach. This article aims on analyzing the occidental and oriental works of literary art with special reference to the select novels of **Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* (1813) and Lakshmi's *Penmanam* (1962).**

Jane Austen and Lakshmi both novalists deals the familial bonds with the social issues in the occidental and oriental world, interpreting their variations interms of poverty, love and marriage. Jane Austen and Lakshmi are they belong to different sociological landscape such as England and India. Both of these writers draw the cristal clear viewed their female characters and have ultimately proved women to be in their homelands inspite of the space being antagonistic and their peace often seems to be ephemeral. Jane Austen portrayed her heroine **Elizabeth Bennet**, in *Pride and Prejudice*, Lakshmi's heroine **Chandra** in *Penmanam* deals with various aspects of love, money and marriage and views them calmly and dispassionately.

Jane Austen wrote about what she had experienced in her life. She described the world of country middle class people and the sheltered and conventional life. The events she describes are ordinary: a country walk, a horse-drive, a picnic or a ball. She works with deeper, stronger and longer significance. Jane Austen depicting the essential human nature and the universal themes such as love marriage, money and religion. She distrusts emotion and describes it only by implication.

Lakshmi on the other writer is a strong favour of Tamil literature and culture is her novels. She has portrayed the trait of the Tamil in her works of art. She has not only written about the well to do. She has a vast scope for the poor and their life-pattern in the stories. She has the capacity to peep deep into the minds of the people from all walk of life and paint such personalities in her stories. She has the strong perception regarding the treatment of women in the Tamil society and is very bold in portraying their emotions kaleidoscopically.

Female Psyche in Jane Austen and Lakshmi Novels

Considered in the light of the movements of women characters both in the select novels of Jane Austen and Lakshmi, there emanates an understanding that the empowerment aspect does not have any fiscal power their women's characters are invested with. It is psychology that plays its dominant part in empowering them. The barrenness in the form of parentlessness constitutes the background for the firming of Jane Austen's women characters in life's goings. In *Pride and Prejudice*, the void is more in the form of mental incompatibility of the Bennets. The same atmosphere pervades in Lakshmi's *Penn Manam*.

Creation of situations is what endows the artist with inventive brain. This facilitated the artist to implant the characters with experience that groom them for life's situations. The usual critical assault on such a contrivance of situations on the part of artists is that it is highly manipulative. But the reader has to view the situations as natural both in England and India.

It was mortality of parents in England that made children bereft of parental care early in life. This is precisely what Jane Austen demonstrates in her novels. But the Indian context has its corollary in the form of parental responsibility of marrying their daughters off, irrespective of the groom's character, status, education etc. for during the times of Lakshmi the societal situation was such that parents normally felt that their responsibility was over once they married their daughters off. In England, during the times of Jane Austen, children, especially girl children stood banruupt of sufficient care and hence their growth had the concomitance of self – care and sometimes their growth had the concomitance of self – care and sometimes their impulsive action in setting their lives for themselves. In the case of the characters of women in Lakshmi's novels, there grows a sense of uncertainty about the possible realisation of their cherished wishes about their marital Settlement. In some case it turns out that what seems to be an ideal settlement changes into one of unpalatability due to the exposure of male life prior to marriage. Brittle, the psyche of certain women is, that it requires some external force to prevail upon them and in Lakshmi's novels this happens usually from women of stronger psyche.

The English social life is such that isolation appears something unique and self-imposed. The interaction of people makes it possible for people to seek avenues of settlement. Lakshmi's world is a reserved world and there is no sociability. Hence the woned of the women characters is cabined and confined. Emma woodhouse feels too secure and this is her dilemma. This ultimately impels her to seek out the one who might be interested in her. Herein roots up her challenge of powering herself to confront life's challenging realities. In the case of Elizabeth Bennet, we find that she is independent and is of temperament to wield control over her realionships.

Penn Manam of Lakshmi is another **Pride and Prejudice**. Darcy's pride and Elizabeth Bennet's prejudice are combinatorially present in the prime protagonist of *Penn Manam*. This apart, one finds that chandra is unessailable as a determiner. Elizabeth Bennet's prejudice against Darcy is present in chandra with her detest for Jagannathan's efforts to entangle her in the marital bond. However Jane Austen with her inventive technique prolongs Elizabeth's gradual intimacy with Darcy. It undergoes various vicissitudes until the last when his pride and her prejudice dilute and wane into nothing. Comparatively, when we look at the happenings in *Penn Manam*, we find that chandra's pride and prejudice undergo the process of reasoning and there stems self-respect which dominates in Chandra's undertaking to resuscitate her husband's lost reputation. She strives towards its revival. In **Pride and Prejudice**, it is a journey towards casement whereas in **Penn Manam**, it is an exhibition of self - over coming rom the abysmol depths of despondency of the protagonist. While is **Pride and Prejudice**, the protagonist's development is gradual, it is empowerment of resolve in **Penn Manam**.

Jane Austen's another novel in *Sense and Sensibility*'s heroine Elinor Dashwood also bears close resemblance to chandra in Lakshmi's *Penn Manam*. Both of them are obsessed with a moral centre of feeling. What they want is honour and life attached to that. But Elinor commits herself to emotional involvement which is absent in Chandra. Yet her emotion is not dilating because she controls her feelings for the sake of her mother and sisters and to situation turns dramatic. But Chandra's circumstances also are dramatic, for she is sought after by a won for her beauty, intelligence, bearing and reservedness. At times Elinor dilates, but chandra stands stubborn, a quality that transformer itself to one of resolve to win, particularly after the marriage with Jaganathan for whom she has no liking. But her inherent obduracy fortifies her psychologically amidst the distance her in-laws maintain at Janannathan's fraud. Her sense of belonging is thus awakered. Between Elinor and Chandra, we find the sense of belonging which is familial. Elinor's sister marianne's happiness is on par with Chandra's friend Ambujam's. The latter is one with a blank mind, believing as good whichever appears good, in her case, her husband himself. After learning of his affairs with a women before his marriage with her, she is beset and it is chandra like Elinor who becomes her mentor. This, despite Chandra's predicament of bearing the slur of her husband. When challenge comes, chandra counters it with iron resolve. This is chandra's empowerment. But Elinor's empowerment rests on her heart's tranquility which corroborates with her acceptance of Edward.

Familial Bonds with the Social Issues in Jane Austen and Lakshmi's Novel

Chandra on being compared with Elizabeth Bennet appears an embodiment of pride, and inherent pride over her physical and mental bearing that prompt her to posit herself to the level of deservability on those that approach her. Though she is endowed with reason, she lacks the power to dissociate things for non-prejudiced judgement. Elizabeth Bennet is a parallel to Chandra on the ground of her attachment to Jane. When the latter suffers in her love for Bingley, it is Elizabeth who advises her to go to London with the Gardiners for a change. Chandra's sympathy for Ambujam's anguish in the later part of the novel resembles Elizabeth's concern for Charlotte who suffers from the despicable attitude of Mr. Collins.

Elizabeth's stubbornness in rejecting Darcy's love has its corollary in Chandra's detest for Jaganathan's efforts to marry her. But Chandra differs from Elizabeth despite her strong views. She is caught up in the Indian milieu of womanhood. Despite her hatred, she cannot voice out her protest, for by succumbing to Jaganathan's efforts to marry her, she decides to put an end to the hardships of her father and step-mother and thereby to have a way for the marriage of her sister. Chandra thinks of her family's welfare. Her brother Venu works in Jaganathan's office where the latter guards him well. Hence Chandra's willing suspension of her hatred for Jaganathan results in her becoming a victim initially. Whereas Elizabeth's prejudices are largely responsible for the spirited stand she takes up, Chandra's self-respect and idealistic conception of married life gets a jolt because of family circumstances. However, we are surprised to find a parallel between Darcy and Jaganathan, for the former retorts to Elizabeth in the novel *Pride and Prejudice*, that she would have overlooked all his defects had it not been for her pride. The Darcy-like importunity happens in the case of Chandra whenever Jaganathan has a chance to speak to her.

Chandra is not webbed around with many characters as her counterpart Elizabeth Bennet. Elizabeth has enough opportunities in the novel not only for brimming with familial and societal affections but also to be a humanist. Her spirited challenge and noble manner in which she pleads for her sister's disappointment and also for the cruel, unjust treatment meted out to Captain Wickham speak of her altruism. But such a situation never occurs for Chandra. What happens around Chandra orients only towards her and her position in life. Elizabeth's concern for her sister printing away in secret, and Captain Wickham's cruel deprivation of his legitimate share are evidence of her indignation for the authors of such misfortunes. Elizabeth is provided with a chance to show her objectivity too. Darcy's assault on Elizabeth's mother and the charge of levity and recklessness of her sisters though unpardonable, are understood in their perspective by Elizabeth. Though Darcy's remarks are towards vindicating himself, Elizabeth with her characteristic objectivity admit them. This eventually leads her to change her attitude towards Darcy, for she believes in the frankness and justness of Darcy. This ultimately lands her to change her attitude towards Darcy.

But Lakshmi, the novelist of *Penn Manam* makes her male Jaganathan replete with importunity towards Chandra and hence the latter begins to ponder over and this accounts for her change of attitude towards her husband. But there prevails a persistent awareness in Chandra about her good sense contributing to her dormant pride. She is fully conscious of the injustice she has done to Jaganathan, knowing very well that he has not been wayward after marriage with her. The novelist does not explicitly tell as to the reason why he sets out with Nagalingam on a few occasions. Perhaps this indication of the possibility of his going astray might have incited Chandra's reason to change her attitude!

Just as the middle class novel of the eighteenth century in England brought out the middle class values and outlook, Lakshmi's novels deal with the regional middle class, especially women and their dilemma particularly that which is generated due to the circumstantial compulsion that makes them come into contact with wealthy men defamed in character. Lakshmi like Jane Austen takes to deal with the manners of her times in the Tamil middle class society dominated by males. *Penn Manam* like Jane Austen's *Sense and Sensibility* ridicules the 'gentlemen' society. All the three dominant males Jaganathan, Ramanathan and Nagalingam are responsible for the agony their wives undergo because of their selfishness and licentiousness. Whereas Jane Austen's characters come within a wide range, Lakshmi's characters fall within a narrow range in semi-rural locations. Lakshmi and Jane Austen draw characters from their personal experience. Settlement of women in life was a problem more serious during the times of Lakshmi. This was applicable to all castes in Tamil Nadu. Lakshmi with her Brahminical background was more conscious about the sufferings of women in middle class families. Finding a husband of good character was a fortune. Her characters are drawn on personal experience and she brings out the fundamentals of character as revealed in activities of daily life. Jaganathan is a type. So is Ramanathan who proves good in family life though he had been astray before marriage. Nagalingam is the worst of all. Yet all these are types. These men are the generators of unhappiness in their women. But her women are strong or at least strengthened.

Chandra in *Penn Manam* is psychologically strong and it is she who infuses hope and skill of familial arrangement in Ambujam and Hemalatha. When they stand out psychologically sunken and like orphans, Lakshmi animates, demonstrates and dramatizes her women as those who cannot be cowed down by life's forces. What David Cecil said of Jane Austen applies well to Lakshmi also. He remarked that Jane Austen's characters act in the theatre displaying their human folly and inconsistency and thereby to sustenance of human

dogma, sometimes comic and sometimes tragic. Lakshmi's understanding of human psychology enables her to present round characters. Chandra, Ambujam and Hemalatha are not flat. They suffer, and grow under stress of circumstances of their own accord or atleast learn from one another and thereby emancipate. They become different as the novel progresses.

Conclusion

One conspicuous feature in Jane Austen's novels is that her heroines are surrounded by manifold characters whereas in Lakshmi's novels, it is not so. It is isolation because of ideals that makes Lakshmi's women stand aloof. This tells of the difference between English social life and that of India. Jane Austen through the portrayal of social life untethers her woman from emotional and social tangles. In Lakshmi's novel's, it is her women's psychology that dispels the forces of the Id and shows traces of the domination of the Super Ego, However, in the evolution of her women, we notice that they are never off balance. They prove themselves to be the embodiments of the reality principle in life to maintain balance and averting extremes, the sure signs of despair.

Jane Austen and Lakshmi have universalized the female Predicaments, where the Psychological views of the women with Sociological and familial environment have simultaneously played a Predominant role in which they struggle for empowerment and ultimately succeed. Jane Austen avoids dark passages crimes, violence, and secret chambers. But Lakshmi touch these things very majestic in her novels. To the contrary they depict the psychological and sociological problems. Both these novalists have not written of simply primitive souls. They have not written of poorman like leach-gatherers devoid of conventions and artificiality. They have kept themselves aloof from the extravagance and modishness which are poisoning the universe. The novels of both Jane Austen and Lakshmi show their deep rooted social consciousness and individual consciousness respectively and discern the evolution of the society. Jane Austen necessities a change. Lakshmi concentrates on the up liftment of the female psyche. They pay their attention to the discriminatory attitude shown towards women. One conspicuous features in Jane Austen's novels is that her heroines are surrounded by manifold characters where as in Lakshmi's novels it is not so. It is isolation because of ideals that makes Lakshmi's women stand aloof. This tells of the difference between English social life and that of India. Jane Austen through the portrayal of social life unfethers her woman from emotional and social tangles. In Lakshmi's novel it is her women's psychology that dispols the forces of id and shows traces of the domination of the super Ego.

These two novalists have proved and predicted the femal psyche to be of the same would despite belonging to varied cultures. They have proved to be sincerest examples in their literatures for art for art sake.

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Cultural Constructivism of the Advertisements: The Myth Makers of the Modern World

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Abstract: Advertisements are one of the most important cultural artefacts affecting life today. Their existence in several media gives them a sort of independent reality that links them to life. Advertising has become the face of popular culture itself: it knits us in and it knits us out, it tells us how we should and feel and what we need to be and do and have in order to lead fulfilling lives. Advertisements function as myths of the modern world. A myth serves “to provide a rationale for social customs and observations, and to establish the sanctions for the rules by which people conduct their lives” (Abrams 178). Taking up this role fulfilled by myths in societies, advertisements draw from allusions and create illusions to sew new patterns and combinations into culture. They function as a metalanguage through which the dominant power communicates its ideological standpoint and attempts to naturalise it. The stories advertisements tell, the ways it chooses to tell them and the ideologies that they advance, do a great deal to reproduce the dominant interests. With the ephemera of social life teeming with signs, advertising functions as a complex hierarchical semiotic register where signifier transfers from first order referents of meaning to second and third order ones. Rooting itself in the existing belief systems, advertisements implant into the collective consciousness of the society newer ideas and interests. Functioning as myths, they take the form of a system of communication which naturalises the political nature of a product’s consumption and production. The paper is an attempt to analyse advertisements from the point of view of Roland Barthes’ concept of Myth. A select number of advertisements from the visual media have been examined to arrive at a conclusion. The analysis gives insights into the ways in which advertisements constitute an ideological tool in the hands of the dominant classes in an advanced capitalist society.

Key words: culture, myth, modernism

Advertisements are one of the most important cultural artefacts affecting life today. Their existence in several media gives them a sort of independent reality that links them to life. Advertising has become “the face of popular culture itself: it knits us in and it knits us out, it tells us how we should and feel and what we need to be and do and have order to lead fulfilling lives” (Williams 209). Advertisements invariably function as modern narratives. The stories advertisements tell, the ways it chooses to tell them and the ideologies that they advance, do a great deal to reproduce “the specific form of political and economic hegemony that is dominant in a particular place and period” (Williams 210).

Advertising also acts as myths of the modern world. Myth is to be understood as having two meanings. Firstly, it is, as its Greek etymology suggests, a legend, a symbolic account of the human condition. Secondly, it is a lie, a mystification. Since no society exists without some form of myth, today’s capitalist society which is based on the economy of mass production and mass consumption has evolved its own myth- advertising is the consumer culture’s version of mythology. Like myth, it touches upon every facet of life and makes use of the fabulous in its application to the mundane. Borrowing ideas and designs from history and the future, and from its own experience, advertising artfully combines them around the theme of consumption. The substance and images woven into advertising messages are appropriated and distilled from the unbounded range of cultural references maintained by the audiences. From baby products to automobiles, advertising creates around it myths that enter the consciousness of the society, nurturing and nourishing it.

A myth, according to Roland Barthes is “a type of speech,” “a system of communication” (Barthes 131). Myth is not a particular object, but rather the “the way in which *an object+ utters *a+ message” (Barthes 131). Barthes explains that “myth has the task of giving an historical intention a natural justification” (Barthes 168). A myth is a “metalanguage,” a second language through which the dominant power communicates its ideological standpoint and attempts to naturalise it by making its message, or ideology, seem self-evident and true; myth is the system used to communicate that which the power wishes to be accepted as common-sense and universal. Just like Gramsci’s hegemony, myth produces an internalised form of social control which makes certain views seem *natural* or invisible so that they hardly seem like views at all, just *the way things are*. Barthes asserts that myth is a system of signification and connotation which circulates the dominant power’s values. This system of signification is found in everyday objects and signs. Myth goes beyond the ordinary linguistic level to enter a semiological level. A myth is a “second-order semiological system” (Barthes 137) in which the sign, which is the final term of the first semiological system becomes the first term, a signifier, of the myth system. The signifier of myth presents itself in an ambiguous way: it is at the same time meaning and form full on one side and empty on the other. The sign is turned aside from its proper function, that is, its denotative function, since in myths, connotation is parasitic on denotation. Barthes considers

the emptying of meaning by form and a continued restoration of form by meaning, what he calls “the constant game of hide-and-peek between the meaning and the form” (Barthes 142) as definitive of all myths. The picture of the Negro who salutes the French tricolour becomes the form with the signification that tacitly expresses the concept that a black man is serving French colonialism without objection. The concept according to Barthes is “at once historical and intentional; it is the motivation which causes the myth to be uttered” (Barthes 142). He continues: The concept reconstitutes a chain of causes and effects, motives and intentions. Unlike the form, the concept is in no way abstract: it is filled with a situation. Through the concept, it is a whole new history which is implanted in the myth....The same goes for the Negro-giving-the-salute: as form, its meaning is shallow, isolated, impoverished; as the concept of French imperialism, here it is again tied to the totality of the world...it is not at all an abstract purified essence; it is a formless, unstable, nebulous condensation, whose unity and coherence are above all due to its function. (142-143) This openness makes myths available for appropriation, which appears to be one of its most fundamental characters and hence used by the dominant ideology as a strong political tool. Further, in myths, the same concept can be expressed through a variety of signifiers. This abundance of signifier compared to the relative poverty of concept lends myths to analysis. Again, the relationship between the myth’s concept and its meaning is one of deformation, or distortion. The repetition of concepts in a multiplicity of signifiers and the distortion of form in relation with meaning are aspects that invite the attention of someone attempting an analysis of myths. Barthes, thus, sees myth as the system through which the historical has become perceived as the universal. Advertising too works in a similar fashion.

Advertisements functioning as myths take the form of a system of communication which naturalises the political nature of a product’s consumption and production. The paper analyses two television advertisements- for Surf Excel and Apple Macintosh- to find out how advertisements work as myth narratives. The Surf Excel advertisement under discussion is first of their “Daag Achhe Hain” (Dirt is good) advertising campaign. Hindustan Unilever Limited introduced Surf in 1959, a time when laundry soap bars were used for washing clothes. Surf was the first detergent brand on TV and the brand initially used TV to effectively educate the consumers on how to use detergent powders for a better wash.

The ad opens with two kids (brother and sister) walking back home from school. The little girl falls into a puddle of mud and dirties herself. Crying, she looks at her brother for help. The brother gets an idea and starts “beating up” the puddle of mud. He dives into the puddle and starts smashing it with a barrage of blows, only to emerge out of it totally dirtied with a triumphant smile on his face. The boy stands up and says, “sorry bola” (said sorry). The sister is happy that she has been avenged and as they walk back elated with their victory, the brother warns the puddle one final time not to do it again, with a smiling sister in tow. The female voiceover concludes, Surf Excel: Daag Achhe Hain (Dirt is good). Not even once in the whole commercial is there a mention of the product being advertised. Sentiments and emotions are highlighted and showcased throughout the advertisement in one form or another and the product is kept discreetly tucked away. The advertisers knit into a typically Indian story the product to be marketed. The advertisement effectively exploits the psychology of the audience and makes use of children’s appeal to convey the advertising message. The use of children in the advertisement lowers the guard of the viewer and exudes a certain warmth that the viewers easily identify with. However, behind the innocence of the children and the story portrayed, there is an ideology that is being deliberately sold by the advertisers.

The commercial can be read as a microcosm of the adult world. While reflecting a spirit that is truly Indian- the love bond between a brother and a sister and how the brother protects and cares for his sister- the advertisement is in fact reinforcing a norm prevalent in the society, a very patriarchal ideology. When the advertisement begins, the brother and sister duo is seen walking back home after school. The brother is walking a few steps ahead of the sister. By extension this can be interpreted as a sign of a statement existing in the society. The fact that the girl walks behind her brother is an indication of how the society always places women as secondary to men. The boy walks disinterested in the girl’s talk. When the girl falls into the puddle, she looks helplessly at her brother for support. The boy turns heroic and starts beating up the puddle while the girl sits beside. This is the denotation that is sent straight to the viewer. The connotation is that women are frail and fallible and cannot protect themselves. The fact that the boy doesn’t fall into the puddle serves to ascertain the notion that women are frail and fallible. When the boy beats up the puddle, the girl simply sits by the puddle and asks her brother to ‘beat up’ the puddle more. The girl is portrayed throughout the advertisement as passive and helpless; though still the root cause of all the commotion. The double edge of accusation and abasement divide the boy and the girl into two discrete worlds, reinventing their separate roles and forcing them to play them according to the rules of patriarchal society. The girl is smeared with more than dirt now: she has the mark of her slavery written all over, though she appears to be more than satisfied and happy about it.

The advertisement ends with a voice over that says “If dirt can bring happiness, isn’t dirt good? Surf Excel: Dirt is Good.” It is with the voice over that the connection between the narrative and the product is made. However, it can be noticed that the voice is not that of a man but of a woman. The disembodied voice of the woman, now alienated from the real situation of the girl in the narrative, becomes godlike and invents a dream of power and autonomy for the women, which is strictly predicated on the male intervention that patriarchy has

both promised and imposed. In addition to selling the product, the advertisement is also selling a very patriarchal ideology.

The second advertisement under study is that of Apple Macintosh. The advertisement opens into a momentarily black scene. A footage of Albert Einstein is shown and the voice over says- "Here's to the crazy ones -the misfits; the rebels; troublemakers: the round pegs in the square holes; the ones who see things differently. They're not fond of rules and they have no respect for the status quo. You can quote them, disagree with them, glorify or vilify them. About the only thing you can't do is ignore them. Because they change things. They push the human race forward. And while some may see them as the crazy ones, we see genius. Because the people who are crazy enough to think they can change the world are the ones who do." The voiceover is backed by some piano music. As voice over progresses, the first footage is followed by a slide show of images of a number of famous people from across the world belonging to different fields: Bob Dylan, Martin Luther King, Jr., Richard Branson, John Lennon with Yoko Ono, Buckminster Fuller, Thomas Edison, Muhammad Ali, Ted Turner, Maria Callas, Mahatma Gandhi, Amelia Earhart, Alfred Hitchcock, Martha Graham, Jim Henson (with Kermit the Frog), Frank Lloyd Wright and Pablo Picasso. The final image that is shown is of an anonymous young girl and the voice over "Because the people who are crazy enough to think they can change the world are the ones who do" coincides with her introduction. The scene then fades into black and the words in white "Think different" fades in. A moment later, the familiar multi-coloured Apple logo appears above the text, and the commercial ends. The advertisement can be seen as a typical example of a myth narrative. The most conspicuous feature of the advertisement is that the product- Apple Computers- is not shown in the entire advertisement. Instead a narrative is formulated and the product is sold through the soft-sell approach- a brand image is created through the process of association. Most advertising is about linking a particular product or brand to a particular set of qualities or benefits in the consumer's mind. This linkage is often achieved through juxtaposition. The viewers are invited to the narrative and are told a story. A myth is created in the first place and 'sold' to the audience who buys it before buying the product proper. In the advertisement under discussion, an array of individuals is shown, all of them great individuals of the twentieth century, in fairly distinct fields. They are identified as people who saw things differently, who were "round pegs in square holes"- the crazy ones.

Dylan, Lennon, Hitchcock, and Henson were some of the most influential entertainers of the latter half of the century; King and Gandhi revolutionary social activists of the century; Einstein and Fuller made innumerable contributions to science, in addition to their work in less esoteric fields; Turner revolutionized the television industry; Ali and Earhart are famous for feats of physical ability and Van Gogh and Picasso, two modern masters of painting. Apparently these individuals have nothing to do with Apple Computer or their products - none of them is shown using computers, and some had been deceased long before Apple was even founded in the nineteen-seventies. The link is achieved through juxtaposition of the images with the brand. The advertisement begins with a voice over that directly addresses the 'crazy ones'. The narrative begins by rooting itself on an accepted definition of the 'crazy ones'. The crazy ones are identified as the misfits, rebels and the trouble makers. The lexical meaning of the word crazy is immediately forgotten with the image of Albert Einstein appearing on screen. The viewer immediately associates the word with a lighter colloquial meaning and the voice over strengthens the intended association in the viewers mind by further describing 'the crazy' as people who see things differently. "They're not fond of rules, and they have no respect for the status quo. You can quote them, disagree with them, glorify or vilify them. About the only thing you can't do is ignore them".

In the first order semiological system the signification is that greatness is achieved by people who 'think different'. The narrative proceeds to build a new definition for "the crazy"- they are people who change things; "They push the human race forward". The idea is elaborated by the voiceover: the greatest people are seen as "the crazy ones; the misfits," but they are the ones that "push the human race forward." The implication here is that the best changes in the world are made by special people, often deemed "crazy" or otherwise different by the society. Thus the link between the images displayed and the message is made explicit and the intended message of the "crazy as genius" is sent straight to the viewer. The message is reinforced by the synchronization of vocals with the video: while the voiceover carries meaning perfectly well on its own, the words when coupled with the images take on stronger meaning. The phrases spoken during each individual's appearance correspond roughly to the popular conceptions about each individual. The viewer hears "crazy" and sees Einstein; "misfit," and sees Dylan; "troublemakers," and sees King. Lennon and Ono "aren't fond of rules." Fuller has "no respect for the status quo." We can agree with Gandhi or disagree with Ali, or vilify Turner - but "about the only thing [we] can't do is ignore" them. Henson is a genius. Van Gogh is, again, crazy. Finally, the "ones who do" are the children and the image of an anonymous child is shown. Before the logo is shown the text "Think different" appears on the screen. The text too can be seen as mythical speech. In the first order system the text is the signifier and the signification is simply a direct appeal to the viewer to think differently.

The viewer is asked to think different like the many "different" individuals in the commercial. The viewer is intended to consider "different" as an adjective, or possibly even as a noun embodying some abstract measure of deviation. It is simply an invitation to "think differently," albeit in a "different" grammatical form

than the viewer is probably used to encountering. In the mythical system, the sign however takes a different signification. Apple establishes itself as different from other companies. The footage of the great personalities serves the purpose. Just like they are different from the common mass so is Apple. It is different from other products. The signifier thus takes a new signification- Apple is different. The theme of "different" is reinforced one final time with the appearance of the multi-coloured Apple logo. Until the logo appears, all footage has been in black and white. The use of black and white footage serves well earlier in the commercial, when it conveys impressions of great figures of history. It serves in another capacity at the end of the commercial by providing a strong contrast to the bright hues of Apple's apple logo. This contrast then provides another instance of how Apple is "different," and supposedly better because of it. Though Apple is different like the different heroes of history, it is also different from them: a difference that is rooted in technology replacing the human in line with a technocratic world where Apple products thrive better. This embarrassed relation with past constitutes the tortion that gets expressed through the mutilated form of the apple in the logo. The artificiality of the whole form is reinforced by the sign ® carefully placed in close proximity to the apple. It is as if by distorting nature, Apple has reserved its rights over nature, and overridden it.

The advertisement is obviously aimed at the members of the global village. By directly addressing the audience and asking them to be the agents of change, Apple is asking the viewer to stand out in the crowd by joining their league with others across the world. The advertisement may be considered paradoxical in that it appeals to the audience as individuals, to their individual tastes and the desire to stand out from the crowd, by asking them to join a group-the group being the owners of mass-produced items. A lot of advertising emphasises individuality as being based on superiority when the main benefit they are stressing is membership of a club of owners. This kind of advertisement promotes a society of competitive individuals, who labour under the illusion that possession of certain consumer goods makes them better than their fellows: different, in short. Both the advertisements we have discussed tend to 'naturalise' a contingent and historical idea: in the Surf Excel ad, patriarchy is equated with sibling love; in the Apple ad, the radical and the revolutionary is pressed into the service of the commercial intentions of an advanced technocratic capitalism. In both, the signifying chain of language is co-opted and transformed into a signifier of a concept that is contiguous with capitalist ideology. Their primary commercial purpose of selling the products appears to be the more innocent of their concerns. Thus both these advertisements ultimately contribute to the mythology of the bourgeoisie, which specialises in de-nominating itself, in self-effacement and disappearance that allow the class to efficiently operate incognito. Thus, as myths, advertisements do what Barthes has said myths do in the modern world: they make the historical and the contingent appear as natural, universal and given. This it achieves by obscuring significance, by stating everything as a fact that does not warrant an explanation. This depoliticization is the ultimate achievement of advertisement's myth-making function.

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Confused Identities: Race, Gender, Culture in Adrienne Kennedy's *Funnyhouse of a Negro*

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Abstract: *Black feminist plays establish a collective identity for the African American women affected by race, gender and culture. The prime aim of the playwright Adrienne Kennedy's work is of translating a cultural consciousness to the stage using the symbols of culture. Toward this end she neither invents a new language nor reconstructs the culture of which she is a product. Rather, she situates femaleness and blackness into the cultural construct. She dramatizes through demonstrating the terms they are allowed in or the causes for which the blacks have been neglected. This paper analyzes Kennedy's one act play *Funnyhouse of a Negro* and examines how her play grapples with the questionable identity of black women who remain to be critique to their black culture that formed them and the dominating culture that at present has excluded them owing to their race, gender and cultural disparities.*

Key Words: *confused identities, gender disparity, cultural disparity, culture consciousness.*

I am a marked woman, but not everybody knows my name. "Peaches" and "Brown Sugar," "Sapphire" and "Earth Mother," "Aunty," "Granny," "God's 'Holy Fool,'" a "Miss Ebony First," or "Black Woman at the Podium": I describe a locus of confused identities, a meeting ground of investments and privations in the national treasury of rhetorical wealth. My country needs me, and if I were not here, I would have to be invented. Hortense Spillers, "Mama's Baby, Papa's maybe: An American Grammar Book"

Hortense Spillers is right. She is a marked woman. And when she later declares the collectivity of the "I," she acknowledges she is not the only one. Marked in all the possible ways: targeted, marred, pointed out, scarred, written on, graded, noted, visible. Marked by "her" country's need for a rhetorical scapegoat; marked by and on her body ("Peaches," "Brown Sugar," "Sapphire"), by her relationships ("Aunty," "Granny," "God's 'Holy Fool'"), by her place in time and space ("Miss Ebony First," "Black Woman at the Podium"). And always marked in fascinatingly inventive ways by race and gender which finally leave her unmarked ("not everybody knows my name"). I am marked. She is marked. We are marked. Whatever the pronoun (and Spillers has to resort to "it" at one point), the subject is the black-woman-as-body violently used, historically, culturally, linguistically, for various purposes. Spillers' aim is to find the agency beneath these names and to do so she traces their historic origin, looking at how they "remain grounded in the originating metaphors of captivity and mutilation" (Spillers 459). Spillers sees these markers, these "names by which I am called in public," as an example of "signifying property plus" and notes "in order for me to speak a truer word concerning myself, I must strip down through layers of attenuated meanings, made an excess in time over time, assigned by a particular historical order" (444). To begin with this quotation from Spiller's 1987 essay because it seems to describe the "stripped" down characters of Adrienne Kennedy's enigmatic dramas. Like Spillers, Kennedy wants an explanation for the conventional and unconventional ways black woman perpetuates cultural concepts at the same time the culture allows both black and woman to exist sometimes symbolically or sometimes not at all. Kennedy, like Spillers, sees the relationship between the markers and the marked as grounded in violence obscured by the pretense of a moral middle-class America. To strip away that pretense, Spillers looks to history. To speak a "truer word," Kennedy lays identity basic under the harsh footlights of the stage, exposing invented "confused identities" (investments in the status quo) and the absurdities of the marked woman.

While Adrienne Kennedy critiques the culture, she is very conscious of her own Western epistemology. She wrote many of her plays from exotic locales, which empower her yet, from which she remains separate. In the introduction to her collected one acts she writes, "More than anything I remember the days surrounding the writing of each of these plays... the places... Accra Ghana and Rome for *Funnyhouse of a Negro* [sic]... the beginnings of *The Owl Answers*[sic], also in Ghana... the lines of the play growing on trips to the North as I sought refuge from the heat at the desks of guest houses" (emphasis mine, Kennedy, *Adrienne Kennedy in One Act*, preface). She is literally a guest, accompanying her husband on State Department business, and figuratively a guest, a foreigner, unused to the heat. More specifically, she is a Western foreigner. She acknowledges this "westemness," scrutinizes how it informs the construction of, even in her own mind, an exotic Africa full of ritual masks and unruly hair.

This paper focuses at Kennedy's one act play, collected in the volume *Adrienne Kennedy in One Act* (Minnesota Press, 1988), and examines how each play grapples with the question of how women central to her plays are to critique the culture which formed them and the culture which now excludes them because of their race and gender. Further, it explores the ways these women are marked by narrative, gender, race, and all the

other limiting agents that keep them playing their assigned roles. What does it mean to be marked especially for protagonists who are unable or unwilling to recognize themselves as such? For many of Kennedy's central characters it means the death of the self.

In *Funnvhouse of a Negro*, the threat and fear of the black father, out there, coming in from the "jungle," is overwhelming. The white mother (or nearly white mother) is put on a pedestal, for just as the "taint" of the dark black father's blood keeps the protagonist, Negro-Sarah, off that pedestal, the blood of the white mother makes her Negro, a Western hybrid, not African. All things European art, furnishings, the royals are revered while blackness is relegated to the frightening jungle. This obsession with the European and this fear of the African for Kennedy get at the heart of the problem: the African's assimilation into the Americas leads to a rejection of the black self. Unlike many of her contemporaries, particularly Baraka and Bullins, Kennedy takes away the pretense of grounding the plays within a realistic framework. There is little sense in her plays of characters working through this conflict toward a politically satisfying purpose or solution. Her plays exist just below the surface of political outline. She is not concerned with nation building, but with a fundamental question: How am I to know who I am when I am simultaneously formed and rejected by the only culture I know? The juncture of this conflict, stripped bare of all pretense and often of plot, character, verisimilitude as if she plucks the symbols and themes right out of the work and puts them on stage, forms the locus of her plays.

The body of her work is about translating a cultural consciousness to the stage using the trappings of culture. Toward this end, she neither invents a new language nor reconstructs the culture of which she is a product. What she does is situate femaleness and blackness into the cultural construct even when that means demonstrating on what terms they are allowed in or how they are left out. The first play that appears in the collection is *Funnvhouse of a Negro* which concerns Negro-Sarah whose fragmented self is portrayed by actors and actresses representing the Duchess of Hapsburg, Queen Victoria Regina, Jesus, and Patrice Lumumba. The three other characters in the play the landlady, Raymond, and an emblematic, white Mother supposedly serve as voices of reality. The play is set in Sarah's bedroom but, as in many of Kennedy's dramas, takes place inside her head. There is an ever-present subtext of sexual violence, rape and incest that is tied to miscegenation. The central theme concerns the fragmentation of self that the mulatto Negro (and for Kennedy the Negro is always of mixed race) must suffer. For Sarah, there can be no illusion of wholeness, the pieces of herself are tied together by the fabric of culture and unraveled by her desire to identify with another a nearly white mother which she, marked by the touch of the black father, can never be. Her fragmentation leads to insanity and suicide, for there is no possibility of reconciling these various factions. Sarah says, "It is my dream to live in rooms with European antiques and my Queen Victoria, photographs of Roman ruins, walls of books, a piano, oriental carpets ... My friends will be white. I need them as an embankment to keep me from reflecting too much upon the fact that I am a Negro. For, like all educated Negroes out of life and death essential I find it necessary to maintain a stark fortress against recognition of myself" (Kennedy, *One Act*. 6).

This tie between education and a desire to shed one's blackness is important to this play and comes up again and again in African-American literature and cultural criticism. In 1933, Carter G. Woodson's *Mis-education of the Negro* critiqued the purpose of higher education for Negroes if that education makes them unsuitable for any place where the society affords them opportunity. Forty years later Toni Morrison is still suspect of the more sinister uses of education. She prefaces *The Bluest Eye* with an excerpt from the Dick and Jane reader, which features happy middle-class children and a smiling father and mother. She quotes it three times: once as it appears in the reader; the second time without punctuation, and the third with neither punctuation nor spaces between the words. Portions of the unpunctuated, reader paragraph appear as headings for chapters throughout the novel. Morrison uses the seemingly innocuous passage as a reading lesson in how subtly the most fundamental exercises are used to teach certain tenets of the culture: middle class morality, the place of women, the function of men, acceptable behavior for children and so forth. She ties a lesson in how to read a text to a lesson in how to read the culture.

Similarly, Kennedy sees a connection between religion and education as hidden by the way culture chooses to mark them. The well-educated Kennedy was deeply affected by her very traditional education and her world travels. Many of her plays were written while she was surrounded by the exotic in places like Accra, Ghana or in Rome, in a "shuttered guest house surrounded by gardens of sweet smelling frangipani shrubs" (Kennedy in *Adrienne Kennedy in One Act*, preface). Her own Western education and lifestyle afforded her the opportunity to critique the very culture that provided her the tools for the critique. Education is the source of certain types of marking that, as Kennedy sees it, religion serves to reinforce in culturally sanctioned ways.

Funnvhouse of a Negro focuses on what it means to be a woman and to bleed in a phallogentric culture. The taint here comes not from black but from red and the fact that femaleness is devalued because of its closeness to nature (its existence manifested through uncontrollable bleeding and procreation) and, subsequently, its distance from culture (its existence manifested through controlled, ritualized bloodletting, violence and the creation of artifacts). Given Kennedy's move from the way history has constructed a useful role for black to the way culture has constructed a useful role for woman, the play calls for a reading that examines the nature of black feminism. One criticism of feminism has been that it is a movement of white,

privileged women, and women of color, uneducated women and poor women are excluded by design or circumstance from the discussion.

Because the plays are written during the male-dominated, race-dominated, Black Arts Movement, the question of privileging race over sex also becomes problematic. The cry of the time was to use art as a tool of revolution so that issues of race should always take precedence. Yet this position put the black woman, who could find little common ground with white women and who could not afford to be "liberated" from black men, in a particularly difficult position. In an effort to be acknowledged or even accepted by white men, the black male artist was often concerned with asserting manhood that dominated women in the same way feminists asserted that white men had dominated them politically. This tendency was certainly a reflection of a generally patriarchal culture. In *Lesson* Kennedy chooses to look not at race but menstruation, examining woman's relationship to a male-centered culture. Her problem here is how to explain what it means to be a woman and to bleed using language and cultural icons that are overwhelmingly masculine.

Kennedy uses the damaged social identity in her plays as a symptom of the deeper psychological fragmentation black women suffer. Kennedy particularly uses the mask, a traditional symbol of power and mystery, as a device to develop what Michael Goldman [in *The Actor's: Toward a Theory of Drama*] calls "the double movement of dramatic elation--both escape from self and self-discovery." (7) Kennedy undermines this empowerment and elation, however, and transforms the mask into an image of imprisonment and terror. Many of her characters become trapped in the mask's freakish impersonality and are unable either to discover themselves fully or to escape from the horrifying selves they do discover

Her plays thus represent the battle between blackness and whiteness, an arena of violent racial warfare that occurs within the psyches of her characters and represents the struggles of African Americans against oppression.

Kennedy embodies the racial polarization that has long characterized American society in Sarah's fragmented consciousness by emphasizing colors--white, black, and yellow, the "color" of the mulatto. The colors themselves take on a life of their own as Sarah talks about how her statue of Queen Victoria is "a thing of astonishing whiteness" and "black is evil and has been from the beginning" (5). Sarah's struggle to integrate her warring heritages is embodied throughout by a relentless repetition of "white" and "black" on every page of the play's dialogue

In actuality, Sarah desires to repudiate her black heritage, symbolized by her black father, whose persistent knocking is heard throughout the play, thus suggesting that Sarah's black heritage cannot be ignored. Kennedy makes Sarah's desire to pass most evident in the following monologue, in which Sarah speaks of her desire for much more than integration into white society:

Kennedy's painful exploration of miscegenation through a fragmented, postmodern form challenges and even assaults her audience, revealing both her riveting power as a writer as well as the grounds upon which her work has been passed over by her contemporaries, critics, and scholars alike.

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Confluence of the Matriarchal Mythopoesis in Eudora Welty's "A Worn Path"

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Abstract: *Many writers use myth in their works in order to highlight certain valid truths to their readers. Some writers use patriarchal myths in most of the works but the myth used by Eudora Welty in 'A Worn Path' is matriarchal in nature. The main character, Phoenix Jackson is an Old Negro woman who takes up the tough journey through the Natchez Trace in order to procure medicine for her grandson who swallowed lye and permanently damaged his throat. Eudora Welty's use of the name 'phoenix' for the old woman is highly significant. Phoenix is a legendary bird from Egypt which signifies a transformation. It resurrects from its own ashes and transforms into a new phoenix. Eudora Welty's character Phoenix Jackson parallels the mythical Phoenix. The bird symbolizes her physical appearance and her sacrificial journey. Her life is renewed in every move as in each struggle she passes, she physically dies, yet morally regains her strength to obtain the medicine for her grandson. The matriarch wisdom renders life to her grandson. The binary trait of life/death and the confluence of the polarities in the mythical matriarch is analysed with reference to Northrop Frye's theory of 'collective unconsciousness'.*

Key Words: *collective unconsciousness, matriarchy and myth*

The origin of mythological literature is without one author. It has been the construction of varied societies and cultures. This mythological literature exists in the form of epics, legends and folk-tales. This oral mythological literature has passed on from generation to generation and later it had been written down and applied to written literature. These literatures have been preserved in popular rituals, cultures and traditions. They have been a part of their religion. Owing to chanting by wandering minstrels from place to place these continued to be preserved passing through sequential ages and through the works of varied writers representing different cultures.

Northrop Frye believes that, "no one genre but genres of literature derive from myth" (qtd. in. Seagal 81). In his essay titled *Tradition and Individual Talent* T.S. Eliot insists on great writers to possess a historical sense which "involves a perception, not only of the pastness of the past but of its presence." He further adds that, "the past should be altered by the present as much as the present is directed by the past". Frye in his essay, 'The Social Context of Literary Criticism' (1973) enlists the factors of tradition which guides authors to present a new writing. He fixes the society as the original source of thoughts. He further exemplifies its "canonical importance" as myths try to "explain or recount something that is centrally important for a society's history, religion or social structure" (276). Myths have two different functions in society and literature. In society, Frye states that these myths urge the members of the society to unite, to accept the authority and to help each other. Frye further claims that the soul function of myth in literature is to communicate the joy that brings to pure creation.

Myth is clearly evident in 'A Worn Path' a story that occurs in Eudora Welty's short story collection *A Curtain of Green*. The character portrayed in 'A Worn Path' is Phoenix Jackson, an old negro woman, whose memory plays tricks on her. Phoenix Jackson's struggles to achieve her goal are struggles that everyman goes through in his journey through life. 'A Worn Path' is symbolic of the path of life, a path worn out, by the number of people who have traversed it. This story has also been considered as "suggestive of a religious pilgrimage while the conclusion implies that the return trip will be like the Journey of the Magi" (Issacs 77).

The name Phoenix links the old woman to the Egyptian bird that periodically renews itself from its ashes and equally apparent is "her quest motif associated with her annual journey to Natchez" (Bartel 288). Phoenix's journey is also symbolic of Odysseus' journey. Marilyn Keys sees 'A Worn Path' as a "symbol for the resurrection of Christ" (354).

The story of 'A Worn Path' is set in December – "a bright frozen day in the early morning" (CS 142). Phoenix Jackson, an old Negro woman, her head tied in a red rag, is seen walking through the pine woods. Phoenix is a legendary bird from Egypt, it was similar to a big eagle with red, blue and gold plumage. The bird always had a transformation. It resurrects from its own ashes and transforms into a new phoenix. In this way Eudora Welty's character Phoenix Jackson has a name which as the bird symbolizes her physical appearance and her journey. In association with her physical appearance Welty confirms that the name Phoenix refers to the bird, because one can see Welty's mention of the three colour of the bird Phoenix in the old woman Phoenix Jackson :

- i) "An old Negro woman with her head tied in a red rag coming along a path through pinewoods" (CS 142). – the reference to the red colour;
- ii) "Her eyes were blue with age" (142) – the blue colour;
- iii) "Her skin had a pattern all its own numberless branching wrinkles and as though a whole little tree stood in the middle of her forehead, but a golden colour ran underneath ..." (142) – the gold colour;

Related to her journey, Phoenix as the bird symbolizes life and death. It means that her life is always renewed, because in each difficulty she passes, she dies a bit and then she is born again to obtain the medicine for her grandson and with this she gives him life.

She is on her way to Natchez, an annual journey undertaken by her to obtain medicine for her grandson who has swallowed lye and thereby permanently damaged his throat. She carries a thin small cane with her with which she taps the ground as she walks recalling the old man, who symbolizes death in Chaucer's 'The Pardoner's Tale',

And on the ground, which is my moodres gate;
I knokke' with my staff, botheerly and late,
And saye, "Leevemooder, let me in!
Lo, how I vannysse, flesh, and blood, and skyn!" (Ll 441-444)

Phoenix finds her journey difficult, as it is not a smooth, straight path she is travelling on "seems like there is chains about my feet, time I get this far", and then "up through pines" and "Now down through oaks" (CS 143). There are bushes to be wary of, creeks to be crossed, barbed wire fences to go through, snakes to look out for and fears to be overcome. In short, figuratively and literally it was a journey that took her over the hills and down dales. Phoenix reaches Natchez late in the evening. She reaches the dispensary and quite forgets the reason for her journey, until one of the nurses recognises her. The nurse's repeated questioning clears Phoenix's mind. But it is only the top haze that is cleared. Phoenix's grandson is apparently dead but Phoenix does not seem to comprehend this. She has been making her annual trips to Natchez every year, for the past four years, to get medicine to soothe her grandson's throat.

Besides the obvious allusion to the Egyptian and Christian myth, Frank Ardolino has discovered that "Phoenix re-enacts the death and re-birth of the pagan vegetation gods Osiris, Attis and Adonis. She is identified with these ancient gods by her physical description and the vegetation about her" (Ardolino 2-3). Old phoenix Jackson's "Skin had a pattern all its own numberless branching wrinkles and as though a whole little tree stood in the middle of the forehead.... Under the red rag her hair came down on her neck in the frailest of ringlets, still black, and with an odour like copper" (CS 142).

The pine and oak trees through which Phoenix Jackson passes are trees considered to be sacred to Attis and Adonis. The red rag worn by her is symbolic of the anemone, "a flower that is believed to have sprung from the blood of Adonais, or to have been stained by it" (Frazer 336). While on her way Phoenix keeps muttering to herself, "Keep the big wild hogs out of my path. Don't let none of those come running in my direction" (CS 142). Adonais is believed to have been killed by a wild boar, and Phoenix's reference to the wild boar reinforces the phoenix – Adonais symbolism.

Osiris is the Egyptian corn god whose body Set, his brother, had cut into pieces and cast into the Nile. Isis, the royal consort of Osiris, picked up the fragments and buried them. The Egyptians regarded sowing as the burial of the fragments of Osiris' body and reaping, done with lamentation, was regarded by them as Osiris being slain once again. It is this annual re-birth and slaying that Phoenix Jackson re-enacts in her annual trip to Natchez. Phoenix Jackson's journey for the soothing medicine for her grandson is symbolic of Aeneas' quest for the Golden Bough, which would enable him to reach underworld and meet his father Anchises, whose advice he sought. There is also an obvious reference to the legend of Daedalus, the architect of the labyrinth for the Minotaur in Crete, in Phoenix Jackson's words as she goes into a field of old cotton and dead corn, "Through the maze now", she said, for there was no path (144).

'A Worn Path' is a story that strives "to probe the meaning of life in its simplest and most elementary terms" (Isaacs 81). A probing that does not come up with anything new for the path that is trod is a worn path, one through which not only Phoenix Jackson has passed but countless people have passed and are passing. It is a path that is dark and lonely as hazardous as Aeneas' descent into Hades. Just as Aeneas was able to overcome all dangers and fears because of the mistletoe or the Golden Bough he carried, so too Phoenix's difficulties seem light because her goal is uppermost in her mind. The thorns that catch her skirt are symbolic of the loneliness, the illusions, and the difficulties of her journey, and they seem of no consequence to her. Uppermost in her mind is the medicine she must get for her grandson. Man's journey through life, like phoenix's and Aeneas' is fraught with dangers and difficulties at every turn. Instead of losing hope, if he carries the Golden Bough with him – a goal, a desire to make something of his life and not to be narcissistic, then, he, like Phoenix, will find no difficulty in overcoming those hazards strewn on his path through life.

In portraying Phoenix Jackson, Eudora Welty carves a confluence of mythical, virtuous traits of good Christian, a good Buddhist and loving matriarch. She parallels the symbol of Buddha. Her conduct is ethical for

Phoenix Jackson does not lie and is not unkind. She parallels the eight fold path (1. Right View, 2. Right Intent, 3. Right Speech, 4. Right Focus, 5. Right Alertness, 6. Right Purpose, 7. Right Effort and 8. Right Motivation) enunciated by Buddha.

Phoenix Jackson's livelihood does not harm anyone and resembles the tradition of Buddhism. As Buddha used his own two feet, his own voice to inspire religion that would continue for generations, Phoenix Jackson also journeys to revive her generation. Her sacrificial life resembles the mythical phoenix bird. She parallels the sacrificial Buddhist monk and also the mythical bird in her traits of single minded determination and selflessness.

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Portrait of New Society of Red China and Culture in Lisa See's *Dreams of Joy*

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Abstract: *Lisa See is a Chinese-American English writer. She lives in Los Angeles (America). She started to write fiction based on Chinese culture, and tradition. Her works are On Gold Mountain, The Interior, Dragon Bones, Flower Net, Snow flower and the Secret Fan, Shanghai Girls and Dreams of Joy. In Dreams of Joy, Lisa See paints a vivid portrait of communist China. Protagonist Joy returns to China from Los Angeles to search her biological father and she enters the country by saying that she want to help people republic of China. Pearl, her mother follows her to China. Through these two characters Lisa See brings the situation of communist China and the existing culture. Pearl found out some culture that is followed by her ancestors that are still not found in her country. Some of them are Foot-Binding and the other rituals. Her works portray the life and culture of Chinese people. This paper focuses on the Communist China or New Society of Red China and its culture.*

Key words: culture, communism, immortality.

‘Culture’ according to Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary, refers to the customs and belief, art, way of life and social organization of a particular country or group. China is a cultural heritage country. Culture intermingles with society and people. Lisa See, the American writer writes about Chinese history with culture in her novels like *Snow Flower and the Secret Fan, Shanghai Girls, Poeny in Love, and Dreams of Joy*. She combines the Chinese culture in her characters. The novel *Dreams of Joy* sets in 1950s. Protagonist Joy born in Los Angeles learns Chinese language in her school and learns about communist China. In order to help the communist china and to find her biological father, she boards in plane and landed in Hong Kong. From there she got into the boat and reached the border. At the border, they collect all the passports and Joy has to answer their queries. She boldly says that her arrival is to help the New Society of China and to find her biological father. Then the officer helps her to find her father. Her father is an artist holds a good position in the country. Followed by Joy her mother Pearl landed Hong Kong, and makes all the arrangements to receive letter from her sister May. For her return plan she hides passport. Joy enjoys the new country. But in 1950s, what Joy learns in her class is totally different in real China. At the beginning she doesn't find any difficulty, because she is with her rich father. But once she marries a village guy her life really sense the China.

The New Society of Red china or the Communist China is what Lisa See picturises in her novel. Other countries come forward to help China. But the communist China doesn't show their poverty outside, in order to prove that they are sufficient in everything. For this reason they arrange parties to show their richness, in which members from other countries attends. Meanwhile people lives in the village men and women suffer lot to earn money and food. Whole day they spend their energy in the fields for their little stomach. At this time Joy remembers her professor who once said that the Chinese peasant is “the twin brother to the ox”. This is what Joy feels after working in the field. But the people have to follow,

THE DANDELLION NUMBER EIGHT PEOPLE'S COMMUNE:

1. PLANT MORE
2. PRODUCE MORE
3. WORK POINTS WILL BE AWARDED ACCORDING TO PHYSICAL STRENGTH AND HEALTH
4. ALL PRIVATE HANDICRAFTS AND PRIVATE ENTERPRISES ARE FORBIDDEN
5. EAT THREE MEALS A DAY FOR FREE. (165)

People in the Green Dragon Village, for the sake of three meal, women, children, men, old people and even the pregnant women work in the field. Once old lady Yong caught by Mao leader that she hides in the kitchen, without going to the fields. The leader of the village took her to the Scaffold and makes her to hear public criticizing. Yong couldn't move one place to another because her feet is bound, she is the only living lady in the village has the foot bind. In this communist China, the old culture is forbidden. Whereas, in the 19th century China those culture is followed and praised by the people. For example, ‘Foot Binding’ is considered very important for young girls to get a good husband and good fortune. Foot binding (also known as ‘Lotus feet’) is the custom of applying painfully tight binding to the feet of young girls to prevent further growth. Foot binding became popular as a means of displaying status and was correspondingly adopted as a symbol of beauty

in Chinese culture. Bound feet were once considered intensely erotic in Chinese culture and a woman with perfect lotus feet was likely to make a more prestigious marriage.

He consulted our eight characters. But when all was said and done, he settled on the typical day for girls in our region- the twenty fourth day of the eight lunar month – when those who are to have their feet bound say prayers and make final offerings to the Tiny – Footed Maiden, the Goddess who oversees foot binding. (*Snow Flower and the Secret Fan* 30)

But the communist China neglects this culture. They want women to work in the field. Whereas in 19th century China, girls who have foot binding stayed inside the house. Old lady Yong grieved and says,

My mother told me that if I had my feet bound, my swaying walk would look like the drifting mist and I would marry into a good family with at least five other women with bound feet. She promised that, when I married, I would wear a headdress weighing more than a dozen pounds. She said I would never have to leave my home, but if I wanted to for some reason, I'd be carried in palanquin so no one would see me. She said I would always have four maids to help me, and for a while I had even more than that. She said I would never have to work in the fields- (224)

New society of Red China or Communist China foot binding is extinct but people still believes and follows their culture. When Joy got married to Tao, people decorated the room with, “red paper cutouts: carp for harmony and connubial bliss, orchids for numerous progeny and the superior man, and peaches for marriage and immortality.”(183)

People in china believe red color gives happiness to the family. Therefore they prefer red color in all the occasions. Moreover, as everyone knows China is largest population country in the world. The reason for overpopulation is somehow cleared in this novel. Women give birth to many children, if the child is male she receives more honor. Does anyone believe woman get pregnant even after her son or daughter get married. Joy's mother-in-law is pregnant. Joy writes a letter to her mother as,

They say mother-in-law are awfull creatures....., but Fu-Shee isn't so bad. She' pregnant again. I'm not. I'd like to have a baby. A son, of course. It would make Tao happy. It would please my in-laws.... (213)

Joy's mother-in-law had the miscarriage. Women in the village start talking at Joy's back because they believe, “Women who haven't given birth are believed to bring bad luck to unborn and newborn babies” (213).

In Chinese, the word womb is made up of characters for palace and children. Chinese woman beliefs of pregnancy: women says at pregnant women, “Don't attend Magic shows,” “because if you see through any of the magicians tricks he'll cast a spell on you out of embarrassment.” “Don't climb any fruit trees, another counsel, because if you do, they won't bear fruit I the coming year.” All these belief is strictly followed by these people to protect their offspring. When Joy delivers a girl baby, her neighbor gives her eggs. Joy says

We receive no brown sugar and ginseng to restore blood, and no chicken and fruit to help rebuild our constitutions. I anticipated that no red eggs will be made to celebrate my baby's one month birthday either. Still, three neighbor women give me eggs: one egg is rotten, the second is so old the yolk cant be distinguished from the white, and the third has a dead chick inside. I think about the risk they took to hide the eggs. (258)

It is a belief that “Red eggs- a symbol of life dyed red for celebration-were given to the guests and relatives”. (*Snow Flower and the Secret Fan* 200) The parents hand out red-dyed eggs to the guests, which symbolize happiness and the renewal of life. The color red represent happiness and good luck and eggs represent fertility. The shape of the egg is associated with harmony and unity.

In addition to these cultures, Chinese Zodiac is culturally inbound with the lives of the people. We might heard that 2014 is the Year of the Horse starts from Jan 31, 2014 and lasts to Feb.18 2015 in Chinese Zodiac. Similarly each year they have one Zodiac sign which tells the nature of the people. The Chinese zodiac, known as Sheng Xiao, is based on a twelve year cycle, each year in that cycle related to an animal sign. These animal signs are that rat, ox, tiger, rabbit, dragon, snake, horse, sheep, monkey, rooster, dog and pig. It is calculated according to Chinese lunar calendar. Similar to the ten heavenly stems and twelve earthly branches, animals in Chinese zodiac were also created for counting years as the system that is now universally accepted . The selection of animals and order are much influenced in Han dynasty. For a long time there has been a special relationship between humans and the 12 zodiacal animals. It is believed that the years represented by the animals affect the characters of people in the same manner as the sign of zodiac adopted by western civilizations.

The novel *Dreams of Joy* is divided into four parts. Lisa See gives Zodiac titles for each part they are, the Tiger leaps, the Rabbit dodges, the Dog grins and the Dragon rises. Joy's zodiac animal is tiger. In Chinese culture, the tiger is considered the king of all animals, and it is believed that it will protect babies. Guests often bring presents pertaining to tigers from tiger hats to tiger bibs. These tiger shoes have embroidered eyes that are sewn wide-open. These open eyes were believed to help keep children from tripping as they first learn to walk.

At the time of people republic of China, especially villagers without food started to die, and the entire village full of corpse. Joy, somehow managed to survive and protects her baby Samantha. The nature of tiger reflects at this situation. Not only has that, at the beginning of the novel Joy courageously left for China to find her biological father. She herself says,

...but I was born in the Year of the Tiger, so before the gnawing blackness of guilt about my dad's death and the anguish I feel about these revelations overpower me, I grip the sheets tighter, set my jaw, and try to force my emotions to cower and shrink before my Tiger ferocity.(3)

The people in China naturally believe the zodiac sign. The animal sign and its nature naturally reflects in the people who is born in the year of particular sign. They casually compares the sign and people character during their conversation. When Pearl talks with her daughter Joy about her father, Pearl says "...I know that a Rabbit will never go all out for you, defend you, or do battle for you".(178) in these sentence Pearl mention about Z.G(Joy's father who has born in the year of Rabbit). In addition to these Pearl says,

"Your father believed in perfect matches", I begin. "My mother believed in them too. So did Yen-yen and Grandpa Louie. Your father and I were very happy, even though an Ox and a dragon aren't a perfect match. Still, a Dragon and an Ox have great respect for each other. They work together for common goals. Even I, as a Dragon, could never complain about an Ox's worthiness. You're a Tiger. You've never mentioned what sign rules Tao."

"He's a Dog," Joy replies.

"Of course," I respond. "A Dog is the most likable of all the signs."

... "A Dog can be violent" (178)

These people naturally judge the person through the sign they own.

'The way of life' is also considered as a part of culture. In China Mid-Autumn Festival is considered to be a special one. In *Dreams of Joy*, Lisa See portrays how the village of Green Dragon, during the communist era celebrates this festival. In this festival, the Moon is closer to earth than at any time of the year. People usually call this festival as 'Mid – Autumn festival'. But Pearl, who born and brought out in China, for few years her entire lifestyle changes, because she settled in Los Angeles. During her visit Pearl celebrates this festival and the culture of China is flows in her blood. She joined with Tao's family, Kumei, Taming and enjoy the family togetherness, the harvest and the Moon. At this communist era, villagers supposed to eat at the canteen, they are not allowed to cook in their house. Instead they have to work in the field. Still they celebrates this Moon festival. The speciality of the Msoon festival is, they make Moon cakes filled with a sugary, paste of dates, nuts, and candied apricots. At the top, they embossed with images of a three-legged toad and a rabbit. In addition to this festival, Pearl says, "I take a box of cakes to Joy's house. *Tuanyuan*, the word for reunion, literally means a perfect circle, and that is what the Moon, the Moon cakes, and our family are on this night."(203) the belief of this Moon festival is picturised by Pearl as,

"This is special night", she tells the children. "The Moon Lady will hear your wishes and grant your requests, but only if they are one of a kind and never heard by anyone else". (203)

Joy looks up to the moon, and so do the children. I too stare at the rabbit in the moon, forever pounding out the elixir of immortality. My wish is simple. *Let my daughter continue to be happy. (204)*

The novel has the themes of motherhood, love, political tyranny, history, and culture. Thus the paper has explored the New Society of Red China, the beliefs of people and the existing culture during the 1950s through the novel *Dreams of Joy*.

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Exploring the cultural displacement in Bharathi Mukherjee's *The Tiger's Daughter*

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Abstract: The Tiger's Daughter is an immigrant novel about returning home. An immigrant novel by definition is a prose fiction of some length that deals with the protagonist leaving his or her homeland and settling down in a foreign country to start a new life. In the process, the protagonist goes through trials and tribulations while settling down in the adopted land fighting discrimination, getting married, finding work in short, integrating into the county of adoption. Typically, the protagonist of an immigrant novel goes through the phases of desire, control, displacement, and integration. Although The Tiger's Daughter evinces all these characteristics, the primary event in the novel is the protagonist returning home after seven years of living abroad. Throughout the novel, Bharati Mukherjee expertly, and subtly, builds the tension between the aristocratic upper classes and between the factory workers, the proletariat and the poor.

Key words: integrating, immigrant, displacement, proletariat and tribulations.

Bharathi Mukherjee is a Third World Feminist writer whose preoccupation is to deal with the problems and issues related with the South Asian Women particularly India. Like her contemporary feminist writers she upholds the cause of women, but she differs from them because her basic concern is to delineate the problems of cross cultural conflicts faced by Indian women immigrants. This is evident by Tara Banerjee in '*The Tiger's Daughter*', Dimple in '*Wife*', Jyothi in '*Jasmine*' and Devi in '*Leave it to me*', three sisters-Padma, Parvathi and Tara in '*Desirable Daughters*' and Tara in '*The Tree Bride*'. Bharathi Mukherjee's heroines are bold and assertive. They have the strong potentiality for adaptability; they live in the firm ground of reality and accept the bitter truth of their life.

In Bharathi Mukherjee's first novel *The Tiger's Daughter*, the protagonist Tara Banerjee returns to India after seven years stay in America. The novel moves on with the independent story of Tara Banerjee, the great-granddaughter of Harilal Banerjee and the daughter of the Bengal Tiger (named so for his temperament), the owner of famous Banerjee and Thomas (Tobacco) Co. Ltd. At a tender age of fifteen she is sent to America for higher studies. Homesick and scared, she tries to adjust to the demands of a different world. Her adjustment travails are described in detail, often using the flashback technique. Tara's early experiences in America— her sense of discrimination if her roommate did not share her mango chutney, her loneliness resulting in her vehemently taking out all her silk scarves and hanging them around to give the apartment a more Indian look, her attempt to stick to Indian ways by praying to Kali for strength so that she would not break down before the Americans— all portray the cultural resistance put forward by an innocent immigrant who refused to be completely sucked into the alien land. As Kumar says, "an immigrant away from home idealizes his home country and cherishes nostalgic memories of it and so does Tara in America" (31). Tara's habit of retaining her maiden surname after her marriage symbolically reflects her subconscious need to be rooted in her native land. Circumstances so contrive incidentally that she falls in love with an American, David Cartwright. Tara's marriage with David is reported in a summary manner, "Within fifteen minutes of her arrival at the Greyhound bus station there (at Madison), in her anxiety to find a cab, she almost knocked down a young man. She did not know then that she eventually would marry that young man" (Mukherjee 14).

David Cartwright is wholly Western and she is always apprehensive of this fact. She could not communicate with him the finer nuances of her family background and life in Calcutta while he asked naïve questions about Indian customs and traditions. Her split self also raised doubt about her husband not understanding her country through her and in turn her concluding that he may not have understood her either. Thus she felt completely insecure in an alien atmosphere. The new immigrant has to deal with people essentially different from him; he has to learn and understand alien ways, language; he has to face unaccustomed problems; in short he has to survive in a grossly foreign environment. (Chowdhury 94)

After a gap of seven years she plans a trip to India. These intervening years though have changed her perception about her surrounding; she has not been able to override gender stereotypes and clings to past memories for sustenance. On her return to India her initial reaction is that of shock and disgust. At the airport she is received by her Bombay relatives and is introduced as the American auntie to the children and she responds to her relatives in a cold and dispassionate manner. When her relatives call her 'Tultul' (nick name) it sounds strange to her Americanized ears (qtd. in Kumar 31). The railway station looks like a hospital with so

many sick and deformed men sitting on the bundles and trunks. In the compartment she finds it difficult to travel with a Marwari and a Nepali. Now she considers America a dream land. When surrounded by her relatives and vendors at the Howrah railway station Tara feels uncomfortable. It is likely that she hates everyone and everything in India where she was born, brought up and taught many values, all because of her acculturation in America.

Mukherjee here shows that nostalgia and cultural memory are integral parts of an expatriate's mental state but as one spends some years in the adopted country, the effectiveness of these things gradually wear out. One, then, finds it difficult to adjust to the ways of life and habits in the home country one has left years ago, particularly when the country goes through a serious socio-political crisis. Similarly Tara Banerjee Cartwright is in an intermediate stage when she is unable to negotiate the cultural terrain of Calcutta she has left behind seven years ago and is looking forward to overcome the loneliness she feels in the alien space and to be part of the nation. As "each atom of newness bombarded her" at Vassar, she longed for her usual life in Calcutta (Mukherjee 13). Her attempts to communicate with fellow students were largely futile. There was an invisible wall between Tara and the White students. As the narrative claims, her privileged Bengali upper class background and an effective training by the nuns at St. Blaise School in Calcutta helped her survive initial problems of cultural adjustments. She clung to the religious icons and old cultural habits which comforted her in small ways.

Later, socializing with fellow Indians through gatherings in Indian Students' Association helped her to ward off loneliness to a certain extent. She kept contact with her parents, relatives and friends through correspondences, which at the initial stage was of great emotional help. Her visit to Calcutta is designed to highlight her expatriate sensibility and to show the extent of psychological distance created as a result of physical separation from her home country and its culture. As the novel demonstrates, she no longer feels at ease with the Indian way of life, not even when she is in the midst of friends and relatives. This sets the stage ready for her eventual acceptance of the socio-cultural values of the new nation. As Rani says, "Assimilation and acceptance in the new culture appear impossible if the past is not forgotten" (83). Tara has no more an Indian identity and is always in clash with the culture of her native soil. The clash is deeply felt in the psyche of Tara who finds it difficult to adjust with her friends and relatives in India; and sometimes with the traditions of her own family.

Tara's psyche is always tragic as a result of the tension created in the mind between the two socio-cultural environments, between the feeling of rootlessness and nostalgia. She feels both trapped and abandoned at the same time. Neither can she take refuge in her old Indian self nor in her newly discovered American self. This difficulty of choosing lies in her refusal to totally condemn any one world. It might have been easier for Tara to leave her past untouched if she could find her old home contemptible, but she does not. Tara's mind is constantly at conflict with the two personalities— one of an Indian and the other of an American. Caught in the gulf between these two contrasting worlds, Tara feels that she has forgotten many of her Hindu rituals of worshipping icons she had seen her mother performing since her childhood.

The conclusion of this novel duplicates the confusion of Tara's character. The riotous and destructive mob outside Catelli-Continental hotel is merciless. Jittery, shivery and encased within a car surrounded by ruthless humanity, Tara feels the vulnerability of mortals. The turmoil outside is an external manifestation of Tara's inner state of mind and by leaving her amidst that turmoil, Mukherjee hints at the irreconcilability of such conflicts. The novel ends with a chaotic scene and unable to present any transcendental vision. Tara's stasis of imagination and general inability to do anything is also a reflection of the manner gender norms are internalized by girls. It is in India that Tara feels dislocated and displaced. In this way, Tara's journey to India proves as a quest for self and her immigrant psyche which proves frustrating, slowly leads her to illusion, alienation, depression and finally to tragic end.

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Bye Bye Blackbird is a Novel of Cultural Hegemony

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Abstract: *The meaning of culture is broad enough to include all human traits and social structures which are learnt and not innate. Culture encompasses all forms of art, recreation and language. The aim of culture is to pursue perfection in all walks of life. It is capable of developing the faculties of man in a harmonious and balanced manner. So the cultural man perfects not only himself but also the world. Literature and culture are mutually related. Literature is more than a realistic depiction of human life. Thus, literature enshrines in it all the cultural aspects of a society including its beliefs, knowledge, values and practices. The study of literature of a country, therefore, can be enlightening. Of all forms of literature, the novel has greater scope in critiquing human life and social culture. In general, literature shapes and changes social thinking and makes its readers more sensitive to others' position in social culture. Anita Desai, the Indian woman novelist in English is seriously concerned with the emotions, thoughts and cultural identities of her characters. Her novel Bye Bye Blackbird deals with Indian immigrants' problems in the alien land of England.*

Anita Desai has successfully depicted Asian immigrants' problems, especially those of Indian immigrants in England. The immigrants from Asian countries were known as 'blackbirds' in the land of white people. In the novel, she presents blackbirds as a marginalized, dislocated, rejected and unwanted foreigners staying in a country that has not adopted and accepted them honestly. The feelings of alienation, emptiness and barrenness disturb their lives. Through the characters in the novel Anita Desai implies that England cannot be a melting pot of cultures. It is a fertile ground for discrimination and marginalization of the Eastern people. With this understanding the major characters adjust themselves to a society that has certain cultural norms. This kind of submission suggests colonial tendencies, yet they are necessary for the maintenance of harmony and unity. This present study is an attempt to bring out how the novel, Bye Bye Blackbird focus on marginalization and the problem of cultural hegemony.

Keywords: *Cultural hegemony, Marginalization, Dislocated, Alienation, Emptiness and Barrenness.*

Before 1960, England had adopted multiculturalism as a policy to attract outsiders or others because England was in need of unskilled and undereducated workers for her material growth and economic prosperity. In the post-war period, people from all around the world with different cultures, backgrounds, religions, mentalities, histories and aspirations have flocked to England in search of blue-colour jobs.

As a result, England turned out to be a large multicultural society. The migration of various non-white groups to England had a number of important consequences. England started facing some serious problem due to the large inflow of the migrants. The natives believed that the immigrants as outsiders would invade their culture. So, England, being a host country, changed its earlier policy of multiculturalism. As a result, the large numbers of coloured immigrants were paid less and were often discriminated against on the basis of colour, caste, origin and religion.

In Anita Desai novel, *Bye Bye Blackbird* there is a shift between the oriental and occidental culture. Orientals believe that occidental culture is more rational and superior in tolerance, thinking, progress, modernism, independence and peace. Occidentals believe that orientals are primitive, black, savage, violent, fanatic, underdeveloped, traditional and conservative. This has created a permanent rival relation of superiority-inferiority complex between the white and black. In power relations, the white have placed the black at the periphery and maintained their centrality at a global level. Thus the black have become the victims of western ideologies and philosophies. Even on the post-colonial period the clash exists. The domination continues in the name of acculturation. It leads to social disharmony, unrest and friction.

The novel opens with the arrival of Dev, Adit's friend, in England. Adit is married to Sarah, a British girl. Dev is the mouthpiece of Desai. He comes to England for higher study. Initially he is averse and reluctant to the idea of staying in England as an immigrant. But gradually a slow change occurs in the attitude of Dev. His initial encounter with the British people and their culture brings unhappiness and discontent.

It is true that there are hundreds of Third World immigrants in London who willfully forget the value of their own local culture in the glitter of the Western city. But Dev has been able to perceive the loneliness that lurks beneath the sheen of the city. Dev notices that the city can offer only a sense of emptiness to the inhabitants. Dev questions the unashamed behavior of the lovers in Hyde Park. The lovers make a show of their love making ignoring the passers-by. There is no culture in England for the immigrants to identify with.

In another situation Dev has a shocking fact that even the white children grow up with a warped knowledge of colour and race differences. While on a sightseeing trip to London, Dev is called a 'wog' by a

schoolboy. Dev's reaction to the insult is sharp, but the point is the boy's awareness that anyone other than a white-skinned person can be insulted publicly. Even nationality of an individual, thus, becomes a criterion for discrimination. What the immigrant feels in England is the presence of the dominant white culture on him. The natives of England have succeeded in marginalizing the immigrants and in intimidating them with their status of a minority.

There are occasions when the immigrants' economic worth is judged by their origin and appearance. The behavior of a pedlar to Dev proves this. Dev's attempt to know the price of an icon is contemptuously ignored by the pedlar. Dev is almost treated like an untouchable who is culturally backward and socially mean. The British in the novel are so coloured- conscious that even jobs are reserved for the fair-skinned Europeans. Even they categorize according to the religion. It is evident that the white hegemony is directed not only by cultural, social, racial and economic considerations but also by religious factors.

Adit, the protagonist of *Bye Bye Blackbird*, leads a settled life in England, as an immigrant with his English wife Sarah. Adit is first of all fascinated by the white culture. He regards England as a 'land of opportunity'. England offers to him are a carefree life that suits a sybarite. He enjoys the life of a bourgeois in England, which offers him pubs, women to eye and a lot of wine. England for him is a symbol of refinement and sophistication, while India is a symbol of crudities and dirt.

While admiring the history and poetry of the West, Adit seems to forget, rather willingly, the fact that the British have used them to play up their hegemony and maintain their central position at a global level. If Adit has greatest admiration for the history and poetry of England than those of his own, then it implies the hegemonic success of the West over its blind cultural fans. Indians like Adit, at least for a while, falls a prey to the glitter of the white ideology of art, philosophy and life. The fact that he gets out of his obsession with everything white itself is a testimony to the hollowness of the white ideology. It also points up the fact that cultures can educate you when you attempt to study them more from close quarters and experience them by living in them. This is illustrated in the attitudinal transformation that takes place in Adit's mind.

Sarah, a British girl married to Adit, becomes a sandwiched and squeezed between two different cultural forces. She has violated certain unwritten codes and conventions of the colour conscious white society. She is humiliated by her colleagues at her school and even the pupils of the school. This kind of humiliating existence has created in her a sense of alienation. The loneliness that she feels in her own white society becomes complete when even her parents extend a cold welcome to her and to her husband on their first visit to her house after marriage.

The taunts of colleagues, the contempt of students and the standoffishness of her own parents have had a weakening impact on her psyche. Like an outcaste, she avoids meeting people. The irony is that she can't feel at home in the company of her own white fellow beings. She faces marginalization at every place-home, school and society. Indeed she is shattered but she makes an earnest effort to piece together her shattered self. She wants to get back to her own identity as Sarah; she takes the path breaking decision of settling down in India, the land of her husband.

It is a land; she seems to have understood, that still holds some respect for marital relationship. It is a land that has accommodated people of diverse backgrounds, cultures and religions for centuries. Further, it is a land that has been a shelter for the alien and the exile. Weakness though it may appear, the land was friendly even to the invaders. Sarah's decision to adopt India as her homeland is an outcome of her feeling that "she had become nameless" (31). She needs a place where she can find humanity, kindness, fellow feeling and self-respect.

It is significant that Sarah's decision matches Adit's disillusionment and disenchantment with English culture and manners. Bitter experiences in England teach him to respect his own country with all its weaknesses and drawbacks. Adit's disenchantment with English way of life is timely. Sarah loses her identity in her own homeland, while Adit loses it in an alien land. The sense of alienation and marginalization becomes so acute in him that he realizes to leave England for good with his wife. Both have suffered on account of their skin colour and inter-marriage.

Anita Desai wishes that Adit's shaking off of a hegemonic impact should be ideally the move that every Indian should take. Indeed Desai has no illusory belief that the fabric of Indian multiculturalism is strong. Rather, she seems to assert that multiculturalism is possible only when the parties involved have the readiness to forget and forgive. She also seems to believe that multiculturalism can be maintained only with difficulty. The picture of India outside is rosy and romantic, but it is not really so.

The family in India is large; the people are with conventional and modern viewpoints. There are also chances of friction. Yet such large families survive. Likewise India too maintains the balance of cultures, religions, sects, beliefs and opinions although it has been occasionally made upset by intolerant groups. Shedding of ego, adjustment to unknown set-ups and respecting others' sentiments are the essential factors that have contributed to the continued existence of multiculturalism in India.

Thus, culture is not important, but cultural differences should be considered positively for maintaining social health and strength. After all there is no one perfect culture, but each culture has something new to share

with. The present study helps to understand that cultural hegemony is a worldwide problem and how it has been tackled by the victims.

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Amish Tripathi's *The Immortals of Meluh* as Cocktail of Myths and Fiction

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Abstract: *A myth is a sacred or symbolic story from the past, and it may be ritualistic in nature. A myth may describe the origins of people, or explains customs or traditions. Retelling of mythology is a common practice in literature. For the past few decades, the practice of retelling of mythology in literature, especially in Indian Writing in English has undergone remarkable changes catering to the expectations of the modern readers. The Shiva Trilogy by Amish Tripathi is one such brilliant attempt. The first book in the series, The Immortals of Meluha is a fresh tale on Lord Shiva whom we meet regularly in temples and shivalyas, but have never had such a fantastic vision of. Amish is an IIM educated boring banker turned happy author. He is passionate about history, mythology, and philosophy, finding beauty and meaning in all world's religions. Amish has interestingly used the plot of ancient folklore and mythology and embellished it with his writing skills and imagination. What comes out is a heady mix of fiction and reality. He tells a fascinating tale of the characters we have grown up hearing of and brings them all to life, molding their characters as per his story's requirement. The Immortals of Meluhais a heady cocktail of mythology as we know it and fantastic tale of its own.*

Keywords: *India, Myth, Fiction, Modernizing, Culture.*

Mythology in Indian context is perhaps the most utilized and most admired for every generation and genre. History bears proof to every fact the Indians from every age, time and place and dynasty have expressed their ardent desire to be enriched and knowledgeable in myths, mythology, legends and folklore. Irrespective of belonging to the contemporary age or being placed in erstwhile era, Indian mythology and its umpteen sections have rested their permanent influence on Indian literature as a whole, which by their own right; can be considered a literary genre itself. The *Puranas* consisting of the two great epics the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* represents the antiquity of India. These epics are the rich storehouse of the traditional myths, stories, about legends, deals with the pantheon of Hindu Gods and folktales. They are viewed as a cultural beacon of values, beliefs, prejudices and philosophical ideals. Doty acknowledges this view as, "Mythic expression is never about trivial matters; it involves instead perspectives behaviour, and essential. It is clearly the sort of expression that presents dramatic embodiments of ideals and values and models of heroic and supreme"(19).

Regardless of the criticisms and accusations directed towards myths questioning its authenticity and validity, writers have been practicing reinterpretation of mythical stories. The main reason for this unquenchable interest of the writers in mythology is to figure out the meaning of their present in relation to their ancient past. The earlier Indian fictional writers assigned perspectives, meanings, and connotations to the traditional myths. They used archetypes of legendary heroes, symbols, character types and themes. But now the common practice of retelling mythical stories involves reconstruction of stories and characters in accordance with the context that clearly brought mythology into the living room conversations and debates.

Mythology in the modern predicament is used to bridge the gap between urban and rural consciousness, between the past and the present. Mythic thoughts, in fact, are attempts to mediate the gaps between continuity and change. By using similar mythological situations, a broader dimension is given to the present-day chaotic condition in which humanity is living today. The mythical past affirms man's relationship to the transcendent. It has a value-structure. It is a rediscovery of the past for the present, and an adaptation for the future. In contemporary Indian works, along with a sense of urbanity, an attitude of irony, frequent use of mythological sequences as structural images, and a continuous involvement with the problems of expediency and eternity, are very visible. These writers have made an effort to retrieve, rediscover, and redefine elements of culture in a creative way, by a return to pride in one's roots, while looking ahead.

The new breed of writers like Amish Tripathi, Ashok Banker and AshwinSanghi are experimenting the mythology genre by blending it with the other modes of writing. For instance, Ashok Banker and Amish Tripathi have blended mythology with fantasy mode. With this kind of implementations these writers are modernizing the Indian myths. Ashok Banker pioneered this practice of modernizing the myths in Indian fictional writing. But he endeavoured to stay true to the original mythical stories by replicating them. On the other hand Amish Tripathi has created purely a fantasy fiction out of the mythical stories by establishing a unique identity for Indian Writing in English with his Shiva Trilogy.

Amish is passionate about mythology, history and philosophy. His belief is that there are beauty and meaning in all world cultures and religions. Amish's Shiva Trilogy is based on the reconstruction of several Indian mythical characters and stories drawn from *the Ramayana*, *the Mahabharata* and *Shivapurana*. For the philosophical arguments he has relied on the classical Sanskrit texts of the *Vedas* and *Upanishads*. The three books of the series are the sole proof of the skill of Amish in crafting different modes such as fantasy fiction, adventure and thriller fiction into the genre of mythology. The earlier Indian writers have made conventional use of mythology. They either used mythical themes or mythical characters in their works. Amish broke this traditional way of handling mythology and has given it a new outlook.

Amish has picked one of the most multifaceted Gods from Hindu mythology to weave his tale about. He takes a God we believe in and turns him into an ordinary man then tells a tale of how the ordinary man transforms into a God due to his conduct, choices, deeds, and destiny. This fascinating page turner easily manages to bring to us a more innovative and engrossing version of the *Shivapurana* along with a subtle allegory of philosophy, with a completely different perspective. He recreates the myth of Shiva, Ganesh, Sati and Kali through his study of all spheres of Indian life and literature. He makes Shiva myth appealing and intelligible to the modern mind. Those who still keep the oral tradition alive through chanting and singing of hymns and folk songs deserve gratitude and admiration of young generation. At the same time, there is also a need to understand and reinterpret its meaning. Recitation without a knowledge of its meaning does not enlighten one. Amish insists to engage oneself in action because actions purify as knowledge liberates. Through recreation, "The Shiva Trilogy" becomes living inspirational scripture capable of providing spiritual direction in the modern world. The life of Shiva as more human than God is what the theme of the book revolves around. The perfect combination and balance of adventure, action and love along with ideologies, mythology and philosophy is what has led Amish to his destiny of producing this nationally acclaimed bestseller.

The Immortals of Meluha is based on the construction of the existence of Indian mythical God Shiva as the legendary figure in 1900 B.C. The epic narrative is generally a literary construction mingled with the pseudo historical material. Amish has succeeded in making many mythological figures into simple flesh and blood human beings, and therein lies the beauty and acceptability of this book. The book starts off with a young tribal leader (Shiva) in Tibet, who is cheerful, carefree, and yet dedicated and strong in both mind and body. His courage makes him highly respected among his tribe of Gunas, and hence, no one questions his decision to move away from Mansarovar and migrate for better life. As the setting of this episode shifts from Mount Kailash to Meluha, Shiva gradually transforms into a more Godlike being, the 'Neelkanth' or 'The Divine one with the Blue Throat'. The Suryavanshis and the people of Meluha prophesize the arrival of this second Mahadeva as an initiator to a safer and a more glorious future for their kin. The plot thickens as the rivalry between the Suryavanshi and the Chandravanshi tribes takes a turn for the worse. This is where Shiva's destiny as a charismatic leader and a divine individual comes face to face with his present persona which is that of a simple unassuming soul. As a whole *The Immortals of Meluha*, by Amish is an exhilarating cocktail of reality and myth blending them like never before showing how rich indeed they are.

Shiva like an ordinary man is unsure, uncertain and anxious about the responsibilities that he would be shouldering in the near future. This is when Sati enters his life. Suddenly, Shiva finds the lost peace and balance in his life and finally succumbs to what he was destined for. Slowly and gradually these events lead up to Shiva discovering the latent strength and power that resides within him and using it for the wellbeing of the humanity. Lord Brahma is referred to as a great Indian 'scientist' who was always inventing devices and cures for the good of mankind. Under his guidance, a select group of adolescents, chosen from each of the seven regions of ancient India, honed their minds to achieve superhuman intelligence. They were known as the Saptarishis. Strict rules forbade them from practicing any trade for personal gain. They became priests, teachers, doctors, who did not charge for their services, but lived on donations and alms. The Saptarishis and the people they selected to share their responsibilities came to be known as the Tribe of Brahma or Brahmins. Corruption inevitably eroded their purity.

There is something here that resembles India's current situation – the Meluhans are Suryavanshis, worshippers of the sun. The Chandravanshis, who live across the border, are a perfidious lot, and worship the moon. They keep sending small bands of assassins who launch surprise attacks on public places. Their aim is to attack non-combatants – the Brahmins, Vaishyas or Shudras, devastate place like temples, public baths, spread terror and wreck the empire's morale. They have the Nagas, a race of deformed people, adept at martial arts, on their side. Shiva is the unwitting savior who is enlisted to fight them off. He like an anti-hero who constantly lights up his chillum and smokes marijuana, keeps looking out for non-vegetarian eating places, and moons over a widow, Parvati, and yes, loves to dance. The book describes a lot of close combat and well-described violence. It is termed as a great book that gets you acquainted with some admirable aspects of our gods and their culture.

Throughout the course of the novel, the diverse canvas of Indian history, mythology, folklore and religion keep the reader engrossed and desperate to turn the pages and devour the printed words. Moreover, the underlying philosophical allegory of the fact that 'God resides in each one of us, all we need to do is realize this and give ourselves a chance' aids the emotional connection and relation of the readers with the book. Though

Amish faced unpleasant experiences while publishing his book, he successfully connects such emotions to his readers. He opens up on the success of his books and challenges faced to Manish Mishra:

I stopped counting after 20 rejections. All of them felt that this was a religious book and the youth isn't interested in religion so there was no hope for this book. To be honest, I don't see my books as 'religious' even though I'm a devoted Shiva worshipper. It's an adventure series. Finally, we self published it. The book picked up within the first week and the publishers who had rejected it came back for a transfer. (Tripathi, "I stopped")

Though there were questions on the publication of his books he believes it's "the attractiveness of Shiva" that has contributed to the popularity of the books (Parker). He talks about how youth attracted to someone like Shiva and something like mythology to Ananya Bhattacharya of *Zeenews.com*:

There is a kind of attraction towards Lord Shiva for the youth. Shiva is a very 'cool' sort of a character. He is a god of the rebels, he doesn't really differentiate between the Devas and the Asuras, he is a one – woman man who is passionately in love with Parvati, he is a brilliant dancer and a consummate musician, and he is the author of the Vedas. Shiva is a very knowledgeable, democratic god; he treats his devotees with respect. At the same time, he has this love for marijuana and *bhang*! I feel whoever has a streak of rebelliousness in them, would find Shiva very attractive.

There is a mood of rebellion and anti-elitism in India and around the world. And Shiva is the original anti-elitist, rebellious deity! (Parker)

He attributed his interest in mythology to his background, "I was born in a very religious family. My grandfather was a Pandit in Benaras and a teacher – he taught Mathematics and Physics at Benaras Hindu University. Both my parents are also very religious. So I learnt much of what I know about mythology and religious philosophies from my family." (Parker) He believed retelling the tales of Lord Shiva — in a modern, contemporary and relatable style will resensitising our minds to our rich cultural past: "I don't think mythology ever went out of fashion in India. We are one of those rare civilisations with a culture spanning more than 5,000 years. We've kept our traditions alive. We allow our traditions to adapt with time and we are not rigid about it. Stories also modernise and localise, which keeps them alive. This tradition of modernising and localising mythology puts life back into it and makes it relevant once again." (Tripathi, "I stopped") Amish to an interview with Anusha Parthasarathy for *The Hindu* says:

My book began as a thesis on the nature of evil and then became an adventure of sorts. Who else can be the hero of such a book but the destroyer of evil, Shiva. Retelling myths has been a rich tradition in this country and my attempt is only a continuation of it. If you look at the Ramayana, Kamban's version is different from the Tulsidas version. They retold it for the people of their era and this is different from the original by Valmiki. It's not just the Ramayana but the same with all Puranas. (Tripathi, "Indian Mythology")

The book's biggest strength is how it plunks the mythological characters from the epics and plants them into tale with fitting characters, but still ensures that they are all humans. The subplots tell tales of Vasudevs, Sati, Nandi, Gunas, Rudra, Devas and Asuras, and more making it strikingly clear that everyone including Gods, can make mistakes. The narrative is lucid and the story is well-paced. Primarily the books are exciting but there is implausibility in it says Shuddhabrata Sengupta:

Amish reveals the mysteries of the plot at the perfect pace, keeping the reader always desiring more information without growing bored. But the excitement of the plot masks deeper problems hidden at the center of the series. At the onset, the Shiva Trilogy claims to be an interpretation of "the rich mythological heritage of ancient India, blending fiction with historical fact." This is a bold agenda to embark on, and if done correctly should be quite fruitful, yielding an enlightening account that is informative, instructive, and interesting. But, while it is a mixture of classical mythology, fantasy fiction, popular science, self-help philosophy, and history, the Shiva Trilogy makes a mess out of each and every one of these categories. The odd blend of fantasy, reality, and speculative history creates an awkward comic tone that can be captured in a single sentence from the first book: "The drone of Brahmin scientists reciting Sanskrit shlokas at the base of the mountain floated up to create an ethereal atmosphere of pathos." The powerful Puranic stories of Shiva and the great wealth of scholarship and archeology of ancient India are reduced to names, vague references and symbols, while the poetic abilities of the author are hampered by religious sentiments. These three major strands—myth, history, fiction—combine in the most awkward of all possible manners; with possible dangerous consequences.

But Amish argues that the very term mythology, which comes from the Greek word *mythos*, means to hide the truth and that it is up to us to discover it through the story, "Probably the only ancient civilisation that has kept its myths alive even today is India. This is not because the other myths aren't as rich as ours but because we have understood the philosophy behind them. Myths are not about the stories but about the message

you spread through them.” And as societies and beliefs change, myths have to change along with them. “Modernising and localising myths are ways of keeping them relevant in modern times. Otherwise, they would die out. Whether that would make them relatable is something readers will have to decide,” he says. (Tripathi, “Indian Mythology”)

In this age of demythologization, whatsoever, Amish firmly establishes a fictionalized historical account affirming that dwelling in geography of India imbues people with salvific strength. Though the fictionist seems to hold that human beings have an active intellect but a passive sensibility, Amish doubtlessly counts himself among those lucky few – the Shiva Trilogy novels- *The Immortals of Meluha*, *The Secret of the Nagas*, and *The Oath of the Vayuputras* have not only become bestsellers but have also been lapped up by both Hollywood and Bollywood for film adaptations, a commendable feat for a debutant writer.

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Cultural Confluences of Transnational Fluid Identity in Naipaul's *Half a Life*

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Abstract: *Culture is like the soul of the human being. It lies embedded in the psyche of every individual of society. It is exhibited through every iota of his/her aspect of life. It was homogeneous in the past, retaining the memory of cultural essences and tradition. However, it undergoes the throes of metamorphosis, which is inevitable in the face of the emerging, rather, emerged new imperialism, namely, globalization. It throws apart the burden of the old legacy of the past. It claims to have sapped the energy of the tradition and culture of any individual. However, it brings out the inevitable changes within the fabric of modern society, which has accepted the globalization and transnationalism. This paper strives to bring out the effects of globalization and transnationalism in the fiction of V.S. Naipaul, namely, Half A Life. It brings out the mobile energy of the modern man, who dangles between the extremes of both temporal and spatial entities. The protagonist of the novel stands baffled by the changing phase of modern cultural artifacts, owing to the irreconcilable forces of globalization.*

Key words: *Cultural Metamorphosis, Globalization, Transnationalism.*

Naipaul stands between the old and new diasporas. His earlier fictions depicted the painful and harrowing experiences of the migrants. In his post-millennium fictions, we find the transformed self of migrants in the form of transnationalism. There is a kind of metamorphosis in the migrant's psyche, which moves from the trauma of indentured labourer identity to transnational efficacy. The border-crossings have been significant in his later phase of fictional writing.

Transnationalism and diaspora are the twin concepts of migrational politics. Diaspora denotes the religious or ethnic groups living outside a homeland. "transnationalism is often used both more narrowly – to refer to migrants' durable ties across countries – and, more widely, to capture not only communities, but all sorts of social formations, such as transnationally active networks, groups and organizations," says Thomas Faist (Baubock 9).

Transnationalism is the global phenomenon, arising out of interconnectivity between people. The term was coined by Randolph Bourne in the early 20th century to describe relationships between cultures. It has reorganized the global cultures at the people's level, at all related to political groups. Transnationalism refers to the change in the migration concepts. Traditionally, the concept of migration carried the dual sense of departure and arrival. It is now bloomed into the movement between two or more places. The migrants have developed strong ties to more than one country, transcending the boundaries of social and geographical frontiers.

Globalisation is the offshoot of transnationalism, possessing the economic base. Internationalism is not to be confounded with globalization, while the former refers to global co-operation between nations and governments and the latter is a kind of global co-operation between people. Transnationalism is akin to cosmopolitanism, as the former explains the individual experience and the latter its philosophy. Naipaul's *Half a Life* and *Magic Seeds* are his last two novels. Though they are separate, they contain a single narrative of migration and identity politics of Willie Chandran and his sister, Sarojini. These two fictions present the critique of diasporans with regard to their rootlessness and their half-lives. They are influenced by globalization as an economic and cultural phenomenon. Balfour states, "Willie Chandran and his sister, Sarojini, have been damaged by colonization, displaced by colonization, and marginalized by globalization" (10). Naipaul's earlier novels depict the agonies of displacement, brutality and emptiness. His earlier works are influenced by the decolonization and its effects. Soon after the phase of decolonization, the moment of globalization has come in existence.

Willie Chandan in *Half a Life* feels that neither family nor locality can give him the protection against the racism and caste. Consequently, he begins his Ulysean journey from India to London and then Africa. *Magic Seeds* extends the journey through the places, Africa, India, Europe. His trajectory journey gives him rich experiences about the fluid identity, which has been produced by the transnationalism.

In these two fictions, Naipaul demonstrates how the migration from the national borders to the global institutions causes anxieties. Chandran feels the nervous tensions in India and Britain and Sarojini feels it in Berlin. Willie Chandran says, "I must understand that big countries grow or shrink according to the play of ...forces that are beyond the control of any one man. I must try now to be only myself"(HL 141). Chandran's inability to get attached to place or cause or family is the result of the globalization. Globalization has wider access, but not equal access. In spite of hybridized and fluid identities, as a result of declonisation and globalisation, the people remain displaced and disrepute. The west remains rich, confident and white and the others remain poor, uneducated and black. Though Chandran and Sarojini try to resist, but are overcome by the global forces. Jan Mohammed says, "Homelessness cannot be achieved without multiple border crossings or without a constant, keen awareness of the politics of borders"(97).

Both Sarojini and Chandran are moved by external agencies. But they never understood them. In the process of multiple border crossing, they have become specular border intellectuals. Multiple border crossings happen only when the migrant feels the impossibility of recreating home. Chandran leaves India for England in order to escape his father's failure and misery. He says, "I began (to feel)... detached, or floating, with no links to anyone or anything...I forgot my situation. sometimes I forgot where I was" (29). He moves from England to Africa and marries a colonial Portuguese woman, Ana. Finally, he is disenchanted and binds his marital ties with her. On the other hand, his sister Sarojini goes with the German lover and realizes her mistakes later. She comes back to India and settles down temporarily in her father's ashram. Having learnt and felt the uneasiness in India, she too leaves India for Germany.

In *The Location of Culture*, Bhabha affirms the rich intellectual possibilities for the migrants. But Naipaul rejects the intellectual possibilities and pinpoints the disadvantages of the educated intellectuals like Chandran and Sarojini. Though their countries offered them shelters, they are rejected on the grounds of race. Though education and language have enabled them easy access to global mobility, they are treated inferior, based in their race.

Chandran and Sarojini do not handle the technique of 'uncritical gregariousness' in the host countries. As they are 'specular border intellectuals', they do not have home because of multiple border crossing between countries. They are placed on the border.

In the modern scenario, even the welfare states could not safeguard the migrants like Chandran and Sarojini. Though they are intellectually brought up by colonial power through the education given by missionaries, they are nowhere in the globalised world. In the place of imperialism, the modern Empire holds the global citizens in its control. Empire does not have any fixed geographical borders. Like its predecessor, it needs the concept of 'the other', the marginals. Searching new identity is a pivotal aspect of exile. Sarojini tries to form new home out of the remnants of her past. Both Chandran and Sarojini are aware of the indifference in the metropolitan countries, Britain and Germany. Chandran creates his persona for himself in order to exist comfortably in these countries. He carries the Indian memories within himself. JanMohammed, says, "An exile in the weak sense, that is, a subject who always belongs to his home culture in spite of, indeed because of, acircumstantial and temporary alienation"(119). *Half a Life* and *Magic Seeds* bring out the proposition that the migrants view globalization as racist and imperial. Further, the possibilities for identity and resistance within the global village and within the democracies have been increasingly motivated. The diasporans do suffer from physical, intellectual and emotional crisis and they are driven to seek identity in the fluid world.

The global migration brings about the topographical shifting, cultural transaction, multiculturalism and fluid identity. The concept of root, home and nostalgia mostly form the core of diasporic writings. The term 'root' is associated with the original homeland from which the dispersed people come from. The idea of 'home' is closely linked to 'the original root'. Rootedness is a geographical concept and is vital to the notion of home. Memory becomes a part of the 'root'. An immigrant, geographically displaced, does not forget his emotional bond with his original home. The memory of the immigrants synthesizes the past with the present. They use the tool of memory to reduce the distance between the alien country and the homeland. Through the recollection, the past incidents of the native land are reflected in the immigrant's mind only in the broken fragments due to the long absence from the native land. Salman Rushdie's comment deserves attention: "We will not be capable of reclaiming precisely the thing that was lost... create fictions, not actual cities or villages, but invisible ones, imaginary homelands, Indias of the mind"(112).

The immigrants are, when they find the hostile atmosphere in the alien land, shocked, feel isolated and alienated. Alienation creates mental disturbance. It is quite common to find the lack of adaptability, lack of acculturation and multiple identities. The inability to feel one with the foreign environment make the immigrants attached to the native land.

Both *Half a Life* and *Magic Seeds* are the contemporary critiques of globalization. They present the accounts of slavery, colonization, decolonization and industrialization, having caused great impact on the characters who have become rootless, half-lives and failures. The migrant is transformed into a border intellectual, subaltern, hybrid and mirror.

Robert Balfour contends in his article “*V.S.Naipaul’s Half a Life, Magic Seeds and globalization*” that these two novels “evidence a departure from postcolonial theoretical positions and shows how they have been overtaken by globalization as an economic and cultural phenomenon”(15).

Anthony Giddens defines globalization as “the intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa” (8). Globalisation has brought in a sense of interconnectedness across and beyond national borders. It has ruptured the very fabric of localized social relations. Globalisation is not new, though it seems to be so. Even in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the West had mooted the idea of colonization. Difference between the erstwhile colonization and the modern globalization is that the latter is characterized by the amount and intensity of global flows.

The global flows with great speed and intensity make the global citizen at cross roads. In these flows, there seems to be a lack of meaning or depth. For instance, the distant events on our television screens do not offer us any meaning or death. They are meaningless in a shallow world. “Hyper-mobility means a placeless world, and therefore a meaningless world.”(8). The effects of globalization are not inspired by any centralized power, be it either state or the capitalist classes. We are not, in this context, bothered about the lack of meaning. Baurillard says, “We manufacture a profusion of meanings in which there is nothing to see.” (8).

In the wake of globalization, the idea of exile has undergone changes. Edward Said and Bhabha’s definitions of migrants have been radically found to be insufficient. The early works of Naipaul such as *The Middle Passage*, *A Flag on the Island* and *In a Free State* revolve around constructing national identity from the past. But such attempts have been proved to be futile in the globalization scenario. Both *Half a Life* and *Magic Seeds* portray the multiple border crossings of Willie and Sarojini. They have been trying to seek meanings in their displaced lives at home and in various countries. But they are unable to find such identity anywhere, in the changing phase of modern life.

Homi Bhabha’s statement about the cosmopolitan outlook of Naipaul’s heroes is worth quoting here: “Naipaul’s people are vernacular cosmopolitans of a kind, moving in-between cultural traditions, and revealing hybrid forms of life and art do have a prior existence within the discreet world of any single culture of language” (xiii).

Half a Life consists of three parts. Part One is entitled ‘A Visit from Somerset Maugham,’ which has three subdivisions. Part Two is named ‘The First Chapter’ with six subdivisions and Part Three is called ‘A Second Translation’ with nine subdivisions. They depict the progression of events, corresponding to Willie’s migration in India, England and Africa. In the first half of the novel, Naipaul narrates the story of Willie’s father and also Willie’s migration to England. In the second half, he depicts the graphic account of Willie’s life with Ana in Africa. The novelist uses both the first person narration and omniscient narration. His narrative shift is linked to the migrations of the protagonist. His journey is the story of self-discovery in three continents. His transnational trajectories are marked by his constant quest for identity.

The novel opens with Willie Chandran’s logical and tricky question to his uninterested father: “Why is my middle name Somerset? The boys at school have just found out, and they are mocking me” (HL13). His crisis begins with his name. Name is very important for a human being. Naming ceremony is considered to be sacred in a man’s life. A baby, who is named by his/her parents at the time of birth, carries the destiny all along life. Willie is curious to know about the cause for his strange and alien name, as his parents are Hindus. His query is similar to the one posed by Gogol in Jhumpa Lahiri’s fiction *The Namesake*, in which he questions the meaning for his name. Gogol, who is born to the Indian immigrant parents in the United States, is afflicted by the burden of his strange name. His father, Ashoke tells him that he is named after the Russian writer. He says, “He has been told that he was named after a famous Russian author, born in a previous century. That the author’s name, and therefore his, is known throughout the world and will live on forever” (Lahiri 66). The colonized during the colonial times had resorted to mimic not only the life style of the colonizers, but names also. It had/had been fashion of the erstwhile colonized people.

Willie’s father tells him that he is named Somerset Maugham, the great English writer. He came to India to collect material in order to write novel about spirituality in the 1930s. Willie’s birth has brought oppressive feelings in his father. He does not like the black child, born to his Brahmin caste and an untouchable woman. “In fact, my thoughts were all inward, and my heart was sinking” (HL 33). With the growth of the half-caste boy, his fears are also growing. He suffers from guilt. He thinks that he has caused taint on him. His caste consciousness at times makes him anxious. However, his untouchable caste wife does not feel guilty and she feels elevated in the marriage. She gives birth to the black girl baby, who is named Sarojini after the national woman poet. Willie has shaped his own destiny, as he hates his father. Regarding the future of Sarojini, Willie’s father speculates that she is to be married to some foreigner. He says, “..all I can hope for Sarojini is an international marriage” (36), because the chances for her in India are restricted.

When Willie lands in London after a sea-journey, he is frustrated. His fanciful ideas about the west have been eluding him. “He knew that London was a great city. His idea of a great city was of a fairyland of splendour and dazzle, and when he got to London and began walking about its streets he felt let down. He

didn't know what he was looking at" (52). The two prominent places of London, namely, Buckingham Palace and Speaker's Corner are disappointing him.

It is the way of the modern world to mimic the ways of the colonizer, who had earlier copied from the colonized countries. So the mimicry is not of the property of the colonizer or the colonized. It is like the double-edged knife. He suffers from the stigma of the old rules of his homeland. They are inextricably bound with his personality. He wishes to shed them at his will. But they continue to bind him even in the west. He is reminded of them in his new life. "He began to see-and it was upsetting, at first-that the old rules were themselves a kind of make-believe, self-imposed. And one day, towards the end of his second term, he saw with great clarity that the old rules no longer bound him" (60). In other words, he likes to shed his old self, bound to his father, mother and family and to move on the world like a cosmopolitan. He moves from the periphery to the centre, unaware of the consequences of the cruelty of the centre. He does not realize that he is about to be thrown out. The centre attracts him only to eject him. We are reminded of W.B. Yeats's classic lines in his poem *The Second Coming*: "Things fall apart, the centre cannot hold;/ Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world." To him, the new awakening appears to be a kind of new revolution.

The erstwhile colonial centre, London houses the subalterns, who had been marginalized by the colonial powers. One such example is Marcus, the black man who indulges in interracial sex. He is basically a diplomat and London is a paradise to him. "He has two ambitions. The first is to have a grandchild who will be pure white in appearance. He is half-way there. He has five mulatto children, by five white women. . .He wants when he is old to walk down the King's Road with his white grandchild. People will stare and the child will say, loudly, 'What are they staring at, Grandfather?'"(90). To the black males, the interracial sex gives a sense of pride and respect. Their hybrid children will in future live like the white people. Marcus-like blacks populate the metropolitan centres with the great ambition of producing white grandchildren.

He in the state of uncertainty decides to settle down, marrying a girl. But he does not know to get a girl for marriage. He lauds the marginalized blacks, such as Marcus and Percy Cato who are trained in the art of seduction and sex. He is rather comparatively feeble in it. He feels later that he is not trained in the art of seduction. He opines that the problem is that there are arranged marriages in India. The thought of sexuality drives him desperately to the house of ill-fame. He has a sexual encounter with a middle-class prostitute, who commands him. His failure of an act has put him in despair. "He was full of shame" (121). He decides to move on. He wishes to follow the footsteps of his early guide, Percy, who goes to Jamaica. But Willie does not like to go to India. "Willie could only go back to India, and he didn't want that. All that he had now was an idea-and it was like a belief in magic-that one day something would happen, an illumination would come to him, and he would be taken by a set of events to the place he should go" (122).

Willie goes to Africa with his newly-wedded wife, Ana in a ship. He is depressed about the African ambience. "I am not staying here. I am leaving. I will spend a few nights here and then I will find some way of going away" (133). At Africa, Willie lives with a sense of security. He feels at ease with Ana's strength and authority. His life as the husband of Ana has put him in complacency. He has no heroic valour, like the legendary protagonists. His liminal existence puts him in an unstable condition. His dependence on the woman makes him shameless. He says with no sense of guilt, "I believed that she was in some essential guided and protected, and as long as I was with her no harm could come to me" (141).

The race-mixing is not new either in Africa or in the imperial centres. Irrespective of the caste that the half-made people belong to, they all suffer from loss of race and culture. The intermingling of people has been a mode of colonial and postcolonial times. There is no homogeneity in the races or their cultures. In the fast growing globalised world, people have got themselves acclimatized to the new climate and new cultures. They do not suffer from loss of culture, as their previous generations had suffered during their migrations. Migrational politics has been commonplace in the post-war diasporic poetics. Geographical distances do not matter much to the modern day migrants. Willie Chandran, while moving from London to Africa, do not feel that he is going to lose his culture. He is worried only about the loss of English language in Africa.

Willie speculates over his bleak future. He has his own doubts, "To be or not to be, that is a question?" In his Hamlettian sense of sensibility, he is dangling. Finally, he decides to move on. He says, "I am forty-one. I am tired of living your life" (227). "I mean I've given you eighteen years. I can't give you any more. I can't give your life any more. I want to live my own" (136). He has had a fall on the staircase and is admitted in the hospital. After recovery, he has his own thoughts of further movement. Ana's momentous reply makes the readers question the significance of lives of the half-racial people, half-Africans, half-Portuguese, mulattos, Asians, including Indian immigrants and of course, the Europeans in the transnational world. Ana said, "Perhaps it wasn't really my life either" (227). Willie then moves to Berlin in order to take shelter in his sister's house.

In the diasporic discourse, Naipaul gradually moves from the world of girmitya experience, as portrayed in *A House for Mr. Biswas*, through the postcolonial chaotic world of *The Mimic Men* and moves through the transnational fluid identity of *Half a Life*. In other words, Naipaul crosses the boundaries of nations, castes,

creeds and ideologies and figures out the new definition of transnationalism in the face of emerging globalization.

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Symbolic Reversal: Annihilating Stereotypes and Salvaging Icons in August Wilson's *Joe Turner's Come and Gone*

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Abstract: *August Wilson's Joe Turner's Come and Gone and The Piano Lesson are quintessential dramatic representation of early African American history and culture. Wilson guides several of his characters towards life altering revelatory experiences that contain strong elements of rituals and mysticism. This paper proposes to discuss how Wilson's characters are healed through spiritual revelation consequently each broken or separate individual may enter into the fullness of selfhood and be able to carry on affirming life. Wilson consistently takes pejorative, racist stereotypes and turns them into holy prototypes. This exploration confers Wilson's emerging mythology re-establishes the racial symbolic landscape and provides a new system where blacks can formulate in their own way, according to their own system, their own faith and their own language. It relates Wilson's consumption of physical objects in every instance in the play to propel healings in a forward direction, so that 'struck' individuals, through an investment of effects of self-deprecation Wilson uses 'symbolic reversal' a process of new belief in the power of that object achieve transcendence over obstacles in their lives. To preserve the integrity of black culture and rescue African American minds and hearts from the corrosive consciousness that offers an opportunity to reassess, valorise and systematize their life.*

Keywords: African American culture, mysticism, symbolism and prototypes.

“...deep-seated need of creative man to recover this archetypal consciousness and their art which shares many characteristics, shares most of all its ability to speak across racial and cultural lines.”

– Joan Fishman

A single voice dominated the American theatre from the 1980s through 2005 and that voice definitely belonged to playwright August Wilson (1945-2005). The adaptations of Wilson's philosophy formulate the society to recognize the source of strength within themselves, with in their family narration and as well as in the traditions of the African American culture. Wilson is regarded as the consummate cultural architect, his dramaturgy is conservative but instead of designing an outline for a new cultural pattern he always direct his efforts toward revitalizing a behaviour pattern that already prevails in a culture. He has devoted his energies in retrieving and reconnecting the disparate parts of the African American culture that exists but suffused into the dominant western white culture. Wilson's portraiture of the black American fortune is central thematic concern that focuses on the everyday lives of those who have not find their ways into history books.

Wilson speech “The Ground On Which I Stand” is a provoking reminder of the struggles for cultural sovereignty that continue to inform marginal imaginative expressions in African culture. By cultural control, he tries to elucidate the facility of an individual to define their cultural practices and meanings as representative expressions of their group. Wilson's plays mainly stress for Black cultural ownership, the creation of Black culture by Black artist for the Black community. The most specific concern of Wilson's plays obligatorily studies one's cultural identity in order to fully understand one's personal identity. Wilson writing is a call for African American artists to grasp the rule over their own cultural uniqueness and establish a permanent tradition that celebrate and preserve African Americans achievements and reaffirm its equal importance in American culture.

This study aims at depicting how the symbolic reversal elements annihilate the stereotypes that are essentially rooted in Wilson's *Joe Turner Come and Gone*. In varying places in the play the characters chronicles back the attention of Africa by incorporating visually familiar reference or by invoking the mythical phenomena. The symbolic reversal essentials of social and sacred codes in Wilson's writing plays vital part in the transformation of consciousness as these salvaging icons are needed to overcome the negative connotations in African American lives. The 'shiny man' signifies the shamanic gods and spirits who are associated with light. This man serves as a power objects to propel healings that makes an intangible shift in the characters who are in spiritual crisis. The characters not only get rid of from the personal confusion but the magical things make them achieve transcendence in their lives.

Joe Turner's Come and Gone opens with Bynum, who is standing in the yard drawing “...a big circle with that stick and now he's dancing around”(2). He killed a pigeon and poured its blood into a cup. This blood

ritual forms the background for many mythological adaptations in the play. He pours the pigeon blood into the ground, the power of flight that innate in the bird is overturned; it is similar to eventual gathering of the separated mother and daughter at boarding house. As Tudier Harris argues “Bynum’s ritual is akin to converting the bird in the sky into a bird on the ground, thereby reconciling heaven and earth and, by extension, mother and daughter.” (53) As such a cultural mythmaker, Wilson’s works renovate and celebrate a meaningful social mythology by incorporating mythic motif like Bynum’s blood ritual.

Wilson’s notion of the African American cultural uniqueness urges a symbolic and spiritual return in African minds. His determination to write on a grand range magnifies the African American experiences and on the other scale gives voice against the recorded history of nameless Africans in America. This taps the never ending supply of untold stories about African American lives and culture in the United States. As he says in an interview “I try to actually keep all of the elements of the culture alive in the work.” (interview 1991)

The references to ‘the shiny man’ show Wilson’s transformation of traditional and religious phenomena into African American mythical phenomena. First it is important to note that characters in *Joe Turner’s Come and Gone* do not come to the revelation by themselves or by the presence of other people, but this happens only by the mythical and folkloric spirit ‘the shiny man’ who resembles underground conductors on the spiritual road. Second the characters possess an unquestioned belief in a world beyond the tangible world and working reality. A profound respect and awareness for the power of thought and visions constitute a vital element in the African American sensibility as in Wilson’s world this power can be gained even from the bones of the dead.

Joe Turner’s Come and Gone is a creation myth, reshaped to suggest that human beings can stand in the role of god in shaping their own destinies and reshape the dehumanizing myths which formulate them to realize the mental freedom. Wilson begins the play with striking reversal and the treatments of folk traditions have an individualistic signature. The play opens with the conjure man, Bynum publically conducting voodoo ceremony in the background of the boarding house. Seth’s scepticism during the first contact with the spirit world attempts to dismiss the root worker as nothing more than an amusing irritation, but at the same time through his description of his wife’s superstitious practices he reveals that the mythical Bynum is not the only affected by the supernatural.

Bertha: You don’t say nothing when he bless the house.

Seth: I just go along with that ‘cause of you. You around here sprinkling salt all over the place...got pennies lined up across the threshold. . . all that heebie-jeebie stuff. I just put up with that ‘cause of you. I don’t pay that stuff no mind. And you going down there to the church and wanna come home and sprinkle salt all over the place.

Bertha: It don’t hurt none. I ant say if it help... but it don’t hurt none. (2)

Fire is believed to be the easiest way to transform body into spirit. Blood is considered as most important to many ancient rituals that opens the gateway between humankind and nourishes the spirits. Similarly in Bynum’s case, when he rubs his hands with companion’s blood the environment changes; his father’s spirit appears, the objects become larger than life and his travelling friend begins to shine. These alterations recommend the hereditary transmission of the shaman’s livelihood. Bynum references to shiny man’s role as “He was the one who goes before and shows the way” (10) is significant of John the Baptist. By these references it implies that the shiny man is a forerunner of a saavoir figure. The shiny man commences the idea of journey toward the full potential of self by recognizing the emerging value.

Bynum a ‘conjure man’ whose skill is dedicated to ‘bind’ the lost and separated persons either physically or spiritually. Having attained spiritual illumination, he is capable of facilitating the same in others. The play according to racial ideas implies that inspite of his knowledge in the African folk and spiritual customs; he is nevertheless torn between two worlds. Bynum does not bind people exclusively, unifies cultures. He is tied to the realistic voodoo practices such as burning pigeon blood, using roots, and linked with the gift of “binding and love.” His strength derives from a custom that extends directly back through slavery from African roots. He is a highly developed successor of the medicine man of African tribes and the conjurer of the plantations. Many of his predecessors sought power by instilling fear in their charges, but Bynum’s approach is towards love, sensibility and compassion.

When Mattie demands Bynum to get back Jack Carper, Bynum says he can easily use the roots that will cause dissatisfaction and bring him back to the bed but he also recommends her that it is not the right way to get her man. Bynum informs her that they two are not cosmically meant to be bound together and their love is just a strong taught in her mind and she can push this taught away as “You wake up one morning and you won’t even be able to call him up on your mind” (25). He guides Mattie to meet Jeremy, her new lover.

Bynum performs an exorcism of sorts; this helps to rid Loomis from past thoughts of Joe Turner and frees him into himself. Loomis visions of bone people interweave Christianity with mythology and remind the vastness of lost lives and human potential. This makes him to experience a vision of dry bones coming to life, draped with flesh.

Bynum: Tell me about them bones, Harold Loomis. Tell me what you see.

Loomis: I come to this place... to this water that was bigger than the world. And I looked out... and I see these bones rise up out of the water. Rise up and begin to talk on top it.

Bynum: Wasn't nothing but bones and they walking on top of the water... Only they ain't bones no more.

Loomis: They got flesh on them. Just like you and me! (53)

Wilson formulates the communal setting of the juba, in which the Holy Ghost is called upon for the spiritual guidance through the direct vision of dry bones. Loomis recognize bones as the references of his ancestors who have suffered before him. The bones cannot remain lifeless and dry in his consciousness because his ancestors need to insist him that he is in want to realize his individuality. A great wave washes over the bones; this event makes them to walk again in the land of the living and eventually aids Loomis to regain his ability to walk again and to stand on his own.

Wilson further inverts Western mythology by denying that white men are altruistic and they are the ultimate centre of the universe around everything revolves. Joe Turner, a legendary white man who unshaped Loomis's life, epitomize this point and enables Loomis to rewrite history. Turner is rightfully viewed as the devil for taking people's souls that leads to an end of their misery. Turner by stealing their lives and their potential without killing them consigns them to the fate of Zombies. But Loomis grow too autonomous, he lives out of fate and this is only because of his will to lead his own life. By blaming the white man for everything he has made himself into a god, in order to become a 'shiny man' he has lifted himself from the pages of the ink that Turner has used to inscribe his life.

The ritual cleansing with blood of Loomis reflects Christian symbolism "...the true baptism that cleansed the sin of Adam and opened the gates of heaven was the baptism of the blood of Christ the Lamb. The ritual diverges from the Christian tradition that reflects in Loomis activities shows that he never depend upon another man's sacrifice for his own redemption but pays his own fee of blood by his own hand." (71) Loomis growth is most significantly subjected by Bynum's midwifery. He is an unwilling patient, and Bynum does not even intentionally interfere. Loomis seeks a singular identity for him to replace the other oriented identity which he has been trying to erase. He finally realises that he need to stand upon in his own for his revelation and Bynum directs his tolerant to a successful rebirth. Till the end Loomis has not overcome the past or fulfilled his quest for wife. Loomis's magic realistic act of healing and redemption necessitates his self-mutilation, discard his daughter and return to the backroads of America as penniless drifter. He is archetypal symbol of racism and repression; he is not simply a man but a force.

Bynum's in his powerful role as the African mystic possesses incredible supernatural power through which he wields to bring positive change and happy reunion to everyone around him. Bynum serves many purposes in the play, as more than one person he represents the African ancestors. Seth's pleased discharge of Bynum's voo-doo action sets the mood of the play and brings the African Americans into a world where the secular and supernatural elements interact with each other to wipe out stereotypes. He is a wise counsellor and spiritual guide whose presence in *Joe Turner's Come and Gone* is absolutely essential for the changes experienced by many of the characters. As Wilson says "...the message of American society is 'Leave your Africanness outside the door.' my message is 'claim what's yours.'" (26)

In addition to setting a chain of mythological events Bynum's ritual serves to draw the African American into Wilson's developing mythological realm. The powerful blood ritual makes African American to connect the ancient subconscious rituals and thereby it transports the realm of myth. The ritualistic letting of blood from the sacrifice of pigeon reaches deep into the African American's psyche. This makes clear that Wilson once again fulfils the 'black poet's mythopoeic function' which is to "create, by definition, reality for the members of his or her community, to allow them to perceive their universe in a distinctively new way." (71)

It is apparent that *Joe turner's Come and Gone* is Wilson's most truly mythic play because in addition to the opening scene which engage the sacrifice of the pigeon, Wilson includes many powerful mythic motifs as Bynum's baptism of blood, dream vision of Loomis and Bynum, Bynum's 'binding Song' and the ritual sacrifice of Loomis, Rutherford Selig as 'the people finder' and the most important unseen character like 'the shiny man.' These indications make clear that one sign system is eventually converted into another sign system; through the undeviating mythical and symbolic reversal transformation annihilate the stereotypes.

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Sprouting of Sovereign Women in Anita Nair's *Ladies Coupe*

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Abstract: *Female Culture, a subject largely ignored by male contemporaries, is in this fast changing phase recognized as an important part of human life. Now women could share values with men both in intellectual and physical spaces which men had claimed as their own. Anita Nair's Ladies Coupe (2010) is marked as the mode of life of twenty-first century women. The woman has moved from the periphery to the center which stands as a symbol of her individuality in society. Her traditional roles get transformed to a wider array and resulted in changes in the norms of our social structure. Men and women's roles in society have been changing owing to cultural change. Women emerge with new trends from the earlier confined patriarchy system.*

In this paper, the confined life culture dictated to the women is analyzed through the portrayal of lives of women of various walks of life narrated in Anita Nair's tour de force Ladies Coupe. The novelist is keen in narrating how women want to be free from their caged existence in their voyage of life. Six women in this coupe symbolize their prenatal existence inside the womb namely home after which they sprout out with new strength. Margaret Shathi emerges out by formulating her own strategy to drive her dream true. Sheela, a sensible fourteen year old girl learns practical knowledge of life from her grandmother. Janaki, an elderly woman of all so far treated as a pampered housewife finds her strength. Prabhadevi asserts her 'self' by conquering her fear. Lastly Akhila, the protagonist of the novel emerges with her new identity as Akhilkandeswari by shedding off her tag as Chadra's daughter, Padma's akka, Priya's aunt and Murthy's sister-in-law. Anita Nair also asserts that women should articulate their aspirations by breaking their silence.

The paper concludes proving that education and bitter experiences enable the women to realize their hitherto unperceived strength and all the women in the novel do not succumb to the stifling elements but succeed eventually through their sheer will.

Key Words: *Female culture, Patriarchy, Quest, Sprouting, Individuality, Sovereign, Identity.*

One is not born, but rather becomes, a woman. - Simone de Beauvoir
Empowerment has to come from within. - Anita Nair

Indian writers in English have played significant role in the field of novel. Women writers explore in their writing especially in the depiction of female culture. In a culture where individualism and protest have often remained alien ideas, marital bliss and the woman's role at home is a central focus. These modern day women authors are now expressing themselves freely and boldly on varieties of themes. The present paper casts light on how women emerge out from their curbed existence with an independent 'self'. Anita Nair examines the changing image of women in the postmodern era. Tradition, transition and modernity are the stages through which women in Nair's novel are passing. Women in her novels seem to be personification of 'new' woman.

Literature not only mirrors the society but act as a communicator of presenting highest ideals and aspirations of mankind. Anita Nair's female characters whether literate or illiterate, rich or poor, young or old, boldly and gradually fight for their right and assert their 'self' against patriarchal society. Women in the past are attributed with the qualities like love, kindness, care and sacrifice, whereas education, politics, career and power are deprived to them by male-dominated society. After a long struggle they try to shine as another equal sun with men. Women in Nair's novels slowly realize their oppression and suppression under the clutches of patriarchal society. After their realization, they emerge out with new identity. They did not rely on any external aid and turned as strong believer of self empowerment. Anita Nair probes through the psyche of her women characters and portrays vividly of their hard struggle over oppression and gradual budding of their sovereign nature.

Indian women writers travel deep into the women's psyche. They delve deep into their mind and portray clearly of their suppression and oppression both inside and outside the home. This kind of suppression and oppression by anti-women ideology results in dilution of relationships, pre-marital relation, extra-marital relation, sterility of life, man-woman relationship and inner fear for everything. When women walk out of those four confined walls (home) and transcend as 'new' women, they were questioned and treated shabbily. In this complex patriarchal society women were deprived of their rights and power which were reserved only for men. When woman put forth her egalitarian foot with man, she is at once curbed as an abnormal and labeled as wild creature.

Anita Nair is one of the most creative and energetic writers of this modern era. She tries to present brilliant picture of the society through her novel and also provides perfect illustrations of victimized women in patriarchal system. When dissatisfaction emerges women burst out with evident change in their conventional order. The man-woman relationship should be corresponding in all aspects to create a harmony.

In her debut novel *The Better Man* (1999) Anita Nair depicts the subjection of women to tyranny and subjugation, and how they are denied of their rights in love and marriage. She portrays twenty first century contemporary society with her emancipated women like Valsala, Meenakshi, and Anjana. Anjana evolves as 'new' woman and wants to get out of the clutches of her male-chauvinistic husband Ravindren. Valsala indulges in extra-marital relation with her neighbour Sridaran when she feels sickened and jaded of her ageing husband Prabakaran. Meenakshi, when her husband deserts her, turns out to be an excellent entrepreneur and looks after her kith and kin. She evolves as a sovereign woman; even she accepts and forgives her sick husband in the end.

Anita Nair with her magnum opus *Ladies Coupe* (2001) has eked out her own identity in the opus of Indian novelists. Like Chaucer's Canterbury tales where the pilgrims unfold their tales to each other, here all the six women unveil their story as the train trundles, truckles and troops to its destination. This tale also attempt to narrate how suppression and oppression come under the guise of love, care, protection and security. Women of this novel slowly become conscious of their tied hands in the name of love and protection. After this discovery they emerge out with inner potential and new dynamism. They curve their own path and set out to reach out the destination. Akhila, the protagonist of the novel has complete hold on her life and responsibility seeks a voyage to Kanyakumari, an unknown land. There she happens to meet five other women co-passengers in the coupe who breaks their cramped walls and transcends as autonomous women with new personality. Aided with their knowledge Akhila too moves from edging to core in her voyage of life. Janaki asserts this by "I can already see a change in you. For the first time evening, I can see life in your eyes" (41).

Akhila, the central character of the novel remains a spinster till her forty fifth year. She is sans husband, children, dream, home, family, happiness and excitement in her life. She hunger for life and experience, seeks an escape from her daily monotony and sets out a journey to Kanyakumari where she realizes her individual identity as 'new woman'. Akhila too enjoys the bliss of a happy life and even dreams herself a traditional and suitable wife of a man. A sudden typhoon hits her tacit and calm life in the form of her father's accidental death. Suddenly the whole family responsibility falls on her fragile shoulders and immediately she takes up the same to safeguard her kith and kin without blaming anything and anyone, "they looked so young and frail. How could she burden them with any kind of responsibility" (59). But on the other hand the selfish family forgets her sacrifice and continues to live as parasites (sucking her blood). Even Chandra (her mother) forgets her responsibility and concerns only about her sons' marriages without a single notion about Akhila.

Akhila's desolate nature and her longing for new spirit are evident when she allows the hands to trespass in the bus. She feels her nerve by this trespass which made her feel like woman and decides to take that bus regularly. But she brings an end to this after realizing her fault and overruled with fear. The same monotonous life continues. There appears a change in her life by a man named Hari (he is younger to her), a co-passenger on her way to work. Lonely and empty life makes her accept the friendly relation which later develops as love between the two. Akhila did not permit the bud to bloom into flower (marriage) though he is ready. This happens because of her inbuilt fear for traditional norms and societal pressure. She is forced to cut her dream and aspirations, goes to an extent of building a wall around her to keep her isolated, "I had to grow a shell around myself. To protect myself. To deflect hurt and pain. If I hadn't, I would have gone insane" (41).

Akhila discovers her enslaved condition by her childhood friend Karpagam who calls her with her full unique identity 'Akhilandeswari', "So who was Akhilandeswari? Did she exist at all? If she did, what was her identity?" (84). She melts from her icy existence to natural state to taste life with a new prospect. Since she is wide awake, there is gradual transitions shown in her empowerment

Akhila is not a creature of impulse. She took time over every decision. She pondered, deliberated, slept over it and only when she had examined every single nuance and point of view did she make up her mind. Even the saris she wore revealed this.... Those were for people who changed their minds at least six times every morning before they settled on what to wear. (2-3)

Nair visibly depicts Akhila's internal growth by her ability to take risks. All alone she picks up the journey to unknown land Kanyakumari. In her stay in the hotel Sea Breeze, finally she discards her fear and evolves as unashamed and blatant. She even encounters a young man on the beach. With her new identity she moves in the path of new ideology. From her abbreviated form she transcends into the fullness of Akhilandeswari. Once again she proved herself a witness for harmony by mutual freedom and respect.

Traditional old definition for woman is a good wife and mother. Coming out of this boundary line is marked with anomaly and oddity. The notion of "woman's nature" struck Simone de Beauvoir as oppression. She called this a way of turning women into slaves. It did not have to be that way, but it usually ended up that way in the society precisely because women were told to concern with their divine nature. They were forced to focus on femininity and its divine duties instead of politics, technology or anything else outside of home and

family. The same happens with Janaki in Nair's *Ladies Coupe*, an elderly, traditional and conventional woman. She was a fragile woman who always taken care by men of her family- first by her father, then her brother, now her husband and after his death may be by her son. Being brought up by this atmosphere Janaki was tired of docile nature and bursts out as, "I would cope. If I was ever became alone. I would manage perfectly quite confident about that. I think tired of being this fragile creature" (23).

At first Janaki hovers with bliss in her married life and suddenly a change creeps up her at certain age. She undergoes mental pressure by her husband who always takes on her side and decides on her behalf. Nair clearly portrays her mind and her strong frustration towards him and even scorns him as, "That's not helping. You just want to control him. You want control everybody. You want everyone to do your bidding" (30). An over dose of love, care and protection can cause sourness in life which is evident with Janaki who screams silently without any verbalization. Instead, she devises her own tactic of twisting his love and care in favour of her and succeeds in it. Again age does not become a barrier for a woman to reach her destination and finally recognizes herself and realizes that true happiness lies within her.

Men stereotyped women purposefully by claiming as an excuse of not to understand them. Man-woman relation should match each other by sharing and caring on either side. If one lag behind, they have to suffer disharmony and commotion. Even in this modern era equality does not exist in its full wing and paved a way to consider as weaker sex. Human relation is delicate to handle with care, commitment, trust, adjustment, sacrifice and love on both the sides. Women now try to voice against their suppression by male-dominated society. They evolve with new tactic to attain respect and esteem in the society. Anita Nair brilliantly portrays inner emotions of women of contemporary society and their mental trauma. Nair's female characters bounce out of their suppression and jumps to a new location (dimension). Though the struggle is hard to proceed, they succeed and reach their goal.

Margaret Shanthi, a fellow traveler of the journey in *Ladies Coupe*, remains a solid example of woman victimization by male-domination. Her husband Ebenezer Paulraj proves himself a male- chauvinist and devises cunning plan to achieve his goal. He stands as perfect illustration for Simone de Beauvoir's avowal, A man attaches himself to woman -- not to enjoy her, but to enjoy himself. Ebenezer maneuvers Margaret into the state of passive and submissive silence. He makes her unnoticeable and unremarkable girl. She is a brilliant girl with gold medal in her post graduation. Ebe persuades her trickily to do B.Ed instead of Ph.D and even her hair style is decided by him. She is provided with no choice but to accept his decision on her behalf. She continues to be a good and charming wife to him. After her marriage she loses her individuality and leads a life where Ebe is in the central focus. In reciprocal, she receives a heavy thunderbolt from him on announcing her pregnancy. She rejoices with the bliss of motherhood which at once fades away by his plan of abortion. He doesn't even act as human and calls that little being a 'zygote'.

Margaret undergoes mental, physical and spiritual crisis at the hands of Ebe. She could not resist the guilt of being sinned by this abortion. At the same time unable to stop this sinful act and her soul undergoes great pain when everyone questions of it,

A faint voice that stemmed from the faith that had once been an intrinsic part of my life: Your hands shaped and made me. Will you now turn and destroy me? ...You created my inmost being; you knit me together in your womb...My frame was not hidden from you when I was in that secret place.... All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be... A slow tear slid. (107)

He loves her but at the same time keeps control over her in addition detains her individuality. Even in work place he keeps vigil of her activities and isolates from others. Margaret identifies her seclusion and loneliness, and decides to crush out her curb. She learns her own strategies to get her dreams true and acquires this skill by learning from Ebe. She takes revenge on her dominative husband by following his tactics of things done. She achieves her goal simply by making him fat. With her strong self-will, she identifies her hidden strength and pushes back the ball to his disadvantage. Nair proves to be a notable writer by depicting Margaret's depression, her silenced articulation and her mental and physical sufferings.

Sheela, a fourteen years old girl and young among all stands in top rank. Though she is young, understands the relation and feeling of family members and others with her deep insight of life. She understands the diverse dynamics of life by her practical knowledge she pursues from her grandmother. She tactfully escapes from male-gazed eye of Hasina's father when he comes forward to wipe the sweat on her upper lip. She remains embodiment of three generation- her grandmother, her mother and her own. She builds her 'self' respect and esteem boldly and courageously. Nair throws light of glimpses on male domination through her. She always curbed and questioned by her father with scorn, "But now that she was grown, when he saw a woman and not to his little girl anymore and he only felt anger at what he thought was questioning authority" (70). Sheela's emancipation results with maturity and inner strength by her grandmother's advice, "The only person you need to please is yourself. When you look into a mirror, your reflection should make you feel happy" (67).

Marikolunthu set as a firm embodiment of women victimization and sexual harassment. Nair visualizes sexual exploitation by male-dominated society and anti-women ideological conventions through her tale.

Patriarchal system easily holdback women's freedom and restricts them strictly by denying their legal and social rights. Marikolunthu comes from village and rural background where her ignorance was used and at once easily blamed. Age-old traditional norm restricts women from any authority and power and pushes them to do household rituals and child rearing by persuading as divine nature. They never hesitate to blame and complain women if they rise their voice and readily silences their verbalization. Marikolunthu's story stands as clear evidence of how most men uses woman's ignorance, innocence, illiteracy, dependence, loneliness and frustration. Nair unveils both physical and mental trauma of suffering woman through her story where she undergoes various disasters, and make her feel frustrated and depressed. She feels emptiness and moves to an extent of neglecting her own son Muthu.

Marikolunthu though illiterate, poor, ignorant and dependent leads a happy and blissful life with her family. Suddenly the whole family faces poverty after her father's death. Her mother turns to be the head cook at Chettiar's Kottai (head family of the village). Even in her childhood she deprived education to look after household things when her mother goes for work. Later she is appointed as an assistant to newly married Sujata Akka of Chettiar family. Nair explores hard struggle and existence of woman in this self-oriented and male-chauvinistic society as, "she caught her younger brother-in-law stripping me with his eyes and saw how her husband looked up from his flies each time I walked past" (226). Sujata's attempts of safeguarding Marikolunthu from this social animal (men) resulted in vain by Murugesan who raped her on her shot stay in the village for pongal festival.

At this juncture of life Marikolunthu loses hope and joy, and freezes within herself. She is haunted by nightmares and unable to sleep quiet at night. As days passes both Sujata (rejected by her husband) and Marikolunthu (rejected by the society) creates closeness in-between and becomes dearest. Marikolunthu feels an in-depth love to Sujata which is evidently depicted by Nair as, "She saw me as Marikolunthu- a person, neither girl nor woman" (226). Their intimate relationship gave consolation to each other as similar to that of Manju Kapur's heroine, Astha. Her love for Pipeelika Trivedi in *A Married Woman* (2002). Marikolunthu's suffering did not come to an end instead it become worse. Sujata's husband Sridhar exploits Marikolunthu sexually and Sujata on her turn punishes her by throwing away of her house. Marikolunthu's frustration compels her to mortgage her son for rupees five thousand at one of Murugesan's loom to cure her tumour.

She leads an insensitive and bored life with no one to care and share. She recognizes her 'self' on seeing the dead body of Murugesan burning at the pyre which set fire by her son Muthu. Marikolunthu's search for life and real values comes to an end on her real self as, "But now I wanted more. I wanted to be the real thing" (268).

Anita Nair clearly depicts emergence of 'new' woman who refuse to surrender the flow of current and evolves with individual self. Women of her novel attain emancipation only after hard struggle and great pain and suffering. They equip themselves and transform their weaknesses as their strength to withstand and march in parallel with men in the society. Nair claims to treat woman with humanistic nature and not to treat shabbily since man and woman are complementary to each other.

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Nothing but Chains: Women in Sahgal's Fictional World

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Abstract: *Nayantara Sahgal has carved a unique niche for herself in the gallery of major post-independence Indian novelists in English. Nayantara Sahgal was born on May 10th 1927 as the daughter of Ranjit Sitaram pandit and Vijayalakshmi Pandit. She belongs to one of India's most distinguished political families the Nehrus. So she has had ample opportunity to observe the Indian Socio-political scenario from close quarters. Her fiction deals with India's elite responding to the crises engendered by political change though part of the Nehru family, Sahgal developed a reputation for maintaining her independent critical sense. She is perhaps the only women writer in English to have consistently reflected the political life of India in her novels.*

In the nine novels to her credit, from the first one A time to be Happy (1957) upto her latest one. LESSER BREEDS (2000) she emphasizes the value of freedom so essential to inner and outer development of individuals and the country. Her view of womanhood, the value she attaches to freedom of an individual and that of a nation, the futility of violence all these are reflected deftly in her novels. Through her novels she implies that challenges of time demand are orientation of values and unless a nation accepts this truth, it has very little chance to survive.

Since the nineteen fifties, there has been a growing awareness among the Indo English novelists to relate literature to social problems. Sahgal in her novels is consistently committed to freedom which is once very own as she calls it in "The Testament of an Indo – Anglican Writer" (Point of view 25). Her protagonists are living in a world of transition from the old world of traditional values to the changing times of a progressive future society. Most of her women protagonists are caught up in a psychic trauma of marital relationship being set in culture at cross roads. Patriarchy considers woman as a sex object and glamour girl" (qtd by Talwar 29) who cannot indulge in the luxury of personality. Fostered in a family of freedom and compassion, Sahgal was aghast when marriage unsettled her disastrously. In like manner Sahgal's novels bring home the existential predicament of the Indian woman and the shackles posed in her path towards attainment of selfhood depicting a tension between expectations of Indian womanhood and the need for individual freedom. Her fictional world is a critique of the society that is hard bound with tradition and an eye opener to the various chains that incapacitate an Indian woman in her exercise of individuality.

Key words: Patriarchal dominance, Cultural conflict, Social segregation.

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Sahgal considers her women mostly as wives rather than as daughters or mothers. Dalip in This Time of Morning is a man of patriarchy. Married to Dalip, an IAS officer feels disillusioned and distraught. There is no space for emotional fulfillment in her marital relationship with Dalip for he cannot consider his wife his equal. Her decision for separation shock her mother Mira who represents traditional indian womanhood. Mira expresses her shock that is usual with a traditional indian woman: "Women stayed married, had since time immemorial stayed married, under every conceivable circumstances, to brutal insensitive husbands, to lunatics and lepers. And Dalip God forbid, was none of these things. Fulfillment had lain in service and sacrifice" (Morning 153).

Rashmi's attitude is different and she cannot help feeling desperate "A part of her married a man loved him given herself to the task of making a home and suffered the wilderness that only two mismatched people could create" (127) Mira attributes this to " the tasteless parody of transplanted modernity" (153) that has invaded her home. Mira's attitude does not surprise her husband Kailas, for she belongs to the fast disappearing race of women for whom endurance was a test of character". Her kind of women are accustomed to an

unflinching code” of traditional values and they can never be lenient with the younger generation. Kailas, a Gandhian by upbringing, talks of Mira’s attitude “One cannot condemn another person. If it is too much for Rashmi we cannot question her decision”(153). Rashmi is of the opinion that if marriage can be so unhappy “It can be made happy too with the right ingredients” (148). However one need not think that is all for modernity. She hates the social attitude of Neil when he feels an “Odd reluctance to talk about the past or future” (163). Rashmi expresses her regret to Neil... me without any past or future, just me lying here on this grass. That’s not me Neil. And I want to know more about you, all about you, don’t you see?”(163). Neil responds “ Can’t we take things as they come Rashmi? “Rashmi answer is precise “yes... we have to invade each other’s privacy a little force things a little or we shall stay just where we are”(163). Rashmi feels no comparable insistence in Neil. She cannot blame him because this is an age of impermanence. “of brief meeting and partings” (165). There is no completeness of any soft. She wondered how little people demanded of each other. There was never a total surrender of any sort. Rashmi’s only anguish is not being able to give everything. She asks, Was that why women become nuns? For God at least demanded everything” (165). She expresses her disillusionment in her own manner. A world in which it is possible and even natural to owe allegiance to a flag and a country but never to a human being (166).

As for Mira, meeting people from other countries at a conference, she becomes aware how insular her life has been. The new contacts give her a glimmer of far vistas, of cultures and values distinct from her own. These new vistas present a range of new conflicts and tensions that society has never known in her youth. She realized that the moral order of the old world has not degenerated nor is enshrined forever in unchangeable patterns of behavior. It has to be refashioned and protected in every age and every generation can find its own way to do this. And she feels sorry for inflicting the stern morality of another generation her daughter” (169). In this connection Jasbir Jain Observes: “Rashmi’s divorce and her relationship with Neil are not a “tasteless parody of a transplanted modernity” but an inner need for communication and involvement which remain unsatisfied. Sex is only of secondary importance” (Aesthetics of Morality” 43).

Rashmi breaks off her relationship with Neil too as he fails to satisfy her inmost need for communication. This longing for true communication makes her accept Rakesh, her childhood friend who has been closer than a brother and more than a friend. As Rakesh had known her Rashmi possessed a brightness that distinguished her in a crowd. Contrastingly enough she now lacks contentment “a state as natural to her as warmth to the sun “(Morning 33). Rakesh easily diagnoses the reason for the change in Rashmi. He thinks now she looked displaced. It was marriage then that had altered her made her a moth trapped in cement” (Morning 9).

Sahgal’s women have good educational back ground and that is why perhaps they are in conflict with a parochial society. Sufference within marriage apart, there is also a portrayal of female conditioning along sexist lines before marriage. Nita’s parent in morning are a queer blend of the East and the West. Her father drinks, dances and attends clubs. Yet she is not allowed to move unescorted and to have a man of her choice as well. She voices her opinion about her father’s choice who according to her are ‘midgets or men who never open their mouths (30). She has nothing against Vijay who her father chosen but only she did not want to marry him. The very thought of marrying and living with a stranger fills her with an unreasoning panic (156). Nita recoils from her mother’s acknowledgment of a lifetime’s denial “After all you never really know a man till you marry him” (155). Sahgal vehemently attacks such conventions of arranged marriage as Organized rape” (A situation 25). Elsewhere, too she condemns such attitudes considering women as possessions when someone remarked We never allow our daughters to go out” or “I can’t do that my husband would not like it” “ it sounded a peculiar alien jargon. As if I thought, women were property not persons” (qud in Identity of women” 20).

The author in the same article talks of Sahgal’s novels as posing a strong counter voice to the dominant patriarchal narrative” (Identity of Women” 21) Which has subdued women’s roles. Sahgal’s women protagonists may not be subdued. But they are not rebellious by themselves. It is the outlook. The dichotomy between the old and the new order gives rise to pangs of a divided self in a married woman of a patriarchal society. This is obviously the case with Rashmi who referring to Dalip says “ I don’t hate him I Don’t wish him harm but he and I she cannot even think We any longer cannot go on together” (Morning 9) In yet another context she feels there was no such thing as a clean break from marriage. A break had jagged edges and did some violence to some part of one’s being (210). This is more so because Rashmi is conditioned by tradition to endure reconcile and preserve”. Whatever the cost might be (10). But she is sure that love which is a terrible desire for a human being will never return in her case.

Leela, in Morning commits suicide when she knows she is pregnant. Where pre marital lapse is an unpardonable crime for girls there is no explanation for extramarital relationship of men like Inder in Storm in Chandigarh. Brought up in a liberal atmosphere Saroj has a pre martial affair in the college days which she confides to her husband Inder hoping for a clean break from the past. Inder considers it to be serious moral lapse while he has extra marital affair with his children’s teacher Mara. Inder who has been precocious in sex before marriage believes to have been wronged by Saroj. He says: “In an order that clearly demarcated the roles of men and women unless that venerable order was breached, trampled and mocked. He was maddened by it, When it came over him he sat looking Saroj with a revulsion that had ancient tribal male roots.” (Storm 102)

Thus Inder is ruthless and aggressive. While Saroj is warmly and wholly involved in her marital relationship, Inder is obsessed with this one act which he uses to humiliate her while Saroj longs to penetrate his inflexibility, Inder persists in raking up the past. For Inder, she has no “right to radiance” since the moment she tells him of her first experience and she is branded a “sinner” by him. Her past rises in “dreadful images to taunt his manhood” and “Jealousy him unprepared”(102).

“The chief characteristic of her fictional art lies in her deep involvement in other people’s pain” (Roa, M.Subba, Readings in Indo Anglian literature 197). As opposed to the traditional inhuman picture of a woman, a woman protagonist in Sahgal is fair and just to the objective of the attainment of womanhood. She is not a mere object of pleasure but man’s equal in word and deed, heralding a new morality built upon mutual understanding and absence of pretence. All the same, Sahgal is not for lifting of all restraints on sexuality, for it may lead to break up of families. It is sad that the only morality most while her man is ruthless and immoral. The new woman, according to Sahgal should fight the ‘deed wood’ of superstitions with fire and favour and emerge as a new ‘Sita’ a woman of courage devoid of passivity ingrained in her by the age old myths of our tradition. Saroj’s assertion of pretence. Merely living together under the same roof without real communication and intimacy in spite of sex and children will lead to sheer accumulation of a lifetime’s habits devoid of the human substance. The new woman, with the divine spark of individuality, should prove her independent worth as Sonali in Rich does, by finding out another ways to live with relentless honesty where the only cruelty is pretence. Sahgal emphasises that this is possible only when people accept each other in truth and it is made possible for Sahgal’s women by positive things like Rakesh. Vishal and Raj whose deep sense of commitment to freedom both at personal and political levels.

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Bama's Karukku: A Spotlight on the Echoing Silence of Caste

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Abstract: This paper aims at dealing with the still stilled voices of the subaltern community in India in general and Tamilnadu in particular, as focused by Bama the Dalit writer. Dalit means oppressed or exploited. It describes the people who have been traditionally considered "Untouchables" and who have been oppressed by the mainstream culture. A survey about caste states that "Caste in India is like air, it is what you breathe but yet you cannot see it" – an Oppressive system that is not even recognized as generating oppression.

Key words: Sabultern, suppression, oppression, marginality.

Cultivation of mind should be the ultimate aim of human existence. - B. R. Ambedkar.

Bama's Karukku is an autobiographical statement of what is to be a Dalit and a woman. A Dalit woman is a Dalit amongst the Dalits. She is thus doubly oppressed and suppressed by her caste and gender. For Bama her position is further endangered by her existence as a Dalit Christian. Karukku focuses on three essential forces namely Caste, Gender and Religion and further it discusses on various types of violence unleashed on her Paryar Caste. The Dalit writer brings to limelight the social conflicts and confrontations faced by the Parayars and moreover the agonizing and hapless lives of the Dalits are well portrayed by Bama.

The writer draws to a conclusion with the remedial measure stating that, the right type of education will help the Dalits to empower and climb the ladder of success successfully. This paper aims at dealing with the still, stilled voice of the subaltern community. Dalits continue to be denied land, water and dignity, and the women among them have to bear the double cross of lowest caste and womanhood.

Dalit means oppressed or exploited. It describes the peoples who have been traditionally considered untouchables and who have been oppressed by the mainstream culture. The word "Dalit" comes from the Sanskrit language, and means ground, suppressed, 'crushed' or broken to pieces. Dalit was used in 1930 as a Hindi and Marathi translation of 'depressed classes', a term the British used for what are now called the Scheduled Castes.

Dalits as we know were out of the varna hierarchy (Brahmins – Kshatriyas - Vaishyas – Shudras). A peep into the social history shows that the vedic literature too mentions of a separate class, the chandalas (cremators) because they were born out of a heinous union of Brahmin female and Shudra male. Patanjali, the grammarian, mentions that Mritapas were a type of shudra who were excluded from village. It is mentioned that one should abstain from using the food containers used by chandalas and mritapas because they are polluted beyond purification.

Dalit studies in Tamil is in the infant stage, as compared to its counterpart in Marati and Kannada. Until the late 1980's or the early 1990's, Dalit voice in literature did not find its place in Tamil literature. The Dravidian parties raised the voice for the welfare of the depressed castes in the South India. The Dalit was simply represented as a worker, fighting against the capitalists. There were many novels in the 1980's but they discussed the discrimination of Dalits and social injustice not with the protesting force. The first Dalit novel in Tamil was written by a women Dalit writer Sivakami in 1989. The novel *Pazhiyana Kazhidalum* discusses the issue of Dalit leadership. It calls the Dalit youth to stand united by ideological commitment to obtain the empowerment of the Dalits. The novel was translated by the writer herself into English – *The Grip of change* (2006).

Bama's *Karukku* (1992) is the first dalit autobiography in Tamil. Being a Dalit woman, she expresses her pain, agony, suppression, sufferings and she gives a bird's eye view about the subjugation of the Dalits by the upper caste people. The dalits succumb to a lot of obstacles and therefore, long for emancipation and empowerment.

Born as the third child of the army officer in Pudupatti in Virudunagar District, Bama portrays the inevitable social problems of the Dalits in her novels. Her Karukku is renowned for its easy and conversational style. She expresses her suppressed feelings of racial discrimination in the convent. Though she started her carrier as teacher in the convent, she quit her job due to the fact that the convent school was no more for the poor, downtrodden children. She opines that the convent which once catered to the needs of the poor in the pre-independent India, now serves the elite classes. She has her determination to carve a niche for the suppressed Dalit class, Parayars. Having born into the parayar family, she vowed to bridge the gap between the parayars and the pallars through her much debated novel *Vanmam*. To the parayars, Ambedkar is the undisputed leader, who championed the cause of the suppressed classes. However, Pallars extol the memories of Immanuel Sekaran, the Pallar leader, who fought for the cause of Pallars in the Southern Tamilnadu.

Vanman is in sharp contrast to the novels of Bama's *Karukku* and *Sangati*. *Karukku* is written in the mode of autobiographical narrative, where *Sangati* deals with vulnerable position of Dalit Women. In Bama's *Millaga Podi*, she portrays the finer emotions of the transgender and their pathetic plight in the society. Most probably all her novels have the social relevance.

Karukku is about Bama's inner quest for self-discovery and the resultant courage, which forces her to move away from the life of a nun to life of a Dalit woman. The Dalit children, (cheri children) did jobs like sweeping the premises, washing and cleaning the lavatories. The nuns felt that "low caste people are all degraded in some way. They think we have no more moral discipline nor cleanliness nor culture". (Bama 2000 : 22-23)

The life as portrayed in *Karukku* throws light on the most agonizing and hapless lives of the Dalits. The journey that Bama travelled was rather very tedious, the encounters were painful and her experiences reveal her agony. There is a little scope for Scheduled caste people to elevate their position mostly because of their non-acceptance in the day-to-day public affair. *Karukku* focuses on two essential aspects namely caste and religion that cause great pain in Bama's life. Bama has never heard of untouchability until her third standard in school. The first time she comes to know her community's pathetic state, which is ironically tinged with humours. As Bama was returning from school, she finds an elder from her street. He was holding out a small packet of snacks. This packet of snacks is tied in a string. The elder was bringing the snacks by holding the strings without touching the packet and was giving it to a Naicker in the village. Bama was unable to control her laughing, looking at the funny sight. Bama says 'Just then, an elder of our street came along from the direction of the bazaar. The manner in which he was walking along made me want to doubleup'. Bama starts to look out for means to uplift herself and her community from the trampled existence. Her elder brother shows her the right path and tells her that education is the only way to attain equality. Bama's elder brother's advice makes a very deep impression on her and she wanted to prove herself. Ever since her brother spoke to her she started studying very seriously. She saw to it that she always stood first in the class. Throughout her education, Bama found that wherever she went, there was a painful remainder of her caste in the form of untouchability. The Government Officers provided the financial grants and special tuitions to the Harijans. These grants and tuitions were more of humiliation than consolation, mainly because it singled out her caste identity.

It was against the odds that Bama completed her under graduation and B.Ed., subsequently she decided to become a teacher. She works in a convent. Bama finds that the nuns working there constantly oppress the Dalit children. When she was in the hostel after completion of her standard eight, Bama painfully recalls the nuns commenting on the Dalit children. Nun used to suppress Dalit teachers very much. On seeing the oppression at convent it was Bama who was suddenly struck with the idea of becoming a nun and so she decided to sacrifice her life, help the poor and Dalit children.

Though the crucial circumstances were like this in the convent. Bama continues to stay in the convent because of her strong determination and perseverance towards the poor and the Dalit children. Those who are taking training with Bama to become nuns were anxious to find out to which caste Bama belongs. Whoever asks Bama about her Caste, she answers honestly without any hesitation. The religious order itself has its own reservation about the Harijan women to become nuns.

Bama has bitter experiences at the school. One day all children along Bama were playing at the school in the evening. At that moment somebody has stolen the coconut. The guilt is thrown on her. Everyone says that it was Bama who had plucked the coconut. Actually she was not guilty but the headmaster treated her badly. He scolds her in the name of caste because of this incident and Bama was in agony. She felt ashamed and insulted in front of all the children. After that she gets suspended from the school. When she cried a teacher advised her to meet the church priest for an apology letter. This is how Bama has given vent to her suppressed emotions through her novel *Karukku*.

Dalits in the earlier days never had any rights. Article 14 provided equality before law to any citizen of India. Article 15 is aimed at protecting the rights of the SCs and STs. It says discrimination on the basis of religion, caste, race, sex or place of birth should be prohibited. Article 16, argues for equal opportunity to all in matters of public employment. And Article 17 abolishes the practice of untouchability. But the ground reality suggests that dalit community have a long way to go before they can claim that they have access to all the available fundamental rights.

To change the perception mindset has to change. It is difficult to expect that people will eventually, voluntarily change their mindset. They have to be forced to change it. Above all being born a dalit leaves one exposed to a number of prejudices. Reservation is made compulsory in the Government sector hence the norms of reservation is being followed. When the UPA government under its common minimum programme first decided to introduce caste-based reservation in private sector jobs, to bring equilibrium in the social justice sector, the corporate houses rejected the proposal. They assured they would extend their support in giving scholarships, establishing vocational training institutes etc but they will not implement reservation.

Even Tata Group Chairman, Ratan Tata had expressed his disapproval over the matter by suggesting that a process of reservation will hamper the process of merit. The other industrial big-wigs who were not in

support of this proposal were Aditya Birla Group, Bajaj Group, Forbes Marshal Group, Mahindra and Mahindra, Wipro Industries etc among others. According to 2001 census data India has 166,635,700 schedule castes and 84,326,240 scheduled tribe population, who form 16.2 percent and 8.2 percent of the total population. Is there any statistics or study to prove conclusively that such a large population of India is intellectually handicapped?

Bearing all this in mind Bama draws to a conclusion and a solution stating that the right type of education will pave way for the Dalits to empower and emancipate them from the clutches of the society and help them climb successfully in the ladder of success.

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Myth and Folklore: Cultural Hegemony in Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye*

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Abstract: Traditionally, assigned the service positions as a social workers, teachers, nurses, Black women writers have to struggle in excess of "having a room of one's own and five hundred guineas a year". Their endless capacity for hard work gave them the confidence to fight against pernicious social and economic pressures. Though they have triple oppression in terms of their being women, black and poor they have a special consciousness.

Toni Morrison winning of the Nobel Prize has made a significant contribution to American literature and the canon of writing by Black woman: her books contribute not only to the understanding of the specifics of life as a Black woman, but also the important issues of survival for the entire community.

The Bluest eye articulates Morrison's concern for the Black community, which then manifests itself in a concern for world in general. An attempt is made to an analysis about the victimization of one small Black girl named Pecola. Self-hate makes her vulnerable to abuse not only from her family but the entire community as well. Pecola is obsessed with the myth of physical beauty and as a result is plunged into a world of madness. Her life is devoid of love and is full of brutality and ugliness. The paper will focus the ways and means by which the present dilemmas can attempt to be resolved.

Key words: Hegemony, myths, folklore, black consciousness, victimization and oppression.

This paper explores about myth and folklore culture in African- Americans. African -Americans are referred as Black Americans. Most of African- Americans are from west and central African descent and are descendants of enslaved blacks within the boundaries of the present United States. African- American history starts in 16th century. After the founding of the United States, Black people continued to be enslaved and treated as inferiors. These circumstances were changed by Reconstruction. Only then there was little development in the black community, people started participation in the great military conflicts of the United States, still there was a racial segregation, and the Civil Right Movement. Finally in 2008, Barack Obama an African -American is been elected as the president of the United States.

African -American in white America has traumatic conditions such as racism, sexism and classism. They are based on the societal and psychological restriction which affects the lives of the blacks, in general, and African- American women, in particular. Right from the day of slavery, the blacks, irrespective of sex had realized the cruel reality of racism. Toni Morrison is, perhaps, the most formally sophisticated novelist in the history of African-American literature, whose work has been described as "amazingly high". She astutely describes the blacks' lives. Toni Morrison has firmly grounded herself in the cultural heritage and social concerns of black Americans; her work transcends narrowly prescribed the conception of ethnic literature, exhibiting universal mythic patterns and overtones. Faulkner's phrases Toni Morrison as that; her novels grieve on universal bones. Even Toni Morrison herself has summed up as

The black woman had nothing to fall back on; not
male ness, not whiteness, not lady hood, not anything.
And out of the profound desolation of her reality she
may very well have invented herself. (Morrison, 63).

Toni Morrison's novels are women centered, she endeavours to create a concordant African-American female identity, as she claims "...I had to bear witness to what was not recorded for this person, this female, this black did not exist 'centre-self' ". (Morrison, 45).The black characters in Toni Morrison's first novel *The Bluest Eye* are marginal's, who strive to initiate themselves in American Society. They are dominated by the racist whites. This novel is of victimization of black people in general and black women in particular. Both inter racial and intra racial is found in this novel.

The myth is a traditional story, which may describe the origins of the world and people. The Mythology here centers upon are the standard of beauty by which the white women are judged in America. They are taught that their blond hair, blue eyes, and creamy skins are not only wonderful but the character which the gift of God should also must maintain. The novel portrays in poignant terms the tragic condition of blacks in a racist America. It examines how the ideologies, perpetuated by the institutions controlled by the dominant group, influence by the self-image of black women, thereby it exposes the devastation caused by white cultural domination in the lives of African- Americans.

Elizabeth Jane Way observes, Morrison's "stunning insight reveals the disrupted emotions produced by living in a world where white standards and goals are presented to blacks as uniquely important and, at the same time, impossible for them to achieve." (Janeway, 383). In short, the novel lays bare the victimization of black people within the context of racist social order.

The story is about a poor girl called Pecola Breedlove. She believes that the contempt and brutality which she meets within the society around her has its roots in her ugliness, her baldness. She is obsessed that she cannot be beautiful like any other white girl. A white girl has blue eyes and blonde hair which make her beautiful and is accepted in the world. But Pecola from her birth is told that she is ugly. Even her mother Pauline yearns for beauty by seeing the Hollywood films, she wouldn't have any change in her. At last she considers herself and her total family members as ugly.

Pecola is a silent sufferer because she is been avoided by her parents and society. The parents they don't have any affection and they are always engrossed in their works. Pauline is an ideal servant for the white house of Fishers near the Lake Shore Park. Her fantasies are fuelled by the movies of Jean Harlow and Clark Gable. She is sustained by the role or mask that she does in the Fisher household. Her marriage with Cholly, Pecola's father and displacement to North from a rural South intruded her orderliness. The ugliness of her life, her family and herself devastates any attempts to put anything in order. In cleaning, cooking, washing, for the Fishers, Polly the caregiver satisfies her own childhood fastidiousness. Abandoning her own children emotionally, she routes her affection, care and concern towards the Fisher child, who is with a golden hair and pink skin.

Pecola Breedlove has under gone many traumas in her life; a few incidents are discussed here. One day the black boys too harass Pecola over the colour of the skin and sleeping habits of her father, a black adult. The hatred of the black boys for the black girl is self hatred induced by racism. They belief that black was not valuable or beautiful. "A group of boys was circling and holding at bay a victim, Pecola Breedlove...Black e mo. Black e mo." (TBE, 50). Pecola is very fond of Mary Jane candy because in the wrapper there is a picture of white girl Shirley Temple. She believes that by ingesting them she has somehow ingest beauty. "To eat candy is somehow to eat the eyes, eat Mary Jane. Love Mary Jane."(TBE, 38).

When Pecola went to Yacobowski's Fresh Veg. Meat and Sundries Store to buy a candy the shop keeper hesitates to collect the pennies from her hand. While taking the pennies from her hand his nails graze her damp palm." How can a fifty-two- year-old white immigrant storekeeper with the taste of potatoes and beer in his mouth, his mind honed on the doe-eyed Virgin Mary, his sensibilities blunted by a permanent awareness of loss, see a little black girl? Nothing in his life even suggested that the feat was possible, not to say or necessary"(TBE, 36). Even Maureen Peals a mulattoo, her classmate also insulted her that she is ugly.

Pecola Breedlove's identity is constructed around the perception of others: her self-image of ugliness is seen in the eyes of others, the image of ugliness; "She would see only what there was to see, the eyes of the other people" (TBE, 35). Her teachers ignore her, her classmates shun her, and her parents overlook her. She has become an object either to be ridiculed or abused. Her impaired self-esteem is been encrushing due to acceptance of her ugliness. This leads to racial identity, the imposition of the dominant. The hegemonic society identity's her as a stultifying. Thus Frantz Fanon in his *Black Skin, White Masks* describes as:

One that day completely dislocated, unable to be abroad with the other, the white man, who unmercifully imprisoned me, I took myself far off from my own presence, far indeed and made myself an object. What else could for me but an amputation, an excision, a haemorrhage that spattered my whole body with black blood? (Fanon, 112).

In this case Pecola's despair is further intensified at the end of rejection, not just by the whites, but also her own family friends and community are perpetrating in the hegemonic assumptions. Pecola engulfs herself for wishing for a pair of blue eyes. Each night, without fail, she prayed fervently for a year for the blue eyes." Pretty eyes. Pretty eyes. Big blue eyes. (TBE, 34).

Cholly Breedlove is presented as a drunken, lazy father and a hated husband. He is being knocked by his wife and wished to be dead by his son. Morrison informs the reader that Cholly was been deserted by his parents and he was under the care of Aunt Jimmy. He is portrayed as a sympathetic figure. He has experienced genuine suffering, having been abandoned in a junk heap as a baby and having suffered humiliation at the hands of white men. He is also capable of pleasure and even joy, in the experience of eating a watermelon or touching a girl for the firsttime. He is vulnerable when two white men violate him by forcing him to perform sexual pleasure with the girl named Darlene for their amusement.

African -American women and children resulted from the cycle of oppression. He is distressed as a child and, never having found a way out of the system of oppression, he began to show his anxious to those who were weaker than he. His rape of his daughter is depicted oddly as a failed return to tenderness. He sees her scratching the back of her leg with toe of her other foot, a gesture just like the one her mother performed which initiated his love for her. In his befuddled state, he collapses his image of mother and daughter, he desires to

protect and cherish her, and at the same time, he cannot control his sexual desire for her. Instead of protecting and cherishing her, he rapes her and then leaves her lying in an unconscious state. The reader hears nothing more of Cholly except perhaps before he left, he raped his daughter a second time, and then that he died in a work camp.

Morrison uses Claudia as a narrator only sporadically in the novel. She tries to resist the internal colonization based on physical beauty, from different strategy. Black people for the Christmas festival will buy only the white dolls for the girls. In this, Claudia, did not like that white doll, she will tear that doll into pieces. Claudia wants to reject these homogenizing and totalizing ideologies. The standard cuteness of Maureen Peals does not cringe any shame of ineffectuality in Claudia or Frieda heart. Though they cannot get close with the teachers or friends, they have the maturity in identifying the real enemy. "We felt comfortable..." (TBE, 57). The thing is not Maureen Peals but the set of ideologies that is perpetrated by the hegemonic race. Alice Walker in her *In Search of Our Mother's Garden* locates in this colourism a form of self-hatred, manifested in celebration over "the birth of a golden child or the urgings to marry a 'high-yellow' in order to lighten up the race". (Walker, 311).

Geraldine, an African- American women indoctrinates to her son Junior, the difference between colored people and niggers, "Colored people were neat and quiet; niggers were dirty and loud." She tries to expunge any trace that could disturb the distinction. Junior's hair is cut close to his scalp to "avoid any suggestion of wool"(68), in winter he is smeared with jergen lotion to prevent his skin from becoming ashen. This depicts the terror of being identified as a pariah in a society that is fundamentally hierarchical. When Geraldine sees Pecola at her home, she asks her to go out, and calls her an ugly.

Claudia and her older sister, Frieda, have learned their life lessons from their mother. They have learned how to be strong black females, who can fight back and not be overwhelmed and brainwashed by standards of beauty imposed on them by white and black women. The contrast between the MacTeers family and Breedloves family is that, the Mac Teers (Claudia and Frieda's father and mother) are not as bad as the Breedloves .

Mrs. Mac Teer regards it as her steadfast duty to provide for her family and to ensure her daughters upbringing in the accepted morality of their time. Neither parent has the time or the emotional energy to nurture their daughters. Mrs. Mac Teer treats their daughters with rough care, but care nonetheless. She dispenses punishment arbitrarily and too swiftly, not recognizing their physical or moral integrity, but she stops short of abusing them for the mere sake of releasing her own pent up frustrations.

When Frieda is sexually molested by Mr. Henry, her parents believe her story and act on it swiftly, punishing Mr. Henry, and leaving Frieda to draw her own conclusions about what it meant." Mr. Henry jumped out of his shoes and kept on running in his socks." (TBE, 77) Mrs. Mac Teer unwittingly foists on her daughters the ideology of white supremacy when she gives them white dolls to love and cherish, but she never directly says her daughters are ugly.

Pauline inflicts a great deal of pain on her daughter. Morrison nevertheless renders her sympathetically. She experiences more subtle forms of humiliation than Cholly does- her lame foot convinces her that she is doomed to isolation and the snobbery of the city women in Lorain condemns her to loneliness. In this state, she is especially vulnerable to messages conveyed by white culture that white beauty and possessions are the way to happiness. She escapes from the ugliness of reality in the movies. She adds insult to the injury of the abuse by not believing her daughter when she tells Pauline that the rapist was her father, Cholly Breedlove.

Though Pecola was wandering the blue eyes, she finally met a priest named Soaphead. He is a priest, a case worker, and a Reader. Pecola asks him if he can give her blue eyes. Soaphead pities her and ask her to give the meat sprinkled with poison to the dog, if the dog behaves strangely, and then her wish to have blue eyes will come true on the next day. So Pecola takes the meat to dog. The dog starts to choke and move funny, Pecola runs out of the house. Soaphead meanwhile sits down and writes a letter to God stating to provide a blue eyes to Pecola."I, I have caused a miracle. I gave her the eyes. I gave her the blue, blue, two blue eyes."(TBE, 144).

In *The Bluest Eye*, there are three African families who for their social status and economic and political advancement exploit their own brethren in order to become close with the ruling class. The first family is Maureen Peals', they have changed their appearance, behavioural pattern according to the American society. The second family is Geraldine's, they have nurture the aspirations of the ruling class. The third family is the Soaphead's he has married a white girl and has converted himself according to it.

At the end of the novel, we are told that Pecola had been a scapegoat for the entire community. Her ugliness has made them feel beautiful, her suffering has made them feel comparatively lucky, and her silence has given them the opportunity for speaking. Though she continues to live after she has lost her mind thinking that she has got blue eyes, this makes us to feel for Pecola's aimless wandering at the edge of town haunting the community, reminding them of the ugliness and hatred that they have tried to repress. Finally she has becomes a reminder of human cruelty and an emblem of human suffering.

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Abbreviation for the novel: The Bluest Eye- TBE

Myth and Folklore in Toni Morrison's *Beloved*

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Abstract: *Myths are sacred stories which deal about the great issues of life and death, but they are also linked with the social, cultural and values of society. All myths are actually believed to be true by the people of the societies that used or originated the myth. Folklore consists of legends, music, oral history, proverbs, jokes, popular beliefs, fairy tales and customs that are the traditions of that culture, subculture, or group. It can contain religious or mythic elements.*

Beloved, the Pulitzer Prize winner of 1988, is a novel steeped in African spirituality and myth. Beloved was murdered, and this violent end causes her soul's unrest. However, she was named and received her gravestone in an act of sexual submission by her mother, and this wrongful burial has made her spirit angry and restless in the African mythological tradition. Beloved's manipulative presence in the household similarly causes conflicts in many of the domestic relationships. Beloved's deeds turn deadly because of the collective weight of the ancestors' experiences of slavery that she brings upon the living from the darker side.

Key words: *Myth, Folklore, African American, Cultural, Slavery.*

The word myth comes from the greek 'mythos' which originally meant 'speech' or 'discourse' but later on, it came to mean 'fable' or 'legend'. Myth is defined as a story of forgotten or of vague origin, basically religious or supernatural in nature. They are sacred stories which deal about the great issues of life and death, but they are also linked with the social, cultural and values of society. Myths not only provide a pathway into the world of the sacred but also act as a guide as to how to live in the world of daily reality. All myths are actually believed to be true by the people of the societies that used or originated the myth.

A myth is a story containing certain identifiable characteristics. It is a religious story – no matter from which culture. It involves the existence and activities of a supernatural being such as a god, a demigod, a goddess or such entities. It is not an isolated tale. It connects up in some significant way with other similar stories within a culture, involving other deities who collectively form a pantheon. Its authorship is communally shared, that is, attributable to no single person. And as it has come into existence through oral tradition, it has usually more than one version. It is believed to be essentially true by those in the society for whom it is one part of a cultural mythology.

Folklore consists of legends, music, oral history, proverbs, jokes, popular beliefs, fairy tales and customs that are the traditions of that culture, subculture, or group. The study of folklore is sometimes called folkloristic. The word 'folklore' was first used by the English antiquarian William Thomson in a letter published in the London journal **The Athenaeum** in 1846. 'Folktales is a general term for different varieties of traditional narrative. The telling of stories appears to be a universal culture, common to both basic and complex societies. The different forms of folktales do certainly have a similarity from culture to culture and a comparative study of themes and narrative ways have been successful in showing these relationships.

Contemporary narratives common in the western world include the urban legend. There are many forms of folklore that are so common, that most people do not realise they are folklore, such as riddles, children's rhymes and ghost stories, rumours, gossips, ethnic stereotypes and holiday customs and life-cycle rituals. Ancient Greek and roman literature contains rich troves of folklore and popular beliefs, many of which have counterparts in modern contemporary legends. Vladimir propp's classic study **Morphology of the Folktale** became the basis of research into the structure of folklore texts. He discovered an uniform structure in Russian fairy tales. His look has been translated into English, Italian, polish and other languages. The English translation was issued in the United States in 1958, some thirty years after the publication of the original. It was met by approving reviews and significantly influenced research on folklore and structural semantics.

William Bascom, the folklorist has stated in the **Journal of American Folklore** that, "folklore has many cultural aspects, such as allowing for escape from societal consequences". Moreover, folklore can also serve to validate a culture as well as transmit a culture's morals and values. Folklorists study medical, supernatural, religious and political belief system as an essential, often unspoken, part of expressive culture. Many rituals can be considered as folklore, whether formalised in a cultural or religious systems like weddings, baptisms, harvest festivals or practiced within a family or secular context. For example, in certain parts of the United States as well as in other countries, one places a knife or a pair of scissors under the mattress to 'cut the birth pains' after giving birth. Even the children's counting out games can be defined as behavioural folklore.

Toni Morrison was the second of four children and spent her childhood in Lorain, Ohio, an ethnically diverse steel town just west of Cleveland where her parents had relocated to avoid the racism of the deep South. Even before her formal school years, Morrison had absorbed a love for stories from her parents. Both her parents were storytellers and musicians and instilled in the minds of their children a deep respect for their culture and heritage through the stories they told. In 1993, Toni Morrison received the Nobel Prize in literature and was the first black woman to get the honour. The Swedish academy described her as a writer “who, in novels characterized by visionary force and poetic impost, gives life to an essential aspect of American reality”. Regarding this, Trudier Harris has commented in **Fiction and Folklore: The Novels of Toni Morrison** that her recognition by the Swedish academy, “was the official inscripting of a worldwide recognition and appreciation of the intellectual stimulation and awesome power of her writing”.

Beloved is a novel steeped in African spirituality and myth. One belief is in a collective consciousness of the ancestors that is carried among the living, which often results in ancestral worship. Another feature is that the female often holds a leadership role in this ancestor community, even taking on a goddess-like quality. Burial practices are very important. Improperly or incompletely buried corpses are thought to generate angry ghosts that linger among the living or return to raise havoc among them. The living are believed to be able to communicate quite readily with their dead ancestors. *Beloved* was murdered, and this violent end causes her soul’s unrest in western tradition. She is named and received her gravestone in an act of sexual submission by her mother, and this wrongful burial has made her spirit angry and restless in the African Mythological tradition. Naming is also important in African mythology, and so are tricksters.

Beloved, as a character whose naming history is clouded, becomes a trickster, able to change forms and cause trouble and misfortune among the living. This trickster characteristic is reminiscent of the signifying Monkey of Yoruba mythology. In this myth, a monkey reveals insults to a lion that were supposedly told to him by an elephant, in order to set the lion and elephant against one another, *Beloved*’s manipulative presence in the household similarly causes conflicts in many of the domestic relationships. *Beloved*’s deeds turn deadly because of the collective weight of the ancestors’ experiences of slavery that she brings upon the living from the dark side. With **Beloved**, the novelist invokes the ancestral legacy of her father’s ghost stories to present a hauntingly complex story of slavery, possession and love. The novel is based on the true story of Margaret Garner, a runaway slave who, upon being found, attempted to murder her children to keep them from being returned to slavery. Morrison tells the story of *Beloved*, the ghost of Sethe Sugg’s murdered child, who has returned from the other side. It begins as a haunting ghost of surviving family members within the home and then transforms into a haunting ghost of the entire community.

Morrison as a writer uses the grotesque as part her social and political aesthetic. In the simplest sense, she uses the grotesque to develop characters and create the plot. In fact, she uses it to accomplish some of her goals for writing, which includes educating readers about African cultures (primarily folklore and religion); telling stories that would have been told or rather have been neglected (primarily those related to the female slave experiences). She also uses it for emphasising the importance of the oral tradition; stressing the importance of one’s roots in the formation of self; and for exposing the interlocking system of race, class, and gender that negatively affect a black person. Toni Morrison did not plan on writing a historical book full of details from Margaret Garner’s life. The story that she has written is full of symbolism and serves as a metaphor for the whole black experience of slavery. Her characters are products of the oppressive system and bear the marks of all the horrors they went through.

The novelist uses supernatural elements of magical realism to explore the historical truth. Her novel is not just a slave narrative and historical fiction but also a ghost story. These two levels are in harmony since ghosts and supernatural events are deeply rooted in the African American folk culture. It has indeed well fitted the notion of the past haunting the present so perfectly. The ghost haunting the main protagonist of the story, Sethe, is not only an embodiment of her traumatic and painful past, her guilt and shame that haunt her present, but also, in wider sense, a reminder of America’s greatest sin. The horrors of slavery are still as real as the manifestation of the ghosts in flesh in the shape of *Beloved* that appeared in the novel. Most of the story takes place in the past between 1855 and 1873 in the era of reconstruction and basically stresses the impact of the fugitive slave law on the lives of thousands of black people and their families.

In this novel **Beloved**, Toni Morrison talks about the story of a slave woman, Margaret Garner, who was caught after her escape from slavery. When faced with going back to her masters she tries to kill her children to make sure they would not have to endure the horrible life she had. However, she only succeeds in killing her three year old daughter before she is stopped and taken to prison. Garner escapes across the Ohio river with her husband and children, but they are found just a day later and returned to Kentucky to be ‘dealt with’ there. After reading the article on Garner, Morrison began to do more research into the history and events surrounding this slavery. She was struck painfully and could not digest the pathetic incident. She was filled with horror and utmost pathos to know that a mother had gone to the extent of killing her own child in order to save it. The dread of slavery has indeed led a mother to do such a deed. Sethe is the central character in **Beloved** as she plays the role of the slave woman, Margaret Garner, who killed her daughter to “free” her from slavery.

Among the characters of **Beloved**, two ‘anonymous people’ Sethe and her daughter Denver, stand out as representations of the consequences of slavery and African American history in general. Sethe is a portrait of the pain of remembering a horrific past; Denver serves as a picture of the future – the life of possibility outside slavery. There are many other characters in the book that provide different examples of black history, but these two women stand out as examples of having able to remember and make sense of the past and also how one cannot learn that no matter how far one distances himself from the past, it is only through relationship with others that this past can actually be left in the past, and not dragged into the future. Whether it is Baby Suggs’ preaching or Sethe’s story telling, one finds that both of them take African traditions as a source of inspiration. Although not an African by birth, Baby Suggs creates within the black community her own syncretic folk religious practice, based on both West Africa and Christian spiritual traditions. Her preaching internalises certain Euro–American values by acting out as an economically successful great mother.

Sethe’s storytelling too, bases itself on the traditional way of communicating and preserving knowledge within African communities. Still it is telling a new land experience and **Beloved** as an embodiment of African American experience of slavery dominates it. Annisa J.Wardi in one of her articles in **African American Review** says that both have taken the, “interrelationship between ancestors and the community as their philosophical underpinning”. Both have been influenced by the American experience of slavery. The only difference that lies between their strategies is the difference in the means of each of them has chosen. To put it more specifically, Baby Suggs resorts to dancing and singing as an avenue to articulate her cultural concern whereas Sethe appeals to community story telling as her means of cultural reconstruction. Susan Convey in her book, **Toward the Limits of Mystery: the Grotesque in Toni Morrison’s Beloved** rightly remarks, “the magic power of healing and regeneration promised by both strategies makes both Baby Suggs and Sethe extraordinary figures bent on dethroning the white authority and supremacy established by the dominant discourses.

By representing Baby Suggs as a figure being worn down by whiteness and black indifference after the infanticide, and Sethe a figure hopeful of recovery, Morrison seems to favour story telling over music and dancing as means of cultural reconstruction. In 1984, the novelist expresses a similar idea in her book **Rootedness: Ancestor as Foundation** “for a long time, the art form that was healing for black people was music. That music is no longer exclusively ours. So another form has to take that place, and it seems to me that the novel is needed by African Americans now in a way that it was needed before”. Considering this, according to Morrison, black Americans should not rely solely on music for devices of cultural reconstruction. Rather, they should rely more on telling stories that are essentially black American. Afro-American story telling has the strength of bringing people together to form a communal solidarity that is so essential to black American cultural rehabilitation.

To make her novels more lively and emphatic so as to reach the inner self of the readers, Toni Morrison beautifully and tactfully sprinkles elements of myth and folklore in her works. Myth and folklore play a vital role in her novels, the novelist uses this aspect as a vehicle to drive home her ideas and thoughts. The readers feel at home and experience a sense of empathy towards the characters when they are portrayed with myth and folklore as the backdrop. The stories are wonderfully woven in the novel in such a manner that they do not stand apart. Instead, the result is an artistically and beautifully woven fabric.

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From Tradition to Modernity: A Study of RajiNarasimhan's *Drifting to a Dawn*

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Abstract: *Drifting to a dawn* by RajiNarasimhan is a vivid portrayal of the transition of women from the darkness to light. This single novel depicts instances of three generations in tandem. The first generation is picturised by Raman, who seduces a relative woman in his own house hold. This also tells the reader that the house-hold itself was not a safe haven for women. Surya the son of Raman, is the hero of the novel and he is the representative of the second generation. He loves Loma at first and gives up his love and marries his cousin, as he is of the view that Loma would not suit his family. Loma, though rejected by Surya, does not marry and remains single throughout her life. Surya gives birth to Bala who represents the third generation. On growing up, Bala is seduced by fellow students and one of them offers to marry her. But, Bala rejects the offer and decides to remain single. This firm decision of Bala's expresses her courage and confidence. This novel too is another example signifying Raji's strong passion for feminine liberty.

Key words: tradition, modernity, second generation

The writers of the past admired and portyed feminine beauty. They had certain laws and ideas about feminine beauty. Women's thoughts, speeches and acts were regarded as feminine beauty. The social norm for identifying women is found in marriage and parenthood. A majority of women have always and naturally, preferred marriage and motherhood. She is not given the opportunity to be a woman to express her innermost feelings. She can no more desire to be something other than what has meant her to be society.

In India, parent considers it their duty to see their daughter married and settled in life. They arrange for it among the so called middle and upper classes in Indian society, marrying a daughter to a suitable groom is a costly affair and many families get ruined in meeting the finance of the groom. This contagion has now spread too many castes in Tamil country, in many cases the parents have to suffer a lot by way of finding a suitable groom to their daughter like leeches suck the blood of the girls' parents with dowry demands beyond their capacity. From ancient times the Indian standard attitude renders the women's role complementary to that of man. Man dominated the women in all ways. Men dominated and pushed the women into inferior status through culture, laws, speeches and through writings.

Feminism is the movement claiming that women should have equal rights with men. The equal rights are in political, educational, employment area and social freedom to do well as well as ill. Feminist writers in India write on Indian women's problem, such as dowry, sathi, problem at employment and familial life etc., with the specific objective of educating the women to resist the male dominance and forge an identity of their own. Feminist writers and feminist critics help women to such collective and individual identifications of their own selves. Such being the trend of Feminist Criticism, the present study of RajiNarasimhan, proposes to analyses her novel from the point of view of Feminist aesthetics. The approach helps to identify the essential feminist stances of the writer. A failure to identify them, would lead to misinterpreting the novel.

Drifting to a dawn is a life of a family caught in the vortex of transition from Traditional to modern urban life. Jana is portrayed as a lady of sympathy understanding and clear headed reason. Raman's over sympathy towards his younger brother-in-law's widow is well understood by Jana. When she comes to know that her husband seduced Paaee, she tolerated his sin and she realized Paaee's suffering. Jana preserved Paaee by her advice and she promised to settle Paaee's future. Jana represents modernity through conformity.

Surya, her only son noticed his mother with fresh pleasure, whose beauty made him think of a very sacred river in a little known place, loaded with local mythology and legend. When Surya came to his house with Loma at night Jana cried to him "No promise! Pack her off!" (p.63). Because Jana did not want to create the same situation to Loma like Paaee in the past. After marriage of her son, Surya, all of them Jana, Paaee and Raman disappear out of the novel. In this novel, Kama's greediness, illiteracy and her partiality to male children are apparent. It was lack of education that made Kamu suspect her servant maid when she missed her armlet. And so she searched all her clothes and made her nude. The reason Surya ascribed to Kamu's behavior is her illiteracy. Education is essential to everybody. Women must be educated. It is education that paves the way to think clearly. Kamu loved her pregnant self. She enjoyed the change in her body. And finally she gave birth to Bala. When she looked at her child as are a foundlingshe said" who wanted a girl"(83).

Loma, his confidante and friend, fights against insurmountable odds to forge an identity of her own. Her entire family fights against the odds of life. Surya gradually gets drawn to Loma. Loma looks upon him as a friend of sorts. She was ugly, black coloured and poor, her parents did not know how to marry her. Loma's

educated mind gave her revolutionary thought. Her mind wanted an escape from the marital situation. Her poverty and ugliness made her sorrowful. In this very same situation many of the ladies jumped into the open well or live a living death. But Loma had a mind to struggle against it. Loma felt that she looked like Durga. Her hard mind, fearless and egoless thoughts came from Durga. Loma understood that Surya's economic difference, culture and parents' temperament would not equalize with Loma. Her educated and gentle mind did not want to disturb Surya's life with Kamu.

When she is introduced again, she is well set for an independent existence. Surya submitted his daughter Bala to Loma. He wanted the change from traditional to modern life. Loma expresses that women must be free. Loma expresses that women must be free. They must get freedom from bondage. Parents must leave them freely. When the time comes parents will uphold them and give them the helping hand. At college, Bala was disturbed and seduced cruelly by her friends, Loma came immediately and scolded the male friends of Bala.

When Arvind said that he would marry Bala, Loma said, "Marry her? Pack wolf marry gazelle? Mushroom marry meadow rose?" Bala never thought herself different from the male. Bala said, "Nonsense, nonsense, nonsense. You won't do anything of the sort I will never drag you" (117). Bala did not want to depend upon Arvind. She did not excuse Arvind's mistake. After Arvind, Varma also violated her. Though this, Bala revised her opinion of the male. As a union member she actively took an equal share in the risks and violence indulged in by the unionists. But after a certain level, Arvind and Varma showed discrimination and wished to exploit her boldness to their private ends. And so Bala lashed out at the entire male folk an undependable selfish tribe.

A careful reading of the novel helps identify Loma and Bala as representatives of modern, new force of woman. Surya's mother with her aesthetic sense quickly identified herself with the sufferings, of her sister and the sin of her husband and tried to work a salvation within the familial structure of life. Surya is the only male member who identified the individuality of woman and tried to help each in her quest for identity. When his wife, failed to live up to his expectations of good woman and when she refused to be educated towards a better life, he allowed her to develop in her own way at her own speed. The characters are not disgusted at the new order that was gradually coming to the fore. Even Kamu had no hesitation in accepting Loma as the confidante of her husband.

If we as readers fail to accept the new order that as a feminist writer Raji Narasimhan is trying to project, the novel stands in prospect of being interpreted as a series of immoral activities carried through three generations. This would be to miss the total vision of the writer. It is in this sense the feminist approach becomes the most suitable aspect for a study in Raji Narasimhan's novel.

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The Assertion of Isolation in Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter*

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Abstract: American Literature is different from other literature in the sense that it has not grown from oral and mythic traditions. It is the product of transplanted culture. The culture of an old – world people who, for political and religious reasons, took refuge in the New world. The radical aspects of the renaissance were presented chiefly by Transcendentalism. Much of Hawthorne's writing centers on New England, and featuring moral allegories with a Puritan inspiration. His themes often center on the inherent evil and sin of humanity, often have moral messages and deep psychological complexity. His depictions of the past are a version of historical fiction used only as a vehicle to express common themes of ancestral sin, guilt and retribution. The treatment of alienation or separation from society is intellectual pride, artistic isolation, sin or any one of the religious allegorical reasons. With this specific theme of isolation, Nathaniel is regarded as one of distinguished writers. This paper is attempted to explore on thriving employment of isolation with special reference to Nathaniel's *The Scarlet Letter*.

Key Words: Isolation, religion, culture. Nathaniel's *The Scarlet Letter*.

The violence of the 20th century American literature owes much to the energy and cultural origins. The literary efforts of the late 18th century can be quickly dismissed. One of the most popular literary genres during the romantic period was the gothic novel, which dealt with morbid emotions and sensational experience. Brown's novel showed the influence of the Gothic novel. American Literature is a popularized literature in the present world. Many writers showed their place in the literary field.

Nathaniel Hawthorne, born July 4, 1804, was an American novelist and short story writer. Much of Hawthorne's writing centers on New England, many works featuring moral allegories with a Puritan inspiration. His fiction works are considered part of the Romantic movement and, more specifically, Dark romanticism. His themes often center on the inherent evil and sin of humanity, and his works often have moral messages and deep psychological complexity. His published works include novels, short stories, and a biography of his friend Franklin Pierce.

Nathaniel Hawthorne presents various themes in the novel such as individuality, sin, Puritanism. The opening chapter itself discusses about the individualism of the protagonist of the novel *The Scarlet Letter*, Hester Prynne. She is treated as a untouchable and avoided to live in the society. Hester balanced all the problems both in prison and outside of the prison. Individual is a big sin in life, but in the novel Hester is separated from the society. She is living in lonely life. She cannot reveal any secret from her inner minds, as well she can't able to manage in the first new life. Gradually she is adopted and adjusted with the lonely life.

Alone is one who like to live where as alienation is given by others. Pearl is her life and breath. In this novel, Hawthorne deals about the treatment of alienation. He says about lonely life how cruel it is. He presents how she leads her life in front of society whether she can manage or else. It is a lesson of human society as well female society. In this novel, individual is the main concept and punishment of Hester Prynne. Nathaniel presents Hester as devoted mother, perfect lover, estranged wife, religious dissenter, feminist outcast to name just a few. She is a glorified rebel and Hawthorne uses her to criticize the puritan's strict society.

More than a tale of sin, the *Scarlet Letter* is also an intense love story that shows itself in the forest scene between Hester and the minister Arthur Dimmesdale. With plans to run away with each, Arthur and Hester show that their love has surpassed distance and time away from each other. This love also explains why Hester would not reveal the identity of her fellow sinner when asked on the scaffolding. Roger Chillingworth is the most affected by the sin, though he was not around when the sin took place.

Hawthorne illustrates that even sin can produce purity, and that purity came in the form of the sprightly Pearl. Though she is isolated with her mother, Pearl finds her company and joy in the nature that surrounds her. She alone knows that her mother must keep the scarlet letter on her at all times, and that to take it off is wrong. Through the book the child is also constantly asking the minister to confess his sin to the people of the town inherently knowing that it will ease his pain. Hawthorne's metaphor of the rose growing next to the prison is a good metaphor for Pearl's life that began in that very place. The reader sees this connection when Pearl tells the minister that her mother plucked her from the rose bush outside of the prison.

The community is nothing more than a collection of individuals. Although they do not see this point now perhaps they will in time. Since everyone within the community was subject to scrutiny, when someone

was caught being bad, everyone could be glad it was not he or she. This closed mindedness could only see hatred for Hester Prynne and the need to identify her with the letter "A". This way everyone would look at her rather than one another. The whole time the letter "A" was stitched upon her clothing it stood for only one thing, adultery. But as the story goes on and the community finally starts accepting her again, through her good deeds, the letter "A" starts representing other words. She was "Able" to deal with a town that hated her, and then a town that accepted her for her good works. The society was able to look past their hatred for her and see that in fact they needed her. And finally she was able to stay, where she wanted to be. Over time the fact the Hester didn't crumble and in fact stood taller despite her exclusion the Puritan society opened their eyes to see that good can survive even in the heart of a sinner. And that despite everything they tried to do, out of their fear of losing their values, individuals would still make mistakes and cause differences in the community.

The word letter is inscribed also on the cover of the novel we are reading and, if Hawthorne had gotten his way, would have been doubled on the cover of the novel with a graphic illustration of the A. To return to the specific question that launched our inquiry, the proliferation of letters in the text of *The Scarlet Letter* makes it very unlikely that there is some 'ideal' letter existing outside or inside the surface; insofar as there is one original letter in the novel, the original of which everything else is a better or worse copy, it is not in any specific meaning outside the text but rather in the specific physical object that Hester wears on her gown.

In fact, all the characters in *The Scarlet Letter*, except possibly Pearl, believe it. And if it is true, we are in a pleasant world wherein different meanings of the letter can be proposed and tested, and we can reasonably expect that the "right" meaning will eventually be established. But the second alternative that the meaning of the letter is not fixed is the one that the structure of the novel as a whole seems to validate. And if it is correct, we are in a much more fluid and insecure world, wherein the "meaning" of the letter is not so much a matter of truth as a matter of power: the letter will mean whatever people can be persuaded to believe that it means; it has no fixed and permanent reference.

This is what Hawthorne shows in the novel: a world wherein different individuals and groups are either trying to persuade others that their meaning is the right one, or are simply imposing their meaning by physical force, while the letter itself remains susceptible to a variety of meanings. He shows this by introducing the letter to us at a point when its meaning is already being questioned, and never from first to last allowing it to be firmly attached to any single meaning. Governor Bellingham's hall of reflecting mirrors aptly epitomizes what happens in this universe of meaning-in-flux: everywhere you look, a different A, with a different meaning.

It can stand for 'artist.' It can stand for 'author,' and 'authority,' so that Hester is being made to wear the mark of her 'adversaries' or 'antagonists,' while insisting that she will be the 'author' of her own letter. Recall the dictionary definition of character as 'a conventional graphic device placed on an object as an indication of ownership, age, or relationship.' In this reading, the letter is a sign that Hester is owned by the Puritan community, and her struggle to change the meaning of the letter is a struggle for her right to 'own' herself.

It can thus symbolize the multiplicity or deceptiveness of "truth" by being simultaneously itself and a symbol of itself, thus containing repetitions and doublings within itself. It can also stand for the law that the Puritans follow and enforce, as in the phrase "the letter of the law"—and in this case it certainly puts the stability of law in question. And in fact, the whole story goes to show that law is constantly in flux. This is the world that we find in *The Scarlet Letter*, with Hester from a different culture, and of another generation, than the Puritan rulers standing for the arrival of heterogeneity and the breakdown of consensus. Since the story takes place less than twenty years after the founding of the American colonies, we can see that consensus did not last long; in fact, it may have been a myth in the first place. Thus, Hawthorne is able to take a single letter of the alphabet and make it stand for multiplicity and the relativity of meaning to make it stand, in a sense, for anything and everything.

Through the contrast of the prison, the "black flower of civilized society," with the wild rose bush growing beside its door. That bush is identified both with the antinomian Anne Hutchinson, who denied the relevance of the "moral law," and with "the deep heart of Nature," which can pity and be kind to those whom society has called criminal. Nature looks good. But over the course of the book it would seem that Hawthorne shows that symbols taken from nature, like the rose bush and the forest, are no more fixed and authoritative in their meanings than the artificial symbols of human letters.

The letter is also represented in Pearl—in fact, twice represented: once in her costume, which Hester has intentionally designed to resemble the letter, "lavishing many hours of morbid ingenuity, to create an analogy between the object of her affection, and the emblem of her guilt and torture" (102). Nevertheless, even though the letter is not identical to whatever it is made to stand for (whatever is in the heart), the letter is still the only possible way to think and speak about that mysterious and inaccessible interior. In Dimmesdale's view, then, truth resides below the surface, and the surface refers to the hidden truth in some kind of correspondent way. The Puritan leaders would not share Dimmesdale's idea that the truth of the letter, the source of its meaning, resides within the human heart. But they certainly share his idea that the letter is no more than a pointer to a truth that is somewhere else.

The truth to which the letter refers is in an invisible, divine world: not "inside" the human heart (such a vision, despite Dimmesdale's supposed orthodoxy, is really antinomian), but outside the human being altogether in a place beyond time and change where God has his dwelling. Puritan law, to Puritan rulers, is the representation in "characters" of the divine word. While acknowledging that their law is only a transcription of an original that is somewhere else, they do not doubt the accuracy of their transcription. In devising Hester's particular punishment they plan to mark her in the human world as, in their view, God has already marked her in the invisible world.

The Scarlet Letter, as a tale of a war between the Puritanical Culture and a member who violates a Puritanical code, weaves the appearance versus- reality theme into the very structure of its elements. What Hawthorne implements is the dramatization of the tension to reconsider the use of terms such as love and religion. Hawthorne creates the theme of appearance-versus-reality represented by the characters to launch his attack on Puritanism. The duality of appearance versus reality is best shown when the reader finds no hope of reconciling a single character's private life with that of the public

In appearance the Puritan Culture stresses human nature common to all its members while in reality each individual is a unique self with personal desires to be fulfilled. Apparently the government injects the idea of union into the veins of people so much so even a slight movement against the grain may be regarded as taboo. Stevenson (1990) in his article on Heinrich Boll's *Billiards at Half Past Nine* states the belief of the so-called Lambs: "There exists a higher bond than that of simple blood kinship, a bond based on a vision of the world as a necessarily moral realm in which brotherhood is established and maintained by shared values alone" (104).

For the so-called Beasts who hold power over the Lambs, he says that their 'guise is order and respectability, the Beast is, in fact, moral chaos' (105). This is what the Puritan society employs: in order to keep people away from truth, respectability and religion are put forward as guises that protect people from losing a higher reality. Accordingly strict Puritan codes are imposed on people the outcome of which is the difficulty in distinguishing between what is right and what is wrong, between appearance and reality.

As many authors speak through their characters, many critics have, since 1850, debated the idea that Hawthorne is after justifying a prohibited sin and introducing Hester as a cult heroine seeking fulfillment in her union; or, that Hawthorne is depicting Hester responsible for her wrongdoing. Hester, as a figure representative of fresh and striking views and nonconformities, may be a reminder of Hawthorn's interest in the American Transcendental Movement with its emphasis on the natural world and soul. Nevertheless, there is more to Hester's motives as well as potentialities of her nature.

The pressure is so intense that it pushes Hester to a mental trauma and changes her to a renegade who breaks free of the Puritan rules to become the worshipper of the temple of her own nature. She cannot tolerate a society that will not allow her to reveal her true and real identity: an identity backed up with unique qualities that separate her from other passive and obedient members. Hester, thinking of escaping with Dimmesdale is similar to Charlotte Bronte's Jane Eyre a passionate woman dubious about going off to France with Mr. Rochester with whom she is deeply in love. Dimmesdale and Mr. Rochester might, at the first glance, seem villains for having violated society-defined conventions.

The reader, having been given access to those levels of conscious and subconscious unknown to the world around, is likely to take side with them. All these two characters show is a saturnine front and appearance via which the reality of the experienced moment cannot be read. The Byronic hero is "an idealist" and the "sensitivity can only be revealed ... when he manages to find a superior woman who can understand his true nature" (Salami, 1999, p. 253). Hester and Dimmesdale, from a Puritanical point of view, appear as rebels however, as idealists, they are after defining their own religion, consummating it as saints who stand as threats to the society.

It is through sin that Hester reaches experience just to enter the state of organized innocence where she can experience love and the one life running through all. And the coup-de-grass is inserted when Hawthorne shows how morally as well as emotionally Hester is developed and criticizes the religious codes defined by those who put a ban on the development of such symbolic relationships. The sin with the evil setting marks the beginning of Hester's ideal life and the revelation of her reality. The flourishing of her reality means the flourishing of her noble thoughts, deeds, and, by and all, her real personality which is hard not to sympathize with: "her breast with its badge of shame was but the softer pillow for the head that needed one. She was self-ordained a Sister of Mercy" (p. 161).

In opposing Romantic and Puritanical philosophies, Hawthorne puts the reality of the Romantic symbol and image of the revolt of imagination against the Puritanical cloaks that obscure the difference between the two. In the literal sense, Hawthorne tries to win the reader's sympathy for Hester who is in love with the Puritan minister and not with her husband. As a person in need of loving and being loved, Hester is excused for having such an affair that likens her to 1984's Winston Smith who, through a secret love affair, fought the system.

In fact, Hester finds her own judgment as the real and true consultant and dares express her freedom of choice and idea that it is the individual feeling that is the most prominent and desirable reality that exists. It is the law of her heart that she abides by and knows to be real and deep. What makes an unforgettable character of

Hester is that all she is and does and feels are accompanied by her obsession with guilt. Hester has a Puritanical conscience after all and cannot avoid the compelling hold of the community and the repressive urge of her natural instinct.

Hester does not leave the place of her guilt— Boston— and stays there to defend what she sincerely believes in. She becomes the manifestation of the humanist view of the Renaissance period placed at the centre of the community. She becomes the harbinger of a new religion in which affection is the first word to be loudly preached. As a matter of fact, religion acts as a proper guise for what the authorities wish to either impose or obtain and shape their rules accordingly. Although religion seems to shape morality, gradually it turns to chaos; though it may display apparent harmony and benefit, in reality it may hold disorder within and not even a suspicion of affection and love. Campbell (1997).

Hester's religion is not defined merely by reason. Feelings are the teachings of her school for which she has fought wholeheartedly. Weston in discussing 'Puritan Temper' refers to "true religion" as "characterized by pious and benevolent feelings" (451). Hester finds it indispensable to devote herself to the secret hidden in her heart if she is to be a religious, pious woman. She has to practice what she believes in and preaches. She is loyal to reality and the laws of her nature set against Puritan-made rules.

It is through her love affair that Hester claims a new identity, a real one, one different from what the public is acquainted with. She, also, claims a real identity for another follower of this new school, she subconsciously identifies Dimmesdale, a member of the Puritan Culture, with God. Hester shows no respect for the world's law, for she knows a higher reality and truth than that practiced by the Puritans. This higher reality for Hester is love to which she remains loyal and with which she remains united. In the holy name of love she, as a cult heroine, stands up to a religion that appears merciful but is ugly and cruel to true love and affection.

Bestowed with the power of love, Hester is able to change everything and show the reality of appearances. She is able to create a new identity, a real personal identity different from the apparent social one. The new identity is nourished through the feeling of love and her relationship with Dimmesdale. Hester's self is empowered through sympathy and relationship with others. She becomes strong enough to change the implications of the scarlet letter she is doomed to wear, to fresh and novel implications.

The Scarlet Letter is not only about good and evil but appearance and reality, a theme practiced all throughout the novel. As it is stated at the end of the novel, "no man, for any considerable period, can wear one face to himself, and another to the multitude, without finally getting bewildered as to which may be the true" (216). Dimmesdale and Hester are judged based on appearance, and a gradual revelation of their reality marks them as adversaries to those who want to blur the difference between appearance and reality.

Hawthorne shows the reality of the token, what in appearance is a "scorching stigma" while in reality and by Hester has changed to a badge of courage, affection and ability. Hester's lover also has the brand of sin on his heart and as a violator of the Puritanical codes makes the reality known to all that we are all sinners. Yet some are disguised in cloaks as law makers and gods. Hester reveals the fact that under every 'Gules' letter, there lie much deeper meanings than what the 'Sable' culture tries to uphold.

The conclusion of *The Scarlet Letter* accords completely with an idea of meaning as a matter of fiat, social negotiation, or consensus. At the end of the story Hester returns to Boston and resumes wearing the letter. Nobody would have required her to wear it any longer, after so much time and so much anguish—which is to say, the law has changed. This final meaning for the letter is a compromise, a newly negotiated result. It is not what Hester originally wanted the community to understand by the letter, but it is very far from what the community originally took the letter to mean. The Puritan community has arrived at a new consensus. Hester has not exactly prevailed over them, and she has certainly not been the prophetess of a revolution as she had earlier hopes of being (263). Nevertheless, she has had a powerful effect on her society's system of meanings, which means that she has been an agent of social change.

At the end of the story the community is different from what it was at the beginning, and this difference is symbolized by the emergence of a new reading of the letter. People are not quite so judgmental, legalistic, and moralistic as they were at the start. They have recognized a domain of experience that they were earlier unwilling to admit existed. They are beginning to find a language for the heart. They are beginning to recognize the claims of the individual and the claims of women. They are ceasing to be Puritans.

On the other hand, Hester takes up her place at the center of a feminine world where she dispenses consolation and advice with a fairly conservative cast to it. She confines herself to concerns of the lovelorn no more attacking the foundations of established society. This change will be brought about by a woman, but a woman without sin, shame, or even sorrow. It is not difficult to see that such a woman is impossibility in the world of *The Scarlet Letter* and that, therefore, the world is very far from ripeness. Thus, if the community has moved part of the way toward Hester, she has moved at least as far along the way toward them.

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Communal Identity Crisis in Gloria Naylor's *The Women of Brewster Place*

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Abstract: Gloria Naylor is a famous American novelist, editor and short story writer. Naylor is noted for her heart wrenching stories built on the lives of African American women. Among her renowned fictions, the present paper chooses the novel, *The Women of Brewster Place* for study. The paper begins with a brief introduction of the writer and continues with the justification of the title which eventually throws light on the struggle endured by seven distinct women who were gathered by fate and continue to survive in a socially marginalized ghetto named 'Brewster Place.' As the title suggests the focus of the paper is directed towards the identity crisis underwent by seven women of the novel who on the whole represent the struggle of all other women folk of the 'Brewster Place'. Although being socially isolated as a degraded community the seven women of the novel along with other women folk in the Brewster Place strive to attain and sustain their identity as an honorable community amidst various social obstacles like patriarchal oppression and familial alienation. The paper gives a comparative study of the Brewster Place with the African American heritage and concludes with Naylor's idea of developing a sense of communal identity and solidarity as a suggestive solution for both the women folk of Brewster Place and the world; to overcome the obstacles we come across in the uneven path of life and to lead a harmonial life built in a dignified community.

Key Words: Identity Crisis, Communal segregation, Marginalisation, Familial alienation etc.

Gloria Naylor is a famous American novelist, editor and short story writer. Naylor is noted for her heart wrenching stories built on the lives of African American women. Her excellence as a novelist is more evident as she won the 'American Book Award' for her first novel, *The Women of Brewster Place* in the year 1983 as it has also been filmed in the year 1989. The novel is numbered with the works of reputed writers like *The Color Purple* of Alice Walker and *Sula* of Toni Morrison among the freshest and most vital voices in contemporary American literature. Perhaps even more than in the fiction of Morrison and Walker, Naylor's history and place comes more alive: the regional and the individual become the source of rich narrative exploration which moves forward as well as back in time. Naylor has earned a reputation associated with both critical and commercial success. She is acknowledged as a significant personality in the domains of academics and popular culture as she boldly voiced out for the rights of women and for other social issues that blocked the upliftment of a society.

Among her renowned fictions the present paper chooses the novel, *The Women of Brewster Place* for study. The paper throws light on the struggle endured by seven distinct women who were gathered by fate and continue to survive in a socially marginalized ghetto named 'Brewster Place.' As the title suggests the focus of the paper is directed towards the identity crisis underwent by seven women of the novel who on the whole represent the struggle of all other women folk of the 'Brewster Place'. Though being socially isolated as a degraded community the seven women of the novel along with other women folk in the Brewster Place strive to attain and sustain their identity as an honorable community amidst various social obstacles like patriarchal oppression and familial alienation.

Wikipedia, The Free encyclopedia online, refers to a broad definition of the term 'community' which incorporates all the different forms of community as cited by Paul James, Professor of Globalization and Cultural Diversity at the Institute for Culture and Society, Melbourne in his book *Globalism, Nationalism, Tribalism: Bringing Theory Back In*, as "a group or network of persons who are connected (objectively) to each other by relatively durable social relations that extend beyond immediate genealogical ties, and who mutually define that relationship (subjectively) as important to their social identity and social practice."

According to the above definition of the term 'community' Naylor presents a similar fictitious so-called community named "Brewster Place" that includes people both men and women of varied characteristic traits who are gathered by fate as a single community in spite of their social isolation from the ethical community of a normal, typical human society; they find 'Brewster Place' as the only place for solace and shelter to live under the sun. Although set in the 1970s in an urban ghetto, the range of explored lives offers a broad spectrum of social and cultural experiences. Framed by opening and closing sections that point to political and economic forces affecting life in Brewster Place, the novel is a series of vignettes about the seven women major characters and how their lives connect to one another. Gloria Naylor neither romanticizes these women nor downplays the oppressive forces arrayed against them. Instead she reveals the dual need for social justice and personal responsibility in a wonderfully written and powerful story.

The novel, *The Women of Brewster Place* is a realistic account of the lives of seven distinct African American women such as Mattie Michael, Etta Mae Johnson, Kiswana Brown, Luceila Louise Turner (Ciel), Cora Lee, Lorraine and Theresa. The novel has a subtitle as “A Novel in Seven Stories,” significant to its subtitle the novel is narrated as seven linked stories; six of the stories concern the stories of individual black women like Mattie, Etta Mae Johnson, Ciel, Kiswana Brown and Cora Lee and the remaining two is titled as “The Two” which narrates the story of the lesbians Lorraine and Theresa and “The Block Party” is the seventh part that concludes the story. These seven stories are framed by two brief passages set in italics: “Dawn,” which recounts the birth of Brewster place at the end of World War I, ‘the bastard child’ of a corrupt deal between city aldermen and a local contractor, a political stop to the then Irish neighbourhood; and “Dusk,” which recounts the death of Brewster Place in the present, when its last, dark children are evicted from its derelict buildings.

Naylor in her prologue “Dawn” and epilogue “Dusk,” describes ‘Brewster Place’ as both the setting and a metaphorical symbol of communal marginalization. Naylor sets the story within Brewster Place so that she can focus on telling each woman’s story in relationship to her ties to the community. She heightens the importance of Brewster place by personifying it as a character. Accordingly the evolution of Brewster Place undergoes a life progress of a human. It is born as a ‘bastard child, mothers three children and ‘waits to die,’ having ‘watched its last generation of children torn away from it by court orders and eviction notices...too tired and sick to help them.’ Naylor weaves the women’s stories within the framework of the street’s life – between its birth and its death. The personification of Brewster Place is evident from the beginning lines of prologue, “Dawn” which states that, “Brewster Place was the bastard child of several clandestine meetings between the alderman of the sixth district and the managing director of Unico Realty Company... And so in a damp, smoke-filled room, Brewster Place was conceived” (1).

Brewster Place was originally conceived in the story as a way for crooked politicians and businessmen to resolve some of their personal concerns to their political and financial advantage. First Irish, then Mediterraneans, and finally African Americans came to inhabit the district. It is actually a street of ‘erect four double housing units’ built on “on some worthless land in the badly crowded district” (1). The bricks of its buildings were ‘the color of dull silver during Brewster Place’s youth’ and its “streets were not paved – after a heavy rain it was necessary to wade in anklet deep to get home – there was a sense of promise in the street and in the times” (2).

As the city in which it was located developed a new boulevard that was raised to enhance the business of the city, the arrival of the new boulevard led to uncontrollable traffic and consequently, so as to control traffic a wall was constructed against some auxiliary streets like the Brewster Place isolating them first geographically and later socially from rest of the city. This is evident from Naylor’s description of it in the prologue as, “So the wall came up and Brewster Place became a dead-end street” (2). Though the neighbourhood was relatively inviting at first, its streets and buildings were allowed to decline as its one through walled up dead-ended street gradually disconnected the inhabitants of Brewster Place isolating them with rest of the city that existed beyond the wall. It became the refuge and dwelling place in majority of the inhabitants like drunkards, rapists, sexually immoral women and irresponsible husbands etc., who were unfit to live along with people of the city existing beyond the wall and is also projected as a racial and socio-economic enclave that is used as a dumping ground for mostly used women and spoiled men.

Though the novel presents inhabitants of Brewster Place as a mixture of both the feminine and masculine genders, Naylor emphasizes her attention mostly over a description of the lifestyle of her female characters. The major male characters presented in the novel are Ben, Samuel Michael, Butch Fuller, Basil and Eugene Turner; all except Ben and Samuel Michael are projected as patriarchal oppressors and abusers of women. The oppression of men over women in a society is rightly expressed by American philosopher and scholar of constitutional law, Ronald Dworkin as, “in a sexist society men consider freedom to be the freedom of the predator and women and girls would continue to be the prey” (62). Brewster Place holds only Ben, Basil and Eugene Turner from the men in this list which means that novel’s setting is matriarch through its description of women and their sufferings in majority. Simultaneously Naylor presents a mixture of distinctive female characters in the novel amongst whom the major characters can be classified into two stereotypical categories: the good woman includes Mattie, Ciel, Miss Eva, Lorraine etc., while the bad and subtle women projected in the novel are Etta Mae, Ben’s wife Elvira and Cora Lee. The circumstances of their lives individualize them into believable human beings.

The more inclusive theme of the novel seems to be the need for a community especially a community of women. Unlike the men in their world, who deal with social injustice in violent and often self-destructive ways, the women of Brewster Place cope with effects of racism and injustice by forming nurturing networks and strong bonds. These bonds can have both dramatic effects, as when Mattie soothes Lucielia’s tragic sadness with love and caring, and subtle effects, as when Kiswana takes Cora and her children to a Shakespeare’s play. In the novel, the bonds formed within a community of women ameliorate the effects, the cynicism and the despair, of a world that devaluates both African Americans and women.

The novel begins with the story of Mattie Michael as she is the foremost and the vital matriarch character in the novel as her experience and friendship remain after chapter, than the first book, forming a kind of ground bass to the rest of the stories. Although she was overprotected by her stern though adoring father, Mattie was easily seduced by the pleasure-loving, cinnamon-red young Butch Fuller, who believed that 'you should spit out what tastes good before it turns to straw in your mouth.' When she recalls dark Basil, the place they were together she associates it with her son named Basil, as he was conceived in the wild herbs of Basil and not with Butcher. Feeling guilty of her pregnancy she leaves her home towards her friend Etta Mae Johnson in Asheville, North Carolina who deserts Mattie to fend for herself and later finds refuge in the home of Eva Turner and her granddaughter Luceilia at Brewster Place, as she was unable to disclose the name of Butch, her betrayer. Mattie becomes the loving mother-figure of Brewster place where she is once again betrayed by her son through his irresponsible ill behaviour. Despite her dual betrayal, she keeps her ability to love and offers emotional sustenance to others like Etta and Luceilia who exist in Brewster Place. Both Etta and Luceilia recoil themselves from the world to find solace in the glow of Mattie's love.

Etta Mae Johnson, Mattie's closest friend, an attractive woman who carries herself with pride in Rock Vale, Tennessee the town in which Mattie and Etta grew up, there was no place for a woman with Etta's rebellious, independent spirit. She refused to play by society's rules and spent most of her life moving to one major city after another, from one promising black man to another, in the hope of that one of them would take care of her. Upon her return to Brewster Place, Etta learns that her friend Mattie can give her what she is searching for, things that no man has ever given her: love, comfort and friendship.

Luceilia Louise Turner called Ciel, is a young married woman, the granddaughter of Eva Turner, the woman who befriended and sheltered Mattie years earlier. She constantly makes excuses for her husband, Eugene Turner's frequent absence from her and her month old baby. When her husband learns that she is pregnant again, he threatens to leave her. In an attempt to prevent his leaving once more, she gets an abortion. When her daughter dies in a household accident, however, Ciel disconnects with life and slowly begins to fade losing her ability to feel. Mattie refuses to accept her gradual suicide and rocks Ciel in her arms so as to make feel and express her sorrow which in turn induces her to return back to life.

Kiswana Browne, formerly Melanie, a young black woman who rejects her parents' middle class values, changes her name and boasts of her African heritage. She is also an activist who organizes a tenants association at Brewster Place. Kiswana, in her naivete, believes that her mother is ashamed of being black because she leads a middle-class existence. Finally realizing that she and her mother are not so different, that they are both women who are proud of their heritage and who desire to improve the lot of future generations, Kiswana learns to be more tolerant to those whose lifestyles are different from hers.

Cora Lee, a young, unmarried high school dropout who continues to have babies because she loves children. After reluctantly agreeing to attend a performance of a Shakespeare's play with her children at Kiswana's insistence, Cora Lee begins to change her outlook on life and motherhood. She realizes that her children are more than playthings and baby dolls rather they are human beings with needs and desires of their own.

Lorraine and Theresa are lesbians of differing attitudes towards life as Theresa is satisfied in her individuality of being a lesbian expelled from the moral society while Lorraine in contrast longs for a social life in a community who never gets it in spite of her strong attachment to Theresa. Lorraine has both a strong sense for herself and a strong commitment to community; for her, people rise or sink together, but all must pull their own oar. In the concluding chapter of the novel, however, Lorraine yearns to unite the loving and accepting quality of Mattie with the power to take control of one's life. Because of the prejudices against Lorraine's lesbianism, she becomes ostracized. When Theresa, her lover forced her to choose between her desire for community and her individuality, Lorraine forces herself to have her vision on the line alone. Pushed into isolation by the intolerance and small mindedness of her lover and other women, Lorraine steps into tragedy and is being raped and killed by a gang of punks.

Although the attack on Lorraine is horribly painful, her death is not in vain. All the women recognize how they treated Lorraine in ways they had been treated in their own lives, and they learn from this tragedy. The women come to recognize the power of community, the need to accept and love one another. In "The Block Party" the concluding chapter of the novel portrays an end as the remaining women of Brewster Place, symbolically tear down the wall separating Brewster Place from the city in the dream of Mattie, revealing their new identity as an understanding community directed towards their own individual consciousness.

Naylor uses many marginalizing symbols in the novel, *The Women of Brewster Place*. Both literally and figuratively, Brewster Place is a dead end street – that is, the street itself leads nowhere and the women who live there are trapped by their histories, hopes, dreams. The brick wall symbolizes the differences between the residents of Brewster Place and their rich neighbours on the other side of the wall. It also stands for the oppression the women have endured in the forms of prejudice, violence, racism, shame and sexism; representing the drug-dealing street gangs who rape and kill without remorse, garbage litters the alley of Brewster Place.

The polarized themes of love and loss, trust and betrayal, hope and despair all help to unify the plot and characterization of Naylor in a visually appealing portrait of the hard lives and gentle strength of seven black women of 1960s. The dreariness of the gray tenement buildings, the oppressiveness of the wall, and the communal segregation make the women of Brewster Place racial, social and economic victims. Yet they come together finally to tear down the wall in the dream of Mattie Michael, which increasingly seemed a manifestation of their oppression, using “knives, plastic forks, spiked shoe heels, and even bare hands” to dismantle it. With this one symbolic act, they demonstrate their determination to change their lives for the better. The novel appears to end triumphantly as Mattie awakens from her dream of Block Party hoping that the women’s emotional and rebellious act of tearing down the wall brick by brick is conceived as the power of community that would bring improvements to the lives of people who exist in Brewster Place.

It is evident from Naylor’s insertion of the theme of black feminism in the novel that she advocates the necessity for black women to enter into a community with each other is conceived as their sole strength to lead their oppressed life towards the path of success. This need for a sense of communal identity is depicted in the words of Fowler in *Gloria Naylor: In Search of a Sanctuary*, as “individual identity is shaped within the matrix of a community” (26). Naylor reasserts the voice of African American matriarch as a strategy of survival. The difficulties faced by the women of Brewster place are symptomatic of wider social concerns and problems.

Furthermore, as the feminist and womanist movements and concepts make clear, for every marginalized and oppressed group, the women of that group are even more deprived and victimized. Naylor gives the image of ‘ebony phoenix’ for the redemption of women of Brewster Place from their destructive modes of oppression faced in their life. It is rightly depicted from Naylor’s description of women of Brewster place in her prologue “Dawn” as, “They came, they went, grew up, and grew old beyond their years. Like an ebony phoenix, each in her own time and with her own season had a story”(5). Naylor suggests that responsibility for the problems with black women’s lives must be taken by the women themselves, shared along with the men in their homes and communities, and by society as a whole. At the same time, she allows these women the dignity that comes from action and autonomy, and the power that comes from community. Naylor explores this attitude by connecting the seven women throughout the stories as they impact on each other’s lives, through where they come from and Brewster Place, where they live now.

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Personal Morality in Bernard Malamud's *The Natural*

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Abstract: *Malamud is one of the best-known Jewish American writers. The primary concern of Malamud's the hero's quest for a meaningful 'new' life. He makes us aware of modern man's dilemma and drives home the need for universal love and brotherhood. He affirms his faith in human values and in man's intrinsic ability to achieve authenticity and acceptance. The paper offers a lucid exposition of this argument. In a time that has emphasized the alienation and fragmentation of man, Bernard Malamud affirms the potentials of human existence. Indeed, he has extended the tradition of the romance-novel and made the form into something uniquely and significantly his own. In his novels, Malamud writes of the conflicting demands of the inner and outer world of his protagonist. His fiction delineates the broken dreams and private grief of the spirit, the need of the heart, the pain of loss and the economy of love. Malamud's characters begin as self-centered and frustrated individuals with a frightened need for success and status. Their basic drives are erotic in nature. Self-transcendence is a painful process for them because it involves a great deal of suffering usually connected in some way to an elaborate and ritualistic trial of love. This trial by love eventually forces a self-scrutiny in which protagonists realize their past mistakes and the need to be concerned for others.*

Keywords: *morality, tradition, frustration.*

Malamud's protagonists appear to demand the love of the people they meet. The possession of someone's love is to them an assurance of their identity and authenticity. It has been observed:

Love is the redemptive grace in Malamud's fiction . . . love rejected, love misplaced, love betrayed, loveless lust; these are the main evils in Malamud's fictional world. . . . Yet the world for all its potential goodness, is not good, and the good man, the man capable of Jove, is inevitably the sufferer, the sacrificer, the saint.

The Natural is the story of Roy Hobbs, an untrained, natural baseball player and his crucial rise and fall. The novel, Malamud reveals, is inspired by the question "Why does a talented man sell out?" which suggested a moral problem. Roy's frenzied pursuits of money, fame and sex, his refusal to learn from suffering and his inability to come out of the shell of egotism-all lead to his moral disintegration; Baseball or human relations call a code of conduct and hence his failure both in human relations and baseball. However, suffering ultimately makes him realize the value of love and responsibility- "the God-given fire of decency and determination, that enables him to overcome everything arrayed against him."

Roy fails to see beyond his own petty needs to the needs of others. His selfishness and egoism are easy to observe on "Roy Hobbs Day" which his ebullient fans observe in honour of their hero. Exultant with success, Roy forgets that he is supposed to, "thank them for their favour and say what a good team the Knights were and how he enjoyed working for Pop Fisher" (108). In proud confidence he declares, "I will do my best - the best I am able - to be the greatest there ever was in the game" (108). The fans who elevate him to the height he reaches are of no consideration to Roy. He feels no love and no responsibility towards them. "The fans dearly loved Roy but Roy did not love the fans" (158).

Iris extols him to be a hero for others rather than best for the satisfaction of his own egoistic needs. She tells him, "I hate to see a hero fail. There are so few of them . . . without heroes we're all plain people and don't know how far we can go" (145). She wants him to give his best as a man and not just as a player to his fans.

The main focus of the novel is on Roy's personal moral failure and it shows mainly in his immature attitude towards the two women who come into his life in "Batter-up!" While Harriet represents both the evil and the good in the preface, now, the two

aspects of his psyche are very distinctly portrayed in the two different persons - Memo and Iris. In Memo is epitomized Roy's selfish nature and in Iris the better side of his personality. "Character is fate," is true of Roy to the extent that Roy, in spite of his experience with Harriet, is just the incarnation of the destructive goddess Harriet Bird; like her, Memo favours black in dress. Roy is fatally attracted to the vindictive Memo who has a "sick breast" - as do all of Malamud's corrupt women, and also flaming red hair, another Malamudian sign of a diabolical nature. It is she who will tempt him to his downfall.

In his "loveless lust" for the sterile Memo, Roy neglects Iris Lemon. Iris is the fertility goddess of the mythical world. In Malamud's imagery fertility is associated with fruits and it is there in Iris Lemon's name. Another sure sign of Iris's fecundity is in her grandmother status at the age of thirty-three and her pregnancy by Roy. It is a flaw in his character which makes him lust for Memo and not respond to the wholesome love that

Iris offers him. Memo would fulfil his own selfish physical needs while love of Iris would mean more giving than taking. "For Malamud's affirmation carnal love alone is not acceptable." Roy must deny his carnal love for Memo for the ideal of complete love.

Roy rejects Iris because he cannot reconcile himself to the fact that Iris is a grandmother. He feels he is no "sucker" to be interested in a grandmother. He does not realize that her fertility is just what recommends Iris. He cannot imagine himself being a grandfather, though only in name: "It was simple enough to him, if he got serious with her it would lead to one thing - him being a grandfather. God save him from that for he personally felt as young and frisky as a colt" (155). However, "Attitude to the role of paternity is crucial in Malamud, and Roy refuses it."

Roy knows that Iris has redemptive powers for it was she, "so cleanly etched in light" (137), who had stood up to show her confidence in him during his batting slump. She, a stranger, had expressed such faith in him as nobody else ever had, "usually when he was down he was down alone, without flowers or mourners" (141).

As a consequence of her action, she loses her privacy. However, she accepts the loss with good grace for she feels, "I don't think you can do anything for anyone without giving up something of your own" (145-46), thereby magically restoring his batting potency. Roy once again sends the ball flying "through the light and up in to the dark like a white star seeking and old constellation" (139).

On the other hand, Memo "is unlucky and always has been and I think there is some kind of whammy in her that carries her luck to other people" (199). As soon as Roy goes into a slump, she begins to avoid him. Later when he is back at top of the game, she comes back to him. She confesses, "there are some things I just can't take and one of them is being with people who are blue" (156).

Roy is subconsciously aware of the worth of Iris in contrast to Memo. Yet, he does not face reality in wilful blindness. He continues to live in the illusion that Memo will build him a home and a family. Roy does realize the worth of Iris which is also evident in the fact that it is only to her he unlocks his past sufferings, his despair and dreams. It is to her he blurts out, "My god-damn life din't (sic) turn out like I wanted it to. ... I wanted everything" (146). In Malamud's world, confession usually signifies the "dawn of love."

Having rejected Iris for her fecundity, Roy tries to divert his mind by seeking the satisfaction of his own sterile lust. Thus we see him smother his regenerative energies by indulging his own weak self. He seeks to pacify his own guilty conscience by eating. He "gluts the hunger for rebirth and the pangs of unwilling love by eating." Not only is his self-preoccupation sterile, it is also self-destructive. As Harriet Bird had done earlier, this time Memo Paris leads Roy to a symbolic death by tempting him to over-eat; it gives him severe stomachache near the crucial day of the pirates-knights match.

Having rejected Iris who was wholly relaxing and satisfying, Roy longs for Memo though he realizes, "there was something about her, like all the food he had lately been eating that left him, after having of it, unsatisfied, sometimes even with a greater hunger than before" (156). Memo, like Daisy Fay, is a false goddess; she confesses, "I'm afraid to be poor" (181). The two are characteristic of American materialism at its worst. It is Memo who first suggests Roy accept the big bribe Judge Banner has to offer if he agrees to throw the play-off game. When the Judge himself first comes to the hospital to bribe Roy, he sticks to honesty for he feels he cannot betray his own team and manager. As soon as the Judge hints that he may lose Memo to Gus Sand, Roy becomes vulnerable to corruption. By this selfish act, Roy shows a great moral lapse towards others. He fails in his responsibility towards his spiritual father "Pop" who is a morally integrated man. Pop had rejected outrightly to co-operate with Judge Goodwill Banner and Gus Sand in any shady deal however beneficial to him.

Roy is not an evil person, he is just infantile. Like Malamud's heroes, Roy is the image of the unintegrated man, the hero who acts incorrectly despite his awareness." Roy is half-aware of his growing corruption, yet being a weak character he continues to indulge in his weaknesses. During the final game for the pennant against the Pirates we see the better self of Roy in a tussle with his corrupt self. Having decided to throw-off the game he struggles to keep himself from batting well to win for the sake of his team and Pop Fisher.

The process of becoming a moral man is the process of learning to love. After his downfall in the end, Roy's renewed possibilities for life can come only through a commitment to love and he does seem to realize that "Evil is the denial of love and furthermore the lack of reciprocity." Roy can redeem himself by reciprocating the love Iris has to offer to him. Thus Roy is "given a second chance to make something of his life and redeem his loveless state by loving Iris and taking on the responsibility of her family.

Malamud has remarked that the "devaluation [of man] exists because he accepts it without protest." Through the ordeal of consciousness, Roy tends to assert his dignity and freedom and differentiate between lust and love, between self-glorification and self-education. In the beginning, "talk about his inner self was to Roy "like ploughing up a graveyard" (155). In the end, he articulates his response by confessing that he has to "suffer again." He has come to realize through his deception and failure that in his 'second' life, the experience of

suffering would teach him 'to want right things.' Being a drama of the growth of inwardness, Malamud's first novel is related to the spectrum of his successive creative endeavour.

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Estrangement in the Select Novels of James Baldwin: An Overview

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Abstract: James Baldwin is considered to be one of the most prestigious writers in the contemporary American Literature. Baldwin brings to light the personal and racial freedom that lingers among the impoverished society. He surges into the problems that exist in the human relations through his works especially in his novels. He is eager in depicting the scars and wounds of oppression, exploited, negotiated and the denied. This paper focuses the value of Negro's special experience with its double-edgedness, the separation of Negroes both from Europe and Africa through the works of the eloquent spokesman, James Baldwin. He visualizes a new dimension which has been cut off: The unspoken recognition of experience which creates a new method of life. Through his works such as *Go Tell It on the Mountain*, *Another Country*, *If Beale Street Could Talk*, James Baldwin brings out the spirit of isolation within the black community in America seeks its solace in religious rituals entwined with the virtue of humanity

Key Words: *Estrangement, oppression, exploitation.*

James Baldwin was one of the most versatile and influential artists of the post-World War II generation, creating memorable short stories, novels, plays, essays and children's books. The concept of the writer as prophet is revealed in Baldwin's writings. The artist functions as a social corrective; he alone is capable of helping the people to reconcile the exalted representation of themselves with truth about them. This particular truth is too great for them to face it and they splendidly seek to avoid due to their deeds.

The writer is of the people and is also a part of the people, yet he is alone. Isolation is a condition which the people must shun and it is in this circumstance that the writer accepts his state. Isolation becomes a necessary block between the writer and his society, but he can never allow his contact with that society to become cut off. The novelist has an indispensable to the prophetic role of the artist. Moreover, the novelist sustains certain remoteness from his society in order to develop the position of objectivity.

Baldwin recognizes that the significance of the Negro's special experience is its double-edgedness; the Negro's are segregated from both Europe and Africa. The problem is most in Baldwin's discussion of the Negro's past, and it is especially serious because he calls one to face the past honestly and to resist the temptation to invent a false one. The assumption found in Baldwin's art is that all of mankind is united by virtue of their humanity. Consequently, the eventual goal of the writer, from Baldwin's perspective, is to discover that orb of commonality where, although differences exist, those dissimilarities are stripped of their power to black communication and stifle human intercourse. The notion the writer pens through his works is that of mankind is united by virtue of their humanity. Baldwin attains to discover that sphere of commonality which is considered to be the ultimate purpose of the writer.

Baldwin acquired praise for exposing the racial and sexual schism of American society and for challenging readers to confront these differences. Baldwin is one of America's most eloquent spokesmen, persistently pursuing personal and racial freedom in the morally and intellectually indigent society.

In his first novel, *Go Tell It on the Mountain*, Baldwin analyzes his own terrific experiences of isolation as a child through John, with an openness that is the hallmark of all his writings. The writer's mother served as the model for the hero's mother, Elizabeth, the symbol of the suffering, patient, guilt-stricken woman who goes out to protect her children from the wickedness of the street.

Go Tell It on the Mountain is a magnificent novel of black consciousness. Baldwin's use of the surname 'Grimes' for the different characters of the family whose 'grim' life stories are told is symbolic of the Negro American's ceaseless battle in America with his own 'blackness'. He depicts this through the older characters the life and aspirations of the Negro men and women in the South and how a alteration in their outlook happens at a later stage after coming north.

In *Go Tell It on the Mountain*, as young people, Elizabeth and Richard had seen New York as an escape from an intolerable situation in the South. According to Elizabeth, it meant liberation from a tyrannical aunt and for Richard, from a racist society. The city also had apprehended out a promise. Elizabeth viewed New York as a refuge for her blameless love and Richard imagined it as a crucible containing the intellectual and aesthetic heritage of civilization. They soon discovered that the city's freedom was a double-edged sword. There was no one to care for them and no one zealously to watch over them.

John longs to find a sense of community. But Baldwin has shown that both Harlem and New York have failed the black child in his search for community. John is deprived of the nourishment of the earthly city but is given its horrors; it either rejects him or tries to perish him. Baldwin's hero John underwent from a severe sense of isolation from the family because he is a victim of his mother's discipline obeying many don'ts as the cost of his upkeep in the family, having to satisfy his elders. He is aware of his subsidiary status in the family at several places in the narrative; he compares himself with Roy and feels bewildered and confused.

Go Tell It on the Mountain superbly portrays the sense of isolation and resultant suffering in the attempt to find a personal identity in the society. Baldwin is keen on displaying the scars and wounds of oppression, exploitation, negation and denial. His novels represent the plight of their respective communities from which they hail. Feeling alienated, the black community in America tries to seek refuge in religious rituals.

Baldwin himself became a preacher at the age of fourteen. He knew the world of church well. Fear was the principal motive of Baldwin's conversion. Undoubtedly he was writing of his own experience and speaking of the great distress caused by it, in *Go Tell It on the Mountain*. Here in a subtle way, Baldwin portrays black consciousness too.

In *Another Country*, Baldwin soundly reprimands a country that would cause Rufus's fate to be as it is, and he blames America for being a loveless society, a society whose character is such that its inhabitants are incapable of loving either themselves or each other thereby causing one's own self and others to experience the feeling of isolation. Baldwin prefers to see the central problem of the novel as a problem of human relations. Rufus is a central symbol and his problems are simply an extension of the problems of the other characters: their sense of alienation, their inability to relate, to establish love relationships beyond the most tenuous. It is not a 'race' novel; for that matter most of its characters are white. It would seem to be about race because of its powerful opening chapter, but even there it is clear that Rufus's essential problems are the results of hang-ups other than race though race plays a part.

Most of his characters have, at the center of their portrayal, are isolated from the society, the culture, and even from each other. The musician in the works of Baldwin is more than a metaphor; he is the embodiment of alienation and estrangement, which the figure of the artist becomes in much of twentieth century literature. They are also reviews upon the brutal, emasculating, feared, and fearing, the land from which they are so estranged. Baldwin gives an illustration about the Black experiences and Black deaths by portraying the musician, an archetypal figure whose refers Black lives.

He is the hope of making it well enough to escape the danger of being Black, the living symbol of alienating from the past and hence from self and the rhythmical link with the mysterious ancestral past. That past and its pain and the transcendence of pain are always an implicit part of the musician's characterization in Baldwin. Music is the medium through which the musician achieves enough understanding and strength to deal with the past and present hurt (Williams 102).

In *Another Country* Baldwin does not undervalue the power of love, mysterious as its operations seem to be; but it is the power of hate that one really feels as one reads the novel.

The major characters are under the affliction from a most profound isolation: estrangement from the past. Cass, in choosing to marry the son of a Polish carpenter, has been condemned to live in social exile from her aristocratic New England family; and Richard, in turn, has exchanged his Polish ancestry for the dubious fame and recognition which he achieves as a writer. Rufus becomes estranged from his family because of his licentious life style and his white mistress, Leona. Ida earns the contempt of her parents because she dares to become involved with a white sexual partner. Vivaldo's isolation from his alcoholic father and his relationship with Ida makes him the black sheep of the family. Eric has been banished for his youthful, illicit intimacies with his black Alabama friend, LeRoy; and Yves has long since despised his mother, who seemed to enjoy bargaining her favours with the German soldiers. They cry out in agony as they search for the redeeming power of love. The cross of alienation becomes a huge burden for these people to bear.

The necessary dimension in this novel has been cut away; this dimension being the relationship that Negroes tolerate to one another, that depth of involvement and unspoken recognition of shared experience which creates a way of life. The novel reflects and at no point interprets the isolation of the Negro within his own group and it results the fury of impatient scorn. In *Another Country* tells Americans the sick truths about themselves.

Baldwin in another novel, *If Beale Street Could Talk* explains that at heart he was not a pessimist. In it, Baldwin intensely expresses his feeling that Black Americans have learnt the truth about themselves through the children. And this conviction, however momentary it may have been, contributes to his wishfulness and optimism of the seventies. Even though Baldwin emphasises the human burden that exists within the black community, he also recognises, in this thoughts at least, the deep, universal bonds of emotion that tie the hearts of people regardless of their colour of skin. He has come to know the truth that black Americans can free themselves as they learn more about white Americans and that 'the truth which frees black people will also free

white people' (129). It is ironical that the impersonality and estrangement which infuse Beale Street coerce its residents to seek a stronger and more meaningful relationship with others.

The affliction of the bewildered people in *If Beale Street Could Talk*, elucidates the garbage dump of New York City, blacks constantly at the mercy of whites, have not even the psychological benefit of the Black Power and other radical movements to sustain them. Though their story should seem dated but it does not do so. And the peculiar fact of their being so politically helpless seems to have strengthened, in Baldwin's imagination.

To conclude, Baldwin represent the eloquent, indignant prophet of an oppressed people, a voice speaking, in an all but desperate, final effort to bring the Negroes out of what he calls their innocence. This voice calls them to their immediate duty for the sake of their own humanity as well as their own safety. It demands that they stop regarding the Negro as an abstraction, an invisible man; that they begin to recognize each Negro in his full weight and complexity as a human being; that they face the horrible reality of their past and present treatment of Negroes, a reality they do not know and do not want to know. As Bone says:

There are psychic causalities on the Negro side as well. No human personality can escape the effects of prolonged emotional rejection. The victim of this cruelty will defend himself with hatred and with dreams of vengeance, and will lose, perhaps forever his normal capacity for love. Strictly speaking, this set of defenses, and the threat of self-destruction which they pose, constitute the Negro problem. (13)

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Black Female Culture as Liberating and Unifying Force in Ntozake Shange's *Spell#7*

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Abstract: *Being a female and particularly a black female has been a challenging existence for African Americans for over two centuries. To survive in a white dominant and male chauvinistic society poses inexplicable problems for the black female. They undergo double suppression, one from the white males and females and the other from their own patriarchy. But these women have woven a distinct culture for themselves to overcome these suppressions, with intelligence and self-realization.*

*This paper proposes to analyze the specific culture by which the black women battle against the injustices meted out to them, in Ntozake Shange's *Spell#7*. In this choreopoem, Shange elaborates about the socially prescribed limitations of being a black artist. Black women artists are treated very meanly and are not given any decent roles by white directors. But these black women try to neglect these roles boldly by proving their multifaceted talents and acting competencies. Natalie and Lily, well trained actresses in *Spell#7*, break the sexist stereotypes of the black female designed as being ignorant and submissive. This multiculturalism acts as a culturally liberating force for them to move freely beyond boundaries enforced on them by the society. Shange insists that women should learn to reverse their differences in terms of physical appearance rather than consider it a source of shame. She tells her women to achieve this through positive creative fantasy. Thus these black women overcome the negative myths surrounding their existence through recognizing their self-worth and inner potential.*

Key Words: *Patriarchy, liberation, self-realisation*

Black females have been considered the most inferior race in America for over two centuries. 'Most inferior', because they are suppressed by the dominant white society at large and also by their own black men. So these women have to battle both racism and sexism for their existence in America. The identification of black women as dark-skinned, ugly, unclean, stupid and immoral has never changed over the centuries. And such stereotypical portrayal of black women by the dominant white society has gradually been internalized by these women, as a result of which they have accepted their subservience to all others.

However to break these negative myths about black women and to erase the stereotypes of black women as mean, lowly creatures, many black women sprung up with vigour as activists, feminists and feminist writers. They tried to formulate a distinct culture for themselves, to overcome the demeaning and atrocious treatment meted out to them by the white society and by their own black patriarchy. They tried to enhance their social status by their innate intelligence and self-worth.

This paper proposes to delineate the distorted conceptualization of black women and their constant struggle and efforts to move towards respectability and virtue, by weaving a specific culture for themselves through intelligence and self-realization, in Ntozake Shange's *Spell#7*. Shange aims to instill the dignity and self-respect in black women while also challenging the negative stereotypical images attributed to them.

Spell#7 is generally about the socially prescribed limitations of being a black artist. Sexism is always an issue in Shange's work as a feminist, but in *Spell#7* racial issues are given primary importance. However this does not mean that sexist issues are given less attention. In fact, black women are portrayed with multifaceted talents and good acting competencies with which they try to overcome the barriers to their artistic excellence. *Spell#7*, thus deals with racist and sexist issues and the ways by which these victims try to cross the boundaries imposed on them by the society. Unlike black male artists, who battle only with racist issues, the black female artists fight both racist and sexist issues to survive. And the bitter truth is that their own black men consider them inferior, just because they are females.

As the play's major focus is on racist issues, Shange provides a well-defined solution to overcome it, from the very beginning of the play through the words of Lou, the magician, "you gonna be colored all yr life & you gonna love it/ being colored all yr life/ colored & love it, love it/ being colored." (Shange 8). The play also ends with these lines sung by all the actors. Shange, therefore wants all the black males and females to acknowledge, celebrate and love their racial identity rather than wishing it away.

The Manhattan Bar, the immediate stage in *Spell#7* and the minds of all black people become a place where the dreams of the blacks are explored and nourished. Shange offers 'creative fantasy' as a tool for self-empowerment for the black women. In this segregated 'Kingdom', Shange allows her characters, particularly female characters to dream of possibilities of overcoming social and internalized psychological limitations. Lily, a black actress is given freedom to fantasize about being the black counterpart to Rapunzel, the fictitious heroine

of the German fairy tale, who trapped in a tower, reunites with her lover by allowing him to climb up her exceedingly long hair. Lily's fantasy is a stereotype of a white girl whose first physical attribute, apart from her ivory skin color, is her long, straight, blonde hair. Since Lily is a black actress she would probably be excluded to play the role of Rapunzel because black women are not generally identified with such a mane.

Therefore this dream sequence of Lily's fastidious hair brushing motions accompanying her monologue, "i'm gonna simply brush my hair...i'm gonna alter my social and professional life dramatically..." stereotypes white women. (Shange 26). But this image of a passive white female directly contrasts the idealized image of a black female's life of activity, whether by choice or circumstance. Throughout the fantasy, Lily is aware that she is not Rapunzel, and she also knows that black hair care involves considerable effort. Black hair has to be oiled to avoid scalp dryness and subsequent flaking, whereas whites shampoo their hair to remove the oil out of it. Her fantasy, therefore shifts from being a white female to the creative powers of 'Chaka Khan', the popular black female singer and songwriter, who would be an ideal role-model for all black females. The differences between white and black hair, accentuate a conscious celebration of difference, which is defined outside black culture as negative. In this segregated kingdom, black females are insisted by Shange, to revere their physical traits of blackness rather than consider them as sources of shame.

Natalie, another black actress fantasizes about being a white girl for a day. Her perceived images of white girls come from her own observations and imagination. But in playing this hypothetical role as a white girl flinging her hair and involved too much with her physical beauty, she realizes that a white girl's life is vain, passionless and empty. Natalie says, "being a white girl...is much more complicated..."(Shange 48) since a white girl should always be conscious to cater to the expectations of men in maintaining her physical beauty. She concludes by saying "i'm so glad i'm colored. boy i cd wake up in the morning & think about anything"(Shange 49). She celebrates 'blackness' as freedom to choose, think independently and to feel. Through this improvisation, Shange breaks the racist myth that a white female is the desire of all men and the envy of women of color. On the contrary, a white girl is threatened by the sensuality, spirituality and social awareness of a woman of color. The black women, thus transform negative racist stereotypes into positive ones by attributing the word 'colored' to passion and integrity. This unique cultural aspect which they design for themselves, liberates them from the fetters of stereotypical negative myths imposed on them by the society. Creative fantasy, thus leads these black women to realize their self-worth, positive traits and the fullness of their existence.

While Shange offers creative fantasy to combat racist stereotypes, she warns against the fantasy of controlling others' actions, attitudes or values to gain power. Sue-Jean, a black female character played by Natalie, meets her ultimate destruction by such unproductive dreaming and falls into irrevocable psychological stress. According to Shange, the ultimate power of any oppressed individual comes in controlling one's own mind. Sue Jean seeks identity and self-affirmation through unconventional motherhood and she manipulates a naïve black man to get pregnant. She names the unborn child as 'myself' which shows her self-centered attitude and her fantasy to control others, as a means to achieve selfhood. She is full of energy throughout her pregnancy. But after the baby is born, she finds out that she cannot exert control over another independent creature. She therefore kills her baby which leads to her ultimate tragedy. By depicting such a conflicting and violent mother, Shange makes clear that negative fantasizing would lead only to entrapment and not liberation of suppressed individuals.

Maxine, another actress, plays the role of a black woman who sees overt eroticism as the only way to happiness. Shange strongly opposes such negative stereotypical behaviour of black females because it would lead them only to self-destruction and loneliness.

Shange's depiction of the common plight of black actors in America deserves special notice. The Minstrel Show conducted by Lou, the black magician, acts as a prologue to the main play and clearly portrays the negativity and inferiority associated with black artists by the whites. The skills of black female artists are therefore only partly realized because of their dark skin color and negative myths surrounding their existence. Shange, here, attacks the bad attitude of white directors assigning only stereotypical roles like mammy and whores to black female artists. And she encourages these women to boldly neglect such roles and offers imagination and self-definition to combat this problem.

As a feminist, Shange, in Act II explores the reality that sexism exists even within the group of these oppressed black professional artists. Alec, who represents the black actor refuses to audition black females because they do not have 'classical training'. It seems that by classical training he means training for white European classics. Paradoxically, he boasts that he could not work in 'hate whitey shows/cuz they aren't true'(Shange 45). As Neal.A.Lester says, "Shange makes clear that black men's sensitivity to racism does not necessarily mean that they are equally aware and concerned about black women's additional struggles with racism."(Lester 109). Shange summons black female artists to overcome this struggle by staunch self-worth and self-assertion.

Shange, then offers multilingual talents as a powerful tool for black female artists against white directors. White directors are under the misconception that the black female artists are incapable of mastering

Standard English. Natalie and Lily in *Spell#7* go to an audition as they are qualified actors. The white director is surprised to see that they are in full command of Standard English, Portuguese and Spanish. And Ross, the black male artist is equally shocked to find that a black woman reads Nietzsche and understands the philosopher's ideas. Shange here advocates multiculturalism as a culturally liberating force for black women to move freely beyond prescribed stereotypical boundaries.

In Act II, Shange attacks the shallowness of some black males who think that all black women are simple and unsophisticated. The women, in contrast are depicted as clever and witty. All the women in the play namely Lily, Natalie, Dahlia, Maxine and Bettina are fully aware of the fact that all men are attracted only towards their physical attributes. So, they cleverly retaliate the courtships of the men thus proving their sense of awareness. Unlike the women in "*for colored girls*", these women do not fall a prey to the manipulative insincere males. This clever and intelligent aspect which they inculcate in themselves is again a liberating force which saves them from physical and psychological hurt by their own men. Through the final monologue of Maxine, Shange asserts that 'surviving the impossible is sposed to accentuate the positive aspects of a people.' (Shange 51)

These cultural aspects that Shange fabricates exclusively for her black female characters, aid them in healing themselves and consequently uniting them as a wholesome race. Through creative fantasy, Shange's female characters move freely beyond the constraints imposed on them by the dominant white society and their black patriarchy. By breaking the conventional walls built around them, they also liberate themselves from the physical and psychological pain and suffering they are subjected to, by their own internalizing of negative stereotypes of them by the blind, cruel society. Their multi-cultural intellect and self-assertion help them in redefining themselves. In their struggle for survival and wholeness, they become united and thereby emerge triumphant. This liberation from the chains of dominance and their subsequent unification comes from the celebration of their physical traits that are deemed negative by the society they live in.

Shange's *Spell #7* thus offers creative fantasy, intellect, multilingual talents, self-assertion, self-esteem and self-realization as necessary cultural traits of black women to liberate themselves from the paralyzing negative mythical stereotypes by the society, and to unify them at large.

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Racial and Cultural Identity in Nella Larsen's *Passing*

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Abstract: In America, Census always focuses on race. For about three decades the official categories were based on race like American Indian, Asian, Black, Hispanic and White. Nella Larsen, one of the most prolific African American writers challenges the colour line which divides the American society, analysing the black and white divisions based absolutely on races and segregation of Black from the privileges of American citizenship, but still she portrays an accord of strong black community in the face of racism. She brings out the two worlds distinct in her society during the Harlem renaissance period. In her second novel *Passing*, two worlds exists in which belonging is determined by one race. She also focuses in her novel the logic behind the Black and White binary without challenging any other boundary like ethnicity. Irene Redfield, one of the two protagonists, is fair-complexioned woman who passes occasionally as white and Clare Kendry, the other protagonist is also fair-complexioned, who permanently pass as white. Irene Redfield leads a middle-class life in Harlem by marrying a dark coloured man Dr. Brain Redfield. While Clare Kendry, has grown up with poverty in Chicago's Black community and attains a great wealth by passing and marrying a wealthy white man John Bellew. Initially, Irene feels satisfied with her married life with Dr. Brain, but after Clare's entry into her life, she gets confused. Finally the novelist, through Irene Redfield takes Clare off the market by killing her.

Keywords: Colour line, racism, black/ white binary, ethnicity, passing.

In 1920's, many black writers emerged and established their identity as one of the most important problems in the Post I World War. The major writers of the Harlem Renaissance are W. E. B. Du Bois, A. Philip Randolph, Marcus Garvey, Alain Locke, James Weldon Johnson, Claude McKay, Jessie Fauset and Nella Larsen. She has published two novels *Quicksand* (1928) and *Passing* (1929). Both these novels were widely reviewed and extremely acclaimed by the critics. Nella Larsen was a prolific writer and highly proclaimed as the rising star among authors of the Harlem Renaissance.

Nella Larsen was born in the year 1891, to a white Danish mother Mary Hanson, and West Indies father Peter Walker. Soon after her birth, her father left his family; therefore her mother married a Danish immigrant named Peter Larson, who later changed his spelling as Peter Larsen, in the year 1904. Before she established herself as "Nella Larsen", she had quite a number of changes in her name: "Nellie Walker", "Nellie Larson" and "Nellye Larson". The frequent change of her name indicates the attitude and experience of consequent dislocations.

In 1907, she joined in Fisk University, the most prominent African-American school of that time. The school, in which W. E. B. Du Bois was an alumnus, and where he emphasised the mission of educating students to be race leaders. In 1915, she was graduated from Lincoln School and started her career as the head nurse at the Tuskegee Institute Training School for Nurses in Alabama. But the life in Tuskegee was not suited for her sensitivity, therefore she returned back to New York and appointed as a district nurse in the New York Department of Health in 1918.

Larsen married Dr. Elmer Imes on 3rd May 1919 and started a new life with him in New York. Her marriage with him made her also to enter into the privileged African American society. In the year 1921, Larsen resigned her job in the City Department of Health, and started her work at the 135th Street Branch of the New York Public Library, where the Schomburg Collection of Materials on Black Culture was started, as well as a natural interest in literature, led Larsen to take advantage of her social contacts for writing and publishing. With the encouragement of her colleague and supervisors at the library she also got a certificate and became a certified librarian.

When she was working as a librarian, Larsen met novelists like Walter White, Jessie Fauset, Carl Van Vechten and Dorothy Peterson. She utilized the books in the library to a great extent. In 1926, she published two short stories, namely 'The Wrong Man' and 'Freedom', in the magazine called *Young Magazine* under a pseudonym Allen Semi. She was recognized as the writer only after the publication of her first novel *Quicksand*. It was highly acclaimed by W. E. B. Du Bois, and won a Bronze Medal from the Harmon Foundation in 1928. Her second novel, *Passing* was published in 1929 through which she gained a better place among the African American writers. She was the first African American who won Guggenheim for creative writing.

Her marriage life was not a long lasting one. She found out that her husband Dr. Imes had an affair with a white woman at Fisk University. Later she went to Europe with Guggenheim grant and lived there for two years. She divorced her husband in the year 1933. In early 1940's she had totally relinquished from the literary world and started her noble profession by nursing the people in the hospital. She was a great and a

successful woman during the Harlem Renaissance. She died in the year 1964, and only a few associates attended her funeral.

In America, Census examines on cultural identity to categorise the citizens. The U.S census focuses its division on race – for example, past thirty years, the Government categories were American Indian or Alaskan native, Asian or Pacific Islander, Black, Hispanic and white. They are categorised not just with reference to their skin colour but also pertaining to their language and cultural practices. Larsen reveals the significant issues in America's mode of group division. Her argument is on the black and white dividing line (colour line) in American society, analysing a system absolutely based on race and isolating blacks from the whites and privileges of American citizenship, but she still prevents a story black unity in the face of racism.

Nella Larsen's *Passing* is profoundly concerned with racial and cultural identity. *Passing*, deals with crossing the colour line that was once customary in light skinned Americans. The title *Passing* means not just the 'racial passing' but also carries its colloquial meaning 'death.' It hints at the subject's disappearance in the novel. The two protagonists of the novel are Irene Redfield and her childhood friend Clare Kendry. Irene, light skinned woman who passes occasionally for white. She leads a happy middle-class life in Harlem by marrying a dark doctor Brian Redfield. Clare is also a fair skinned woman, who was grown up in poverty in a Black family and she tries to escape from the poverty world to the white world by marrying a wealthy white man John Bellew. She bears his continuous humiliating comments on blacks to obtain the financial success.

The novel begins by describing the two different worlds during the Harlem renaissance period. Irene is so critical and cautious of her friend Clare and her choices, passes when it is convenient. In the beginning, Irene sees a fair skinned woman in Hotel Drayton, and fears that the white woman might have found out that she is passing. Soon she recognises that she is none other than her childhood friend Clare Kendry, who is also passing as white in the hotel. Here Larsen discusses the idea of two different races – white and black – as passing Irene herself cannot identify Clare is 'Black' and even she is passing. She also criticizes on the colour line which divides the two races and the White's racial notions on the Blacks.

Martha Cutter states Larsen's view on the genre of passing, by explaining how Clare confronts the logical divisions that society not just allows her to cross the colour line from black to white but also gives freedom to cross back and forth again and again: "Larsen emphasises that for Clare's friends, passing is a permanent and irrevocable act; once one passes into the white world, one's black identity dies. Yet Clare insists on being alive in both worlds. In so doing, Clare throws into question racial divisions, as well as the idea of firm and irrevocable differences between the races" (93).

Passing focuses on the reason behind the Black / White binary as ineffective without going on to the challenge or upholds any other group boundary, such as ethnicity. She conveys these ideas of blackness as racial rather than cultural. For example, Clare is brought up by her white aunts who prohibit her from confessing her racial identity - 'Negroes.' Mary Mabel Youman views *Passing* has the thematic duality of race and class. Certainly, class is an extremely important factor in Irene's life which plays a crucial and motivational role in the life of the passer and that it also shapes, restricts, and ultimately controls certain behaviour. The scene in which Irene and Clare have tea in Clare's home along with their childhood friend Gertrude demonstrates that these three women form a social-economic spectrum, that is Gertrude, a fair skinned woman, passes as white and married to a white butcher and represents the lower end of the spectrum; Clare is also married to a wealthy white man, who, when younger, "turned up from South America with untold gold"; Clare represents the upper-end of the spectrum (56 , 42). Irene's husband Brian is a black medical doctor, who has never been to South America but wants to move to Brazil in order to escape racist American society (217). Irene represents the centre of the spectrum. Brian's economic and social position allows Irene to participate in the social activities and becomes a member in Negro Welfare League etc.

It is class that leads to the culture and spiritual price of passing. Only the fair skinned passers are invited to Clare's house for the tea. Clare seems aware of an overall cost of passing when she tells Irene, "[M]oney's awfully nice to have. In fact, all things considered, I think, 'Rene, that it's even worth the price'" (44). And Irene does not want husband Brain to talk to their oldest son about sex, a fact which leads Youman argues that Irene's attitude toward sex is a function of a class-induced spiritual crisis (238). The implication is that the social class, sexuality, and spirituality combine in the passer to create a world-view that both physically and mentally isolates passers from both their native and adopted cultures.

Clare's identity is unstable because she passes back and forth and she destabilises the other characters also. For example, initially Irene feels satisfies with her black-middle class life with her husband and two children and suddenly confusion occurs after the interruption of Clare in her life. After seeing her, Clare becomes completely dissatisfied with her racial and cultural identity. Clare's passing also deconstructs the stable identity of her husband John Bellew. His character signifies the construction of racial categories and the sense of identity. His sense of identity is similar to that of the Americans in the past, which lies within his sense of being – and of his whole family being – not black. He teases and affectionately calls his wife as "Nig" for which he explains, that she is becoming dark: "I know you're no nigger, so it's all right. You can get as black as you please as far as I'm concerned, since I know you're no nigger. I draw the line at that. No niggers in my family.

Never have been and never will be” (171). Through his words, it is clear that according to him skin colour has nothing to do with the race, and the trait he assumes that, eagerly identifiable even though her neglects to present the logic for identifying it.

One of the conventions of ‘passing fiction’ is the return, or attempted return, of passers to black culture. Robert E. Fleming divides the conventional “difficulties experienced by characters in the passing novel” into two categories; “the practical” – essential, the various ways in which a ‘passer’ may be ‘found out’; and “the psychological” – essentially, guilt, loneliness, and loss of self-esteem” (214). Robert Bone posits that “the invariable outcome (of passing) ... is disillusionment with life on the other side ... a new appreciation of racial values, and an irresistible longing to return to the Negro community” (215). In the passer, appreciation of one’s racial values is made possible by comparing those native values to one’s adopted, white values; and, of course, one cannot return to a place one has never been. Therefore, the one who passes seek to return to their native culture which they knew in childhood. Clare slowly enters into the life of Irene. She wants the exposure to black life which Harlem affords. She moves along with Irene and her husband Brian to the Negro Welfare League and to the other parties hosted by the blacks. Her frequent visits to her home makes Irene to suspect whether there might be any illegal affair between Clare and her Brian. Charles R. Larson states that Larsen’s life is parallels with her novel *Passing*: “Nella Larsen’s husband, Dr. Elmer Imes, was a notorious womanizer, and by the time *Passing* was published, the fault lines in Nella Larsen’s ... marriage were so unstable that it was only a matter of time before the relationship would end” (xv). Near the time of the divorce, Elmer had an illegal affair with a white woman like that of Brian with Clare and “and Nella herself was said to have jumped out of a window and broken her leg” (xvii). Once when Irene and her black friend Felise Freeland were shopping in the streets of New York, accidentally encounters Clare husband John Bellew. Instead of giving explanation to protect Clare, she gives appraising stare and walks on. She deliberately avoids Mr. Bellew and simply takes revenge on him, as once she was forced by Clare to pass as white at her house before her husband.

Clare’s initial cost of passing is betrayal; she deserts her own black culture to pass into the white world. Larsen says, but the cost of rejoining black culture is also betrayal and that leads to her death. It is Irene who made Clare to rejoin the black culture. Yet, she realises that her friend’s back to the black culture will definitely ruin her life, which means Clare will move with Brian to gain the black identity and Irene will lose both the upper-middle class life and her black identity.

Irene, Brian and Clare attend the party hosted by Freeland’s house. John Bellew comes to the party and calls his wife as a dirty nigger. There was a serious quarrel between the two and later Clare falls out of the window and dies. Clare’s death is the result of the two colliding while ‘passing’ one another. Martha Cutter says, the novel’s end permanently fixes Clare’s in-between status: “Clare’s death at the end of *Passing* is a stroke of genius that maintains her problematic ‘passing’ presence. Having used Clare to destabilize the universe of her other characters, Larsen removes Clare from the novel before she can become enclosed by one meaning... ‘Passing’ thus becomes a narrative strategy for creating a presence that can evade ideologies that usually confine the ‘tragic mulatto’ ” (97). According to Cutter, Clare provides a solution to Langston Hughe’s being ‘neither black nor white’ with the warning that such in-betweenness can live only temporarily in the society and it would rather throw all such non exclusive delineations out of the window.

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

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Abstract: AravindAdiga 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* whichalso 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 BalramHalwai. 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 freightexhibit the prevailingqualities 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.AravindAdigauntangles a lot of cultural and social differences which comprise the vast landscape of the modernveracity 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 AravindAdiga's*The White Tiger*.

Key words: capitalism, culture and language

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 ambiance. 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 usedBalram 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 BalramHalwai,thelanguage of the rural poor as well as its potential for knowing subversion is expressed.Through BalramHalwai, Adigaalso 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 sellerin theminor 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 inEnglish." (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 Balramto 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, zippja, 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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Culture and moral values – The need of the Hour with Reference to Ian McEwan’s selected novels

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Abstract: *Cultural studies is the widely discussed and the latest in the literary world today - to write about and discuss the people who have lost their native culture, identity, the past glory and the emergence of the suppressed all over the world. It’s about displacement, dual identity and strife for equality especially when we talk about the writings of the postcolonial world which has gained considerable amount of attention. Keeping this at the background, the paper attempts to probe into the literary world of Britain which is witnessing and adapting the changes that came with end of colonialism. Writers like Martin Amis, John Berger and Ian McEwan who are bringing in a new and effective trend (which can be termed as postmodernism) into English literary world especially in the genre of fiction which is no less than the writings from post-colonial contribution. Further it discusses how postmodernism has emerged notable and appreciable, gearing up with innovative methods in thematic content, narration and diction with reference to the works of Ian Russell McEwan. The paper relates how the writer brings out the need to revive our values in a very subtle manner.*

Key Words: *culture, post-modernism and gothic*

If it is loss of identity in the postcolonial world, it is loss of faith and moral in the Queen’s land. The post war period in Britain is a bleak and confused period for the people which reflected in the works of contemporary writers. People were exhausted of the confused state of society and economy. Having been in such chaos, there was a gradual rejection of past values and faith in the name of science, reason and modernism. However there was a plea for the betterment of social, economic and religious ways of life, in the works of socially responsible artists. There was a gradual upcoming of these many young writers earning a fast reputation in the British literary world. Their works center on the shuffled and disturbing picture of people and individuals exploring their inner, hidden self. They daringly speak about the deviated and uncanny self of individuals and detail the reason behind. **Ian McEwan** is one of these writers exhibiting idiosyncratic picture of gothic elements and disruptive themes in a more technical and extraordinary manner unlike the older novelists who however initiated this kind of portrayals. The very nature of postmodernist techniques to aim for difference finds way in his writing. Altogether the genre of novel crosses its predestined characters in the hands of not only McEwan but as well with his contemporaries. Striking originality of McEwan has gained him a very staunch place in the contemporary literary world. Critics also opine that his style of writing can be seen as an extension of novelists like Anthony Burgess and William Golding of the post war time. Exploring novelty in his style and details, McEwan forever emphasizes on the older values of course in his own indirect way and the urgent need to revive them in the postmodern world where the younger generation sees life as a mere time of pleasure and delight without any moral commitment. His two novels about children represent two different ways of life in the modern world.

To revive the past culture and moral ways of life is the most essential of the contemporary world which McEwan throws light on through his first novel ‘**The Cement Garden**’ and ‘**The Day Dreamer**’ where he presents the fantasy world of children and a group of adolescents. He stages how the modern generation longs to be left free completely without any control from elders. ‘The Cement Garden’ is the first attempt of McEwan as a fiction writer in which he presents a group of children, who lose their parents one by one. Initially, the father dies and their own in their dislike to go to an orphanage. The children especially the elder ones Jack and Julia attempt to form a life of adults by managing the family on their own, cutting the mother follow him due to illness, where after their four children together create a world of themselves completely from the outer world. Eventually the children hid their mother’s dead body in the tin cellar covering it with concrete. Jack, who is also the narrator of the plot, is already a peculiar, untidy person and his behavior worsens with his disgusting habits. Julia on the other hand metamorphoses herself as the mother of Tom, the youngest boy of the family. Julia also shares an affair with Derek- a friend. Jack’s hatred for Derek increases because of his incestuous attraction towards his sister Julia. Jack gradually changes himself to match Julia and as well assumes the role of the father. However the private funeral that the children give their mother, initially by dumping her in the cellar covering it with concrete begins to throw problems. Meanwhile, the children inclusive of Julia reject Derek’s offer to include himself in their game of mummies and daddies. Derek, being insulted by these children exposes the children to the outer world by bringing the police as the novel ends and as well the ephemeral fantasy world

of the children. In this plot, McEwan exhibits the character of Jack as a teenage modern boy who doesn't seem to have any moral commitment towards life. He is the one paving way for the deranged state of mind of the other kids in the family. Eventually he and the other children cut themselves from the outer world of reality. They chose to be unaccountable to the society. The impulse of Jack even when his parents were alive not to be answerable to anyone extend to the other children in the family after their death which brings in no sense of loss. In fact Jack feels a sense of release that he immediately metamorphosis him as the leader of the family. Jack confesses 'I did not kill my father but I sometimes felt I had helped him on his way' showing his indifference and his absence to help his father in need. With these words, the suppressed emotions of sex, anger, vengeance and desire exhibit from Jack and other children. They have concern for nothing and no one and their primary and absolute concern is only about fulfilling their subconscious desires at any cost.

On the other hand, coming out of these serious pictures, McEwan presents the delightful, colorful imaginary world of a little boy Peter Fortune in his other work 'The Day Dreamer' which appeals both to children and adults. Peter, the ten year old boy is an extraordinarily imaginative person who keeps dreaming anytime anywhere. Peter's remarkable imaginative power enables him to invent a vanishing cream in his fantasy world, with which he makes his parents and his sister disappear and enjoys a life of complete liberty until he is redeemed back to the real world by his sister. The novel is a short journey into Peter's own and isolated world of fantasy. In his world, Peter enjoys being unimaginable characters where he exchanges his soul with primarily a cat, a doll and a baby. All through, the author makes Peter assume different shapes when the little boy undergoes the mysterious experience that a human generally cannot which appeal to both children and the grownups. One such experience is his internal incarnation as a twenty five year old man who falls in love with a girl. This experience in his imaginative world gives him a new perception of life which according to him is a mere life of futility, where elders spend their time in meaningless discussions, worries about future and material progress. But having fallen in love, Peter's notion about his future transforms into anticipation that he is heading towards his interesting adventure. He transforms himself from his innocence where he is worried about his passing into a knowledgeable boy who can weigh the value of grownups and the life ahead of him. He begins respecting them for their experience unlike the children in the earlier fiction. Through his fantasy world, he realizes love as the enduring force of life and he eagerly awaits his adult life. Till then confused and mystified about his future, Peter turns out to face the ocean of life, 'vast and unknown'.

However Peter Fortune cannot be compared with the children of '**The Cement Garden**' who attempt to go to the extreme end of innocence. In both these novels, McEwan's portrayals of the adolescent's as well children's world are of two different dimensions as he intensely explores their life and the problems they face as immature kids in the contemporary world. He defines their values of life to be more distinguished from that of the adults. The adolescent and the children are constantly baffled and irritated by the initiation into what is on the other side. In both the novels, it is evident that the children doesn't seem to prefer the governance of the elders especially in '**The Cement Garden**' where the author subtly indicates the need of guidance to children whose childhood life could have been the other way with a better leadership. The children in the novel are of nature in their approach to life, belonging to the modern and technical era where they happen to lose their innocence at a very young stage. They get got in their ignorance about the ways of life before their accomplishment of a mature mind. At the same time, the world that the author draws for Peter in 'The Day Dreamer' is a world of fantasy to make him realize the value and wonder of the world of reality which he seems to attain at the end of the novel. His world of fantasy nurtures him with an unimaginable joy and wonder also at the end proves love as the source of endurance in human life. It is a harmless world of hyper-imagination. Extraordinary and endless exposure of the modern world make these children's life complicated leading their life into mystery and disorder. Children in the novels do not wish to stick to the world of reality but aspire to create a world of freedom on their own. The characters reflect modern thinking of contemporary men where we tend to lose grip on moral ways in order to attain ephemeral pleasure in life. The loss of innocence at very early time leads children to act like matured men. Despite their oddities, these characters are part of the society standing for the less known deviations in human life. These novels can be seen as an alarm to the modern society which has failed to keep up the moral ways of life and to transform it to its posterity. The author's subtle accusation is on the parents of the modern world who doesn't pay any heed to acquaint the children our past tradition of the value of morality and established social ethics. In away in the novel, 'The Cement Garden', the parents are to be blamed more than the children for their irresponsible nature as adults. The house and the society they leave for the children is a mere 'waste land', where there is no possibility of human contact even for communication and reference. Reaching its extremity, it paves way for their cruel act of private internment of their mother. There seems no possible situation that the family spends together happily or even communication among them. Altogether, McEwan tries to reflect the modern parents and family running behind material progress lacking morals and ethics. As seen in 'The Cement Garden' the father tries to create a concrete garden of artificiality and not a natural one from which the children come out cracking their boundaries, indulging in unethical habits. The cement garden that he creates is an indicator of the material and mechanical life that he gives his children out of which they cultivate plants of savagery. Their emotional deadness comes out when Julie utters,

'It feels like it's always been like this, I can't really remember how it used to be when mum was above and I can't really imagine anything changing' (The Cement Garden, 134). The children with their 'end of innocence' expose the present time modern and sick society. While Peter indulges in his unconscious mind into recreating a world of uncanniness, McEwan's other children tend to copy the unpleasant practices of the adult world. In Peter's case, it is a harmless world of hyper-imagination unlike McEwan's other world of unconsciousness exposing the forces of darker impulses to children. If the day dreamer Peter Fortune leads us into a pleasant delightful journey into different souls, the children of the cement garden stagnate inside their filthy shelter. McEwan's talent lies in his handling of two completely different worlds of human beings, as children and adolescent. But his perceptions of both kinds of lives ultimately are attempts to throw light on the decaying modern world where man is heading towards a futile life losing his faith in God and humanity itself. McEwan through these novels projects a deranged or dehumanized contemporary society as an outcome of science and reason. As Swift states, "**We can never leave the past for the present**", tradition and older values do play a vital role in shaping the posterity in a better and positive manner especially in the modern society where men focus more on material prosperity. Having become the Centre power of the universe with their extremity of technical knowledge, the modern men forget and tend to lose themselves from the social etiquettes and values which had once restricted him into a circle of morality. In this modern complicated scenario, works of Ian Russell McEwan urging to revive the moral ways of life do deserve a wide appreciation.

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Memories, Desires and Identities in Amulya Malladi's *The Mango Season*

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Abstract: *When we stand in a new land, inspite of bringing our material belongings we also bring our personal belongings such as our culture, tradition, origin identity and so on in the form of memory from our homeland. We tend to act and react to the contemporary experience, yet not to the greatest significance. At times unsurprisingly our innate nature disturbs the present position. India is a land of tradition where family relationships play a vital role in Indian families which is not mandatory in American families. Thus diasporans are caught between home and not home which leads to the question of identity for them. Priya in Amulya Malladi's The Mango Season is also a victim to this identity frustration. Though she lives with the fullest comfort and happiness in America, she finds difficult to hide her love towards her family and her memories about the homeland probes in. She finds difficult to identify herself. She is neither Indian nor American. It is very difficult to hide the real identity. But time and place changes and it is very important that one should be practical and live practically. Uma Parameswaran said, "Home is where your feet are" Priya too finds that her home is in America with Nick. However longing for homeland, relationships and memories of the past have its own value. Thus Priya also finds all these problems but she lives happily with a hybrid identity of being an Indian- American.*

Key Words: *Hybridity, Memory, Identity.*

The sense of being and belonging to one particular region is impossible in the present globalized world. The homeland is itself argumentative. It becomes necessary that one has to become the other in the alien soil. The identity of self is shaken because of the imposed needs and welcomed situations. Though rejections and dejections are invisibly visible in the minds of diasporans, they struggle and at times satisfied with the scenario in the foreign land.

Broadening the narrow knowledge, culture, relation and connection is very much possible for the diasporans when they leave from the native land. Though they enjoy all these privileges from this wide network, the fragrance of the native soil springs in their mind which is present in the unconscious mind. When we stand in the new land inspite of bringing our personal belongings we also bring our personal belongings such as culture, tradition, relationship, origin , identity and so on in the form of memory from our homeland. "We are both doomed and blessed, to be suspended between two worlds, always looking back, but with two gorgeous places to inhabit, in our imaginations or our hearts" (Paranjape 161).

Priya the protagonist brings her memory of the homeland to America when she comes to pursue her Master's degree in U.S. She falls in love with an American Nick and she feels comfortable to live with him under the same roof. She submits herself to Nick which is clear when She states that she is not interested to return to her homeland. Though she asserts herself that she is happy in America with the intricacies and extricacies present over there, the reflections of homeland and her affection towards the home is explicit when she remembers about India. When she went to her grand parents house she feels happy for eating rice with pappu with her fingers. She says that she had forgotten the joys of mixing rice and pappu with her fingers. Food just tasted better when eaten with such intimacy.

At certain places she strongly acknowledges that her home was in America and she loves eating food in KFC's and Hydrabad was an alien place, her tradition and culture is still alien to her memory and body. She feels bad that she is living with a foreigner before marriage which is not an accepted of for girls before marriage. She says, "I was living in sin with a foreigner I intended to marry"(17).

Exile means not only distancing oneself from the native soil but also carrying the mind with the treasure of memories of origin and bringing them to light when the mind is in diasporic chaos. Though everything comes with a fixed price tag in America, she recalls from her memories how her mother used to barter over everything in Indian market. She dislikes this bartering business and moreover it is not possible in America. She is happy in recalling such experiences and she says, "thanks to happy memories like that I never, ever, bargained" (11).

Affection and transformation are inevitable for diasporans. Priya's transformations of being an Indian to an American is visible but her affection towards India and Indian values are invisibly visible from her words and deeds. When she moves to America to pursue her Master's degree. She is not an exception. Like all Indians she also had many Indian friends in the beginning. Later only in the due course of time colour vanishes from her

mind and she mingles with everyone inspite of caste, colour and creed. She says, “I had started out with only Indian friends but my circle grew as I grew. Now I was in a place where I didn’t think in terms of Indian friends and American friends, just friends, I had somewhere down the line stopped looking at skin colour” (213).

Priya feels as an outsider inside India. She has become very much westernized and sees everything in the Americanized vision. Though she is much against the every attributes of India and Indianness she finally acknowledges that she has a perfect space for India which she cannot deny it. She says, “After several years of exile I could feel the texture of India. It was the people, the smell, the taste, the noise, the essence that dragged you in and kept you. I hated this country for a lot reasons, the narrow-mindedness, the bigotry, the treatment of women, but that was on a large scale, on a day-to-day basis. India was still my country” (198).

Though one is firmly placed physically at one space, psychologically the mind anguishes to satisfy its own wishes which makes the life half-fulfilled for diasporans. Though Priya is physically satisfied with her presence in U.S. yet she wishes to achieve certain things which make her mind also to be contented. She has a deep love for Nick and she won’t leave him at any cost. But she also looks for her parents’ approval and she fails to spare them for the sake of Nick. She says, “They’ve always been my safety net. I have been daughter, grand-daughter, sister, niece just as I have been woman and fiancée. It is who I am. I can’t divorce the family any more than I can myself. Do you understand what I’m saying” (179).

Priya’s love for her family is deep. It is clear when she frankly admits that she can’t leave anyone in her family. But at the same time she also has deep love for Nick too and she wishes everyone to accept him. When she reveals her affair with Nick, no one in her family has extended their hands in the matter of marrying Nick. After coming to know her affair with Nick, her grandfather says that he won’t accept her idea and if she marries him against his wish then she will not be given any place in her family. The words of Thatha hurts her and she tries to console him but failed. He is very stubborn. Priya’s complex scenario is constructed because of the diasporan dilemma she is bound with.

Most of the diasporans like Priya faces certain complex scenarios and their satisfaction of life is always a question of discussion. Though everything has happened naturally in priya’s life, it is very difficult for her to make the happenings into simultaneous reality. Suppression of an diasporan is very prominent and the feeling of otherness makes them to struggle in their homeland as well as in the other land too. It is only because of falling in love not with an Indian she faces lots of problems. Her wish to marry Nick is cracked and she fights with everyone to marry him. She says, “I didn’t do it on purpose”, I cried out. “Ma, these things happen. I’m sorry that you don’t approve, that you feel I’ve betrayed you, but this is my life and I have to live it for me. And for me to be happy, I need to marry Nick. It’s that simple” (169).

The struggle to transmit the idea of culture, belief and tradition is difficult. But everyone is showered with single life and that life longs for its own wishes and desires to become true. It is same with Priya too. She struggles hard in order to make her wish to become true. She says, “I don’t like the way you think and sometimes I don’t like the way my entire family thinks. You know what, it doesn’t make a difference. I still love you all very much and I’ll always love you. But that doesn’t mean I have to nod my head when you say something wrong” (108).

Priya thinks that women should have freedom in her life which is denied in India. Her aunt Lata and Sowmya are bound by the family commitments and restrictions. Lata becomes pregnant because her family members wishes to have a male heir, Sowmya accepts the bridegroom shown by her parents inspite of her own likes and dislikes. It is from Priya they are inspired to act with courage and determination. Lata fails to see the sex of the baby and Sowmya frankly tells to everyone that “I just want to do the things I want to do” (182).

Priya after seven years of exile in America, finds difficult to cope with the intricacies present in India. Yet she struggles hard to be the best in Indian scenario. Against her wish of wearing sorts to overcome the Indian heat she follows the words of her mother by wearing salwar –kameez. Thus diasporan dissatisfaction is very much prevalent in the life of Priya. Wearing a cloth of their own wish is itself impossible for. Are the diasporans free with their own will? A big question is still wandering for an answer.

Autonomy and identity play a vital role in everyone’s life. In spite of all the problems, compromises and tolerance every individual tries to achieve their own identity inspite of caste, colour, gender, race and so on. Priya as an individual, inspite of being an Indian or American, tries to identify herself as an individual entity. It is very difficult to hide the real identity. As time and place changes one has to change according to it. It is the law of nature. But one cannot hide the real identity. Priya’s anguish to accept her views are clear when she expresses that “I was feeling like an object instead of a person” (143). She at first rejects to move with Nick but later she realizes that she has to live for her own sake and not for others. Then she starts her life by living with him in the same roof. She justifies herself by saying that “I realized that I had to stop worrying about what my family would think and start living my own life on my own on my own terms” (142).

Priya’s parents are broad minded and they never force any decisions on her. They left her free to make her own choice except in the matter of marriage. Priya’s mother is very much against her westernized ideas. But Priya wants her mother to accept her and she dislikes to run behind her mother’s constructed conventions. She says, “I wanted – no sometimes needed acceptance from ma, but I wanted her to accept me the way I was, not

the way she envisioned me to be. I wanted her to love Priya the person, not the Priya the daughter who didn't live outside of her imagination" (87).

The relationship between diasporans and homelands are complex. Though they seem to be unique and interdependent; they have a strong invisible threads in the memory which ties the two. Diasporans are always gaiety nightingales who sing the glory of the homeland in a hybrid discourse. They always live in an 'Imaginary Homelands'. However loss of home, longing for homeland, missing of relationships and memories of the past have its own value. Thus Priya too finds all these problems. She lives in a hybrid identity of being an Indian-American.

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Cultural Reminisce and Reinvention of Australia in Peter Carey's *Illywhacker*

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Abstract: Peter Carey's *Illywhacker* was a huge vision of Australian history. It is an epic vision of Twentieth Century Australia. It is told through the memories of a 100-year-old confidence and compulsive liar, the protagonist, Herbert Badgery. *Illywhacker* depicts a particular phase of Australian culture and nationalism and a search for their identity. Also Australia is picturized as a climatic image, a penal colony of the Japanese tourist industry. Carey brilliantly visualizes the bleak sense of powerlessness and imprisonment that continues to haunt European-Australian consciousness. Carey also evokes the horror of the anti-Chinese riots at the Lambing Flat Goldfields in the Nineteenth century Australia. Herbert Badgery's double role as a surrogate storyteller and a dealer presents him in the process of constructing his own identity and destiny, foregrounding the theme of personal and national representation. He is one of the narrative protagonists who sees himself as alienated from the society but still trapped within a brutal and oppressive power. All the characters in *Illywhacker* run up against the boundaries of a white male hegemony, underscoring their inability to find any space outside the ideology that defines them. In brief, *Illywhacker* reminds Australia and its own sin.

Keywords: Cultural Recollection and Celebration, Nationalism, Hegemony, Self-identity and Dominant cultures.

Australia is relatively new country positioned culturally and politically in a gap between British heritage and American hegemony. Contemporary Australia with its escalating population, greater social and political complexity, widening economic structures and marked cultural diversity, has provided a fertile ground for novelists like Peter Philip Carey.

This paper will examine the articulation of the characters' most private anxieties and how they give rise to the meaning to culture. The Father of Law (America), specifically the phallogocentric ideology that shaped Australia, is structured to prohibit natives from achieving their subjectivity. Their manhood and subjecthood are denied in the name of Law. Carey's *Illywhacker* epitomizes this problem and how the characters fought against those restrictions and their lack of ability to find a room outside the ideology which labels them. The dominant ideology of this novel is phallogocentric and American centric which can be traced back to the objectifying ideology of the slave holding Australia.

Illywhacker (1985) consists of three blocks of Eighty-six, Sixty-one and Sixty-six short chapters respectively each and each of these chapters have a few pages long and often shorter than a single page. The frequent pauses and discontinuities to result serve to ground the narrative all the more firmly in the character of its narrator. The protagonist of *Illywhacker*, Herbert Badgery is a convinced nationalist but nevertheless earns his money by selling American cars. His love-hate relationship to these American cars is shown in these lines from the novel:

The Ford had been a tumour in my life. I had fought battles with it in the way another man might fought battles with alcohol or tobacco. I had walked away from it and returned to it. I had rejected it only to embrace it passionately. I admired its construction, its appearance, the skill that had produced it so economically. And these were also the things I loathed. (75)

Illywhacker gives a picture of Australia's culture, nationalism and self-construction. Badgery salesmanship reveals Australia itself as a show, a product manufactured from illusion and deception. And his life caricatures his country Australia. His rejection of colonial dependency leads him to sell American-made Ford cars. His early vision is an independent aero-plane business making it as an autonomous product but by the end his entourage has become "an ugly menagerie" (594).

Illywhacker can be considered as a song of Australia and as a manifesto of nationalistic folkloric. Lamb's words strengthen the point: "The novel's major allegory of imprisonment- Charles Badgery's pet shop-presents a condemning portrait of colonization and its accompanying cultural cringe. The trap of low self-esteem is a form of abuse, and the novel makes good use of Australia's history of economic exploitation by a host of 'colonizers' (British and America)" (34).

The novel in different ways exposes the original deceit of Australian history and their public appropriation as cultural celebration of the dominant culture of white Australia. Karen Lamb remarked this as: "The obsessive power for national identity shows its polarity in the pride and self-loathing invoked by the pet-shop allegory at the end of *Illywhacker*. Badgery's showmanship is the last laugh of a defeated culture" (46).

Herbert introduces himself in the first sentence and which makes it clear that he is going to tell lies and stories in the novel. The lies are paradoxical, that the truth is narrated through beautiful lies. But he is not really the liar as he discloses that he even lies about that- the lies and the stories he told in this novel. Hassel points it as:

He does not lie about Australian history- indeed he tries to correct what he sees as the lies Australians told themselves. The concept that there is a factual truth that history can recover and report is currently vigorously contested. ... We are condemned to seek History by way of our own pop images and a simulacrum of that history, which itself remains forever out of truth. (71)

He does occasionally lie in his dealings with other characters because he wants others to like and admire him, to give him money, to buy cars. The novel challenges some of the misrepresentations of Australian history, which suggests that there are recoverable truths in History. The novel also exposes the colonial process through postmodern extravagance and various narrative elements. These include the narrative metaphor of petshop the treatment of histories, and the presentation of Herbert himself, an investigation of the state of nation. On the whole, the novel portrays Australian culture, nationalism and search for self-identity. The novel also challenges the received histories of Australia portraying the country which are initially stolen from the original inhabitants and then it is sold out to the succession of international carpet baggers who exported Australian minerals, inventions and native fauna. They pacified the natives with enough to eat and a comfortable cage to live.

The individuals are unaware of many factors which determine their emotions and behavior. These unconscious factors may create unhappiness, troubles in personality traits, difficulties in work and in relationships, disturbances in mood and self-esteem. All the above said characteristics can be seen in the characters of *Illywhacker*. And they are alienated from themselves and from society but still trapped within a brutal and oppressive power. This shows that Australia has never escaped from its narrow imprisonment. To create a national repository of their own, uniquely Australianess, Australians have sought to reclaim and recreate those American influences but they have to invent the new ones.

The picaresque plot of *Illywhacker* as a carnivalesque, grotesque, centerless, marginalized, parodic and open ended history of Australia with its foregrounding of the fictionality of history and reality is well qualified for both a postcolonial and a postmodern reading. Australia cannot totally free itself from its past and their colonial past but have to live with it and they have to find a way of dealing with it. Carey uses the remnants of colonization in order to create an Australian piece of art. He does not irritate imperial art, but uses it and digresses from it through his use of utterly Australian themes, through reflection and through parody.

Architecture is a metaphor, which has been frequently used by Carey in this novel. For instance, when Badgery is going to build a house for his girl and at the end of the novel his grandson Hissao becomes an architect and rebuilds the pet-shop. Here it is found, the relation between the treatment of national identity and its building metaphor. Herbert constructs the pet-shop in order to justify his own life. He looks for a fixed and permanent identity although he never makes it.

You think you can put up some shanty and that makes it your place, but you can't, and it never will be....Forget what we did. The matter is obvious. The land is stolen. The whole country is stolen. The whole nation is based on a lie which is that it was not already occupied when the British came here. If it is anybody's place it is the blacks. Does it look like your place? Can't you see, even the trees have nothing to do with you. (307)

Badgery is possessed of building houses for himself, for his family and for various animals. His son and grandson share this preoccupation with building which eventually results in Pet Emporium. The novel also shows how the people construct prison for themselves in various ways and how they look at their imprisonment. They use their entrapment as a means for controlling their situation and emotions. Herbert Badgery is a fine example of such a prisoner.

Even symbols and signs play a much important role to personify cultural and national identity. Badgery's passion for national variety only go together with his zeal for motorized vehicles. He believes that his country's identity should be invested in the manufacture of Australia's own plane or car. But in Charles' case, Badgery's son, this leads to setting up an Australian pet emporium, which enables him to associate his love of animals with his fondness for his own country. Hissao, Badgery's grandson, in club with the new owners, the Mitsubishi company, realizes the value of his business and which will be inherent in the consumption of national stereotypes. Australian fauna both animal and human are used as symbols in this novel. The replacement of the objects and symbols by an inclination is determined by a symbolic connection of thought, of which the person concerned is usually not conscious.

Patchy, disjointed, and unreliable narrative style are an appropriate medium to represent a country's culture and history, which are more pertinently used by Carey to point out the national crisis. The nature of Australians' dreams and visions of identity are examined in the context of an international arena, particularly through Herbert Badgery's legacy to Charles and Hissao. The image of caging animals and birds is an effective

symbol of colonization. The novel repeatedly describes the characters' hallucination concerning dreams of national identity and self-identity. Leah reveals that the Australians do not belong to Australia: "I cannot stay still anywhere. It is not a country where you cannot rest. It is a black man's country: sharp stones, rocks, sticks, bull ants, flies. We can only move around it like tourists" (323).

Images like goal and prison express the contemporary Australian society, which is trapped by its history imprisoned in its self-created present and caught by these legacies in the future. Whenever Badgery passes in prison and cages in emporium and even the houses which he builds are images that exemplify the direction of contemporary Australian society. Badgery's ambition to make history, or Leah's ideas that there is no history, denote the aspects in a search for an Australian identity.

The neo-colonialism of the USA and Japan are the other aspects of history, which have been engulfed in Australia. Herbert Badgery and Charles' delusions are endangered by their reliance on America; and Hissao depicts a new aspect of neo-colonialism of Australia by Japan. Woodcock writes: "The Badgery Emporium has become a museum of Australiana with exhibits made up of people displayed in cages- the Bondi Surf Life-saving club, shearers, inventors, manufacturers, bushman, aboriginals, and Herbert Badgery himself" (68-69).

The celebration of struggle towards independence in community and in individuals, and the dominating influence of foreign culture are so obvious. Fletcher remarks: "In *Illywhacker* one metaphysical device is authorial intervention usually to label lies or liars, or to foreshadow future events or recall previous ones in the novel" (13). Foreign authority by United States, England, and Japan is tied to specific political and economic imperfections in Australia. Badgery is constantly encountered by people who take into account that an Australian car could challenge an American one.

Myth has a complex relationship with history. Carey moulds history into myth through some narrative tricks. His characters rewrite history, and they analyse untruthfulness and sometimes they bring history to the realm of fantasy. Lies and Lying are significant in two ways in this novel: At first, as a characteristic of Badgery, the protagonist, and secondly, as the part of the analysis of Australia's self-construction. It transgresses and undermines the presumption of formal continuity and genre coherence. Both continuity and coherence entreat and indict as they investigate the construction of fundamental Australian mythologies, the visions, dreams and lies of the national psyche. In this process, continuity and coherence deconstruct the contemporary state of nation. And also the novel demythologizes contemporary condition of Australian society in a manner which reveals a hidden history under the surface. It can be summarized as contemporary Australia agonizes from a kind of regression which is masked by a façade of pretence.

The relationship between language and history is a key matter in postcolonial concern with his own country because it is through language that one can make a usable history. Kane figures out this as: "In Carey's work the disjunctiveness of postmodernism coincides with his sense of the historical displacement of colonialism; the continuing influence of the past- the post colonial condition- is transformed into a vision of future" (522).

Badgery's history serves as a sort of synecdoche for Australia's evolution. his financial condition – like Australia's, Carey implies that is invariably determined by some foreign power first by the British, that his father, who masqueraded as an Englishman worked for a British cannon company; then Americans - Ford Motors, as well as the Yankee hustler who becomes Charles' partner in the pet-export business. And finally by Japanese at the story's appalling surprise conclusion, in which Herbert's original dream of a native-owned enterprise frees of colonial exploitation which is realized with particularly vicious irony.

Obsessive dreams or idealisms and the hidden imperial history of white Australia's colonization of Aboriginal land, a theme which may seem to be divergent in the novel. Carey's novel involves a wide variety of characters, settings and situations, thus creating a multifaceted panorama of mid-nineteenth century colonial history. The theme of isolation is remarkable in this novel. Its theme and narrative structure express a revisionist perception of history, which shifts the emphasis from the public to the private and attaches importance to the experienced patterns of life, thoughts and dreams of ordinary people. The quest for identity is carried out on a personal level and the effects of past history of colonialism may have an impact on the development of a national and personal identity.

All the characters of this novel, whose clothing and skin can be peeled off layer by layer until there is nothing left of the person. With societies in which regions, buildings even people dematerialize until they cease to exist or give chance to the people to reborn as different persons. These elements are embedded in a completed realistic mode of narration, and there is nothing extraordinary. But they are merely a part of everybody's everyday life.

We cannot divorce ourselves from our past or history. In our world, the past or history is always present in the codes, symbols and signs in society. Anything which is completely new and original, devoid of all history, would be meaningless. Carey as a postcolonial writer aware of the colonial past with all its binary opposites of colonized and colonizers, exploited and exploiters, suppressed and oppressors are still present in contemporary world. For these reasons, his present discourses cannot be escaped from the language of colonization.

With all these elements, Carey introduces a new sense of Australian identity and nationalism in this novel, *Illywhacker*. All the ideas of European, American and Chinese presented in the novel, are treated with some suspicion. And they are only accepted as long as they coincide with Australian ideas.

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Marginalisation of educated women in Nayantara Sahgal's *The Day In Shadow and Rich Like Us*

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Abstract: *The main focus in the novels of Nayantara Sahgal, the celebrated Indian English novelist, is on the plight and problems of educated women, mostly with an urban base. She speaks about the predicament of new Indian women. In this paper, an attempt has been made to explore the subjugation of educated Indian women and also their maladjustment in the Indian social setup. Sahgal also depicts how women grow in strength in spite of many hurdles and how women make many sacrifices and compromises, and how they boldly face the challenges of life with forbearance. The plight of working women in the novels *The Day in Shadow and Rich Like Us* is still worse. They are aggravated by their problems of marital adjustments. In both the novels, the novelist emphasizes the value of freedom so essential to the inner and outer development of an individual entrapped in critical situations. In *Rich Like Us*, the insightful story of an English woman Rose, married to an Indian, delineate the marked difference between the culture of the ancient and the contemporary. The story of Simrit in *The Day in Shadow* is pathetic as she is incapable of leading a normal life after her divorce in spite of being a freelance writer.*

Key words: *marginalization, suppression and culture*

Nayantara Sahgal is a prolific writer and her literary canon consists of eight novels, two autobiographies, some non-fictional works several articles and shortstories have been published in leading newspapers and magazines. The present paper deals a historical survey of the subordinate position of women and this exploitation in various ways. It also studies the genesis and different stages and strands of women's liberation movement, how it has affected the ethos, literature and criticism in our time.

The novels of women writers centre around the marriage of women protagonists. Marriage plays an important role in the life of a woman since it is regarded as the goal and destiny of women. They occupy a paradoxical position as they are subjugated and suppressed yet indispensable to the family. Access to education and socio-economic changes bring about a change in their attitude. They question the patriarchal hegemony while playing the traditional role allotted to her by the society. In both *The Day in shadow* and *Rich Like us* Sahgal insists that the human being has to fight against the wrong.

The main focus in the novels of Nayantara Sahgal, the celebrated Indian English novelist, is on the plight and problems of educated women, mostly with an urban base. She speaks about the predicament of new Indian women. In this paper, an attempt has been made to explore the subjugation of educated Indian women and also their maladjustment in the Indian social setup. Sahgal also depicts how women grow in strength inspite of many hurdles and how women make many sacrifices and compromises and how they boldly face the challenges of life with forbearance.

The plight of working women in the novels *The Day in Shadow and Rich Like us* is still worse. They are aggravated by their problems of marital adjustments. In both the novels, the novelist essential to the inner and outer development of an individual entrapped in critical situations. In "Rich Like us" the insightful stories of an English woman Rose, married to an Indian, delineate the marked difference between the culture the ancient and the contemporary. The story of simrit in "The Day in shadow" is pathetic as she is incapable of leading a normal life after her divorce inspite of being a free lance writer.

"Women are persons not possessions" is the note echoed in all her works. Nayantara Sahgal infuses into her heroines the spirit of self-respect and individualism. Her heroines always try to realise their selfhood either unconsciously or consciously and deliberately. In *The Day in shadow* and *Rich Like Us*, she shows how women can be criminally exploited without creating a ripple.

The main theme of *The Day in shadow* and *Rich Like Us* 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. Simrit 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 realises 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. 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 is a businessman, aspiring for greater comforts and riches, but he is unmindful of his wife, Simrit as a person who has individuality and who aspires for her own identity.

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 a suffocating experience. She feels isolated within her skin and even the physical relationship is not involving or kind enough. It is an act with beginning and an end with nothing in between or even afterwards. Simrit feels completely alienated from Som that the physical act can no longer transport her unresisting to a comfortable place.

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. She finds her life disrupted and herself in the midst of a peculiar financial problem. The divorce settlement is a continuation of her marriage as it pins her down to the role of a victim and attempts to crush her desire to be free in a positive way. All her attempts to make other see the divorce settlement from her point of view fail because people do not see her as a person seeking freedom and fulfilment. Simrit likens her position to that of a donkey whose burden attracts no notice and draws forth no pity "for loads for donkeys (The Day in shadow 56)".

What forces simrit to rebel against the conventional security of marriage is her yearning for a free communication of ideas with her husband beyond the glandular sensations of sex. Simrit realises that talk is the missing link in her relationship with Som and tries in vain to engage him in any meaningful dialogue.

In *Rich Like Us* Sahgal delves in the problems of Post Independence India. Sonali, an IAS, finds herself a square peg in a round hole due to the cramping working conditions and corruption rampant everywhere. The story of an English Woman Rose married to an Indian delineates the marked difference between the culture of the Occident and the Orient. Life for Rose in India is enervating and unfortunately she pays for it a heavy price by her ruthless murder. There is an inexplicable fatalism about her - her yielding to Ram's persuasions and her decision to sail to India against warnings by her parents. Ironically inspite of all her experience of the male species, and even with the knowledge that Ram had been married, she fatalistically walks into his life. There was something romantic about her attitude to Ram. Rose desperately longs for a child when she sees Dev, Ram's son from his first wife Mona. She thinks that Mona enjoys the status of the house because she has produced a son and performed her role as a vehicle for the next generation while women are intended.

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. She continues to be assertive and if the situation demands, even becomes aggressive.

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Syncretizing the dominant and the native Anishinabe culture in Louise Erdrich's *Tracks*

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Abstract: *The only solution for the native culture to survive is to syncretize with the dominant culture. To coalesce with the dominant culture, has been misinterpreted by the inhabitants as a total surrender. In order to establish their native heritage, many individuals have sacrificed their lives as a symbol of resistance. To survive many have surrendered their identity and have passed on to the oppressor's culture. It is this conflicting dilemma of resisting or adaptation that has led indigenous writers to express the necessity to recognize both the cultures in order to exist. The present article is the study of the prominent Native American women writer Louise Erdrich's novel Tracks (1997) which focuses on the specific roles played by female characters- Fleur Pillager and Pauline Puyat who assign different roles to themselves to assert their identity. The two contradictory characters- Fleur Pillager who identifies herself with her Anishinabe culture and Pauline who chooses to define herself with the dominant culture depict the disparity of the choices. Adhering solely to the cultural traits leads the native inhabitants only in stress, dysfunction and in a state of depression. Clinging to untraditional patterns of living and acquiring the conventional religious beliefs leads Pauline to a state of despair. Both the characters fail to work within the new system and ultimately fail in their attempt. By depicting characters like Nanapush, Erdrich authenticates individuals who succeed by working together and within the new order. Erdrich establishes the need for oneself to adapt to the changing environment. She validates the concept of essentialism by recognizing both the cultures for a holistic living.*

Key words: *Indigenous culture, dominance, hegemony, resistance, assimilation.*

The indigenous Native Americans' psychological conflict remains highly unarticulated. As a result of the colonial conquest during the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, the malevolent face of oppression continued to be visibly encountered by the Native Americans which have forced them either to assimilate to the white culture or remain alienated. The forced allotment of the native land and the relocation of these indigenous Indian territory west of the Mississippi river served only as a precursor to the torment and struggle which stood in the forefront for these tribes. The mindset of the dominant colonizers attitude gets articulated in President Roosevelt's speech, when referring to the North Americans as: "justice is on the side of the pioneers... this great continent would not have been kept as nothing but a game reserve for squalid savages" (Jacobs 141).

These indigenous tribals encounter cultural conflicts which lead to a cultural trauma too. Yet there exist a few natives who in spite of the hazards continue to create a hybrid identity which engenders a new possibility. Only those who create a third space as Homi K. Bhabha states it to be 'interruptive, interrogative, and enunciative' (qtd. in. Graves. N.pag.) survive. According to Bhabha, this hybrid third space is an ambivalent site where cultural meaning and representation have no 'primordial unity or fixity' (N.pag.). This third space could be paralleled to Tirishanku in Hindu mythology where the King Tirishanku was forced to enter a third space which was neither in heaven or earth but an in-between world. Neither can the natives exist solely by imbibing their culture nor can they rely on the dominant culture,. Yet in order to survive they are bound to create a hybrid identity or syncretize to create a hybrid third space where they can exist by co-existing. It is this clash of identities that gets depicted in indigenous literature.

The syncretizing vision is focused upon by the varied multicultural writers representing the Latinos, African Americans, Asian Americans and Native Americans who possess the knowledge of both the cultural history and that of the dominant European and American culture. Writers like Ralph Ellison to Toni Morrison; Maxine Hong Kingston; Amy Tan, Louise Erdrich are among the major ethnic American writers who have drawn from the Afro-American, Native American, New Mexican and the 'Gold Mountain Chinese American reservations of San Francisco and have voice the ethnic hybridization of cultures.

Louise Erdrich is a Native American writer of novels, poetry, and children's books featuring indigenous -Native American characters and locale. Erdrich is acclaimed as one of the most prominent writers of the second wave of the Native American Renaissance. She is an enrolled member of the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians, a band of the Anishinabe (also known as Ojibwa and Chippewa).

Erdrich's novels- *Love Medicine* (1984), *The Beet Queen* (1986), *Tracks* (1988), *The Bingo Palace*(1996), and *Tales of Burning Love* (1997) encompass the stories of three interrelated families living in and around a reservation in the fictional town of Argus, North Dakota, from 1912 through the 1980s. Erdrich explores a new hybrid identity where to survive amidst the dominant and native cultural clashes -the only

solution could be to syncretize. She articulates the cultural heritage and also the sense of the changes and loss involved in the twentieth-century Native American experience.

Tracks depicts the story of two native American families of the early 1990's set in the Great lakes region of Minnesota, North Dakota, Montana, Michigan and parts of Canadian too. These tribes were woodlanders whose main occupations were bear hunting, growing crops and fishing. These natives possessed both the healing and spiritual powers derived from their ancestors. Their fertile lands being invaded by the French and European explorers and later by the Jesuit missionaries corrupted these natives of their practices. These natives represent a distinct Ojibwe subculture of the vast Omamiwinimiwak (Algonquin) language speaking tribal people. Owing to the pressures of the government- the dominant bureaucrats, the conflict arises between and within these two families.

The story is narrated by two characters, who alternate the chapters. One is the fifty year old tribal elderly man named Nanapush and the other though a Native American woman, she succumbs to the dominant culture and assimilates herself towards their religion too. She is Pauline Puyat, who narrates her own story of how she became a bride of Christ. She abandons her heritage for her survival. Nanapush's main purpose of narrating the past to his adopted granddaughter Lulu is to reconcile Lulu with her mother Fleur for having deserted her daughter and by getting her admitted in a government school. Historically, schools were run by Christian organizations or by the government and their main mission had been to distort the cultural knowledge to the future generation. To justify Fleur's deeds the narrator shifts both the readers and Lulu to the years between 1912 and 1924, the years in which the natives have been victimized to the dominant culture's exploitation.

Nanapush's first meeting of Fleur in 1912 occurs when he rescues her in a frozen winter space and cures her to good health after consumption- a recent epidemic that affected the Anishinaabe. As both Nanapush and Fleur have lost many of their kinsmen, they create a native bond between one and another. The following year, for economic survival Fleur takes up a job in a butcher's shop in a nearby town named Argus. She meets Pauline Puyat another native woman. One day Fleur wins a group of men in the game of poker. Owing to their loss to a native woman, they sexually abuse Fleur that night. Fleur immediately leaves the town which is followed by a tornado where no member of the town of Argus is harmed except the men who have seduced her. They were found to be dead frozen in a freezer in the butcher's shop where they had attempted to take shelter.

Fleur returns to her reservation home spot, meets Eli Kashpaw a native and falls in love with him. Fleur remains pregnant and Eli owns the child and a new family is created- Fleur, Eli their daughter Lulu, Eli's mother Margaret and their second son Nector along with Nanapush the elderly tribal man. Pauline too leaves Argus and stays with Bernard the Missionary and learns the art of serving the sick and dying. She meets Fleur and envy's her life and owing to increasing jealousy, she feeds a love poison to Eli and Sophie another native to copulate. Owing to her eccentric attitude she is sent to teach in a Catholic school.

Fleur Pillager is a strong complicated indigenous woman. She possesses ancient tribal powers and abilities in abundance. She has a spiritual relationship with Michibizhi, the water man. In spite of the healing powers, she is deprived of all the riches which the Anishinabe people cherish as their asset: Community, children and land. Fleur undergoes the most traumatic sequence of struggles in her life. She had witnessed her entire family perish before her eyes. She was seduced and, later deceived by her husband's brother Nector by leaving her land of unpaid tax, where they revive their land by paying it off. This results in Fleur's land being usurped by the lumberjacks. This overwhelmingly confident woman, owing to lack of a loving, guiding hand and for want of survival loses her land and fades away into exile unable to withstand the loss of her cultural possessions. The origins of the Anishinabe culture get personified in Fleur. When Nanapush depicts Fleur as possessing the Ojibwe sub cultural spirits, he states, the Manitou,"spoke through Fleur...Turtle's quavering scratch, the Eagle's shriek, hoon's crazy bitterness, Otter, the howl of the wolf, the Bear's low rasp"(59). The loss of the Pillager land leads Fleur to a post traumatic state where her powers gradually decline. Nanapush expresses Fleur's diminishing powers as, "power dies, power goes under and gutters out, ungraspable."(177). With his education, Nanapush would maintain the cohesiveness of both the cultures. He says, "I talked both language in streams that ran alongside each other, our every rock, and every obstacle" (7).

Though this exile which Erdrich assigns to Fleur is temporary, she portrays Fleur to emerge in the later novels. The portrayal of Fleur in *Tracks* is of an absolute failure. As she had misused her ancient wisdom only to intimidate fear in the minds of her and the dominant people, it results in her loss of her own self, child and her land.

In contrast to Fleur Pillager who strongly rests on the native culture is Pauline Puyat who does not rely on her Native American Indian identity. She rather passes on to the white culture by turning towards religion- Christianity for survival. She asserts this as, "I wanted to be like my mother who showed her half-white. I wanted to be like my grandfather, pure Canadian" (Tr 14). She justifies her strand as, "even as a child I saw that to hang back was to perish" (Tr 14). Pauline visualizes Christ in herself and is self-absorbed as a narcissist. She takes it as a vow to defeat the Anishinaabe spirits for the sake of Christ whom she considers to be white. As her mission, she utilizes her religious practices against her natives. She murders Napoleon who impregnates her by

mistaking him to be the water god, Michibizhi. She disclaims her child by abortion and is claimed as a traitor by her own natives. Yet the white world to which she assimilates realizing her frenzied attitude towards religion does not discard her but turns her to a Catholic school to serve as a teacher.

Fleur is an embodiment of native resistance. Pauline is a representative of the assimilated native fallen a prey to the dominant European American society. Nanapush is the product of syncretization of two cultures-native and the dominant. Nanapush has adhered to the Spivakian concept of strategic essentialism. "It refers to a strategy that nationalities ethnic groups or minorities can use to present themselves "(Ritze 93).It had proved to be advantageous to him to temporarily essentialize himself to assert his group identity and to achieve certain goals.

Of the individuals who best survive are those who syncretize themselves with the mainstream culture and their traditional culture. It is Nanapush the elderly man in the Anishinaabe who succeeds in the end above all the characters. While Pauline Puyat and Fleur Pillager move away from their native land, Nanapush embodies the traits of the trickster figure, and assimilates with the world of today and aids Lulu his adopted granddaughter the representative of the younger generation to adapt herself. Initially Erdrich depicts him as a staunch native tribal who narrates the decline of their culture to Lulu as,

My girl, I saw the passing of times you will never know. I guided the last buffalo hunt. I saw the last bear shot. I trapped the last beaver with a pelt of more than two years growth. I spoke aloud the words of a government treaty, and refused to sign the settlement papers that would take away our woods and lake. I axed the last birch that was older than I, and I saved the last Pillager (2).

Here, his repeated assertions of "I saw," "I guided," "I spoke" establish his individual identity.

Nanapush narrates the fall of the community in the opening lines as, "we started dying before the snow, and like the snow, we continued to fall"(Tr 1). According to him their world represents, the earth, sun, moon, animals and plants etc. Instead of such relations he utters to Lulu, that a new world has entered to exist and to exploit them as," wind from the east, bringing exile in a storm of government papers."(TR 1).

The two members who survive in the native Anishinaabe land are the elderly man and woman-Nanapush and Margaret- the mother in law to Fleur. It is the syncretizing attitude which permits them to cope with the dominant culture. Both remain loyal to the native customs and also adhere to the dominant practices. Nanapush was educated in a Jesuit school in "the halls of Sr. John"(Tr 33) and he can read and write. Though not a practitioner of religion, yet he attends the church prayers along with Margaret and Lulu. His main purpose is to bring home Lulu from the boarding school and later elevate himself as a tribal chairman. Margaret also parallels Nanapush in her ways of adapting herself to both the cultures. She prays to Virgin Mary and also to the water god, the Manitou's in the lake. Though an illiterate, the long years of experience affirms her identity and survival. These two elderly man and woman who represent the tribal community are unconsciously forced to assimilate to the dominant culture.

The dominant culture which comprised essentially of the wealthy Europeans entered the new found land of America to usurp the fertile land and exploit the native people , their culture and their religion. Queen Elizabeth's charter to Sir Walter Raleigh was clearly founded on this principle. It gave the Europeans a free liberty and license to discover new lands. In 1583, "Elizabeth, by the Grace of God, of England, France, and Ireland, Queen, defender of the faith", granted to Sir Walter Raleigh, his heirs and assigns forever, letters patent which read as follows:

...to discover, search, find, and view such remote heathen and barbarous lands, countries, and territories, not actually possessed of any Christian Prince, nor inhabited by Christian people, as to him, his heirs and assigns, to every or any of them shall seem good, and the same to have, hold, and occupy and enjoy, to him, his heirs, and assigns forever. (Mcmillan N.pag)

This statement refers to the natives being termed as, "heathen and barbarous" who had to be Christianized. Though not christened yet these two have acquired the art of syncretizing their identity along with the dominant culture.

Almost all the indigenous characters represent a humanitarian spirit. Yet Fleur and Pauline lack the trait of balancing both the cultures. It is the elderly wisdom which syncretizes for the common good. Fleur unable to accept her loss of land goes on an exile. Pauline represents the Christian ideology of self-sacrifice for serving the humanity depriving her native culture. It is Nanapush who signifies an alliance between the traditional cultural trait amidst the complexities of human nature and the syncretizing attitude of embracing a religion filled with compassion and humility.

Post colonial theorists and multicultural theorists have contradicted the notion of a pure and a monolithic cultural identity. Insisting on its fluidity, they have asserted culture to be heterogeneous, diverse and remain to be constantly in a state of flux. They justify the constant process of its evolution. For a cultural identity to exist either in an individual or in a society, one has to constantly create alliances, both within and outside his community and at times with the dominant culture too to form a new cultural identity. It is this trait of syncretization which Stuart Hall terms it to be a 'production' which is never complete and, "is always in

process and always constituted within and not outside representation”(qtd.in. Contemporary Postcolonial Theory: A Reader 110). It is this process of production which Louise Erdrich seeks to create in her novels.

Ines Talamantez in her article “Seeing Red: American Indian Women Speaking about Their Religious and Political Perspectives” identifies the complex patterns of Native women’s identity crisis as,

Some native women continue to resist completely all forms of Christianity and practice their own native ways, which beautifully blend culture and spirituality in one complete worldview. Other women continue to follow their cultural ways and have found a method that allows them to be Indians from a specific culture but yet accept and embrace Christian dogma. And of course some Indian women have accepted Christianity completely and have opted for assimilation into the dominant American culture. (223)

Fleur Pillager has resisted the dominant culture, Margaret has adapted to both the cultures and Pauline has deserted her nativity and has assimilated to Christian ways of living. It is Nanapush who has not only syncretized but has succeeded in passing on this trait to his adopted granddaughter.

Though Erdrich writes from within the culture, she indirectly emphasizes the natives to inculcate the traits of syncretizing their culture with the dominant culture. It is a new world based on the old tradition and beliefs but responding to the dominant culture which could redeem the natives to exist, that Erdrich envisions as a solution in *Tracks*.

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Distinction in English Civilization in George Orwell's *England Your England*

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Abstract: *“England, Your England” pictures the English society at the time of the Second World War. It satires the essential unity and indivisibility of the English people. It summarizes the universal British characteristics along with patriotism. Orwell particularly admires the two qualities of the common people, one “their extreme gentleness” and other “their deep moral attitude of life”. There are differences and divisions between nation and nation. The average of human behavior differs largely from country to country. The fact is that there is something distinctive in English civilization. But England with the rest of the world is changing. It can change only in certain directions, which up to a point can be foreseen. It does not mean that the future is fixed, it at best means that certain alternatives are possible. One of the most important developments in England of the past twenty years has been the upward and downward extension of the middle-class. The old classification of society into capitalists, proletarians and petit-bourgeoisie (small property owners) has become obsolete. Orwell’s chief metaphors of England are those of the family and the living organism, “an everlasting animal stretching into the future and the past, like all living things, having the power to change out of all recognition and yet remain the same”- This is how Orwell describes England.*

Key Words: *nation, behaviourism, patriotism.*

Introduction:

“England Your England” pictures the English society at the time of the Second World War. It satires the essential unity and indivisibility of the English people. It summarizes the universal British characteristics along with patriotism. Orwell particularly admires the two qualities of the common people, one “their extreme gentleness” and other “their deep moral attitude to life”.

There are differences and divisions between nation and nation. The human behavior also differs from one country to another country. The fact is that there is something distinctive in English civilization. England with the world is changing; this has been discussed by Orwell in the present essay. The changes are made only in certain directions, it does not mean that the future is fixed but some alternatives are possible. The most important development in England is that the upward and the downward extension of the middle-class and the old classification of the society into capitalists, proletarians and petit-bourgeoisie have become obsolete.

Orwell’s chief metaphor of England are those of the family and the living organism, “an everlasting animal stretching into the future and the past, like all living things, having the power to change out of all recognition and yet remain the same”- This is how Orwell describes England.

Patriotism and Differences:

“One cannot see the modern world as it is unless one recognizes the overwhelming strength of patriotism, national loyalty.” (Part I) Orwell says that highly civilized human beings are flying overhead and trying to kill people in England as in the name of war. The entire British are under the threat of bombardment and destruction. Though we can understand that the people fighting and indulging in war is more civilized, law-abiding and kind-hearted, they do this because of patriotism and national loyalty. Differences are there between nation and nation, human behaviors also differs from country to country.

Many from different country dislike the national way of life in England. They feel the sensation of breathing a different air like beer is bitter, the grass is green and the coins are heavier. In spite of its naturalness, England changes as it is a kind of reflection of the war. The clatter of clogs in the Lancashire mill towns, the queens outside the labour exchanges, the to-and-fro movement of the Lorries that can be seen on the Great North Road of England and the old maids going to Holy Communion are all characteristics features of the English scene.

Patriotism is the main focus of the essay Orwell defines patriotism as a devotion to a particular way of life which makes one believe to be the best in the world. By nature patriotism is defensive both militarily and by power. The abiding purpose of every nationalist is to secure more power and prestige not for himself but for his nation. It is patriotism that is defined here expresses itself in “England Your England”. Orwell pays more attention in finding the feelings of the community, the tendency of the inhabitants to feel alike and act together in moments of supreme crisis.

Merits and Demerits of the English People:

Artificially the English are not gifted. They are not musical as the Germans or Italians. Painting and sculpture never flourished in England as they had in France. The English are not intellectual. They have a certain power of acting without talking a thought. They are good sleep walkers. The phrase ‘a sleep-walking’ coined by Hitler for the Germans is the best applied to the English. The English are not only a nation of flower-lovers, but also stamp-collectors, pigeon-fanciers, amateur carpenters, coupon snipers, crossword-puzzle fans and dart-players. They believe in the liberty of the individual. This sort of liberty they believe is not with the economic liberty to exploit others for profit but a liberty to do what one like.

The English civilization is good at its best as we can see the bus conductors are good-tempered and the policeman do not carry revolvers. Though the successive wars have shaken it, but not destroyed it. The patriotism of the common people of England is not conscious or vocal, they never remain their historical memories is the real fact. The English literature is full of battle poems; they gain popularity by means of tale of disasters and retreats. Military dictatorships exist every where. The English people irrespective of all classes hate the swaggering officer with jingle of spurs and crash of boots. The British officers wore civilian clothes during off duty.

In England people still believe in the concepts of justice, truth and liberty. The law is not so just but still everyone respect law and feel a sense of outrage, even the totalitarian idea has never taken root. The people in England have no military knowledge defensive towards the war. The soldiers songs are not vengeful during the war but humorous and mock-defeatist one for example,

“I don’t want to join the bloody Army

I don’t want to go into the war

I want no more to roam

I’d rather stay at home

Living on the earnings of a whore.

Status of ruling, middle and working class people:

The attitudes of the ruling class people are purely negative among the English intellectuals. The English society could not use them because of such kind of attitude. They took for granted the divorce between patriotism and intelligence. But patriotism and intelligence have to come together. Such class people never expect to come into power. They are shallow; their severance from the common culture of the country is another striking feature about them. They have the intension of being Europeanizes and constitute an island of dissident thought. This sort of attitude of the ruling class has some effect on the English public life.

The most important development in England for the past twenty years leads to the upward and downward extension of the middle class. As Orwell says, **“thirty years ago the Blimp class was already losing its vitality. The middle-class families celebrated by Kipling, the prolific lowbrow families whose sons officered the army and navy and swarmed over all the waste places of the earth.... (Part V)** England is a country where financial power and property are left in very few hands. The peasantry disappeared; the independent shopkeeper is destroyed, the petty businessman slowly diminishing in number. Modern industry cannot get great number of managers, engineers, technicians and even the salesmen who draw large salary. The tendency of the capitalist is to enlarge the middle-class and not to wipe them out.

The working class became better when compared to last thirty years. This is because of the trade unions. The standard of life of a country cannot rise without a corresponding rise in real wages. A millionaire cannot light the streets for himself by darkening it for the working class. However unjustly society is organized certain technical advances are bound to benefit the whole community. The modern industrial methods run after less man power so that people are left with more energy even after their day’s work is done. During this era both the working class and the middle class draw together their habits, manners and outlook.

Indeterminate Social Class and Future England:

“After 1918 there began to appear something that had never existed in England before: people of indeterminate social class (Part VI). In 1910 every human being can be distinguished by his clothes, accent and manners. The old class distinctions are diminishing slowly. The drawbacks of the war will wipe out the class privileges. When this happens the life in England will be tinged with the characteristics mentioned earlier. Whatever may be the consequences of the war its national culture will remain as it is, it will not be Russianized or Germanized but England will be an England for ever.

It needs some very great disaster, such as prolonged subjugation by a foreign enemy to destroy a national culture. Some important traditional works like the stock exchange will be pulled down, the country houses will be changed to children’s holiday resorts and the horse plough will be replaced by the tractor will be completely forgotten.

Though there may be such changes yet England remains the same is a thing to note.

“National characteristics are not easy to pin down, and when pinned down they often turn out to be trivialities or seem to have no connexion with one another. (Part II). In England concepts like justice, truth and liberty still prevails. Their illusions are powerful; the hanging judge is a symbol of strange mixture of

both reality and illusion. The contradiction of democracy and privilege, humbug and decency makes English familiar.

The English Civilization:

The English are outside the European culture. They show their talent in literature. The British democracy is supposed to be mild because the governing class controls the press, the radio and the education. But the national government of England reflects the will of the English people and act according to their will and expectations.

It is crystal clear that England is a class-ridden country with privilege ruled by old and silly. The tendency of the inhabitants to feel alike and act together at the time of crisis is a remarkable attitude of the people. The corruption is limited which can be seen in the English press. They lead a scandal less public life like a Victorian family with private language and common memories.

During the years of war the Empire started to stagnate which affected everyone in England, especially the middle class and the left-wing intelligentsia, during nineteen thirties the British morale was hampered because of the left-wing intelligentsia. The attitude of the left-wing intelligentsia is negative so the English intelligentsia is Europeanized. They started taking cookery from Paris and opinions from Moscow. They formed an island of dissident thought, feeling ashamed of their own nationality. In this way the culture of the country slowly diminishes.

During the past ten years the social position of the English intellectuals is negative like anti-Blimps is said to be a by-product of the ruling class stupidity. In this condition society cannot use them so patriotism and intelligentsia came to be divorced and good for nothing.

The Gentleness of English Civilization:

Many nations have their own characteristics, like Spaniards are cruel to animals as they make lot of noise, Chinese are addicted to gambling but English are gentle. Though they are not gifted artificially like the Germans and the Italians they are gentle and practical minded, but the common people are not puritanical, they are gamblers, drink as they like, devoted to bawdy jokes using foul language. They live for centuries without any definite religious belief. The Anglican Church did not exercise any hold on them, for this they even go to the extent of forgetting the name of the Christ. The common people are not tainted by power worship.

The gentleness of English civilization is the marked feature of England. This can be seen in both the middle and the upper class people as they hate war and militarism. The English criminal law is out of date. When people in England are hanged there is no outcry against it, they accept it as a part of law and it cannot be altered. Everyone believes that law can be impartially administered.

Conclusion:

The ending of the essay is poetic and a remarkable one. Orwell brings a vision of England in which the common culture is paramount. This essay is cultural history of England, a history concerned to document the blunders of ruling class. Orwell's superannuatedness of the English middle-class manners and the dangers inherent in the continuing middle-class hegemony in English life and culture is clearly depicted in this essay.

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Multipronged Aggression in Chester Himes' *If He Hollers Let Him God*

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Abstract: African-American literature has generally focused on the role of African Americans within the larger American society. African-American literature explores the issues of freedom and equality, African-American, racism, religion, slavery, migration, feminism and so on. African-American literature presents the African-American experience from an African-American point of view. African-American literature has both been influenced by the great African diasporic tradition and shaped it in many countries. African Americans are also represented in the genres of science fiction, fantasy and horror.

African-American literature has also crossed over to genre fiction. A pioneer in this area is Chester Himes, who in the 1950s and '60s wrote a series of detective novels. Chester Himes' novel *If He Hollers Let Him Go* depicts the experience of black people in America during 1940s, at the time of World War II. The present paper aims at exhibiting the experience at war is showed clearly through the character, Robert Jones. He attempts to wage a personal war against racism. Though this central character, Himes has shown the condition of the black in 1940s and their struggling to survive amongst the problems they face.

Key words: Racism, African- American Literature, Chester Himes' *If He Hollers Let Him Go*.

Introduction

African-American literature has generally focused on the role of African Americans within the larger American society. African-American literature explores the issues of freedom and equality, African-American, racism, religion, slavery, migration, feminism and so on. African-American literature presents the African-American experience from an African-American point of view. The Harlem Renaissance from 1920 to 1940 was a flowering of African-American literature and art. It was part of a larger flowering of social thought and culture. Numerous Black artists, musicians and others produced classic works in fields from jazz to theater. A large migration of African Americans began during World War II. This migration produced a new sense of independence in the Black community and contributed to the vibrant Black urban culture seen during the Harlem Renaissance. African-American literature has also crossed over to genre fiction. A pioneer in this area is Chester Himes, who in the 1950s and '60s wrote a series of detective novels.

Chester Himes, a novelist, essayist, and short story writer, was born on July 29, 1909, in Jefferson City, Missouri. He attended Ohio State University after high school but dropped out by the end of 1926. He preferred the company of pimps, gamblers and hustlers. He pimped for his girlfriend Jean Johnson and committed crime. His behavior led to his arrest. He was sentenced to twenty five years in prison on December 27, 1928. In the 1940s, Himes' writing reflected the anger and frustration building up in the Black community. He became discouraged as he encountered racial hostility while in the workforce. For the next fifteen years, he was part of the literary period known as the Protest Era. His protest novels are *If He Hollers Let Him Go* (1945), *Lonely Crusade* (1947) and *The Primitive* (1955).

If He Hollers Let Him Go tells the story of Bob Jones, an African American shipyard foreman during World War II. He is falsely accused of rape. Though, Jones is found innocent of the charges, during his hearing the judge decides he must be punished for expressing interracial desire. He judge forces Jones to make a choice: he either accepts a rape conviction or goes to prison, or he volunteers to enter World War II. The novel depicts the experience of black people in America during 1940s, at the time of World War II.

The central character, Robert Jones lives in constant fear every day of his life because he is a Blackman. Other black men also suffer and also are in constant fear which they have to face. Chester Himes has given thoughts of white people about the black men. Through the words of white people, they show their hatred towards the black. Even the white people who work under the black men show their hatred towards black indirectly and sometimes directly. Race becomes the main focus for every American. As Jones is black, his position as a leader, supervisor in the Atlas shipyard is always under the view. Every black men's little mistake is taken in to account by the white and they make it an issue. Even in dreams, Jones is haunted with issues of racism. He wakes up with three dreams in his mind. One dream is, he is offered a chained dog, the second is of being present at a criminal investigation in which the white detectives are trying to find a black man and the third is of seeking a job from white men who mock at him for not having tools.

The white people cross the street by looking at the big new car full of black faces. Even their looks are full of hatred. When they reach the shipyard five minutes late, even the white gatekeeper looks humiliate at them. The guard at the entrance asks Jones, "What's the matter you coloured boys can't never obey no rules?" (18). Kelly, Jones' supervisor, an Irishman shows his feeling for black. While he passes, the white women look at him curiously, and with open hostility. Jones feels that only the older women are friendlier than the younger white women. Suddenly he faces a white girl.

The white people beat him back and Jones gets wounded, when he gets up, he couldn't stop remembering them. Out of his anguish towards the white people and the white who beats and wounds him, he wants to kill the white and to show his power. Jones, then plans to murder him, "It was then I decided to murder him cold bloodedly, without giving him a chance" (43). Jones wants to show the white, how he feels everyday and how all coloured people feel in foreign land. After Jones has made his mind to kill that white man in that evening, he feels very strong now, "I had never felt so strong in all my life" (45). On his way to his home, he feels different for the first time in this country. Even his attitude towards all the white has changed.

Jones gives lift to the southern people. He enjoys their company. After refreshing himself, he again comes back to shipyard, and waits for his man (white) to come. The white realizes that Jones is following him and gets fear. Once he reaches his home, he hurries to lock the door. Jones plans to enjoy that day with his girl, Alice. So he reserves a table for them in the best hotel in town. He dressed neatly and reaches Alice's home. Mrs. Harrison, Alice's mother welcomes him and talks about their condition. Jones couldn't like to accept the point of Mrs. Harrison. Though Alice's family is black, they belong to high position. They are treated equal by the white. Alice and Jones enter the hotel in great excitement. But they do not know that everything is going to be collapsed.

Even the waiter is not ready to serve the colour. The head waiter of the hotel says that all the tables are reserved a table then also the waiter is not ready, "I'll have to consult my lists for tonight. We have so many unexpected officers whom we must serve, you know" (70). He makes them to wait for a long time. Many whites come and go off. This makes Jones very hot, "Tomorrow I'm going to kill one of you bastards," (71).

After a long time, the waiter takes them to the last table which makes Jones very angry. "We came here to something to eat out of the kitchen, not to eat in it" (71). Alice looks extremely embarrassed. All the white people in the hotel look at them very strangely. This command makes Jones to feel very badly. Alice usually moves up with the white people easily. They too accept her and her family because of their position in the society. And also Alice more even looks like white.

On their way back to home, the cops stop them. They stop them because they are blacks (coons). When one of the cops identifies Alice as black, she couldn't accept it and she doesn't want to lose her respect. So she argues with them to the station and put a cash bail. On the way back, Alice scold him that he couldn't act like a man. That night, both have a painful and hatred night. Even in his dream, Jones is haunted by the hell behavior of the whites and their treatment to the blacks. Even in sleep, he couldn't sleep well. Once he wakes up, his mind is totally surrounded by the previous day's incident, about his job and the white girl, Madge. Thought about Madge makes him like he is burning in fire.

Jones gets ready and goes off away from the people he knows. He goes top hotel away from the town. Though he meets his friend Veda, he feels very lonely and depressed. The two white soldiers enter the hotel along with the white girl. The white girl gets over drunk and starts to move very close with the black boys in the hotel. White the white soldiers start to go away, they compel her to come along with them. But she does not consider that. One of the whites gets red and says, "Let's get out this nigger joint" (93). The black people call themselves as 'nigger' but they never bear white people calling them as nigger. The white girl is out of control. She can do anything shat she likes. Even she can bring them all trouble because "She was white" (93). These things make Jones to suffer.

Jones tries to shake the thoughts about the white people and their domination from his mind. Yet all the incidents which are happening around him, make him to feel irritate which show that the black people are very inferior to the white people. Even the white girl in the drugstore likes to sell the things only to the white people. Jones reaches Alice's House and meets her along with her friends Polly Johnson, Arline Wilson and Cleotina Dobbs. They all talk about many different things which he doesn't like. He couldn't involve in their conversation. Then one more friend of Alice, Tom Leighton comes to her house and joins in their conversation. Their topic changes. They talk about the black in the atmosphere of the white people. They talk about the works of Richard Wright *Native Son*. Arline doesn't like *Native Son* as it portrays bad about North White people.

In their conversation, Jones says about Negroes condition. All of them talk about the condition of the black and remedy for their depression. This also made Jones very angry. He couldn't accept the thought that the white man giving or finding solution for their problem. After all the friends have gone, Alice and Jones have a great misunderstanding and argument. In one point Alice advises him to come away from his thinking about the white. But he couldn't. Then, he says his problem and the reason for his visit to her.

In shipyard all the black people support him and plan to rise against the white for depromoting Jones. All the blacks together support Jones which makes him to feel better, "I felt better than I'd felt all morning"

(135). Next, he meets the union steward, Herbie Frieberger to talk in personal. As he is white, the steward asks him to come later. But Jones is adamant and talks with him. But the steward is not ready to make Madge to work with the blacks. He tries to compromise and says that they all like the blacks. The steward refuses to make Madge to work with the blacks. So Jones returns without a word. He thinks what will happen if all the blacks refuse to work with the white. Whatever he does, he gets only suffering in the white society. So he remembers Alice words that the black should think of their future and better go off without fight with the whites.

Jones goes to meet Madge in her place. He gets the thought of seducing her. All his people are in great anger about their lives. Jones wants to come out of his tense. He wants to show his power and to show that he is superior. So automatically, his legs go towards where Madge is working. Jones searches for Johnny Stoddart and first he couldn't find him. On his return, he sees him and Johnny gets scared. Then Jones feels sorry for him and leaves the tool that he brings to kill him, "Then all at once I felt sorry for him. Sorry for anybody who had to be that scared and keep on living" (158). After few minutes only, Johnny returns back to his normal. "Now he was ready to die for his race like a patriot, a true believer. I could see in his mind he wanted to kill me because I had seen him lose it" (158). He says that he wants to fight with Jones says, "I don't want to fight you, I want to kill you.

During lunch time, Jones watches Madge sitting and having her lunch. First, he hesitates to go near her though he wants to meet her, then he goes near her and starts to speak with her. Then Madge's sister-in-law, Elise joins them. After their conversation, Jones says to Madge that he will meet her tonight at night for dating. After his work, he takes bath. He gets call from Alice asking him to come and meet her but he doesn't respond to it. He goes to the place where Madge is living. He packs his car for her arrival. But she has gone out. So he goes to Alice house to meet her. But she is about to move with Leighton. She ignores him and goes with Leighton. He couldn't tolerate that she has gone with Whiteman.

Totally drunk, Jones again goes to Madge's apartment and knocks her door at late night. He comes her in thought of seducing her. First he forces her, then she itself allows him to be close with her. She says, "All right, rape me then, nigger!" (182). But he let her free on hearing the word 'Rape'. He leaves her and goes out of the house. She pursuits him to the parking. Jones thinks that the upper class black people get enough food and live well. They never destroy them by allowing the white to rule their mind. The last and only possible way to live amidst the white people is to tolerate everything and proceed with their progress. But such things make Jones to suffer. He never accepts the sufferings faced by the black. Of his three years in Los Angeles, he has worked hard and earns many things such as Alice, car and many girl friends. He has to satisfy with it otherwise he cannot survive. Many times Alice advises him to accept the life on its way. She asks him to live his life fully without hating the white for their action. But he couldn't accept the way of black living in America. Jones tries to divert his mind from his racial thoughts. But all the things that are happening around him make him to feel disappoint. He thinks of quitting the day's job. He seeks Alice to get peace of mind. When he calls her, he gets the reply that she is busy in meeting.

Again Jones plans to quit the day's job and goes to Mac's office. But suddenly he goes towards Don's working place in order to see Madge. He himself voluntarily gets into problem. But she stares at him and turns towards Don and commands badly about the black woman which shows her anger towards Jones. Again Jones seeks Alice, but now she is not ready to come and talk with him. Jones gets a call from Alice in good mood. That day is going to be a good and pleasant day for Jones. Her speech makes him to feel very happy, very important to her. He feels very special that day. But Jones doesn't want to think about his race because of the reaction from the white society. But again Alice says that through compromise only; the black can survive in the society. Whatever Alice says, Jones first doesn't compromise. He feels frustrated about his life in the white society. Again she says that everything is controlled by our soul only. So all can lead a peaceful life if they control their mind.

These words change the mind of Jones and he feels very free and feels like a new person. With the new hope in his mind, he departs Alice with the promise that he will compromise who he had a fight. On his return, he announces Mac that he will continue his job without any trouble with his co-workers. In his work, Jones goes to the deck house and checks all the room in search of instrument. There, he enters into a closed door and sees one white woman is sleeping. All of a sudden that white woman wakes up. He notices that the woman is Madge and says that he doesn't notice her.

Finally Jones remembers a woman. So he goes to her home and informs her about his trouble. He wants to use her phone to call Alice. He calls Alice and informs her that he is in great trouble and in need of money. But she asks him if he hasn't done anything, there is no need of escaping. She believes that the white people will give judgment without differentiation. But Jones knows very well, the white will never free the black people. On the way, he stops for red signal. A police cruiser sees him and recognizes him as a black. The cop asks him about his bandages and searches his car. They get gun from glove compartment.

Jones says the reason for killing Johnny to the sergeant. Suddenly he wakes up. Jailer wakes him and asks him to come, as Judge Morgan wants to see him. He goes with him and waits for the judge. That time he feels that he has lost his life. His life is only in the hands of white people. They have to decide his future. The

judge comes along with Mr.Houghton, the President of Atlas Corporation. The president says that the white woman is ready to forgive him and withdraw her charge against him as it will create racial tension among the workers. He thinks that may be the corporation people would have realized the truth about the wrong charge of Madge.

So they are planned to withdraw the case. The president blames him for not being perfect though he has given good opportunity and responsibility. Jones promises that he will keep his word and will stay away from white women. He faces lot of problems in this white society. Though many black people are leading their life in this society, Jones couldn't tolerate the problems created by the white. His impatience pushes him to troubles. At last, he has lost his job, his lover, his family, his dream and everything. Because of this, now he has joined the Army and has to work till his life ends.

CONCLUSION

Chester Himes' first three novels have taken the intersections of race with other sites of difference such as sexuality, gender, and class as its central subject. Later, he has chosen horror theme in most of his novels. The present study examines the social conflicts presented in Chester Himes' *If He Hollers Let Him Go*. Bob Jones, the black, is appointed as one of the supervisors of Atlas Corporation. He hopes for his better life and happy future economically. But he is appointed only to maintain good relationship among the Whites and the Blacks. His growth suffers due to his inner racial conflicts and racial problems faced by him in the white society. Then his position in society totally ends because he is accused of 'rape' which he doesn't do.

The novel presents a disjunction between the protagonist's fantasies and his actions. The protagonist, Robert Jones suffers due to the racial problem. The first chapter of the novel itself shows the dominant theme of the novel, the conflicts faced by the black in the white society. Though racism presents in the white society, Robert Jones suffers mostly due to his inferiority complex which makes him very tensed whenever he faces the whites. Himes describes full and fully racial tension. The novel presents a story during 1940's. Himes' hero, Jones is the victim of not only of white racism but also of social emasculation at the hands of black and white women. He is close with Black woman, Alice and also with White Woman, Madge. But his circumstance demands him to choose none. He doesn't marry his wealthy, self absorbed, near-white fiancée. Alice and accepts the limitations of his race.

Himes' hero, Bob suffers because of racism. Though he doesn't go to the problems, the problems come to him. He doesn't do any harm to Madge, just he couldn't bear the word 'nigger' which match uses to call him. So he calls her as 'bitch'. Later he doesn't do anything. Though he goes to her room to have sex with her, he returns back without doing anything. It is Madge who accuses him for 'rape' which he doesn't do, "*Help! Help! My God, help me! Some whiteman, help me! I'm being raped*" (222).

In this novel, it is the white society that destroys the life of Bob Jones and makes him to join in the army. Bob Jones mostly suffers due to his inner conflicts which make him to hate the Whites. Himes' *If He Hollers Let Him Go* shows the life of middle class their sufferings in the society. Addison Gayle, Jr., argues that the novel is, "concerned with the powerlessness of the black-middle class intellectual" (182). Absurdity is replaced by the certainty of fear for black in a white supremacist society. The world around Bob Jones remains absurd. The world which he lives is organised around subordinating his existence. When comparing the both novels, Chester Himes has taken 'race' as the main concept. The plot construction of the novel is firsthand information because Chester Himes has portrayed his own personal experiences in this novel. And also this novel is a contemporary work which picturizes accurately what has happened during this period.

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Socio - Cultural Realism in A. K. Ramanujan's Poem Obituary

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Abstract: Attipate Krishnaswami Ramanujan a prolific writer has penned more than fifteen books that include verse in English and Kannada and translated Tamil and Kannada verse to English. It is significant that, through the medium of poetry, many Indian poets voiced Indian culture in various forms but A.K.Ramanujan explored into the matters of social concern. Though, his major characteristics of poetry include exactness, he is well known for depicting deeply the vital issues of South Indian socio-cultural ethos that have been existence in subsequent decades. This consciousness about Indian traditional society and culture has brought him recognition all over the world.

A.K.Ramanujan, a leading Indian English poet of Diaspora tradition is not baffled by the east and west cultural contradictions but analyses the socio-cultural issues in the tradition of Indian sensibilities. His poems are also remarkable for their emotional and psychological reminiscences of Indian culture. Even though, he settled in the United States of America, it is wonderful that his belief and practice in Indian culture and life had been retained till his death. His poems help him to make sense of the ideals of Hinduism and present the manifold facets of it. This paper tries to focus some realistic facet of South Indian Hindu culture and tradition seen through a western outlook. Though, there are many notable poems, Obituary is taken to project the socio-cultural realism in an ironic tone.

The poem Obituary is a short poem which reveals the unexplored areas of human life. It explores the gloomy reality of Indian culture and customs prevailing particularly, the close ties of family relationship, spirituality, superstitious belief and religious ties in the way of life. This paper also analyses the poets psychic obsession with his cultural roots which is seen deeply embedded in his un forgettable Indian past.

Key words: culture, realism and obsession

Introduction

Indian English poets voiced the Indian diverse culture in various forms. They were radically different from previous decades. It is significant that, in the second half of the twentieth century, many Indian English poets were pre occupied with the problems of roots. There were very few poets who voiced the social, culture ethos and milieu of India differently in their own aspect. Among, A.K.Ramanujan is considered to be the corner stone. He is well-known for his excellent and special depiction of Indian folklore and translations of Indian classical literature. This consciousness about Indian traditional society and culture has brought him recognition not only in India but globally

Attipate Krishnaswami Ramanujan shortly called as A.K.Ramanujan was an Indo-American poet. He is much beloved by his modern readers as not only a poet but a scholar, philologist, folklorist, translator, and playwright. In 1976, the Indian government awarded the Padma Sri and 1983 he was given the MacArthur Prize Fellowship. He has penned more than fifteen books that include verse in English and Kannada and translated Tamil and Kannada verse to English. A.K.Ramanujan work's bristle for depicting realistically deeply the vital issues of South Indian socio-cultural ethos that have been existence in subsequent decades. Along, he reflects the confrontation with life and cultural values.

Diaspora

A.K.Ramanujan a leading Indian English poet, though settled in America never forgot his motherland and always lived in the reminiscences of Indian culture and society. A.K Ramanujan's poetry, "rooted in and stems from the Indian environment and reflects its mores, often ironically" (Parthasarathy 3). Being a Diaspora, he is not baffled by the two cultural contradictions but views the socio-cultural issues in the tradition of Indian sensibilities. This paper tries to focus some of A.K. Ramanujan's realistic facet of South Indian Hindu culture and tradition seen through a western outlook.

A.K.Ramanujan's Poetry

A.K. Ramanujan's many poems are noted for their emotional and psychological reminiscences, with the mark of socio- cultural realism. His poetry expresses another reality of Indian culture the ideas of Hinduism and presents the manifold facets of it. It unearths the hidden histories of Indian cultural production. The real impact of Indian traditional social-cultural, ethos and religious spiritual ideas are clearly discernible especially in the life of the middle class people.

Socio-Cultural Realism

As far as Indian English poetry is concerned, the socio-cultural realism can be interpreted in many ways according to its various layers of means. In A.K. Ramanujan's poetry focus of socio-cultural realism includes Indian society, its tradition, culture, rituals and religious faith embedded in the middle class people's life. The focus is on the several unexplored areas of human life which are considered as irrelevant and neglected. The foremost aspect of A.K. Ramanujan's socio-cultural realism is that he depicts the suffering of the Hindu middle class people who struggle between materialism and culture.

Obituary

Among many notable poems of A.K. Ramanujan, *Obituary* is taken to project the socio-cultural realism. The poem *Obituary* is written in the second volume of A.K. Ramanujan's collective poem *Relations* in 1979. It is a short poem which reveals the unexplored areas of human life. It is written in a simple diction in eight paragraphs. The poem written in first person, bristle with a vivid picture of Indian family life, culture, and moral background.

Obituary is a very good example on several unexplored areas of socio-culture. It is remarkable for the manner in which it touches on the vital issues that have been existence in the Indian society for subsequent decades and grown into matter of urgent social concern. It explores the gloomy reality of Indian culture and customs prevailing, particularly the close ties of family relationship, spirituality, superstitious belief and religious ties in the way of life. It is through appropriate image; A.K. Ramanujan depicts the human situations contradictions and complexities experienced by the people of the period.

Tribute to Father

A.K. Ramanujan's explosion of thoughts is seen in *Obituary*. The complex thoughts bring out Indian social problems like growth of population, unemployment, poverty, and illiteracy. The poem is a tribute to the father of the family who passed away due to cardiac arrest. It delineates a Hindu middle class life during the post independence. *Obituary* is not an elegy. It pictures ironically on the pragmatic problems of a Hindu middle class family facing a sudden death of the father who lived irresponsibly. It can be noted that in *Obituary* A.K. Ramanujan describes the Hindu traditions and customs where they have outlived their utility and at present having sentimental value.

Struggle of Middle Class

In *Obituary* the deterioration in the quality of life is apparent. The middle class people seem struggling hard economically for their livelihood along the cultural pressures. The son in the opening line seems to be disgruntled with his father. He does not show any strong feelings for the father's death but alludes the pain left after the patriarch absence. The lists of things that the father had left after his death as a legacy are listed:

left dust
on a table full of papers
left debts and daughters
a bedwetting grandson
named by the toss
of a coin after him (Parthasarathy 10)

Role of a Son

The son in the poem is the epitome of responsibility and courage. After the father's death the son is considered to be the savior of the family. He shoulders responsibility and for any ancient rituals that the culture requires. The son observing and nurturing the social ethics from childhood is capable and competent to rupture the relationships. He is of the opinion that the father had left nothing materialistic to support the family. The father had left with trials and tribulations even the house in which they lived leaned slowly. The deterioration in their quality of life is apparent in the metaphor of the house. The house had to be renovated. The only support of the house was the coconut tree in the yard.

In the process of social and cultural transformation there has been no flight from the traditional culture and identities. In spite of poverty and new responsibility waiting, there has been no rejection of tradition. Simultaneously two major responsibilities wait the son. He had to pay the debts and marry the daughters. The unmarried daughters as burden raise the cultural aspect of the female in the society, placing emphasis on marriage. Parents are endowed with the responsibility of marrying their daughters with a good amount of dowry and bearing the expensive of the marriage that suits their status which was not so easy in a middle class Hindu Brahmin community with just only one income by the male.

A.K. Ramanujan has presented the diverse aspects of tradition in a new garb, which is also indicative of the need to distinguish between the relevant and irrelevant aspect of it in the context of changes in the contemporary world. The poem recognizes the vitality inherent in Indian culture and tradition and also the changes. His subtle irony colours his glimpse into the traditional ideas and rituals which are followed by people belonging to diffuse strata of the Indian society after the death of the father.

Socio- Cultural Practices

Occasionally, the glory of the Hindu past is obliquely suggested. The son is not mourned or pained by the sudden death of the father, who died a sudden death in the market place by heart attack. Instead he is

stunned with new responsibilities. He does not escape or show any ill feel but accepts mutely and follows the immediate cultural rituals and social customs mechanically. The poem brings out a typical of traditional Indian society. Their practice and faith surrenders to the pressures and prejudices of the society. In spite of all adversities, the son faces the challenges and adversities.

When the father was cremated, coins were placed on the body's eyes in keeping with the Hindu custom of swift cremation. The very nature of reality and the role of good and evil in life of Hindu philosophy are basically concerned. As per Hindu culture, if any unfilled wish of the dead person exists, the body will not burn properly. A.K.Ramanujan ironically states that the father during cremation was burnt properly. He was free from the family deeds. He was not moved in heart or obsessed with the responsibilities. His eyes did not have any feelings. As per Hindu ritual customs, the ashes were collected and dispersed on the east directions of the confluence of three holy rivers.

Economically Degraded

Another serious limitation of the Hindu view of life is exposed in the death of the father, it has degraded economically. The family did not erect an epitaph or tombstone for the father bearing dates of his birth and death. The poem is vivid as it reflects on the father's past life in a Brahmin ghetto. The poem is vivid as it reflects on the father's past life in a Brahmin ghetto. The son felt that from his birth to death, the father did many things in correctly or incompletely. His birth or death was neither consequence. He is deemed as incapable, and gained nothing worthless in life. The worthless father's birth was through caesarian which was against the orthodox Brahmin society. They considered that it was due to the evils done in the previous birth. His death was also quite unexpected.

Earlier, the son used to read happily the newspaper wrapped in the groceries like salt, coriander and jaggery for great fun. But, now he read for the hope of finding his father's obituary lines in the madras newspaper. Despite the displeasure with his father voiced, the son respectfully wants to have the paper with the father's obituary.

A Changed Mother

A.K.Ramanujan offers detailed description of several customs and practices which are now probably a lost defunct. The father's sudden death has given two things realistically. The first is 'a changed mother' and the second is 'one annual ritual'. The death of the father has provided the mother an identity as 'a widow' which is considered by the society as bad omen. A widow is seen as liability in the society. In Hindu culture the widow is prohibited against traditional practices and subjected to many restrictions. Her attire and attitudes are changed. The pious Brahmin lady, now a widow has forbidden being in front of all the deeds of the family and society. She is considered as in auspicious and discriminated from the society.

An Annual Ritual

The second change after the death of the father is significant because each year they have the ritual of honoring and remembering. The son appears to view favourably the great absorbing power of his traditional culture. Every Brahmin till his death has to customize the death anniversary ritually of his father and fore father. This ritual had to be performed for years in succession. Thus, the honor and to remember has to be customized. The poet's confrontation with life and cultural values are reflected realistically. Their practice and faith surrenders to the pressures of the society. He is by no means blind to some of its stable virtues. He admires its strong faith in the unity of all life and with resilience fulfills.

Joint Family

In spite of ironic tone employed throughout the poem. However A.K.Ramanujan in the socio-cultural practices, describes a large, traditional Hindu joint family. The characteristics of the Indian joint family are reflected. The intricate relationship within the family organization has been conveyed within. The individual gains protection, stability and strength only through the joint family. The close-knit of the family has made the son not grief stricken. He is votary of the Indian way of life which affirms unity in diversity and the need to safe guard human values.

Male Domination

In *Obituary* the joint family is male dominated. Male gender in the family primarily has more responsibilities. After the death of the father innumerable difficulties seem to haunt the next male heir the son. He is heaved with responsibilities which the father had unfulfilled to do in his life. The son buries his personal feelings, and resides on the pragmatic problems that his family faced after his father death.

Oppression of Women

The description of women gives painful sufferings in *Obituary*. Women are often seen as subordinate and inferior to man. The oppression of women is clear and realistically pictured in the poem. The Hindu women were passive in the second half of the twentieth century. They were doomed in depth to the social cultures. They were treated as subordinates. The mother and daughters live a crucial life and are known for high moral values. Being the real victim's they look after only the domestic life. They have no personal will and considered as the moral beam of the family. Psychologically, the wife is a mute observer for the irresponsible

man being the head of the family. Though they suffer pain integrally, they are safe as the son protects and take cares. It was the religious obligation of men to protect women for which he will be awarded the highest heaven.

Societal Conventions

Two societal conventions things are brought clearly in *Obituary*, one is marriage and the other is motherhood which was more societal conventions of the beginning of the twentieth century. The women surrender completely to the pressures of societal conventions of the society. The long suffering of the middle class Hindu wife at the hands of her husband is obviously designed to point a moral. The urge for social reform was of course a significant aspect. A.K.Ramanujan depicts the anguish sensitive individuals resulting from their spiritual up rootedness and confusion of values in the society they live in.

Conclusion

Obituary is remarkable for the manner it touches on vital issues of the society that have been existed in the subsequent decades grown into the matter of social concern. The socio- cultural values have a meaningful existence. The poet has given a wonderful firsthand experience of life in the death of a hierarchy of the family. The post Independent Indian scene with its curious criss- cross of rapid socio cultural realism remains a strong force. His realism is unsparing along his humanistic faith and humanitarian compassion.

A.K.Ramanujan's poetry is like a mirror where one can see the face of Indian socio cultural realism. It is through appropriate images that A.K.Ramanujan has depicted the human situation, contradiction and complexities of the people. As a whole, A.K.Ramanujan stands culturally graceful for he interprets the socio-cultural in a different form.

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Delving into Acculturation in Jumpa Lahiri's *The Namesake*

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Abstract: *Jumpa Lahiri the vibrant diasporic novelist stupefied the readers with her wonderfully designed novel the **Namesake** where she delineates on the issue of acculturation. The term acculturation entails a two way process of change. It focuses on the changes experienced by minorities in response to their contact with dominant majority. The diasporic novel the **Namesake** mainly discusses the acculturative stress faced by both the first generation and the second generation immigrants as shown by Jumpa Lahiri with dexterity. Thus this paper designs to show how the characters evolve to attain the acculturated state.*

Key Words: diasporic, immigrants, generation and acculturation.

Diasporic writing has flourished over the years and it still continues to occupy a pivotal role in the field of literature. We have Amithav Ghosh, Shashi Tharoor and Salman Rushdie to be named for instance. To have followed them is Jumpa Lahiri whose fictional works include *The Namesake*, *The Lowland* and *The Interpreter of Maladies*.

Her debut *The Namesake* made her a much promising Indian diasporic writer who had marveled the hearts of readers with her crisis of identity which prevails to be the top notch problem of the immigrants till date. In this novel, the writer speaks of two generations of immigrants who face the cultural shock and how things turn around when the characters have acculturated to their naturalized and ethnic culture.

To delineate on this topic, a character study of the two main characters of the novel is taken. The first is Ashima Ganguli, mother of Gogol who is none other than the protagonist. The latter is Gogol himself. An analysis of the first generation immigrant and the second generation with their usual cultural conflict is what will be cited for the further discussion of the paper.

Ashima Ganguli:

The Calcutta girl who moves to America with her husband with high hopes and dreams becomes homesick as she cannot get accustomed to the foreign land. Her dislocated heart keeps her aloof from America's culture and feels estrangement from India. The bengaliness in her is retained all through her life as she even tries to nurture her two children with indianness in them. Being the first generation immigrant she has conflict in accepting her new life as an American.

The adaptation is real tough for her as she often feels lonely and this caters to animosity in the hearts of her children for her weird behavior. Ashima was very close with her husband and her only consolation was him as her children adapted the Americanized lifestyle which bothered her way to much. The sense of loss from staying away from home made her stay displaced, dislocated and the cultural shock shook her too much. The first generation of Diaspora, were always isolated from mainstream American Culture. Despite the fact that they spoke English, they were betrayed by their accent. They feel alone and aloof there. Lahiri has shown all this through various conflicts presented in *The Namesake* through Ashima.

The thought of preserving her indianness was her idea of being culturally rooted but after Ganguli's death, the startling decision of her to stay with her children in America shows her acculturated state where now she thinks Calcutta to be "foreign" (186) because now she has become accustomed to the life in States. She is no longer completely Bengali, but she hasn't become an American either and it seems like she is at peace with that. Frankly, that's a fitting end to her character, because her name means "she who is limitless, without borders" (21), Ashima has reached a point where she really has transcended boundaries, and in the world of *The Namesake*, that is no small feat.

He's an American born Bengali son of immigrants, surrounded by rich white folks at schools like Yale and Columbia, and in places like Boston and New York. That's quite the identity crisis. The boy who so badly wants to be accepted as the American kid is always ostracized because of his name "Gogol" that seems to be a ridiculous term for his friends. He is pet named as Nikhil and again he seems to disconnect from this name too as in a way he has accustomed to his actual name Gogol which is why he refuses for his name change at school.

"The second generation finds itself presented with two conflicting realities and cultures and sets of expectations; one of the host countries through socio-cultural surroundings and the other of the home country through their parents" (Batra 50). Hence the protagonist is confused with his parents' ideologies of culture and he takes them to be ridiculously impractical as he does not see India with reverence. The identity crisis is a constant reminder of his dual identity that Gogol; must confront all throughout his life.

It is only after his dad's demise Gogol realizes the importance of his name. The name is retained and he happily calls himself to be a Bengali thereby accepting his ethnicity. This is only possible after he has come in terms with both cultures- Indian and American. Now he has no shame in calling himself to be "Nikhil Gogol Ganguli" (160). His discovery of his ancestral history and the assertion of his present Americanness is the blended personality of the second generation immigrant. Jhumpa Lahiri has indeed brought about the issue of acculturation in this novel beautifully for the readers to empathize the double identity faced by the immigrants.

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Globalization and Cultural Hegemony in Rohinton Mistry's *Such a Long Journey*

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Abstract: Globalization is a phenomenon that expands the movement of people and capital across the national borders. It is not only the economic phenomenon, but also affects cultural, political, social and religious life. It can be seen as a mechanism that merges different cultural practices. Many cities have become multicultural and hybridized with globalization. In this context of globalized cultural regimes, a new form of domination, exploitation and cultural practices and writings emerge in literature. Derek Walcott argues that migrants possess 'double consciousness'. Homi Bhaba, popularized the term 'Hybridity', prefers multiple cultural identities. This 'hybridity' and 'double consciousness' are found in immigrants and in globalized society. Antonio Gramsci adopted the term 'Hegemony' in his Prison Notebooks. He realized that culture plays in politics in a new and compelling way. According to him it is a more potent political tool than mere force of arms.

Keywords: Cultural Hybridity, Hegemony, Globalization, Identity, Multiculturalism.

Globalization is a global phenomenon which brings out the inter-connectivity between people and mixing up of cultures. This interconnectedness and coalescence of culture troubles one's identity. Globalization does not destroy localities but creates a sense of cross-culture, multi-cultural and trans-cultural experiences in different ways. Diasporans bring with them varied experiences, cultures, traditions, languages and memories, and translate and transform them into a dynamic varied transnational societies. This is clearly seen when Gustad in Mistry's *Such a Long Journey* requested the pavement artist to paint portraits in the Khodadad building. He painted Gods and Goddesses of different religions and also religious places of different religions. The impact of globalization is very vital and one cannot escape from its affectation.

Rohinton Mistry is the Indian Parsi writer. He was born on July 3, 1952 in Bombay. He occupies the position of one of the successful South Asian novelists. He has written three novels such as *Such a Long Journey*, *A Fine Balance* and *Family Matters* to his credit. His second novel *A Fine Balance* came in 1995. It tells the story of four characters of Meneck, Dina, Ishvar, and Omprakash and the impact of Indira Gandhi's state of emergency on them. The third novel, *Family Matters* came out in 2002, which focuses once again on the Parsi community in Bombay. He has viewed the life of a middle class Parsi family in Bombay in the mid 1990s. His last work of fiction *The Screem* was published in 2008. He has written extensively about India, Parsi culture and community. Parsis are the main characters in all his novels. He practices and belongs to Parsi community. He has chronicled the multi-faceted tradition of Parsi history and culture. He has also pictured the experiences of Parsi as a minority community existing in India for more than one thousand years. Mistry's clever portrayal of his characters gives a glimpse of Parsi's life, sufferings and position in the present Post-colonial scenario.

The novel *Such a Long Journey* is constructed based on the Nagarwala incident during the regime of Mrs. Indira Gandhi. Mr. Nagarwala, a Parsi man, is accused for impersonating Mrs. Indira Gandhi's voice over telephone to chief cashier in the branch of SBI. By this way he takes sixty lakh rupees for freedom fighters in Bangladesh. Mr. Nagarwala is announced guilty. This gives a shock for the entire Parsi community. Mistry's portrayal shows that his community has a great respect in the past, which he feels shattered by this ungrateful incident.

This novel creates a picture of Parsi life, based on memory and imagination. The day-to-day life of the inhabitants of Khodadad building, Dinshawji and Major Bilimoria, reflect the complexities who live in the margins. Religion and the day-to-day life of the denizens of Khodadad building beautifully merge together in this novel, which in a way determines the unique ethnicity of the Parsis. The first light of the morning barely illuminated the sky as Gustad Noble faced eastward to offer his orisons to Ahura Mazda. The hour was approaching six and up in the compound's solitary tree the sparrows began to call. Gustad listened to their chirping every morning while reciting his Kusti prayers "... the metallic clatter of pots and pans began nibbling at the edges of stillness. The bhaiya sat on his haunches, beside the tall aluminium can and dispensed milk into the vessels of the housewives" (SLJ 1).

The funeral rites of the Parsis bring to the fore another scale of their unique ethnic identity, which is further explored through the detailed description of funeral prayers after Dinshawji's death. "The corpse is carried carefully to the upper bungalow, which had a little verandah in front leading to the prayer hall, and a bathroom where the deceased would be given the final bath of ritual purity" (246). But after the accomplishment

of all these rites, the two men carried the body to an empty room, clothed in white and “laid it on the low marble platform. The face and ears were left uncovered by the white sheet. A priest arrived and lit an oil lamp next to Dinshawji’s head” (247). The description of dustorji’s prayer which penetrates the every nook and corner of the room adds serenity to the very conventional ritual of the cremation. But the very distinct ethnic identity of the Parsis is consummated in the very reference of The Tower of Silence where the corpse of the parsis are led to hang it from a tree for the vultures to eat up.

Gustad’s acquaintance with other religion is strongly associated with his friendship with Malcolm who is a Christian. Even in his childhood he used to visit the church with Malcolm. But this familiarity with other religion is intertwined with his pride in his own religion and his own ethnic identity which is perfectly echoed through his speech. “...Our prophet Zarathustra lived more than fifteen hundred years before son of God was even born, a thousand years before the

Budhha, two hundred years before Moses. And do you know how much Zoroastrianism influenced Judaism, Christianity and Islam?”(24). Though the influence of Parsi religion on other religions is entirely Mistry’s own view, but it’s quite evident enough that Gustad’s own pride in his own religion embodies Mistry’s own pride. Besides the portrayal of the indigenous Parsi culture Mistry subtly demonstrated the very notion of ‘hybridity’ which permeates the Indian society and leaves an imprint on the Parsis.

Though he has not gone very deep into the impact of hybridity on the Parsis to highlight their aboriginal culture and practices but the few traces which are left throughout the novel are apt enough to counter the essential Indian culture propagated by the dominant narratives. Gustad’s preference to read The Times of India instead of the Parsi newspapers like Jam-E-Jamshed is one of the several traces of hybrid culture. This notion of hybridity which engulfs the Indian society brings to the fore the gaps and silences in the very discourses of essential Indian culture. This excludes the heterogeneous cultures of the muted groups of the society. The very concepts of unity in diversity, coexistence and unison of several cultures unveil the undercurrent of cultural politics which apparently remains under the façade of the politics of multiculturalism.

The politics, played by the privileged classes is in a way contrived in nature. The promotion of the core Indian culture in a way surreptitiously denies the existence of other cultural ideologies and they are pushed into the margins so that the hegemony of the privileged cultures remains undisputed. Thus the detailed analysis of Parsi culture, their religion, food habits and their day-to-day life is an attempt to rediscover their forgotten past which is long suppressed by the dominant ideologies in the society. Mistry’s nostalgia and a longing for their past and origin are clearly echoed from Gustad’s own reminiscences of his childhood days, when there were abundance everywhere around him.

Such a Long Journey, Mistry’s first novel, is set against the background of Bangladesh-Pakistan wars of 1970s. The novel takes place in Mumbai. Most of the characters in the novel belonging to Parsi community express their agony imposed by the society. They are wounded much by the cruelty of the world around them. They persist in struggling to find a state of grace, to find meaning, to find happiness.

The novel delves into the plight of the protagonist, Gustad Noble who is bound to the wheel of destiny destroying all the hopes by incidents. He lives in a Parsi building called Khodaded building with his wife Dilnavaz and three children struggling hard to keep them out of poverty. Being a hard working bank clerk, he receives respect. He bears much bitterness from the past which has limited his potential. He says, “No future for minorities, with all these fascist Shiv Sena politics and Marathi language nonsense. It was going to be like the black people in America- twice as good as the white man to get half as much”(55).

Major Jimmy Billimoria, Gustad’s intimate friend, is working for RAW. His disappearance put Gustad into a twinge. He is a devoted patriot and is ready to do anything for the country. He is a simple man and he is easily trapper and betrayed by the Indian Prime minister accusing him of imitating the Prime Minister’s voice over the telephone to the chief cashier of SBI and takes sixty lakh rupees. One day Gustad received a letter from Billimoria requesting him to transfer some money to a new account in a false name ‘Mira Obili’. He wrote that he could not disclose him all the details because it is a matter of National Security. Dilnavaz is afraid as Gustad received huge amount of ten lakh rupees and she requested him to return the money.

After receiving fifty lakh rupees, the Prime Minister arrests and imprisons Billimoria for remaining ten lakh rupees. Gustad is requested by Mohammed, to visit Billimoria in person to listen to the story of a dying man. He describes how he is trapped by the Prime minister for the national intrigue. He says, “very clever woman, Gustad she said, if my enemies try to make trouble, all you have to say is. You imitated my voice. I laughed... who would believe this? But she said under the proper condition, people will believe anything. She promised ...nothing would happen to me” (277). The Prime Minister traps him not through violence but by winning his consent to be dominated which Gramsci called ‘Hegemony’.

Billimoria confesses that he decides to take aside ten lakh rupees for his friends like Gustad who are in need of money. The huge amount of sixty lakh rupees is actually taken only to help the ‘Mukti Bhani’. But in opposite it is transferred to a private account to finance her son’s car factory. Billimoria is hassled in the prison by torturing him to return the ten lakh immediately. He believes that once the money is returned he will be relieved. He says, “only one way... quietly do my four years... then forget about it” (280). But his belief is

shattered by the power and he dies in hospital. There is no Humanism found in his life, but only money matters in the globalized world.

The external incidents of the Bangladesh war that lead to corruption and the personal problem are combined together. Once such problem is Noble's fear of getting caught with huge amount, sent by Major Bilimoria solved after returning the money and mystery came into light after meeting Bilimoria in prison.

The novelist is more concerned with the Parsi community. They have adapted to Indian social life. They not only lived peacefully in the vast sprawling forest of Indian culture but also accepted the land and contributed to it. But Indian politicians have attacked verbally. Mrs. Gandhi in particular has been inimical to their interests because she destroyed their hegemony over the banking system by nationalizing the banks in 1969. Dinshawji states: "What days those were, yaar, what fun we used to have. Parsi 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" (38).

Throughout the novel the anxiety of Parsi community is obviously presented. Their dreams and hopes are shattered. Gustad says: "nowhere in the world has nationalism worked" (38). It shows that how he is scared of politicians. Not only Gustad but the other members of the community are scared of politicians. They are scared of Shiv Sana and their slogan 'Maharashtra for Maharastrians' painfully reduce the Parsi community to consider the stake the nation. As Dinshawji states: "And today we have that bloody Shiv Sana, wanting to make the rest of us into second-class citizens. Don't forget, she started, she started it all by supporting the raciest buggers" (39). The novel revolves around the journey of Parsi community in a new land.

It is understood that the novel reveals Rohinton Mistry's anguish and his unpleasant jolt when his community felt hurt at the Nagarwala incident. He wants to reinstate the integrity of the Parsi community through the incident. The journey represents the spiritual quest of the protagonist to obtain the values of life passing over the continuous struggle. Though everything becomes common even in uncommon places due to this globalization mostly power and money plays a prime importance in all the aspects of human life. Brotherhood, love and human values have lost its glory and everything gains value in terms of money and power. 'Hegemony' and 'Money' have occupied a prominent place in the present scenario. Life of Gustad, Bilimoria and the other characters are also the victim of 'Hegemony' and 'Money'. Thus Mistry's *Such a Long Journey* is an embodiment of globalization and cultural hegemony.

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Hermeneutic Representation of Zora Neale Hurston's *Moses as a Hoodoo Man*

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Abstract: Zora Neale Hurston the iconic writer of African American Literature belonged to the Harlem Renaissance period. Hurston valorizes African American folk culture in her works. Hoodoo also known as “conjure” is a traditional African American folk spirituality. It is also called folk magic. In anthropological literature the term hoodoo is called “sympathetic magic”. Judeo-Christian Moses is transformed into a hoodoo man by Hurston in her novel *Moses, Man of the Mountain*. Hurston through Moses acknowledges the prevalence of hoodoo belief system existing among her people.

The dubitable parentage of Moses leads to his exile from the palace of the Egyptian Pharaoh. Moses indulges in learning the secrets of Nature and masters hoodoo practices too, as the interpreter of Nature commands all respect and fear and could become more powerful than the Pharaoh.

Like Claude Levi-Strauss’ bricoleur, Moses interrogates the elements present in the natural world and discovers their signification. He uses his hoodoo to serve a subtle counter hegemonic role- he subverts Pharaoh’s expectations of Hebrew behavior. He plays multiple roles. He becomes the dramaturge as well as the stage- director. Moses raising his magical rod foretells the commencement of the conjure effect and lowering the rod symbolizes the redemption from the dangerous and luminal state of affliction.

The paper analyzes how Hurston has proved that the interrelation of Christianity and conjure in African American religious discourse has a potential for effective resistance against oppression and violence.

Key words: hoodoo, hegemony, bricoleur, Harlem Renaissance.

Zora Neale Hurston was a novelist, short story writer, essayist, folklorist and an anthropologist. Hurston was raised in the integrated township of Eatonville which was insulated from racial discrimination. She was nurtured by the folk culture prevalent in the southern part of the United States with its stories called *lies*, verbal duel called playing the *dozens*, spirituals, songs and folk religion. When her contemporary writers like Richard Wright were belligerent in exposing the racial prejudice, Hurston valorized the folk culture of the African Americans in her works. In her third novel *Moses, Man of the Mountain* Hurston has transferred the biblical Moses into a hoodoo man and examines the liberation of the African Americans which is replicated in the freedom of the Hebrews from the Egyptian Pharaoh.

Moses in *Moses* feels alienated by the rumors spread in the palace of his lineage as a Hebrew. His killing of the Egyptian overseer adds to his dubitable heritage. The news that the Pharaoh would give him capital punishment for killing the Egyptian overseer triggers him to go on self exile. He decides to study nature and hoodoo to become greater than the Pharaoh. His journey to Midian and Koptos makes him the most powerful man.

Lovalerie King confirms that in *Moses*, “Hurston combines her respect for voodoo as a system of beliefs, her belief in dynamic interaction with the natural world as a way of obtaining self-knowledge into one all-encompassing story” (72). Hurston through *Moses* acknowledges the prevalence of hoodoo which was regarded an affront to their community by the black elites. Moses’ interaction and curiosity regarding nature begins at a very young age. Moses’ life is intertwined with Nature. He is found in the river Nile; God’s presence is felt by him in the form of burning bush, he controls the wind and is regarded the man of the mountain comprising all the four elements of water, fire, wind and the earth. Moses learns about nature from Mentu the stableman whose folk wisdom is unsurpassable.

The unanswered questions by Mentu kindle Moses to seek knowledge from the temples, the priests and their magic. The priests dissuade him but Moses learns to feed the sacred snakes and handle the altar fires. Mentu is shrewd enough to observe that Moses is destined to learn the Book of Thoth which will bestow power on him to commune with God, to enchant the heavens, the earth, the abyss, the mountain, and the sea. The language of birds and reptiles would be intelligible to him. He will be empowered to enter the world of ghosts and the sky with the sun, the moon and the Gods. Moses promises to go in search of the Book of Thoth in Koptos.

Hurston champions the greatness of the folk wisdom whose lives are closely linked with nature. Marcus and Fischer mention in *Anthropology as Cultural Critique* “[T]hey -primitive men -have retained a respect for nature, and we have lost it (the ecological garden); they have sustained close, intimate, satisfying

communal lives, and we have lost this way of life (the experience of community); and they have retained a sense of the sacred in everyday life, and we have lost this (spiritual vision)” (129).

The quest to reach Koptos becomes a burning obsession of Moses. The incident in the construction site of killing the Egyptian overseer and Ta-Phar’s scheming presents Moses as a traitor. To escape capital punishment Moses goes on self exile. He crosses the Red Sea at a secret point where the ebb of the tide leaves a dry pathway. The legendary parting of the sea is presented as a natural occurrence enabling Hurston to employ a clever strategy of presenting Moses as a man who gains knowledge of the sea. This knowledge of the natural world makes him even more powerful than the Pharaoh. After crossing the sea he resolves to chase his dream of reaching Koptos.

When he witnesses the mountain named Sinai and Horeb on the other side he is awe struck by the majesty of it. Moses decides to climb the mountain the next day. On Jethro’s insistence Moses stays in Midian. Moses indulges in learning the secrets of Nature and masters hoodoo practices too. Moses accepts Jethro as his father. They discuss the symbols and meanings; Jethro wins the heart of Moses by his deep knowledge. Jethro teaches deeper magic to Moses who can read other people’s thoughts adeptly. Jethro becomes the mentor for Moses and teaches him the names of the herbs and plants. Hurston marks that, “He practically lived on the mountain, in the desert, beside streams, feeding his mind on Nature” (*Moses* 111).

Like Claude Levi-Strauss’ bricoleur, Moses interrogates the elements present in the natural world and discovers their signification. Moses has mastered magic too. He uses his magic to control peer envy. He is adept at sending a plague of varmints, frogs and flies. He creates a plague of frogs when Jethro’s cousin Zeppo lands with his kith and kin. Jethro is awe struck by Moses’ power to produce excrescence called ‘manna’ on a plant. He embraces Jethro’s monotheistic God. The death of the old Pharaoh enables Moses to pursue his journey to Koptos successfully. The Book of Thoth has increased his supernatural powers. Hurston writes, “He saw the sun and the moon and the stars of the sky as no man had ever seen them before, for a divine power was with him” (*Moses* 118-119). Moses is deeply contented with the unperturbed life at Midian. But destiny has relegated the role of the redeemer of the Hebrews for Moses which is thrust on him in the presence of the burning bush. Moses hears the divine voice and he pledges to redeem the Hebrews.

Moses wields his power by using his right hand. He uses his hoodoo to serve a subtle counter hegemonic role –he subverts the Pharaoh’s expectations of Hebrew behavior. The Cushite priests had turned water into blood at a small level. But Moses has the power to convert all the water bodies into blood. He lifts his hand to strike the malicious gossip with leprosy. He commands the power of flame and spreads or eradicates cattle diseases. Moses develops the smoke from the incense into a thick white mass that hung stationary. Moses’ voice behind the smoke gives the illusion that it is the voice of God. The smoke becomes the divine Presence when he lifts his hand and smoke itself is deified. The thing which is mysterious is always considered with high regard. Similarly the Smoke remains a mystery and the people regard it as divine.

Moses displays the power of his rod to avoid the Hebrews returning to the worship of the Egyptian Gods. Moses plays multiple roles. He becomes the dramaturge as well as stage-director. Moses raising the rod foretells the beginning of the conjure effect and lowering the rod foretells the redemption from the dangerous and luminal state of affliction. Moses turns water into blood forcing Ta –Phar to sit in counsel with his ministers. As the Egyptian priests perform the same trick the next day, the Pharaoh refuses to free the Hebrews declaring that the God “I Am What I AM” (*Moses* 138) is not an original god.

Moses promises to meet the Pharaoh after a week on Wednesday the same time. Moses brings the Pharaoh and the people to the garden with the pond. The moment Moses lifts his hand the swarm of frog fills the entire place. The priests are helpless and Moses drowns them in the Nile. Moses bids adieu to the Pharaoh and promises to meet them again next Wednesday. The plague of lice afflicts everyone except people in Goshen. Moses tarries for a month to perform his next feat.

Moses sends the plague of flies and on the request of the Pharaoh tells that at five ‘o’ clock the flies will vanish from Egypt. The Pharaoh never relents enforcing Moses to send the plague of boils. It is followed by the plague of hail which destroys animals, crops and ruins houses. For an hour he waits observing the clouds when suddenly thunder rolls from east to west followed by the hailstorm ruining Egypt. The plague of locusts then troubles Egypt. Then the darkness descends on Egypt for three days. The coldness freezes people which force them to request the Pharaoh to free the Hebrews. The Pharaoh consents to free the Hebrews when the first-born babies and his grandson are dead. Moses successfully leads the Hebrews out of Egypt and drowns Ta-Phar in the Red Sea. Moses has won the freedom for the Hebrews ultimately. Moses continues his journey of leading the people to the Promised Land.

The Daily Telegraph has published that scientists had presented a report that biblical plagues had really happened. The scientists have claimed that the biblical plagues that devastated ancient Egypt in the Old Testament were the result of climatic change and a volcanic eruption. Climatologists studying the ancient climate at the time have discovered that a dramatic shift in the climate in the area occurred towards the end of Ramses the Second’s reign. They found that his reign coincided with a warm climate, but then the climate

switched to a dry period. The scientists believe this switch in the climate was the trigger for the first of the plagues.

The rising temperatures could have caused the river Nile to dry up, turning the fast flowing river that was Egypt's lifeline into a slow moving and muddy water-course. These conditions would have been perfect for the arrival of the first plague, which in the Bible is described as the Nile turning to blood. Dr. Stephan Pflugmacher, a biologist at the Leibniz Institute for Water Ecology and Inland Fisheries in Berlin, believes this description could have been the result of toxic fresh water algae. He said the bacterium, known as Burgundy Blood Algae or *Oscillatoria rubescens*, is known to have existed three thousand years ago and still causes similar effects today.

He said that it multiplied massively in slow-moving warm waters with high levels of nutrition. And as it dies, it stains the water red. The scientists also claim the arrival of these algae, set in motion the events that led to the second, third and fourth plagues – frogs, lice and flies. Frogs development from tadpoles into fully formed adults is governed by hormones that can speed up their development in times of stress. The arrival of the toxic algae would have triggered such a transformation and forced the frogs to leave the water where they lived. But as the frogs died, it would have meant that mosquitoes, flies and other insects would have flourished without the predators to keep their numbers under control. This, according to the scientists, could have led in turn to the fifth and sixth plagues –diseased livestock and boils.

Moses a hoodoo man and a man of science would have been an expert in studying about the elements of earth, water, fire and wind. As a conjurer he makes the right connections through metonymy and commands particular effects and aims through visual and verbal metaphors and mimesis. The break which he takes between the plagues would have been the period of development of the pests. The pillar of fire leads the Hebrews during night time and appears as a cloud during day time. But the Hebrew slaves grumble at the lack of food and brackish water, Moses produces manna and makes the quail appear for the Hebrews to eat them. The Arab man inserting a branch of a tree to change the salty water into drinkable strikes his memory and provides water to the Hebrews. Some of the famous miracles Moses performs in the Bible while leading the Hebrews out of Egypt are really tricks he learned from his first trip to Midian: he crosses the red sea because of his knowledge of tides and strikes water from a stone by finding a spring he had once encountered. His miracles are as fantastic as the biblical version, and from Moses' perspective there is no difference between them: they're all just applications of his vast knowledge of nature.

Moses hands over the laws of God to the Hebrews. Miriam is sharp enough to delineate the voice of God as the voice of Moses but is doubtful. Moses would have mastered the art of ventriloquism to sustain the mystery of God. Fear and awe are the emotions which make people worship God. Hurston in *Dust Tracks* asserts, "It seems to me to be true that Heavens are placed in the sky because it is the unreachable. The unreachable and therefore the unknowable always seems divine –hence religion" (277). Moses has studied the psychology of the Hebrews who will recourse to the worship of Egyptian Gods if the aura and mystery are not preserved.

Hurston opines, "People need religion because the great masses fear life and its consequences. Feeling a weakness in the face of great forces, men seek an alliance with the omnipotence to bolster up their feeling of weakness...It gives them a feeling of security" (*Dust Tracks* 277-278). Moses is apprehensive that Miriam's suspicion would dispel all the awe and respect they have for the new God eventually destroying his mission of reaching the Promised Land. So he afflicts her with leprosy and silences her. Moses kills Aaron who would have been an obstacle to his plan for the Promised Land. Moses has become a very powerful man with the hoodoo power which is the magical practices of the African Americans. Hurston has presented another facet of the folk culture of the African Americans.

Moses is able to accomplish his aspiration of becoming the most powerful man by mastering nature through hoodoo. His journey to Koptos and Midian has empowered him. He has vanquished the Pharaoh with his hoodoo knowledge. He has successfully led the Hebrews out of physical bondage.

Conclusion

Hurston's novel *Moses, Man of the Mountain* has an empirical value as it examines the predicament of the people in that era. Hurston's narrative has proved that the interrelation of Christianity and conjure in African American discourse has a potential for effective resistance against oppression and violence. She has also presented how Moses has used the folk magic as an effective weapon to liberate the Hebrews.

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“Hunger is also a Teacher” Contextualizing the Cultural Heritage of a Favela Dweller. An analysis of the diary of Carolina Maria De Jesus The child of the dark

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Abstract: *Nature has plenty to fulfill the basic needs of the entire creation including human race but it does not have much left to slake the unquenchable thirst of human greed. The blind greed of human heart and poverty of his soul has cleft the world into two miserable halves: the rich and the poor, the haves and the have-nots, the privileged and the underprivileged. The meager minority of the world's population wallows in wealth and squanders the resources, the exploited majority are caught in the vicious circle of hunger, illness and crime. The poor are born and die in the inescapable quagmire of poverty. The irony of the situation is that they are the architects of riches of the world. They have their physical, mental, moral, cultural and spiritual development stunted for no fault of their own. They become the scapegoats in the dirty games of politics played by the governments. This paper on Favelas, the Ghettos of Brazil applying the Epidemic theory tries to explore the life of its underprivileged inhabitants .*

The Diary of Carolina Maria de Jesus “Child of the Dark” is taken as the “context to explore the life of the (Cultural Heritage) of a Latin American Woman. Further the paper wants to substantiate that the great literature is not mere purgative to effect the emotional catharsis: it doesn't stop with functioning as a balm to ease the disturbed mind rather a sword that cuts the Gordian knots of social issues and a panacea for all the social sores.

Key Words: *Favelas, - the slums of Brazil*

Nature has plenty to fulfill the basic needs of the entire creation including human race but it does not have much left to slake the unquenchable thirst of human greed. The blind greed of human heart and poverty of his soul has cleft the world into two miserable halves: the rich and the poor, the haves and the have-nots, the privileged and the underprivileged. The meager minority of the world's population wallows in wealth and squanders the resources, the exploited majority are caught in the vicious circle of hunger, illness and crime. The poor are born and die in the inescapable quagmire of poverty. The irony of the situation is that they are the architects of riches of the world. They have their physical, mental, moral, cultural and spiritual development stunted for no fault of their own. They become the scapegoats in the dirty games of politics played by the governments. This paper on Favelas, the Ghettos of Brazil applying the Epidemic theory tries to explore the life of its underprivileged inhabitants .

Favela is a term coined by the soldiers who served the army in Bahia. It refers to a tree which has skin irritating nature native of Bahia. They are considered as “subnormal agglomerations.” Favelas are small cities of filth, perversion, prostitution, physical, mental and moral deterioration.. The favelados are the inhabitants of the favelas are people who are convinced from their child hood that in order to live they must imitate the vultures. They live by robbing one another. They have an unhealthy atmosphere where the people have more chance to go wrong that to become useful to state and country or to themselves. The favelados are the slaves of hunger.

Hunger is the seminal force that drives human beings. It is the pivot on which human existence revolves. But the people who are blessed with easy access to food never know what it is to be hungry and how precious is the food they waste. Hunger is also a teacher. It teaches us what is the value of food earned decently and how blessed is the life of a person who need not worry about what he/she has to eat when gets up in the morning.

Carolina Maria De Jesus diary titled the Child of the Dark presents the prophetic sayings of Mahatma Gandhi. There are People in the world so hungry that god cannot appear to them except in the form of bread. Dona (Madam) Carolina as she was fondly called by the fellow favelados became a Latin American literary sensation with the publication of her diary. She was born to an uneducated, unmarried farmhand mother. Her illiterate mother could give her only two years of schooling but kindled her passion for letters. Employed as maid at many white households circumstances forced her to become unwedded mother of three children and take refuge in the favelas. She hunted the garbage dumps for scrap materials and waste paper to feed her three children and herself. Though it was a self exile of compulsion to the garbage dump of human existence, her passion for reading and writing kept her alive. She is finest example for Bertolt Brecht's saying “Hungry men reach for the book' it is weapon.” Her quest to have a hunger free life for herself and all compelled her to record meticulously her every day struggle for existence in the streets and dump yards as a rag picker. Her life

in the favela of Caninde, Sao Paulo gives the context of the cursed cultural heritage of the favelas which are considered to be the cancerous growth, sore on the body of the beautiful cities of Brazil.

Life of the Favelado is hard. Hard is the bread that we eat. Hard is the bed on which we sleep. Hard is the life of the favelado. To understand better this paper summarizes few heart wrenching incidents from the diary of Carolina in her own words;

i. A truck came to the favela. The driver and his helper threw away some cans. It was canned sausage. This is what the hard hearted business men do. They stay waiting for the prices to go up so they can earn more. And when it rots they throw it to the buzzards and the unhappy favelados.

ii. One day Carolina was collecting scrap when she stopped at Bom Jardim Avenue. Someone had thrown meat into the garbage, and a pretty little boy was picking out the pieces. He told her "take some Carolina. It is still fit to eat". He gave her some and so as not to hurt his feelings she accepted. She tried to convince him not to eat the meat or the hard bread gnawed by the rats. He told her no because only two days since he had eaten. He made a fire and roasted the meat. His hunger was so great that he couldn't wait for the meat to cook. He heated it and ate. The next day she found that the little black boy was dead.

iii. Carolina went over to the factory that manufactures sausages. She saw many tomatoes on the ground. She was going to pick them up when the manager came out she didn't go near because he didn't like people to pick them up. When they unload the truck they pull out and squash them. But human beings are like that..... they prefer to see things spoil than let other get some use from them.

iv. Carolina goes to collect some bags of paper from the river bank. There she found bags of rice that had rotted in a warehouse and were thrown away. She was shocked seeing that wasted rice. She stared at the bugs that were there and the cockroaches and rats that ran from one side to another.

The above quoted incidents tell us that it is not Carolina but hunger is the looming large character in the diary. Like misery and misfortune hunger never comes alone. Hunger is always accompanied by his convenient cousins alcoholism, prostitution, violence and murder. They pin down the people of favelas to the vicious circle of epidemic crime.

The word epidemic is commonly used to describe the high incidence of social problems of ghettos, here the slums, the favelas of Brazil. This theory assumes that social problems are contagious and are spread through peer influence. Two basic conditions determine a community's susceptibility to social epidemics.

- i. The residents risk of developing social problems.
- ii. Their susceptibility to peer influence.

As a famous samba song says "I am caught between crime and necessity" the faveladas are compelled by the necessity of hunger. The unhealthy atmosphere of favelas compels the people to go wrong. They are forced to conclude that "Today he who lives till the hour of his death is hero because he who is not strong gives in. Those who can't bear the screams of stomach and its torture are tired of life. They either commit suicide or pressed to steal.

The families when they arrive to the favelas from the interior parts of the country are united, uncorrupt and ethical.

They contribute their hard work, their high hopes and their loyalties, but do not benefit from the goods and services of the system. They are not economically and politically marginal, but are exploited, manipulated and repressed: they are not socially, culturally marginal but stigmatized and excluded from a closed class system (Perlman 1976)

Financial difficulties combined with bad examples give in for disintegration. Young boys having no access to education, by peer influence are taken to violence and become criminals. Young girls get abused and become destitute. Drugs numb their bitter conscious and paralyze their sense of right or wrong

The solution to the grievous man made problem lies with man. As Carolina observes the problem can't be solved by the politicians who visit the public only during election times. Person with ability must become leader. Those who are blinded by the so called supremacy of money could never understand the pangs of hunger that kill people.

When a politician tells us in his speeches that he is on the side of the people that he is only in politics in order to improve our living conditions, asking for our votes promising to freeze prices, he is well aware that by touching on these grave problems he will win at the polls. Afterward he divorces himself from the people. He looks at them with half-closed eyes and with pride that hurts us.

The poor have been victims of intolerable corruption, hollow campaign promises, and unfulfilled dreams of minimum security. They are denied "decent work and decent pay" which will ensure them other

things like good health, education and housing. Fidel Castro's words highlight the mentality of the ethics defiling modern politicians.

The ever more sophisticated weapons piling up in the arsenals of the wealthiest and the mightiest can kill the illiterate, the ill, the poor and the hungry but they cannot kill ignorance, poverty or hunger.

The Vedic scriptures of India provide us with some insight into the nature of compassion and spirituality:

“Everything animate or inanimate being that is within the universe is controlled and owned by the Lord. One should therefore accept only those things necessary for himself, which are set aside as his quota, and one should not accept other things, knowing well to whom they belong.”

By divine arrangement, Mother Nature supplies the needs of all living entities. Overcome with insatiable greed, however, modern society blindly pillages the earth of valuable resources, and thus robs billions of people in developing countries of their God-given Nature-given quota of food.

This statement is clearly corroborated by the fact that more than one-third of all grain produced in the world is being fed to cattle and other livestock. It appears, therefore, that the solution to world hunger lies beyond the boundaries of expensive and exhausting humanitarian efforts by a few NGOs and that the root cause needs to be targeted, namely, greed. For too long individuals like politicians, merchants or wealthy nations have taken more than their fair share of the Earth's resources and now must completely cease their selfish gluttony

As the economists say access to food and other resources is not a matter of availability, but rather of ability to pay. Put bluntly, those with the most money command the most resources, whilst those with little or no money go hungry. This inevitably leads to a situation whereby some sections of humanity arguably have too much and other sections little or nothing. Indeed, globally the richest 20 per cent of humanity controls around 85 per cent of all wealth, whilst the poorest 20 per cent control only 1.5 per cent.

While goods are more abundant than ever before, the number of people without shelter, work or enough to eat is constantly growing. Of the 4 billion people living in developing countries, almost a third have no drinking water. A fifth of all children receive an insufficient intake of calories or protein. And two billion people - a third of the human race - are suffering from anemia.

Hunger continues to decimate whole populations because hunger has become a political weapon. In today's world, no famine is gratuitous. Hunger is a strategy pursued with unbelievable cynicism by governments and military regimes that the end of the cold war has deprived of a steady income. Rather than starving the enemy, as Sylvie Brunel points out, they are starving their own populations in order to cash in on media coverage and international compassion, an inexhaustible source of money, food and political platforms.

Amartya Sen, the winner of Nobel prize for economics, is renowned for showing how government policies can cause famine even when food is abundant. On several occasions, he has stressed “the remarkable fact that, in the terrible history of famines in the world, no substantial famine has ever occurred in any independent and democratic country with a relatively free press”. Rejecting the arguments of the neo-liberals, Professor Sen contends that greater responsibility for the well-being of society must be given, not to the market, but to the state. A state that must be sensitive to the needs of its citizens and, at the same time, concerned with human development throughout the world.

What Carolina told the photographer write under the photo that “Carolina who used to eat from trash cans now eats in restaurants? That she has come in to the human race and out of the garbage dump.”

My question is when are we going to stop changing the world into a garbage dump because of greed?

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Culture as an Evolutionary Phenomenon in Manju Kapur's *Difficult Daughters*

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Abstract: *“It is the duty of every woman to get married” says Kasturi, mother of Virmathi in Manju Kapur’s Difficult Daughters. Indian Society is bound by duties and responsibilities which is a part and parcel of the country’s culture. Though India is a land of varied cultures, there are certain aspects which are followed by Indians in an astute manner. These ceremonies are being followed from time immemorial. But Manju Kapur in her novel Difficult Daughters has projected the outlook of the post modern educated women of India. In her novel she has presented women belonging to three generations. While Kasturi very astutely follows the tradition by marrying and bearing 11 children she expects the elder daughter Virmathi to simply follow her. But we see Virmathi is possessing a mind of her own and is determined not to suffer like her mother. She aspires to educate herself, for which she pays a heavy price by falling in love with her professor. This according to Kasturi, the mother is blasphemy. Here we see how determined she is to pursue the life that she determines. She finds no meaning in following the tradition or culture that she was born in. She moves on to achieve what she desires. Ida, Virmathi’s daughter, goes a step further. She divorces her husband and is determined to remain single, an aspect which would revolt Kasturi. But once again we see she moves a step further from her determined mother to be single and idealistic. She wants to be “me”. Thus we see that culture is not a stagnant one but an evolving phenomena which is bound to change with the changing generations.*

Key Words: *Marital Subjugation, Gender Issues.*

Cultural heritage is an expression of the ways of living developed by a community and passed on from generation to generation, including customs, practices, places, objects, artistic expressions and values. Cultural heritage is often expressed as intangible or tangible cultural heritage. (ICOMOS 2002).

As part of human activity, cultural heritage produces tangible representations of the value system, beliefs, traditions and lifestyles. As an essential part of culture, as a whole, cultural heritage contains these visible and tangible traces from antiquity to recent past.

In some ways every Generation is interested in cultural heritage in ways that speak to

them. However, when one has a drastic cultural shift, certain cultural practices can be left behind, says Rachel Nordstrom, a museum specialist on cultural heritage.

In Indian culture and heritage, individualism, quest for identity; and concepts of rebelliousness have often remained alien ideas as far as women were concerned. Women were not supposed to raise voices for their rights, protest against injustice or question the already existing beliefs, customs, rituals and superstitions. Indian women novelists have been portraying women in various manifestations. But recently, the remarkable range of India’s most accomplished women writers of post-colonial strand has brought a tremendous change in the trend of depicting women characters. Women writers like Kamala Markandaya, Nayantara Sagal, Anita Desai, Sashi Deshpande, Bharati Mukherjee, Manju Kapur, Gita Hariharan and the others have intuitively perceived the gender issues upsetting women and presented women as an individual who fights against suppression and oppression of the patriarchy.

Manju Kapur is the author of five novels. Her first novel *Difficult Daughters*, won the Commonwealth prize for first novels (Eurasia section), her second novel is *A Married Woman*, third *Home*. The fourth *The Immigrant* has been long listed for DSC prize for South Asian literature and her fifth novel is *Custody*. She is a prolific writer who, in her novels, captures in detail the lives of the period and places in which she lives, thus by contextualizing her age.

Manju Kapur’s *difficult daughters*, her maiden novel published in 1998 is a standing example to prove that culture is an evolutionary phenomenon. The novel is written on the pre-independence background of Indian society that was facing long violent confrontation for freedom as well as the assault and onrush of modernity in the form of ‘new education’ or loud voice of women, who since middle ages, have been the victims of repressions and oppressions.

The setting up of a nation has played a vital role in providing a platform for the women on which they can perform and raise their voice.

Difficult Daughters is a story of a young women's life caught up in the complex web of social positions, personal desires and quest for education. It is set up against the backdrop of partition of the sub-continent into India and Pakistan. Virmati, the heroine undergoes alternative fission-fusion as her identity is by turn divided and enlarged by various family and national problems.

She 'seeks human relations that will allow her to be herself and to exercise the degree of control over her life which as an educated woman, she knows she deserves'(Rolloson).

Born in Amristar in an austere and high-minded household, except for her traditionalist mother Kasturi, Virmati always aspires for a freedom which is condemned and ridiculed in a tradition bound Indian society. Virmati is a prototype of post-colonial Indian woman, as she succeeds to shake of the fetters of her mother's influence over her. Her education has helped her in inculcating her spirit of diffidence and rebelling against her family when it comes to her arranged marriage, devising an excuse for her higher education. She conceives that marriage is an obstacle in her pursuit for higher education as it withdraws woman's freedom and subjects her to male domination. She attempts suicide to rebel against the marriage arranged by her parents. Her revolt works as her parents agree to send her to Lahore to pursue her higher education.

This bold step of virmati perplexes her mother, kasturi, who by this age got married, she fails to comprehend Virmati's disinterest in marriage "How had girls changed so much in a generation"(D.D.60). She holds the view that education means denial of tradition and culture.

The clash of traditional culture and modern culture continues for three generation of kasturi,

Virmati's mother and Virmati, Virmathi and Ida-Virmati's daughter. Kasturi very astutely follows the Indian tradition by marrying, being submissive to the patriarchal orders of the house, bearing eleven children and taking care of the household. She is unaware of free thinking independent life. According to her woman is duty bound and the only duty according to her is to get married and take care of the family and be submissive to the elders and menfolk of her family. For this attitude, she is held in high regard by her Father-in-law. On the other hand she has mercilessly swiped away the childhood pleasures of Virmati by her yearly pregnancies. At the age of 12 Virmati had 11 siblings and a sick mother to take care of. A traditional value revered by one generation is nothing but a burden which cannot be held in reverence the next generation. Virmati, a difficult daughter of kasturi becomes a mother of another difficult daughter called Ida. Through the words of Ida we can see what was burdensome for Ida.

I grew struggling to be a model daughter. Pressure, pressure to perform day and night. My father liked me looking pretty, neat and well dressed, with kajal and a little touch of oil in my sleeked Black hair. But the right appearance was not enough. I had to do well in school, learn classical music, take dance lessons so that I could convert my clumsiness into grace, read all the classics of literature, discuss them intelligently with him and then exhibit my accomplishments graciously before his assembled guests at parties.(D.D 279)

Ida was pressurized to look good, behave smartly and address neatly and graciously before her father's guests. she was trained not for Ida's good but for an exhibition, which gave her a sense of aversion. Her mother Virmati too tightened her reigns and did not give her the freedom she wanted. The same freedom which Virmati wanted when she was young.

'there are other things in life 'she told her mother .

' Like what?' asked Virmati.

'like living'

You mean living only for yourself .You are disappointing your father .'

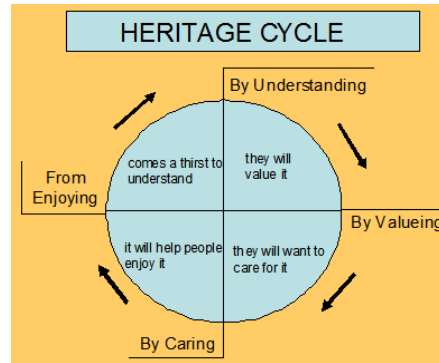
' Why is it so important to please him?' Ida protested to her mother .(D.D 279)

Ida thinks her mother to be submissive, who was thought to be a rebel by her mother Kasturi. The novel actually opens with the declaration of Ida: 'the one thing I had wanted was not to be like my mother'. Ida was resolute to leave her past behind and live for the future. She does not wish to make the compromises which her mother had made.

The novel is set in the backdrop of Indian independence. As the country emerges independent, the traditional women emerges into independent women. the independent women into free women. Thus we see a gradual evolution silently taking place from one generation to the other. This gradual change is recorded by Manju Kapur in Difficult Daughters which has an autobiographical element. The approach towards culture gets changed as the next generation comes and a new trait is given birth. Human beings evolve naturally for the betterment of human race. Certain cultural inheritance may not be found suitable for the next generation. The value and the meaning of a particular cultural trait determines the life of it. An all inclusive cultural trait stands the test of time, survives and is even revered, if it stands as a guide for life.

The Heritage Cycle diagram gives us an idea how we can make the past part of our future (Simon Thurley, 2005). In a clockwise direction the wedges and arrows read:

- By understanding (cultural heritage)
 - people value it
- By valuing it
 - people want to care for it
- By caring for it
 - it will help people enjoy it
- From enjoying it
 - comes a thirst to understand
- By understanding it.....etc



A superficial trait undergoes either death or a transformation and evolves into new a trait. In Manju Kapur's novel *Difficult Daughters* one can see so many patriarchial superficial traits, which the matriarchy assertively evaded and evolved. One can feel this through Ida's words.

The places I visited, the stuff I read tantalized me with fragments that I knew I would not be able to fully reconstruct. Instead, I imagined histories rejecting material that didn't fit, moulding ruthlessly the material that did. (D.D 280).

The past history of her mother was in no way meaningful to her. She pays her last tribute as a mother to Virmati but she wants her mother to be in her past and allow her to be herself.

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Self - Discovery of Aboriginality in Sally Morgan's Novel *My Place*

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Abstract: *This paper throws light on Sally Morgan's journey towards the recovery of the personal and historic aboriginal past and present as reflected in her novel **My Place**. Sally Morgan, born in 1951, of mixed aboriginal and white Australian descent, wrote the autobiographical novel **My Place** in 1987. It is one of the earlier work in indigenous writing and a milestone in aboriginal literature.*

***My Place** is a biographical chronology of the life of Sally Morgan and reveals her discovery of aboriginality in her heritage. Sally's younger years, with the general facts about her school and home are brought out in the first section of this book. Sally was unaware that she was aboriginal and was encouraged to tell other kids that she was Indian until the age of fifteen. After the discovery of her true heritage, she digs deeper and decides to write a book about it. Through her research, she embarks on an emotional journey to learn about her family history. She also discovers with the help of interviews with her family members, that her family had been a part of removal process in Australia.*

Morgan confronts the indigenous reader with the idea of learning their past and embracing indigenous identity, even if it is painful. This article brings out Sally Morgan's self-discovery of aboriginality.

Key words: *Aborigines, Indigenous, Self-discovery.*

This paper throws light on Sally Morgan's journey towards the recovery of the personal and historic aboriginal pasts and presents as reflected in her novel *My Place*. Sally Morgan, born in Perth, Western Australia in 1951, of mixed aboriginal and white Australian descent, wrote the autobiographical novel *My Place* in 1987. It is one of the earlier work in indigenous writing and a milestone in aboriginal literature. She could be also considered as an aboriginal ambassador, who taught indigenous Australians to feel proud of their aboriginal identity rather than shame.

In 1974, Sally completed her Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Western Australia and received post-graduate diplomas from Western Australian Institute of Technology in counselling psychology, computing and library studies. At present, she is working as a professor at the Centre for the Indigenous History and the Arts, the School for Indigenous Studies, at the University of Western Australia.

In addition to *My Place*, she has also written many literary pieces which includes *Wanamurranganya: The Story of Jack Mcphee*, and numerous children's books such as *In Your Dreams*, *Little Piggies*, *Just a Little Brown Dog*, *Pet Problem* and *Dan's Grandpa*. Her first play *Sistergirl* was produced by Black Swan Theatre and was first staged at the festival of Perth in 1992. She was also an artist of international repute and in the book titled *The Art of Sally Morgan*, her work as an artist is excellently described and illustrated.

The novel *My Place* is written in an indigenous perspective of history and the mode of storytelling was closely connected with the aboriginal identity. It received a great accolade during its release in 1987, and its importance can be noticed and evidenced through its inclusion in school curriculums. It was somewhat considered to be controversial due to the book's introduction of the 'stolen generation'. As a result, there were some historians and critics who critiqued Morgan and her writing. Bain Attwood questioned Sally Morgan's preference to represent herself as aboriginal when the discovery of her aboriginality was so late in life. According to Keith Windschuttle, the entire book is fabricated and also claimed that Sally Morgan is not even aboriginal. While, Nene Gare said that, "sally Morgan shows how Australian people have been impoverished by their inability to come to terms with what they have done to the original settlers, the aboriginal people".

Janette Turner Hospital in her article titled *The Whitefellas don't Understand*, reviewed and appreciated *My Place* as:

Morgan's extraordinary book, is about a quest for the past of one person and one family, an individual past which turns out to be a communal past, which is, in turn, the history of a people. When it was published in Australia by a small literary press in 1987, with neither fanfare nor publicity budget, *My Place* became an instant best seller, and has remained on best-seller list ever since. (The New York Times)

On 11th July 1987, The Sydney Morning Herald appreciated this novel as: "As for *My Place*, it deserves a place- among the classics of Australian Biographies." It also published an article on 20th December 1987 detailing Human Rights Commission Awards presented to indigenous writers in which Sally Morgan was one of them for her novel *My Place*. This novel *My Place* was so influential that it had affected the Human

Rights Commission to understand that the indigenous issues was still prevalent in Australian society during its release in 1987. It has won many awards such as The Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Humanitarian Award in 1987, The Western Australia Week Literary Award for Non-Fiction in 1988, and Order of Australian Book Prize in 1990. International art historians selected Sally Morgan's print outback, as one of the thirty paintings and sculptures for reproduction on a stamp, celebrating the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1993.

My Place is a biographical chronology of the life of Sally Morgan and reveals her discovery of aboriginality in her heritage. She collects and narrates the tales of her great uncle Arthur, of her grand mother Nan who is otherwise known by the name Daisy and of her mother Gladys exactly as they were told to her. Her story begins with her quest for identity. Sally's younger years, with the general facts about her school and home are brought out in the first section of this book. She recalls that moment in 1979 when she saw the dim shapes through the fog of official history: "I always thought that Australia was different to America, Mum, But we had slavery here, too. The people might not have been sold on the blocks like the American Negroes were, but they were owned, just the same". (*My Place*, n. pag.)

After the discovery of her true heritage, she digs deeper and decides to write a book about it. Through her research, she embarks on an emotional journey to learn about her family history. She also discovers with the help of interviews with her family members, that her family had been apart of removal process in Australia.

The story begins with Morgan recounting her earlier life including everything from wetting her pants in school to sleeping in the same bed with her two sisters and brother to running across the backyard with her mother, grandmother, and siblings to escape from the drunken ramblings and threats of her mentally ill father. In her childhood, the traces of that history haunted her in a mystifying ways. When she was in her third grade, one day she came home from school with a question. "The kids at school want to know what country we come from. They reckon we're not Aussies. Are we Aussies, Mum?" (*My Place*, n. pag.) Her mother's immediate reply was, "tell them you're Indian". (*My Place*, n. pag.) The social ruckus that her appearance frequently caused amongst her peers in school greatly influenced and pushed Sally towards the exploration of her ancestry. She narrated her story with a kind of naïveté which implied an innocence that far exceeds the inexperience of childhood. She had problem in coming to terms with her inherent difference, which was mainly due to her mother who never submitted saying that the family was aboriginal until Sally was 15 and her grandmother staunchly insisted that their entire family was white. Thus, Morgan grew up in a house that avoided the most glaring piece of history that made them significant.

It was Sally's love towards her family which gave her empathy. And this empathy helped her to trace out the true history of her heritage and identity by getting the true stories from her grandmother Daisy, mother Gladys and her great uncle Arthur. The autobiography of daisy which is the shortest one of the three, can be recognized as a tribute to Sally. The grand-daughter's love enabled her grandmother Daisy to come to terms with some aspects of her own incredibly painful past. Daisy, who wanted to be white, came forward to acknowledge her aboriginal heritage and personal identity: "At least we not owned any more". (*My Place*, n. pag.) And even Sally's mother Gladys, felt embarrassed that "once, I wanted to be white" (*My Place*, n. pag.) and to feel pride in what her aboriginal heritage has to offer.

Sally presented her past life as a layer upon layer of a living daily life. She reflected everything as she recounted her experiences from over the years including her emotions, thoughts, ideas- everything that held any significance to the socially colorblind girl. The real emotion of the text, especially from the first part of the text, comes from what Morgan does not say or says but did not explain since she likely did not understand the events or situations at the times that they happened, respectively. For example, as a young girl, Sally was called names, ignored by her father's parents, asked to end friendships, given strange jobs, and frequently submitted to strange behavior by her grandmother.

As Morgan matured, slowly realized that she is not Greek or Indian but that she is an aboriginal. This realization alongwith the matriarchal side-stepping of this issue led the young woman to develop an aggressive thirst for the truth. It took many years for Sally to collect the stories and histories from her family members as she was graduating. At first, her collection was slow going but later on it begins to pick up speed by pulling more and more people into her project.

Through the tale of her great uncle Arthur we come to know that these aborigines with thousands of years of different culture behind them, they had been ridiculed, despised, and given names usually bestowed on animals and used as an animal. They were forced by the white land takers to adopt a life style which included sheep and cattle farming which naturally came to them. As Arthur puts in his words:

" The blackfellas made the stations, not the white man.
And before the white man came we didn't use the insecticides,
Killing the birds. That's why the blackfellas want their own land,
With no white man about destroying it.
White men went out shooting the blackfellas for sport,
As if they were animals." (*My Place*, n. pag.)

He also says that:

“There’s so much that whitefellas don’t understand.
They want us to be assimilated into the white
but we don’t want to be. They complain about our land rights
but they don’t understand the way we want to live.” (*My Place, n. pag.*)

Personal loss and journey of recovery are the two prominent themes in Australian literature. However, *My Place* is not informed by this theme of loss or recovery, it is driven if it is not pulled by it. Australia’s relationship to the aborigines is deeply marred by this theme of loss. In the recovery of those who have experienced loss of their true identity, culture, language, and heritage the family is greatly valued as a rejuvenator of heart and the soul.

This novel also draws the theme of class, of contrasting wealth and poverty in the world of aboriginal. But, the far more stronger theme is the theme of inhumanity and exploitation of ‘family’ feeling. Sally’s women characters are more stronger in this novel. Her grandmother Daisy Corunna, who clearly suffered more nevertheless emerged as a woman with a powerful compassion to help others. Colonization had deprived her of her name and confused her identity. “My name is Daisy Corunna, I’m Arthur’s sister. My aboriginal name is Talahue”. (*My Place, n. pag.*) On the station she went under the name Daisy Brockman and later on she took the name Corunna. Various myths about her father was given to her, on which she commented: “Aah, you see, that’s the trouble with us blackfellas, we don’t know who we belong to, no one’ll own up”. (*My Place, n. pag.*)

Sally succeeds in creating a history for a people who were overlooked and brushed almost completely under the rug of history, using the first hand experiences and recollections of elderly aborigines. Through her collections, she recounts the history of those people whose lands were taken away by the British colonials, who were the only people to have legal rights to own it. These new land owners built a massive plantation and aborigines were made to work in it.

Sally, through this novel highlighted and reflected racism and a great deal of discrimination against aborigines. Aborigines’ working condition conveyed in the historical account of this novel are gruesome and painful to read. As Morgan puts in her words “I’ve met people taken away in the sixties”. (*My Place, n. pag.*) They were separated from their children, denied the pay that they were promised to them, and were frequently beaten. As a part of removal process, these aboriginal and mixed race children were taken to orphanages, where they were given basic education in English and religious curriculums, as a result they were forced to learn white’s language and culture. The jobs given to them are service jobs such as housekeeping or else, jobs which demanded excessive and difficult physical labour such as ploughing, planting, and clearing land. In return, these employers gave nothing to these aborigines for exchange of their service or job and this led them to be in a lower socio-economical position.

Morgan understands what her people were really yearning for as the story progresses. These elderly aborigines were yearning for a feeling of ownership by the younger generation. Whether the generation consist of full-blood or mixed race aborigines, a connection between the younger generation with the older one is seen as a kind of strengthening means of building a national community. She and her contributors emphasize the need for creating a large-scale aboriginal community and the national awareness about aborigines and their history. Sally strongly feels that a tree without its roots will never grow and people who never had a clearly defined and discussed role in a society must work hard to earn the respect and recognition that they deserve in their own land. *My Place*, socio-geographically traverses thick plain bushes of Australia and also desert/lowlands of western Australia. Most of these stories discussed in this novel takes place around Brisbane and three major landscapes are drawn out which includes the multi-ethnic suburbs where middle class white families and low class aboriginals or mixed race families live; in the bush where we can see the aboriginals thriving hard and in the plain lowlands are the railway stations, farms, plantations, and stations are located. The tie that binds these aborigines with their lands are almost tangible and it is reflected through Arthur’s words as: “They don’t have to hunt too hard - the spirit can bring birds to them, They do a rainsong and fill up the places they want, If it’s cold they can bring the warm weather like the wind...” (*My Place, n. pag.*)

Daisy’s story was just soul-destroying but it did not destroy her soul. Arthur’s and Daisy’s mother Annie was shared as was custom by the owner of the station. The offsprings were never acknowledged and though they knew it, they were careful enough not to speak of their parentage. In such a situation, the aborigines were torn away from their black mother and sent to the far away place where the arrogant white man thinks to be a better half. They are heart broken, scared of loneliness, faced utter helplessness and they don’t speak their own language as they pretend to forget it. Daisy bears her child, Gladys and as she records :without self-pity “they get you down on the floor and won’t let you get up”. (*My Place, n. pag.*)

Daisy’s daughter Gladys was sent to parkerville Children’s Home, where Gladys finds only Christ but no mother, no father, and no family. Gladys was married to a returned soldier from World War II. It is a sad bargain as the war had wrecked her husband Bill Milroy mentally and physically; and he became an alcoholic. As Sally’s father was a war veteran, he and his family received financial aid from Australian government as he

was in hospital and after his death. This aid was sharply detested and made a source of suspicion by Sally's grandmother, Daisy. Sally informs to the readers by her writing that since her grandmother had seen Australian government behaving badly with her people and had removed all the rights from them, it made her grandmother hard to believe in the aid that her family received. Hence, Sally's Australia was one defined as a long history of discrimination, governmental abuse of power and racism.

Sally's book *My Place* is a history, but one freed from the constraints of academic history. Conveyed as a series of stories it interweaves between past and present, portraying how the unacknowledged past continues to shape the present. It succeeds brilliantly, in putting questions on everyone's mental agenda about the meaning of white colonisation for aboriginal people and those of part aboriginal descent. By means of her writing, Morgan confronts the indigenous reader with the idea of learning their past and embracing indigenous identity, even if it is painful. Thus, this article clearly portrays how Sally Morgan's succeeds in tracing out her true aboriginal culture, heritage and identity.

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African Folklore in Ntozake Shange's *Sassafrass, Cypress & Indigo*

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Abstract: *The present study is based on the analysis of African folk lore Culture in Ntozake's novel, Sassafrass, Cypress & Indigo (1976). The paper begins with a brief introduction to the writer Ntozakeshange and a short summary of the novel chosen for the study. As the title suggests the study of the paper is carried out on the African music culture introduced by NtozakeShange. Sassafrass, Cypress, and Indigo incorporates Shange's earlier novella Sassafras (1976). Apparently set during the Vietnam War era, it depicts the story of Hilda Effania and her three daughters, African American natives of Charleston, South Carolina, descendants of a family of weavers. The novel depicts the fantasy of one of the three daughters Indigo whose magical musical qualities inbuilt in her with a mystical power of the black spirit asserts her as a radical feminist. The culture of music includes the variety of music throughout the works which includes comparisons from other folk lore cultures. It also includes the Black Arts Movement which separate symbolism, mythology, critique, Iconology and Feminism. The analysis of music culture is done through perspective principles-music, dance, movement, form. Each principle is explained with examples cited from the novel.*

Key words: *folklore, African American, feminism*

NtozakeShange is a renowned poet, playwright, novelist and performance artist. Her ground breaking work, based on the contemporary experience of black women, has cemented her reputation as a powerful American Feminist and literary figure. Her style is distinctive and idiosyncratic. As a writer, she does not want her readers to have control over the reading process. Once, she said that she hoped her readers would struggle to understand her meaning. She writes, what she hears in her mind, revealing the "music beneath the words."

Rounding out her achievements in playwright; poetry and novels, Shange has also written numerous essays about the experiences of different racial and ethnic groups as well as sharing her opinions on art, feminism and music. She has also written four Children's Books.

NtozakeShange's work has been widely anthologized and performed throughout the world, and she is the recipient of a prestigious grant from the Guggenheim Foundation. She currently lives in Brooklyn, New York. The novel *Sassafrass, Cypress and Indigo* (1982), we take for the study of the paper. Folklore (or lore) consists of legends, music, oral history, proverbs, jokes, popular beliefs, fairy tales, stories, tall tales, and customs included in the traditions of a culture, subculture, or group. It also includes the set of practices through which those expressive genres are shared. The study of folklore is sometimes called folkloristics, and people who study folklore are sometimes referred to as folklorists. The English antiquarian William Thoms introduced the word "folklore" in a letter published in the London journal *The Athenaeum* in 1846. [In usage, there is a continuum between folklore and mythology. Stith Thompson (1885–1976) made a major attempt to index the motifs of both folklore and mythology, providing an outline for classifying new motifs within which scholars can keep track of all older motifs. Folklore can be divided into four areas of study:

1. artifacts (such as voodoo dolls)
2. describable and transmissible entity (oral tradition)
3. culture
4. behavior (rituals)

These areas do not stand alone, however, as often a particular item or element may fit into more than one of these areas.

Apparently the story set during the Vietnam War Era, it tells the story of Hilda Effania and her three daughter, African-American natives of Charleston, South Carolina, descendants of a family of weavers who did piecework for a wealthy white family. Hilda Effania has conventional aspirations for her daughters, hoping that each will marry well and happily, preferable to doctor's son. She gives them the means to follow an upwardly mobile path: She sends Sassafrass to an exclusive northern prep school and Cypress to New York city to study ballet. She offers Indigo the opportunity to study the violin. Her daughters, however, are not content merely to follow the path she suggests to them.

The daughters' stories are told separately. Indigo's story concerns her arrival at sexual maturity at the age of twelve and the resulting changes in her life. Her constant companions have been dolls. She has made, and she sees herself as inhabiting a world of magical people and events. When she is on the verge of giving up her dolls, Uncle John the rag picker, one of the mysterious figures she has befriended, gives her a violin. She becomes adept at improvising on the instrument, producing unconventional but compelling music. Initially resisting her mother's desire that she learn to play properly, she ultimately does learn to play conventionally.

For a while, Indigo uses the magical power of her fiddle as part of motor cycle gang, the Ogeechee Captains. Her epiphany occurs when she is being chased during a misadventure through vaults where African Slaves were once imprisoned. At that point, she renounces her flirtation with a life of violence. Indigo knew her calling. The colored had hurt enough already. Ultimately, she goes to live with her aunt on a coastal Carolina island, where she learns the aunt's trade of mid-wifery.

The narrative then turns to her older sisters, both in California to begin with. Sassafras is in an abusive relationship and cannot find her artistic voice while Cypress is a dancer and a coke-dealer—both have to find their roots in their art in order to survive and be happy. But there is no direct link between them. After a few time, they began to share their thoughts through letters between the sisters. At one stage, they want to lead an independent life and comes out of their bounds. That Story ends in harmony. The unique community of African-American descendant Americans. It borrows from these Gullah tradition and reflects an emphasis on the role of women in a society's functioning ways of taking care oneself and other. novel set in Charleston, South Carolina, with major influences from sea islands off the coast of South Carolina, Georgia and Florida.

Shange employs Gullah Culture as a point of departure for understanding these women's live in the late 20th Century and historicizes their experiences as artists against the back drop of the Black Arts Movement, which "asserted blackness as a counter cultural force in opposition to Eurocentric ideology of white supremacy, but often excluded women from its mainstream. In addition, Shange's reliance on music, particularly Jazz, also reflects on harkening back to the Black Arts Movement, where distinctly "black" forms such as jazz were celebrated. While these influences inform the content of the novel, they are also reflected in other works of the author. There are many themes featured throughout the novel, but of particular interest are the feminism, forged. Shange's work features women who are not defined by others, but who have through their own experiences, shaped their lives. It is through such experiences that sassafras, cypress and Indigo relationships to their spirituality to each other and their own felinity are integral to the development an understanding the novel.

Sassafras has a closer link to her soul and she fulfill that desire in various paths. By weaving cloth, sassafras is continuing a tradition which forges and lined spiritual ties to her slave ancestors. Moreover, Sassafras' ideas with individuals in the rural Louisiana commune indicates that she seeks to "to keep the company of the priests and priestess" and to try "everything to be a decent IBEJII, a santera (213). CAROL Marsh-Lockett further expounds upon this thoughts in her essay, "A Woman's Art : A Woman's Craft: The Self in Ntozake Shange's Sassafras, Cypress, and Indigo" when she states that "Sassafras comes into spiritual and emotional fruition through plying the craft she learned from Hilda" (50). sassafras's' weaving serves as a paradigm of how black women keep traditions in the black family alive and maintain healthy relationships to their spirituality.

Indeed, a connection to all things spiritual is not sassafras's' alone to possess. Cypress also expresses her spirituality through her dances. Dancing offers Cypress more than an outlet for expression; it provides her opportunities to connect with the Orishas, particularly Damballah. During an intensive dance at a tavern, Cypress becomes one with the pulsating music, surrendering herself to the spirits. Cypress is transformed; she behaves as if she is the avenue through which the father of all spirit travels. She dances "curved and low to the ground, her back undulated like Damballah child must" (156). Cypress' respect for the spirits and is made known when she states that guests are not to "touch the altar for the Orishas" (102). The imagery Shange uses in the novel suggests that all women can have a relationship with their spiritual self through art. For Sassafras it is through weaving, and for Cypress it is through dance.

A fantasy of Indigo's or Shange's own portrayal of black folklore. Regardless of the intended portrayal of Indigo's magical qualities, Issacs believes that, "it is not presented with enough clarity. The reader remains mildly fond of Indigo. People who talk to dolls can be enchanting, but it is nonetheless befuddled about her role of the novel" (394).

Indigo's outlet for her spirituality comes in various forms, but is most notable through her music. Aside from representing the granny midwife archetype, Indigo is a special girl with unusual powers and a deep understanding of the spiritual world. She converses through music with slaves whose language was stolen. As Shange demonstrates in the novel, the whites took "them languages we speak. Took off with our spirits & left us wit they son... The fiddle be callin' our gods what left us" (27). Indigo serves as a conduit for the expression of the spiritual forced around her. Furthermore, Indigo maintains an array of spells for healing affiliations, self exploration, love, happiness and other uses. Yet communication with spirits through music and the creation of spells is not the only indicator of Indigo's mystical prowess. as a young girl, she rarely speaks to her family or the town people. Instead, she prefers to talk with her dolls and treat them as if they were alive. while Indigo's behavior may seem strange, perhaps it suggests that children are more receptive to the supernatural than their adult counterparts.

Even more remarkable is the relationship that the siblings have with each other. Although they live far away from one another---sassafras's in los Angeles, cypress in new York, and Indigo in Charleston, they are able to maintain healthy connections with one another. Despite being the oldest daughter, Sassafras is in need of sisterly advice from cypress when she leaves Mitch after a brutal beating. Arlene Elder expounds upon this

notion in her article, "Sassafras, Cypress & Indigo: Ntozake Shange's Neo-Slave/blues Narrative. "Elder states that "Shange culturally species her story...by showing the positive influence on sassafras's of her sister Cypress"(104). Instead of telling her sister what she wants to hear, Cypress explains that Mitch remains selfish and unyielding.

However, there are hurtful aspects of this sisterly bond because both women indulge in unhealthy behaviors, which border on codependency. AS Elder states, "Cypress deals drugs, transverses New York City under ground and above ground, from one end to other "using some of the proceeds to give money to Sassafras, so that she may join the New World collective artist' community" (104). Yet it is little Indigo, the most innocent of the three, who has always been adored by her elder sisters. Christmas traditions upheld by the young women and their mother imply a somewhat mystical bond. In her essay, Marsh-Lockett goes so far as to posit that they resemble the three fates: Atropos, who carried the shears and cut the thread of life; Clotho who carried the spindle and spun the thread of life; and Lachesis, who carried the globe and scroll and determined the length of life. (48)

Shange's novel illuminates and affirms the notion of black sisterhood and kinship. By preserving strong unions, these sisters grow and develop into better, smarter, happier women. For Elder, Shange's book focuses on 'three sisters and their mother, comprising a suspended, but ultimately strong family unit" (106).

In addition to sassafras's, cypress, and Indigo's connections to one another, they have a strong sense of their own feminine identity. Sassafras' femininity is denigrated by Mitch at every turn as he attempts to subvert her power as a black woman. He thrives in his misogynistic treatment of her, and he believes that he must stifle the things that she enjoys as a woman he literally and figuratively relegates her to the kitchen when she is caught crocheting. Sassafras is a strong adherent to the ideology of black womanism. Chikwenye Ogunyemi defines the term in her article, "womanism: The Dynamics of the Contemporary Black Female Novel in English" as a "philosophy that celebrates black roots, the ideals of black life, while giving a balanced presentation of black womanhood" (72). Ogunyemi asserts that black unity among men and women is an ideal component in black women's writing. Shange does not fully reconcile the idea of harmony among black women and men, because although the three main female characters maintain strong bonds with each other and their mother, the discord between Mitch and sassafras' leads her to stay in a relationship that mocks and denigrates her womanhood.

Although Indigo enters into womanhood as an adolescent, she has an understanding of what being a black woman entails. When she gets her menses, Indigo makes velvet sanitary napkins for her fifteen dolls so that they can share in her experiences as her body undergoes changes. Ogunyemi states that a "young girl inherits womanism after a traumatic event such as menarche or after an epiphany or as a result of the experience of racism, rape, death in the family, or sudden responsibility" (72). For Indigo, this process is not traumatic; instead it is celebrated as a rite of passage. Several of the rituals mentioned in the novel are rooted in concepts such as motherhood, birth, and other themes attributed to femaleness.

Shange's novel contributes to a literary movement among black women writers. The novel references the connections that black women share with their spiritual awareness, their links to each other, and their relationships to their own femininity. The relationships in this novel are significant because these three sisters exemplify the African philosophy of Sankofa, which means "return and recover it." Sassafras, Cypress, and Indigo become stronger, happier women because they have been able to return to their true selves and recover their African spirituality. This phenomenon is not limited to Shange's novel, but can be applied to contemporary fiction and non-fiction. By analyzing such folklore, we can uncover other important themes such as feminism, mythology, music, and dance, which contribute to the progression of the novel. Such issues speak not only to the African American experience, but also to the human condition.

Despite Issacs' problems with the structure of the novel, and some of the devices and techniques Shange used in her character development, she does praise Shange as a novelist, comparing her art to weaving, a skill shared by both the mother and the eldest daughter in Sassafras, Cypress and Indigo. Issacs puts it poetically in her last sentence, "When she's weaving well, however, her fiction is very fine indeed" (394).

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Dawn for Dalit Dames in Bamas' *Karukku*

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Abstract: *In spite of having many caste intricacies and complexities, our mother land shines as one of the world's largest democracies. In this man made world, women have been suffering silently in all the castes. Education has slowly opened the eyes of men and women in all other castes so we could see many changes in the life of women all over India. As Bharathi and Gandhi had dreamt, the women have come out of their kitchens and bed rooms for making laws and for rules the states. The great leader Dr. Ambedkar proclaimed that higher education should be given to all Dalit women in if we like to break the binding chains though education gave Dalits a lot of self confidence and propelled them to fight against their oppressors. Even then in many areas Dalit women have not yet completely released from clutches, Dalit Dames are oppressed and suppressed by her caste and gender. Girl babies are always considered inferior and are taken less care. When she grows up a Dalit young women, she will sexually molested by the upper caste men. Dalit men enjoy the liberty of falling in love and inter-caste marriage. A Dalit woman would never be allowed. All These worst social discriminations and atrocities are excellently portrayed by the Dalit woman Bama in her autobiographical work "karukku", Tamilians can feel proud that this modern Tamil work has been translated in English in 2000 which has brought the attention of the whole world towards the sufferings of Dalit woman. The result is the rise of Dalit Feminism. The bitter experiences in the author's life generally illustrate the narrator's painful journey and reveal the bitter reality of the social ills confronted by a Dalit woman. Though there is no proper end in the story creates awareness among Dalit woman. So it brings daring dawn to Dalit Dames. The first part portrays the suppression and sufferings faced by the Dalit women but the later part renders a positive identity of Dalit women and shows their inner strength. As a girl, as a teacher as a nun, Bama tries to awake the Dalit woman.*

Key Words: *suppression, oppression, discrimination.*

In India a large section of people are living a life of suppression and unendurable sorrow though it is the largest democracy in the world. These sections of people are termed as Dalits and the cause of their wretchedness is our strongly caste structured society. The word was used since the early 20th century, the beginning of the Dalit Social Movement. Dalit means broken, oppressed, untouchable, downtrodden, and exploited. The caste system in India is built on the standard of purity and impurity. Purity means rich and white, impurity means poor and dark. Being socially segregated for centuries, they are obliged to live a helpless life without menial facilities. As published in *The Hindu*, "every sixth person in the world as an Indian, every sixth Indian is a Dalit. In spite of the guarantee of civil rights and the special law enacted in (1989) to prevent atrocities against them, the Dalits continue to be the victims of social discrimination and oppression across the country" (15). In this one can guess the miserable condition of Dalit women. Dalits, in liberated India are still barred to use the free amenities; such as water taps, schools, temples, restaurants, hotels etc. The Dalit women have been beaten by the upper caste women while filling water from public taps. Dalit women have to bear social humiliation as well as the male dominance in the family.

Dalit literature is a literature of protest, pain, and agony. Its beginning can be traced to be undocumented oral folklore and tales of the past decades. Dalit literature as a genre was established in the 1960's and 1970's, when a spurt of Dalit writing was published in Marathi and Gujarati. Nearly two decades later, Tamil Dalit writing marked its identity in the literary map of Tamilnadu. A Dalit woman is a Dalit among the Dalits. Doubly oppressed by a patriarchal and caste tyrannical society, a Dalit woman nonetheless has exemplary endurance and the indomitable spirit to bounce back against all odds. The time has come for Dalit writers to not only lament their subjugation but also to simultaneously celebrate with pride the dauntless spirit of the Dalit women.

Bama Faustina Mary was born at Puthypathy near Madurai in 1958. The name Bama generated from the author's real name Faustina Mary Fathima. In Tamil Fathima is pronounced as Bathima and from that the name Bama comes. Her family was converted to Christianity was back in the 18th century. Her father was Susairaj and mother Sebasthiamma. Bama began to be noted as a writer with the publication of *Karukku* (1992), an autobiographical novel was first published in 1992 in Tamil. It was immediately translated into English (2000) and many other Indian languages. It won the crossword Award in 2000. Her works include *Kusumbrukkarn* (1996). It is translated into English as *Harum, Scarum Saar*. The third one is *Sangati* (1994). Which is translated into English as *events*. The fourth one is *Vanmam* (2003) translated into English under the same title in 2008. The works of Bama in Tamil exemplify the emergence of the Dalit writings. She hails as the first Dalit woman writer in India. Bama now works as a teacher in a school at the small village of Uthirameror near Kancheepuram. Bama's *Karukku* is the first autobiography of its kind in Tamil Dalit literature.

The Hindu, Bama also says, Because Dalits have been told again and again of their degradation they have come to believe they are degraded.... They have reached a stage where they themselves, voluntarily, hold themselves apart... The consequence of all this is that there is no way for Dalits to find freedom or redemption.

It is true that Dalit are made to believe that they are filthy and out casted. For centuries they deemed themselves lower and are nowhere equal to upper caste people and hold apart from society. The Government has an extra obligation to make sure that women can realize their rights. As Ruth Monorama says, Dalit women are discriminated against three times over. They are poor, they are women, and they are Dalits.

In India, in spite of constitutional guarantees of non-discrimination on the basis of caste and gender (Article 15 (1), the right to life and security of life (Article 21) and the constitutional directive to specifically protect Dalits from social injustice and all forms of exploitation (Article 46), Dalit women are subjected to subjugation.

It seems to Bama that “there lives are unceasingly tedious” and their bodies, mind, feelings, words and deeds are always under conduct and domination”. And as Dalit women they have a double cross to bear: not only are they exploited outside home by the upper castes, they are also abused by the highly patriarchal men within the community.

Karukku focuses on two essential aspects namely: caste and religion that cause great pain in Bama’s life. Bama has never heard of untouchability until her third standard in school. The first time she comes to know her community’s pathetic state, which is ironically tinged with humour. As Bama was returning from schools, she finds an elder from her street. He was holding out a small packet of snacks. This packet of snacks is tied in a string. The elder was bringing the snacks by holding the strings without touching the packet and was giving it to a Naicker in the village. Bama was unable to control her laughing. Looking at the funny sight. Bama says:

Just then, an elder of our street come along from the direction of the bazaar. The manner in which he was walking along made me want to double up. The self questioning has begun in Bama with wonder. Bama writes: “What did it mean when they called ‘Paraiya’ had the name become that obscene? But we too are human beings. Our people should never run these petty errands for these fellows. We should work in their fields, take home our wages, and leave it at that (13).

Bama starts to look out for means to uplift herself and her community from this trampled existence. Her elder brother shows her the right path and tells her that education is the only way to attain equality. Bama’s elder brother opines:

Because we are born into the paraiya jati: We are never given any honour or dignity or respect. We are stripped of all that. But if we study and make progress, we can throw away these indignities. So study with care, learn all you can. If you are always ahead in your lessons, people will come to you of their own accord and attach themselves to you. Work hard and learn (15).

Throughout her education, Bama finds that wherever she goes, there is a painful reminder of her caste in the form of untouchability. The government offers the financial grants and special tuitions to the Harijans. These grants and special tuitions were more of humiliation than consolation, mainly because it singled out her caste identity. Once the identity is revealed, Bama opines: “Among the other students, a sudden rustling: a titter of contempt I was filled with a sudden rage”(19). It was against all the odds that Bama completes her under graduation and B.Ed. Subsequently, she decides to become a teacher. She works in a convent. Bama finds that the nuns working there constantly oppresses the Dalit children. When she is in the hostel after completion of her eight class, Bama painfully recalls the nuns commenting on the Dalit children. Bama expresses her grief: The warden sister of our hostel could not abide low-caste to poor children. She’d get hold of us and scold us for no rhyme or reason. If a girl tended to be on the plump side, she’d get it even more. These people get nothing to eat at home: They come here and they grow fat, she would say publicly. When we returned to the school after the holidays.,she would say, publicly. look at the Cheri children! When they stay here. They eat the fill and look as round as potatoes. But look at the state in which they come back from home just skin and bone (17-18). It was then that Bama was suddenly struck with the idea of becoming a nun and truly to help the Dalit children. She took a drastic step of resigning her job as a teacher and entered the order. She entered a particular order since she, “had read about the woman who founded that particular order how she had done so for the sake of the poor and lowly; lived and died for them alone. I wanted to be like her, living only for the poor and downtrodden” (Bama 2000:20-21).

Bama was admitted that the upper caste students enjoyed more status and respect from the nuns. The nuns in the convent constantly throw insults and abuse against the Dalit students. The Dalit children did jobs like Sweeping the premises, washing and cleaning the lavatories. The nuns felt that “low caste people are all degraded in some way. They think we have no more moral discipline nor cleanliness nor culture” (Bama 2000:22-23).

Bama reflects over the words of her grand mother, who works as a servant for Naicker families. When she works in the fields, even small children would call her by name, order her and command her. The little boys do all these things just because they belong to the Naicker family. Bama's grandmother, like all the other labourers, calls the little boys as Ayya, which is another name for master. When the Paraiya or Dalit women ask drinking water, the Naicker women pour out the water from a height of four feet. While the paraiya women and others drink water with their cupped hands. One day I went with paati to the Naicker house. After she had finished all her filthy chores, Paati placed her vessel that she had brought with her, by the side of the drain. The Naicker lady came out with her left overs, leaned out from some distance and tipped them into paatis' vessel, and went away" (14). Listening to this Bama feels terrible and concerned about the past generation for their services to the upper case as slaves and the way they are oppressed in the name of untouchability, casteism, suppression, domination and whatever it may be.

Bama has bitter experiences at the school. One day all children along Bama were playing at the school in the evening. At that moment somebody has stolen the coconut. The guilt is thrown on her. Everyone says that it was Bama who had plucked the coconut. Actually she was not guilty but the headmaster treats her badly. He scolds her in the name of caste. This incident in her life gives more inspiration. She feels that it is not impossible even for a Harijan to study and from then onwards she excels in her studies with a desire to prove her ability as equal to or better than other students.

Dalit Dames suffer in silence. They learn to bear all Domestic Violence enduring such assault and violence has been made as duties of Dalit Dames. Women are materials for men to play games. Even old grandmothers give the fruits to the boys, and they give only left over skin of the mangoes to the Dalit girls. Dalit Dames are not at all provided with needed medical aids. Some times, when Dalit Dames are sick and unconscious, they are all buried alive. Dalit Dames without healthy food suffer from malnutrition. They are taken to the pujaries to do mantras to get them well.

These social harms against Dalit Dames are slowly removed only by educated Dames like Bama and her literary works. She speaks and writes for the enlightenment of Dalit Dames. After becoming an established writer, she says, I chose to write to break through the system without breaking down".

Bama believes that the bright rays of education alone can bring Dawn to Dalit Dames. Knowledge and awareness alone can uplift her people. Her journey as a writer has slowly brought some light in the life of Dalit Dames. All the facilities must be enjoyed by Dalit Dames. Dames can make and Dames can break. Such an illuminated day will dawn soon. Bama's writings are wonderful boons. Equalities power to stand on their own legs and needed wisdom are to be given to Dalit Dames. Really *Karukku* of Bama is a Divine scripture for Dalit Dames to break the enslaving chains, Every word of Bama is a bright sparkle to put an end to the troubles or to tackle.

Thus in *Karukku*, Bama requests her community to follow a few things to put an end to the agony of women. She asks them to treat both boys and girls alike, showing no difference between them as they grow into adults. Girls too must be given freedom and make them realize their strength. Then she is sure that, there will come a day when men and women will live as one, with no difference between them: with equal rights, then injustices, violence and inequalities will come to an end, and she is sure that the saying "Women can make and women can break" (123) will come true and "such a day will dawn soon" (123).

Equality, liberty, and all facilities, and higher education will reach the Dalit women very soon. These type of literary works have already started the work of bringing the dawn for Dalit Dames.

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Recreating History as Fiction: Reading Shashi Tharoor's *Riot*

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Abstract: History, politics and culture have always been a dominant preoccupation of the Indian-English novelists. This compulsive obsession was perhaps inevitable since the genre originated and developed from the concurrently climatic phase of colonial rule, the stirrings of the nationalist sentiment and its full flowering in the final stages of the freedom movement. An attempt is made in this paper to examine Shashi Tharoor's *Riot* as a multilayered narrative that sheds light on many contemporary issues on history, politics and culture of India. There is also an attempt to look at how certain historical episodes have been reconstructed and infused to the gamut of the text.

Tharoor got the idea of writing this book when he received an account of a riot from his friend Harsh Mander, an IAS officer, who witnessed it in person when he was posted as a district magistrate in Khargaon district in Madhya Pradesh. Around the same time Tharoor read in the news about the killing of Amy Biehl in South Africa by a violent black mob. Biehl was a Fulbright scholar in South Africa helping the local authorities on social work. Tharoor has infused both these stories into the texture of the novel and has given a political dimension by setting it against the Babri Masjid demolition of 1989. The story of *Riot* unfolds through number of different voices and Tharoor uses journalistic reporting, diary writing, scrape books, interviews and newspaper reports to present this plurality of vision. Along with the main story of love between Lakshman, an IAS officer at Zailgarh in UP and the American volunteering social work in the locality named Priscilla Hart, there are other equally significant threads of cultural and social collisions in the novel. As Tharoor observes in the after word of the novel, "history is not a web woven with innocent hands."

Key Words: Compulsive Obsession, Contemporary Issues, Cultural and Social Collisions.

History, politics and culture have played a dominant role in shaping the post-Independent Indian writing in English as this phase is characterised by the nationalistic sentiments in the light of the Independence. Number of attempts has been made by the writers to represent the plurality of India in their works: the diversity of language, culture, religion and lifestyle inherent in the country. This apparent diversity within has been instrumental for the first two novels of Shashi Tharoor, *The Great Indian Novel* and *The Show Business*: while the former is an allegorical representation of the ancient Indian epic *Mahabharata* being reinvented in the twentieth century India, the latter is a recreation of an episode from the immediate past of Bollywood cinema. The third novel, *Riot*, portrays the story set in a small town of Zailgarh in Uttar Pradesh where an American student and social worker Priscilla Hart gets murdered in a riot that broke out between Hindus and Muslims in the wake of the demolition of Babri Masjid in Ayodhya. Two separate episodes are yoked together into the texture of the novel by Tharoor: the first one narrated by his friend Harsh Mander, an IAS officer who managed an actual riot in 2001 at Khargone in Madhya Pradesh and the next one is the brutal murder of an American scholar Amy Biehl by a violent black mob in South Africa.

Different themes are ingeniously woven into the text of the novel: love and betrayal on one hand and the conflicts between culture, religion and politics on the other. The story is narrated through a varied media of journals, transcripts, interviews, letters exchanged between the characters and from the extracts of personal diaries and scrapbooks. By adhering to a different narrative pattern Tharoor attempts to recreate the conventional pattern of narration to suit his unusual story of love in times of troubled political context. The novel was simultaneously released in India and America at the same time with two different cover paged and sub-titles: The Indian edition presented a grim photograph of a real riot with flames and smoke rising from an overturned cart whereas the American edition carried a nostalgic photograph of the setting sun against a Mughal monument fringed with Rajastani fretwork. The American edition even carried a sub-title "A Love Story" to make it more emotional. Tharoor reflects on the two aspects of the novel in his non-fiction work titled *Bookless in Baghdad* as:

The two covers reflect, too, two different aspects of the same novel, because *Riot* is a love story, while also being a hate story. That is to say, it is the story of two people intimately in love in a little district town in Uttar Pradesh, but it is also the story of the smouldering hatreds being stoked in that town, Zailgarh, and of the conflagration in which both are caught up. American readers looking for a love story will also find a novel about the construction of identity, the nature of truth and the ownership of history; Indian readers expecting a novel about the dangers of communalism will also discover a tale of another kind of passion. (17)

Riot seeks to examine some of the vital issues of our times on an intimate canvas by presenting a love story between an Indian IAS officer named Lakshman and the American student and social worker named Priscilla Hart. While *The Great Indian Novel* attempts to recreate the mythological past into the political scenario of the twentieth century India, *Riot* addresses the more intrinsic and vital issues of the day on a smaller and intimate canvas by recreating the immediate political past of our nation.

The novel begins with the series of spoof columns in the *New York Times* reporting the murder of an American girl Priscilla Hart in the town of Zalilgarh in Uttar Pradesh under mysterious circumstances. This twenty four year old New York University doctoral candidate has been in the North Indian town as a volunteer with the population control organization, HELP – US . A few days after the murder, her parents, Rudyard Hart and Catherine Hart, decide to travel to India to seek convincing answers to the questions of their daughter's tragic end. They are joined by a reporter from New York Journal named Randy Diggs who not only plays the role of the chorus but assumes an instrumental role in unifying three different perspectives in the story that of the District Superintendent of Police Gurinder Singh, Hindu chauvinist leader Ram Charan Gupta and the Islamic scholar and professor of History Mohammed Sarwar. The other characters include Priscilla's project director Shankar Das, his assistant Kadambari and her sister Sundari, the victim of the domestic violence Fatima Bi and her incorrigible husband Ali, and the most intimate but never present friend of Priscilla in the US, Cindy Valeriani, Lakshman's wife Geetha, his daughter Rekha and Nandini, and the secretary of Richard Hart when he was in India as the marketing director of Coca- Cola.

By employing these multiple voices, Tharoor attempts to construct a novel of ideas by focusing on the construction of a religious identity of India. It has been an extremely difficult task to adopt a perspective in a country where the history dates back to the times of the mythology and beyond to an unverifiable past. So a simple love story of Priscilla and Lakshman when set against the plurality of religion and culture, attains an altogether new dimension and generates immense complexities or riots. Religious hatred and cultural conflicts are the central themes within which the entire story revolves round: the former created by the age old conflict between Hindus and Muslims in the country, ignited further by the Ayodhya issue and the latter outlined by Lakshman's conflict whether to be an Indian or Western in his attitude towards love.

Along with the question of love and religious riots, Tharoor also addresses the plight, oppression and atrocities faced by the women in India by portraying two victims of domestic violence in the form of Fatima Bi and Sundari. They are left with no choice but to obey the whims of their men and in the case of Sundari even that of the mother in law. Their tragedy is a sad reminder that iterates the fact that women still face the "agni pariksha" in a nation where the myth of "Rama Rajya" is still cherished. Even Priscilla could not escape the inevitable catastrophe as a woman who could not fulfil her dreams of love and laid destitute and abandoned like Sita, at the end.

Susan G. Cole makes an important observation in her essay titled 'Riot Act' that the novel is about the construction of identity and memory as there is never really one history but different perspectives of the past. Tharoor himself admits in an interview with Manju Roy that he has attempted to present the multiplicity of perspectives as people are disputing the ownership of history and trying to cover the truth behind a certain event. The concept of the nation of India emerges in the novel through diverse and often contradictory narratives provided by different characters. Ram Charan Gupta, the local Hindu leader and a prospective candidate for the next parliament election, provides the anti – colonial perspective in his arguments with Randy Diggs but adopts a pro – Hindutva stance in the case of the Ayodhya issue. Professor Mohammed Sarwar on the other hand voices the historical and rational opinion on the issue. Lakshman makes the secular and erudite contribution to the religious and political questions from the point of view of an administrator. Randy Diggs adopts the coloniser's biased views on India along with Rudyard Hart and Katherine and only Priscilla is left bewildered at the threshold of this vast continent like Adela Quested in Forster's *Passage to India*. Tharoor raises questions about how history is reconstructed in the work of art by challenging the notion that history is constructed with consensus and presents number of voices analysing the past differently in the text. He claims that his novel presents not a "torrid East – West encounter in a colonial setting" but "it's about today's people in our increasingly globalising world, where collision and confluence seamlessly cross national and ethnic boundaries" (Patil 77).

The fictional account of the riot that includes the actual incidents relating to the Coca – Cola controversy, the dispute of Ram Janmabhoomi/ Babri Masjid issue and the Sikh riots of 1984 indicate that history has been recreated as fiction. Yet *Riot* makes clear departure from the traditional nomenclature of social/historical novel and provides a new perspective as a Meta – fiction that problematize history by portraying characters from the past with objectivity and irony. Instead of giving expression to some already existing reality or worldview the novel develops into a kind of discursive formation of ideas and an expression of divergent views forming specific relations to historical events. Hence the historical events as well as the fictional happenings depicted in the novel offers multiplicity of perspectives and provide different versions of historical as well as fictional truth.

The novel presents a dismal picture of the country constituted by the age old rivalry between the dominant religions: Hindus trying to establish and reinforce the rule of the majority and the Muslims putting up resistance. Every issue is problematized and politicised and innocent people lose their lives in violence and bloodshed. Tharoor holds politicians responsible for the pathetic state of affairs in the country as well as for the communal violence. They exploit the mob psychology in the name of religion and disrupt the status quo to their advantage. With the shifting paradigms of power politics, they become the masters of mis-governance and malpractice. The rule of the law gets replaced by the rule of lawlessness and the state agencies that are meant to administer becomes dysfunctional. As a result, the police excesses and bureaucratic immoderation have become the rule of the day and the common man's apathy has gone down to such abysmal depths that they take the pathetic state of affairs as a way of life.

India has become a land of power hungry politicians who play communal politics with religion for their personal and political goals. The self-styled religious leaders form a nexus with political leaders to do irreparable damage to the state, society and humanity. This unholy union is behind the sowing the seeds of hatred and hostility in the name of religion and is the root cause of the entire communal issues in the country. It has not only derailed the process of nation building, but put the unity and integrity of the nation in jeopardy. By denigrating the national prestige and trampling down the centuries old interaction, exchange, cooperation, trust and mutual respect, they have been successful in making an impasse in the country. The temples and mosques have become passports in the pathways to the legislature assemblies and parliament. This unholy use of religion as a ladder to success and a tool of oppression has made India a land of wounded civilisation. It has dismantled the resilience and strength of Indian unity and integrity and created ugly divisions, cleavages and fissures in place of rich and variegated diversities and pluralities. But the only lesson we inherit from history is that it gets repeated with more vehemence and no one learns any lessons from it. So chaos, disorder, violence and riots have become a permanent order of the day and made the state of the nation as a godforsakenland.

Tharoor maintains a delicate balance and a sense of decorum when he handles the ever burning topic of communal rivalry in India especially in the light of the Ayodhya issue: the two distinctive voices in the name of Ram Charan Gupta and Professor Mohammed Sarwar are presented through the eyes of an objective journalist, Randy Diggs who has come to India to do the "story" behind the death of an American scholar and social worker Priscilla Hart. Their views on the topic of temple/masjid controversy are entirely brought out through the exchange of dialogues between them and Diggs. The District Magistrate Lakshman seems to present the authorial version in the debate by reaffirming the concept of secularism that has sustained India as a nation throughout history. He maintains that the greatest contribution of Hinduism in a land of plurality is secularism, the way of life that does not prioritise one religion over the other. By attempting a work of fiction on the theme of cross cultural love against the backdrop of the unending religious controversy, Tharoor has successfully established that personal and political relations in this land of multiplicity is tortuous, if not malign.

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Unheard Melodies: A Study of Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things*

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Abstract : *Arundhati Roy a Booker Prize winning novelist belongs to new generation of Indian writers. Her debut novel The God of Small Things is with a special focus on how she models different representations of women, taking as a background the discussions within postcolonial feminism about subalternity and the representations of women from the so-called Third World in theory and literature, as well as the concept of agency from Cultural Studies. This purpose is reached by studying and comparing three main female characters in the novel: Mammachi, Baby Kochamma and Ammu, centering on their different ways of relating to the male hero of the novel, Velutha, an Untouchable in the lingering caste system of India. The paper argues that Roy has contributed with diverse representations of subaltern women in the Third World who despite their oppressed and marginalized status display agency and are portrayed as responsible for their own actions.*

She rightly puts forth how women become victims of violence, exploitation, alienation and exile. Social institutions like family, marriage, religion and government are responsible factors for their marginalization. Roy weaves her plot, thread by thread, into a colourful, multifaceted story; added to the narrative are different cultural references to Shakespeare, The Sound of Music, Kathakali (traditional drama-dance) and the music of the rolling stones which create a patchwork of associations and connotations. The novel is not just a beautiful and intricate postmodern saga but it is definitely an intervention into Indian culture.

Key words: *feminism, violence, alienation*

Arundhati Roy a Booker Prize winning novelist belongs to new generation of Indian writers. Her debut novel *The God of Small Things* is with a special focus on how she models different representations of women, taking as a background the discussions within postcolonial feminism about subalternity and the representations of women from the so-called Third World in theory and literature, as well as the concept of agency from Cultural Studies. This purpose is reached by studying and comparing three main female characters in the novel: Mammachi, Baby Kochamma and Ammu, centering on their different ways of relating to the male hero of the novel, Velutha, an Untouchable in the lingering caste system of India. The paper argues that Roy has contributed with diverse representations of subaltern women in the Third World who despite their oppressed and marginalized status display agency and are portrayed as responsible for their own actions.

She rightly puts forth how women become victims of violence, exploitation, alienation and exile. Social institutions like family, marriage, religion and government are responsible factors for their marginalization. In this novel the predicament of Indian women is studied in depth along with the plight of dalits (untouchables), lower class people, racial subalterns vis-à-vis global capitalism and neo-imperialism masquerading as globalization.

Ammu's roles as a divorced woman, a single mother and as an educated woman denied of her rights of inheritance, as a sexually sentient being who is deprived by the pre-colonial "Love laws" the freedom to choose her partner and is penalized for it, stands on different issues side by side with other subalterns, whether of caste, class or gender. Ammu, craving to take control of her life that is so much suppressed by a social order, is faced against a system where her Marxist brother Chacko exploits the poor women labourers in his factory, both financially and sexually, and goes unchecked. She sees characters like Mammachi, being appropriated by patriarchy and be asphyxiated and distorted by it. She sees Velutha being accused of the accidental drowning of Sophie Mol. Ammu's father is incredulous of the fact that her Bengali Hindu husband wanted to prostitute her in order to please his white boss. The colonial ruler's authority is challenged by a subaltern woman in the novel who is economically and socially marginalized. Smothered by social injustice, Ammu rebels against the very social norms that constitute the Syrian Christian community in Kerala. This rebellion is an act of resistance against the very foundations of this society. Her most significant act of becoming sexually involved with the untouchable, lower class Velutha, cannot be taken at its face value as an act of sexual transgression only. This is an act of resistance aimed at bringing about change in and around her. In short Ammu, a subaltern woman resists oppressive and repressive social and political structures. She does not succeed in bringing about any tangible change but puts up a brave fight for realizing her dreams. Although she may not consciously have worked for other subalterns, her actions contribute to the emancipation of different kinds of subalterns and there lies her exceptionality.

The second most important female character is Mammachi who puts up a kind of resistance against patriarchal oppression and marginalizing apparatuses. Mother of Ammu and Chacko, Mammachi is also a physically and psychologically abused wife alike so many women in different societies who undergo torture and

trauma and never speak out. Roy situates Mammachi in a strategically significant position between the caste, class and gender-subalterns and the feudal-capitalist patriarchal social structures that are inflicted with age-old complexities. She is not only a passive but is also the target of the jealousy of her entomologist husband. Mammachi is marginalized in terms of class and gender. A descendant of upper class Brahmins, she, however, is not a victim of caste prejudice. Marginalized by her son in old age and facing an economically disadvantaged position, Mammachi is a subaltern in more than one way.

Baby Kochamma is the daughter of Reverend John Ipe and is in love with the Roman Catholic priest, Father Mulligan. To win over him Baby Kochamma converts to the Roman Catholic faith. However, she does not dare to challenge the traditional ideas of love and marriage prevalent in post-colonial India. Baby Kochamma does not run away to fulfil her dreams and upholds very reactionary ideas. Baby Kochamma's acts of getting Velutha and Ammu in trouble and manipulating Estha and Rahel after Sophie Mol's death are key moments that show us just how insecure she is when it comes to social status.

So, Ammu, Mammachi, Baby Kochamma and Rahel, four women in *The God of Small Things*, interrogate pre-colonial or indigenous norms, customs, laws, values and structures connected with patriarchy, class, caste and feudal-capitalist economic structures.

Roy weaves her plot, thread by thread, into a colourful, multifaceted story; added to the narrative are different cultural references to Shakespeare, *The Sound of Music*, Kathakali (traditional drama-dance) and the music of the rolling stones which create a patchwork of associations and connotations. The novel is not just a beautiful and intricate postmodern saga but it is definitely an intervention into Indian culture. It is a book with several beginnings. The many beginnings are finely interwoven with the novel's temporal fragmentation, that is, its constant shifting in time and space. One of the story's several beginnings takes place in Ayemenem, Southern India, in the month of May and quickly jumps forward to the next month to Rahel's return and to her brother Estha's re-return. After this, we see another beginning and the narrative slides to twenty-three years in the past, to the fateful two-weeks prior to the death of their English cousin. These are just a few of the novel's beginnings. Another beginning is the story of Pappachi's and his moth. His narrative exposes the family's anglophile tendencies and modern India's juxtaposition of cultures, of postcolonial modernity and traditional life and these time shifts, between the past and present, give the reader this sense of imbalance; an imbalance from which modern India also suffers.

In Roy's work, like in most postmodern or postcolonial fiction intertextuality plays an important role. There are numerous allusions to other literary works, religious texts, history, folklore, fairy tales, cinema, pop culture, etc. Intertextuality in postcolonial fiction is particularly important because it gives a sense of interconnectedness and emphasises the clash between the culture of the coloniser and the colonised. In *The God of Small Things*, Arundhati Roy uses many references to 1960s British culture, which is juxtaposed with the more "backward", behind the times, India that seems to be stuck in the 50s.

The characters in *The God of Small Things* are multilingual. Their native language is Malayalam and for them English will always stand second as the language of their former masters. The language employed by Roy is also representative of a colonised society suffering from postcolonial cultural hybridity. In any postcolonial country the language will become a hybridisation of native and non-native languages.

Roy's *The God of Small Things*, presents women as subalterns, some of whom try to bring about change through resistance. But as subalterns they do not have the articulate voice that members of other groups in Indian society have. These women mount resistance against both local and global inequalities, though the first kind of resistance is perhaps stronger. Through their trajectories of personal involvement in different issues they interrogate the structures of caste, class and gender, implicitly and explicitly, unconsciously and consciously, partially or tangentially and wholeheartedly. These women are different and similar, complicit in oppressions as well as mounting frontal attacks against iniquitous social structures, customs and laws.

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The Dominant Culture in Ann Petry's *The Street*

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Abstract: *The Dominant culture in a society refer to the established language, religion, values, rituals and social customs these traits are often the norm for the society as a whole. Dominant culture (mainstream culture) is the culture that is held within a large amount of people residing in a society, or in other words it is the culture that seems the most "normal" to those that live in a specific area of the world.*

Mainstream Culture can also be broken down easily to figure out what its definition is. Mainstream is the dominant or principle tendency and Culture is the caliber in a single being or an extended group that comes from a concern for what is seen as tolerable in the letters, scholarly pursuits, arts, manners, etc. So when you put them together it basically means the "Dominant Act's of and within a society".

The Street revolves around the main character, Lutie Johnson. In this novel, she show how her past experiences and current circumstances makes it virtually impossible for a black woman to ever achieve anything more than what they have managed to achieve.

The Street relates the difficult education of Lutie Johnson, the protagonist; she has not yet learned to read the mythical signs and symbols of American culture with the disbelieving irony required by the conditions of her race and gender. Lutie understands the rejected position in which she is placed by the views of the dominant society. In a similar vein, the final images of the novel are those of the garbage that lines and defines the Harlem streets, images with which the novel also began but which now recur with a stirring resonance. By the end of the narrative, Lutie begins to reconcile herself to the manner in which she is seen by those who control the signs, symbols, and opportunities of American culture.

Keywords: *Dominant Culture, Language, Religion, Values, Rituals, Social Customs, Protagonist, Mythical, Race, Gender, Dominant Society, Signs, Symbols, Opportunities.*

African-American literature is the body of literature produced in the United States by writers of African descent. It begins with the works of such late eighteenth-century writers as Phillis Wheatley. Before the high point of slave narratives, African-American literature was dominated by autobiographical spiritual narratives. African-American literature reached early high points with slave narratives of the nineteenth century. The Harlem Renaissance of the 1920s was a time of flowering of literature and the arts. Writers of African-American literature have been recognized by the highest awards, including the Nobel Prize to Toni Morrison. Among the themes and issues explored in this literature are the role of African Americans within the larger American society, African-American culture, racism, slavery, and social equality.

This unique cultural and sociological understanding of spirituality in African American cultural expression is reflected in a new sense of acceptance by African American women's writings. Contemporary writings unite against the dominant Anglo-American world views that emphasize isolation as a virtue, praise separation, and reject trust in human subjective and social relations. African American cultural modes of being seek constantly a basic harmony of connectedness

African-American culture, also known as black culture, in the United States refers to the cultural contributions of African Americans to the culture of the United States, either as part of or distinct from American culture.. The culture is both distinct from and enormously influential to American culture as a whole. Individualism and self-determination are values in the dominant society that most significantly affect the analysis of reparations to African Americans. Robert Staples describes the value orientations of white Americans on individualism as follows:

"In human society each individual must make his own mark through competition for the prestige goals of his culture. The rewards of his victory in the competition are his alone, to be shared only with certain prescribed people (e.g., wife, children) over whom he has control.

Those who have not achieved success or are without sufficient resources have only themselves to blame because of their inability to compete. The dominant group perceives that each individual is responsible for his or her own behavior . . . "(27)

The value placed on individualism is so entrenched in the dominant perspective that it cannot yield to foreign concepts like group entitlement or group wrongs. Opponents of reparations to African Americans analyze the merits of the remedy from this dominant perspective with its focus on individualism, thereby contributing to the opponents' conclusion that the idea of reparations to African Americans is absurd, frivolous, or unworthy of serious consideration.

Petry was born Anne Lane on 12 October 1908 in Old Saybrook, Connecticut, to a middle-class African-American family, one of the few in her geographical area. Although she grew up in New England, Ann Petry lived in Harlem for several of her adult years, absorbing its vitality and chronicling the problems of the African-American community. Like her father, she became a druggist, working in the family business until 1938, when she and her husband, George Petry, decided to settle in New York. Sometimes compared with Richard Wright, she used racial themes in realistic, sociological novels with moral overtones. During the 1960s and 1970s Petry declined in popularity, but interest in her work was revived by critics during the 1980s and 1990s.

After working for a time the *People's Voice* in Harlem and involving herself in cultural and civic activities, Petry decided to devote her attention to her own writing. By 1943 she was beginning to have success with her short stories, and in 1946 her first novel, *The Street*, set in Harlem, was published and won her acclaim. Two other novels, *Country Place* (1947) and *The Narrows* (1953), returned to small-town settings. Petry died in May 1997, at a time when her work had been rediscovered by critics and the public.

“Her voice had a thin thread of sadness running through it that made the song important, that made it tell a story that wasn't in the words – a story of despair, of loneliness, or frustration. It was a story that all of them knew by heart and had always known because they had learned it soon after they were born and would go on adding to it until the day they died (53).”

The Street, despite being an Urban novel where life of the protagonist is described as well as those with whom she has close encounters, but still at times it seems that *The Street* passes in the background and becomes oblivious at other times, while the novelist is entangling with the life of the protagonist. Lutie has been abandoned by her husband and has to take care of her eight year old son whom she wants to protect from the influence of the Harlem environment but racism and its accompanying contours doom her plans to failure.

The sexual harassment and racism Lutie faces at every turn of her life, shakes the reader to his core. The Blacks and their lives dominate the novel though Petry only gives a bird's eye view of the white characters twice in the form of Mr. Junto, a local businessman whose optimistic views on race are nonetheless tainted by the fact he's fine with using his influence to persuade Lutie into sex, and secondly Bub's schoolteacher, Miss Rinner. Lutie does not often encounter hostile situations that explicitly discriminate against her, but she is aware of the institutionalized and veiled subjugation that is present everywhere in the society though she sometimes thinks she can get out of it with a little hard work, that is a part of the larger American dream. *The Street* is not a goody ending happy novel. How can it be, and how can it be now, more than fifty years after its publication date, when the same institutionalized and systemic oppression still continues? Petry had a very specific message here, and one that she gets across beautifully and brutally.

The whole novel is full of symbolic and physical traps that depict the black particularly the men existing in the ghettos away from the sight of the White men. The dingy apartments where they exist, the menial jobs that they undertake and the rent they pay to the white landlords all makes their lives miserable. Even the so called dignified job of Lutie carries the dark intention of making her the mistress of the bo. Lack of opportunities and racism compel, black men, like Lutie's father, to kill their time through drinking and in slumber. Other indulges in extra marital affairs or finds a concubine who can help them reinforce their manhood as they have failed to find a job. In most cases the women work in the white man's house while their men indulge in all sorts of vice.

Petry concludes her novel with an image that, while not as violent as her first description of the street, is just as poignant and visceral. The street has now entered a kind of gilded age, glorified in an image of purity: snow. The snow also represents the ability of the white power structure to bury the “grime and garbage” of reality and instead creating the alluring sandpit trap image of “the street.” Moreover, Petry's last illustration is one that is at once revealing and hopeless. She exposes the cyclical nature of “the street,” its widespread universality, and inescapability. Wherever Lutie goes, “the street” will be the same, regardless of the distortion it hides behind. Petry's contrast of Lutie's real life with a fictional image suggests that this character has unreal media influenced expectation about life.

In this novel we can see that, how women had suffered a lot to become an identical figure. Women are treated badly in this society, though there are many growths and freedom to women has given, there are some obstacles to overcome to achieve their goal in this society. Likewise the author has included the life of Lutie in this novel and her overcoming of several obstacles to reach her goal. Being a single woman she faced many problems to lead a happy and prosperous life. But she can't able to achieve her identity because of this dominant society. She is trying to find a way to get her and Bub into a nicer neighbour so that she can raise the boy properly. However, she is losing her battles because of her skin color and her gender. Lutie's attempts to obtain financial stability and she ultimately defeated in the final chapter. Lutie ever really had a chance to achieve her goal as well as she was doomed for failure from the beginning.

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Aspects of Social - Cultural Realism in Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man*

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Abstract: Afro-American novels depict the struggles of Negroes in the society and the techniques of their survival in a white dominated world. In *Invisible Man*, Ellison's creative consciousness encompasses a vast range of world literature. It deals with the repression and betrayal associated with racial discrimination in America. Ellison establishes the context of the relationship between black people, their culture and the social status in American society. He demonstrates the immense prospects that accompany marginal world. Alienation becomes a condition of vision and invisibility represents the deprivation and dispossession of a minority group. It evokes a growing sense of cross cultural ties and identifies the situation of the modern man. The theme of survival of the blacks in a sociological condition of their race and community portray the chaos of the modern world. The tale is related by a man invisible in his self-knowledge, looking back at his visible innocence, and finally emerges as a human capable of taking a responsible role in a society.

Invisible Man has grasped the inner meaning of life. He utilizes his experiences of life and imagination to create a work of art. The purpose of his work is to remove the people living in a state of wretchedness to a state of blessedness. His study is a voyage of self-discovery. His new role as a literary artist is liberating, and it enriches the self to connect to a larger social and cultural world. The fiction transforms the marginal life of the American Negroes to develop the aspects of socio-cultural identity. Ellison tries to emphasize race differences with the definite objective of achieving racial co-operation and harmony in a cultural pluralistic American society.

Key words: consciousness, discrimination, identity.

Afro-American novels depict the struggles of Negroes in the society and the techniques of their survival in a white dominated world. Ellison's creative consciousness encompasses a vast range of world literature in "*Invisible Man*". It deals with the repression and betrayal associated with racial discrimination in America. Ellison establishes the context of the relationship between black people, their culture and the social status in the American society. He demonstrates the immense prospects that accompany marginal world. Alienation becomes a condition of vision and invisibility represents the deprivation and dispossession of a minority group. It evokes a growing sense of cross cultural ties and identifies the situation of the modern man. The theme of survival of the blacks in a sociological condition of their race and community portray the chaos of the modern world. The tale is related by a man invisible in his self-knowledge, looking back at his visible innocence, and finally emerges as a human who is capable of taking a responsible role in a society.

The survival of the protagonist is an epic journey through a labyrinth of freedom, conformity, denial and possibility. The works of Ellison portray the racial status, cultural dilemma, oppression, betrayal and sufferings of black people in the American society. It is a struggle and survival of a black youth to exist in the twentieth American society, which is dominated by the white society. The novel predicts the necessity of the *Invisible Man* to move beyond the condition of invisibility, conferred on him by the American society. He must achieve a sense of self, which will enable him to impose his imagination on an ambiguous reality. Survival motif projects the protagonist's existence after undergoing life and death struggle in the society.

The protagonist of the *Invisible Man* confronts many racial repressions and his racial and social conflicts constitute the main theme of the novel. He struggles with the realities of the society as it portrays a sordid social world which renders invisibility. He narrates his experiences from an underground cell. He describes his experiences as a student in a South, a laborer in the northern city, his travels in Harlem following his work in a political organization named Brotherhood, and his participation in the Harlem race riots of the nineteen forties. He is constantly engaged in a footrace against himself. He is forced to live in a coalhole, realizes his visibility, gains self-knowledge and emerges victorious in conquering his own true self.

Ellison employs naturalistic and surrealist elements for a survival of black youth in a society, which is ruthless and inhuman towards the black race. He also indicates that he has outgrown his naiveté, and is sufficiently content with his identity. It imposes the fact that the individual must assume responsibility for shaping his own destiny.

. . . Ellison's creative intention was to depict something of the sweep and variety of what he calls the Negro-American experience. The black milieu so richly depicted in *Invisible Man* is not simply décor; it is the novel's macro subject and the essential socio-cultural context for the exploration of its moral and thematic interests. (Mc Sweeney 3)

The Invisible Man gradually moves from innocence to experience and from repression to expression. He hesitates to accept his folk tradition, which makes him devoid of any identity. He finds himself invisible. But, when he accepts his black lore, he loses touch with his identity. The protagonist's grandfather in his death-bed provides the lesson for the black community. He teaches the way to confront racial discrimination in a white dominated world. His grandfather provides inspiration for his quest for visible identity.

The grandfather defines the terms of existence for him. He reveals to his grandson "Live with your head in the lion's mouth. I want you to overcome 'em to death yeses, undermine 'em them with grins, agree 'em to death and destruction, let 'em swallow you till they vomit or burst wide open" (IM 17). He represents the ambiguity of the past and his advice poses the riddle for the protagonist. Ultimately, his journey is towards self-realization and learns a lesson from invisibility. He resolves to do good for the society. The novelist comments on the grandfather

Samson, eyeless in Gaza, pulls the building down when his strength returns; politically weak, the grandfather has learned that conformity leads to a similar end, and so advises his children. Thus, his mask of meekness conceals the wisdom of one who has learned the secret of saying the "Yes" which accomplishes the expressive "no". Here, too is a rejection of a current code and a denial became metaphysical. (Ellison 56)

The Invisible Man delivers his high school valedictory address and tries to prove that the progress of the Negro is the humility. He is also subjected to a series of brutal degradations and experiences racial discrimination when he is made to stand in front of a dishonest woman. He witnesses the frenzied reactions of white men to the combination of blond sexuality and black humiliation. The blond has learned to suppress her human character behind the mask of a kewpie doll. "The white men treat the blacks and the white lady not only as animals but also as inanimate objects" (German 390). The Invisible Man encounters a vet in the Golden Day, a road side bar, who directly reveals the invisibility of the Invisible Man. He recalls his progression in the medical field which was curtailed by the white men. He tries to teach him the wickedness of the whites but the invisible man could not understand the simple facts of life. The vet comments on his ignorance and insists him to discover the reality of the world. He points out the invisibility in him.

As a novel of social exclusion, Invisible Man describes a culture in which the difference that separates black from white, both within society and within the mind that has internalized those symbolic pigments, is a difference of race so vast that Invisible Man is not merely awkward or out of place. He is invisible. (Schaub 128)

The invisible man searches for a human and national identity in an attempt to erase out his imposed invisibility. The brutality of the white is clearly brought out in the battle royal scene. The battle royal scene is conducted for the amusement of the leading white citizens. The black youths are blindfolded with white cloth and pushed into a ring, where they engage themselves in a frenzied fight to entertain the white audience. The whites encourage the blacks to knock one another and the scene predicts the enforced physical torture. The battle in itself is a ritual which symbolizes many aspects of discrimination in a socially segregated society.

The battle royal scene depicts the power of the whites who make Afro-Americans channel their aggressive impulses inward upon their own race instead of their true enemies, who remain on the side lines. The nightmarish game not only highlights the castes in the segregated south, but prepares the Invisible Man for the unpredictability and viciousness of the American life. The protagonist learns a lesson that he can only survive by telling a lie which has been already advocated by his grandfather for his survival. "Invisible Man is painfully aware that the world he believed solid and absolute is, in reality disordered and amorphous" (Schor 88). He decides to move to the New York City to continue his search for a visible identity.

Dr. Bledsoe, a black man by his color and nature deceives the protagonist with his treacherous recommendation letter when he travels to New York. The blacks offend themselves. The letter states "the bearer is no longer a member of our scholastic family, it is highly important that his severance with the college be executed as painlessly as possible. I beg of you, Sir, to help him continue in the direction of that promise" (IM 156). White people are pleased by the degrading nature in the lives of Negroes to reinforce their racial prejudices. The protagonist is also exposed to the degradation in a paint factory where he has to mix ten drops of black dope into every can of 'optic white'. The process of enriching white paint symbolizes the interplay of racial colors in America. The unintentional dropping of the concentrated remover into the buckets containing white paint gives a grey tinge which causes his termination.

The invisibility becomes visible in an unknown factor that the careful calculations and expert manipulations are needed to whitewash the Americans. He learns an important lesson that the blacks can make their presence visible without the oppression of the whites and has a way to find their identity in the society. "Blackness and nil are the Negro's position – nothing nowhere. And the novel's metaphor leads to the dilemma of identity, for the black man cannot resign himself to nothingness or embrace invisibility." (Schafer 233)

The protagonist decides to join the Brotherhood, a political organization where he falls prey to "keep this Nigger-Boy Running syndrome" (IM 156). The dream signifies his grandfather's view that he has to keep running others errand than his own. It is the other way of suggesting that he must decide for himself rather than

play roles imposed upon him by others. He must resume responsibility for his own life. The vet and the grandfather predict the necessity of the Invisible Man to follow his own impulse and should take decision for his future career. He senses that the aims of Brotherhood and methods do not coincide with his own and comes to realize that they feign interest in civil rights, actually repressing blacks and deny their individuality. They are only an object and an instrument to the power politics. The Brotherhood is the ultimate cultural experience to the protagonist where he understands the reality of the society.

Ras, the Exhorter, who represents a political alternative for Afro-Americans, expresses his anger against the whites who betray them. "AFRICAN! Why you, with them? They sell you out. They enslave us – you forget that? How they going to be your brother?" (IM 299). Ras advocates a massive return of the blacks to Africa, but the approach is unrealistic, suicidal and vulnerable to exploitation. The protagonist disguises himself with a pair of dark glasses and a wide brimmed hat in order to escape from Ras 'The Destroyer', who had sent his hoodlums to catch him. His appearance makes a lot of difference and change in his perception. He discovers an identity within himself. He is mistaken for Rinehart, a man of many identities.

Ralph Ellison suggests that the life of Afro-American offers anonymity and unforeseen possibility through Rinehart. Rinehart is the incarnation of the invisible. He is identified as a desirable lover, a gambler, a police briber and a self-ordained Reverend, a 'Spiritual Technologists'

Undoubtedly the most intriguing street personality in the novel is Rinehart, because he is the most complex, ineffable character in the metropolis. Rinehart is the infinitely adaptable organism, who has no sense of race or history, and for whom only the present circumstance has reality. (Weber 172)

Invisible man decides to follow Rinehart, who exploits basic human desires to alleviate suffering and confront grief. He exploits his invisibility completely and infinitely. The hero finally dismisses Rinehart as he feels anti-social. He realizes his final reversal of life when he drops into the womb of earth, a coalhole. He is also enforced to live in an underground basement and confronts the realities of life. He is left to himself, seeking his self for the first time. He recollects his experiences of life, burns all his papers, symbolically represents to discard his former identities in order to penetrate the darkness of his life. The invisible man dreams of the castration and the dream is the destruction of the fear that has kept him running. He decides to seek help from his friends in spite of difference in race. "That there hang not only my generations wasting upon the water ... But your sun... and your moon... your world..." (IM 460).

The dream is a symbolic re-enactment of his soul. It also enables him to achieve self-realization. The castration of the Invisible Man is not the destruction of his manhood but the way for creation. It destroys the source of his non-identity and helps him to attain vision. The knowledge of his self makes him a responsible person to become a literary artist by writing down his experiences. William Gode, speaks about his decision says, "Presumably the writer who functions creatively in society will be willing to face his racial experiences, which, although surely unpleasant at times, have driven him to write about these experiences in a 'creative' way, so that both writer and society all prosper" (501). The protagonist rejects the values of the culture or society in which he finds himself by birth. At the end, he is able to realize the importance of his black culture which provides him with an identity. The identity renders him self-realization and visibility.

Invisible Man regards past as a burden and future as a stepping stone for success. He discovers that history moves swiftly and dangerously. The adventure of the invisible man is a search for identity, which enables him to erase out his invisibility. He gets frustrated by his repeated defeat and accepts the identity enforced upon him. He resolves to fight his invisibility with his new identity and finally takes a responsible role in the society. Invisible Man has become the shaping artist of his tale. The protagonist emerges from the slave system that stifles and dehumanizes him to anti-slave systems. The anti-slave system alienates him from his own people. As a writer, he imposes a human pattern on chaotic reality, giving clarity and meaning to his existence. The last stage of metamorphosis provides him with conformity towards his survival.

Ultimately, he is forced to learn from his experiences. He finally realizes that the advice of his grandfather has a different meaning. It is a plea for affirmation towards the principle. The knowledge makes his life a successful one and has turned it into a strategy of survival. By accepting and evaluating his experience, he previews his future which will enable him to seek a promising survival. His adventures lead him from ignorance to enlightenment. His underground experiences spiritually gains him self-knowledge, enabling him to have a visible self. "The discussion and evaluation of complex human emotions that go on in the novel, as well as the making of philosophical decisions done by a disembodied voice' make the novel an ideological one" (Ogbaa 177). Invisibility can result from the loss of one's identity or from denial of an individual's humanity. His invisibility can be defined as a state of existence which provides him self-realization which leads him to his redemption and ultimately to his resurrection.

Thus, he resolves to take a responsible role in the society and his work of art provides him a visible identity. The identity erases out his imposed invisibility and leads him to the path of a survival. "In Ellison's vision his character can fit himself for the social reality by coming to terms with the chaotic fluidity of existence itself. Having travelled through the ether of absurdity – he rediscovers the justification of social diversity and

unity” (Schaub 129). Invisible man is praised for its treatment of individuality and self-awareness. The dynamic of the novel stems from the hero’s struggle within himself to accept the legitimacy of his heritage, in the face of the constant attacks by the white community or its allies in the Negro society.

Art is the communication of human truth and has the ability to speak to the human conditions. Invisible Man has grasped the inner meaning of life. “Ellison convincingly depicts the richness and beauty of Negro culture and tradition in the United States, and clearly shows the inappropriateness of neo-African nationalism” (Ping 81). In the process of his self-realization, he accepts chaos and absurdity as a part of a human condition. Perverseness, diversity and contradictions are the reflections of humanity and life. Life should be lived by realizing one’s humanity and acting according to one’s belief. He utilizes his experiences of life and imagination to create a work of art and it ends with an expression of faith.

The purpose of his work is to remove the people living in a state of wretchedness to a state of blessedness. His study is a voyage of self-discovery. His new role as a literary artist is liberating, and it enriches the self to connect to a larger social and cultural world. The fiction transforms the marginal life of the American Negroes to develop the aspects of socio-cultural identity. Ellison tries to emphasize race differences with the definite objective of achieving racial co-operation and harmony in a culturally pluralistic American society.

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The Igbo Culture and Tradition in *Things Fall Apart*

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Abstract: Chinua Achebe is the leading and certainly the best known, writer of fiction is Black Africa. His novels are read all over the English – Speaking world and are studied in universities and for school examination in Africa, Britain, and North America and even in Australia.

He was the fifth of the six children of Isaiah Okafor Achebe, one of the early Igbo converts to Christianity, who was an evangelist and a teacher in the church missionary society's village school. His interest in the history of Nigeria was great. So it is not surprising that when he turned to storytelling he should turn as one not only fully informed in the analysis of English Fiction but also as the determined to express through this means the spirit of his people and write about Africa from the inside.

The novel is set in Ibo culture and onwards the ends of the nineteenth century, when European were just beginning to penetrate inland in West Africa. The Ibo people are a large nation of related tribes and they are around eleven million people sharing a common language, common beliefs and tradition and a common social structure. In English, both they and their language are known as "Ibo" but they prefer themselves to use the form "Igbo".

Key words: Culture, Language, Beliefs, Tradition, Social Structure.

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Historical Background of Nigeria

The country of Nigeria has been a crossroads of African cultures. Today, the protestant Yoruba people live in the western section of the country, while the Muslim Hausa –Fulani occupy the north .Achebe's novel deals with the Catholic igbo of the east ,specifically with their nineneeth and early twentieth-century associations with British missionaries and imperialists.

Culture and Society

The novel is set in Ibo culture and onwards the ends of the nineteenth century, when European were just beginning to penetrate inland in west Africa. The Ibo people are a large nation of related tribes and they are around eleven million people sharing a common language, common beliefs and tradition and a common social structure. In English, both they and their language are known as "Ibo" but they prefer themselves to use the form "Igbo".

They were organized into group of related villages in basically democratic system, engaged in simple subsistence forming and their lines were lived within a highly formalized frame work of social relationship and of primitive animistic religion in which respect for ancestor. "The Igbo communities that chinua Achebe explores in his novel *Things Fall apart* contained organized social structure which kept order, allowed social rising and enforced religious morals and rules (Ohadike xxii).

The Ibo society is a self – contained tribal society in which the retention of the myth, legends beliefs, customs, religion, proverbs, tales, taboos etc is upheld with a utmost sense of duty.They have their own social system, entertainment, dance, music festival and rites. They have their own village councils, judicial system that decide cases and settle disputes and quarrels.

The Igbo communities that chinuea Achebe explore,in his novel *Things* fall apart contained organized social structure which kept order allowed social rising and enforced religious morals and rules. The social class system was based on the lineage of the males in the community and was "ruled by their elders (Ohadike xxii).

The Igbo society as portrayed by Achebe, relies on the balance of the archetypes animus and anima to ensure a balance between the male and female roles and they are strongest people. Achebe's Okonkwo, who have a stronger people. Achebe's Okonkwo, who have a much stronger animus side, have less control of their emotions and can appear. as a whole "primitive". The Igbo culture has both anima and animus roles that form a cohesive and holistic way of running a community of people.

Chiolo is an example of how Igbo women participated in the leadership, labour roles and marriage, perpetuating the sense of balance within the community. Chiolo in *Things fall apart* was greatly respected in the

community because. She was the priestess to the oracle. In the Igbo culture women had the power to gain their own health and rise in social class on their own accord (Ohadike xxviii).

The marriage practices in Igboland were logical way to assure, a balance power between the men and the women as well as provides the necessary food to feed the community. The Igbo people had an agricultural society which needed the help may members prompting the desire to bear more children. The head women of a household "Shared every title that the man might acquire" which allows equality the heads of the household (ohadike xxxii). In things fall a part the first wife Anasi "Wore the anklet of her husband's titles and looked like the ruler of the women folk" in the "large and prosperous family" (Achebe 21). It was a great honour to be a first wife.

When the animus and anima of a person is out of balance turmoil can occur and husband and wives may have difficulties. "Igbo laws protected wives to a certain degree from, abusive or unhappy marriage by allowing the women to leave her husband (Ohadike xxxii). In Things fall apart Achebe mentions, that," if a women runs away from her husband her pride – price is returned (Achebe 92). Women's and mens roles in the social structure of Igboland very very symbolic of their religious practice and beliefs male and female gods and goddesses such as Chukwu and Ani governed the lives of Achebe's characters in Things Fall apart. Chukwu was the masculine "Supreme being" of all creation and action (ohadiki xxxiii). The Igbo people consulted the male oracle through the female priestess (Achebe 17). Every male god seems to have a correlating female goddess to keep the balance of animus and anima in the spiritual world. The priestess to the oracle of the Hills and caves was "full of the power of her god" and was "greatly feared" by those who came to seek the oracle's wisdom (Achebe 17).

Pronunciation of Igbo Names and Words

Like Chinese, the Igbo language is a tonal one; that is, differences in the actual voice pitch and the rise or fall of a word or phrase can produce different meanings. In Chapter 16, for example, Achebe describes how the missionary's translator, though an Igbo, can not pronounce the Mbanto Igbo dialect: "Instead of saying 'myself' he always said 'my buttocks.'" (The form k means strength while k means buttocks.)

Igbo names usually represent meanings — often entire ideas. Some names reflect the qualities that a parent wishes to bestow on a child; for example, Ikemefuna means my power should not be dispersed. Other names reflect the time, area, or other circumstances to which a child is born; for example, Okoye means man born on Oye Day, the second day of the Igbo week. And Igbo parents also give names to honor someone or something else; for instance, Nneka means mother is supreme.

Prior to Nigerian independence in 1960, the spelling of Igbo words was not standardized. Thus the word Igbo is written as Ibo, the pre-1960 spelling throughout Things Fall Apart. The new spellings reflect a more accurate understanding and pronunciation of Igbo words. The List of Characters includes a pronunciation that uses equivalent English syllables for most of the main characters' names.

The Justice System was headed by the spirits of the Ancestors manifested as the elders dressed as egwugwu (Achebe 89). A crime committed against a community member was viewed as disrespectful to the deities to whom the Igbo people often prayed. Even old people in African society are highly regarded like other gods and goddesses.

The tribal world is to go in complete agreement with the spirits of the oracle. These people worship many Gods. They believe that there are three levels of divine beings : the highest level is the supreme God ,or "Chukwu". Underneath Chukwu are lesser gods ,called "Umuagbara" and under these are the "Ndi Ichie," the spirits of dead people. The Ibos also believe in reincarnation. Folksongs are also a vigorous expression of the Nigerian culture. For example, the rain song (31) expresses man's relation to nature in complete harmony. Also that reflects that importance of rains in the African farming and unhindered happiness of the tribal people symbolized by the rain. The past glory of the Ibo people who depended on the culture hero is sung in the song when the people praise the folk hero Oka fo (45).

Kotma of the ash buttocks,
He is fit to be a slave.
The white man has no sense
He is fit to be a slave . (154)

The archetypes of anima and animus are also important to have not only in balance within a society but within each individual. A wealthy woman or man would have both strength to complete hard work and compassion or understanding toward their families Okonkwo from Things Fall Apart was unable to adapt to the changes the Europeans brought to his home, umuofia, because his animus archetype overpowered his overall psyche. Okonkwo "had no patience for unsuccessful men", could not articulate his thoughts well through speech, and hated "gentleness" all of which are associated with the archetype anima and more feminine attributes (Achebe 4, 12). Okonkwo's father had too much anima which led him to an idle, yet happy, life. Things Fall Apart demonstrates that a person must have equal parts of anima and animus in order to live in harmony with the one's self and act in a peaceful way within the society.

The Igbo culture was very balanced and were “very eager to accept” the changes brought by the Europeans, including education. The Igbo people desired to “Live free from crime and sickness, to live in harmony with unseen higher forces, and “live in peace with themselves” (Ohadike xlvi). The Igbo culture was formed around the belief and practice of equality among humans and with the gods. When a part of the Igbo society is not in alignment with the practices of harmony it is easily identifiable, such as the personality of Okonkwo in *Things Fall Apart*. It is important in Igbo society as well as all civilization that a balance remains between anima and animus archetypes in order to keep peace and learn to grow for the future as a community

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Silencing the Woman: Portrayal of Benare in Vijay Tendulkar's *Shantata! Court Chalu Ahe*

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Abstract: *The subjugation of women in society has been reiterated by prevailing patriarchal notions that are firmly rooted in culture, tradition, custom, heritage and value system. It takes on an altogether new guise in the Indian context where the concept of "pativrata" has been glorified through folklore, rituals, and scriptures and sanctified by the religion. The mythological characters like Savitri, Sita and Damayanthi are projected as archetypal images of an Indian woman striving for the wellbeing of their husbands, irrespective of the way they are treated. The virtue of the scheming male constructed notion of chastity has been carefully inserted to the common psyche by the invention of similar stories of female sacrifice.*

*Theatre has always been the most appropriate arena for effectively representing the latent anxieties that are often glossed over by the society. Indian theatre from the time of Tagore has been utilising the stage as a potential tool to inculcate the larger cultural and social changes. Vijay Tendulkar, the significant voice of contemporary Marathi drama, has portrayed number of characters who represent such transitions. This paper attempts to consider how despite being educated the central character in *Silence! The Court is in Session, Miss. Benare* is marginalised and tortured by her own colleagues at school first and by the society later. The mock trial she is subjected to brings out the horror a woman has to undergo in any patriarchal society and questions the absurdity of justice.*

Key words: *Patriarchy, Culture, Tradition, Custom, Heritage and Value System*

Colonialism has made its impressions felt in diverse modes through different genres, with a curious attention paid to the portrayal of the doubly colonised subaltern, the women. Postcolonial studies illustrate how women are socially, culturally, politically and literally marginalised and subjugated as the 'other', or the 'inferior' by treating them as secondary citizens by the larger and powerful phallogocentric society. In the Indian context, socially constructed ideologies like self-torture, sacrifice, chastity or *pativrata* are intrinsically inculcated and perpetually propagated using various strategies. The mythological scriptures and rituals which are considered to be the mine of Hindu traditions have popularised the mythological characters like Savitri, Sita, and Damayanti who are valorised as the ideal image of an Indian woman. The virtue of chastity which is a male constructed ideology has been instilled from time immemorial into the thoughts of men which has been perpetuated into the thoughts of women employing heterogeneous strategies.

The postcolonial texts, however, foreground the gender issue from diverse perspectives, focusing on the possibilities of their emancipation from the clutches of the strategically nuanced notion of patriarchy, which is degenerating as well as exploitative in its relationship with women. Margaret Mead, an anthropologist by profession, in her work titled *Sex and Temperament in Three Primitive Societies* successfully illustrates that sex is not a determining factor for gender but just a cultural construct. She conducted a series of studies on different tribes of New Guinea and found that the members of Arapesh tribe were very gentle, mild, affectionate and soft with no difference between the men and women as both of them behaved in a so-called 'feminine' manner. Similar studies conducted on the Mundugumor tribals who were cannibalistic and lived in a hostile environment proved that both men and women were 'masculine' and were aggressive, harsh, violent and competitive. Yet another study based on a tribe named Tchambuli ascertained that the male and female behaviour was contradictory to the normative roles assigned to man and woman in most societies, that is women were masculine and men were feminine in nature. Women were more dominating and managed all the major works of the family while men were idle and they went shopping, wore curls and gossiped. This study becomes a "breakthrough in determining that gender and sex are different things altogether. Sex stands gendered. Gender inequality does not inherit from one's biology but culture. Gender identity is imbibed with the help of socialization" (Mohanty, 232).

The auteur Marathi dramatist Vijay Tendulkar is a colossal figure in the arena of Indian drama, who made forceful intervention in favour of the underprivileged, by making many of his plays instrumental in vehemently attacking the male centred society. His plays implore to ponder on the atrocities inflicted on women, providing them a literally marginal space in the society. The present study is an attempt to testify the cannonade of women in the society and its representation in literary works especially in the plays of Vijay Tendulkar, giving special reference to the play *Shantata! Court Chalu Ahe (Silence! The Court is in Session)*. He makes the play as a fitting device to raise the questions on gender discrimination and invigorates his anathema against such gruesome atrocities prevalent in the society.

The play sprang from a real life story of an amateur group that was on its way to stage a mock trial in a village near Mumbai. It lambastes the ideology of glorification of motherhood by laying bare the sexual politics in patriarchal norms of family and gender relations. The play unfolds itself, bringing forth the eternal questions of society, class, institution of marriage, plight of women, violence, cruelty and hypocrisy. Miss Benare, who plays a lead role, is a teacher by profession and is presented as a crass, bold, exuberant and rather independent woman. She expresses her desires, exhibiting infinite zest of life by asserting her non-conformity to the well-defined tradition of a conventional society. The theatre group which consists of Miss Benare, and many other professionals, most of them who are a drastic failure in their respective professions, plot to entrap Miss Benare in their mock trial.

Miss Benare is charged of infanticide and the mock trial, which started in a lighter vein, gradually becomes inhuman and vicious as all the male members turn jealous and malicious at Benare who is a free bird enjoying her life in its full bloom. Her misdemeanours are ballooned up due to their frustration of defeatism and unsuccessful lives. The trial inflicts excruciating pain on her and the whole event turns into a harrowing experience for her. She becomes a victim of imbalanced and distorted man-woman relationship and the weapons used against her are fudged and fabricated. Benare was considered a profligate as she was unmarried and had a relationship with Professor Damle, one of the members of the theatre. The initial plan of the group was to enact a play based on a case against the American President Lyndon Johnson for producing atomic weapons. Sukhatme, the lawyer of the group feels that for a change there should be a different kind of accused and that if it is a woman, things would really look different and thus Benare is entrenched in the plot unjustifiably. Sukhatme feels that infanticide is a terrible crime and preaches about the nobility of motherhood and reminds that since woman has been acknowledged as the mother of mankind, a great responsibility is vested upon her. Meanwhile another member, Kashikar is reminded of the Sanskrit proverb, "*Janani janmabhūmishca svargadapi garisyasi*" (Five Plays 79), which he translates as mother and the motherland, both are greater than heaven. Thus by glorifying and idealizing motherhood, the society has enslaved and degraded women to mere caretakers of their children by putting the burden squarely on their shoulders.

Though the group present claims to be the guardians of culture and tradition, who are indulged in protecting the honour of a woman, they don't hesitate to assault and defame the same womanhood by insidiously assailing Benare for her unwed motherhood. Mr. Kashikar finds fault with the very system of educating girls: "Our society should revive the old custom of child marriage. Marry off the girls before puberty. All this promiscuity will come to a full stop" (Five Plays 98). He attacks her saying that Miss Benare has made a heinous blot on the brow of motherhood which is considered as purer than heaven and argues that the character of the accused is appalling and bankrupt of morality. He emphasises that her conduct has blackened all social values hence the court should pay attention to take a very stern and inexorable view of the prisoner's crime, without being trapped in any sentiments. The unconscious biases of patriarchy which is entrenched in the culture of misogyny is evident in the responses of her own co-actors. They feel that motherhood without marriage is the greatest sin and needs to be annihilated as the accused has plotted to destroy the very root of the much treasured culture, tradition and religion.

Benare falls prey to the lust of her own maternal uncle at a very young age and repeats the same folly by offering herself both heart and body to her friend, Professor Damle. However, in both these cases it is the victim, being a woman who is put on the trial and the victimizers – the men escape from its trauma. One can find Benare bearing a stark resemblance with Tess in *Tess of D'Urbervilles*, the celebrated novel by Thomas Hardy where Tess becomes a victim of lust and hypocrisy and her lament "Was once lost always lost really true of chastity?" (Hardy 115) turns universal. Similar is the plight of Hester Prynne, the heroine of the famous novel, *The Scarlet Letter* by Nathaniel Hawthorne who had to undergo the brutality of the patriarchal society by wearing on her gown an elaborately embroidered letter "A" which stood for 'adulterer' because of her cowardly lover Dimmesdale who feared his reputation. The novel explores the theme of sin and Pearl, their daughter, the fruit of their relationship is a walking example of the torture afflicted upon a 'fallen' woman by the ruthless male oriented society.

The lively, dynamic and sprightly Benare seen in the beginning of the play is reduced to an insentient block of stone converting herself from a single individual woman to the very embodiment of the predicament of oppressed womanhood, unable to even utter the name of her oppressor. She is described as a canker on the body of the society which reflects the societies' attitude towards such grown-up unmarried girls. She loses her job as the chairman of the Education Society felt that "It is a sin to be pregnant before marriage. It will be still more immoral to let such a woman teach, in such a condition! There's no alternative this woman must be dismissed" (Collected Plays 113). Confounding factors point that none of these guardians of morality finds fault with Professor Damle, a married man, with five children continuing his career of teaching and guiding the children. Tendulkar has very dextrously painted the society's infliction of brutality towards women who tend to break the "glass ceiling" above their heads and the hypocrisy of the middle class is highlighted through documenting the discrimination towards women who seek to undermine the radical pretensions of this world. As the celebrated critic Khan has observed: "This world is full of inherent rivalries and competitiveness. It allows a

very limited space to women and any attempt to transgress the sanctioned space results in their further marginalisation” (73).

The worst among the double colonized are the sect who are positioned still in the lower strata of social hierarchy: the women belonging to the Dalit community. They are subjected to multiple oppressions and unaccountable miseries in a caste reigned society. The Princely state of Travancore established by Marthandavarma in the early 18th century collected taxes like “Mulakaram” (breast tax) and “Meesakaram” (moustache tax) from the Avarnas. As the avarna women were not permitted to cover their bosom in the public, those who tried to disobey the rule were severely punished. The life of Nangeli, a martyr from the central part of Kerala bears testimony to the heinous system of forceful tax collection that included more than one hundred infamous, barbaric taxes levied on the Avarnas and Dalits. When the village officer known as *Pravarthiar*, came to know that Nangeli was covering her bosom in public, he rushed to her house demanding the tax. She reacted sharply to such an inhuman practice by severing both her breasts and offering it on a plantain leaf to the tax collector. The officer in terror fled from the place leaving Nangeli to die bleeding. Chirukandan, her husband too ended his life by jumping into the pyre of his beloved. (The only historic instance of the husband throwing himself into the pyre of his wife) This incident triggered intense fury and the very next day the tax was withdrawn by Sree Moolam Thirunal of Travancore fearing the public agitation in 1803. The place where Nangeli resided is now in the District of Alappuzha and is known as “Mulachiparambu”, as a tribute to the bravery of a Dalit woman.

That the situation of women is bewilderingly deplorable and that their marginalisation has a long history from the remote past to the present era of twenty first century is a matter of inexorable disgrace. Since the canon of the society is a male bastion, a remarkable change is disconsolate unless the men are coerced out of their misogynistic convictions and women change their *c'est la vie* attitude in respect to their, untenable condition. The liberation of women has to go a long way and the gumption for it has to come from both men and women or else the space allotted to women would ever remain a marginal constraint.

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Polarization Through Race, Class and Gender in Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye*

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Abstract: Toni Morrison, the most celebrated contemporary American novelist powerfully evokes in her fiction the legacies of dislocation, racial discrimination and slavery that have been bequeathed to the African-American community. Her first novel *The Bluest Eye* depicts the tragic life of a young black innocent girl, Pecola Breedlove, who strives to be loved by her family and others. Pecola assumes that the reason she is detested and ridiculed is that of her blackness and ugliness. Therefore, Pecola sublimates her desire to be loved, a desire to have blue eyes and blonde hair; like Shirely Temple, the ideal white beauty, who Pecola thinks is adored by all. Pecola, soon after entering into her womanhood is sexually abused by her father, Cholly Breedlove. Pecola suffers as a target of attack everywhere. She is ignored and despised at school, taunted by a group of boys, discriminated by the black women Geraldine and Maureen Peal, who is socially an upper class. Pecola becomes the scapegoat, the sacrificial victim on whom the whole community purges itself. Her discrimination is polarized through her race, class and gender.

Key Words: Polarization, Pecola, Class, Race, Gender.

Introduction

Toni Morrison is among the pioneer of the modern black writers who have redefined African American writing in many ways. Black women in America being black, female and poor have been polarized by racism, sexism and class not only from the white world but also from their own men. Polarization of the black women led them to face the problems of race, class and gender which finally pushed them towards a margin. *The Bluest Eye* clearly examines the process of polarization of the black in the hands of the white through racism, classism and male prejudice. The black, both men and women could do anything rather obey the differences by the exploitations of the white. The novel examines how the principles disseminated by the dominant groups and accepted by the marginal group influence the identity of the black women. The novel exposes the story of a black girl in 1941 who is all but destroyed by her desire for white beauty and by other African Americans acting in response to the oppression of white culture.

Polarisation through Superior Black Class

There are three minor African families who, for their social rank and financial and political progression, submit their own black identity in order to become close to the ruling class families, The Peals, Geraldine and Elihue Micah Whitcombs. Polarization is not only between the white and the black but also between the blacks who is superior in their financial status. The central character Pecola is polarized between the black due to her poverty. Maureen Peal is the only character in the novel represents the Peals. Maureen Peal is a light-skinned, young mulatto girl and claims herself to be beauty. Her appearance, conduct and observations offer sufficient glimpses of consciousness of the Peals.

Maureen Peal is one such who is considered as the richest of the white girls. Maureen is measured beautiful in great part because of the description that has made her look white: her fair skin, her long hair, and her green eyes. She symbolizes the white ideals by which other girls are judged. Her whiteness, her beauty, her status is unattainable for Claudia, the narrator, her sister Frieda and Pecola who is financially poor. Maureen has fully internalised the white relations of darkness with ugliness. For people like Maureen, black seems to be the colour of the devil himself. Maureen Peal's relative prosperity and reputation are advantages to her being for nearly white. She is the classmate of Claudia, Frieda and Pecola. Maureen is different from all other girls. Maureen enchants the school by the way of her dressing. The teachers encourage her and the boys stop fighting when she appears. "She enchanted the entire school. When teachers called on her, they smiled encouragingly" (60). Maureen's relative affluence and popularity lead her to abuse and curse the black girls. She humiliates and attacks Pecola, Frieda and Claudia being black and ugly and asserts with a pride that she is cute and beautiful. Maureen Peal's expressions were so powerful that it might have hastened Pecola's journey towards dissolution. Pecola is astonished by the humiliations made by Maureen Peal.

The second African family, Geraldine, Louis, Junior also cultivates the aspirations of the ruling class. Geraldine Loudis, a socially conscious black woman wants to erase her blackness, her very identity. Hailing from a middle class, Geraldine wants to be a part of the ruling class. They feel themselves to be 'coloured' and despise the poor blacks. They try to erase any personality trait which might seem too black. Geraldine allows her son Junior, to associate only with white children. She teaches him that the "Coloured people were neat and

quiet; niggers were dirty and loud” (85). Instead of instructing Junior about his culture and heritage, she steers him away from it.

Junior is not permitted to associate with his own peers. As a typical black boy he desires to be with the blacks. “Junior used to long to play with the black boys. More than anything in the world he wanted to play King of the mountain and have them push him down the mound of dirt and roll over him” (85). His feelings of bewilderment and self-hatred for his own people come out in aggressive acts. He tortures his mother’s cat with the knowledge that the cat receives more of Geraldine’s love, than he, himself, does. Junior also begins to believe that the black boys are not his equals. Eventually, he begins to choose dark-skinned girls. Pecola bears the impact of one of these attacks. Geraldine walks in after Junior’s attack on Pecola and she immediately reflects her cruel rejection of Pecola, which devastates the young girl. When Junior assaults on Pecola, Geraldine walks in and looks at Pecola and immediately classifies Pecola as a nigger, pure waste.

The traits of divergence towards blacks in the mother, continues even with their generation. The son Junior too expresses his revulsion to Pecola. Geraldine’s teachings make sure that Junior will trouble his own generation with for their skin colour, as well as for their culture. Geraldine’s emphasis on decorum and cleanliness depicts Morrison’s projection of ‘internalized racism’ and ‘middle-class contempt’ for the poor even amidst their own economically superior black class. Geraldine practices a ‘self-division’ in order to drive out her blackness.

The third family, Elihue Micah Whitcombs, known as Soaphead Church hails from an aristocratic West Indian family of mixed race. This family is so obsessed with the physical appearance of Europeans that they endanger their mental stability by assimilating themselves to maintain some resemblance of whiteness. He was well educated by his father who was a strict schoolmaster. Due to his rapidly fraying gentility and his English he attracted the women of the town. The people thought that he was supernatural being rather than unnatural. So he changed his name to Soaphead Church, a brand that allowed him to feel obstinately noble on the unusual occurrences that he touched, helped, or supported a human being. He gradually elevated himself to be a spiritualist and a sort of faith healer. He grew up thinking, in the manner of his family and ancestors that blackness was ugly and that whiteness was noble.

Owing to this wide gulf between this received wisdom this black man hated himself for not being white enough. He hated other blacks for being ‘too’ black. He is trapped in the negativity of his self image and with this preconceived notion he hated all human beings. With his spiritual and psychic qualities he encountered the black girl Pecola with the assurance that he would change her eyes blue. Pecola who craved for blue eyes requested him to render her with the blue eyes. “My eyes,” “What about your eyes?” Pecola asks, “I want them blue” (172). Soaphead replies that he is a true spiritualist and psychic reader and would offer his help. He thought, “Here was an ugly little girl asking for beauty. A surge of love and understanding swept through him, but was quickly replaced by anger” (172).

He believes that he has got the most fantastic and the most logical petition that he had ever received. He differentiated against her by making her unknowingly poison a dog he dislikes intensely. The poison that Soaphead Church later gave Pecola feed to his dog symbolizes Pecola’s own thinking which has been poisoned by the values of the dominant cultural order. It is evident that there are racial, class and gender polarization not only between the white and the black and also amidst the blacks too.

The next family is MacTeers who is financially low but embodies love and security for her daughters that Pecola’s family lacks. MacTeer is an underprivileged, struggling black wife and mother of Claudia and Frieda. She works at home, cooking, cleaning and taking care of the children. Her priorities are clear that she will care for her daughters’ betterment. When she faces problems she has no complaints that “She would go on like that for hours, connecting one offense to another until all of the things that chagrined her were spewed out. Then, having told everybody and everything off, she would burst into song and sing the rest of the day” (22).

Amidst all the black families the worst affected family due to polarization is Breedlove’s family. The Breedloves: Pecola with her mother Pauline Breedlove, her father Cholly Breedlove and her brother Sammy Breedlove, like million other blacks traveled to the north in search of job and for better living environment. They live in a hastily converted run-down storefront, which embodies the family’s ugliness.

The Breedloves did not live in a storefront because they were having temporary difficulty adjusting to the cutbacks at the plant. They lived there because they were poor and black, and they stayed there because they believed they were ugly. Although their poverty was traditional and stultifying, it was not unique. But their ugliness was unique. (36)

The Breedloves home had one big room where there was no privacy and the children were not protected from acts of violence and sex. This way of living, drives Pecola into her fantasies of becoming a little white girl who could be adored by all. Katherine McKittrick in *Black and, Cause I’m Black I’m Blue: transverse racial geographies in Toni Morrison’s The Bluest Eye.*” *Gender, Place & Culture* (2000) views Pecola’s faith in her ugliness to be driven from her geographical surroundings. The home of the Breedloves exemplifies that “identities are constructed according to place and residency and how certain possessions help maintain and define the meaning of being black” (134).

Blacks Desire for White Standards

The eleven year old Pecola is the most obvious victim of the discriminations encountered by the black and the white due to polarization. The young girl grows up as a black female in the 1940's wishes to be loved and accepted by her family and others. In the past, huge numbers of Americans of non white environment have instead lived the repulsive side of the American experience, that of racial disagreement and social standards of human value. The beauty that often demands 'white' characteristics depended both of the physical body and also constituted the internal psyche of the person. Pecola Breedlove yearns for blue eyes and believed that people would stop humiliating. Pecola notices that nobody loved her and that by acquiring the blue eyes she might change her situation. She believed that through blue eyes she would find love and approval from everybody. The white cultural domination had inflicted the inner psyche and exploited the identity of the blacks too. It had pierced their attitudes to an extent that only by adhering to or assimilating themselves according to the white standards could they expect a survival without humiliation. Elizabeth Jane Way in *Women's Literature* (1979) views, "Morrison's stunning insight reveals the disrupted emotions produced by living in a world where white standards and goals are presented to blacks as uniquely important and, at the same time, impossible for them to achieve" (383).

Pecola considered herself to be so ugly that her only perception of identity was to assimilate herself in terms of a white girl named Shirley Temple. Pecola's pathetic wish for satisfaction is determined in her significant image of imaginary identification- Shirley Temple, the icon of the ideal beauty of America. She desired to take even some milk in a blue- and- white Shirley Temple cup. "She was a long time with the milk, and gazed fondly at the silhouette of Shirley Temple's dimpled face" (BE 17). Emma Parker in *Contemporary Literature* (1998) asserts,

Pecola becomes besotted with a picture of Shirley Temple on a cup. Pecola worships the white ideal of beauty and virtue represented by Shirley Temple and the milk. Her sense of worthlessness is metaphorically represented as emptiness, as thirst, and she attempts to find meaning in her life, to fill herself, by imbibing white cultural values. (621)

It is this greed in Pecola to imbibe all forms of whiteness that culminates later in the form of insanity. Pecola is biologically a female child. She is deprived of love from her parents, a vital factor essential for care and development of a female child. She is depressed of her own black cultural values as she has no role models available for her to grow and to develop a positive sense. Added to Shirley Temple, Pecola finds the second entity of recognition in Mary Jane. Mary Jane is a small girl whose picture is named on the chocolate's wrapper. Pecola sacrifices much of her pride to buy candy for the blue eyes of the little girl portrayed on the package. Pecola believes that by swallowing them, she could achieve her beauty of the blue eyes. Morrison comments in this situation as: "Each pale yellow wrapper has a picture on it. A picture of little Mary Jane, for whom the candy is named. Smiling white face To Pecola they are simply pretty" (BE 48).

Once Pecola encountered a fifty-two-year-old white storekeeper, Mr. Yacobowski to buy the Mary Jane candies, she faces extreme humiliation owing to racial difference. Even the guiltless act of buying a candy turned out to be an opportunity for Pecola's mortification. She realized the extreme disgust in the white owner while handing over the candy without touching her hand.

She points her finger at the Mary Janes – a little black shaft of finger, its tip pressed on the display window. The quietly inoffensive assertion of a black child's attempt to communicate with a white adult. He cannot see her view – the angle of his vision, the slant of her finger, makes it incomprehensible to him. (47)

Pecola believed that like the milk, the piece of candy is believed to have the power to change her appearance. She does not understand the reason to be ashamed of. She felt the shame to be mysterious. Morrison traces the hasty sequence of Pecola's feelings upon leaving the store. Mysterious shame moves away, replaced by anger. "Anger is better. There is a sense of being in anger. A reality and presence" (48). The anger just as rapidly sinks and shame, again takes its place. The shopkeeper, Yacobowski, does not become aware of her presence. Owing to her dark complexion he thinks her not to exist at all. It is only to be accepted, loved and acknowledged as a human being that Pecola yearns to possess blue eyes. Acquiring blue eyes proves to be a mask of human identity.

Pecola's desire to be loved does not get satisfied. So being loved by others becomes her ultimate desire. She is believed to be horrible by everybody she encounters. The nearby community which Pecola grows up and lives in is another reason for Pecola's overwhelming longing for blue eyes. The boys on the playground mock at her by calling her black.

A group of boys was circling and holding at bay a victim, Pecola Breedlove. Heady with the smell of their own musk, thrilled by the easy power of majority, they gaily harassed her. "Black e mo. Black e mo. Yaddadsleepsnekked. Black e mo black e mo ya dadd sleeps nekked. Black e mo. (63)

The important drawback for Pecola's isolation and pain is her race too. Not only do the white but also the black boys taunt her at school. She becomes the scapegoat for their disgrace and pain. No one desires to play

or see her. Pecola's teachers do not recognise her. Pecola is often left alone on a double desk in the class. "Her teachers had always treated her this way. They tried never to glance at her, and called on her only when everyone was required to respond" (BE 44). Pecola is abused and neglected both at school and in the community.

Polarisation Leads to Insanity

Pecola becomes a victim of intra-community class conflict which finally leads her to a state of insanity. Pecola never realises that she has been under the spell of white cultural domination. All that she has practised is repeated elimination and brutalization. Even more frighteningly, her parents do not love her. This difference of her parents is also the outcome of racial prejudice. Pecola's search for an aesthetically defined beauty includes her mother Pauline's variation of the same into her life. The relationship between Pecola and her father is violent and hateful. As a typical father whose sole responsibility should shower on the children, Cholly proves to be an utter contrast. Unloved by her mother and ignored by her father she becomes the disastrous example of the ultimate choice of accepting the white standards of beauty. Pecola's alienated self paves the root cause for all disasters in her life. Cholly spends his days opposing debtors, getting drunk, and fighting with his wife, until his need for love and his desperate desire to express love ends in his tragic rape of his daughter. The lack of love in the family amidst members forces the father to seek a solace only in executing it through sex. The sexual desire and the drunkenness blur his vision to differentiate the mother and the daughter.

Pecola Breedlove is oppressed racially and sexually on the basis of class distinction. Her condition is associated with violence, ugliness and poverty. Unlike Pecola, Claudia and Frieda, the MacTeer girls, though they are black, their economical status and familial love does not force them to any kind of suppression as Pecola has received. Barred from reality by racial discrimination and inequality, Pecola goes mad, fantasizing that her eyes have turned blue and so fitted her for the world. She has lost her balance of mind. Despised and rejected by a community overwhelmed by self detestation, Pecola is pushed to the limits of the society and towards marginality, both factually and symbolically. Pecola conceals herself behind the ugliness. She feels that she was born at a place where she is insignificant and useless. Madness is Pecola's destiny and there is no rescuer for her. Cynthia Davis in *Self, Society and Myth in Toni Morrison's Fiction* (1982) views Pecola as, "Pecola is the epitome of the victim in a world that reduces persons to objects and then makes them feel inferior as objects" (330).

Conclusion

Gender, class, and racial discrimination therefore became an integral aspect in the novel. Pecola experiences and undergoes the extremities of subjugation, suppression and polarization which any other woman would not have experienced under patriarchal domination. As a result, she dislikes her black self and to gain a recognition desired for blue eyes for she believed that the blue eyes might strongly put out her ill treatments and give her love and security that are badly missing from her life. She believed that the only solution to put an end to her problems was through acquiring blue eyes.

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Mahabharat in Draupadi's Voice: A Study on Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's *The Palace of Illusions*

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Abstract: *The Palace of Illusions* is a reinterpretation of the story of Indian epic *The Mahabharat*. The novel is half-history, half-myth and wholly magical. It gives a new voice and stature to the fire-borne heroine of the *Mahabharat*. The novel gives a new vibrant interpretation to an ancient story. For most of us, the novel could be considered as a nostalgic trip provoking, evoking and moving our reposes to every passionate and defiant woman who is tossed between emotions and reason by known and unknown forces of life. The present paper proposes to examine how Panchaali acts as a listener, facilitator and connector to people. Panchaali is married to five loyal husbands who have been deceived by their kith and kin. They were sent out of their kingdom. Panchaali supports her husbands in their quest to reclaim their political right or birth right. She remains at their side throughout their period of exile and a terrible civil war. Woman plays an important role in the family. She supports her husband, children and becomes a dutiful homemaker. She remains with them in any critical situation and encourages them to face the consequences through her moral support. She has the strength to create history by making or marring the relationships. One such woman is Panchaali. Divakaruni has captured the magical world of the epic for its twenty-first century readers.

Key words: *illusion, nostalgia, myth*

The Palace of Illusions is a reinterpretation of the story of Indian epic the *Mahabharata*. It captures the magical world of the epic for its twenty-first century readers. The novel is half-history, half-myth and wholly magical. It gives a new voice and stature to the fire-borne heroine of the *Mahabharata*. The novel gives a new vibrant interpretation to an ancient story. For most of us, the novel could be considered as a nostalgic trip provoking, evoking and moving our reposes to every passionate and defiant woman who is tossed between emotions and reason by known and unknown forces of life.

A Woman plays an important role in the family. She supports her husband, children and becomes a dutiful homemaker. She remains with them in any critical situation and encourages them to face the consequences through her moral support. She has the strength to create history by making or marring the relationships. One such woman is Panchaali. While dealing with the role of women, Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni in the author's note of *The Palace of Illusions* says:

I was left unsatisfied by the portrayals of the women ... they remain shadowy figures, their thoughts and motives mysterious, their emotions portrayed only when they affected the lives of the male heroes, their roles ultimately subservient to those of their fathers or husbands, brothers or sons. If I ever wrote a book ... I would place the women in the forefront of the action. I would uncover the story that lay invisible between the lines of the men's exploits.
(xiv-xv)

So Divakaruni decides to make Draupadi a narrator of her history. Draupadi herself explains "her joys and doubts, her struggles and her triumphs, her heartbreaks, her achievements. . ." (xv). Divakaruni says about Draupadi in her author's note. "It is her life, her voice, her questions, and her vision that I invite you into in *The Palace of Illusions* (xv). Divakaruni has filled the novel with exotic things such as Panchaali's birth from fire, her marriage with five brothers, her desire for Karna, her magical palace, and her death.

When Divakaruni is asked by interviewer Preeti Zachariah whether it is a good thing for the society, she says, "I do see that as a great potential advantage. Strong women, when respected, make the whole society strong. One must be careful with rapid changes, though, and make an effort to preserve at the same time, the positive traditions of Indian culture." (In Search of the Self)

It is said education alone can expand woman's consciousness of the world and ensures her place in the society. Aparna Tiwari presents the pitiful condition of women: "Girls in these Post-modern times too, are not so welcome at birth in India" (140). The prophesy at Draupadi's birth that she would "change the course of history" (5), was just an excuse used by Krishna in her favour for allowing her to continue with her studies. Even the tutor declares that "... women were the root of all world's troubles" (24). Dhri too agrees that girls have short memory and asks Draupadi "Boys are different from girls," . . . "When will you accept that?" (25). But Panchali says, "... I hungered to know about the amazing, mysterious world that extended past what I could imagine, the world of the senses and of that which lay beyond them." (23-24).

Draupadi who has longed for a more heroic and meaningful name gets the name Panchaali by the sage Vyasa. She insists that everyone should call her by her new name Panchaali: “A name strong like the land, a name that knew how to endure” (42). Panchaali is smart, resilient and courageous.

A woman forever keeps listening to others’ instruction in order that she might behave in the manner she is expected to do so. Freedom to lead an independent life is denied. Her life is circumscribed by moral certitude. Panchaali comes to know that her father is arranging swayamvar for her through Dhai Ma. She feels so happy because she thinks that she is given freedom to select her own husband. But the happiness is short-lived like a bubble. Dhri explains about the test of skill. Whoever wins, he will be married to her. She listens to Kunti and the sage Vyasa in the case of marriage. She knows she cannot fight against destiny. No one will agree to marry five persons. But she does it because her birth prophesies matters to her a lot.

Panchaali who acts as a listener to Dhri, Krishna, her father, her mother-in-law goes along with her husbands to Khandav. From being a mere listener, she does the role of a facilitator to her five husbands. Though all the five husbands have other wives, it is Panchaali who has supported them wherever they move. At all times, both in good and bad, she is the one who has gone with them. She feels special at their hearts. She herself expresses:

I’d been at their side when they were young and in danger. Marriage to me had protected them from the murderous wrath of Duryodhan. I’d played a crucial role in bringing them to their destiny. I’d shared their hardship in Khandav. I’d helped them design this unique palace, which so many longed to see. If they were pearls, I was the gold wire on which they were strung. Alone, they would have scattered, each to his dusty corner” (151).

She acts as a connector to the Pandava brothers. It is she who unites them in all the ways till death. Without her, “They would have pursued separate interests, deposited their loyalties with different women. But together we formed something precious and unique. Together, we were capable of what none of us could do alone” (152). Thus, panchaali commits her own life to the total welfare of the Pandavas.

After the curse, the Pandavas are punished to lead their life in forest for twelve years and one year in disguise as per Duryodhan’s command. Though it is not necessary for Panchaali to accompany her husbands, she goes with them. She says, “I was a good wife. I supported them through good times and bad; I provided them with comforts of the body and the mind; when in company, I extolled their virtues. I followed them into the forest and forced them to become heroes” (213). Panchaali finds her meaning of life in being responsible.

After the war, the kingdom is filled with widows and orphans. The women want to die in the funeral pyre. The men cannot stop them; because of the women’s ferocity. The guards are not able to stop them. At this critical situation, Panchaali thinks of the words of Dhri’s tutor. She climbs onto the makeshift dais, beside Yudhisthir. At once, the women stop running towards the pyre. They happen to see her. Panchaali says, “I’d started to address the women as a queen might her subject, but as the words formed in my mouth, I spoke as a mother among mothers, and together we wept” (314). All along Panchaali has been concentrating on her role as a single or forsaken or humiliated woman. Her sorrows appear to be insurmountable. But when she sees similar companions in distress, she ignores the personal loss and discharges the duty of a queen. As a queen, she tries to console bereaved mothers and wives at the warfront. She promises them that she will take care of them all. She establishes a court for women and protects the unfortunates from the unscrupulous.

This novel is not written from the traditional religious perspective but from the vaster spiritual perspective. She has Krishna at her side all the time and she does not know who he really is. At the end she asks: “Are you really divine?”(359). He answers “Yes, I am. You are, too, you know” (359). We are all divine and a part of the big whole. On the level of mystical ride, it is clear that spirituality transcends genders.

Thus, Divakaruni has wonderfully portrayed the relationship of Panchaali with her brother Dhri, the Pandava brothers, Dhai Ma, Kunti and her enigmatic friend Krishna. Her different role as a daughter, sister, friend, wife, daughter-in-law and mother is beautifully depicted in the novel. As a daughter, she listens to Drupad and Dhai Ma, the nurse. As a sister, she listens to her brother Dhri. As a friend, she learns things from Krishna. As a wife, she supports and facilitates her husbands. As a daughter-in-law, she obeys Kunti’s words to a great extent. As a queen, she acts as a connector to people. The novel and its characters go around Panchaali, the harbinger of the great battle.

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Buddhistness in Tagore's *Chandalika* and *Natir Puja*

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Abstract: Rabindranath Tagore was a Bengali polymath who reshaped his region's literature and music. He introduced the best of Indian culture to the West and vice versa, and is regarded as the outstanding creative artist of modern India. The rational and humanistic aspects of the teachings of the Buddha had attracted the creative genius of Tagore since his earlier days. Tagore felt like prostrating himself before an image and that was when he saw the Buddha at Gaya. He found the Buddhist principle of man's social equality particularly alluring to his own concept of 'divinity in man'. The play *Chandalika* is a dramatic expression of this ideology. It is a visual presentation of the age-old struggle of the marginalized section of Indian society to attain the status of equality. In this play Tagore found readymade material for the propagation of his idea of equality and humanism. No doubt, the Hindu concept of caste distinction based on one's birth is inhuman. It should be completely wiped out and equality tinged with humanity should be established. Similarly, in the play *Natir Puja* Tagore uses the dance form in a subtly nuanced manner –where dance itself becomes a liberating force- it is both a liberating and an expression of identity and self assertion in women. Buddhism is a religion for the common man and a philosophical guide for the intellectual. It succeeded in winning the support of many oppressed people suffering from deprivation of rights, poverty and hunger. This religion has a great impact in the thoughts and reflections of the poet. Buddhism has restored human rights to the deprived, to those who were trampled under feet by the so-called high-ups of society. Thus, through these plays Tagore glorifies the eternal virtues of Buddhism viz. love, kindness, compassion, equality and absence of hatred, ill-will and selfishness as he was very much impressed by the glory of the Buddha and Buddhist culture.

Key words: Buddhism, tenets, emancipation, love, equality, compassion.

Rabindranath Tagore was a Bengali polymath who reshaped his region's literature and music. As a poet, philosopher, educationist, playwright, thinker and social reformer, Tagore crosses the constraint of time and space. In his universal appeal and varied genius, the 1913 Nobel-laureate fails to be read from a 'time-bound' approach. His contributions to literature is as precious as his contributions to culture, education, nationalism, human studies, religion, gender, economy and rural construction. He introduced the best of Indian culture to the West and vice versa, and is regarded as the outstanding creative artist of modern India. Born and brought up in a family of eminent intellectuals and social reformers, he inherited and imbibed from them the basic human values that made him a poet par excellence. As a young boy he received very little formal education but learnt profound lessons of life in close company of tranquil nature to which he often visited in the sagacious company of his father. A visit to the West widened his intellectual horizon and enriched his experiences and outlook towards life and the world. His socio-religious philosophy was mainly influenced by the Upanishadic religion, the Brahma-Samaj of Raja Rammohan Roy, Christianity of the West and above all by the humanism contained in the Buddha's gospel of "love all". Lord Buddha taught that selfishness is the chief evil of human life. His preaching known as Buddhism, was a religion of proper moral conduct and not a religion of priests, temples, gods, sacrifices or rituals. It is now an accepted fact that Buddhism is a religion for common man and a philosophical guide for the intellectual. Buddhism succeeded in winning the support of many oppressed people suffering from lack of rights, poverty and hunger. In referring to early Buddhism, it should be noted that it succeeded, under the definite socio-historical conditions of the times, in expressing in a special form the aspirations of the people for a better life. The rational and humanistic aspects of the teachings of the Buddha and Buddhist culture have attracted Rabindranath Tagore. He has recalled contributions of Buddhist rulers and Buddhism in Indian civilization and the role of Buddhist philosophy and culture in art, literature and intellectual life of India, in his poems, plays, essays, and lectures. Buddhism has a great impact in the thoughts and reflections of the poet.

From his wide exposure to worldly affairs, he formulated his own philosophy of life. Monotheism, humanism and universal brotherhood and love for all creations were the prominent features of his religion. Regressive things like orthodoxy, ritualism, idolatry and animal sacrifice had no place in his religious conduct. He opposed tooth and nail casteism, inequality and untouchability and stood firm for equality, liberty and prosperity of mankind. Endowed with this bent of mind, it is but natural, that he found Buddhist thoughts so dear to him.

The contrast and conflict between orthodox nature of traditional Hinduism and unorthodox character of Buddhism attracted him the most. The rational and humanistic aspects of the teachings of the Buddha had

fascinated the creative genius of Tagore since his earlier days. "Only once in his life, said Rabindranath, did he feel like prostrating himself before an image and that was when he saw the Buddha at Gaya". He found the Buddhist principle of man's social equality particularly alluring to his own concept of 'divinity in man'. Tagore believed in the presence of God in all the creations and as such he could not believe in caste distinctions nor could he tolerate the idea of untouchability.

The play *Chandalika* is a dramatic expression of this ideology. This play is a literary representation of the controversial subject of untouchability. Prakriti, a Chandal girl, becomes a live character in Tagore's hands. She jettisons the religious and social discourse by which she and her race have been relegated to hellish untouchability, meanness, subalternity and marginality. Her inner consciousness as a human being is rekindled by the Buddhist monk, Ananda. It is a visual presentation of the age-old struggle of the marginalized section of Indian society to attain the status of equality. Through this play Tagore conveys his idea of equality and humanism. The Hindu concept of caste distinction based on one's birth is inhuman. It should be completely wiped out and equality tinged with humanity should be established. In this play Tagore portrays an untouchable girl, Prakriti, who has a deep sense of degradation heaped on her psyche through centuries of injustice. Her mother keeps on reminding her of their low-birth and as such unworthy of serving even water to the caste-Hindus. But when Ananda, a Buddhist Bhikshu, asks her to give him water and says to her that all human beings are equal and any water that quenches a man's thirst is pure, she is awakened to reality and is instantly emancipated from the curse of age-old tyranny of low-birth. Here Tagore epitomizes the Buddhist tenet that everyone born in this world is equal and there is no disparity based on one's birth.

Yet another Buddhist trait portrayed here is theme of love. Buddhism is based on the strong foundation of love, compassion and non-violence. If a man learns how to love and how to live amicably with his fellow human being, then there will not be any disharmony in the world and there will be perfect amity everywhere. In that case there will be a paradise on earth. Love born out of suffering for others has the power to do miracles-as did Lord Shiva, during the mythical "churning of the ocean". At the time of the freedom struggle movement, Gandhiji practised this successfully. Buddha also taught us love, tolerance and non-violence and when followed in the right way, these traits will surely lead to a peaceful coexistence. In "Chandalika" the carnal passion of Prakriti which falsely adopts the name of love, is cured of its dross by Ananda's suffering and emerges, in the process, as pure love redeeming the erring object socially and spiritually. This actually is the real function of true love. The chandal girl, Prakriti thus becomes a spokeswoman of Tagore's ideal of humanitarianism and universalism. He gives a strong espousal to Buddhism, which rendered shelter to the untouchables and subalterns in its liberal religious gamut. Buddhism has restored human rights to the deprived, to those who were trampled under feet by the so called high-ups of the society. The humanism is what deeply impressed Tagore, who is himself a great exponent of humanity. Today the world is very much infected with violence; humanity is narrow-minded. So Tagore implores the Buddha to wipe "all dark stains" from the heart of this earth.

"It is loving and giving that makes life worth living" – so goes a saying. Buddhism is all about these two noble traits. This play "Chandalika" is replete with this act of 'giving'. Prakriti, the chandala girl gives water to Ananda. Ananda gives Prakriti the awareness of self, her new birth. Prakriti, in turn longs to give herself (her egoistic self) to Ananda, but this kind of giving goes with possession. Prakriti's mother offers to give her life itself for the sake of her daughter by undertaking to work a magic spell to drag Ananda. Through sympathy, pity and love (all cardinal principles of Buddhism), through her identification with Ananda's suffering, Prakriti realizes that after all what she had desired to give him (her physical self) is nothing but her 'wretched self'. Towards the end of the play again we find the 'givings'- Prakriti gives Ananda his freedom, Ananda gives Prakriti her deliverance, a spiritual rebirth which is superior to the ego-birth that he had given her earlier and Prakriti's mother gives her life itself, her supreme sacrifice helping to bring about the spiritual union of Prakriti and Ananda.

Even in the other play *Natir Puja* too one can find tinges of Buddhist traits. The play itself is based on a Buddhist legend as related in Rajendra Lal Mitra's "The Sanskrit Buddhist Literature of Nepal" published by Asiatic Society of Bengal in the year 1882. Here Tagore uses the dance form in a subtly nuanced manner – where dance itself becomes a liberating force- it is both a liberating and an expression of identity and self assertion in women. It is a moving story of a low-born dancing-girl who, through religious martyrdom, not only frees herself from the curse of low-birth but also rises to the level of becoming an adorable being. Winning over the forces of orthodoxy, represented by Queen Lokeshwari and Princess Ratnavali, Srimati successfully demonstrates that true worship to one's Lord needs no paraphernalia and one's work itself is the real worship. In the climax, Srimati dances before the altar in a crescendo of ecstasy removing one by one the superfluities of jewels and gorgeous clothes till she is 'pure and naked' in her yellow ochre of Bhikshuni. Taking it as her worship the guards strike her dead at the King's command. There is transcendent victory for her and Buddhism in her death, for now Queen Lokeshwari and even the adamant Princess Ratnavali fall at the feet of now-dead Srimati and repeat the salutation hymns. This is the irony and this is where Srimati scored a victory even after her death.

Lokeshwari tries to her best to stop Srimati from performing the worship. Her arrogance shows that she is out there to exploit the low-born status of Srimati. She is more anxious about her royal pride than the sanctity of altar. She is prepared witness the altar “desecrated” by the blood of Srimati but cannot endure the feet of a dancing girl to “tread the royal shrine”. This is what Tagore vehemently opposes- any one born in this world, irrespective of his caste or colour has the right to offer prayers at the place of worship. God makes no distinction but it is only the human mind that makes mean distinctions based on meaningless things. What is needed at the altar is the serenity of mind and purity of heart and nothing else.

The essence of Tagore’s humanism as envisaged in Buddhism is truly reflected in Malati’s words when she tells Srimati, not to cry as their worship does not depend on rites or offerings and that the Lord has been born in their hearts too. This manifestation of the Infinite in the finite is what Tagore calls humanism. Where the Lord is born in human heart, there is no worship needed, no altar is necessary. Human heart itself is the greatest altar and every action of the bearer of such heart amounts to true worship.

Again, on the occasion of Buddha Purnima, a special offering was arranged. The court *nati*, Srimathi was chosen to dance before the altar which was acceptable to Ratnavali, the Queen. She contemptuously criticizes Srimathi and says such offerings should not be performed by “fallen women”. The consciousness of royal blood does not permit her to tolerate Srimati who was of “low birth”. Through this act of the Queen, Tagore drives home the idea that worship of the divine can never be and cannot be a monopoly of any caste because the true worship is the dedication of one’s best in the will of God. Srimati, knowing well the danger involved in her act of transgression (as the king had banned any form of worship), surrendered herself totally before the altar without worrying about anything.

The themes of love and non-violence, the essential traits of Buddhism, have found appropriate treatment in this play of Tagore. The protagonist Srimati, with her love and divine gentleness, is able to effect a change of heart on the part of her opponents. Though taunted and teased by the royal Ratnavali, she remained calm and unperturbed. She would rather tackle them with a smile and tries her best to make them understand their folly on their own. “Love begets love”- Srimati by her act of kindness has become the paragon of peace, non-violence and forgiveness.

Buddhism has a great impact in the thoughts and reflections of Tagore. Buddhism has restored human rights to the deprived, to those who were trampled under feet by the so-called high-ups of society. Tagore through these plays has glorified the eternal virtues of Buddhism viz. love, kindness, compassion, equality and absence of hatred, ill-will and selfishness as he was very much impressed by the glory of the Buddha and Buddhist culture. Tagore being brought up in a family of eminent intellectuals and social reformers, inherited and imbibed from them the basic human values that transformed him into a poet of world stature. He bats for Buddhism and has underscored the practical side of Buddhism in his works, more especially in “Chandalika” and “Natir Puja”. In these plays he has achieved a rare feat of bringing out the socio-religious significance of the noble ideals propounded and preached by the Buddha. To conclude, it can be said with conviction that Tagore through his plays, projected Buddhism as an effective tool to get rid of the age old social vices like orthodoxy, idolatory, casteism and untouchability and tries to bring about a world order through Buddhist teachings like renunciation, non-possession, non-violence, tolerance, forgiveness and love and compassion.

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Enrichment of the Inner Self in Shobha De's Novels

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Abstract: *Shobha De may rightly be described as a realistic down to earth writer portraying, the Indian upper middle class milieu. She boldly illuminates the actual human conditions and discusses the problems, desires and aspirations of career women highlighting in general gender awareness, self definition, existence and destiny. Most post - modern Indian women novelists explore the feminine consciousness of the women writers. The paper focuses on the evolution of women writers towards an awakened conscience which leads to the enrichment of their inner self in a male dominated society. Women characters realize their inner strength through self - introspection and self – discovery. They are not mere spectators as victims of oppression rather they have succeeded in influencing and having a history of their own. Women are portrayed as a cultural backbone of the family due to their capability of providing physical, emotional and social vitality to their families and also to the comprehensive family of mankind.*

Key words: *realist, introspection, culture.*

Shobha De the most celebrated novelist among the Indian writers in English, occupies a remarkable and distinguished place in Indian English writing. Her main concern is to see women in wider and broader perspectives and discussed blatantly the problems, desires and aspirations of career women highlighting gender awareness, self-definition, existence and destiny. Most of the women characters depicted by De are economically independent and socially uninhibited who are conscious of their self-respect for they are competent professional who work equally with their male counterparts. Most post modern Indian women novelists explore the feminine consciousness of the women writers and their evolution towards an awakened conscience which leads to the enrichment of their inner self in a male dominated society.

Self introspection and self discovery help the women characters to realize their veiled inner strength. The women now emerge as the ultimate redeemer because as mother, wife, sister or daughter, she has the ingrained power of sustaining the family. They are the cultural backbone of the family who has the capability of providing physical, emotional and social vitality to their respective families and to the comprehensive family of mankind. The results are varied when the women characters resort to self-introspection leading to self-discovery. These women who discern new and important discoveries about themselves succeed in finding a sense of fulfillment in their relationship to the world.

Human existence depends on the making of various kinds of human relationships. No one can imagine ones existence without human relationships. Human relationship is the essence of the continuation of human existence. There is a great importance of family in the making and continuing these human relationships because, family lies in the core of all these relations. For each and everyone, family is the source of peace and happiness, progress and prosperity, enthusiasm and encouragement. In portraying various kinds of human relationships, De finds an opportunity to highlight the suffering of women, journey of women from ignorance to knowledge and innocence to experience. Her theme of identity and recognition of woman in society is linked with her portrayal of relationships.

Though appearing to uphold liberated views about emancipated women, De strongly speaks in favor of the institution of marriage. The women in her novels, however liberated, educated, assertive or confident do not totally rule out the idea of marriage in their lives, for De values human relationships, especially family ties. Family is the surest anchor in crisis.

In "Socialite Evenings", shobha De, presents how karuna realizes the valuable support of the family in moments of crisis, through whom, De shows her belief in strong human relationships especially in the small unit of society. The protagonist was aware of the fact that she was running away from reality to a superficial existence. By assessing the situation she craved for independence, indulges in introspection and discovers that snapping of family ties was traumatic and detrimental. She is pleased to be in the fold of the family.

"Starry Nights" presents the chronicle of a young girl, who reaches the height of stardom by surrendering her body, soul and psyche. After undergoing exploitation and desertion, her confidence is regained and she reconciles with her family. Though a victim of circumstances, she finally emerges as a strong woman who fights boldly against the guilty conscience and wounded psyche. She showers motherly love and affection which was earlier denied to her daughter. Realizing the importance of family as a unit of society, she reconciles with her family. Real happiness lies within the folds of family and marriage, even though a woman is liberated or

modern. In “Sisters”, De shows how the two sisters were the worst enemies, became the best of friends. Both of them support each other in crisis.

A victimized woman is presented as facing life confidently. “Sultry Days” infers that a woman with a fully integrated personality can solve many problems in her life and need not be a victim. The novel culminates on a note of optimism for those who come to terms with life. Mrs.Verma, who undergoes the trauma of tempestuous marriage, becomes realistic and foresighted and Nisha becomes courageous like her mother.

De’s women characters, particularly, the educated and enlightened ones do not surrender to social pressures meekly, rather they react against their husband’s hypocrisy without compromising their family lives. As a balanced evaluator of a woman’s existential dilemma, she exhorts her women to fight for their rights, become economically secure and aware of social responsibilities without neglecting her familial duties.

De’s women are presented as bold, enterprising innovative and ever ready to accept challenges. She strikes a balance between a successful career and a rewarding home life. Each woman’s experience of life is different and unique. Exploring the world of urban woman in India, De shatters patriarchal hegemony and emphasized the value of equivalence of power between men and women. The main focus is on the lives, achievements hopes and frustrations, feelings and emotions of the corporate women, high profile women, aristocratic women and those who overstep their male counterparts in everyday life. Women’s superiority is proved in each and every sphere of public and private life. In her novels, more mature women are portrayed in comparison to male counterparts. The emergence of new women in changing cultural scenario is important and they do not follow the burden of social and cultural loads that keep them under the supremacy of the male for centuries. De puts women in diverse conditions and makes them to struggle and come out with their own solutions.

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Culture - An Accomplice of the Oppressor: A Study of Select Bengali Short Fiction

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Abstract: *Culture is the characteristics of a particular group of people, defined by their language, religion, cuisine, social habits, music and arts. Culture is a powerful human tool for survival, but it is a fragile phenomenon. It is constantly changing and easily lost because it exists only in the minds of the people. All the material things are merely products of culture which helps in preserving culture. Literature represents a people and their culture and tradition. It preserves their ideals like love, faith, duty, friendship etc. It carries the culture of the people from one generation to the other. The present paper focuses on the short stories of select Bengali writers to discuss the point that even culture can be oppressive in nature. It shows how women are intimidated in the milieu of culture by citing examples from Tagore's short stories. The focus of the study then shifts to myth to show how myth functions as a domineering instrument in the lives of the tribal people. The stories of Mahasweta Devi, a true documenter of the sufferings of the tribal people, are discussed to drive home the point.*

Keywords: *Oppression, Marginalisation, Myth, Feminism, Cultural Studies.*

Culture is the characteristics of a particular group of people, defined by their language, religion, cuisine, social habits, music and arts. Culture is a powerful human tool for survival, but it is a fragile phenomenon. It is constantly changing and easily lost because it exists only in the minds of the people. All the material things are merely products of culture which helps in preserving culture. Literature represents a people and their culture and tradition. It preserves their ideals like love, faith, duty, friendship etc. It carries the culture of the people from one generation to the other. The culture thus imbibed in the minds of the people may sometimes produce adverse effects. Despite reflecting the tradition of the group or community, culture sometimes becomes the chains in the hands of the people. People strictly adhere to their cultural codes and blindly follow the rules without questioning them. This helps the autocrats to easily oppress the people. This paper analyses Rabindranath Tagore's "The Ghat's Story" and Mahaswetha devi's "The Witch-Hunt" to show how culture and mythical beliefs help the powerful people to intimidate the innocent lot.

The treatment of women and their position in the society is the main concern to Rabindranath Tagore. Women in Tagore's days have been highly exploited by the feudal society. The out dated, cruel, feudal customs enhanced the miseries and tortures of women. From the days of yore women are instructed as subordinate to men. Right from the Bible, she is portrayed as inferior to man and this is deeply rooted in the psychology of every women. Even today, the modern women who work on a par with men have at least a little trace of gender inferiority nestled in their subconscious mind. This was even worse in the early nineteenth and twentieth century where women willingly submitted themselves to the power of patriarchy. The idea that one group is better than another group and has the right to control the other gets embedded in the institutions of the society. People are controlled by the pre-framed laws or cultural ideologies which have been in practice for a long time. There is no explicit exercising of power or violence but a systematic imposition of oppression. The oppressed are unaware of their oppression and hence they become the suffering lot. Tagore criticizes the feudal morals and customs which ruled over the life of Bengali women through his "The Ghat's Story". The river stairs narrates the story of Kusum, who lives near the Ganges. The river stairs is very fond of her as she comes daily and plays in the water. She is married to someone and the steps cannot feel her feet. After a year it feels her return with her familiar feet.

Kusum was married to a man who worked in a far of place. She has met him only a few times since her marriage. She gets a post which announces the death of her husband and she is widowed. Tagore writes "By post coming to know of her widow hood, at the age of eight years, wiping off the vermilion mark from her head, casting away her ornaments, she came back to her native place by the side of the Ganga" (SP 33-34). Even before starting her conjugal life she becomes a widow. The cruel cultural set up is such that even if a girl is widowed within a few hours of her marriage she has to sacrifice her pleasures for the rest of her life. The most brutal thing is that a girl is married at the age of five to ten years which is considered as the rightful age. As years have passed nature has showered the bloom on the young girl. Kusum has grown into a beautiful woman. During this time the arrival of a Sanyasi to the Siva temple causes much interest among the people. Every one visits him for advice and blessings. The women who came from the village to which Kusum was married discuss that the Sanyasi very much resembles Kusum's dead husband. One night Kusum is sitting alone in the steps. When the Sanyasi comes down to the river, her veil slips off her head and both see each other. The Sanyasi asks who she is and she tells her name. She goes home and he is sitting on the steps for the whole

night. This is just a passing reference to the fact that the Sanyasi is Kusum's dead husband. From then on Kusum starts serving the Sanyasi and the temple. She is very obedient and listens to all his lectures. Suddenly she is not to be found serving the Sanyasi. When he asks for the reason she says "Master, I used to revere someone like a God; I used to worship him, and that joy has filled my heart. But one night I saw him in a dream, as if he were the Lord of my heart; somewhere sitting in a bakul grove, taking my right hand in his left he was talking about love with me" (39).

On knowing that the man in dream was he himself the Sanyasi orders her to forget him and leaves the place. After this Kusum is sitting on the steps for a long time and after it becomes dark the river steps has just heard a splashing sound but could not make out what has happened. In the story there are many instances to support the belief that the Sanyasi is Kusum's dead husband. He wants to be away from the familial ties and has done it by just sending a post. He did not care about the life of the woman entrusted to him. He is such a selfish and covetous man to run away from life to become the saint of the people. Kusum too is not strong willed or rebellious. She passively accepts without questioning whatever comes to her. She is programmed from her birth to act as per the norms of the society and that is how she conducts herself.

Before the marriage, Kusum was called 'Kushi' which means happy, by her friends. After marriage her entire life has changed. She always has a shadow of sorrow in her face. She restricts her living to the Ghat and the house. She finds happiness in serving the Sanyasi. She dedicates herself to him and the result is her love for him. She knows that it is wrong to love a Sanyasi and wants to stay away from him. But that love too is intuitional. She might have had some intuition that the Sanyasi is her man and this might have drawn her towards him. Even ten years after her husband's death Kusum has lived because in that life she did not experience any love or devotion. Dying for a person whom one has hardly met once or twice in life is mere stupidity. But now her heart has felt the love and devotion to the husband and she cannot forget his thoughts. So she is ready to sacrifice her life in the memory of her man in dream. Kusum is both institutionally and internally oppressed. Society as an institution has laid certain norms and codes of conduct for women. Kusum follows these codes very strictly. She psychologically fits herself into these norms which lead to her oppression. At a very young age she sacrifices her vermilion and ornaments for a man whom she has barely met in her life. She restricts herself against any likes and dislikes and leads the life of a widow. When she is drawn towards the Sanyasi, she oppresses herself by not meeting him. When she finds out that her love will never be fulfilled she ends her life. Unlike Kusum, Somri in "The Witch-Hunt" is externally oppressed by the wealthy landlords in the society.

Mahasweta Devi's "The Witch-Hunt" is a perfect portrayal of the tribal culture and the problems faced by them. It is about the belief of a witch and its consequences in the life of the tribal people. Devi has used the central event of witch-hunt to bring out all the injustices meted out to the tribes. Devi's main concern is the life of the tribal people who are excluded from the political map of India. Devi's fiction is a classic illustration of her socio-political philosophy of life. Her writings deal with the social deprivation of the tribal people living in remote corners of Bengal, where modernization is but a distant dream even after several years of independence. She is a long time champion for the social, political and economic advancements of these communities whom she characterizes as the 'suffering spectators' of the country. The story is set in the tribal villages of Hesadi and Murhai. There are signs of drought in the village and the government is setting up relief centers in the nearby town to help the tribes. The people in the village hear stories about a witch in the locality and are worried about their lives. They go and seek the help of Hanuman Misra, the temple priest, and ask for his advice. He prophesizes that he got a vision of a naked woman saying "I am the famine" (245) and there are possibilities for the presence of a witch in their villages. He calls the tribal people as sinners and so the witch is sure to wander around their village. He asks them to suspect each other and even themselves that they are not transformed into a witch. People are worried about this witch story and are constantly vigilant.

Every usual happening is suspected and is concluded as the action of a witch. When the clouds do not gather to give rain it is the result of the presence of a witch. If children die after drinking the sour milk from the Shiva temple it is also concluded as the action of a witch. Hanuman Misra orders them not to burn the witch or stone her but only chase her away. Drought seems to lose its horror and the witch has become the primary panic. There are many deaths in the village owing to the fear of the witch. Finally, they spot the witch and chase her away twice. Meanwhile there are a few talks about the disbelief of the witch but no one openly admits their doubts. Few people suspect Hanuman Misra for fake news of the witch but they do not dare to speak against him. When they spot the witch and chase her for the third time she hides in a cave. The villagers fill the cave with smoke and try to bring the witch out. But they can hear only screaming of a woman in terrible pain followed by a newborn cry. The village chief, Pahan, realizes that it is his own daughter, Somri, who was missing for the past nine months.

Somri was working in the Hanuman Misra estate and was raped by his son. To save his face from the shame he has driven the dumb girl into the forest after removing her clothes. Somri was wandering in the forest and was driven with hunger to eat raw meat as she was pregnant. Hanuman Misra has let loose the fear of the witch so that people will not enter the forest and even if they see Somri they will drive her away as the witch.

The belief of the people in such baseless things like a witch has enabled the Misras to easily hide their crime. Here culture indirectly helps Hanuman Misras to oppress the childlike people. There are many incidents in the story which show how power is exercised on the tribals. The tribes are aware of all the natural disasters but a police beating is new to them. They are afraid about the police who come and harass them without telling them the reason. The police act according to the wish of the wealthy landlords of the area. An Australian is introduced in the story, who is ready to pay money to Hanuman Misra for a real Indian Witch as he wanted to take her with him. The Krishna Consciousness devotee is ready to offer one quintal of clarified butter to perform the yagna but no one cares about the suffering tribes. Under the cover of development and modernization the non-governmental organizations enter the area but they primarily develop themselves and forget the tribes.

Both the stories discussed in this paper are perfect examples of gender intimidation and internalized oppression. Internalized oppression works within the groups of people who suffer the most from the mistreatment. Oppression always begins from outside the oppressed group, but by the time it gets internalized, the need for external oppression is hardly felt for the damage to be done. If people from the oppressed group feel bad about themselves then there are only two places to dump those feelings – on oneself and on the people in the same group. Thus in “The Witch-Hunt” the tribes accuse each other as witches and they call themselves sinners. In “The Ghat’s Story” Kusum consciously leads the life of a widow without crossing any boundaries. When she loses control she commits suicide. In both the cases the culture of the people plays an important role in oppressing them. Though that is not the main aim of culture, the oppressors manipulate culture to suit their needs.

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Ecological Imperialism: A Centrifugal Force in Anita Desai's *Baumgartner's Bombay*

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Abstract: *The article intends to present a brief view of ecological imperialism. Selecting certain features, the second part will apply them to the chosen text-Anita Desai's Baumgartner's Bombay (2007). The text is set in Bombay but flashes back to pre-war Berlin, Venice, Calcutta and travels to an internment camp in the foothills of the Himalayas and then to post-war Calcutta. Jews, Germans, Bengalis and Gujaratis traverse the locale and Baumgartner, a saint like person is a protector of stray cats. But he is a man tossed by the currents of history. The advent of the Nazis had the power to set an entire continent afoot and The World War II sweeps over; the evils of the world are depicted in the pogroms of massacre and partition. Suketu Mehta rightly points out 'What Desai has done in Baumgartner's Bombay is detail the entire blood-soaked twentieth century in one not very significant life'. Though sneered by people, he makes his rounds of local teashops to scavenge for his many cats which are the 'defenders of Baumgartner's realm' (263) and pose a threat when he is murdered. Who murders him and why?*

Key Words: *Ecological Imperialism, Environmental Racism, Environmental Justice, internment camp, massacre.*

The truth of such freedom for the subject, however, is at the same time unfreedom; unfreedom for the other. For this reason the turn against natural beauty, in spite of immeasurable progress it made possible in the comprehending of art as spiritual, does not lack an element of destructiveness, just as the concept of dignity does not lack it in its turn against nature.

-Theodor W. Adorno, 81-82.

Recurrent focus is on the theme of nature and man. Postcolonial ecocriticism, a growing concern, unfolds the precarious condition of the planet and at the same time implicates the historical and political issues. It broods over the clamorous cry-destruction of the planet. Exploitation of the developing world makes one think of the oppressive dualism by which we are led to perceive that both 'native' and 'nature' are subordinated. Intellectuals and activists are concerned about the threat to the ecosystems. Ecologists speak about the threats that endanger the Mother Earth. Environmentalists express the environmental degradation and some of the ecologists are caught in the conflict of whether ecocriticism has to overpower the human survival. The turn against nature has caused destructiveness and one race's freedom has become unfreedom for the Other which refers in general to the subordinated. Pablo Mukherjee views that any postcolonial studies cannot but 'consider the complex interplay of environmental categories such as water, land, energy, habitat, migration with political or cultural categories such as state, society, conflict, literature, theatre, visual arts'. Equally any study that attempts to give importance to environment will have to trace 'the social, historical and material co-ordinates of categories such as forests, rivers, bio-regions and species' (quoted in Haggan & Tiffin 2010:2). Different tracks interplay in the site and work towards the ongoing condition.

The British environmental historians Alfred Crosby and Richard Grove reveal the historical embeddedness of ecology in the European imperial enterprise. Alfred Crosby's term *ecological imperialism* 'ranges in implication and intensity from the violent appropriation of indigenous land to the ill-considered introduction of non-domestic livestock and European agricultural practices' (Haggan & Tiffin 2010:3). Haggan and Tiffin refer to the Australian ecofeminist Val Plumwood's understanding of ecological imperialism that 'reason-centred culture' which enabled the European dominance continues to structure the human attitude towards nature and thereby nature and animal are considered as the other as 'being either external to human needs, and thus effectively dispensable, or as being in permanent service to them, and thus an endlessly replenishable resource'(4).

Another form of ecological imperialism, they point out, is the *biocolonisation* which covers the biopolitical implications of current Western technological experiments and trends. It is a biopiracy of indigenous 'natural-cultural property and embodied knowledge – to Western – patented genetic modification' and other instances of 'biotechnological suprematism and 'planetary management' (4). Once again these methods also become instrumental for they serve their needs and political ends.

A third form of ecological imperialism, they refer, is *environmental racism* defined by the American environmental philosopher Deane Curtin as 'the connection, in theory and practice, of race and the environment so that the oppression of one is connected to, and supported by, the oppression of the other'(4). Plumwood calls it 'hegemonic centrism'. The economically disadvantaged or the marginalized have faced the

‘environmentally discriminatory treatment’ Nature and the marginalised become dispensable. When some humans are defined as the uncivilised and animalistic, the humans naturally focus on anthropocentricism. Cary Wolfe argues that humans can engage in ‘non-criminal putting to death’ in Derrida’s phrase, not only of animals but of humans as well by marking them as animal (5). They explain further ‘in assuming a natural prioritisation of humans and human interests over those other species on earth’, it paves way to generate and repeat the racist ideologies of imperialism on earth.

By citing Mowforth and Mont, Haggan and Tiffin observe that ecotourism is a ‘new form of ecological imperialism in which Western cultural values override local values and thereby oppose the [very] principles of sustainability which ecotourism claims to support. Ecotourism is so keen to foster cultural sensitivity but fails miserably and ‘the local people are themselves treated (Zooified) as curiosities, and are stereotypically represented as being at one with the natural environments they inhabit and protect’ (67). At times it goes to the extent of causing eviction of native /local people.

Environmental justice is a grassroot movement started in the US around 1980. Lawrence Buell defines that it is a ‘series of community – based resistances against toxification of local environments and the siting of waste dumps and polluting industries that discriminate against poor and otherwise disempowered communities, particularly communities seen as victimized by what has come to be called environmental racism’ (141-142). The poor and politically less powerful groups are the affected and they have started to raise their voice to move towards environmental justice at different spheres of the globe. Robert Bullard remarks ‘environmental racism is just one form of environmental injustice’ (Quoted in Buell 2005:117). Many supporters insist on the right of all individuals to be protected from environmental degradation.

How do these concepts of ecological imperialism stream through Anita Desai’s *Baumgartner’s Bombay* (2007)? The very first chapter of the novel opens in an eerie atmosphere of Bombay with a woman Lotte, speaks German but nationality unidentified, speeds through, locks her door cautiously and keeps a parcel of letters stained with blood on table and is panic stricken. She cannot overcome her fear, anguish and loss of an intimate person to whom she revealed her secretive life in the lonely world. This migrant tries to build up a world in the alien space by being the illegal wife of Kanti Sethia, a Marwari businessman from Calcutta whose demise jeopardises her life. If the space is occupied by such people, there is another wave of migration and Farrokh Cama, owner of Café de Paris speaks with utmost derision: ‘new race – men who remain children, like pygmies, dwarfs...these junky heathens of today ...Tell their parents big big lies about Hindu gods, say they love Buddha, say they want to visit temples, live in ashrams....Get drugs in these ashrams, drugs from those pandits’ (15-16). They forcefully take food from shops but never pay money, exploiting Indian hospitality. He acknowledges that his religion teaches him to give but why should he give to rich children from America and England? Besides they pollute the world by having women but not wife and they ‘scream, shout filthy language, abuse .. you pig, you swine, you Indian ass ...’ (18) when they do not get money. Next ‘they begin stealing. Yes, pickpocket in cinema house, pickpocket in market. Burglary in old people’s home. In shops. Even killing, even murdering’ (19). And for all this expository account, he is not able to throw out Kurt, a German, who has stationed himself in his café. The Indian space is thus appropriated by these people and the helpless Indians become victims, dispensable animals for them to have money.

Racial hatred spumes over the land and all the houses suddenly bear swastika sign in Berlin yet the houses are checked, window panes broken and people are marched out. The holocaust is not directly depicted but it is ‘the marching and shooting. The shooting and killing. The killing and the killing and the killing’ (25) that predicts Germany. Herr Pfuehl the business man from Hamburg after buying the house of Baumgartner wanted to erase its past history. ‘He was afraid of being accused of harbouring Jews when Hitler was trying to rid the sacred fatherland of them...’ (63). Herr Baumgartner’s widow or son were delicately brought up in the old Germany with their ‘piano-playing and singing and reading of the classics. They were not the Jews of the Shtetl after all, of Kosher and Hanukkah and Cheder and God knew what other Galician horrors’ (63). He shifts them to a room as a paying guest on Grenadierstrasse from where he has arranged for Baumgartner to travel to India to carry on his business of timber, sandalwood etc. Many other Jews have fled for safety across the globe. His own father Baumgartner had been taken away by police. His mother ran from one police station to another to find him. But a fortnight later he returned from Dachau, shoulders hunched and shivered ‘The shiver started in the back of his neck, making his head jerk like a hen’s ...his face twitched on the pillow, pulled in every direction ... that shiver made the quilts suddenly heave, subside’ (50). This predicts the condition of all the Jews caught by the Germans. After few days he died pathetically. The author seems to portray the case of an individual but captures the brutal horror suffered by the entire race. History records the Jewish race massacre in the dark years of Germany. Environmental racism had spearheaded and went unchecked.

Baumgartner, German born in Germany but of Jewish origin, therefore a refugee is the identity bestowed on him. Hit on the back of the neck he is taken away to police station where it was declared ‘British make rule here, sir, not Indians’ and sent to the improvised camp in Fort William with other ‘enemy aliens’ (120) and deported. ‘In the central internment camp in Ahmednagar where ‘the hostile aliens’ from all over the country were poured like ants from a closed fist into a bowl of dust’ (123). He is exasperated to know that they could

not even differentiate German Jews and Nazi Germans and as he had no one to appeal for him and prove that he is not hostile he had to remain in captivity for six years. The final internment camp was at the foothills of Himalayas. He could smell the Himalayas: 'sap, resin, woodsmoke, a tingling freshness' (124). All in the camp 'milled around like a herd o cattle' and every activity was done at the blow of whistle, even sleep. The lesser functionaries 'took a particular pleasure in rounding up the men and undressing them, then separating them according to their size and appearance, like cattle, making jeering remarks as they did so. What gives romance for Baumgartner is to work in the fields for it kept him away from the continual interrogation. He envied the village women's 'simplicity, the absence of choice and history' but his life was 'hopelessly tangled and unsightly, symbolized aptly by the strands of barbed wire wrapped around the wooden posts and travelling in circles and double circles around the camp' (129). The Jews were tortured by Nazis and then separated from the Nazis, they were in new bunks. Diseases afflicted and bad food was served. America entering war, British gaining victory and then one day 'Hitler is dead ...the war is over' (155) becomes unbelievable. Returning he lodges in Hira Niwas, collects wounded / thrown cats and looks after them. Wounded as he is, and treated as an animal, he has the heart to care for the stray cats.

The second world war could not end in India. Twenty thousand men of Indian National Army who fought against the British but were on the side of Japanese are under trial. 'War within war within war. Everyone engaged in a separate war and each war opposed to another war' (202). Guns were fired. 'Done with the global war, the colonial war, only to be plunged into a religious war' (210). Muslims killed Hindus, vice versa that twenty thousand people were killed in three days of violence in Calcutta. It was Habibullah the trader who sent Baumgartner to Bombay and his letter to Chimanlal gave him a mooring, taking him to a house, Hira Niwas, behind the grandiose pile of the Taj Hotel. In all the four historical recordings cited above, the ecological imperialism of putting to death by marking humans as animals has equated itself to environmental racism and institutionalized speciesism that continue to be used to rationalise the exploitation of animalised human.

The holocaust becomes instrumental for Pfuehl to take away the property of Baumgartner and make his son Hugo Baumgartner be a clerk in his business and later evicts him by sending him to India with the pseudo promise of beginning a new life. The irony is that India gets Zooified and is depicted as an exotic land. He warns the mother and the son not to think of it as 'an ancient land ... the land of snakes and fakirs' (61). The son promises the mother, who is frightened of 'snakes and tigers' in India that he will have servants to drive away the snakes and bring her 'gold oranges' (65). India is the dangerous land in the East and she refuses to go to that place of spiders and snakes. Pfuehl assures that it is under the British Empire. Political forces and old concepts of the land in the context unfold the commingling of present and past against the ethos of the land.

Kurt as a hippie narrates a series of strange experiences in significant places which present India's spirituality, carnality and secretive aspects. 'In Benares he had lived with the *doms* in the burning ghat', where he helped in funeral pyres and slept in the 'courtyard of the palace of the *dom* raja', (183) who was happy to have him for he was visited by none. In Bihar he lived with tantrics, learnt yoga and meditated till the devil and he danced together and the swamis screamed with fear at the sight. In Tibet, the magicians flew into the sky 'on a streak of lightning and vanished in flames' (185) and they cut the corpses into fragments and performed the ceremony. In Calcutta he lived with lepers scavenging from the refuse tip and a leper girl loved him. Her lip began to rot and he left. In Goa he bought and sold and lived on opium, on marijuana, on cannabis, on heroin. 'He had lived with nudists posed for tourists' cameras, sailed with fisherman, swam in the sea with dolphins and sea serpents'(186). In Lucknow, beating his bare body with a whip, walked in the procession at Mohurrum. In Mathura he had done the parikrama; smuggled cases of opium on camel-back in Rajasthan; met and grappled with a yeti in the Himalayas (186). In Baumgartner's room he sequences these events at a breath and India's spirit communion, royalty, poverty, drug world, multireligious strangeness are all caught as curiosities in its exotic nature to the world. Isn't this an ecological parading of strange India?

India looms large of natural wealth. Pfuehl presents India as a 'promising place ... you ought to know how much of my timber comes from there, all the mahogany and rosewood, and all the fancy pieces of sandalwood – where else but from the East, from India and Burma and Malaya?' (61). The natural resources of India had been usurped and exploited for years together. Reading behind this eposition renders the whole picture of the vast land appropriated for the purpose of growing these trees, the resources exhausted and the web of traders and countries implicated in the export business over a long span of time. Recalling the Indian historian Ramachandra Guha's cryptic words is adequate: 'pauperizing millions of people in the agrarian sector and diminishing the stock of plant, water and soil resources at a terrifying rate' (Quoted in Haggan & Tiffin 2010: 1-2) is the predicament in India. Industrialization and business have bolstered the structure of the rich becoming richer and the poor poorer. Paradoxically the European ecosystem did not suffer any havoc neither were they pauperized. Haggan and Tiffin analyse that environmental issues are not only central to the projects of European conquest and global domination but also as inherent in the ideologies of imperialism and racism (6). Europeans colonizing the land has caused widespread ecosystem change, created unequal power regimes, established a kind of biopiracy and exploited the natural resources.

Environmental racism pervades Calcutta at the time of partition. Beggars, cattle, stray dogs and vendors set up wherever there was space. Supine bodies like corpses in their shrouds were lying in rows near the decayed portico; 'those who slept in the day were labourers who worked on night shifts, and those who slept at night were families that lived in the cracks and crevices of the building like so many rats or lice' and people bathing and washing were on a 'seemingly endless war upon filth' (203). Baumgartner mounted the stairs, 'careful not to step on the beggars and lepers and prostitutes who inhabited every landing ...' (204). In Bombay in front of Hira Niwas, families lived on pavements with tincans for roof and rags for wall; men lay in drunken stupor; women washed in gutter that the cooking pots 'shone like crumpled tinfoil in the glare' and there was the 'heaps of faces that the children left along the same gutter and the squares of greasy paper' (7). Baumgartner was appalled at the sight of 'a part of migrant wave from the drought – stricken countryside, refugees from famine or riots' (8-9). In the same place Taj Hotel stands in magnificence within five minutes walk. Environmental justice has no relevance / significance in these residential areas.

Baumgartner had been fifty years in India and out of fifty, thirty years in Bombay but failed to have subjectivity. He belongs nowhere and no kin to have any link or relationship as his mother was trapped and died in Nazi camp. On Farrokh's complaint, he brings Kurt home. One day he pierces the knife into Baumgartner's throat and blood oozed, 'it was like a diarrhoea of blood' (258). He steals Baumgartner's silver antics, won at horse races with his business friend Chimanlal, and runs away. A German kills a German Jew in the Indian soil. Historical events and socio-political happenings act as a centrifugal force dispersing people across the globe. Lotte saves his letters which had motivated Anita Desai to write the novel. Destructiveness of man and nature go unchecked. History, politics and individual lives are smeared with blood. Imperialism stampedes across the eco-socio-system.

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Replication of Indian Culture and Heritage in Githa Hariharan's *The Thousand Faces of Night*

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Abstract: India is the cradle of civilization with great tradition and heritage. The ethnicity of the country is prolific with a lot of myths. India brims with a rich heritage of literary tradition. The tradition continued in imparting our culture and interpreting the myths of our country. The ancient traditions of India reveal the true history on the status of women. India had her own tradition of feminine culture and women's participation in spiritual and public affairs. The women writers concentrated on the portrayal of different facets of women. Among the contemporaries, Gita Hariharan uses the genre fiction as a medium to transmit the culture exhibiting the Indian myths in detailed manner to correlate the contemporary life of our people. Gita Hariharan's novel represents the reality for a considerable section of Indian Womanhood. The subconscious Indian psyche and the social relationships are based on traditional value of real womanhood. The values and tradition of the Hindu society plays a vivid role in the novel *The Thousand Faces of Night*. The author illustrates the differences, conflicts and contradictions of the characters and the system that oppresses and suppresses them.

Key Words: Culture, heritage, tradition, womanhood.

Introduction

Githa Hariharan's debut novel, *The Thousand Faces of Night* articulates the problems of women with the help of Indian mythology. The novel highlights the survival strategies of women belonging to three different generations. The lives of three women in *The Thousand Faces of Night*- Devi, Sita and Mayamma expose the different dimensions of women's oppression. She links the plight of her women characters with the Indian myths and legendary heroines in the epics of India. The traditional Hindu myths and tales also have depicted women to be timid, submissive, servile, feminine and inferior to men. Epics like *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana* have set standards directly or indirectly by which our culture has been operating all along. These Hindu myths and lore, which speak about women's roles and models, have a greater impact upon female psyche and women have been trained to internalize their cultural image through these myths. These myths are used as tools by patriarchal society in a subtle manner to enslave women and make them play male-scripted subordinate roles.

Adrienne Rich described women's writing as re-vision. According to her re-vision is an act of looking back, of entering into an old text from a new critical tradition. She observed "this is for us (women) more a chapter in critical history; it is an act of survival." (Rich, 1972:18) Women's writing of last decade, dealing with social, political, economic and religious matters, have become a critical re-vision. As part of this re-making and re-visionist myth making, old stories are told in different ways from gyno-centric perspectives. The reworking, revisioning and retelling of the myths as allusions of the character's story are the highlight of Githa Hariharan's *The Thousand Faces of Night*.

The Thousand Faces of Night is the portrayal of different facets of women suffering and depicts the status of women in Indian society. The novel explores how middle class Hindu society prescribes gender relations and male script roles by means of myths that women are told and how women rework them in their lives and lives of other. The novel presents stories of three women – Sita, Devi and Mayamma who engage in a lonely but difficult battle against the restrictive rules of patriarchy. The paternalistic laws of Manu, the ancient Hindu sage runs like a thread throughout the novel. These laws are articulated by Devi, the protagonist's father-in-law. This male discourse is subverted by female discourse of Devi's grandmother. If Manu speaks of female subordination, the grandmother's discourse glorifies strong, rebellious angry women, Draupadi and Amba from Mahabharata, whose wrath inflicts havoc and destroys entire lines of male controlled dynasties.

Grandmother's narration is a kind of revisionist myth making, as she has improvised the texts and seems to impart a secret knowledge through her purposeful retelling of the tales. She does not dwell on the prominent figures of Hindu mythology like Sita or Savitri, rather she retrieves marginal figures like Gandhari, Amba and Ganga who are almost forgotten and rendered invisible in patriarchal version of myth.

Devi, a young educated girl with the 'American experience' struggles to cope with her husband Mahesh, who is most of the time on business tour. She feels alienated in her own home. She searches for an identity and tries to free her from the bondage of marriage and the various roles levied on her. Grandmother's tales heard in her childhood days inspire her and she tries to replicate them with her own life. For the grandmother, the link between her stories and the lives of real women whom she has come across is a vital one.

She tries to make subtle connections between the profound, awe-inspiring lives of mythical heroines with the sordid stories of real women and men. For each character's problems grandmother indirectly narrates a story. The stories are solutions to their problems but they "were not simple: they had to be decoded." (Hariharan, 1992: 27) Devi's grandmother is a feminist in her own way asserting her individuality and sheltering women who are victims of male chauvinistic society.

The stories were told for particular occasion to a particular character. For instance once Devi was surprised to see the photograph of her mother with a veena. She had never seen her mother playing a veena. Devi's grandmother narrates the story of Gandhari as an answer to her question. Gandhari of Mahabharata with all her fury "embraces her destiny- a blind husband- with a self sacrifice worthy of her royal blood." (Hariharan, 1992: 29). Gandhari is usually portrayed as an icon of self sacrifice, but in grandmother's story she becomes a symbol of pride and self denial. Saddled with a blind husband, she desires to share his blindness than to be his vision. She might have blindfolded herself to rebel against the injustice urged on her to marry a blind husband, Dhritrashtra. Gandhari is the very enigma of protest. She is a willful, proud woman who sacrifices "sight" as an answer to the injustice done to her.

In the same way Sita, Devi's mother discards veena, as an act of denial and sacrifice to retaliate her father-in-law's curt remarks, "Are you a wife, a daughter in law?" Sita is a willful and proud woman. When her father-in-law objected to her playing the veena in the house, "she reached for the strings of veena and pulled them out of the wooden base. They came apart with a discordant twang of protest." (Hariharan, 1992: 30) Gita Hariharan draws the parallel between Sita's repressed desires and Gandhari's suppressed anger. Thereafter Sita focused on one goal in life ; to be a good wife and good mother. She meticulously planned the lives of her husband and her only daughter Devi with clinical precision. She led her husband from promotion to promotion. She sent him to Africa on a prestigious mission where he died. She sends Devi to America for higher studies. On Devi's return, Sita leads her to the altar of marriage gently and firmly. Suppressing her artistic desires and dreams, she becomes an embodiment of self-denial.

Another story that grandmother picked to display the pathetic resemblance between legendary and mundane women characters is of Amba. Bheeshma, a celibate, kidnapped Amba from her 'swayamvara'. In order to take vengeance Amba practiced meticulous penance, took many births and finally became the cause of his death. Grandmother drew a resemblance between Amba and Uma, who was a motherless girl. Uma, Devi's cousin was abused by her husband and father in law. Her experience in new home was worse than she had in her home. She returned to her home after a year and lived with grandmother till the old woman died. While talking about the tortuous path of motherhood, grandmother quoted the example of Ganga who drowned all her children and broke her marriage with Shanthanu (Hariharan, 1992: 89). All such stories of mythological women become Devi's cultural and psychological survival kit. They mark a female rite of passage into female creativity. In her fantasy, she becomes a woman warrior, a heroine.

Soon marriage traps Devi in man-made enclosures. Grandmother's stories are replaced by her father-in-law's discourse. Baba is a typical illustration of a male dominated patriarchal world. His character is revealed through the stories, which he elaborates to Devi. They are elucidation of the codes laid down by Manu which explicit the virtuous and chaste women who inspire their husbands along the path of Dharma by their sacrificial nature, self-renunciation and subservience. While grandmother's stories "were a prelude to my womanhood, an initiation into the subterranean possibilities. His define the limits." (Hariharan, 1992: 51). Baba's stories were not ambiguous and its centre-point "an exacting touchstone for a woman, a wife." (Hariharan, 1992: 51). Baba's stories always reflect that women should be devoted to their husbands. He explains the means of reaching heaven by serving their husband with devotion and care.

Devi's married life proves to be hollow. After years of married life Devi's heart remains untouched and not even sought for. Mahesh remains a shadowy figure in her life. Marriage does not provide any space for her. Mahesh views marriage as only a necessity and takes her life with him for granted. He allows her no choice of reading books or taking up a job. Devi observes, "My education has left me unprepared for the vast, yawning middle chapters of my womanhood." (Hariharan, 1992: 54). Her longing to bear children to break the monotony is not fulfilled. Finally, in a fit to give vent to her lone life, she chooses to elope with Gopal, an Indian singer. She hopes to find solace with the company of Gopal but in vain. So the hankering for love ends and she goes alone in search of her identity.

Devi in her loneliness is drawn to the solitary figure Mayamma, the old caretaker of Mahesh's house, who has stoically endured the sufferings inflicted by her husband, mother-in-law and son. "She has coveted birth, endured life, nursed death" (Hariharan, 1992:136). Mayamma belonged to the generation of women who quietly bore to death their liabilities and never rebelled even if they wanted to, because it was considered outrageous for a woman to dodge away her familial bindings even if she was crushed underneath it. Mayamma had no bitterness in her, she could live several such lives again, but she was aware that the new generation is not as patient and may not prevail circumstances similar to hers, she says "Devi, that child so easily moved to tears, what does she know of penance?" (Hariharan, 1992:113). Mayamma is the archetypal woman, who accepted her fate, cursed it but never questioned it and lived life as she was expected to.

Devi's lifelong search for an identity ends when she reaches her mother. She rehearsed in her mind the words, to meet Sita and to offer her love: "to stay and fight, to make sense of it all, she would have to start from the beginning". (Hariharan, 1992:139) While Devi returns to offer her love, Sita is also reborn through her daughter's adventures in life. She retrieves her lost self by returning to her music and to her veena. "She sat before the relic from her past, the broken veena, freshly dusted, and waited for Devi to come back to her." Both Sita and Devi have liberated from the pressures of feminine role-play to attain a free creative individuality.

Conclusion

This is one novel where women are in the front and center of the struggles, transforming hardship and pain into power. The protagonist, Devi tries to free herself from the so called notions, taboos of the society, and expectations of the scriptures. She tries to break the bond a woman has with the society and takes the rebels of the myth as examples to find her identity. Devi rewrites these stories in her own life and she learns that "A woman fights her battle alone". Hariharan's idea behind naming her protagonist 'Devi' is to reinforce in a woman the realization of her inherent powers. Hence Devi not only symbolizes fury, sublimity and power but also independence. The three main characters prove their strength of womanhood in their struggle for survival.

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Dismantling Dystopian Complexity through Social Ecology: A Study of Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's *Shadowland*

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Abstract: Literature is an excellent platform to stage the innate and inter-dependant relation among all organisms in the world. Indian Literature has its meritorious share in this endeavor and the writers hailing from this territory give voice against the dangerous venture perturbing natural order and the need to preserve the natural world. Ecocriticism is an interdisciplinary study focusing on the relationship between ecology and literature but it widens further to encompass various fields. Ecology plays a vital role in carving out an ideal Utopian society with upright cultural norms. Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni strives to focus upon the aftermath of ecological disaster thereby creating a dystopian world *Coal* in her *Shadowland*. The tale narrates the quest journey of Anand and Nisha in search of the lost conch, the symbol of flourishing culture attuned with nature. The innumerable experiences that they undergo in the techno-city *Coal* transcending physical and time boundaries teach them the intricacies of life. They slowly untie the mysterious knots of life. The cultural heritage of a community is highlighted by contextualizing the intrinsic worth of ecology. The theoretical framework of the paper is based on Social Ecology.

Key Words: Social Ecology, Dystopia, Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, Murray Bookchin, Environment, Ecology.

Literature is an excellent platform to stage the innate and inter-dependant relation among all organisms in the world. Indian Literature has its meritorious share in this endeavor and the writers hailing from this territory give voice against the dangerous ventures perturbing social and natural order, and the need to preserve the environment. Technological improvements and scientific discoveries, no doubt, have paved the way for the betterment of humanity. But the problem arises when they begin to dominate humanity with the illusory comfort zone. Caught up in such net of trance, human world has started moving towards a dystopian world devoid of environmental benefits. Many writers worldwide have featured this attribute in their novels which reflect their ecological concern. Indian Literature has also contributed to this realm of universal concern, keeping intact its cultural norms. Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni is one such committed writer voicing her concern towards the betterment of humanity. She is a prolific writer highlighting the importance of relationships, whether between human beings or transcending human boundaries encompassing all beings. Though living abroad, her reverence for cultural heritage is revealed through her statement in an interview: "I read very widely, very different people. This helps me grow - as a writer and a human being. I particularly like reading old Indian literature - our epics, the Ramayana and Mahabharat, for example" (Shaunn Farrell, 2005). Her trilogy *The Brotherhood of the Conch* attempts to throw light upon the oft traced path – redemption from evil. The novel taken for scrutiny is *Shadowland* and it is analyzed under the context of ecocriticism. The theoretical framework of the paper is based on Social Ecology.

Ecocriticism is an interdisciplinary study focusing on the relationship between ecology and literature but it widens further to encompass various fields. Ecological studies play a vital role in carving out an ideal Utopian society with upright cultural norms. Though debates pertaining to nature versus culture storm around the world, a community/society revolves around two subtle forces, environment in general and culture in particular. The theoretical framework of the paper is based on Social Ecology. Murray Bookchin says in his book *The Philosophy of Social Ecology: Essays on Dialectical Naturalism* thus: "Whether humanity recognizes that an ecological society would be the fulfillment of a major tendency in natural evolution, or remains blind to its own humanity as a moral and ecological agent in nature, becomes a *social* problem that requires a *social* ecology." (140)

Social ecology emphasizes that ecological disorders arise owing to social problems. The root cause lies in the turmoil prevailing in any one facet of the societal set-up like economy, ethnicity, culture, power structure and gender issues. Bookchin says that ecological problems and social problems are intertwined, and gross understanding of this issue would only promote environmental disaster. He also underscores the role of spirituality in social ecology.

Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni strives to focus upon the aftermath of ecological disaster thereby creating a dystopian world *Coal* in her *Shadowland*. The tale narrates the quest journey of Anand and Nisha in search of the lost conch, the symbol of flourishing culture attuned with nature. The innumerable experiences that they undergo in the techno-city *Coal* transcending physical and time boundaries teach them the intricacies of life. They slowly untie the mysterious knots of life. The cultural heritage of a community is highlighted by

contextualizing the intrinsic worth of ecology. Dr. Michael W Fox observes that to harm the components of the earth is to harm oneself: “This harm arises when we discount the being of others – the sanctity of their being – and come to treat others purely as a means to satisfy our own ends” (19). A typical example for this statement is Shadowland, a world occupied by restless human beings.

Shadowland is formed as a society rips apart resulting in ecological imbalance. Divakaruni projects the dystopian world through the city Coal which once had been a flourishing country. Coal turns out to be the future name of Kolkatta with double implication – Coal’s throbbing heart beat is an artificially manufactured energy after extinguishing coal; and the literal world Coal is gloomy and poisoned to the core. Though technology can benefit humanity and the world, how a dystopia would be created in no time if technology rules the world supreme by controlling all activities of the human beings is stressed through the story line. Making the protagonists travel towards future, the author takes the readers to the, not imaginary but, imminent world if humanity continues to strife and exploit nature. This is an alarming note since certain instances that Divakaruni makes a note at have already taken roots in the society. In her novel *Shadowland*, the protagonist Anand who belongs to the Brotherhood of Conch undertakes a perilous journey to the future land Coal along with Nisha to bring back the stolen conch thereby restoring the lost order of their world. They not only save their world but also open the hearts and minds of the Coal people to reality by reminding them of their lost cultural norms attained with nature.

At the outset, Divakaruni projects the serene atmosphere of the Silver Valley where all living beings in the place, including human beings, lead a harmonious life with nature. The healers, belonging to that place, have mastered the arts of life like the art of Transformation and the art of Persuasion for common good. The conch, which is believed to have magical powers, adorns the highest pedestal in their Brotherhood. Anand communicates with the conch when he wishes to, and it signifies the internalized bond that exists among all components of the world. Also the conch’s proposal to Anand to touch it before he leaves for a three-day trip is indeed symbolic of nature’s appeal to feel it. The author wishes humanity to sense nature’s presence as Anand does: “He picked up the conch carefully and brought it to his chest, feeling it pulse against his heart” (9). Anand and Nisha find solution to any crisis by seeking help from the conch. The conch resolves their problems both at physical and mental planes. Thus Divakaruni underlines the therapeutic effect of nature aiding all beings. So, nature prospers when the culture of respecting each being flourishes. The cultural integrity of the community in the Silver Valley owes a lot to the ecological sensibility it possesses. This condition is similar to what Bookchin observes in his article “What is Social Ecology?” as,

In social ecology a truly “natural” spirituality would center on the ability of an awakened humanity to function as moral agents for diminishing needless suffering, engaging in ecological restoration, and fostering an aesthetic appreciation of natural evolution in all its fecundity and diversity. (246)

The loss of the conch creates chaos in the Silver valley. Anand and Nisha find to their shock that the entire Silver Valley has vanished; instead they find only craggy rocks covered with ice. The mango orchids, dormitories and the flower lined pathways altogether have vanished with the conch. This is the threshold of chaos sequencing any forcible removal of a being from the environment. Divakaruni takes the readers from the Silver Valley to the Coal city thereby providing a nightmarish vision of future if communal disorder and authoritarian outlook persist in the world. So far, nature has not been disturbed by the society whose cultural norms are in line with nature. But when totalitarian mind-set creeps in, disorder prevails, affecting culture, societal structure and ultimately nature. Michael E Zimmerman observes thus: “Social ecology explains the ecological crisis as the outcome not of a generalized anthropocentrism, but rather as the result of authoritarian social structures, embodied most perniciously in capitalism but also present in state socialism.” (2)

A virtual trip around the Coal city is enough to scare any human being. Technology rules the city with authoritarian social pyramid; scientists control the city, guards obey their orders; common people suffer; and magicians are excommunicated. The social structure is manifested in the buildings and in the environment of the city. Futuredome is the place for the elite and the scientists; Farm House is the place where the best (chemical) yields are ever consumed by the inhabitants of the Futuredome while the common people outside are unaware of even fruits and chocolates; magicians are dumped in the House of Fine Spirits; and Rehabitational Centers are for the rebellious. This obvious power play echoes communal disparity and social disharmony. Environmental collapse is due to the dismantling of healthy social structure and in turn it creates bungled cultural standards. Manufacturing oxygen is their prime goal for which the scientists intensify scientific investigations bringing out a powerful X-converter machine that would cull out objects of power from Outer Lands and would harvest their energy for the benefit of the Coal people. The conch has become an energy resource awaiting its day of harvest. When the scientist refuses to give the conch, mentioning it to be an energy resource for their people, Nisha remarks: “To you the conch is nothing but a big battery..... It is a Being. It’s older and more important than all of us” (92). But the scientist is unyielding. This alarming tendency of the human beings who start to exploit other worlds after exhausting what is gifted to them is psychologically and physically possible because of their

concern about survival. But not analyzing the root cause, they reiterate their mistake of disturbing the societal structure of the other world this time, causing havoc in their environment.

The culture prevailing in Coal has become technocratic without ecological sensibility. Subjugation and exploitation become inevitable at this level. The excommunicated magicians represent, not merely a group of people performing magic but, the ones who have understood the powers of nature thus trying to internalize them. Their excommunication signifies the separation of the people of Coal from nature thus symbolizing their destruction. This is reflected in Bookchin's statement thus: "A humanity that failed to see that it is potentially nature rendered self-conscious and self-reflexive would separate itself from nature morally as well as intellectually (*The Philosophy of Social Ecology*, 131).

The city Coal, actually Kol – that is Kolkatta before a few hundred years, has brownish air that is strong and retching. The place is scientifically and technically advanced devoid of any natural resource including the Sun and the Moon. Zimmerman observes thus: "If current trends go unchecked, we are told, the future offers two given scenarios: either nature will take 'revenge' on our profligate behavior, or capitalists will replace faltering biological systems with synthetic substitutes" (153). Coal city is typical of the latter vision. The scientists plan alternative measures for everything natural. The author projects how science would even tamper the memory of the human beings. Sumita and Asha lose their original identity as they are addressed as Dr. S and Dr. A by the technocratic community. Dr. X, the real name being Akshay, is a human manifestation of autocracy. He is cautious about not pronouncing the original name of anyone in Coal as the persons would be reminded of their past. Even the colors of the buildings in the Futuredome are designed in a way that no one would pose question to anyone. Thus he wields power over everyone with technology as his scepter and subdues the ones who opposed. Anand's observation about the scientists suits Dr. X the best: "They had wasted their abilities on providing frivolous luxuries for the rich and powerful of Coal – but what about the common people? Talking to B had made him realize how harsh their existence was" (45).

Akshay is the root cause for dismantling the societal structure in the beginning. His avarice and restless spirit force him to break off his relation with the magicians to secure name, fame, money and power. Though born into that community, his severing of ties with magicians is akin to what Bookchin observes thus:

Early forms of magic did not view nature as a world apart. Its worldview to be such that a practitioner essentially pleaded with the "chief spirit" of the game to coax an animal in the direction of an arrow or spear. Later, magic becomes almost instrumental; the game is coerced by magical techniques to become the hunter's prey. (*Earth Ethics*, 253)

Akshay opts for science as it yields quick results. This ambition and unnatural outlook results in the rift giving way to two prominent groups – magicians and scientists. Thus power structure starts to penetrate the society. Divakaruni depicts the disarrayed state through a council meeting where the two groups accuse one another for the societal and the environmental disorder. The leader of the magicians opines that they should pass laws defining the life style of their society since the scientists have become overly fond of luxury. This pictures the class distinction thereby leading to communal disharmony. The fast enlarging comfort zone of one sect has disturbed the other human beings and the environment. Robbery and vandalism crop up in the society symbolizing dissatisfaction and scarcity. When it is pointed out in the council meet, a scientist retorts that they would establish a larger elite police force, and the suggestion, "Violence against our own people is no solution. If we want to reduce crime, we have to fill their empty stomachs" dissolves in the air (137). Though the crux of the crisis is analyzed, the elite group fails to realize the truth; it complicates the intricacy and ultimately its future plans fail miserably. The chaos slowly rips off their cultural ethics and environmental balance. Their distorted voice that comes out of the mask they wear represents how even the natural way of communication has become a distant dream. Thus evolved the dystopian world Coal, that dares to tamper the integrity of the Outer Worlds as days pass by.

The author pinpoints at the over-ambitious outlook that would have its impact in triple layers – individual, societal and environmental. At the individual level, giving space for momentary pleasures, selfish attitudes, uncaring tendency, loss of sensitivity pave the way for being disconnected from the outer world, that is symbolically severing one's emotional tie from all living and non-living organisms. If this mental framework becomes contagious, it results in the break-down of societal order. This imbalance of the societal structure is caused by coveting money, comfort and power, and for accomplishing the trio, environment is exploited. Finally dystopia sets in. Suffocating to the core, humanity seeks to resolve the problem; but not knowing the source to be the poisoned roots, it intensifies the complexity. Divakaruni does not stop with picturing the calamity owing to the misstep of humanity, rather offers a solution which reflects the idea of Bookchin about social ecology that, "... it challenges the entire system of domination itself and seeks to eliminate the hierarchical and class edifice that has imposed itself on humanity" (*Earth Ethics*, 257).

The Mirror of Fire and Dreaming, a magical object that figures in the *Shadowland*, reflects the self and dissolves the egoistic layer of the scientists. The true self urges them to bring back the lost order, first by social integrity and then by environmental restoration. Magicians and scientists, after their long struggle, decide to join

hands together and to restore the natural resources. Their joining hands signify the author's dream of creating a world of perfect social order that has ethical responsibility towards the human and the non-human world as Bookchin underscores: "Social ecology thus stresses the need for embodying its ethics of complementarity in palpable social institutions that will give active meaning to its goal of wholeness, and of human involvement as conscious and moral agents in the interplay of species" (*Earth Ethics*, 257). Finally, Divakaruni portrays the merry union of the scientists and the magicians whose collaborative work would be yielding fruitful results very soon thus restoring their cultural norms, societal harmony, and ecological sensibility. Thus a healthy society, with its ecological ethics and complementary cultural norms, can preserve and create a healthy environment. This ideology inherent in social ecology would dismantle the dystopian complexity and promote universal love and peace.

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Reconstructing Identities in Amitav Ghosh's *Sea of Poppies*

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Abstract: *Quest for new methods have challenged the global conditions and ever-increasing cultural multiplicity. This condition is delineated through a panorama of characters who have migrated to an unknown place in a ship called the Ibris, in Amitav Ghosh's Sea of Poppies. Ghosh brings out the attention to the historical consequences of Imperialism with a colonial backdrop that leads to migration and displacement of people. This paper focuses on the manner the characters try to escape their names, caste, race, bodies and the place of origin while reconstructing the identity by using the tools of Deconstruction. The characters are cut off from their older personal, familial and national ties these migrants forge new identity and adopt the Ibis as a new cultural community. The characters in Amitav Ghosh's Sea of Poppies, not only attempt to reconstruct their identity by hiding their names, bodies, caste and racial origins but also the individuals' quest for the representing themselves in different ways which ultimately restarts their lives to create a new essence.*

Key words: identities, globalization, tradition

The postmodern era confronts the long establishing ideologies and values related to individual and family. Identity is now multi-faceted and constantly reconstructed by choice whereas individuals' identities in traditional societies were fixed and stable. The perception of identity has demonstrated to be remarkably liquefied and unstable, attaining its own meaning in various disciplines in ways that best suit their intentions and priorities. The traditional and exceedingly valued frames of reference in terms of which individuals can identify themselves and their place in society have been blown out. The quest of identity has become a very broad and influential concept in the postmodern era wherein an individual must search for new methods of representation to challenge the global conditions and ever-increasing cultural multiplicity. Identity is now complicated and constantly reconstructed by preference whereas individuals' identities in traditional societies were unchanging and constant.

The postmodern age and the present era of globalization has bestowed the assumption of fixed identity as obsolete and has recognized that identity is a multi-layered and changeable notion. The unavoidable manipulate of the media, especially the internet, social networking and mobile phone paved a way to new channels to permit for the transaction of information and people to surpass borders resulting in greater exchange. The spaces they inhabit are not fixed and homogenous but heterogeneous and malleable. Therefore, individuals are allocated to re-construct their image and adopt multiple identities while altering existing

Ghosh, the postmodern writer, celebrates in his writings the fluid condition of entity along with other elements of postmodern fiction such as migration, plurality, multiculturalism, skepticism and the disappearance of boundaries. The present paper not only examines the individuals' quest for representing themselves in various means but also the manner in which the characters in Amitav Ghosh's *Sea of Poppies*. They attempt to rebuild their identity by conceal their names, bodies, caste and racial origins and ultimately restart their lives to fill new essence. The latest novels in the Ibis Trilogy- *Sea of Poppies* and *River of Smoke* trace the lives of the main characters who formulate their identities to muddle through with the colonial and socio-cultural situations.

According to Weinreich "A person's identity is defined as the totality of one's self-construal, in which how one construes oneself in the present expresses the continuity between how one construes oneself as one was in the past and how one construes oneself as one aspires to be in the future." Weinreich's definition assists in relating an individual's past identity with future one illustrating component aspects of one's total identity, such as one's gender identity, social identity, ethnic identity and national identity and so on. In the present novel each of the characters tries to connect one's past with the present, memory with desire, old ties with new associations and moves to reach their destination with a strong degree of ambivalence.

The characters try to reconstruct and they are influenced by power and the world that surrounds them and thus changes their identities while travelling in the Ibis. They are brood on their own feelings, beliefs, memories, or imaginations. A person's identity is recreated through a combined effect of names, familial ties, social class, racial affiliation, role image, the imagination, memories, relationships, environmental forces, and historical background. These elements act continuously to shape identity of an individual. The transformation of identities in the main characters in the novel, *Sea of Poppies* takes place on the ship Ibis. Deeti changes herself to be Aditi, Kalua becomes Maddow Colver to conceal their real identity or perhaps they want to live a new life with a true and respectful identity. Mr Zachary Reid, goes away from the American racial discrimination. is changes into Malum Zikri, Jodu turns out to be Azad Naskar, Paulette, impersonating into the gumasta Baboo Nob Kissin's niece Putleshwari or Pugly, is running away from a rigidly defined and divided European

community in India. Raja Neel Rattan Haldar becomes Neel and transported as a convict for the offence he has not made. All these individuals create a new identity for themselves, and the colonial set of connections acts as a medium for their transformations. In the fictional world of *Poppies*, Amitav Ghosh constructs the notion of subject in representation through discursive connections with people, places and situations. The identity that comes through this author's works is not a solid and stable entity as in the modernist manner. Neither is it its own origin. It is closer to the fluid and changing discursive construction in the post modern sense.

Identity construction is an exceptional trait in this novel but seems to be inclined by the ethico-political and socio-economic dynamics. They relentlessly modify their characters' roles and trajectories to reform new identities in new milieu. Colonial upheaval hinders the outline of the roles assumed by the persons in the public context. A superficial reading of the novel might give the impression that it is a historical novel occurs in the colonial period. There is a note of the dramatic turn of events and destinies befalling the main protagonist and her interaction with a mishmash of other characters with whom she travels from land to river and climactically travel through sea. But the creation has a deeper level that Ghosh has readily gone to sea depths by vigilantly peeling its social, economic and political layers and at a still deeper level, the metaphysical. The episodes which follow the main character, Deeti anxiety at one level, the struggle between capitalism and socialism; at another level, the narrative seems to be a conflict for the hierarchical power. Deeti can also be seen to transform herself into a new identity permitting for meta-fictional reflection and a recognition of destinies as indicated in her resolution to marry Kalua who rescued her from sati.

Even then she did not feel herself to be living in the same sense as before: a curious feeling, of joy mixed with resignation, crept into her heart, for it was as if she really had died and been delivered betimes in rebirth, to her next life: she had shed the body of the old Deeti, with the burden of its karma; she had paid the price her stars had demanded of her, and was free now to create a new destiny as she willed, with whom she chose... (178)

Ghosh's constructs Deeti's identity in two dimensional processes. He mingles the imaginative interpretation and interweaves the textual traces from the pages of Sir Gieron's diary. Gieron mentions in this historical record about his encounter with the father of a female coolie in a village along the Ganges noting that the man "denied having any such relative, and probably she had gone wrong and been disowned by him" (Bahadur). This diary provides only a little mention of this woman with a processing number, while Ghosh attempts to recreate and fill the blanks left by the archives with his imagination as a novelist and with impulses as an anthropologist.

The central theme of the novel is identity. The identity is identified by different aspects, including the appearance, family, relationships, men, oppression and liberation, motherhood, and age. The novel probes into the devastating effects of colonialism on individual's lives, and how it has consequence on the rest of their lives. They are caught up in the anguish of imperialism the people have to strive to revive their identities by themselves, and we perceive the struggle they go through to achieve this. The theme of motherhood is shown to effect identity as it makes women love their children so powerfully they will go through anything to help them. Deeti's maternal instincts are analogous to Toni Morrison's central character Sethe in *Beloved*. Sethe's maternal instincts direct her to kill her own child, and almost lead to her own self destruction. But contrary to Sethe, the misfortunate woman Deeti finds safety of her child before deciding to her self-immolation. 'When the boat sailed away, with Kabutri in it, it was as if Deeti's last connection with had been severed. From that moment she knew no further hesitation; with her habitual care, she set about making plans for own end' (159).

Identity is about constructing an image by choice, it follows that identity is not fixed; since they are free to change their minds. To select a new image and to adopt a new identity does not represent a fundamental me; I can have more than one identity, depending on situations.' Middleton claims, 'We are inundated by a multiplicity of clamoring voices proffering alternative identities. This inevitably results in us making different choices'(50). It is apt that Paulette Lambert—an orphaned French girl hides and runs away from her benefactor, Mr. Burnham who takes her into his household and then exploits to fulfill his sexual desires. Aspiring to lead a new life, Paulette joins the *Ibis* under the guise of a Brahmin's daughter. She recreates her identity under the strong influence of her upbringing by an Indian ayah who becomes her 'Tantima'-'aunt mother'. She feels more at home with Indian clothes, food, language, and people than her ancestral European culture.

Ghosh formulates this European woman's identity as a two-fold constructive. On the one hand, her realities, the Bengali culture in which she lives, the language she speaks and the strong influence of books related to nature compose one unit. So we find her attempting from the very beginning of the novel to enliven her realities as if she listens, 'out her father's voice. How wrong he was! How mistaken he had always been in his understanding of her, making her into that which he himself wished to be, rather than seeing her for the ordinary creature that she was' (137). On the other hand, her unquenchable desires, cherished dreams, enduring goals and strong sense of determination lead her to make an adventurous voyage to cross black waters. Moreover, she has a passion to sail all around the world like his grand aunt Madame Commerson who joined a great expedition organized by Monsieur de Bougainville to know the riches of the earth.

The dilemma of Paulette comes almost to an end after a shocking turn of events in the story. When her father dies, she resorts to her own resource to pick up the thread that has been repeatedly broken between herself and her desire. She develops her mind sufficiently to fulfill her desire but unlike her grand aunt she passes for a typical Indian woman with ghungta as a means of concealment. "...she had also disguised her appearance in a number of other ways: her feet were lacquered with bright vermilion alta; her hands and arms were covered with intricate, henna designs that left very little of skin visible; and under the cover of her veil, the line of her jaw was obscured by large, tasseled earrings...." (359)

Even though the characters are placed in new environment which is difficult for adjustment, they settle down in the alien culture and attempt to adopt new culture either by assimilation or biculturalism. Out of struggles and hardships, the people cope up with new surroundings in an effort to settle in the unfamiliar environment. The alien integrate with natives as a result of which the existing differences are reduced and gaps are successfully filled to extract lasting benefits for both. In this novel, Zachary's character is redesigned to suit to the new conditions in association with new relationships.

The lascar Serang ali's influence on Zachary Reid is immense and deep. The reason for Serang's enthusiasm to transform Zachary into a gentleman, a pukka sahib is not only out of paternal feeling but also the lascar's feeling to perceive him as one among their group of seamen. Zachary finds himself not just adapting to their speech with ease: 'as if his oddly patterned speech had unloosed his own tongue' (16) but also begins to relish their flavor and changes his food habits 'to a Laskari fare of karibat and kedgeree- spicy skillygales of rice, lentils and pickles, mixed on occasion with little bits of fish, fresh or dry....he soon grew to like the unfamiliar flavours' (23). Zachary's reconstruction of identity in integration with laskari group is as similar as Paulette's assimilation to Indian culture.

The individual identities are portrayed as being shaped by the great historical events. At the point in time when the industrial revolution and abolition of slavery were being celebrated, another system of servitude was underway: indentureship. Indenture labour resulted in the migration of millions of people from place to place and country to country especially-- into British and French colonies. A great Majority of them, either helpless or compelled by the situations, stayed back in the countries and participated in the creation of new, Creole cultures. Amitav Ghosh's *Sea of Poppies* is surely a gripping and engaging novel if assessed from post modernist's point of view. The way the identities of the characters constructed and reconstructed can yield interestingly new insights into the meaning and understanding of postmodern identities in the present era. A postmodern strand of creativity seems to appear in Ghosh's manner of narrating the plot with colonial background as he blends history with fantasy, juxtaposes native with naïve, units a high caste with an out caste, pastiches genres and mingles languages to create a vivid picture that included a motley mix of characters. His pen is not out of ink to bring to pass the same trend in revealing the origins of characters like Zachary and Ah Fatt as creoles. According to Stuart Hall, "Identity becomes a 'moveable feast'; formed and transformed continuously in relation to the ways we are represented or addressed in postmodern societies.

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Depiction of Sorrows and Solace in the Poems of Jayanta Mahapatra

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Abstract: *The purpose of this paper is to bring out the evils of Indian society which have been well-exhibited in the poems of Jayanta Mahapatra. He is the first Indian English poet to receive the prestigious 'Sahitya Academy Award' in 1981 for his volume, Relationship. He got this award just because he had presented how India was in the past and its pride. He is a poet of Indian land and his soul lies in India. India is a developing country, in an ironic sense, in the ways of developing its beggars, destitutes, young criminals, and prostitutes. Once India was glorified for its past golden events but today's modern India is despised for its present misdeeds. Such an India is presented through the poems of Mahapatra.*

According to Mahapatra, India was very rich in its heritage, myths, and legends in the olden days. But today's India appears very pathetic to him since it is diseased with all the agonies of human lives. According to Mahapatra, people lead their lives but those lives are very miserable lives which are always waiting for a magic to happen through the intervention of some natural or supernatural occurrence and bring about the desired change. But such a magic never happens and the poor people's lives end without realising the dreams and desires. Hence, Mahapatra always portrays those miserable lives in his poems with the hope of giving solace to the Indian people at least through his poems.

Key words: *Magic, Myths, Legends, Solace*

Indian English Literature encompasses all fields of knowledge and life. It is also a very down-to-the-earth literature which deals with Indian People, Culture, and Nature which are embedded in Indian soil. Many great philosophical writers have lived in India who have always directed their people in the right path. Indian writers used many regional languages to represent their own views. Only their languages were different but they had Indian hearts. Indian English Literature has got its own pride to contain the writers and philosophers who are great masters of world classics.

Apart from the major genres like poetry, prose, drama and fiction, many artists have contributed their talents through the arts like dance and music. These arts performed by the Indian people had reflected the culture of Indian people and their love for arts in ancient India. Not only arts but architecture of many buildings in India reflects the Indianness of ancient India.

The pre-independent India contained many poets and a few novel writers. The famous pre-independent poets were Henry Derozio, Dom Moraes, Michael Madhusudan Dutt, Rabindranath Tagore, Sri Aurobindo, Sarojini Naidu, Toru Dutt, Nissim Ezekiel, etc. This row of line prospered even after the independence with the poets like Kamala Das, A.K. Ramanujan, R. Parthasarathy, Vikram Seth, Arun Kolatkar, Keki N. Daruwalla, Dilip Chitre, Jayanta Mahapatra, etc.

Before independence and after independence, many poets presented only reality in their poems. They always sympathise with the plight of people. Jayanta Mahapatra is such an indigenous Indian English poet. To him, Orissa is a land of repose, of faith and dream, basking in the tropical sun, caressed by the wind and the rain. The broken temples, deserted villages, drought-stricken countrysides, and suffering souls appear to him to be crying for salvation of the people in Orissa.

Jayanta Mahapatra was born in Cuttack, Orissa in 1928. His parents were stern followers of Christianity and so he too had to follow Christianity. Mahapatra does not attach much importance to any organised religion. People are struggling to get real freedom in all walks of life. But it never happens and so he obviously does not want God who is powerless to help or alleviate people's sorrows and sufferings. Since his birth, he had always craved for true love because his mother was always strict towards him and his father was always away from home due to his profession. This made him write something as an exercise of exorcism. Mahapatra admits himself that his writings always contained the elements of his own experiences with his parents, with his society and with his soil.

Orissa is very famous for its historical background and its richness. As Mahapatra is from Orissa, he feels proud to sing about Orissa and its cultural heritage. Even while receiving the prestigious 'Sahitya Academy Award' in 1981, he said: 'To Orissa, to this land in which my roots lie and lies my past, and in which lie my beginning and end...I acknowledge my debt and relationship'. Such is his love for his land and his people. In 1970, he won the second prize for his poem "The Report Card" by the International Who is Who in Poetry,

London. In 1975, Mahapatra became the first Indian to receive the coveted Jacob Glatstein Memorial Prize given by *Poetry* magazine.

Mahapatra reveals his anguish and pain throughout his poems with a humanistic overtone. He is not happy with his milieu. Often he can be seen regretting what is happening around him. An undercurrent of melancholy is detectable through most of his poems. In the modern times of failing traditions, Mahapatra finds himself caught in the conflicting circumstances of his past and present. The images in Mahapatra's poems evoke a sense of pity for the poor, the helpless and hapless such as widows who seek refuge in God, but the shut doors of the temple add to their agony and pain. In Mahapatra's milieu, people have no sympathy, no care, no concern for others, and even God is mute and apathetic towards the weak and the helpless.

In his poems, he goes back to Indian roots and portrays the Indian situations with great authenticity. Mahapatra is neither a romantic nor a revolutionary poet. He is like a historian who records the events of India and tries to explore them like a scientist. He is like a traveller who travels throughout the ages of ancient India, medieval India and modern India.

It is often quoted that a poet is a prophet of truth and as per these words, he presents all the historical facts from old India to modern India. Through his poems, he presents many historical events like Kalinga war, sea-route business between India and other countries across Bay of Bengal, architecture of Sun temple at Konark, Puri Jagannath temple, fertile lands of Orissa, etc.

Realising that it is the duty of a poet to represent his society, he portrays the ills of society with great agony. In his poems Mahapatra makes an indefatigable quest to know what ails his countrymen in reality whether it is religion or culture or their fate. He has been trying to find an answer to this question but his search continues through the years.

Mahapatra deals with all sorts of problems prevailing in Indian society. Mostly, he sings about Indian women. He never feels for women but he feels with Indian women. In our Indian society, women are either glorified as mother goddess or the evil incarnate but they are never treated as human beings. Mahapatra is a master penetrator into the core of the female heart. Poverty, hunger, and starvation have been chronic in India and they are the most significant facet of the lives of the Indian masses.

Mahapatra's poetic world is doubtlessly scattered with various images of wives, beloveds, whores, seductresses, village women, city women and adolescent girls. These images of women which constitute a vital part of Mahapatra's poetry underscore his overriding obsession with loss, absence, silence, hollowness, grief, death, and time. Women in this society are mere 'zeroes' and this is also reflected in his poems by allowing male narrators the first person appellation 'I', Mahapatra makes the poem a personal statement and its narrator a unique individual. In his poems, women are never referred to in the first person, only in the most impersonal third person. They exist mostly "without a name" as they really live in India.

The unpleasant situation of women doesn't exist only today but from time immemorial. Draupadi was humiliated in the court of Duryodana and the disrobing of countless hapless women happens even today. Rape and violence against women have become a common thing nowadays and it seems that there is no end to this evil. The poet poignantly captures such a ghastly incident in his poem "The Lost Children of America": "In the Hanuman Temple last night / the priest's promaded jean-clad son / raped the squint-eyed fourteen-year fisher girl / on the cracked stone platform behind the shrine" (119-122).

Hanuman is the eternally celebrated God, a symbol of 'brahmacharya'. Nothing can be more ironical than the rape of a fisher girl in that temple, that too by the son of the temple priest who has turned modern deviating from the traditional role. The victim of rape is a fisher girl who belongs to a low caste in the social hierarchy and wronged by a man of high caste to which the priest's son belongs. Mahapatra satirizes this shameful condition of India. The whore-image is significantly figured out in the opening stanza of "The Lost Children of America":

Here
in the dusty malarial lanes
of Cuttack where years have slowly lost their secrets
they wander
in these lanes nicked by intrigue and rain. (1-5)

Under the cover of darkness some men sometimes go to brothels and get themselves lost like goats at the "wooden block of butchers' shops". The poet says: "The plump whore he has just left/ has brazenly gone to work on a new customer." This image portrays a modern Indian floozy who wants to spend as little time with her client as possible, for her time is measured in terms of money and she has to attend to other clients. The whore's profession is employed for artistic purposes in "Man of His Nights":

A girl's wanton laugh
suddenly shatters the silence
A flame of evenings
"Smell here," she says, lifting up her arms to her companion,
"the strong scent the man used." (8-12)

India's past boasts 'the exploits of warrior-queens', but its present reveals cultural atrophy. Today we live in a state of cultural collapse caused by the criss-crossing of western and Indian values, making 'the women' feel 'restless'. India's history has lost its significance; it lays only in books that college girls carry tucked at their breasts. Today, instead of 'warrior-queens', Mahapatra notices educated urbanized women who flaunt western values. He satirizes the image of a city woman under the sway of the western culture in "The Twenty-fifth Anniversary of a Republic: 1975": "What is wrong with my country? / The jungles have become gentle, the women restless / And history reposes between the college girl's breasts" (201-203). The whore image is neatly tucked in this same poem. Mahapatra feels that modern tradition has spoiled our ancient Indian culture.

The images of prostitutes are so powerful and authentic in the poems of Mahapatra. In the poems of prostitute sex, the men quest for communication with prostitutes; but they always get frustrated. This frustration is verbalized in an artistic manner in "The Whorehouse in a Calcutta Street". The man visits the whore with a keen desire for communication, as he wants to learn something more about women but his desire is frustrated: "You fall back against her in the dumb light, / trying to learn something more about women" (28-29). But later, the prostitute says this to her client: "Hurry, will you? Let me go." / and her lonely breath thrashed against your kind" (41-42). The client's dreams are shattered by the words of this prostitute because the man wants to know more about the women but gets failure in his attempts.

Another realistic image of a victim-woman, raped and killed presents the corruption in the contemporary Indian society is scornfully handled by Mahapatra in the poem "Morning Signs". According to Mahapatra, these killers live freely whereas women are the victims of their fate:

Before the morning paper comes I know
that Lata's rapists and killers
have been set free, for that is how
it has always been. (13-16)

Mahapatra's women are not continually tormented by death or fear of advancing time. Birth, reproduction and death are the salient phenomena of nature and all organisms share this cycle. Women are always ready to accept whatever God has given to them and they lead their lives without any complaints. Mahapatra's women are devoutly religious. He paints a faithful portrait of Oriya women in "Dawn at Puri" "White-clad widowed women / past the centres of their lives / are waiting to enter the Great Temple" (4-6).

Woman is not a free agent but a pawn in a deterministic natural order and hence she waits for what the world will only let her do. Mahapatra, always sceptical of Hinduism and at times exposing its weaknesses, satirically questions women's attitude and their blind unshakable faith in Hindu religion in "These Women": "What do they live for / beyond the veils of innocent prayer / they climb up and down the holy stairs" (12-14).

Mahapatra also explores the ecology of woman's isolation and loneliness highlighting with absence, silence, and hollowness. He depicts this situation more artistically in "A Missing Person":

In the darkened room
a woman
cannot find her reflection in the mirror
waiting as usual at the edge of sleep
In her hands she holds
the oil lamp
whose drunken yellow flames
know where her lonely body hides. (1-9)

This short poem is an autobiographical piece in which Mahapatra is deeply involved. This is the picture of his own mother whom he used to observe in his early years and whose memory tormented him for a long time. His mother used to carry an oil lamp in darkness in which she could not see herself and the poet raises the question if the women are unable to see themselves in light, how can they see their inner-selves in darkness.

Mahapatra's poetic voice becomes sad and heavy when he deals especially with women's issues. He feels deeply for the plight of Indian woman who bears the burden of her womanhood in utter loneliness, helplessness, humiliation, deprivation and often deplorable degradation. In "Hunger", Mahapatra depicts one such incidence:

It was hard to believe the flesh was heavy on my back
The Fisherman said: will you have her, carefully
trailing his nets and his nerves, as though his words
sanctified the purpose with which he faced himself
I saw his white bone thrash his eyes. (1-5)

Poverty and sexuality play havoc in the life of men and women debasing them to sub-human levels: a father, who is prostituting his girl-child, hardly out of her teens, is in casual business-like manner that is most shocking. He is unable to look at the customer in the eye, nor can he face himself. That is why the fisherman takes refuge in "trailing his nets and his nerves" (3) which indicates his disturbed psychological state of mind.

Perhaps it is the first time that he is forced to sell his daughter. Between the two hungers, these unfortunate men and women lose all dignity of their lives.

Mahapatra assures that only in his verses he can release the fragrance of the jasmine which he has suffered in the mute spaces of his soul. As he is ageing day by day, he cannot accomplish anything using his physical stamina. He can only think of poetry, for he has been accustomed to do only this, as the saying goes, 'men would do what they used to do'. Mahapatra's love for his fellow men and the world at large is very well revealed in his verses. If that love had not been there, as he says, he would never be able to compose such powerful lines. He is very much justified in asking a very pertinent question in his poem "Will a Poem of Mine be the Only Answer?": "All this naked knowledge makes me tremble, / defeated as I am by my own tactics, my poetry, / by the words I measure with my pain..." (20-22). Thus, Mahapatra measures his pain with his words and gives solace to the people.

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Eschatology in Mahabharatham

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Abstract: *In today's fast paced world and busy schedules the values of cultural heritage seems to be blurred. This present paper brings out the significance of the cultural heritage which is embedded in the epic Mahabharatham.*

In India's rich cultural heritage, there are many fascinating mythological stories that attract our attention and one such story is the legendary Mahabharatham. Eschatology is the doctrine of the cycle of rebirth. Amba took rebirth in Mahabharatham. She was the eldest daughter of the King of Kashi. Amba wanted to take revenge on Bhishma because of him she was separated from her beloved. She pleaded God Siva to show a way to kill Bhishma. God blessed her with a boon that she would be the cause of Bhishma's death in her next birth. Amba's rebirth as Shikandini became the cause of Bhishma's death in the Mahabharatha war.

Keywords: *Eschatology, Chivalric Codes, Law and Dharma.*

Cultural heritage encompasses traditional activities and practices, monuments, historic urban areas, vernacular heritage, cultural landscapes, living dimensions of heritage and all aspects of the physical and spiritual relationship between human societies and their environment. These cultural heritages should be preserved for the future generations. People should learn the valuable messages embedded in the cultural heritage. The value of cultural heritage can be evaluated by the people, only when they realized the actual worth of it. So executing the significance of the cultural heritage is more important than exhibiting the heritage. This present paper brings out the significance of the cultural heritage which is delineated in the epic *Mahabharatham*.

Eschatology has various definitions according to the religious belief. In Christianity, eschatology is concerned with heaven, hell, the return of Jesus, and the resurrection of the dead. The second coming of the Christ is the central event in Christian Mythology. In Islam, eschatology is believed to be the final assessment of humanity or the day of the judgment. According to the Hindu Mythology it is a belief in rebirth. The notion of rebirth is often portrayed in Hindu epics. In Mahabharatham numerous characters took rebirth. Amba the chief character's rebirth brought to end to the Gurukshetra War.

Amba was the eldest daughter of the King of Kashi. The King arranged swayamvaram for his daughters Amba, Ambika and Ambalika. Amba decided to marry King Salva in the Swayamvara. Bhishma whose real name was Devavrata came to the swayamvaram and challenged the participants. King Salva was the only person fought against Bhishma. But Bhishma defeated him and asked the King of Kashi to send his daughters with him. Amba informed that she loved King Salva and wanted to marry him. So Bhishma understood her feelings and allow her to marry her beloved but King Salva did not ready to accept someone's gift. So Salva asked Amba to marry Bhishma, who won the challenge. Actually instead of Vichitraveeryan, Bhishma participated in the swayamvaram. Vichitraveeryan was the younger brother of Bhishma. In the helpless position Amba wanted to take revenge against Bhishma as a consequence she asked him to overrule his oath of celibacy and marry her. Bhishma could not break his oath and ignored Amba.

Amba begged Parashurama, the great warrior, to kill Bhishma but he failed. Exasperated, irritated, she prayed to Shiva to make her the cause of Bhishma death. Shiva blessed her with a boon that she would be so, but only in her next life. Amba immediately leapt into a pyre and sacrificed her life. Amba was reborn as Shikandini, the daughter of Drupada, the king of Panchala. Drupada prayed God Shiva to accord a male child. However, Shiva on appearing informed him that he would get a female child who later will metamorphose herself a male person. Though Shikhandini was born as a woman, Draupada, was told by the Rishis that she would one day become a man. Despite born with female genital organs, Shikandini was raised a son, taught warfare and statecraft.

Shikandini was a great warrior. She decided to fight with Bhishma in the Gurukshetra War. Ancient Indian abided some chivalric codes. Those chivalric codes are even essential for the present day inevitable wars. Some of the codes followed by the Ancient Indians were: a war should not be held in the dwelling place; a soldier should not attack women, children, old people and cattle; a soldier should not fight with an unarmed warrior and a soldier should not kill the opponent who surrendered himself.

All such incredible laws were undeniably abided by the Ancient Indians. This strict adherence to the law protected the innocent people. These chivalric codes are the most essential cultural heritage which should be executed in the contemporary society. Present techno-world people knowingly and unknowingly failed to abide these shorts of chivalric codes.

Before the commencement of the Gurukshetra War, Shikhandini was nominated as a General for the Pandava troop. According to dharma a soldier should not attack a woman. If Shikhandini participated in the war she would fight with a man but that concern opponent could not fight with a woman. So her entry to the war field was prohibited. Because of her gender, Shikhandini could not take part in the war. Shikhandini became Shikhandi and entered the war field. Shikhandi was the reason for Bhishma's downfall and her entry to the war field was one of the biggest reasons for turning the battle of Mahabharata in favour of Pandavas. The tenth day dawned, Krishna's chariot rolled out to the war field. Behind Krishna, Shikhandi stood and behind him, Arjuna.

Bhishma roared after seeing Shikhandi behind Krishna, "You bring a woman into this battlefield, before me," and he added "I will not fight with this woman" (Thakur "Shikhandini" n.pag.). Bhishma lowered his bow without even looking towards Shikhandi. Krishna retorted in his calm voice, "You see her as a woman because she was born with a female body. You see her as a woman because in her heart she is Amba. But I see her as a man because that is how her father raised her. I see her as a man." (Thakur "Shikhandini" n.pag.). Shikhandi's birth gender prevented Bhishma to shower his arrows on him. Shikhandi charges his mighty astra towards Bhishma and his arrows fell on him without hindrance. Arjuna stood behind Shikhandi, protecting himself from Bhishma's attack, and aimed his arrows:

The tenth day, confronted by Shikhandi, Bhishma refuses to fight a woman, and he abandons his weapons. Thousands of arrows strike Bhishma in waves. There is no space on his body thicker than two fingers that is not pierced. He falls from his chariot, and lies fully supported by the arrows, with no part of his body touching the earth. Bhishma does not actually die until much later, at his choosing. He remains lying on a bed of arrows until the end of the battle. (*The Mahabharata* n. pag.)

With the fall of Bhishma, the war moved in favor of the Pandavas. Nine days later, the Kauravas were defeated and dharma had been established. Without doubt, Shikhandi changed the course of the war and played a pivotal role in the establishing of dharma.

Bhishma considered Shikhandi as woman and even asked Krishna to send her back but Krishna treated him as man and welcomed him on the chariot with Arjun. The Kuru Clan worshipped, Durga, the goddess of war and victory. But they said it was against dharma to let women hold weapons and step on the battlefield. So Krishna delineated that women's participation in the war field was not an adharma. Women have equal rights and equal position.

On the tenth day Bhishma was defeated in the war only because of the entry of Shikhandi. However Bhishma was a well-behaved man, he stood on the side of Duryodana. Bhishma was an unconquerable person. Shikhandini, became a transgender to fight against her opponent. This notion of transgender does not state that woman cannot do serious task rather it provides the implied meaning that 'he' comes from 'she'. If indispensable, a woman can acquire the power and passion which is akin to man.

The tragedy of our modern culture is that we worship Krishna but we don't welcome Shikhandi as Krishna did. The Gurukshetra war was held to repay for the humiliation done on Draupadi. The hundred brothers lost their life only because they humiliated Draupadi in the Hasthinapur court. The death of Duryodhana is the ultimate warning for the persons who humiliate women.

Laws which were followed in the names of dharma charged severe punishment for the person who humiliated women. The harsh punishment is the only way to vanish such kind of cruel persons. But the present law just showing mercy towards the criminal and neglected the sufferings and emotional feelings of the victims. The law not only failed to punish the criminals but also seduced other criminals to continue their criminal attitude. Literature is the mirror of the life; no doubt, the epic reflected the event which happened in the Hasthinapur court. The end of the war showed how Duryodhana was defeated. This defeat instructed the future society to give severe punishment to the persons those who humiliate female.

Portraying the cultural heritage is not the apt way to lead a nation in a moral way. While enquiring person in the court, the court people asked him to take oath on the holy book Bhagavad- Gita. This methodology is not enough way to maintain the law and order in a perfect manner. The law should abide the sensible moral codes and rational judgments portrayed in the cultural heritage like *Mhabharatham*.

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Dramaturgies of Activism in Hansberry's *Les Blancs*

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Abstract: The 1960s and 1970s were transformative years for African American descent in innumerable ways. The Black American Theatre dated roughly from 1965 to 1976, has been called the 'Second Black Renaissance,' suggesting a comparison to the Harlem Renaissance of the 1920s and 1930s. The two periods were alike in encompassing literature, music, visual arts and theatre. Both the movements emphasized racial pride, an appreciation of African heritage, and a commitment to produce works that reflected the culture and experiences of black people. African American dramaturgy offers an insight into the evolution of blackness, a device, continually reconstructed and redefined within the theatre. Lorraine Hansberry, a skilled playwright of 1960's, uses the significant device of a black woman dancer to represent "Mother Africa" and to incite Tshembe's call to revolutionary consciousness in her political play *Les Blancs*. His psyche, which is tied to the spirit of Africa, is personified by a woman dancer who constantly calls him to action, back to the struggle of his people. Here, the power of theatre acts as a cultural force within and as a social barometer of African American experiences. Hansberry proves herself to be 'culturally constructive' in creating the omnipotent character Tshembe Matoesh.

Key Words: Black theatre, racial pride, cultural force, evolution of blackness.

Introduction

Black playwriting in America is directly related to African theatrics. Theatre is a living, dynamic space in which many perspectives converge: playwright, director, actors, and set designers. Other creative forms such as novel or short story offer only a static vision that remains constant during the process of audience or reader engagement. In theatre, the bodies on stage, in conjunction with the presence of a live audience, generate a palpable connection between actors and spectators, fostering a sense of culpability within the spectator.

The pioneering playwrights of the Harlem Renaissance, speak about middle class and common folk, about passion and apathy, love and hate, life and death, hope and despair, self-effacement and race pride, oppression and equality of the races and sexes in their plays. These themes reached the hearts of black people across the nation. They wrote for black community and their plays were produced in black-owned and black-operated community theatre, churches, schools, social club halls and homes. In their dramas, they supply their audience with compassionately drawn, multidimensional characters. Through theatre, the black race is given roots that nurtured, tested, healed and provided the spirit to survive. It helps blacks to become aware of their own self-worth.

The plays by black women are vital because they provide a unique view of the black experience during the period between 1910 and 1940. Through their content, form, characterization, and dialogue, the black women playwrights stunned the American theatre.

Lorraine Hansberry, a prolific playwright, began writing *Les Blancs* (The Whites) as early as 1960, soon after the publication of her remarkable play *A Raisin in the Sun* (1959). In *Les Blancs* Hansberry expands on the attention given to Africa in *Raisin*, where Asagai, the Nigerian intellectual and activist, is used to fortify and examine the familial, political, and cultural bond between Africa and Black America. When *Raisin* was produced in 1959, African struggles for independence had begun to receive international attention. By the 1960s, African nationalist movements had assumed vast and powerful proportions.

Revolutionary Setting

Les Blancs: The Collected Last Plays of Lorraine Hansberry, a powerful triumvirate of plays set in Kenya around 1952 painfully investigates the bloody Mau Mau Revolution against the British and European rulers. In recreating an African colonial scene in *Les Blancs*, Hansberry visualizes the genesis of a new black world. The play raises thought-provoking questions about history, Africa, America, anger, and confrontation. It depicts that people are largely a fusion of evil and good, valour and fear, conviction and confusion, indifference and involvement. Hansberry argues for humanism even as she directs her themes through a predominantly African historical and socio-artistic experience.

The play is set in a mythic, white-ruled African nation, Zatambe that closely resembles Kenya, East Africa, of the mid 1950s, when natives took up arms against white settlers after many years of peaceful efforts to negotiate their freedom. The principal character, Tshembe Matoseh, returns from England to attend the funeral of his father. He encounters the ongoing rebellion but refuses to be a part of it. His family's tribe urges him to lead the violent struggle. Tshembe's dilemma is classic. His mental state which parallels Hamlet was obvious. He is torn between thought and action. He remained a man of thought and eventually inherited his earth. He chooses painful action and freedom. The following effectively narrates his state of mind: "...Tshembe

is swept up by his own emotions, by revelation that his father was a leader in the resistance, and by an intensifying series of events, which propel him to the wrenching decision to join and help to lead the growing revolution.” (Elam 48)

Hansberry contrasts European influence in Zatembe. The rustic scene of the Prologue prepares the mythic African background of the plot, foregrounding major dramatic components that uphold action. It is a simple metaphorical African setting briefly removed from realism blended with imagination. The East African world view of the Prologue is conveyed through dramatic components by natural surroundings like “sounds of crickets, frogs and “bush- babies,” the occasional cry of a bird and “laughter” of a hyena,” (LB 41) music, a dancing African Woman, a spear, and a hyena. Lorraine Hansberry picturizes the African dance as:

A WOMAN, majestic and motionless, appears. Black-skinned and imposing, cheeks painted for war, about her waist a girdle of hammered silver, she does not wear a “sarong.” From their wrists and ankles hang bangles of feathers and silver which provide their own staccato accompaniment as she begins to dance. (LB 41)

The Woman dancer introduced in the Prologue reappears at specific points in the play. Her Masai features and costume easily define her as the soul of “Mother Africa” a persona of “the slaughter, the enslavement” of the people (105). The blend of the ancient African heritage has been typically brought out by Lorraine Hansberry. When the play progresses, suddenly there is silence. The Woman dancer is seen suspended in the sky in a characteristic African dance pose. Black-skinned and imposing, cheeks painted for war, her wiry hair rounded by a colourful band, she wears only a leather skirt and about her waist, a girdle of hammered silver. From her wrists and ankles hang bangles of feathers and silver (53). At the end of the Prologue, the Woman raises a spear, a common East African weapon foreshadowing rebellion. The Woman dancer will later offer Tshembe a spear in her bid to coax him to defy colonization.

The spear, symbol of traditional vigour further heightens the native ambience which the author injects into her plot. The Woman dancer dances her way into the hearts of her audience and emblemizes Tshembe’s mental state, his inner sentiments and bouts of guilt. Tshembe expresses his pathetic mental state to the missionary as:

Tshembe: I think so, I thought so. I no longer know. I am one man, Madame. Whether I go or stay, I cannot break open the prison doors of Kumalo. I cannot bring Peter back. I cannot... (breaks off) I am lying Madame. To myself. And to you. I know what I must do...

Madame: Tshembe Matoesh. Africa needs warriors like your father. (126)

The loss of lives at the end of the play is ritualistic. Human sacrifice fosters a reawakening and becomes a symbolic route through which black regeneration is mapped out.

Les Blancs expands thematically, finally addressing global concerns along with black issues within and beyond Africa. This happens to be one of the chief objectives in the play. Lorraine Hansberry nurtures the probability for frank and cooperative socio-artistic encounters between Europe and Africa. As writer and activist, Hansberry envisaged the antithetical aftermath of socio-artistic isolation on black struggles. Black Americans are, after all, intertwined and intermixed, genetically and culturally, with ‘others’.

Africa is rejuvenated from various conceptual angles in Hansberry’s *Les Blancs*. It is mythic, since its recreation is informed by the playwright’s insight and not outright reality. Her Africa is largely an abstract innovation from a Western perspective, even though the process is backed by comprehensive research. The mythic world of Zatembe is molded by Hansberry’s imagination, yet it centers on a graphic reappraisal of colonialism and liberty struggles in Kenya. She uses this historical fact within an allegorical, mythic context postulated by character types.

Lorraine Hansberry has attempted to educate the Americans about Africa. Genuine portrayals of Africa exist alongside mythic modifications. The colonial scene in *Les Blancs* is legitimately and cogently portrayed. Hansberry sometimes shifts from the actual to the ideal, but often confirms herself. References are made to consummate, model Africa that ought to displace white imperialism. Through this play, the playwright engages the emotion as well as the intellect of Americans as she did in *A Raisin in the Sun*. In her recent biography of Hansberry, Anne Cheney writes “... the simple eloquence of the characters elevates the play into a universal presentation of all people’s hopes, fears, and dreams” (104). Robert Nemiroff states that the elaborate examination of African systems in *Les Blancs* is an immediate “visceral response” to the U.S. production of Jean Genet’s powerful play *Les Negres* which was originally published in 1958 and the English translation *The Blacks: A Clown Show* published in 1960. Genet’s play is designed for white audience. Wearing white masks, black characters act out a clownish exchange to the delight of a white audience.

The history of black theatre chronicles the many significant plays which were produced to expose and explode the definitions of blackness. William Wells Brown’s *The Escape or A Leap to Freedom* (1858) was the first black play published in the United States. In this work, black performers exploited the theatricality of the construction of blackness. The power of theatre acts as a cultural force within and as a social barometer of African American experiences. African American dramaturgy offers an insight into the evolution of blackness, a device, continually reconstructed and redefined within the theatre.

African American theatre began in the Harlem Renaissance of the 1920s and 1930s. This was a time when big cities like New York, Chicago, and Washington, D.C., saw a flowering of African American art, blues, jazz, poetry and fiction. They produced musicals that were successful and popular with both, whites and blacks. The musicals were introduced African American life. By witnessing the success of musicals, white investors began to get into the business and shunned the blacks out. During the Great Depression (1930-1940) of the theatre, there arrived a government jobs program called the Federal Theatre Project, or FTP. The FTP served as a training ground for black actors, most of whom had only found work previously as extras or chorus dancers. The project also employed and schooled African Americans in lighting, sound and other technical parts of theatre. The art of theatre is a mirrored performance of life. It serves to assist in achieving a transformational shift amidst the psyche of the audience.

From the arrival of the first African slaves on the American soil, the discourse on race, the definitions and meanings of blackness have been intricately linked to the issues of theatre and its performance. In the past, the Westerners treated the blacks with intellectual inferiority and cultural primitivism.

In 1950s, African American dramas represent a fundamental break from traditional playwriting. Traditionally, the playwrights established conventions in the portrayal of characters that remained consistent throughout the play. In the new playwriting of African American drama, the terrain of characters that remained consistent throughout the play gets shifted. In the 1960s, activism became the dominant theme of the black theatre. The theatrical performances of blacks reflect the social and historical lives of their society.

Theatrical Techniques

Theatre is built upon devices. In the theatrical environment, the signification of objects results from their specific usage in the moment. Lorraine Hansberry's *Les Blancs* (1969) offers the clearest and most powerful viewpoints on the constructed reality through various techniques. Hansberry uses the significant device of a black woman dancer to represent "Mother Africa" and to incite Tshembe's call to revolutionary consciousness. Throughout the play, the African intellectual character, Tshembe Matoesh and the white American liberal, Charlie Morris, engage in a series of polemical debate on race. A polemic is a contentious argument that is intended to establish the truth of a specific understanding and the falsity of the contrary position. Polemics are mostly seen in argument about very controversial topics. At one instant in *Les Blancs*:

TSHEMBE: ...Race—racism—is a device. No more. No less. It explains nothing at all.

CHARLIE: Now what the hell is that supposed to mean?

TSHEMBE: I said racism is a device that, of itself, explains nothing. It is simply a means. An invention to justify the rule of some men over others.

CHARLIE: ...Race hasn't a thing to do with it actually. (LB 92)

Relying on the audience's suspension of disbelief and the magic of theatre in both Tshembe and Charlie, the visionary Mother Africa is portrayed as visible only to Tshembe and to the audience. The device of introducing a woman dancer directs the dramatic action and foregrounds the unique theatrical negotiation of illusion and reality.

Hansberry masters the presentation of the inseparable link between dialogue and action. Dialogue becomes a process that can energize and help clarify ideas and lead to action. To her, people must not sit and think too much and wait forever, as Peter tells Matoseh through the story of Modingo. Modingo, the wise hyena, was asked by the hyenas, the earliest inhabitants of the jungle, to settle their territorial quarrel with the elephants who want more space because of their size. Modingo, whose name means "One Who Thinks Carefully Before He Acts," understands the argument offered by both and refuses to join either side until he has thought on the matter. While he thinks, the hyenas wait-too long, because the elephants move in and drive the hyenas from the jungle altogether.

Hansberry carefully exposes social awareness and artistic individualism. Apart from the presentation of long and intense dialogues exchanged between her characters, she equally adopts theatrical language that conveys elements adopted from the African and African American tradition. Like the men playwrights of the Movement, Hansberry too incorporates music, dance, gesture, storytelling and the element of signifying—or double entendre. She carefully provides a combination of Western mainly Brechtian technique and African theatre tradition. Characters like Morris and Matoseh parallel this combination.

Music

Regarding the element of music, Linda Hart observes that *Les Blancs* reflect the playwright's approach to music as a form to show the multiple dimensions of reality (Hart, 64). For example, African drums are present at the very beginning of the play, with stage directions carefully noting that 'these are not at all the traditional 'movie drums,' but distinct, erratic and varied statements of mood an intent' (LB, 41). The drum serves as a powerful assertion of an African culture that colonialists attempted to erode. Throughout the play, it is not the classical music, but African music that is heard. Drums speak a language and send messages. Hence, music is presented with its cultural as well as its entertaining function. The drum is a fundamental presence throughout the performance, constantly reaffirming Africa's existence and Africans' self-determination not to die in the ashes. Drum bears the rhythm of life throughout the play.

Les Blancs commences with the drums announcing Matoseh's father's death and ends announcing the beginning of a revolution, that is to say, a father and great warrior dies, and a leader is born, Matoseh. This circular structure has the ritualistic effect of life, of nature. It also symbolizes the death of the uncommitted and detached Matoseh and the birth of Matoseh as a committed African leader. The opening of the play consists of distinctive elements that reaffirm African culture. The sound of the drums increases 'as the houselights go to black' (4) and moves to the speakers on the stage to introduce the third element that is of the African woman dancer. Drums, then, fuse with the woman's movement into a dance.

The presence of sounds such as crickets, birds and frogs, stresses the importance of nature in African traditions. To the sounds of nature gather the drums and the drums finally join the woman dancer, until nature, music and dance become body and spirit inextricably linked and in harmony with the earth. The cry of a hyena, though, disrupts this harmony and, when the woman dancer hears it, she walks towards the spear that is plunged into the ground downstage, pulls it out and raises it high. The hyena's cry foreshadows Matoseh's return from Europe to his African village, which is heard by the African woman dancer. Then the woman dancer prepares herself to go to Matoseh and give him spear. At the end of Act I, Matoseh feels the presence of the African woman coming towards him, but he wants to escape and forsake the struggle. Yet, the African woman dancer mimes the years of slavery and slaughter, and, finally, she throws him the spear that he, instinctively, takes.

Play within a Play

The African woman dancer symbolizes the spirit and land of Africa. The woman is Africa's outcry to be defended from rape, exploitation and scars caused by colonialism. Hansberry's symbolism of the woman warrior, the drums and the hyena folk tale, is rooted in the African American tradition of signifying. The repetition of these symbols throughout the play emphasizes self-assertiveness and self-affirmation against the danger of possible annihilation, that is, the danger is the arrival of the wise hyena who thinks and waits for too long instead of taking an action on time (Matoseh). The hyena's terrible laughter encloses a double meaning. It symbolizes the irony originating from the 'bitter joke that was played [on the hyenas] while [Modingo, the hyena] reasoned,' (95) while the elephants took their land. Signifying emerges out of the reversal of the hyena's reaction; instead of tears, the hyena emitted laughter, a *terrible laughter*. Humour, in African and African American tradition, has been a form of survival and the hyena, is narrated by Peter, an African (named by Europeans) to warn Matoseh of the dangers they are in if he does not lead his people into action to prevent the invader from robbing their African land. The tale, as part of the African tradition of storytelling, then parallels the theme and action of the play.

Conclusion

In archetypal colonial setting of *Les Blancs*, Hansberry has incorporated the spirituals, dance, drumbeats, and folklore to enhance her play. The inter-textual figure in the play—Mother Africa serves to be an effective determinant of Lorraine Hansberry's dramaturgy. In implementing the dramaturgies of activism, Lorraine Hansberry differs from the other writers on a rebellious, political and national mode of characterization.

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Socio-Culture vs Deviance in the Select Plays of Vijay Tendulkar

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Abstract: An icon of India's vernacular Marathi theatre and the doyen of the avant-garde Indian theatrical movement of the modern era, Vijay Tendulkar successfully venture to reveal the social turpitude. Tendulkar's plays reflect socio-cultural reality as they comprise real-life situations, real life characters, events and incidents. Through his plays he shows a shocking but genuine complexity of human relationship with the society and satirizes social institutions like marriage, politics, journalism, caste, etc. While reflecting socio-political reality and complexity of human relationships man is exhibited totally helpless against the bitter circumstances in the modern world. Within the deep rooted casteism and socio-economic divisions, each social class in turn looks down upon the other. There is a clear assumption in the present study of Vijay Tendulkar that the stigmatization of the groups is a bad thing – a social evil – and that it needs to be changed. Stigmatization is very rarely a positive promoter; stigmatization can have a positive, moral function. But in most cases it is a negative denigrate which results in stunted growth. Since these stigmas are considered as social evils the stigmatized turn out to be deviants who are extremely violent. All his plays are studied with unforgettable personae or so called deviants like Arun Athawale in *Kanyadaan* and Sakharam in *Sakharam Binder*. The playwright's sympathy for these little big men in the modern world who are victims of social and familial norms and values is clearly perceptible. No doubt, the plays of Vijay Tendulkar, directly or indirectly, bring to notice man's response to ordinary, day-to-day life and the total helplessness against the forces of fate. Tendulkar acts as a humanist who cuts through the chord through which the underdogs remain submissive and puts forward 'accept the unaccepted.'

Key words : Socio-cultural reality, Deviance, real life characters, culture & society.

The analytical study of Tendulkar's plays reveals that the dramatist has a desire to strive tirelessly for perfection of life where there are no barriers of caste, class, sex, etc., in society. He dreams, so to say, of freedom, equality, and social justice for one and all. Like Chekhov, he aims at creating a kind of emotionally refined, integrated, and conscious world. Tendulkar's dramatic genius is characterized by unusual creativity, profound psychological insight, sharp incisive sensibility, comprehensive vision and broad cosmopolitan perspective. His plays are neither moral nor immoral. One may be justified in calling them amoral.

The study of Tendulkar's plays arrives at some significant inferences. The dramatist aims at bringing to light some of the most complex and vital issues of our existence, inner and outer. One can approach his plays from various points of view, such as psychological, sociological, socio-cultural, politico-cultural, deterministic, existential, feminist, Marxist, etc. The function of Tendulkar's plays is neither to just entertain nor to just reveal ironies and contradictions but to help man know himself in relation to his environment and society.

The plays depict agonies and sufferings, that is, in short, helplessness of man, but they are anti-sentimental and anti-emotional. They create cathartic feelings of pity and terror, since pathos and violence characterize most of the action in the plays. So, the total effect is neither of alienation nor of empathy but to creating necessary awareness in the audience. The chief impact of the play is one of shock, agitation, and awakening of the audience's mind and consciousness to the maladies and weaknesses of both, society and an individual. So, the playwright aims to transform drama from a means of entertainment into an object of enlightenment; in other words, he intends to make the theatre a medium of higher communication.

Stigmatisation is of increasing importance in relation to racism, ageism and sexism but also as an impediment to treating patients. Deviance is the outcome of stigmatisation. It involves a complex set of attitudes and behaviours, which play out in the interaction between people in a variety of settings. The deviant person tends to hold the same beliefs and identity as 'we' do and how the standards he has incorporated from the wider society equip him to be intimately alive to what others see as his failing. People cannot be divided into the deviant and the normal: people generally experience both roles at different times and in different places. However, the problem is that some get 'typecast', playing the deviant role in almost all social situations. All of us have experienced both sides of the deviant relationship, experiencing negative responses to our acne, nationality, weight, glasses, baldness etc. but also react to the stigmas of others.

Stigma creates an indelible impact on the individual and the society. Stigmatisation can be seen as a functional form or social control. Commonly in large social groups people need to identify and label particular individuals in terms of the deviant behaviour in order to warn people regarding the individual's bad or shameful reputation or dangerous character. Another important functional perspective holds that the process of stigmatisation is effectively hard-wired into our genetic make-up. The ubiquity of stigmatisation in human societies argues for it being rooted in our "biologically based need to live in effective groups". Because humans

are fundamentally social in their make-up, with survival linked to our ability to live and act reciprocally with other humans, there has arisen a stigmatisation of those who do not 'play fair', do not reciprocate, and who thereby threaten the functioning and survival of their group. The stigmatiser in many cases is likely to experience anger, irritation, anxiety, pity and fear as part of the process, while the deviant may feel embarrassment, shame, fear, alienation and anger as the gifts of the society and culture.

Vijay Tendulkar is identified as a rebel against the established values of a fundamentally orthodox society. Man and woman are impartial parts of this world. Man is not complete without woman and woman is not complete without man. World has no value without man and woman. All the things happen here for man and woman and sometimes due to man and woman. Every religious book has a centre i.e. man and woman. All the things around them are made for them. Though they are made by god, their relationship is not made by themselves. The different things like culture, history, religion, society affect on their relationship. *Sakharam Binder* and *Kanyadaan* are the two plays which reflect these complexities and deviance as an upshot of society in a higher ratio.

Sakharam Binder is considered a harsh critique of the institutions of Caste and Marriage, laid with blatant violence, abusive language and explicit sexuality. The play revolves around the central character Sakharam, a book-binder, who though a Brahmin, is the antithesis of the general idealized conception of a member of that caste. Sakharam, though apparently crude, aggressive and violent, has his own laws of personal morality and honesty. The openness of his personality becomes in itself a critique of the hypocrisy of the middle class. Sakharam does not believe in the institution of marriage and arranges contractual cohabitation based on convenience with single women who have been deserted by their husbands or have walked out on them.

Sakharam, the book-binder, is an outcaste, having a Brahmin father and a Mahar mother. Due to the constant, inhuman beating of his father, he leaves his home at the age of eleven. The bitter experiences of life harden him and make him violent. In this sense, household life in his childhood crushes his tender feeling and leaves him a rough and tough guy growing like a desert cactus - a leafless plant with fleshy branches that stands the onslaughts of stormy weather. He considers himself a Mahar, a dirty scavenger. Having no belief in the institution of marriage, Sakharam remains a bachelor. He hunts for the destitute women. There is no sentimental or legal or moral binding between the two living together. Though Sakharam remains unmarried live together (contractual cohabitation) with women deserted by their husbands. He bitterly criticizes the institution of marriage and attacks husbands. He assures the deserted woman of his good treatment. He also emphasizes them that he is not like their previous man. Sakharam provides the woman with sari, bangles and chappals free out of cost. Here, Sakharam becomes a giver and the destitute becomes the receiver. But he makes a contractual arrangement based on mutual convenience with a woman in all her helplessness. Laxmi is the seventh in the series of such helpless women.

Tendulkar weaves a matrix of intricate interrelationships by introducing Laxmi and Champa, both diametrically different from one another, complicating Sakharam's beliefs, indicating religious and domesticated tendencies in him when in contact with Laxmi, eventually turning her out of his house and bringing in Champa, undergoing a psychological turmoil resulting in his temporary impotence and finally murdering Champa in a fit of anger and frustration. On the one hand Champa, the gross, sensuous, brazen on the surface shows strange kindness and generosity when she convinces Sakharam to give shelter to Laxmi who, for all she knows, turns out to be her rival. Laxmi, on the other hand, is the seemingly docile, meek and a stereotypical embodiment of the ideal Indian woman who shows greater ruthlessness and presence of mind in covering up for Champa's murder, as Sakharam is totally bewildered by what he has done.

Sakharam being a Brahmin by birth shows no signal of the breed. His manners and behavioural traits prove that his mother was right in calling him a Mahar. He was in fact a rebel against the Brahminical society. The violence in his personality which he expresses verbally and physically to his mistress is probably a reaction to the frequent beatings he received at the hands of his own father. He was devoid of the protective mother's love and the true parental care from his father which deliberately resulted in posing himself as a masochist. It is Sakharam's mother's insult in childhood, where she 'labels' him as a Mahar untouchable that scars his identity, so that he chooses to become a social deviant, an outsider by choice. The consequence of stigmatisation is usually that the individual becomes a 'deviant' by nature. A stigma refers to an attribute or symbol that is known to be negatively evaluated by a social group or society, in such a way that individual with the attribute tend to be denigrated and socially excluded, hence forth deviant. Such a nature can be evaluated in the character of Sakharam. Laxmi, who is thrown out of her own home and ostracized, in turn looks down upon Champa's immorality. Mistreatment, hatred and even murder take place all in the name of false morality and misplaced values.

The play *Kanyadan* is perhaps the most controversial of Tendulkar's plays. It deals with psychological study of the social tensions caused by casteism in India side by side with the development of Jyoti's character from a soft-spoken and highly cultured Brahmin girl into a hardened spouse of her Dalit husband. Likewise, it portrays transformation in Nath's attitude. Bitter experiences of life turn the stubborn idealist into a disillusioned realist. Nath in an MLA and Seva, his wife, is a social activist. They cannot spare sufficient time for the

upbringing of their children Jyoti and Jaiprakash. Nath always stays outside the house doing social service and delivering public speeches. Seva is often busy organizing women's rallies and camps. Here, the playwright throws light on the fact that, in the contemporary society, educated parents become oblivious of their familial responsibility of tending their children while fulfilling their social obligations.

The play, as the title suggests, centers round the theme of matrimonial relationship. Jyoti, an educated lady, hails from a politically and socially conscious Brahmin family. She decides to marry Arun Athawale, a young Dalit poet. Her brother and mother forewarn her about the misery that may befall her in the aftermath of the marriage. However, her idealist father, who dreams of a casteless society, appreciates her decision since he believes that society cannot be transformed through words alone. Jyoti's decision to marry Arun provides him an opportunity to follow in the footsteps of the old social reformers who not only delivered speeches and wrote articles on the remarriages of widows but also married them. So Jyoti and Arun get married. "What follows is a sequence of violence, misery, and disillusionment" (18).

Arun always remains conscious of his lower class origin and inflicts on Jyoti inhumane cruelties. Constant awareness of the suffering which the Dalits have undergone such as eating stale, stinking bread, flesh of dead animals, etc., renders him violent. He is of the opinion that there cannot be any give-and-take between the Dalits and upper-class people. The constant memory of the incident that even the call of the downtrodden, "Johaar, Maay-Baap! Sir/Madam, Sweeper!" (513) pollutes the Brahmins' ears makes him restless and mindless. He comes to the conclusion that the Dalits cannot fit into the Brahmins' "unwrinkled Tinopal world" (513). So, the hellish sufferings that Jyoti receives in her matrimonial life with Arun is a kind of revenge that he seeks on the Brahmins for having humiliated and exploited his ancestors for centuries.

All the efforts of her mother and brother to rescue Jyoti from the horrible suffering come to nothing. Her father compels her to go with Arun, as he is not ready to give up his deals. It is so because, he believes: "No man is fundamentally evil; he is good. He has certain propensities towards evil. They must be transformed, completely uprooted and destroyed. And then, the earth will become heaven. It is essential to awaken the good slumbering within man..." (563).

Nath always dreams of freedom, equality, and social justice for one and all. For him, his daughter's marriage with a Dalit boy is a kind of successful gesture towards his efforts of creating an egalitarian, humanitarian society where human beings are treated as human beings and not as animals. Rational in thinking as his wife and son are, they refuse to share his united, integrated sensibility. This is how he urges upon his wife to save the inter-caste marriage; he pleads (with passion): "Seva, let not this wonderful experiment fail. This dream, which is struggling to turn real, let it not crumble into dust before our eyes! We have to do something. We must save this marriage" (537).

However, in the course of time, Nath realizes the hollowness of his idealism. Arun receives a high acclaim for his autobiography. Name, fame, and position in society do not bring about any change in the brutal treatment he metes out to his wife. He beats and kicks Jyoti even during her pregnancy. The physical torture becomes a routine affair with her mother a "procuress" who supplies girls from the Seva-dal to the socialist leaders, and again, her father a 'eunuch'. It is difficult for Nath to believe the fact that the person who describes the humiliations he has experienced with extraordinary sensitivity and seeks sadistic pleasure in wreaking revenge upon his wife for the guilts of her class or earlier generations. Father feels guilt-conscious thinking that his daughter becomes painful and miserable for having sincerely adopted his scale of values on the path of humanism.

Nath fails to comprehend Arun's split personality. Somehow or the other, he wants to help him, but finds himself too helpless to do anything. On the contrary, he goes to deliver a speech on his autobiography thinking that his refusal to speak on it will invite more troubles for Jyoti. But she does not like her father's appeasing policy in making an insincere, dishonest speech. She accuses him of having made her mentally crippled and abandons his house with a firm decision never to return.

Returning is not possible for Jyoti. Her father has taught her all through her life that it is cowardly to bow down to circumstances. She is reminded of the lines from one of Kusumagraja's poems which her father often recites "I march with utter faith in the goal; I grow with rising hopes, cowards stay ashore, every wave opens a path for me" (565). The lines act like a drug on her consciousness, so intensely and poignantly, that it becomes impossible for her to abandon the path (of an intercaste marriage) she has treaded so far. The play is open-ended and, hence, the audience is left to ponder over what happens to the daughter's prospects of married life and the father's idealistic fervor in the days to come.

The connected themes of his plays under discussion are concerned, in one way or another, with love, sex, and violence. However, the content or the subject-matter of each of the plays is distinct from and independent of the other. Tendulkar, in his plays, successfully tries to destroy the outdated pieties and stereotyped beliefs. He is an iconoclast who intends to bring about a change not only in the subject-matter, form, and structure of his plays but also in the mind-set of his audience. Tendulkar, in his plays, successfully tries to give the socio-political and cultural reality of his age a dramatic garb. He presents a situation in which the protagonist's mind catches light or develops insight compelling the audience to accept life as it is and with all its

challenges. He also confers deviance is the result of dejection, desertion, isolation and rejection encountered by them in this so called socio-cultural setup. The playwright's sympathy for these little big men in the modern world who are victims of social and familial norms and values is clearly perceptible. No doubt, the plays of Vijay Tendulkar, directly or indirectly, bring to notice man's response to ordinary, day-to-day life and the total helplessness against the forces of fate. Tendulkar acts as a humanist who cuts through the chord through which the underdogs remain submissive and puts forward 'accept the unaccepted.'

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Subaltern: Repression and Subjugation of Women within Patriarchal Borders in Khaled Hosseini's *A Thousand Splendid Suns*

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Abstract: *The word 'subaltern' is German word which means 'inferior rank' or 'secondary importance'. The genealogical study of 'subaltern' refers to three outstanding thinkers. They are: Antonio Gramsci, Ranjit Guha and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak. Subaltern literature reflects various themes such as oppression, marginalization, Gender discrimination, subjugation of lower and working classes, disregarded women, neglected sections of society, Deprived classes etc... Subaltern literature is one of the subdivisions of post colonialism. That is it is often the destruction, self immolation or sacrifice, which draws the attention of the people to the subaltern. Khaled Hosseini's novels deal with the theme of exploitation basing on the oppression and hope, ties to Afghanistan, pregnancy and children, education of women, marriage versus true, Man's inhumanity to man Systematic victimization of women by patriarchal institutions. This paper examines the subaltern voice expressed by Hosseini in his second novel A Thousand Splendid Suns in their endeavors' to disinter the subaltern voice with the help of representation and focus on the predicament of the subaltern.*

Key words: *subaltern, secondary importance, oppression, marginalization, disregarded women, self immolation, man's inhumanity, victimization, patriarchal institutions, predicament.*

The word 'subaltern' is drawn from the Latin 'subalternus'. Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary denotes that the word, 'subaltern', as noun means 'any officer in the British army who is Lower in rank' than a captain. Its adjectival form denotes of inferior rank'. According to some thinkers, perhaps he used the term as a synonym for proletariat. Literally, he refers to any person or group of inferior rank and station, whether because of race, class, gender, ethnicity or religion.

Gramsci stressed the connotation of this expression in terms of Gender, Class, Caste, Race, and culture. Gayatri Spivak includes a new dimension to the term 'subaltern' for the colonized people, oppressed generations, working classes, blacks and muted women. B.K. Das opines that "Gayatri Spivak has expanded the meaning of subaltern who laid the stress on gendered subaltern-that women who are doubly oppressed by colonialism and particularly in the Third World countries". It can be presumed that G.Spivak has given prominence to the plight of women. Ranjit Guha interprets the subaltern studies as "a name for the general attribute of subordination in South Asian Society whether this is expressed in terms of class, caste, age, gender and officer or in any other."

The word was under censorship by Gramsci: he called Marxism 'monism', and was obliged to call the proletarian subaltern: That word, used under duress, has been transformed into the description of everything that doesn't fall under strict class analysis." In order to consolidate its meaning one can opine that the term subaltern literature covers the themes such as about the masses, dalits, the deprived, oppressed, marginalized and neglected sections of society. Subaltern studies started in the early 1980s as an intrusion in South-Asian historiography. It gained its popularity into a vigorous post-colonial critique. The South Asian scholars used the term in a wider sense that focused more on what happens among the masses at the base level of the society than the elite. Bonavenura de Sousa Santos "uses the term 'subaltern cosmopolitanism' in the context of counter-hegemonic practices, movements, resistances and struggles against neo-liberal globalization, importantly against social exclusion He also uses the term interchangeably with cosmopolitan legality as the diverse normative framework for an "equality of differences". The term 'subaltern' here it is used to indicate oppressed and marginalized people who tried to resist hegemonic domination.

The novel up brings 40 years in the lives of two Afghan women who have very different situations, but who eventually end up in the same situation as many of their female predecessors. Mariam, the book's protagonist, was born as an illegal child and was prohibited from attending school. At 15, she was forced to marry Rasheed, an ugly, abusive man who forces her to wear a burqa against her wishes. Mariam is harshly oppressed throughout the novel. She is never made to feel like a first-class citizen by her father or her husband.

Hosseini provides information about marriage customs and women's rights in Afghanistan in the 1960s. Islamic law allows a man to have more than one wife. Arranged marriage was the norm. Girls as young as nine were considered ready for marriage, and were often married to men twenty years older than themselves. The age of fifteen was considered a "good, solid marrying age." Still, at that time (before the coming of the

arch-conservative Taliban government), women of a certain class did attend university. And, women did have the right to refuse marriage. Mariam's wedding would not have taken place had she not given in to her father's pressure and said "Yes." In Jalil's family at least, it seems that the wives have a good deal of influence, although that influence is limited to the sphere of the home. Over the course of the novel, readers will note how women's rights become more reduced as radical conservatives take over Afghanistan.

Laila is an attractive girl who lived just up the street. She was born to educated, liberal parents and enjoyed the freedoms Mariam was restricted from. During the wars of the 1980s and 1990s, a rocket destroyed Laila's home with her parents in it. This tragedy and unexpected pregnancy forces Laila to become Rasheed's second wife. Rasheed savagely beats Laila, as Afghan women in general are stifled and forced to suffer the consequences of being born the inferior gender. With every rise and fall of political regime, the country's men become more and more hostile towards their wives and children. The women in the novel are not permitted to show their faces and are not permitted outside the home without permission. The novel's main characters are also forced to have sex with Rasheed and are punished when they do not produce strong, healthy sons. Female value in Afghan culture, furthermore, is determined by the ability of women to produce males.

Khaled Hosseini introduces the first protagonist of the novel; Mariam seems to be misguided due to her complicated upbringing. The combination of a frequently absent father and an emotionally damaged mother leaves her with little guidance or love throughout her childhood. Mariam physically describes herself to have dark hair and skin, with a "long face," which is an insecurity of hers. Mariam's physical and emotional anxiety likely originates from her mother, Nana, who constantly brings her down. Nana once states that schooling a girl like Mariam would be useless, and she constantly reminds Mariam that she will not be going anywhere with life due to the fact that she is female. Nana frequently refers to Mariam as a "harami", which Mariam learns with age is an "unwanted thing," and "that she, Mariam was an illegitimate person who would never have legitimate claim to the things other people had, things such as love, family, home acceptance." (pg. 4)

Rather than rejecting her mother's negative ideas, Mariam simply takes everything in like a sponge, and keeps it with her for the rest of her life. Nana's death confirms to Mariam how lost she really is, and she instantly blames the occurrence on herself. When Jalil and his wives refuse to take Mariam in, she loses any hope that her father loves or respects her. She is abandoned and set up with an abusive suitor, Rasheed, who gradually offers her little to no freedom, love, or appreciation. When Mariam becomes pregnant, she starts to show more positive traits, as she feels as if being a mother will bring happiness into her life. Her dreams are shattered, however, when she has a miscarriage. Mariam labels the incident as an "undeserved blessing." "Traitorous daughters did not deserve to be mothers and this was just punishment." (pg. 93) This quote exemplifies the stress that still plagues Mariam, and that the containment of her new life has not given her an opportunity to grow away the grief and guilt she faces. After four years of marriage, Mariam officially becomes afraid of Rasheed, and does not make attempts to stand up to him. Part one is concluded with Rasheed's harsh comparison of pebbles to her cooking, as he forces her to literally chew rocks and break two molars. With this, it is implied that Mariam is a broken soul.

Hosseini introduce second protagonist of the novel, Laila is the youngest child and only daughter of Hakim and Fariba. The absence of both of Laila's older brothers, who have gone to war, makes her mature for her age and fills her with a sense of purpose. Laila has a strong desire to use her intelligence and education to improve the world around her. At age 15, Laila falls in love with her best friend since childhood, Tariq, but war forces Tariq and his parents to flee to Pakistan. Days later, a rocket kills Laila's parents and wounds her, and Rasheed and Mariam nurse her back to health. Laila's idealism and independence are challenged when she decides to marry Rasheed in order to give her unborn child by Tariq a father. Upon becoming a mother, Laila puts her children first and finds she is willing to accept limitations she once would have openly mocked. Through her growing relationship with Mariam, Laila not only takes comfort in having a friend and mother figure, but also begins to understand the sacrifices that are necessary to be a good mother by following Mariam's example.

The novel '*A Thousand Splendid Suns*' describes the plights of Afghan women under the repressive forces of political parties and at their homes. Islam has really forbidden the woman to come on streets without burqa (veil) because the fair sex can easily be the victim of eve teasing and men's lustful approaches, the veil serves as a sort of protection. Women in Afghanistan overcome adversity and oppression by the opposite sex everyday of their lives in and outside the confines of their own homes. What Khaled Hosseini describes in the novel is really unfortunate not for the women only but for the humanity at large. The Afghan women are really fighting for their existence of being born women. Khaled Hosseini is concerned with their health, education and their being abused by their fathers, their husbands, their neighbours and largely by the poli-tics of unending war in Afghanistan.

The novel's heroines, Mariam and Laila, become a symbol of female bonding and rebellion against the sexist nature of their country. Although they are both forced to marry Rasheed, they find happiness in each other and their children. Aziza, Laila's daughter, serves as the attempt to change status quo. Mariam and Laila are determined to educate her in the Koran and in becoming literate and aware. At the end of the novel, Zalmi,

Laila's son, and Aziza are sent to school together. After an initial rivalry, Mariam and Laila become best friends. *A Thousand Splendid Suns* give insight into daily life in Afghanistan through the eyes of two very different women who become the closest of allies.

A Thousand Splendid Suns is set in Afghanistan from the early 1960s to the early 2000s. Mariam, a young girl in the 1960s, grows up outside Herat, a small city in Afghanistan. Mariam has complicated feelings about her parents: She lives with her spiteful and stubborn mother, Nana; while her father Jalil, a successful businessman, visits Mariam — his only illegitimate child — once a week. Mariam resents her limited place in Jalil's life; she wants to live with him, his three wives, and her half-siblings in Herat. She makes her wishes known by asking Jalil to take her to see Pinocchio for her fifteenth birthday. Jalil reluctantly agrees, but then never shows up to take her to the film. Mariam walks to heart and finds Jalil's house, but he doesn't let her in, so she sleeps on the street. The next morning, Jalil's chauffeur drives Mariam home where she finds that her mother has committed suicide. Mariam is taken to Jalil's home after her mother's funeral. Jalil's wives want nothing to do with Mariam, so they force him to let her marry Rasheed, a widowed shoemaker in Kabul. At first Rasheed treats Mariam decently, but after she suffers miscarriage after miscarriage, he abuses her both physically and verbally. It becomes clear that Rasheed's only use for Mariam is in her ability to replace the son he lost years ago. Growing up down the street from Rasheed and Mariam is Laila, a young, intelligent girl from a loving family. However, the Afghani war against the Soviets disrupts Laila's childhood and both her older brothers leave to join the war.

Laila seeks comfort from her best friend, Tariq, a boy a few years older than her. Just before Laila reaches adolescence, her parents' receive news that both of their sons have been killed. A few years later, war reaches Kabul and bombs fall on the city regularly. By now, Tariq and Laila are teenagers and in love. As Tariq tells Laila that he and his family are fleeing to Pakistan, the couples makes love for the first time, quickly and passionately. A few days later, Laila's parents decide to leave Afghanistan as well, but as they are packing a rocket hits their house, killing Laila's parents and wounding her. Rasheed and Mariam nurse Laila back to health and after she recovers, a stranger, Abdul Sharif brings her news that Tariq has died. Devastated and realizing she's pregnant with Tariq's child, Laila agrees to marry Rasheed. Mariam is initially hurt and threatened by Laila's presence and refuses to have anything to do with her. However, after Laila gives birth to a daughter, Aziza, the women come to see themselves as allies against Rasheed's abusive, manipulative ways.

A few years later, Laila gives birth to a son, Zalmai. Then, one afternoon, after years of abuse and sadness, Laila is shocked to see a man standing at her front door: Tariq. Tariq and Laila spend the afternoon together while Rasheed is at work. Laila and Mariam realize that Rasheed hired Abdul Sharif to tell Laila about Tariq's untrue demise so she wouldn't run away. When Rasheed finds out that Tariq has come home, he brutally beats Laila. With a shovel, Mariam kills Rasheed. The next day, Mariam turns herself over to the Taliban in an effort to clear the way for Laila to find sanctuary for herself and her children in Pakistan with Tariq. In Pakistan, Tariq and Laila marry and finally begin the life they dreamed of so many years ago. With time, both of Laila's children warm to Tariq and they enjoy their new life. But in September, 2001, their happiness is overshadowed by news that the United States has attacked Afghanistan. Following the US invasion, conditions in Kabul improve, and Laila insists that her family move back home so they can help rebuild their city. They stop by Herat on their way to Kabul, where Laila visits Mariam's old home and is able to come to terms with her grief over Mariam's execution. Laila and Tariq build a new life in Kabul: Laila becomes a schoolteacher at the orphanage where Aziza once lived. And when Laila becomes pregnant, she decides that if she has a girl, she'll name her Mariam.

Mariam grows up in a small shack outside of the city of Herat. She was brought up to know her place in society as a 'harami,' or bastard child. She is a strong girl who questions authority and dreams of bigger things for herself – far beyond what she finds within the walls of her small shack. Though she is raised by Nana, her mother, she is very fond of her estranged father, Jalil. After falling into deep despair following her mother's death, Mariam is abandoned by Jalil, who marries her off to Rasheed, despite her attempts to remain single. Her childless marriage to Rasheed eventually forces her into a life of submission and misery until close to the end of her life, when Laila provides her with some hope. At the end of the novel, Mariam rises up in revenge and strikes Rasheed dead. She ultimately is tried and executed by the Taliban for her actions.

The women forge strong bonds despite the efforts of their husbands and their government to reduce women's power. The bonds differ in nature. For instance, Giti, Hasina, and Laila form a bond of girlish friendship, but Mariam and Laila form a much more powerful familial bond later in the novel. Nana finds strength from her daughter Mariam, and Mariam finds an admirer when she arrives in a Taliban-controlled prison. The novel thus suggests that women have a strong ability to find strength and support in one another. Mariam never would have gained the strength to fight Rasheed if she had not gained confidence and love from Laila.

The exploitation of women in male dominated society of Afghanistan is further highlighted by the fact that once Laila gives birth to a son, Rasheed sheds some kindness on baby Zalmai, his cherished boy. Rasheed began to spend excessive amounts of money on Zalmai, not using any of the Aziza's old toys, diapers, though

these were still serviceable. He spoiled Zalmai with gifts they can't afford, including a TV and VCR, both items forbidden by the Taliban but Rasheed procures them on the black market. In contrast, he had previously refused to even buy girl clothes for Aziza, Laila's first child. Shortly after these gifts for Zalmai, he suggests that Aziza go into the streets and beg to cover the debt he has on Zalmai's petty gifts. This cruel contrast enables one to understand the role of women in Afghanistan. Rasheed wishes that Aziza beg and take on the burden of his actions like the other girls there. The solution provided for the family's poverty (to send Aziza away) is evidence that she is the most expendable member of her family. Furnishing the example of male dominated society where girls are being treated unfair and unworthy for living. This irrational way of thinking causes one to pity Aziza and find fault in Rasheed. The Taliban laws of Shari 'a provide Rasheed the opportunity to suppress and subjugate all the related characters like, Mariam, Laila and especially Aziza. Being females they all suffer first because of the Afghan politics, its political heads and then because of their personal lives under the dictatorship of Rasheed.

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Impact of Modernity & Urbanity on Culture in A. D Hope & Nissim Ezekiel

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Abstract: *The legacy and bequest of leading Australian poet Alec Derwent Hope (21st July 1907 to 13th July 2000) and Indian poet Nissim Ezekiel (16th December 1924 to 9th January 2004) to the English literary world is unquestionable as they have contributed a lot of literary works in the form of poems, critical essays and plays. Their works have passions, satirical edges, and philosophical insights dealing with the problems of modernity and urbanity and its effects on culture. Culture means a system shared beliefs, values, and behaviors that members of the society use to live with, in their world and with one another.*

The Post-Independence Indo-Anglican poetry begins with Nissim Ezekiel and the Australian poetry begins with A D Hope. They portray, reveal and expose the true image of their countries, modern life, modern human's nature, urban attitude and culture. Their poetry centers on love, personal integration, the contemporary Australian, Indian scene, modern urban life, modern culture and spiritual side of life.

They are fed up with the culture of their places of dwelling and thus the poems like "Australia", "Standardization", "Urban" "A Morning Walk", "In India" clearly show the turmoil, chaos and havoc of their minds. They lived during the two world wars and also in the industrialization era and thus dealt honestly with the pathos and agonies of their nations. They accepted that modernity and urbanity destroyed the culture and did not give anything to the society but took peace and spiritual life of the people and drastically affected the culture of the nations.

Australia and India have similar culture, ethnicity, civilization, tradition and ethos as both nations are influenced and dominated by the English language and literature for the past two centuries. They are the members of the commonwealth nations which have the common values and goals that include the promotion of democracy, human rights, individual freedom, elite culture and world peace.

A D Hope and Nissim Ezekiel are happy to live unhappily in their native places and honestly, truthfully and candidly recorded the pathos of modernity and urbanity and also presented that how the invasions and alien dominations have destroyed the culture of the nations in their works. The dehumanizing influence of the modernity and urbanity on human individuality and their impacts on modern culture are described vividly in their works.

Key Words: *Modernity, Urbanity, Culture, Human Rights, Ethnicity, Civilization, Tradition, Ethos, Values and Goals*

Introduction

A D Hope and Nissim Ezekiel have described the modern culture very effectively in their poems. They are fed up with their places of dwelling Australia and India and thus they have written the pathos and sufferings of the modern life in their works. They believe that the modernity and urbanity have disturbed and destroyed the peace, culture, tradition and spiritual life of the people. "Ezekiel says that a writer needs a national or cultural identity, without that he writes about the series of imitations, echoes, responses, but don't develop as there's nothing at the core to develop" (Shirish, p.48). Hope and Ezekiel have truly bonded with their native places Australia and India respectively and thus they have presented the problems of devastations of culture due to urban and modern civilizations in their works successfully, efficiently and effectively.

Australia and India are far away from each other and also in different continent but the great poets Hope and Ezekiel narrate the problems of the countries are same with their views on modernity and urbanity and their impacts on the culture of their nations. They have also served as professors of English Literature in their countries and thus contributed a lot for the development of the poetry of Australia and India. They have pioneered the English poetry of the 20th century and become the greatest poets of their ages and their nations.

Australia and India are the great countries with vast culture and traditions and the modern world and its ethos have destroyed their culture. Both the great countries have been dominated by the English culture and language. This domination of Western and European culture affected the citizens of the countries in general, but the intellectual sections of the society in particular.

Hope wrote mostly autobiographical poems and used lot of images in his poetry to deal with the contemporary and modern issues of Australia. Kevin Hart, reviewing Catherine Cole's memoir of Hope, writes that, "When A D Hope died in 2000 at the age of 93, Australia lost its greatest living poet who deals the contemporary problems of the Australia very effectively" (Hart). Ezekiel's poems show the Indian ethos and

traditions very effectively and efficiently. John B Beston asked Ezekiel, "Writing in English in India, would you see yourself essentially as an Indian poet, or a world poet?" Ezekiel answered, "I regard myself as an Indian poet writing in English" (Shirish, p.30). The dominant passion of his life is poetry and he has taken to his vocation with a genuine, indisputable, sincere, honest and real commitment.

Hope and Ezekiel are the men of urbanity and modernity and thus lived mostly in the cities and have written poems that are metaphysical, sensual, serious, frivolous, frolicsome, playful, sympathetic, mocking, rational, sensible, realistic, wise, logical and mystical. It is a known fact that one must be rooted in the culture of a nation to discuss the issues of that land. They believe that the impact of modernity on culture has devalued the system and thus the system is totally collapsed. Ezekiel has great regard for cultural life of a country, as in one of the essays he wrote, "Political points of view without cultural associations are futile" (Anklesaria, p.48). They lived in the modernity and urbanity era and thus their poems are full of illustrations of modern culture. As Ezekiel says that one must be brought up in the nation to talk about the problems of that nation, and thus both the poets were brought up in their respective nations and thus describe the modern culture effectively and successfully.

Culture of Australia and India

Australia's original inhabitants, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are the custodians of cultural traditions. Others have arrived from different countries since Great Britain established the first European settlement at Sydney Cove in 1788. Australia and India have an amalgamation of several cultures; have been influenced by a history that is several millennia old. They have a spirit of egalitarianism and social equality that embraces tolerance, mutual respect and compassion. They have the unique religious traditions and spiritual values as the people are free to practice any culture and any religion.

The dominant religion of Australia is Christianity and India is Hinduism but all religious followers are living amicably in both the countries. "Eugene M. Makar defines traditional Indian culture is relatively social hierarchy" (Makar, 2008). "C K Prahalad says modern India is a country of very diverse cultures with many languages, religions and traditions" (Des Dearlove, 2009). Australia and India have multicultural nations as people from all parts of world live amicably and happily. "Nobel Laureate Amartya Sen says that the culture of modern India is complex blend of its historical traditions, influences from the effects of colonialism over centuries and current Western culture both collaterally and dialectically" (Amartya Sen, 2005). Contemporary Australia is a pluralistic society, rooted in liberal democratic traditions and espousing informality and egalitarianism as key societal values. While strongly influenced by Anglo-Celtic origins, the culture of Australia has been shaped by multi-ethnic migration which has influenced all aspects of Australian life (About Australia). Both countries have the diverse culture with many religions and languages.

Hope wants to live in Australia instead of the failure of cultural thoughts there as Ezekiel who also does not want to live India. Hope wants to live gladly in Australia and thus ends his famous poem "Australia" hopefully and positively that some prophet would emerge or come from the Australian ground, who would claim freedom and rights to liberate the aborigines and Australian culture from the colonizers.

Yet there are some like me turn gladly home
From the lush jungle of modern thought, to find
The Arabian desert of the human mind,

Hoping, if still from deserts the prophets come (Australia, ACP, p.74)

He believes that some days the country would flourish with the culture of aborigines and hopeful about that change. The Australian desert would breed some prophet to enlighten the land. He calls the present Australian society as "The Chatter of Cultured Apes" and Australia as stupid and devoid culture. He accepts the modern society of Australia and its culture are in the hands of cultured apes that come from the European lands.

Ezekiel too regards himself essentially as an Indian poet writing in English. His poems show the native tradition and culture. Shirish quotes, "Ezekiel has the desire to fit in the native tradition and belongs to the native scene is explicit" (Shirish, p.30). His gloomy image about the city Bombay and the devastation of the culture due to modernity does not shake his spirit of an Indian and he wants to live in India and thus he declares:

I've never been a refuge
Except of the spirit
A loved and troubled country
Which is my home and enemy.(C P, p.209)

Even though Hope and Ezekiel have been fed up with the native lands but hopeful that some changes might occur and thus do not want to live their places. "As M. K. Naik emphasizes the need of rootedness: "... unless art is rooted in the soil, it is bound to be condemned to both superficiality and artificiality...." (Naik, p.33). Hope and Ezekiel belong to their native lands and thus understand the culture and problems of their countries. They are happy to live unhappily in their native lands. "Igor Maver says that Hope uses lot of traditional poetic forms and numerous allusions from classic literatures and cultures, which he considers the source of Western and Australian culture" (Maver, p.25). Hope wants to deal with the problems of his country as the country is going away from the Australian Aborigines' culture.

Hope tries to explain through his poems that modernity has great negative impacts on the land of Australia. "Hart comments that when once asked what poets do for Australia, Hope replied that "They justify its existence" (Hart). He believes that the poets are so fed up with their land that they give the idea about the existence of a land like Australia to the people by writing poems. K R S Iyengar says, "The recurring note on Ezekiel's recent poems is the hurt that urban civilization inflicts on modern man, dehumanizing him, and subjecting his verities to pollution and devaluation" (Iyengar, p.59). Hope and Ezekiel gave negative one sided approach and explore the spiritual poverty of the land. They believed that in the name of civilization they buried their own culture and ultimately do not get anything. The intellectual development is making the citizens of both the countries to forget their own true culture.

Modernity & Urbanity in Australia and India

The life of both the great poets clearly shows that they are giants in writing poetries in their native places. Both served as professors of English in the universities and thus developed zeal to improve their knowledge of the world literature. Urban people normally become the modern people and the hustles and bustles of city life automatically enter in their lives. The poets do not satisfy with the modernity, urbanity and industrialization that were developing in the 20th century. They used lot of doomed images to present the modern Australia and India in their poems. Hope declares:

Such savage and scarlet as no green hills dare
Springs in that waste, some spirit which escapes
The learned doubt, the chatter of cultured apes
Which is called civilization over there (Australia, ACP, p. 74)

Hope believes that in the name of modernity the culture is destroyed and the European culture is dominating in the land. He sees danger for the Australian culture in the modern era.

Ezekiel too has the same views and believes the Indian culture is destroyed and thus he calls modern culture as disastrous in his poems. He describes the pitiable condition of the common man in India in his poem "Yashwant Jagpat". Yashwant is like any other poor man who can be seen in all corners of India, facing all kinds of disadvantages, troubles and hostility. He incorporates the sense of poverty and deprivations of his land in his poems.

The poets belong to their native lands and thus visualize the collapse of tradition and civilization due to modernity. They satirize the evils of modern and urban society like materialism, artificiality, pollution, corruption, selfishness, egoism, self-interest, brutality, vindictiveness, heartlessness, unkindness, brutality, ruthlessness and cruelty in their works very honestly, candidly, frankly and sincerely.

The rich cultural heritage, tradition and custom of the great and ancient Australia and India tend to lose its value, respect and identity owing to the present generation's mania on materialistic, acquisitive and covetous development. Consequently the significance of the culture, myths, legends, customs and traditions has been ignored in the modern Australia and India. There arises a dire need to preserve the culture as these poets through their writing tried their level best to preserve the culture and thus documenting the literature is undoubtedly the only tool to promote the national cultural heritage which naturally results in the holistic development, growth, advancement and improvement of every citizen of the nation.

Impact of Modernity on Culture

Hope and Ezekiel have the innate talents to present their arguments of impact of modernity on culture effectively in their poems. The image of Australia is found in the poems of Hope and the image of India is found in the poems of Ezekiel as both are dejected that the cultural change has destroyed the old tradition and peace of the people. Hope says about Australia:

They call her a young country, but they lie
She is the last of lands, the emptiest,
A woman beyond her change of life, a breast
Still tender but within the womb dry (Australia, ACP, p.74)

He uses the image of a young woman to describe the country as he says that still it has the tender feelings but the womb is dry and the poet says that Australia is barren and empty land as it fails to produce life and the modern culture has destroyed its traditions and customs. Men are growing to be alike, losing their individuality. He warns about the impending danger of standardization that will take out all the essence of life in his famous poems.

The image of India and its superstitions have been clearly narrated in Ezekiel's poems as he considered like Naipaul that the country has been moving towards a devastating culture, principles, and ethics and it becomes an empty and desolate land. The image of India is presented in a gloomy manner as Ezekiel sees only problems in the land. He talks about the beggars and hawkers of India as they are wandering in the cities. The image of slum is also very gloomy as the poet sees only, the dark side of India. He uses the irony to describe how India is noisy in silence in his poem "In India". The changing reality of love and the human relationship is the Spiritus Mundi from where he draws all his images of devastating culture. The terror in the country has also seen in his poems as he uses the words frightened virgins and wasted children. He presents the gloomy and

depressing image of India and its culture.

Barbaric and sick with slums
Deprived of seasons, blessed with rains
Its hawkers, beggars, iron-lunged,
Processions led by frantic drums,
A million purgatorial lanes,
And child-like masses, many-tongued
Whose wages are in words and crumbs (A Morning Walk, C P, p.119)

The poet presents the diversity and multiplicity in the life style of people in India and the ironies and vicissitudes of Indian life find a place in his poetry. The plight of the teeming, heaving, busy, hectic and tiring masses who, lack the basic amenities of life and the people living in slums of the cities, have to face many hardships and destitutions in every day life. He never dissatisfied like Naipaul on the habits and customs followed by the Indians but tries his level best to bring awareness among the Indians about the hazards of modernity on human development.

Hope and Ezekiel believe that the modern culture has reduced human personality to a zero. They never like to leave their lands but love to live there unhappily, discontentedly and miserably. They condemn the modern man who fails to appreciate the soothing beauty of nature and all that are given by nature. Both Australia and India have the diverse culture, the modern European culture and the old traditional Australian and Indian culture, as more alien people started living in these lands. "Mulk Raj Anand says that modern India is a synthesis of many cultural cross currents and it is conscious of the 'double burden the Alps of the European tradition and the Himalaya of his Indian past'" (Naik p.33). The same identity of Australian culture we can find in the poems of Hope. They tried unhappily and regrettably to rectify the mistake of their people's belief in the modern culture and want to remove the cultural anarchy and make the true culture of the lands to flourish, by writing various poems on diverse topics by condemning the hazards and dangers of modernity on the human lives.

Impact of Urbanity on Culture

Hope presents the gloomy image of Australian cities and says that they fail to have true culture of the land. He is unsatisfied with the culture of his land and thus says it is a desolate land. He does not agree to call Australia as a young country. The true image of Australia is presented by him as a barren and empty land and the impact of urbanity has totally destroyed the ethics of the land. It has no history, culture, songs and architecture and the people believe in superstitions and emotions. He says:

The river of her immense stupidity
The people do not live but survive (Australia, ACP, p. 74)

The people of Australia want to survive in their land and the poets write poems to make sure the survival of the land. He calls the five cities as the cancerous ulcers and the blood and puss have come out of those five cities by using up of her all resources and strengths.

And her five cities, like five teeming sores
Each drain her, a vast parasite robber-state
Where second-hand Europeans pullulate
Timidly on the edge of alien shores (Australia, ACP, p.74)

He attacks colonization and calls the people as second hand Europeans derogatorily. He gives the image that in the name of civilization they have buried their own culture. He called the society as chatter of cultured apes and Australia as stupid and devoid culture. He gives the negative one-sided approach and explores the spiritual and cultural poverty of his native cities.

Ezekiel too talks about the city of Bombay and says that it has the divert tension. He felt in reality the city is inhabited by sick people, with its sick hurry and divided aims. The Indian cities are full of foul air, infectious and contagious. He depicted the city of Bombay stripped of its glamour in a realistic manner. He was totally involved in a situation, which he felt to be hopeless one too. The universal darkness is made momentarily bearable. Bombay was the metaphor for the urban life in India.

We noticed nothing as we went,
A stragglng crowd of little hope,
Ignoring what the thunder meant,
Deprived of common needs like soap
Some were broken, some merely bent (Enterprise, ACP, p.21)

He says that how people have become deprived of the culture in the urban lands. The urbanity has made man to live like a machine and there would be no human relationships and life. His poem "Urban" expresses the unhappy experiences he felt in Bombay. He finds the city dwellers rootless as they belong to the vulgar turmoil, disorder, chaos and havoc of life and he calls them active fools.

At dawn he never sees the skies
Which, silently, are born again?

Nor feels the shadows of the light
 Receive their fingers as his eyes.
 He welcomes neither sun nor rain
 His landscape has no depth or height (Urban, C P)

It is the symbol of any modern city that has the dehumanizing influence on human individuality. He bewails, regrets, deplores and bemoans that the modern man has lost the contact with nature in his poem "Urban", as Hope also bewails about the same lost in his poem "Standardization" that the modern man fails to appreciate the soothing beauty of nature and also started abusing and looting all its resources.

The unplanned city has a death-wish
 Every body is in the business, buying cures (Healers, CP, p.231)

They believe that in reality the city is inhabited by sick people, with its 'sick hurry and divided aims'. The modern life in city is howling and crying. They hope that the situation may change and the people of both the lands will get good traditional culture, as through their writings they try to bring awareness to the people about the urban culture.

Conclusion

A D Hope and Nissim Ezekiel have presented the gloomy picture of Australia and India in their poems as they believe that the culture is devastating, demoralizing, disturbing, ruining and damaging by modernity and urbanity. They have protested against the erosion and abrasion of values and undignified acts which are an insult to humanity. They do not like the ultra-modern trends which degrade the well established value system and culture, which have proven their efficacy and usefulness down through the ages. The modernity has made the man a machine and he finds no time to divert attention towards the values of life. Ezekiel says that the modern world has reduced and condensed the customs and cultures of the lands to nothing and people struggle to get hollow, futile, worthless, and useless happiness.

Poster selling health and happiness in bottles
 Large returns for small investments, in football pools
 Or self-control, six easy lessons for a pound
 Holiday in Rome for writing praise of toothpaste (A Time to Change and Other Poems, p.9)

Ezekiel presents very gloomy and depressing images of the modern life in which man fails to recognize the true values and human relationships in India as he forgets the old traditions, wisdom and customs of the land, which are suitable for a peaceful, pleasurable, enjoyable, heavenly and blissful living.

Ancient Indian wisdom is 100% correct,
 I should say even 200% correct
 But modern generation is neglecting –
 Too much going to fashion and foreign thing (The Patriot, C P)

The modernity and urbanity have converted the man in to a machine and he finds no time to divert attention towards the values of life. Ezekiel says that the modern and urban world have reduced and condensed the customs and cultures of the lands to nothing and people struggle to get hollow, futile, worthless, and useless happiness in the modern life and started searching that happiness in the modern and urban India. He presents the image of modern and urban life as dark, gloomy, depressing and devastating.

Hope and Ezekiel try to visualize the world of harmony, peace, growth and prosperity amidst the chaos and crisis surrounding the individual. They explore the possibility of combining the secular outlook, with religious feelings in their lands. They understand that life is devoid of charm and aesthetic sense in the modern and urban world and people start behaving like machines and this hostile environment does not allow the individual to coalesce with natural and real cultural life harmoniously.

Thus, Hope and Ezekiel teach the hazardous impacts of modernity and urbanity, brilliantly, vividly, intensely, successfully and vibrantly to the citizens of Australia and India.

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The Past and the Present: Tradition of Myth in Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's *The Mistress of Spices*

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Abstract: Myths have always held great fascination for all since times immemorial. Earlier these tales were considered to be simple stories written or transmitted orally among people of simple and intellect. Studies have revealed that myths are not always culture specific, but many times they reveal a dynamic set of images, symbols, narrative patterns, even characters and themes that have an affinity and similarity despite being distanced from each other geographically, historically and socially. This paper discusses the concepts of Tradition and Myth in Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's novel *The Mistress of Spices*. Divakaruni's literature represents a daring yet also smooth and spontaneous interaction between various worlds and ways of existence, those considered as "real" and those considered as "supernatural" or "imaginary." The use of mythical tradition is completely different in *The Mistress of Spices* (1997). This novel is set in the present times in America thus to resonating the modern experience and through that the eternal experience of woman transcending time and space. It blends fantasy and reality; the past and the present. Divakaruni explains Tilottama's journey through the realms of the timeless and the time bound; the fantastic and the real, passing through the different phases of life that reflect her stages of rebirth or transformation unfolding a woman's archetypal journey and her search for her true identity and salvation. The writer positions Tilo and her spices at the centre of the interaction between races and cultures, even various Indian cultures, with people of all ages, prejudices, and expectations.

Key Words: Myth, Tradition, Supernatural powers, Fantasy, Spices, Reality, Identity.

Myths have always held great fascination for all since times immemorial. Earlier these tales were considered to be simple stories written or transmitted orally among people of simple and intellect. Studies have revealed that myths are not always culture specific, but many times they reveal a dynamic set of images, symbols, narrative patterns, even characters and themes that have an affinity and similarity despite being distanced from each other geographically, historically and socially. Myth has now been accepted as a meaningful unit of the literary text. This paper discusses about Tradition and Myth in Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's novel *The Mistress of Spices*.

Some of the modern critics of myth have stressed that the myth is essentially related to creation.

C.G. Jung says that "myth is formed around a figure that may be a god a man or a process that repeats itself throughout man's history whenever creative phantasy is freely manifested" (18).

Divakaruni is a prolific and acclaimed writer who has written popular novels like *Sister of My Heart* (1999), *The Vine of Desire* (2002), *The Conch Bearer, a trilogy* (2003-2009), *Queen of Dreams* (2004) and *The Palace of Illusions* (2008) to her credit. *The Mistress of Spices* belongs to the genre of magic realism. The journey of the protagonist of the novel from being Tilo to being transformed into Maya has been traced in this paper.

Magic has always been an integral part of different genres like epics, fairytales, adventure stories handed over orally from generation to generation, drama and poetry. While myths might contain magical happenings and events, they are regarded to be authentic and true by the recipients of that culture while literary texts which contain magic are categorized under the fantasy genre of literature. The fantasy genre of literature differs from magical realism, a literary trend in postmodernism, in which magical elements are introduced into a realistic atmosphere with a view to having a deeper understanding of reality. These magical elements are explained and accepted like normal occurrences, and are presented in a straightforward and matter-of-fact manner.

Divakaruni's *The Mistress of Spices* is a juxtaposition of the past and the present life of Tilo. The past life of Tilo reveals the fact how she was ordained as a mistress of spices by the Old one, the First Mother who trained her on the island to be a mistress of spices. Her past life is dominated by fantasy and magic. The present life of Tilo is related to her service as a mistress in a spice store in the crooked corners of Esperanza where Oakland buses stop. These are the elements of fantasy and magical power in her present life too but it dominated by reality as Tilo touches the lives of many people who come to her shop and for whom she has given remedy for their suffering and sorrows with her enchanted spices. Divakaruni mixes reality and fantasy and the result is enchanting. *The Mistress of Spices* is cloaked in fantasy and the prologue with its strong under-current of realism runs at the very beginning of the novel and as the novel progresses the fantasy elements diminishes and the realistic elements become prominent.

The Mistress of Spices is written in a unique style that blends fantasy and reality; the past and the present. This novel unfolds the magical saga of Tilotamma as Divakaruni documents Tilotamma's journey through the realms of the timeless and the time bounds; the fantastic and the real, passing through the different phases of life that reflect her stages of rebirth or transformation unfolding a woman's archetypal journey and her search for her true identity and salvation. This interplay between the fantastic and the real as a means towards the realization of her identity that reflects a woman's existential quest forms the bases of Divakaruni's novel.

The novel opens on a note of stark reality in one of the poverty-stricken villages of India, where an unwelcome girl child is born. And ironically she is named as Nayan Tara, star of the eye, by her parents whose faces were heavy with fallen hope at another girl child. But as she grows up she reveals supernatural powers, for which she is revered and feared by both her family and villagers. This is her victory which is nonetheless tinged with a "deep wordless sorrow" (9). As her fame spreads; she is abducted by the pirates who bring ruin and destruction to her family and village. She became the queen of the pirates. Tilo's friends are serpents. All her mythic knowledge has been imparted to her serpents. The serpent is usually a chthonic manifestation of the Mother Goddess and therefore a symbol of fertility. By association it is also a symbol of the feminine. Divakaruni uses conventional myth and symbolism to create a female world. Assisted by the mythical sea serpents and the sea she reaches the island of magic and fantasy for which she had been yearning for so long. She reaches the island which is full of mythical and magical proportions.

From Nayan Tara, she became the disciple of the First Mother in that island who can be seen as the archetypal image of the wise old man who guides the protagonist towards her true identity. Now immortal Tilotamma is ready to enter the real world of present-day America with a new identity, new knowledge and a new mission of curing other people's maladies with her knowledge of the magical powers of spices. This knowledge and initiation comes at a price. To serve the spices and the First Mother she must leave her own form of youth and beauty and live in the body of an old woman in Oakland as the mistress of spices. These spices will obey her as long as she keeps her promise of not revealing her identity, never using these powers for herself and not having any physical or emotional bond with her customers. Her re-entry into the real world of present-day America is through a trial by fire. She transcends time and space and like the mythical Shampati "bird of myth and memory" or Phoenix-like, her earlier identity is consumed in fire and she is born to a new identity as an old woman ready to live her new existence in Oakland, California. The name that she has chosen for herself is significant as Tilotamma was the name of an apsara, the chief dancer at Indra's palace who fell in love with an ordinary mortal and was punished as her beautiful body became bent and twisted by a cruel disease.

America has always been seen as a land of boundless opportunities, a place where human beings, have chance of actually fulfilling their mythic yearning for a return to paradise in the bright new world of the American Continent. So the myth of the American dream entices the immigrant Asians who come to this land of "Edenic dream" for the fulfilment of man's eternal quest for fame, money and prosperity. But the all too familiar immigrant tales shattered dreams, pain and struggle is what greets them in America. And it is Tilo who brings solace, comfort, warmth, security, confidence back into their lives with her secret knowledge of the magic of spices which she administers to cure and heal people who visit her store. There is Lalit who is trapped in an unhappy married life with a man chosen by her parents. She does not want to hurt her parents and quietly accepts abuse and neglect. Then there is Jaggit, the shy, frightened boy transformed to Jag by the endless hostility he has bear for his accent and his turban. He hits the road with a yearning for power. But he promises Tilo start a new life over. And Haroun, the cab-driver who fled Dal lake, where generations of his family had rowed Shikaras for tourists. He lands in America, an illegal immigrant but he looks forward to riches and happiness in this land.

True to her nature the Good Mother that is Tilo, appropriately associated with the life principal, warmth, nourishment, protection, growth and abundance. So this sensitive mistress reaches out and touches the lives of many people who come to her store. But ironically she herself remains lonely and alienated because of her sacred vow that prevents her from maintaining any association with her customers. She has to hide herself behind a persona of old age and ugliness. Her true self remains hidden. But when a lonely American ventures into her store, he arouses in her a forbidden desire and finally makes her to shed her mask and confront her Anima, what Carl Jung characterizes as the image of the opposite sex that a person carries a personal and collective unconscious, in other words, the psychological characteristics of the opposite sex in each of us are generally unconscious revealing themselves only in dreams or in projections on someone in our environment... we tend to be attracted to the members of opposite sex who mirror the characteristics of our own inner selves. So Raven or the lonely American is the one who is able to recognize Tilo as his soul mate. He is a native Indian American, uprooted from his culture and wandering aimlessly seeking power through money to fill a void in his life. He is able to recognize his soul mate, Tilo through his dream of a black and beautiful bird. Whenever he dreams of this black Raven he feels bliss. A similar feeling he too experiences when he meets Tilo. That is why despite Tilo's persona of ugliness he is able to recognize her inner beauty. The bird becomes the symbol of "earthly paradise" where Raven wants to go along with Tilo. The raven in Native American myth is often

depicted as the creator of the world who stole the sun, the moon, fresh water and fire and brought it from the world of spirits to this world.

Tilo, despite her emotional and spiritual attraction towards Raven cannot disclose her true identity and break her sacred vow to the First Mother and the spices to follow the dictates of her heart. She is in a dilemma as voices from the past intersperse her consciousness reminding her of her vow. Thus, within the text of the novel is woven the archetypal dilemma of a woman torn between duty and dictates of her heart. She oscillates between the two. Like the lady of Shallot she ultimately breaks the spell, crosses the boundary of her store and experiences the touch with the real world, is ready to be punished for her transgression. She is reminded of a tale from her forgotten childhood, of Lord Shiva who consumed the dreadful poison churned by the gods and demons to save the world and she thinks, “Even for a god it must have been painful but the world was saved” (298). And it is then that her epiphanic moments dawn, “I Tilo am no goddess but an ordinary woman only...this truth I have tried to escape all my life. And though once I thought I could save this world, I see now that I have brought brief happiness in a few lives” (298). This is the moment she has made a choice, and is ready to face the wrath of the Great Mother. She has no illusions about her fate. Not only will she lose her immortality but she would also be imprisoned in the body of an old woman forever. She would lose her soul-mate Raven and would thus have to lead a painful and lonely existence. But she has no regrets. She is all prepared to atone for her transgressions. But the First Mother forgives her.

The First Mother is indeed the archetypal image of the wise old man who guides Tilo towards her final destiny of leading an ordinary life of a mortal with the person she loves. Tilo is indeed forgiven but not before she passes the trial of earth-burial. She is buried in the debris of her store in an earth quake. Finally rescued by Raven, they are on the verge of leaving Oakland, a site of complete disaster because of the powerful earthquake that strikes the city, in pursuit of their “earthly paradise”, until Tilo stops midway as she realises that there is no earthly paradise, only a state of mind that can experience contentment and bliss by relieving the sufferings and pain of others by bringing light and joy in their lives, “there is no earthly paradise. Except what we make back there, in the soot in the rubble... in the guns and needle..., the young men and women lying down to dreams of wealth and power and waking in cells. Yes, in the hate in the fear”(298). This is not Tilo the immortal mistress of spices curing the maladies of people without the human touch. Tilo is now relieved of her beautiful, terrible burden, ready to lead an ordinary life with the person who is brave enough to share her dreams and be by her side always. And so, this time she has metamorphosed into a new being. Her new name, her new identity completes the quest of this woman whose name is now, Maya. This name becomes all the more meaningful as she says, “...it can mean many things. Illusions, spell, enchantment, the power that keeps this imperfect world going day after day” (298).

There is a poetical blend of fantasy and reality in this novel. *The Mistress of Spices* reflects the mythical journey of an ordinary woman from extraordinary to ordinary life. Folklore myth and legends are essential components of magic realist fiction which *The Mistress of Spices* is embedded with.

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Contextualizing Acculturation in Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things*

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Abstract: Culture is the legacy of physical artifacts and intangible attributes of a group or society that are inherited from the past generations, maintained in the present and bestowed for the benefit of future generations. The paper tries to explore how Indian literature has been obsessed with the horror of cultural deconstruction through Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things*. The paper stresses on the fact that how Roy gives a deeper view into the way of cultural norms as well as the Love Laws change and mold, not only the events of the story, but every individual characters. The rigid social bonds of the society cause the human race to yield to the other illegal laws which satisfy their soul. A cultural code of ethical relationships; the Love laws are violated by many of the main characters in the story leading to woes of great proportion. The paper tries to focus on the revolutionary idea of illicit relationships which has become a common, casual activity in this so called cultural Indian country.

Key words: Acculturation, Cultural deconstruction, Spiritual deficiency.

Introduction:

Culture can be comprehended as the traditional way of life, especially the general customs and beliefs of a particular group according to their social setup. But the post-modern human race hesitates to accept their own parent culture. People's mind has been haunted by the vigorous attitudes of **cultural deconstruction**. The present day culture includes itself with the terrifying aspects like, westernization, illicit love laws, marginalization of certain communities, and gender inequality. All these attitudes on the whole can be coined by a single term called **acculturation** on which the following presentation is dealt, with reference to Arundhati Roy's novel *The God of Small Things*.

In this novel *The God of Small Things*, Arundhati Roy's ebullient spirit, her compassion, humor, playfulness and candor are as refreshing as ever. Roy is the most acclaimed Indian English writer. In her only novel *The God of Small Things* she employed all the above mentioned aspects of acculturation. The present discourse mainly focuses on the illicit love laws which are undergone by all the characters in the novel without gender partiality.

Acculturation in the Novel:

The term acculturation can be defined as the modification of the culture of a group or individual as a result of contact with a different culture. As the term defines, due to the impact of different western cultures, Indian people first of all lose their customs and costumes, later the problem became verse when it entered into the main realm of illicit love laws. It has become a common activity now. Man having sexual contact with more than one lady. Woman marrying more than one man. Begetting illegitimate children have become very casual activity now. The story in this novel *The God of Small Things* completely revolves round with themes like these.

Roy in this heart rendering novel described many types of love as, erotic, familial, incestuous, to the novel. However, Roy focuses her authorial commentary on forbidden and taboo types of love, including Ammu's love for Velutha and Rahel's love for Estha. Both relationships are rigidly forbidden by what Roy calls "the Love Laws or the laws that lay down who should be loved and how. And how much" (Roy 31). Although breaking these laws is the worst of taboos, and those who break them are brutally punished, desire and desperation overcome the love laws at the key moments of Roy's novel.

The book is basically about love. Although the book is tragic, it is a most beautiful love story. The accultural effect on love is very explicitly shown by Roy through Ammu, the most prominent protagonist of the novel. Ammu is shown as a young widow with two children neglected and cared less by everybody in her own family. There is no one to take care of Ammu she becomes a tragic lonely figure in the very young age, "Her

eighteenth birthday came and went. Unnoticed or at least unremarked upon by her parents”(Roy 38). Ammu just wished to get rid of this critical situation, so she agreed to marry the man at Calcutta whom she met when she went to attend a marriage ceremony. She hastened to marry him because that was the only way of refuge; more over she knew that people of Ayemenem would never agree to her plans. As the author says, “She thought that anything anyone at all, would be better than returning to Ayemenem. She wrote her parents informing them of her decision” (Roy 39).

But very soon she realized her worst decision of her life. The man she married was an alcoholic and went to an extent to satisfy the carnal desires of his boss just to save his job. At this juncture Ammu is thoroughly shocked. It seemed as if she had jumped out of a frying pan into the fire. Ammu could not take this extreme humiliation, she in tiff with her husband hit him with a heavy book and left the place with her twins Estha and Rahel and reached Ayemenem. This was the first evidence of acculturation and the drastic impact of it.

Society is always governed by its own social conventions. It prescribes strict rules and regulations for social conducts such as ‘love laws’ which means whom to love and how much to love. The society should follow these rules for making jam and jelly as mentioned by Roy in this novel.

This ‘love laws’ in its origin is sustained by the four pillars of the society-**religion, caste, god and the scriptures**. There are many transgressors of love laws in this novel. Because of her great painful life Ammu, found solace only through her love with Velutha an untouchable man which breaks the with ‘love laws’. When she is not allowed to precede her love, she started to shower hatred to her most beloved children. They have become a burden and an obstacle in the path of her life. She said to them as “You’re the millstone round by neck!” (Roy 253). Ammu and Velutha’s love for each other is a wild and dangerous love. Ammu’s relation with Velutha is viewed with a lot of contempt by the people around her because they term it to be illicit, unethical, immoral and sinful.

Chacko is Ammu’s intellectual and self-absorbed older brother as Mammachi extremely fond of him often said “Chacko was easily one of the cleverest in India” (Roy 55). He was a Rhodes Scholar at Oxford and he met Margaret while she was working in an Oxford café. Deeply in love with her he married her. The marital life of Chacko was no longer bliss. She had grown tired of his squalor and started viewing Chacko with a lot of a scorn and contempt, because for her he had “become a fat Man, with a body to match his laugh” (Roy 247). So within a year she divorces him around the time that their daughter is born. Chacko’s love for Margaret was forgiving and demanding. His love was secure and comforting. But Margaret voluntarily divorces him when she realized that she did not need him. She also married Joe because of his uncontrolled personality that made her feel free. When her second husband Joe died, she readily accepted Chacko’s invitation to Ayemenem. This is the best example portrayed by Roy to show the acculturation. A woman is ready to accept any man to lead her life without any individuality.

Baby Kochamma, the paternal aunt of Ammu is one of the elder most persons in the story. Although she is a spinster throughout her life she too crossed the so called cultural love laws. She has her own love story. As a young girl she fell in love with the handsome Irish monk, Father Mulligan, who was in Kerala for a year. Baby Kochamma was so blindly attracted to him. She even went to the extent to seduce him. Baby Kochamma converts to Roman Catholic against the wishes of her father, to set close to Father Mulligan. At last she took her vows and entered in a convent in Madras as a trainee novice with a strong hope that even this act will provide her the legitimate association with Father Mulligan. This can be clearly observed in the following lines, “That was all she wanted. All she ever dared to hope for, just to be near him, close enough to smell his beard. To see the coarse weave of his cassock. To love him just by looking at him” (Roy 24). But all her efforts and desires to be close to Father Mulligan went in vain. At this juncture she grew restless and confused. After Ammu and Velutha the at most indecent love affair can be seen through this character. She underwent her immature love affair, without her parent’s concern, result of which she became an insecure, selfish and vindictive person. Above all this she was so strong in her love. She dedicated her whole life and remained unmarried even for her unrequited love. Her love was most profound. It was so profound to the limit that she continued to write, “I Love you, I Love You” (Roy 297) in her diary daily even after years of Father Mulligan’s death.

Roy also introduces her readers the love between brother and sister. Rahel and Estha’s love for each other is so strong and deep that they instinctively know what each other is thinking and doing. But their love has

been proved with illicitness when Rahel and Estha met at the age of thirty-one, where they seem to belong to each other both by their body and soul.

Rahel is one of the most important characters in this novel for this theme of acculturation. Rahel is a very energetic and enthusiastic girl as portrayed by Roy. There is a close resemblance between Roy and Rahel. Rahel is the typical example for the post-modern people, who are living their life without any aim. Rahel is the most aggressive and rebellious of the two twins. She was only eleven years old when her mother died, "Thirty-one. Not old. Not young. But a viable die-able age" (Roy 3). At that young age she was the only person who accompanied Chacko for her mother's funeral, and not even Estha. After Ammu's death Rahel encountered the painful condition of a child without parents and that too, a girl child. Even Estha was safely escaped from this situation to their father. But she was put under the care of Mammachi and Chacko. "in matter related to the raising of Rahel, Chacko and Mammachi tried, but couldn't. They with drew the concern" (Roy 51). There was no one to take care of Rahel. She lived her life with her own conventions, "Without any body to arrange a marriage for her. Without anybody who would pay her a dowry and therefore without an obligatory husband looming on her horizon" (Roy 17).

Rahel hankered for true love and affection throughout her life. This longing made her to behave in a very rude manner. She was black listed in her school three times for misbehavior. She was caught smoking, besides this she was also caught setting fire to her Hense Mistress's false hair bun. After completing school, she luckily got through entrance exam. Out of interest she joined in the college of Architecture at Delhi. Here, Rahel seems closely resembling to Roy's own life. Rahel put eight years in college without completing the five years course to get the degree. She lived in a cheap hostel and ate a subsidized student's mess. Occasionally she wrote letters to Chacko and Mammachi but never went to Ayemenem, even for Mammachi's death. The suppression due to loneliness and modern culture converted her to this situation. Because of the age old conventions created by the society, she feared that Ayemenem people were cold and indifferent to her.

Rahel, during her college life fell in love with Larry Mc Caslin, who was in Delhi to collect his material for doctoral thesis. Her marriage to Caslin is described by Roy as, "Rahel drifted into marriage like a passenger drifts towards an unoccupied chair in an airport lounge" (Roy 18). She did everything in a carefree manner; she did not care for her future. As an assertive woman she just did whatever she liked. The impact of social conventions and patriarchal society; brought this as a result in Rahel. Rahel's marriage too like her mother ended up in divorce. He holds her, as though she was a gift and notices a hollowness in Rahel's eyes that seems to contribute to their lack of understanding and eventual divorce. After this separation she lost her husband's love and affection. Later she came back from this isolation and started to work in an Indian restaurant as a waitress in New York. She then worked as a night clerk in a bullet proof cabin at a gas station outside Washington; "where drunks occasionally vomited into the money tray and pimps propositioned her with more lucrative job offers" (Roy 20). She also saw a man being stabbed to death. All those horrific scenes made her heart harder. This is very well picturized through the way in which she conveys her divorced state of marital life to Comrade Pillai. Instead of sighing or sobbing or being embarrassed, she in the most straight forward way told Comrade Pillai, "We were divorced. Rahel hoped to shock him to silence. 'Divorced'? His voice rose to such a high register that it cracked on the question mark. He even pronounced the word as though it were a form of death" (Roy 130). This is where the society reflects with its conventions.

On the whole each and every individual character in this novel has crossed their culture for some valueless reasons. Roy gives the reader a deeper understanding of all of the different dimensions of love. The novel deals with the revolutionary idea of illicit relations. It sends shock and waves to average Indian societies, but the western society is absolutely normal according to its sensibility. Roy has been severely criticized for her portrayal of sexual aspects which look absurd and they could have been easily done away with. Their detailed description drew a lot of flake for her.

Roy in her final chapter has deliberately described some of these scenes because they leave a deep impression on the minds of the innocent characters in the novel which goes on to shape their personality when they grow up. For example, the experience Estha under goes at Abilash Talkies, gives him nightmares throughout his life. These abnormal experiences later develop into abnormalities of the characters. The sexual portrayal or the senses in the book are no doubt in abundance and have been criticized. But Roy sees it to be universal thing rather than a very private matter.

One interpretation of Roy's theme of love is that love is such a powerful and uncontrollable force that it cannot be contained by any conventional social code. Another is that conventional society somehow seeks to destroy real love, which is why love in the novel is consistently connected to loss, death, and sadness. Also, because all romantic love in the novel relates closely to politics and history, it is possible that Roy is stressing the interconnectedness of personal desire to large themes of history and social circumstances.

Though Roy herself justified all these illicit pictures for some valid reasons, it seems unethical in the Indian eyes where the people are deeply cultural and traditional. But Roy has interwoven these incidents to bring out the deep rooted psyche of the characters without which they would appear empty. She has delineated such scenes only to suit the framework of the plot or the sentiments of the characters. She has tried to teach the people the real value of love and culture through her characters. All the characters in the novel without any impartiality have undergone sufferings whoever crossed their culture.

Conclusion:

India is a country, which is filled with various cultural heritages from the ancient period, that's why it is **Incredible India** in such country **Spiritual lacking** and **deficiency in moral teaching** may be the major cause for the people for acculturation. As Roy aptly portrayed in the novel that Ammu and Velutha gets severely punished for every 'sin' they have committed. Ammu after being a prey to all abuse, torment, torture, and pain she died alone without anybody. Even her death was also not a peaceful death like her life, "in a grimy room in the Bharat lodge in alley where she had gone for a job interview as some one's secretary, she died alone" (Roy 161). People must be morally, psychologically and spiritually instructed that, their sins will be counted for them as the proverb, **As you sow, so shall you reap**. To conclude, Love would therefore be an emotion that can be explained and experienced only in terms of two peoples' cultural backgrounds and traditional identities.

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Marginalization in the Guise of Reservation In Tomson Highway's *The Rez Sisters*

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Abstract: Tomson Highway, a first nation writer of Canada, is popularly known for his plays that epitomize the life pattern of the native people on the reservations in North America. His play *The Rez Sisters* became a huge hit dramatizing the hopes and struggles of seven Native Women on a fictional Wasaychigan Hill Indian Reserve. Tomson Highway has successfully delineated how funky the lifestyle of the Natives on a reserve, for the Natives lack access to education, work opportunities, healthcare and other basic needs for the life sustenance. As per treaties in White ideologies, reserves were designed to protect Aboriginal people but actually to isolate and impoverish them. The life on the reserves could not save the traditional way of life and one can attribute this to the dominant White culture.

Key words: Post-colonialism, Indigenous Writing, Marginalization, Cultural Study.

Marginalisation is a kind of discrimination by which individuals, social groups, and even ideas are made peripheral to the mainstream by relegating or confining them to the outer edges or margins of society. It blocks individuals or entire communities of people from various rights, opportunities and resources such as housing, employment, healthcare, civic engagement etc. This marginalisation in the form of social exclusion is reflected on the life pattern thrust on the Native peoples living on reservations. Though the birth of reservations in North America is said to uplift the social condition of Native people, the real status quo of them is they are confined to the fringes of society.

There are roughly three hundred and ten Indian reservations in America. These reservations are parcels of land that have been given over to Native Americans. The Natives do not have full power over the land, but they do have limited governmental rule. These reservations are governed by the tribal band council, although the system of government may vary from reservation to reservation. Reservation lands are not strictly owned by bands but are held in trust for bands by the Crown.

Life on reservation is often of lower quality than that of the surrounding areas. There are high instances of unemployment, alcoholism, and poverty while the Native Americans struggle to retain and pass down their heritage and culture. Many Indian reservations make money through gambling casinos. The Indian Gambling Regulatory Act was passed in 1988. This Act allows gambling facilities on reservations as long as the state government allows for some type of legalised gambling.

Some of the new laws by the settlers had prohibited the Native Americans from hunting and continuing life in the manner they were accustomed to. Besides hunting, many of the early settlers were setting up new plans to convert the Native Americans to Christianity. However, without the ability to hunt and gather food, as they were accustomed to, many of the Native Americans became bitter as they were forced off their lands and told to become farmers. Many of the early Indian reservations were resistant to farming and some of the Native Americans faced starvation.

In general, it can be said that the creation of the reservations was to serve two purposes. Firstly, setting aside land for the Native Americans would avoid clashes between them and the white settlers. Secondly, by confining the Native Americans to an area of land, they could be watched, with hopes of "civilizing" them. As per treaties in White ideologies, reserves are designed to protect Aboriginal people but actually they isolate and impoverish them. The isolated condition of Native people pushes them to social exclusion or marginalized position.

The above given brief introduction to reservation and marginalization of Native Americans helps the reader understand the structure of Native peoples' life on reservation in Tomson Highway's plays. Tomson Highway, a first nation Cree writer of Canada, is popularly known for his plays that epitomize the system of life of the native people on reservations in North America. His play *The Rez Sisters* became a huge hit in 1986 dramatizing the hopes and struggles of seven Native women namely Pelajia Patchnose, Philomena Moosetail, Marie-Adele Starblanket, Annie Cook, Emily Dictionary, Veronique St. Pierre and Zhaboonigan Peterson on a fictional Wasaychigan Hill Indian Reserve. It has won the Dora Mavor Moore Award for an Outstanding New Play (1988-89), as well as the Floyd S. Chalmers Canadian Play Award, given to Canadian plays produced professionally in the Toronto area.

Having been born and raised within the confines of the reserve, the seven Native women crave for a better life by winning the Biggest Bingo Game in the World to be held at Toronto. They work hard and successfully raise the money they need to pay for their trip to Toronto. During the Bingo game, one of them, Marie-Adele

dies. The women at the end do not win the jackpot. However, Philomena and Veronique win a portion of money which they use for fulfilling their wish.

The seven Cree women represent the life of Native women on reservation. Their dreams reflect not only their simple wishes but also their deprived and undercivilised plight on reservation. The eldest among the group of seven women is Pelajia Patchnose. She wants the Bingo money to pave the road in front of her house. Her younger sister Philomena Moosetail is in need of money for hiring a lawyer to find the child she had with a White guy. She also craves for an indoor bathroom with a spirit white toilet. Marie-Adele Starblanket, Annie Cook and Emily Dictionary are half sisters of Pelajia and Philomena. Marie and Emily don't want to buy things from the 'to be won Bingo money'. Emily wants to escape from her past gruelling life and Marie from her life-consuming abdominal cancer. Annie who is infatuated with a Jewish country singer wants to have the biggest record player in the world to play country music. Veronique St. Pierre is sister-in-law of all the above and wants to have the biggest stove on the reserve and cook for all the 14 children of Marie-Adele. These dreams of the sisters stand for their lowest standard of reservation life which is devoid of basic needs for life sustenance.

Land was considered as a common property by tribes and for them it didn't exclusively belong to humans but to other living beings as well. They lived close to nature but the Colonial government established reserves to confine Native people's space and dominate them in every aspect. While analysing White ideologies, reserves were designed to protect Aboriginal people and preserve their ways but actually to marginalize them.

When we analyse the above said brief introduction to the Aboriginal life in Cree cosmology, we could see at the beginning of the play itself, the characters' dissatisfaction with the life on the reserve. The opening scene begins with Pelajia Patchnose who discusses with Philomena her longing to leave the reserve. She says "Everyone here's crazy" (6). Pelajia's husband has to go hundred miles to find work in Espanola, while her boys had to go all the way to Toronto because it is "the only place educated Indian boys can find decent jobs these days" (6). There is constant drinking, fighting and adultery. There is "nothing to do but drink and screw each other's wives and husbands..." (6). Pelajia's trapped life on the reserve for fifty three years pushed her to think of leaving 'Wasy'. However, leaving the reserve means facing discrimination and assimilation in urban centres, relinquishing one's Indian rights, and losing or jeopardizing connections to family and territory. This is what we can decipher when Philomena replies to Pelajia's dejected words: "This place is too much inside your blood. You can't get rid of it. And it can't get rid of you" (4).

Reserves are typically located in areas where economic opportunities are limited, and the reserves themselves provide few resources. Aboriginal people's ability in fishing, hunting, timber harvesting and berry-picking is severely limited and that leads to a rapid increase in poverty on reserves. Many Aboriginal people living on reserves suddenly find that they are unable to sustain themselves or their families. As a result of their jobless condition, they, especially men, emerge as alcoholic. In the play, *The Rez Sisters*, Emily Dictionary was beaten daily by her husband before she left him. She narrates: "...Henry Dadzinanare come home to me so drunk his eyes was spittin' blood like Red Lucifer himself and he'd beat me purple" (50). The violent male behavior is the result of alcohol abuse which is the result of marginalised life. Veronique's husband Pierre St. Pierre is an ever alcoholic person that she grumbles: "You know that Pierre St. Pierre never has money. He drinks it all up" (26).

Another blemish of reservation life is that it shatters the mental balance of the mind of dejected Native people and it may, sometimes, drive them to commit suicide. Such destructive force can be found in the pathetic end encountered by Rose, the bosom-chum of Emily Dictionary. She is driven to self-destruction in vexation. She drives her bike down the middle of the highway and goes head on into a big 18-wheeler. Emily explains: "Rose. That's Rosabella Baez, leader of the pack. We were real close, me and her. She was always thinkin' real deep. And talkin' about bein' a woman. An Indian woman. And suicide. And alcohol and despair and how fuckin' hard it is to be an Indian in this country" (97).

Native women are the most victimized on reserves since they undergo twofold violence from White and Native men. White men rape women to prove their power over women, while black men, being powerless under white domination, use rape as a weapon to express rage about their struggle for power with White men. Examples can be cited from *The Rez Sisters*. Philomena talks to Pelajia about her love with Caddy, a 'blond, blue-eyed six foot high'(81) man. He left her pregnant and went with his wife. She remembers that she left her child on September 8, the day all the sisters are going to play the biggest Bingo game in Toronto. She didn't even try to know whether her child was a boy or a girl. After 28 years now, she wants to find a lawyer, with the money she wishes to win from Toronto Bingo, and wants to see if her child is a boy or a girl. She doesn't even want her or him to know who she is.

Emily Dictionary was severely mistreated by her husband, who tried to kill her once, and as a result, she had no other way but to abandon him. Zhaboonigan Peterson is a twenty four year old mentally disabled adopted daughter of Veronique. She was assaulted and raped by two White boys with a screwdriver, and left bleeding by the side of the road. Highway has explained in a talk at the University of Victoria in 1992 that this rape is based on an event which took place in a small town in Manitoba. Here, the rape atrocity of the Whites represents the history of "double feminization" i.e. gender and racial persecution of Native women.

Another hazardous result of reservation life is health deterioration, especially in women. Originally the Aborigines, though not civilized, lived healthy life for they were close to nature. On the contrary, their reservation life with limitations has detrimental effect on their health condition. In *The Rez Sisters*, Marie-Adele Starblanket is a 39 year old middle aged, family oriented woman caring deeply about her husband Eugene, and their fourteen children. She has a weakening physical state since she is plagued with the crippling disease of cancer. She says, "When I win THE BIGGEST BINGO IN THE WORLD, I'm gonna buy me an island.....And my island will have lots of trees.....my 12 Starblanket boys and my two Starblanket girls and me and my Eugene all living real nice and comfy right there on Starblanket island..."(36). Her objective is to take care of her dysfunctional family, and rise above her surroundings creating a better environment for her loved ones.

The illustrations cited hitherto are transparent enough to showcase Tomson Highway's ambition in writing plays i.e. to show what funky folk Canada's Indian people really are. Here one can best notice the fact that the funky nature of the Native people is mainly because of their reduced access to comforts of life. Reserves are, therefore, a disruptive and in many ways destructive imposition on the indigenous people. To sum up, the marginality defined in the land for living of the tribes in reservations has also taken the form of "marginalization" since the natives suffer from the limitations incurred on their basic needs.

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Celebration of Black Identity in Zora Neale Hurston's *Jonah's Gourd Vine*

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Abstract: *Black culture is a curious blend of diverse ethnic cultures. It has its origin in the ancient Africa. It is not formed as a response to forces of oppression. Therefore, it is neither static nor one-dimensional. This paper shall examine the myriad dimensions of black culture as reflected in Zora Neale Hurston's novel Jonah's Gourd Vine (1934) and highlight its unique characteristics. It shall trace the roots of black culture and proceed to discuss the oral tradition, religion, music and dance of blacks in America. Paying specific attention to Eatonville, the site of most of Hurston's stories, this paper shall state the importance of the all-black town in contributing to the healthy life of blacks. It shall reveal how Hurston has promoted the preservation of her black folk culture's best features, and the eradication of its worst traits. In a nutshell, it shall discuss how Zora Neale Hurston has endeavoured to establish the cultural heritage of blacks amidst the prevalent cultural oppression in the US. It shall conclude on the note that celebration of black identity offers a solace to blacks who suffer a common oppression in the US.*

Key words: *black folk culture, oral tradition, religion, music, dance, black identity*

In an age when blacks in America felt ashamed of their colour and race, Hurston tried her best to establish a strong sense of black identity in her writings. She suffused her novels with many folk elements and celebrated her black identity. Folk tales, folk music, folk sayings, proverbs and folk beliefs which are a large part of Southern black culture has been extensively used in "Jonah's Gourd Vine". Hurston's descriptions of folk belief, music and sayings serve to deepen the reader's understanding of her characters, community and culture. In *Jonah*, Hurston lures her readers with her folk wisdom.

The American South has long been a source of varying types of folk traditions, customs and beliefs. As Southern culture grew from a combination of a number of ethnic groups, specifically African, French, and English, this combination of traditions created a strong folk culture that had a more lasting effect in the South than in the rest of United States. Of the many Southern authors who drew inspiration and context from folk life, none were so accomplished as the African American Zora Neale Hurston (1891-1960). Trained as anthropologist and folklorist, Hurston collected oral history and data throughout the South on her folklore expedition. In her first novel, *Jonah's Gourd Vine*, Hurston's inclusion of Southern folk tradition makes the novel a true representation of Southern culture in Florida in the early 20th century. Folk elements make this novel a highly accurate and valuable text for either literary or anthropological study.

In *Jonah*, Hurston utilizes folk activity to empower the oppressed black community in four important ways: folk narrative, music, sayings and belief. John Pearson, the protagonist is heavily affected by the traditions of Southern folklore. His oratory skills are particularly responsible for his growth in life. His first wife, Lucy is also equally eloquent. Her speech is rooted in black oral culture.

Folk tales are a large part of Southern culture, especially among African Americans. Propensity for storytelling was part and parcel of the American Negroes. When the story begins, John Pearson is a sixteen year old mulatto searching for a job. But as the story progresses, he gradually rises to prominence in his black society as a preacher, Minister, and Mayor. The rise of John Pearson can be attributed to his skills as an orator and storyteller. John evinces a great zeal for storytelling. Hurston writes, "Next to showing muscle-power, John loved to tell stories. Sometimes the men sat around the fire and talked and John loved that" (*Jonah* 61). Men and women recognized his storytelling skill as well. One of the men in Alabama says, "Leave John tell 'em [stories] 'cause he kin act 'em out. He take de part of Brer Rabbit and Brer B'ar and Brer Fox jes' ez natche'l" (*Jonah* 61). Only from storytelling, John develops his talents for praying, singing and preaching. Deacon Moss once remarks, "Dat boy got plenty fire in 'im and he got uh good strainin' voice. Les' make 'im pray uh lot" (*Jonah* 89). John starts to mimic preachers as a way of continuing to develop his preaching skills. His first sermon is an impersonation of another preacher. "John preached the sermon himself for the entertainment of the men who had stayed in camp and he aped the gestures of the preacher so accurately that the crowd hung half-way between laughter and awe" (*Jonah* 107). Eric Sundquist argues that John's final sermon, which is recounted toward the end of the book, was taken almost verbatim from Hurston's research, specifically a sermon by a Rev. C.C. Lovelace recorded in 1929.

Music is an important part of the African American folklore. Hurston uses folk music as a method for discussing the history of African Americans in America. In the scene which describes the plantation celebration,

Hurston writes, “they [African Americans] called for the instrument that they had brought to America in their skins—the drum—and they played upon it. With their hands they played upon the little dance drums of Africa. The drums of kid-skin...and the voice of Kata Kumba, the great drum, lifted itself within them and they heard it...the drum with the man skin” (*Jonah* 29). Hurston acknowledges the origin of the music as Africa. She describes the music as “furious music of the little drum whose body was still in Africa, but whose soul sung around a fire in Alabama” (*Jonah* 30).

Sundquist explains Hurston’s phrase “drum with the man skin” in his book. The drum represents the tribal drums of Africa, and is not actually made of the skin of a man in this setting. The drum and its music and rhythm is so entrenched in the bodies and souls of the performers, that it has become part of their bodies. The drums and the movements of the dancers draw so close together that the drums become the people and the people become the drums. John’s exposure to folk music and performance serves as a gateway to his career as a minister. Both folk singing and Southern-style preaching are based in rhythm, audience response and oral presentation.

Folk sayings and proverbs dot throughout the novel. Hurston imparts a sense of authenticity to her characters by making them speak in folk language. The orthographical representation of an African American dialect provides a sense of authenticity to her characters. A confrontation between John and his step father Ned is the clearest example of the function of folk sayings in the novel. John says to Ned, “And you, you ole battle-hammed, slew foot, box-ankled nubbin, you. You ain’t nothin’ and aint got nothin’ but whut God give uh billy-goat, and then round tryin’ tuh hell-hack folks...dat’s de very corn Ah wants tuh grind” (*Jonah* 47). Some critics have taken issue with this method for a number of reasons: some see it as too difficult to read, espousing a racist view of Southern speech or just unnecessary. Even the noted critic Trudier Harris noticed the problems with Hurston’s writing. Harris said that “no matter how much we appreciate the folk creativity in the phrasing, or try to attribute the use of such metaphors to John’s youthful exploration with language...we still cannot get around the fact that Hurston includes [this language] primarily to satisfy her love for folk expressions” (*Alice* 40). While most of the characters speak using Southern colloquial expressions, Lucy Pearson expresses her feelings mostly through folk proverbs or maxims. She always resorts to folk sayings in her endless advice to her husband. Even on her death bed, she admonishes him in folk language, “Go ‘head on, Mister, but remember—youse born but you ain’t dead. ‘Tain’t nobody so slick but whut they kin stand uh ‘nother greasin’. Ah done told yuh time and time uhgin at ignorance is de hawse dat wisdom rides. Don’t get miss-put on yo’ road. God don’t eat okra” (*Jonah* 128). In her last conversation with John, she uses five different folk idioms. While these sayings are most likely accurate, they are also too pervasive in the novel. As Harris puts it, Hurston “allows her fascination for the speech to overtake her artistic sense” (*Alice* 38).

An expert in Southern folk belief, Hurston includes numerous folk beliefs in her text. John and Lucy believe that sassafras tea can thin the blood. Also, their faith in love-knots as a way of securing their marriage are popular folk belief among African Americans. Next, hoodoo, a form of magical practice, is an accepted belief by African Americans. Hoodoo practitioners, called conjurers or “two-heads” usually use roots and natural herbs to cast spells in similar ways that a herbal remedy would be administered. Hurston describes voodoo (and hoodoo) as the old mysticism of the world in African terms and its symbolism is no better understood than that of any other religion. In *Jonah*, Hattie Tyson wins John’s heart by hoodoo. The readers are introduced to the hoodoo rituals in the novel when Dangie Daewoo performs the rituals to break the relationship of John and Lucy. Holding the bitter bone, she says, “Now fight! Fight and fuss ‘til you part” (*Jonah* 126). Just after one watches her “rub her hands and forehead with war powder” and lie in the “red coffin facing the altar” and go “into the spirit”, one witnesses the outcome of her curse in the very next chapter.

The rituals that accompany Lucy’s death are based on the folk belief of the South. Just before Lucy dies, she watches a spider weaving webs on the wall. The spider plays a large role in the African American folk tales. According to one belief noted by Puckett is, “if a spider webs downward, a death will occur in the family” (*Folk Beliefs* 492). In *Jonah*, Lucy is convinced of her impending death when she watches a spider “web downward” in her room. She prepares her daughter Isis for the death ritual. She gets the pillow pulled from under her head and gets her bed turned so that her head faces east so that she can “die easy” (*Jonah* 133).

Thus, performances of folklore are markers of culture and community in *Jonah*. As folk activities are only transmitted orally, there must always be a performer and an audience. In *Jonah*, all of the characters act as both performers and viewers at different time. These folk performances, be they music, narrative or practice, are an integral part of the culture that Hurston wrote about. Folk elements thus impart *Jonah* realism, local colour, and valuable insight into the rich black culture.

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Emotional and Physical dilemmas in Octavia Butler's *Kindred*

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Abstract: *The present study tries to establish the role of Octavia Butler in the genre of science fiction. Slavery was mostly reflects in her fiction. Science fiction gave her literary freedom to discuss the matters which she thought to be important. The study examine how Butler handles the genre of science fiction in her own way and how Butler was attracted to the genre and how she made use of the infinite possibilities of the same. One of her novel, Kindred was taken for the critical reckoning. Butler used effectively dystopia, a sub –genre of science fiction, to express her ideas of the future. Normally dystopias tell about a frightening future. Butler's dystopian novels are different in one way from the dystopian works of other writers as she tries to bring in a ray of hope in her dystopian works. Through Kindred, a black science fiction that mirrors Black's past and present; Butler attempts to present the idea of slavery as an alien abduction. In Kindred Butler vibrantly reminds how the slave system both physically assaulted blacks and sensitively deformed whites.*

Key words: *Afro American science fiction, Bildungsroman, Dystopia, Future, Past, Power and Slavery.*

Introduction:

Octavia Butler is the first African American woman writer to gain popularity and significant commendation as a major science fiction writer. She wrote twelve dazzling novels and all of them are science fiction. Butler prefers to write in a simple style using uncomplicated language and fine characterization. She was born on June 22, 1947, in Pasadena, California. Her father, a shoeshiner, died when Butler was an infant. Butler's mother, Octavia, and grandmother raised her. From an early age, Butler watched her mother work to keep the family afloat and heard her grandmother's tales of suffering and misery. Octavia worked as a housemaid in the homes of white people who treated her as if she were less than human. Butler's grandmother had been a slave in Louisiana, forced to work in the cane fields. These women, who endured oppression and supported their families, informed Butler's stories. She said that the misery of her female relatives' lives inspired her to spin fantasy worlds into which she could escape.

“When I began writing science fiction, when I began reading.”

Butler is often hailed for her success as a black woman writer of science fiction, a genre dominated by white men. She said that her experience as a black woman in a hostile society made her singularly capable of writing about dystopias. Butler believed that the reader should understand the message of the writer and she conveys her message vibrantly to readers. One can see the traces of the intertextual theory in her writings, especially in *Kindred*, which can be called as a modern slave narrative; the reader is constantly reminded of many slave narratives of the olden times. Critics search for realism and melodrama in the Butler's works, but Butler offers them horror, science fiction and fantasy.

For her, the world of science fiction has always provided sanctuary and salvation. Butler used science fiction to discuss any issues related to the African American community by the smart combination of utopia and dystopia and lead the way in bringing black people into the imagined future, the most common focus of science fiction. Butler voices out the inequalities and injustices existing in our society and succeeds in conveying significant and relevant messages through her novels. The two noteworthy elements in Butler's work that sets her apart from other writers are the creation of supernatural intelligent black women characters who cross time & space and the ability to present incredible black diasporic storylines while contradicting the tenants of realism.

“I wrote myself i.e., since I'm me and I'm here and I'm writing”

Butler was attracted to the genre of dystopian science fiction since it gave her freedom as a writer. She believed in feminism and considered that women should be given their due share of liberty. It is a form of literature that explains social and political structures. Dystopia is often characterized by an authoritarian or totalitarian form of government. It is often repressive social control system, lack of control system or absence of individual freedom, expressions. She also said that she was writing not for other people, but for herself. Although she was glad if her work helped others, she said that writing each of her works forced her to grow in new ways, and that she wrote to create herself. The present study include Butler science fiction novel *Kindred* for critical analysis.

Theme Analysis:

In *Medias res* is a Latin phrase that means “into the middle of things”. A novel or narrative that begins in *medias res* opens at a critical point in the middle of the plot and establishes the key components of the story characters, setting and conflict in a sequence of flashbacks. As such, the protagonist generally describes the story's origin and resolution by moving back and forth between related incidents in the text. The first time the reader meets Dana, the protagonist of Octavia Butler's 1979 novel *Kindred*, most of her body, except a part of

her arm, has returned to 1976. The rest of Dana's arm is stuck somewhere in the middle of her bedroom wall and in 1815 on the Weylin plantation.

In the opening scene of the novel, Butler introduces Dana in the middle of the action of the novel; in Media's res. Dana moves between incidents amid the twentieth and nineteenth centuries and establishes the origin and resolution of *Kindred*'s plot.

Rufus is the prime embodiment of this theme. When we first meet Rufus, he is a young boy. While his race and gender alone give him some measure of authority, his youth renders him relatively powerless, and at this stage in his life, Rufus is a humane, compassionate soul. Despite being bombarded by the message that his skin makes him superior to all African-American people, Rufus's instinctive moral sense tells him that Alice and Nigel are worthy of his respect and friendship. Yet Rufus's good instincts prove no match for the power he is given. When he comes into his inheritance and becomes a slave owner, Rufus begins to believe that he has a right to control the lives of others, mete out punishments, and have all of his demands satisfied. A small tyrant, he turns on his friends and elders, abusing Alice and treating Nigel as a subordinate. Like his son Rufus, Tom Weylin succumbs to the corrupting influence of his authority. We never see Weylin as a child, so we don't know whether his instincts are as sound as his son's.

In Butler's novel, family ties keep slaves in one place, which makes familial love a tool of those who seek to oppress. The slaves know that if they displease the Weylins in any way, the Weylins might retaliate by selling them away from their families. This is what happens to Sam, who is sold away from his family for the crime of speaking to Dana. The Weylins also encourage family ties as a way to bind the slaves more closely to the plantation. They do not trust Nigel until he marries Carrie and begins a family. By settling down, Nigel weds himself to the plantation and his life there. He loves his wife and children and wants to support them, so he is less likely to run away, rebel, or plan subversive actions. Sarah, too, is held hostage by her love for Carrie. Weylin knows he could get a good price for Carrie, but she is more valuable to him on the plantation. Not only does Carrie work hard, but she also inspires Sarah to work hard; as long as she has Carrie to protect, Sarah will stay on the plantation and follow Weylin's orders. Alice is bound to the plantation and to life solely by her children.

Once Rufus tells her he has sold her children, she has no family to hold her, and she promptly escapes by taking her own life. Family ties account, in part, for Dana's loyalty to Rufus. Although Rufus mistreats her cruelly, Dana cannot help continuing to save his life. She feels a familial bond to him, and moreover, because he is her ancestor, she must save him to safeguard her own life. Family connections are one of the few sources of joy in the lives of the slaves Butler depicts. At the same time, though, family ties are what force the slaves to remain on the plantation, which is the source of their torment.

Kindred is a novel, filled with whippings, rape, hangings, dog attacks, and various other brutalities. Butler crams her novel with violent episodes not to shock or titillate but to bring to life the omnipresent terror that African-Americans lived with in the 1800s. The threat of violence informs all of her characters' decisions and shapes their personalities. The white characters believe it is their right, and even their duty, to inflict bodily harm. The black characters know that any spark of rebelliousness, independence, or cleverness may be rewarded with a whipping, or worse. They are often cowed by this knowledge. Butler argues that violence warps everyone, victim and perpetrator alike.

The motif of time travel gives structure to each section of *Kindred*. Episodes open with Dana's travels backward in time to 1800s Maryland and close with her travels forward in time to 1970s California. For Dana, time travel becomes expected, even ordinary. This shows how shockingly easy it is for modern-day people to accept slavery. Just as Dana quickly gets used to the initially bewildering sensation of time travel, she quickly gets used to the initially unthinkable institution of slavery.

In *Kindred*, whips symbolize the white man's power and capacity for violence. The men who wield whips in the novel are men to be feared. A whip in the hand of a white man embodies all that is evil in the antebellum South. The way the whips function stands for the slow, soul-crushing effect of slavery. Whips have the capacity to kill, but, unlike guns, they kill slowly. They are a premeditated instrument of slow torture. In the same way, slavery kills the soul piece by piece.

Birthdays stand for the cruel cycle of slavery. For the slaves on the Weylin plantation, the birth of infants is a mixed blessing. Although the birth of a child brings with it great joy, it also creates great suffering. The necessity of caring for an infant links parents more closely to the plantation, making it almost impossible for them to consider escape. As the infant grows, the parent must suffer from the knowledge that his or her child is enslaved and must fear the possibility that a family member will be sold. Butler makes Dana's first trip to Maryland coincide with her birthday to suggest that, like an infant on the Weylins' plantation, she has been born into suffering. Dana's final trip to Maryland comes on the Fourth of July, the birthday of the United States. The timing of this trip reminds us that this nation is grounded in a history of agony. Although the birth of the United States brought about great good, it brought pain in equal measure.

The first important theme is that of the horrors of slavery. Dana is forced into the past where she sees people bought and sold, sees families torn apart, and experiences torture at the hands of her "owner." This terrible

institution will also come to tear apart our country in the Civil War while Dana experiences its consequences on a personal level. It is important to note that the idea of acceptance of this institution invades the white and the black population alike. Whites grow up to believe that slavery is part of their entitlement as the superior race, while blacks accept it, because the white race has conditioned them to believe that it is their only option in life. They become too afraid of the whip or of being sold to a state further south to attempt escape. They are resigned to being property.

The second important theme involves the idea of obsessive love. Rufus comes to rely so completely on Dana that when she returns to future, he falls apart. He can't allow her or Alice to leave him and as a result, he impacts upon them in the most destructive ways. The whole system of slavery is also an example of obsessive love. The entitled white owners cannot let go of the power they achieve as slave owners, while the slaves themselves are conditioned to believe their white owners to survive.

The final theme is that of the human need to be free. Even though they are conditioned to believe they cannot escape, every slave wants freedom. Some are more willing to tempt the fates and run for Pennsylvania, but they all dream of a life where they are in control of everything that happens to them. It is especially true for Dana and Alice, both of whom dream of lives away from Rufus. It is even true for Rufus who wants a life where both Dana and Alice like him and love him. He wants freed from being just a plantation owner and wants to live accepted by those he loves.

The mood is mostly dark, because of the people who are held in slavery and the impact of both Tom and Rufus Weylin on them. There is always the fear of torture and of being sold to a state even further south. For Dana, there is the fear of never finding Kevin again and going home. However, in the end, there is a sense of hope that at least Dana assured that Hagar would be born, and she and Kevin are sane and well, now that Rufus is dead.

Conclusion:

Dystopia is a sub- genre of science fiction¹ and an emerging new branch of literature. Several authors are attracted to this particular genre. The present study examines how Butler presents a frightening future in her dystopian fiction. Huxley's *Brave New World*, Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty Four*, Wells' *'Time machine'* and Zamyatyn *'we'* are regarded as some of the major works of twentieth century dystopian literature. It has been acknowledged that several modern dystopian writers like Margaret Atwood, Chinua Achebe, Ursula K. Leguin, Isaac Asimov, Anthony Burgess, Kurt Vonnegut and Ray Bradbury have influenced on the writings of Butler.

Dystopian literature addresses the most horrific systems of society. It also broadens the readers' scope of awareness, accepted values and principles. However, though so much literature is based on these thematic questions and solution, the itinerary of real humanity has not changed. This calls into question the role of literature within people. Perhaps literature is considered just an entertainment. The society is unresponsive to the driving force of the dystopian sort of writers. The popularity of dystopian literature can be interpreted in another way also. This shows that people are eager to read these novels and learn from dystopian fiction.

In Butler's novels the race is not the entire focus even though her heroes turn out to be black, but she utilized life sciences to answer what makes us alike and what makes us different among human beings. Difference, adaptability, change, and survival are thematic threads connecting Butler's books as tightly as a pattern. One can see Butler as an incomparable writer, a strong black voice in helping to build a black presence in science fiction, and as a woman determined to weave from spangled fabric new patterns of her own design.

The white characters believe it is their right and even their duty, to inflict bodily harm and they are coarsened as a result of this belief. The black characters know that any spark of rebelliousness, independence or cleverness may be rewarded with a whipping or worse. Butler argues that violence warps victim and perpetrator alike.

Octavia Butler is considered as the most prominent science fiction writer of her times. She was attracted to the dystopian genre since it gave her freedom as a writer. She believed in feminism and always considered that women should be given their due share of freedom. Butler presents the female as body, healer, savior, settler, nurturer, victim, mother, liberator, rebel, and builder, defendant, noble and inherently virtuous. She was also an advocate of black people who were deprived of their liberty.

Through her novels, she voices out the inequalities and injustices existing in our society and succeeds in conveying significant and relevant messages through her novels. The contribution of Octavia Butler usually recognized as the first black woman to gain widespread compliments and appreciation as an exploratory fiction writer have influenced the works of new generations of science fiction writers of colour. Butler's fiction was definitely in the social science fiction vein. In order to explore modern and ancient social subjects, Butler utilized the exaggerated reach of tentative fiction. She often represented concepts like, gender, religion; social status in symbolic language and wretched open the science fiction gates of gender and colour with her extraordinary vision, imagination and courage.

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Cultural Discourse as an Empowering Strategy in Maya Angelou's Autobiographical Fictions

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Abstract: *Black women autobiographies have committed a tradition within a tradition. Maya Angelou, the Phenomenal Renaissance woman is an eminent autobiographer. Various empowering strategies through African Culture have been experimented by Maya Angelou. Story-telling is one of the most important natures in African Culture. Maya Angelou has also empowered herself through story-telling ability. Grandmother and grand daughter relationship plays a significant role in African tradition. Through songs, dancing, acting, artistic and writing one can identify her own identity. Maya Angelou has proved her identity through songs, dance, acting and other narratives to exposure herself and her oppressed womanhood. Experimenting to understand the nature of things in life through reading books of Shakespeare, Edgar Allan Poe and Charlotte Bronte and so on also imparted herself in African tradition. Another important strategy is recalling both 'episodic' and 'semantic' memory. The use of an empowering mode of narration termed as psycho-narration has also aided Maya Angelou's series to construct her female subjectivity. To conclude, Maya Angelou has proved her own self identity with the aid of empowering strategy through her autobiographies.*

Keywords: *story-telling, experimenting, recalling, episodic and semantic memory, psycho-narration.*

“All of my work is meant to say, ‘You may encounter many defeats but you must be defeated.’ In fact, the encountering may be the very experience which creates the vitality and the power to endure.”

- Maya Angelou.

Introduction

A survey of the African American women's autobiography seems it necessary to substantiate the complexities of the African American women's lives. The literature examines the issues of racial and gender – based discrimination experienced by most black woman, the research and findings are situated within a American context, and do not necessarily address the problems that confront African American in USA or in the other countries. The description of black women was so prejudiced and so they have decided to write an autobiography for themselves which gave them a self-determined identity.

Maya Angelou's autobiographies are the valuable treasures of her personal thoughts of life. She depicts herself as a representative of her race, a black American woman. Her narratives mostly indicate “Black” experiences (Mcpherson). Angelou's emphasis on Black Social conditions, Black struggle, Black aspirations and Black strength makes her autobiography one of the most widely read narratives about the Black experience. Maya Angelou has used various cultural discourses as an empowering strategy in her autobiography.

Storytelling

The creation of fantasies is equivalent to storytelling, and storytelling in the black community is a highly rated art. The art of storytelling is an act of relief or a healing one. Maya Angelou through her experiences and through anecdotes continues her expressions of the white illogical hate which creates a fear amidst black women to meekly support anything for their survival. The story narrated by Martin Luther King retold by Maya makes it explicit here. “Honey, when you have your head in a lion's mouth, you don't snatch it out. You reach up and tickle him behind his ears and you draw your head out gradually. Every black woman in this country has her head in a lion's mouth” (SFH 59). To survive as a maid for the survival of her family black women like Lillian had to express their views.

Maya equals her delight in her move to the library with Brer Rabbit's state of relief at being tossed into the briar patch by the farmer. Both are victims of their situations yet both use their native wit and resourcefulness to overcome devastating odds. By borrowing the Brer Rabbit narrative, Maya makes an implicit comparison between her positions as a black American woman in an African, Islamic, male oriented world and the inhumane conditions of black Americans in slavery.

In spite of being political activists, men continued their gender discriminate which Maya recalls here. Again Maya recalls the stories of several slave heroines while attending an informal gathering of African women in London. The women are the wives of political activists in the struggle. Although their national backgrounds are quite different, they share the same sense of frustration and ineffectualness in comparison with their husbands, who ironically enjoy more autonomy in the fight for freedom. One woman narrates the history of Harriet Tubman, which is an example of one more dramatic presentation of the heroism of Sojourner Truth.

Maya extends her personal narrative to include anecdotes about well-known entertainers or political figures or observations about significant historical events; she necessarily fictionalizes the story of her past in her writings. Thus fictionalization gets highlighted when Maya includes other narratives within the narrative of her life. Each borrowed story is usually a sampling of a different context to achieve a special effect within the autobiography which Maya has contributed successfully with all sincerity and honesty. The stories about Sojourner Truth and Harriet Tubman like the folktale of Brer Rabbit enlarge the scope of Maya's autobiography and bring certain historical points of reference to the story of one person's life.

African Grandmother

African Grandmothers proved to be a pillar of strength and stood as matriarchs both for their families and in their black society. Mildred A. Hill-Lublin asserts: "A grandmother both in Africa and in America, has been a significant force in the stability and the continuity of the Black family and the community" (257). The first person who had inspired Maya in her life was her Momma. "People spoke of Momma as a good-looking woman and some, who remembered her youth, said she used to be right pretty. I saw only her power and strength" (CB 46). Momma was her paternal grandmother, a successful, smart entrepreneur who owned a general store in the centre of the activities in the black part of town.

According to Momma, feeding the soul is like feeding the body. She was not only industrious but also religious. The indomitable Momma rises each morning with the consciousness of a caged animal. She rises at four o' clock daily with a small prayer and had not made use of an alarm clock. The prayer, "Guide my feet this day along the straight and narrow, and help me to put a bridle on my tongue. Bless this house, and everybody in it. Thank you, in the name of your son Jesus Christ, Amen" (CB 7) would be a source of strength to Maya. Only from Momma, Maya begins to learn how to survive in the cage.

Momma serves as an embodiment of great strength to Maya. She is stern and determined to rear the children and also possesses the wisdom of a matriarch. Though Momma is not formally educated, she is full of wisdom, highly religious, hard working, and quite an extraordinary character. She teaches Maya the lessons on trusting her maternal instincts. Annie Henderson proves to be a primary example, as the strong grandmother, both in African American Literature- the traditional preserver of the family, the source of the folk wisdom, and the instiller of values within the Black community.

Artistic Genius

Oral experiments through songs, dancing, acting, writing and artistic forms such as painting, drawing, sculpture, quilting, weaving, dance, music etc., have also been identified as a form of expressing identity. Only a writer of good writing skill can express himself in a wholesome way the expression of his entire life through the art of autobiography. Angelou's appreciation of music and song as elements of rejoicing and release in the black community exemplifies the empowering strategy. Music, as a tool of empowerment, at times becomes a weapon of defiance, taking on the characteristics of flagrant resistance.

While Maya was working in the Purple Onion, the members were discussing about that they were in need of a singer and if anyone knew folk song, which lasted for two hours, it would be good. Maya voluntarily tells them that she knew a calypso song. Maya voluntarily tells them that she knew a calypso song. All men exchanged the looks with them and started to laugh. She justifies their African slang too. The firmness in the black woman to leave nothing untouched is revealed here. Maya shifts gradually from a cabaret dance to a talent as a Calypso folk singer which renders her an opportunity to get acquainted with the Porgy and Bess a musical concert.

In the last three decades she has written and produced several prize-winning documentaries, including *Afro-Americans in the Arts*, a PBS(Public Broadcasting Service) special for which she received the Golden Eagle, and *Black, Blues, Black* (1968), a ten-part program about the prominent role of Africa culture in American life. In 1973, Maya became only the second poet next to Robert Frost, to read at a presidential inauguration when she read her poem *On the Pulse of Morning* at President Bill Clinton's inauguration and it was broadcast live around the world.

Experimenting

Maya Angelou was molested at the tender age of six, this drawn herself into the world of mutism. Experimenting to understand the nature of things in life in the world of five years of mutism, Maya read the books of Shakespeare and Edgar Allan Poe. She even memorizes about sixty sonnets of Shakespeare and also reads the novel of Charlotte Bronte's *Jane Eyre*, which had inspired her to release from the state of self-mute trauma to an empowered woman voice with the power of words that has enriched her creative imagination and has also empowered her story telling ability. Angelou read through the Bible twice as a young child, and memorized many passages from it. African American spirituality, as represented by Angelou's grandmother, has gained its impact throughout Angelou's writings. Titles from biblical allusions like Gather Together in My Name and anecdotes like Go down Moses, the Camel allegory revealed her spiritual wisdom.

The elements of the individuals self, loss and discontentment, process of maturity and spiritual values gained by Maya Angelou and depicted in her autobiographical series validate the series to be a proof of the genre of 'bildungsroman.'(victorianweb.n.pag.) Through the philosophy of Afro centric Cosmology, Angelou

has universalized her personal life and connected herself with her African Ancestors. The autobiographical series adheres to the concept of Afro centric Cosmology. Maya Angelou has constructed a uniquely black and female autobiographical self. She has gifted a literary legacy and has proved to be a guiding force, a source of encouragement and inspiration for the readers and for the future literary trends.

Recalling

The empowering strategies which Maya Angelou has experimented to empower herself are multifaceted. The strategy of 'recalling from memory' proves to be a supreme empowering strategy. Recalling from memory, the past experiences and thereby revisioning through an autobiographical account serves as a powerful mode particularly for women to create and embody their subjectivity and identity. Maya Angelou's autobiographical series prove to reclaim her female voice of empowerment through reinvestigating and recalling the past through the lens of the present.

Maya's recalling refers to both 'episodic' and 'semantic' memory respectively. It is through this episodic memory she recollects the specific incidents from the past, relives events and as Tulving phrases it Maya helps the reader to travel back in time. Through her semantic memory Maya recalls her generic knowledge of her community, her culture and her literary knowledge too. She recalls the days of her memorizing more than sixty sonnets, and the entire lines of the mock epic *Rape of the Lock* (1712).

The silence of five year to a female girl at a tender age of thirteen reveals the extreme stage of oppressor, which the horrifying sexual abuse had rendered to this girl. "Mrs. Flowers, for she had given me her secret word which called forth a djinn who was to serve me all my life: books" (CB 200). Flowers is the woman who teaches Maya practical lessons about life and also broadens her appreciation of literature, which serves as a great help for Maya throughout the book. Flowers ministers to Maya's growing hunger and quest for individualities by giving her books of poetry, talking to her philosophically through books, and encouraging her to recite poems, committing poems to memory, pondering them, recalling them. While lonely, it gives Maya a sense of power within herself, transcendence over her immediate environment.

Flowers awakens Maya's conscience, sharpens her perspective of her environment and of the relationship between Blacks and the larger society which teaches her something about the beauty and power of language. Emotionally and intellectually strengthened by this friendship, Maya begins to compose poetic verses and ring roses and to keep a scrap book journal in which she records her reactions to and impressions of people, places and events and new ideas that she is introduced to by books.

Psycho Narration

The use of an empowering mode of narration termed as psycho- narration has aided Maya Angelou's series to construct her female subjectivity. Psycho- narration employs the third person as it is part of the narrative discourse unlike the first person monologues. From the first person 'I' to third person narrative 'Maya', Maya Angelou's psyche coincides with the characters records through which she records her thoughts and emotions.

Sensations, dreams and erotic experiences stresses the nature of sexual awareness thereby as Smith asserts in her *A Companion to Jane Austen* (2000) that "psycho- narration subtly makes a space for female desire and thereby inscribes it as part of female subjectivity within the empowering interpretation of autobiography" (56). Psycho-narration has offered another advantage of temporal flexibility. According to Cohn in his *Transparent Minds Narrative Modes for Presenting Consciousness in Fiction* (1978) the mode can "as readily summarize an inner development over a long period of time as it can render the flow of successive thoughts and feelings, or expand and elaborate a mental instant" (34).

After visualizing the work of heavy narcotics in the body of Troubadour Martin, Maya awakens and asserts that, "I had no idea what I was going to make of my life, but I had given a promise and found my innocence. I swore I'd never lose it again" (GT 214).

Conclusion

The process of Maya Angelou's self-consciousness with self confidence and self respect aids the beginning of her empowerment. The theory of empowerment states that often empowered women transfer their mode of empowerment to their children, families and whole communities. Thereby, they begin a virtuous cycle of empowerment. Empowerment is a complex inter connected system which includes economics, class, race, caste, gender, geography, ethnicity, religion, age, culture, and other factors too. It is a lifelong process. It is both a strategy and a goal. Through the empowering mode of autobiography Maya Angelou has passed on her empowering strategies to the readers in the present age and also proves to continue her art of autobiography for the future generation too. She strongly upholds that her writings would continue to empower woman throughout generations.

To conclude, Maya Angelou's autobiographical series continues to serve as an inspiration to the universal womanhood thereby asserting her 'self' as a role model for a Phenomenal woman whom she states as,

I'm a woman
Phenomenally.
Phenomenal women,

That's me.
Now you understand
Just why head's not bowed. (41 - 46)

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Guilt of the Past: The Trauma of Indigenous Dispossession in Kate Grenville's *The Secret River*

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Abstract: *The indigenous people (Aborigines) of Australia are one of the oldest surviving cultures in the world. They have inhabited Australia for nearly 60,000 years and their culture, laws and ceremonies, and their primordial bond with the land are strong and enduring. The trauma of the indigenous people of Australia started with the colonization of the continent by the British in 1770. The early years were devastating for the indigenous people who lived around the present day Sydney. They were decimated by many traumatic events like massacres, wars, diseases, incarceration, forced removal from land, and restriction of movement. Settler colonialists usurped the indigenous people, their land and its wealth without any treaty. Australian Literature has sometimes emphasized this destructive impact of the colonial order on aboriginal culture and at other times emphasized the aboriginal people's strength and courage in responding to that new order. Especially in the second half of the twentieth century Australians have been exposed to shocking revelations about their colonial past. As a result many of the contemporary Australian writers began to engage with the past and the ambiguous relationship between indigenous and non indigenous Australians in their literary output. Kate Grenville, one such revered contemporary Australian writer, deals with the issues of power and national identity in colonial as well as cotemporary Australia in her historical fiction. She has received Orange prize for Fiction in 2001 for *The Idea of Perfection* and Commonwealth Writer's prize in 2006 for the novel *The Secret River*. *The Secret River*, based on colonial encounters was also shortlisted for Man Booker Prize and Miles Franklin Award. This novel is dedicated to the "Aboriginal people of Australia: past, present and future" and is acclaimed as a compelling narrative of settlement violence. This paper presents *The Secret River* as a significant cultural text that explores the contrasting elements of white Australian settler culture and indigenous Australian culture and the losses inflicted by one culture on the other.*

Key words: *trauma, colonization, power*

Through a reconstruction of past events, *The Secret River* enacts the violent trauma of aboriginal dispossession and destruction upon which Australia is founded. Grenville has sought to bring the secret of settler colonial violence out in to the open, with the aim of promoting Aboriginal healing and reconciliation. She has borrowed the title of the novel from Stanner Boyer's famous announcement that "there is a secret river of blood in Australian history". The novel tells the story of William Thornhill, a convict whose life is based upon Grenville's own ancestor, Solomon Wiseman. William Thornhill is sentenced to death for stealing a shipload of expensive woods. Offered an alternative, he chooses transportation to New South Wales, Australia. Like Wiseman, William is transported to New South Wales, and once freed, settles on the Hawkesbury River outside Sydney. Australia appears to be a land of opportunity, though the hamlet of Sydney is at this time (1806) little more than a cluster of crude huts. William adapts to this strange new environment, following the examples of other convicts and fortune-hunters. He stakes out a claim to an attractive piece of land (ironically, shaped like a man's thumb), grandly naming it "Thornhill's Point". Then things begin unraveling. Native aborigines who already inhabit the land, and to whom the concept of ownership is utterly alien, are initially passive, then resentful, eventually confrontational. Upon the arrival of the settlers on the Hawkesbury River Banks, the yam daisies, planted by aborigines are removed as weeds, and replaced by Thornhill's family with corn. Until William plants his patch of corn, the Aborigines play a peripheral role in the novel. They hover behind the scenes, with little impact on the events. The act of pulling up the daisies and planting his corn sets William on a path of direct conflict with the Aborigines. The land now has two owners, neither of whom will abandon the land willingly. The Aborigines leave a ring of spears around William's hut as a sign of their willingness to fight for their land. Misunderstandings crop up and multiply, and subsequent actions lead to a horrific massacre, in which William grimly, reluctantly participates. William's "triumph" is plaintively contrasted with the stoical endurance of the aborigine Jack, the lone survivor of the massacre, who possesses a primal connection to the land and its spirit that William's act of "ownership" can never displace. In the end he is seen seeking to assume something of aboriginal rootedness, the aboriginal sense of belonging, which as a colonist in a new land, he painfully lacks.

The *Secret River* is a significant cultural text in the sense that it foregrounds the ambiguous relationship between the settlers and the original inhabitants of the country. Throughout the novel, Grenville juxtaposes British and Aboriginal understandings of several important social concepts: personal property, clothing, hunting and farming, family relationships, and relationship to the natural environment. Aboriginal

claims to possession are also presented in equal terms to settler claims to the land. The incomprehension with which each culture regards the other leads to the majority of conflicts in the novel. The awkward meetings and uneven exchanges between settlers and locals point to the fact that the violence, when it comes, arrives not out of nowhere, but out of grievances accumulated and territorial skirmishes and misunderstandings unresolved over years.

Indigenous Culture-Subverting the Traditional Notion

In presenting the Indigenous culture, the novel undermines many established beliefs about the Aborigines' peculiar habits and character. It shows how the Aborigines managed the land in far more superior and scientific fashion than most settlers realized. When William tells his son that the aborigines are savages and they did not plant today so that they could eat tomorrow" (146) Dick retorts telling his father that they can do a lot more than he can, and they don't have to spend all day tending the corn. William is furious, and he gives Dick a beating. Dick's interest in the Aborigines opens William's eyes to the fact that the Aborigines are not savages. William is thoroughly impressed with the aborigine's ability to start a fire with two sticks, and the reason he gets so angry at Dick for saying that the Aborigines know how to live better because they don't spend all day sweating over a patch of corn is that he senses an element of truth in the statement. If the Aboriginal way of life has something to offer, then the value of everything that William desires, such as social prestige and power, and everything that he works hard for, the domination and ownership of the land, will be undermined.

One day in January, William notices smoke coming from near the Aborigines' camp. The Aborigines have started a fire along the slope. William and the others think that the Aborigines started the fire just to catch the lizards running away from the flame. They think the Aborigines are lazy and wasteful, burning a whole patch of land just to catch a few lizards. But they soon realize that the Aborigines have a long term plan for the burned land. Soon, new shoots of grass appear, attracting whole families of kangaroos. The Aborigines pick off the kangaroos when they come to feed. The smell of fresh meat cooking, drifts over to the Thornhills' camp, making their mouths water. William decides to shoot a kangaroo for their own pot. But he is not an experienced hunter, and the kangaroos easily avoid him. William also learns that Aborigines can control fire with the branches of leaves.

On another occasion, William approaches the Aborigines with the hope of trading flour for some kangaroo meat. Whisker Harry accepts the flour and gives William a leg of kangaroo. The meat is still covered in hair, and William cannot figure out how to skin it. He finally takes an axe to it, cutting it up into pieces. The poor butchering leaves little to roast, so Sal makes a soup with the meat. They have to strain the liquid through muslin to catch the hairs William could not remove. While the soup is satisfying, it does not come close to taste of roasted meat.

Sal, William's wife looks down upon the aborigines as "no better than dumb animals" (Grenville 207) She chats with the Aboriginal women as they pass by the hut just as she would chat with her neighbors in London. However, her patter is laced with racist comments and the assumption that the women are little more than animals. Grenville undermines Sal's sense of racial and civilizational superiority in the episode with the bonnet. Once Sal trades her bonnet and some sugar for one of their bowls which she intends to take back to London and sell as collector's piece. One aboriginal woman puts the bonnet on her bottom, demonstrating a marked lack of respect for the trappings of white culture. While Sal laughs at the women for the incongruity of the bonnet next to their primal nakedness, the Aborigine women see Sal's clothes as absurd. Sal eventually comes to understand that the aborigine women have their own routines of domestic work and childcare that resemble hers.

Settler Culture-Representing Colonial Imperialism

The white settlers in the novel display alternative versions of the dominant colonial culture, from coexistence to ambivalence to atrocity in the way they approach Aboriginal possession. On the one hand, there is the "good settler"—Tom Blackwood—whose stated philosophy is "Give a little, take a little, that's the only way" (Grenville 107). Blackwood lives with Aboriginal people, but he describes it as his land, and he is the one who suggests that Thornhill settle on the point. He speaks the aboriginal language and has great appreciation and knowledge of their culture. On the other, there is the rapacious character of Smasher Sullivan, who lives on Broken Bay, and who is responsible for the rape and murder of numerous Aboriginal people throughout the book. Blackwood and Sullivan often clash as Blackwood refuses to accept Sullivan's vicious treatment of the Aborigines. William occupies a middle position. He is torn between Smasher Sullivan's racist hatred of the Aborigines and his argument that violence is the only way to deal with them, and the moderate approach symbolized by Mrs. Herring and Thomas Blackwood that suggests it is possible to live side by side with the Aborigines. He does not like Smasher's crude mouth and drunken ways, and he respects Blackwood's work ethic and taciturn character. He wants to follow Blackwood's advice of giving a little to take a little, but he does not understand how to implement it. He is willing to give the Aborigines some food, but he is not willing to share his claim to the land. Though he is anxious to avoid becoming like Smasher, he ultimately becomes involved in the climactic massacre.

Following the massacre, the novel explicitly portrays the outcome for William as a simultaneous gain and loss. The pacification of the area leads to William's confirmation of his possession of the land, and to increasing wealth into his old age. It also leads to his loss. Firstly, one of his sons, already partly acculturated to the local Aboriginal group, goes to live with the 'good' settler, Tom Blackwood. Beyond this, there is a loss of confidence in possession, a kind of dissonance produced within William's later years. In the end he is seen as a puzzled old man who is still unsettled. Despite his high stone walls, English garden and gatepost lions, William finds himself confronting emptiness:

Sometimes he thought he saw a man there, looking down from the clifftop . . . Told himself that was a man, a man as dark as the scorched trunk of a stringy bark, standing on the lip of the stage, looking through the air to where he sat looking back. He strained, squinted through the glass until his eyeballs were dry. Finally he had to recognize that it was no human, just another tree, the size and posture of a man. Each time, it was a new emptiness.(Grenville 330 and 333)

Thus *The secret river* concludes with a profound sense of loss. All of this suggests that Grenville has succeeded in unsettling the settler reader, in questioning the authenticity of their presence in the land. The novel presents both good and bad forms of colonization, in which the bad prevails through misunderstanding. As Lyn McCredden has suggested: "The emptiness which William sees each evening in the land, and the fullness he has pursued in possessing and cultivating his own little piece of earth, are represented as being both of his own making and the products of historical forces" (McCredden 23). Whether they conduct their activities in brutal or civil ways, they perpetuate the settler-colonial articulation directly to the land at the expense of indigenous possession.

Thus by contrasting the Indigenous culture and the settler culture, the novel situates Indigenous Australia as marginalized, disadvantaged and dispossessed – but also, just as significantly, alive. It also seeks to consider the impact of that loss upon non-indigenous Australia in order for the non-indigenous Australian nation to 'cope with' the violence, brutality and consequently the guilt of colonialism.

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Cultural Kinetics in Badal Sircar's *Scandal in Fairy Land*

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Abstract : “Cultural kinetics” is an emergent paradigm that couples a network approach to large-scale community or institutional organisation with large-network analysis, adding as well the longitudinal dimension of time. It studies networked social processes in large networked systems, and formation and transmission of cultural patterns and social structures as learned behaviour. Such analysis of complex systems demonstrates that it is a mistake to regard “structures” as fixed, immobile or recurrent in exactly repetitive form. Rather, structures tend to be “vibratory” within oscillatory fields of motion. Cultural Kinetics in the above sense is cast in a satiric mode in Badal Sircar’s *Scandal in Fairy land*.

The cultural kinetics of the play is a parody in which the iconography of the physical body symbolically dramatizes the disease of the socio-political body. The play exhibits the changing ways of life of societies and groups. In children’s theatre, in the garb of fantasy, the play unravels yellow journalism and the ugly face of commercialism – the cultural aberrations which lead to social malaise.

Sircar drives home the ideology of the Third Theatre for conscientization that change or development will come only from the people when they become critically aware of their situation and their potentialities to bring social change. Like all great thinkers of the world, Sircar is worried about the growing separation between economy and society and tries to instil values as antidotes to the ills of society for the betterment of individuals and the society. The paper concludes that the part played by culture is pivotal in understanding, reproducing and challenging social, economic and political power relations.

Key Words: Cultural Kinetics, Cultural Patterns, Social Structures, Physical body, Socio-political body, Yellow Journalism, Commercialism, Change.

Culture refers to both individual and collective human experience in the form of cumulative deposit of knowledge, roles, symbols, beliefs, values, attitudes, meanings, hierarchies, religion, notions of time, spatial relations, concepts of the universe in relation to living and non-living things and so on. Though common patterns of human life are found existing among the diverse living patterns of humanity, culture represents a way of life, a specific or unique life style of an ethnic group. Therefore, culture is both diverse and unified. According to Waugh, “Cultural studies is constantly asking new questions, looking for new ways of theorizing and understanding cultural phenomena and social implications”(251).It brightens up many dark corners of human knowledge and experience with new critical insights.

From time immemorial, literature depicting socio-cultural stereotypes has emerged owing to Man’s undying urge to narrate and listen to stories. The changing phenomenon of change is phenomenal and culture is no exception to this. According to Marxist theory of ideology, shared by Louis Althusser, “culture is one of several ideological state apparatuses whose raison d’etre is to instil meanings and values in the individual” (247).

“Cultural Kinetics” is an emergent paradigm that couples a network approach to large-scale community or institutional organisation with large-network analysis, adding as well the longitudinal dimension of time. It studies networked social processes in large networked systems, and formation and transmission of cultural patterns and social structures as learned behaviour. Such analysis of complex systems demonstrates that it is a mistake to regard “structures” as fixed, immobile or recurrent in exactly repetitive form. Rather, structures tend to be “vibratory” within oscillatory fields of motion. Cultural kinetics in the above sense is cast in a satiric mode in Badal Sircar’s *Scandal in Fairy land*. The cultural kinetics of the play is a parody in which the iconography of the physical body symbolically dramatizes the disease of the socio-political body. The play exhibits the changing ways of life of societies and groups.

As J.L.Styan opines, “all values in art depend on the power of communicating them, making them a wholly felt breathing force to the recipient” (165). Badal Sircar, a Bengali playwright, actor, director, a committed theatre activist and doyen of third theatre for conscientization, communicates relevant socio-political and cultural messages to his audience.

As Badal Sircar claims in one of his lectures, "theatre by itself will never change the world for the better, but let us allow theatre to stake a modest claim in the process of that change", (Badal 37) the ideology behind the Third Theatre is that development will come only from the people, when they become critically aware of their situation and their potentialities to bring about social change.

Sircar's *Scandal in Fairy Land*, which is an adaptation of Premendra Mitra's *Roopkathar Kelenkari*, a story written for children, is a work of fantasy dealing with an adult theme in children's theatre. *Scandal in Fairyland* unravels yellow journalism. It presents people's craving for sensational news and how unscrupulously the media is bent on providing thrilling accounts of news. Consequently, this play is a brilliant critique of the media and their machinations for sensation and money. It unmasks the ugly face of commercialism, an adult theme in children's theatre to make them also aware and sagacious.

The works of fantasy are alluring as they seem to escape from reality. Makarand Paranjape says in this regard, "Reality is harsh, unkind, and cruel, but fantasy, art, love is more fulfilling, satisfying and energizing" (92), is true because fantasy deals with events that are impossible by real life standards. Freud's view that "a happy person never fantasies" and "the motive forces of fantasies are unsatisfied wishes and every single fantasy is the fulfillment of a wish, a correction of unsatisfying reality" (38) is applicable to the reverie of Sircar too with a difference. In the garb of satire, the idea that the avarice for possession of wealth makes people adopt fraudulent means to achieve their ends is proffered through comic situations which have contemporary relevance.

In a fairytale framework Prince Thunderbolt, the hero goes about killing ogre after ogre and saves eight kingdoms from the ravages of the wicked ogre and then marries Princess Rose in a happy ever after manner. Towards the end, the play subverts the image of Prince Thunderbolt. As Ayyappa Paniker critiques, "The hero's discomfiture comes to light when the veracity of his having killed so many monsters is questioned and he himself produces witnesses [...] to prove the allegation that he has not slain any Ogres and that he has used fraudulent means to acquire kingdoms and gold" (34). The prince becomes a cheat by paying heed to the words of Midas Speculatorotti, the owner and editor of the Daily Fairy Green who is an embodiment of corruption.

Prince Thunderbolt emerges as a slayer of ogres. In his unique style, he has killed the seventh ogre also and the ogre's body is said to be cut into pieces "and scattered over the seven seas at the end of the earth, and not a sign of the beast remains, except in the blood stains on the Prince's victorious sword", (42) reads the Daily Fairy Green Version. Prince Thunderbolt has been offered half of the kingdom and the hand of the Princess by every King for every successful venture. But he has declined the offer of the Princesses and instead has gained an equivalent value in gold. So he remains a bachelor still and the citizens of Copperland avidly wait to know his decision and the daily Fairy Green makes a successful market on this issue. The media thus caters to the needs of public taste.

Prince Thunderbolt is looked upon as the wealthiest and the most powerful prince and a brave knight who retrieves countries in distress like Christian in Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* or Spenser's Red Cross Knight in *Faerie Queene*. The chorus considers him a great hero, a saviour of mankind:

THREE: It is our hope that Prince Thunderbolt will forever remain loyal to his mission,

FOUR: And save more such kingdoms from the onslaught of ogres (44).

Sircar's satiric tone at the expectation of the people is very obvious. He rather expects each and every individual to take up the responsibility on his/her own shoulders for common good in which case there is no need for hero-worship which is a sort of escapism from one's duties. I.A. Richards' view that mass culture encourages people to prefer fantasy to reality, is reiterated by Leavis too when he argues that recreational pursuits through radio, cinema, advertisements and popular fiction instil habits of fantasy that make us ill equipped to deal with life (Day 131,132).

The paper boy functions as a bridge connecting the fairyland and the real world. He publicizes the Stance of Fairy Green about Prince Thunderbolt's issue. When Thunderbolt refused to marry the princesses, Daily Fairy Green praises the exceptional Prince Thunderbolt by publishing a sizzling editorial on him: "Sacred vow to save Fairyland – the bachelor Prince's noble ideals – sacrifices connubial bliss for love of Fairyland" (45).

Media should be a torch-bearer and not a torture giver. But Mitra's modern fairy tale of a prince and an ogre virtually created by the press with a vested interest, a shady game of 'dying and vanishing' of the ogre finally subverted or exposed by the press itself "is a brilliant critique of the media in their machinations for sensation and money" says Sircar about the original. The same is true of the adaptation too. The press exploits the human tendency to crave for sensational news or scandals. In the words of Sinha, the Daily Fairy Green "[...] uses its editorials to whip up public hysteria, with little juicy tit-bits to keep the emotional interest of its readers at fever pitch" (116).

The editorial which glorified the prince as a sage or a super star adopts a fresh ploy to increase the sales of the paper as soon as the public interest wanes. It begins to criticize the decision of Thunderbolt to get married. The editorial questions his stand thus: "But should not a man who chose the welfare of the nation as his cause be made of sterner stuff?" (49). It further deplores and condemns him for having stooped to his personal comforts and happiness without any consideration for the welfare of the nation. As the Prince is steadfast in his decision, the press makes a diplomatic maneuver of subverting the fairy tale version of Thunderbolt and exposes him. The paper boy very loudly shouts "Prince Thunderbolt a fraud! Corruption in Fairyland! Prince Thunderbolt exposed!" (50). The sizzling hot news sends sales soaring sky high.

The impact of the mass media on the public is so tremendous that they indubitably believe everything that is told from the view point of the media. The masses sail along the current of media waves. This attitude of the public is well brought out when the citizens of Ironia question the authenticity of Prince Thunderbolt's encounter with the ogres and their killings. The Daily Fairy Green editorial which extolled the virtues of the prince turns the tables against him and calls him a fraud and cheat. The people demand proof for the death of the ogre and ask for the corpse or a part of the ogre's dead body.

It is quite ironical to note that the ogre is a harmless old creature but Midas is greedy, selfish, shrewd and cunning. Thunderbolt accuses Midas of shady business dealings. But Midas is not ashamed of his act of paying money to write for him or bamboozling people, rather makes a loud and proud proclamation of his dealings:

We're all over the world making business deals. I make films too. All those religious stories – Jazz them up, cut and paste them, and make them into box office hits. I make so many things – ask me what I don't make! Parties, revolutions, plays, temples – you name it, I make and unmake it! (56). "If it had not been for him and his 'crooked ideas', both the Ogre and the prince would have been nowhere", (117) comments Sinha, exploring the villainous role of Midas. Culture Kinetics is discernible here through the mode of satire.

In the process of explanation Midas exposes himself while unmasking the 'gallantry and chivalry' of the prince. He points out that the prince has amassed wealth by means of the so-called adventures. He claims himself to be the master brain behind: "...Think how he must be enjoying his huge estate – seven halves make three and a half kingdoms! And all that gold? How do you think he's got such power and wealth? Who gave him the idea of making a deal with that Ogre? Yours truly, Midas Speculatorotti" (56-57). His brain child, the master plan brought him thirty-five percent commission. He considers Prince Thunderbolt, a fool who has lost a fine business at the sight of the princess. When he is exiled in punishment, he is not in the least bothered. He is glad enough to leave for Bengal and becomes a prosperous black marketeer.

Great thinkers like F.R. Leavis are alarmed by the growing divide between economy and society. F.R. Leavis is of the view that the organic community based on tradition is harmonious whereas industrial society based on rules, machines and anonymity is dissonant. He also questions the validity of proliferating commercial values, materialism, and competition which in his opinion, will destroy an authentic, unified culture, by replacing it with a synthetic, divided one (Day 132).

In the form of a modern day parable, Sircar criticizes the modern world which is filled with not non-human but inhuman characters. The ogre and Midas are juxtaposed to stress home the point that at least the ogre regrets and asks forgiveness, but not Midas, an inhuman wretch. The ogre states that he is unlucky to live up to a ripe age because, like his father and grandfather he has not been slain by any brave prince and adds that "just because I was greedy I've got to suffer all the pains of old age" (55) by listening to the crooked advice of men like Midas. It is appropriate here to quote the words of Vijay Tendulkar in an article, "Breakfast with evil" in which he states, "one sets up demons as targets of hate, so that they symbolize disowned aspects of one's own self" (n.pag). The ogre in this play symbolizes a human frailty like violence or oppression, an animalistic impulse. When man succumbs to it he becomes inhuman. The ogre, a monster is a foil to Midas, rather it serves to heighten by contrast, the sharpness of satire. It has been said by James Sutherland that "the satirist is most devastating when he appears to be most disengaged" (Sinha 114-115). It is this disengaged stance that Sircar achieves in this play by making an ogre more humane than Midas.

Beyond the realm of fairytale glitter, *Scandal in Fairyland* can be looked upon as an allegory. As has been clearly pointed out by Neelima Talwar, "From Northrop Frye to Frederic Jameson, a number of critical insights about allegory as a determining factor in philosophical, educational and fictional enterprise have been offered....Allegorical pattern in drama is intrinsically related to performability of the ideas" (110). Allegorization is a central aesthetic principle through which ideas are presented in the form of characters. These characters either perpetuate or subvert cultural stereotypes. Badal Sircar offers allegorization of the ogre to teach the masses the process of tackling violence.

The alternative measure to violence is peace and not further retaliation through violence. Prince Thunderbolt overpowers the ogre not by fighting with it or killing it but by means of love. The ogre is tamed into a submissive creature. While talking about its future it says, "Living on milk and honey for so long I've forgotten how to eat human beings. I can't even raise a feeble Fee Fi Fo Fum" (50). Originally the ogre lives on human flesh but it has been tamed by Thunderbolt. If a wild, man-eating ogre can be domesticated, why man cannot be reformed, whose oppressive, inhuman actions are not inherent traits, seems to be the question that Sircar wants to raise. Though this reading touches the extreme edge of imagination it is not impossible. Usha Jesudasan in her article "The Ahimsa way" speaks about violence at work place. She points out that having recognized violence, the most common response is to act with a similar kind of violence and it begets more violence and the vicious cycle continues. Every individual should realize that he / she is a perpetrator of violence and a little care and compassion for others will make a vital difference. She enumerates upon the reaction with ahimsa as follows: It may seem as if being an ahimsa person is akin to being a door mat, allowing

others to walk all over you. But, it gives you inner strength and power over the person who hurts you (Hindu Magazine 4). Only little drops of water make a mighty ocean, similarly the small and humble attempts of non-violence will lead to a global change.

It is highly relevant as the above Newspaper article appeared on the same day when India was frozen with a shock of a series of bomb-blasts at two major cities Bangalore and Ahmedabad on consecutive days in 2008. The faith-shattering, heart rending untoward incident reminds one of the words of Vijay Tendulkar in his article, "Breakfast with evil" : "The anomic violence that finds expression in religious and ethnic riots in the lonely streets of urban India is an example of [...] self-hatred" (n.pag). His words refer to the inhumanity of man towards his own clan. The root cause of all these anomalies is the wrong choice of man. He takes up the double edged weapon of violence, ironically to protect and also attack and thus becomes an enemy of mankind.

The core of a culture is formed by values, which means broad tendencies for preferences of certain state of affairs to others like good-evil or right-wrong. Therefore values can only be inferred from the way people act under different circumstances. Accordingly Prince Thunderbolt under the evil influence of the owner of Daily Fairy Green, Midas, is attracted towards money, the corrupting force of humanity and power through fraudulent means. Having reproached by conscience he throws away his degenerate self and tries to become human though not divine.

Many great prophets are of the opinion that if man hears the inner voice, the voice of God within, it will lead him towards the right path. If the intuitive power of man is tapped through 'spiritual sadhanas' like yoga and meditation, the real communion between man and his maker will be carried out. If it is done in a proper way every individual will be led by his unfailing power of intuition. It is apt and altruistic to quote the words of Bhaduri Mahasaya, a spiritual guru of Paramahansa Yogananda from *The Autobiography of a Yogi* by Yogananda: "What rishis perceived as essential for human salvation need not be diluted for the west. Alike in soul though diverse in outer experience, neither West nor East will flourish if some form of disciplinary yoga be not practised" (65). Though Sircar does not rely on religion for the salvation of humanity, it is certainly one of the unfailing means of solutions. Like Emerson, he has faith in himself, in his fellow human beings and makes a clarion call to unite them for combined endeavour resulting in beneficial action.

Through children's theatre Sircar, the satiric critic of social failings, conveys a serious thought provoking message to adults – the message of non-violence, one of the ever greatest principles advocated by Mahatma Gandhi. Gandhiji instructed people to develop moral courage, because he knew that with undaunted moral strength, insurmountable hurdles could be easily overcome. Referring to the way shown by Gandhiji, Srinivasa Iyengar remarks: "The way of 'an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth' cannot lead to a lasting harmony, for what is gained through force is constantly in danger of being lost through even greater force. The way of salvation would therefore be to meet the menace of evil, not with the weapon of Duragraha, but with Satyagraha, the force of Love and Truth" (257).

Similarly, Sircar sows the seeds of non-violence which will lead to the blossoming of love and compassion in the hearts of men to face the problems of the modern world. Above all, Sircar considers avarice for money as the corrupting and degenerating factor of humanity. He primarily whips at man's infatuation with money, for the love of possession of it paves the way for dehumanization and thus he looks forward to a new era of cleanliness in the politics of our nation.

To conclude, as Anoop says, the idea of Cultural Kinetics has got direct expression as a formal coding of life and art making it quite clear that what is first required of the critic is familiarity with a particular "imaginative universe", within which the acts of people are signs (71). The unbalanced materialism of the social body which is decoded through the characters of Prince Thunderbolt, Midas, the ogre, the paper boy, the King, the Minister, the Queen, and the chorus as people form a structure that determines all aspects of the emergent culture in *Scandal in Fairy land*.

The part played by culture is pivotal in understanding, reproducing and challenging social, economic and political power relations. Culture systems, on the one hand, may be considered as products of actions and on the other hand as conditioning influences upon further action. Culture thus becomes a cultivated behaviour imbibed and transmitted from generation to generation.

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Cultural Chaos in Kiran Desai's *The Inheritance of Loss*

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Abstract: Kiran Desai's Booker Winning post colonial novel, *The Inheritance of Loss* (2007) addresses the violence and exploitation to a abysmally disturbing and nerve-shattering extent perpetrated man on man. This paper is attempted to analyse the cultural encounters of the major characters like the imperial ICS officer Jemubhai Patel, the judge's westernised granddaughter Sai and her difficulty in adjusting with her anti-western lover Gyan, which leads to separation in Indian part and Biju's moral struggle to serve beef in New York restaurants and his return to India is analysed.

Key Words: Kiran Desai, Booker, The Inheritance of Loss, Cultural conflict.

Culture refers to a set of beliefs, moral codes, values and customs of a society, which is inherited from generation to generation. This moral values and faiths are differed from one group of people to another. Cultural difference takes place where the two or more different cultures disagree with each other. When the disagreement arises, it affects the life an individual to the core. This paper examines how the cultural chaos occurs in different characters of Kiran Desai's Booker Winning novel, *The Inheritance of Loss* (2007).

The Inheritance of Loss is the work that records, what John Sutherland calls "the multi-cultural reverberations of the new millennium with the sensitive instrumentality of fiction...It is a globalised novel for a globalised world." The incidents in the novel, like Kiran herself ricochets between two worlds, one set in Kalimpong town located in the western part of Darjeeling Hills in Eastern Himalayas of India and the other in New York, the city of worldwide fortune seekers. In the multi-layered narration, conflicts of cultural values, morals and ethics of the East and the West are inextricably interlinked.

Kiran focuses the cultural chaos through two parallel narratives. Jemubhai Patel, a retired judge of the colonial India lives in Kalimpong of West Bengal with his orphaned granddaughter Sai and his loyal cook. His house is surrounded by a coterie of Anglophiles like Lola, Noni and Mrs. Sen. The American part deals with the story of the cook's son Biju's struggle to survive as an illegal immigrant. Biju leads a fugitive life, shifting from place to place, with the constant fear of evading the INS (Immigration and Naturalization Service) as an illegal worker. Prasanta Bhattacharya calls that this novel is the "story of East meeting and perhaps 'eating' and 'digesting' the West, for most of the present Indian writers in English are cultural cross-breeds settling halfway between their Indian birth and a Eurocentric or Americanized upbringing, continues as if to give credence to Thor Hyderdahl's theory of human migration"(223).

As a school boy in Bishop Cotton School, Jemu was greatly dazzled by the portrait of Queen Victoria, erected at the entrance of his school building. He moves to Cambridge in 1939 to pursue his higher studies and returned India as a member of ICS (Indian Civil Service) and becomes a judge in Allahabad high court.

Prior to leaving England, Jemu was disinclined to abide Indian tradition and culture. He refused to throw away his father-given coconut into the sea, which his father believed would make his journey safer. He rejects the food prepared and packed by his mother. He fails to be empathetic with his parents, and instead he feels pity for them. The western culture makes him to speak against his father. In order to save the honour of the family, his father begged him to get back Nimi, for which Jemu denied saying, "Why are you talking like this?.. You're following the script of a village idiot. She is unsuitable to be my wife" (IL 306).

In the racist England, Jemu was isolated, experiencing a remarkable change in his personality that he worked for twelve hours at a stretch, late into the night, where "pusillanimity and his loneliness had found fertile soil... The solitude became a habit, the habit became the man, and it crushed him into a shadow" (IL 39). He tried out to speak English with British accent, applied extra powder to conceal his black skin. Amidst his attempts to accord with the westerners, he remained as a foreigner and received second rated treatment.

Jemu returned India with a transformed position of an ICS officer and becomes the mark of the colonial hang over. "He envied the English. He loathed Indians. He worked at being English with the passion of hatred and for what he would become, he would be despised by absolutely everyone, English and Indians, both" (IL 119). In his conscious attempt to anglicize himself, he becomes a painful puppet in the hands of his colonial captains. Ghosh feels, "In the process of becoming his colonizers, he disowned his family, tradition and culture and inherited the loss of self-esteem, pride and vitality that left him emotionally paralytic and spiritually dead. So degraded he became that he hated the presence of humans and felt comfortable in the company of a pure bred bitch" (70).

In England, he learns the English way and started to conceive the supremacy of the west. Homi Bhaba observes that the influence of a different culture often causes tension between the desire of holding on to one's identity and the demand for a change in identity and that mimicry is a compromise to this tension. To mimic the western culture, Jemu studied hard and worked hard to speak English with British accent. Like the British, he had tea every afternoon and used powder puff to hide his real skin colour. He ate English food and wore clean and ironed clothes. All of his clothes — his pajamas, towels, socks, underwear, and handkerchiefs are ironed by the cook. In spite of his all attempts, he remains an outsider, so that he suffers from a double isolation. Yet, his strong faith on the superiority of the west is not diminished.

In India, Jemu was taunted by the rude manifestation of racial trauma in England, which he had experienced twice during his Cambridge days. Once, in a bus stop, he was terribly insulted by a group of taunting white boys, who threw stones and made monkey faces at him. They teased at him, "why is the Indian brown?" he shits upside down, HA HA HA" (IL 209). In another worst incident, he ran away by seeing at the brutal attacks on an Indian boy. "One of the boy's attackers had unzipped his pants and was pissing on him, surrounded by a crowd of jeering red-faced men" (IL 209).

As Jemu was a loyal servant to the Raj, he couldn't tolerate his wife's participation in a rally organized by the Congress party to welcome Nehru. It has become an act of insubordination which seriously compromised his career. The infuriated judge asked Nimi a series of questions and thrashes her brutally. He was inhuman to his cook, and not even affectionate towards his granddaughter Sai. On this chosen duality of Jemu's character, Prasantha Bhattacharyya writes, "The continual violence he had to engage in to drive out all traces of ethnicity from his persona in an ill-conceived attempt to become 'equal' with the masters left him bereft of vitality and merit that otherwise were his own inheritance begotten through his biological, parental and communal past" (224).

Jemu finds something familiar with his granddaughter Sai, the true inheritor of a hybrid culture. Her mother, the daughter of Jemu is a Hindu, and her father is a Zoroastrian. She, like her grandfather has the western taste, but she is not a blind admirer or anglophile like him. As Sai is a westernized Indian brought up by the English nuns at St. Augustine's Convent, Dehradun, she had grown up with lot of contradictions – Lochinvar and Tagore, economics and moral science, highland fling in tartan and Punjabi harvest dance in *dhotis*, national anthem in Bengali and reciting a motto in Latin. She learns Indian as well as English way of life simultaneously with lot of proposition. To her, the convent system is completely obsessed with the notion of purity and morality. Because, she was taught in the convent,

"cake was better than *laddoos*, fork spoon knife better than hands, sipping the blood of Christ and consuming a wafer of his body was more civilized than garlanding a phallic symbol with marigolds. English was better than Hindi" (IL 30).

Sai was happy in quitting the convent that she despised the perversities of convent system of education that smacked of colonial prejudice and was unduly obsessed with purity and sin. She hated the perverted preaching of the convent, "the sweet sweet pastel angels and the bloodied Christ, presented together in disturbing contrast" (IL 29). She scorned the heavy uniforms, manly shouldered blazer and tie, and black cow-hoof shoes. On hearing the message of her parents' sudden demise, she felt that she was freed from her "four years of learning the weight of humiliation and fear, the art of subterfuge, of being uncovered by black-habited detectives and trembling before the rule of law that treated ordinary everyday slips and confusions with the seriousness of first degree crime" (IL 29).

Sai is fond of reading the books like *My Vanishing Tribe*, but knows nothing on the tribal people of her native land like Lepchas, the Rong pa, people of the ravine who followed Bon and believed the original Lepchas, Fodongth-ing, and Nuzongnyue who were believed to belong to the land first.

Sai's mathematical tutor Gyan was frustrated by the thought of undertaking a long journey in the cold evenings to tutor Sai for a little money, whereas the westernized people like Jemu and Sai live affluently in a spacious bungalow taking hot baths, sleeping alone in large rooms. Again, he was disgusted by the comment of Jemu on his behavior: "Common sense seems to have evaded you, young man" (IL 162). This vituperative remark created annoyance and angry in him and generate "a self-righteous posturing, a new way of talking" (IL 162). So, Sai tried to cheer him up by narrating the beautiful Christmas party she had with Father Booty and Uncle Potty in the last night that all of them joined together, drunk and became wild. As Gyan is aware that the celebration of the western festivals like Christmas and Valentine's day are the commercial holidays and they are not celebrated with its true spirit, he ignored Sai's recounting. But when she extends to narrate, Gyan becomes seriously angry and yelled at her,

"Why do you celebrate Christmas? You're Hindus and you don't celebrate Id or Guru Nanak's birthday or even Durga Puja or Dussehra or Tibetan New Year." "You are like slaves, that's what you are, running after the West, embarrassing yourself. It's because of people like you we never get anywhere" (IL 163).

The anti-western Gyan hates Sai for her imitation of western culture. He criticises her as the copy cat of the West and blames Sai that because of the people like her, he couldn't get any job. The fury and suppressed

anger of Sai drew her fledgling romance to undergo a severe setback. As an ardent champion for the cause of separate Gorkhaland, Gyan has denounced Sai for her shameless colonial slavery and mimicry of the West. He yells, “Don’t you have any pride? Trying to be so Westernized. They don’t want you!!!! Go there and see if they will welcome you with open arms. You will be trying to clean their toilets and even then they won’t want you” (IL 174). Sai struck back to the insult of Gyan by saying that he comes from a low class and uncultured family of arranged-marriage types.

Gyan’s ethical prejudice is outburst in sharp with the counteracting of Sai over the question of Father Booty’s eviction from India. Sai believed that Gyan was responsible for informing the police on the stay of Father Booty without proper papers in India. She told him that he should have been sent away instead of Father Booty as he had done a lot of service to the local people than him. The stirred nationalistic feeling of Gyan makes him to respond, “We live in India, thank you very much. We don’t want any cheese and the last thing we need is chocolate cigars” (IL 258).

This confrontation cast a shadow on the burgeoning love of Sai and Gyan. The infuriated Gyan lists out the reasons to betray Sai:

“She who could speak no language but English and pidgin Hindi, she who could not converse with anyone outside her tiny social stratum. She who could not eat with her hands; could not squat down on the ground on her haunches to wait for a bus; who had never been to a temple but for architectural interest; never chewed a *paan* and had not tried most sweets in the *mithaishop*, for they made her retch; she who left a Bollywood film so exhausted from emotional wear and tear that she walked home like a sick person and lay in pieces on the sofa; she who thought it vulgar to put oil in your hair and used paper to clean her bottom...” (IL 176).

Biju, the son of Jemu’s cook moved to the U.S. in tourist visa and overstays there by working illegally from one ill-paid restaurant job to another, living with many others in appalling conditions and thus understanding the ugly and disorderly state of the West. In the U.S. restaurants, he has been forced to serve beef to the customers against his moral conscience and religious values. He dislikes to serve beef, but was convinced by the line of reasoning of his fellow worker Saeed Saeed that cows in India are holy, but the cow from which the beef served in American restaurants are not Indian cow; therefore it was not holy.

But Biju was once again struck with the thought of holy cow and unholy cow. In *Brigitte’s* restaurant, once Odessa taken the corner table and aroused the spirits of Biju by tearing into her steak:

“You know, Biju,” she said, laughing, “isn’t it ironic, nobody eats beef in India and just look at it—it’s the shape of a big T-bone.”

But here there were Indians eating beef. Indian bankers. Chomp chomp
... Holy cow unholy cow. Job no job” (IL 135-136).

Biju was impressed with the act of Saeed Saeed who still refuses to eat a pig. “*First* I am Muslim, then I am Zanzibari, *then* I will *BE* American,” (IL 136) which makes Biju to seek asylum in Gandhi cafe to lead a puritan way of life. But there also he was exploited by his master Harish-Harry. Biju, like his father’s master Jemu confronts with hostility and discrimination from the higher class cultures. Yet, like Jemu, he was determined to get a green card to settle in the U.S. At one moment, he even prepared to marry a disabled or mentally retarded green card holder. But his fellow Malaysian worker Omer feels, “White women, they look good when they’re young, but wait, they fall apart fast, by forty they look so ugly, hair falling out, lines everywhere, and those spots and those veins, you know what I’m talking about. . .” (IL 101).

Biju is inherited the traditional virtues like sense of rootedness, naivety and cultural conscience. After the working hours, Biju’s friends used to visit the Dominican women in Washington Heights, for which Biju denied to join with them saying that those women are dirty. “Fucking bitches, fucking cheap women you’ll get some disease . . . smell bad . . . *hubshi*. . . all black and ugly . . . they make me sick. . .” (IL 16).

Biju returned India with brim to live within a narrow purity. He realised that it is better to live as a poor, yet contended Indian in India than as a rich detested foreigner in abroad. He is happy of returning his homeland. He visualised the scene of meeting his father again and again like a movie in his mind. His great dream of becoming a green card holder is shrunk into building a house with solid walls and a roof that wouldn’t fly off during the monsoon season and decided to run a taxi service for his livelihood. However, he was robbed by the GNLG goons that he lost everything he had earned in America, including his dress. But finally he is honoured with the reunion of his father for his virtuous cultural adherence.

The cultural chaos results in the discord of the lives of the characters in the novel. Jemu lost his wife, daughter and his family by the excessive obsession of the white, which torments him into pieces. Sai and Gyan are separated by the faith of the superiority of one culture over another. Lola and Noni become the victims of the borrowed culture. But Biju, the inheritor of his own culture is rewarded with the reunion of his father.

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Portrayal of Communal Suppression on Black Women Character in the Select Novels of Toni Morrison and Alice Walker

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Abstract: *Since time immemorial, black women are suppressed by communal as well as social factors. Black women are harassed by both white and black men. They have been forced to play the stereotyped roles such as mummies, nannies, wives and daughters. They are compelled to fulfill the desires of black men. It is due to the consequence that black women are not allowed to voice their views. In Toni Morrison's novels *The Bluest Eye* and *Sula* and Alice Walker's *Meridian* and *The Color Purple*, the black women characters like Pecola in *The Bluest Eye*, Sula in *Sula*, Meridian in *Meridian* and Celie in *The Color Purple*, are alienated by their family and their community for varied reasons. Pecola is raped by her biological father and she is branded as an outcast; Sula, a university educated black girl, is suppressed by being self-recognized. She is declared an outcast within the community for her authoritative behavior. Meridian, a self-contented and college educated girl, has been condemned by her community for her self-reliance. Celie is forced by her communal conventionality to call her husband 'Mr. _____' instead of his name 'Albert'. She is abused by her stepfather and is compared with 'cow' as an exchangeable object. Celie becomes non-reactive and insensitive owing to the influence of her community. In the novels mentioned here, Pecola involves herself in madness and gets relieved, Sula empowers through education, Meridian empowers by involving herself in Activist Movement and Celie empowers by engaging herself in quilt business.*

Key words: *suppression, feminism, religion*

Spatial inequality is the imbalanced share of qualities or resources and services depending on the area or location. Some communities have enough or larger amount of resources than with those communities which are nearer to them which leads to the impossibility of changing the cycle. Spatial inequality is possible owing to various reasons, such as religion, culture, or race, income, health, education and poverty which identify significant economic and political challenges for the governments of many developing countries. It is fundamentally distinguished by the location decisions of firms and households.

The space which is identified is highlighted with emotions, imaginations, observations, practices and remembrances of human beings. It varies from person to person. Toni Morrison and Alice Walker's female characters like Pecola, Pauline, Claudia and Frieda in *The Bluest Eye*, Sula and Nel in *Sula*, Meridian, Wile Chile, Louvine, Fast Mary and Lynne in *Meridian* and Celie, Nettie, Shug, Sophia and Squeak in *The Color Purple* face racial, cultural and sexual oppressions. Both the writers have exposed the interlocking nature of oppressions which their female subjects have encountered amidst in equal systems of domination. If the girl children attempted to assert themselves for self-hood, they were treated as aliens within the community.

Women are unable to withstand their plight brought by the black fathers to their families due to their illicit behavior which they give vent to. Claudia's Mama curses that "old Dog Breedlove had burned up his house, gone upside his wife's head and everybody, as a result, was outdoors" (17).

A more mature Claudia affirms that the entire black community plays its part in Pecola's degradation by failing to love her and by despising her for her extreme poverty and ugliness. Before burning his house and making his family 'outdoors', Cholly owns a house and earns enough money for their survival, but Pauline's restlessness and Cholly's drunkenness lead them to face an economically and mentally imbalanced state. After losing her tooth, Pauline never imitates white movie heroines and thereafter she forces herself to poverty and ugliness. She had desired to 'pass on' to the white standardization for her survival which she knew that she could never achieve.

Initially Pauline and Cholly Breedlove attempt to tie the black people with the forms of African-American Culture in order to get relief from suppression by caring and sharing with each other. Their move towards North separates the couple from using the reforms which they know how to expose in any sustaining purposes. They relieved themselves from the bondage of culture and believe that their only potential is to produce children and look after them. They reject the community rituals and heritage. Avey fails to understand her quest for self-hood. Her disconnection with her heritage actually distracts her from her purpose of life.

Pecola is confronted by her community. She is asked to stay back when she fantasies the 'blues' because of her blackness. She is always 'boomeranged' over the head when she has heard about the little black

boys' avoidance of being identified as 'bawl no coal' or as a: "... stovepipe blonde". Her family and community believe that "white is right". Her mother Pauline sings about her longing for blues, "hard times, bad times and somebody-done-gone-and-left-me-times" (24) and Poland, the whore brings about 'blue in Pecola's mealbarrel/Blues up on the shelf.' (44)

The communal pattern induces both mother and daughter Pauline and Pecola Breedlove to accept their fate which leads to loosing their self-esteem. Pauline develops self-hatred and transmits the same to her daughter, Pecola which transcends even to her brother Sammy. The Breedloves apply their "ugliness" in a different way of living; Sammy, Pecola's brother uses his ugliness by causing pain, Pauline for martyrdom and Pecola as a shield to safeguard from people. Pauline has encouraged a "general feeling of separateness and unworthiness." (88) Owing to her foot injury in childhood which makes a slight limp, she always creates an orderly attitude which is expected by her affluent white employers. Poverty and racism play a vital role in her unworthiness. At one extent, she has started to fulfill her dreams in that illusionary white world.

Both Pauline and Pecola are exploited and not accepted by their community because of the lack of standards of feminine beauty as characterized by the white community. Pauline tries to adopt 'white' colour. Her light brown skin and long straight hair of any colour make her to appear more Caucasian than African. The term Caucasian denotes to the colour of the people of Europe, certain parts of Africa and Asia. They are differentiated from the people of USA, Australia and Newzealand who have light-skinned tone.

As Pecola in *The Bluest Eye*, Celie has never experienced the caring and nurturing at home. In the guise of the step father the girl is threatened, humiliated, abused both sexually and psychologically. The domestic space which ought to have been occupied by the parents is absent here. Either physically or psychologically, the absence in this space is filled naturally and utilized by outside elements, particularly by men and consequently possessed and later dominated. One method of patriarchal domination is the sexual harassment which men use as a weapon against women.

The expectations of the patriarchal world remain dominant here. Silence should be the ultimate resort to women. Celie confirms her very being while writing letters to God. Her communion with God represents her benign existence: "The actual language of the letters, which are written in Celie's folk speech without any attempt at editorializing or Walker's part, is similarly reaffirming something essential to her personality" (10).

Celie's sexual abuse is the effect of andocentric culture which portrays women to an inferior state. Androcentric culture explores male as dominant and female as other should obey the norms posed by male culture. According to western philosophy, andocentric is based on psychic, sensible and linguistic structures enable patriarchy system. She observes that initiating changes in andocentric is essential. For her, "A Revolution in thought and ethics is needed if the work of sexual difference is to take place." (6) She stresses that the culture remains continue owing to binary thinking-male as the one and female as the opposite of men. Similarly, the binary oppositions depicts men as logical and women as emotional.

When Albert demands for Nettie from Fonso, Celie has become a substitute for Albert's dead wife. Without asking permission, she is submitted to Albert like a 'cow'. Women like Celie are the medium of exchange: a kind of word, circulated in place of words; objects signified not signifiers. She has sacrificed her life for her sister Nettie by getting married with Albert. She is offered like a lamb. She is allotted only for the household work and child-caring. She is dump mentally to the domestic violence and oppression. Unlike Pecola, who is neither treated a 'cow' nor a lamb; Celie's position is elevated to the position of animals.

The untold sufferings of African American women get depicted in Toni Morrison's *Sula*(1976) too. Women remain to be abandoned by the husbands. Poverty remains to be the only reason for their pitiable condition.

Eva begins her life with the assertion of white and male domination. Her husband named BoyBoy leaves her and has settled with another black woman. She and her three children namely Hannah and Plum are abandoned by her husband. She had little food and no amount in the middle of the winter. When her baby cries for milk, she lends from her neighbour. She recognizes her helpless situation. So, she leaves her children under the care of her neighbour and places her absence for eighteen months. Her absence for her community is mysterious: "Two days later she left all of her children with Mrs.Suggs, Eva's neighbour, saying she would be back the next day. Eighteen months later she swept down from a wagon with two crutches, a new black pocketbook and one leg" (34). No one knew where Eva has been so far and about her missing leg. Her absence with her missing leg becomes an 'open' space for the communal people to create stories about her. By losing her leg hitting with a railway track, she brings a huge income. In order to bring up her children, she has lost her leg. Her community has the urge to know her whereabouts for the certain period. Yet she has become an embodiment of will to make her survival.

Owing to poverty and to aid her children survive; mothers tend to sacrifice themselves for want of money. As they remain to be uneducated they take up such means of sacrifice. The domestic space in the African American world is mostly occupied by women and children. For example, In Eva's 'ramshackle house', there is no "men in the house, no men to run it. (35). Male-female relationships in *Sula* are signified by mental and physical abuse.

Sula leaves Medallion between 1920s and 1940s and stays outside. During her separation from Nel and her community, she learns more about feminism and modernism which encourages her sexual liberties and helps her to improve future activities. Her mother's advice and her adopted values influence her alienated personality.

The entire community treated her as an evil spirit just because she was accompanied by the plague of robins, an infectious disease. Like her mother, Sula indulged in sexual pleasure with the men of the Bottom. While she followed the same with white men, people cursed her by blaming that no African woman could do so. At the time of her death, Sula is completely isolated from the community. She placed herself in Eva's boarded up room which symbolizes that a person behaved indifferently and feel aloof from then collective is like a head cut off from a body; she is accepted by no one except Nel. But after death, none makes arrangement for the burial of Sula except Nel who did with the help of white folks. Sula's rose shaped birthmark has become the sign of her seclusion.

After returning to Medallion, Sula's self-assertion develops confrontation within her. She argues with her grandmother: "I don't want to make somebody else. I want to make myself." (92) At her deathbed, Sula conveys to Nel, "But my lonely is mine" (43). Sula never tries to explain her situation except to Nel; she says: "social conversation was impossible for her because she could not lie." (121)

Nel regrets for being incapable of demanding her needs. After the death of her husband, her only responsibility rested in taken care of her children to stabilize her traditional role. Her love towards her children in immature saintly self-image ignoring her self-hood. At her deathbed, Nel attempts to prove her goodness. Women like Nel, Sula, Hannah and Eva remained to be independent woman on mothers and yet they would not succeed in life owing to poverty, lack of communal recognition and devoid of a work space. The only means of an economic survival for the uneducated African American woman was to resort to prostitution.

This 'law breaking' attitude of Sula, make others to treat her as pariah and therefore she is not accepted by her community: "Sula was a pariah, then and knew it, knew that they despised her and believed that they framed their hatred or disgust for the easy way she lay with men which was true" (122).

A woman in communal space is accepted only when she adheres to the womanhood norms of the society. Nel remains to be a suitable example. Nel argues with Sula that she wants to follow the principles of Medallions. As a Black woman, she cannot go against the racism outside her society and sexism inside her society. She believes that she needs marital life. She expects a man to be aside to guide her. She follows her communal women because she knows that there is no possibility of romantic relationship with a man.

In Alice Walker's *Meridian* (1976), Walker depicts that the racial discrimination of the black people is mainly due to their geographical condition. Mrs. Hill receives her education only through her mother. Mrs. Hill's father does not allow his children to continue their studies. Ultimately the mother begs her husband and got permission to educate her by working in a laundry. She became a teacher and had supported her siblings.

Mrs. Hill, the mother of *Meridian*, marries Mr. Hill not because of love but to conciliate the community. She is not interested in possessing children. She has no intention involving in marriage life but only after begetting the children she feels irritated and there afterwards she curses her community and the whole world and people whoever advise her to have children. In the very first pregnancy, "she becomes distracted from who she was" (12).

Meridian's mother is depicted as "not a woman who should have had children" (49) but an individual. Her situation represents the views of other women. She believes that women who sacrifice their life only for their children were really dead. She is aware of "being buried alive, walled away from her own life brick by brick" (51). She knows that she is forced to have motherhood which she never expects to do, she believes that she has lost her creativity. She wants to continue her teaching profession but she fails in passing new exams, because of hatred towards the new generation. She lacks in guiding *Meridian* by following the principles of others rather than herself because of not believing herself.

Mrs. Hill, *Meridian's* mother, in order to pacify her community and to be recognized, she marries Mr. Hill. She feels burden to have children. So, she attacks her community and her family for not warning against having children. She sees in the very first pregnancy, "she becomes distracted from who she was" (4).

Meridian wants to prove as an individual and so she ignores her child and gets legal separation from Eddie. She has heard about the Civil rights Movement and finds her way to go further. By entering a new concept of empowerment through social movements which she witnesses in a bomb blast, inflames her curiosity and shows her path to be a volunteer. At the age of seventeen, she reincarnates as a rebel along with the volunteers against the 'towns segregated hospital facilities' and involves in the 'freedom march to the church' by establishing in singing freedom songs. However, she feels wounded not at heart but by mind. The emotional disturbance in a woman is not to be found in *Meridian*. For her economical survival, she serves as a typist. As a volunteer, she teaches to read and write. She gets a chance to renew her school, studies contains her.

Like other black women, *Meridian* is not obedient daughter; she does not yearn to be a devoted wife and never be an adoring mother because she is against the demanding roles. She believes that she has failed conventional 'Black Motherhood' (91): She fails to be a good daughter when she thinks off self-awareness and independence. She trains herself to be away from the clutches of parental domination in order to concentrate on

her personal development. She is not ready to accept blindly the notions of marriage and motherhood.

As a political activist, she realizes the though she wants to involve in social changes, she has to follow up the collective conscious. Though she is enforced by her family to play her role as a daughter and a mother, Meridian focuses her inability to ignore the words of her mother. Having separated from Eddie, Meridian envisions her own world. Her fusion with her generation of activist's blacks and the previous generation of oppressed blacks makes her to discover the demands of the ruling class who frame the responsibilities to be followed by the blacks within the conventional cycle. She is shocked at the perceptions of the authority and the beliefs of the oppressed class. At last, she decides to concentrate on collective identity instead of personal identity. Her painful experiences bring her new birth to make her entry in social life.

Meridian wants to put an end to the abdicating roles such as "Devoted Wife" and "Loving Mother". She erases her roles as wife and as mother to being "buried alive, walled away from . . . life, brick by brick"(162). Hiding herself from the clutches of motherhood, she involves in the Civil rights Movement. Her dedication credits her scholarship at Saxon college, leads her to another way of tradition but helps to thrive individually.

The denial of space resulted in racial violence. Even Black children were subjected to these. Meridian and the activists involved in civil rights movement have a suspicious aspect on a version of history, while others believe in the association of The Sojourner tree with the context. Anne Marion ignores the fact and believes in the history relates with the college and the tree; it protects the Blacks once when Saxon College re-contextualizes it. She applies Marxist version of history which degrades the church. She concludes and blames the Sojourner tree which serves her context with the native traditions, though she falls in the traps of white authority which she believes interconnected with her self-identity.

Meridian converts the letters into decorative art in order to overcome her anger and the history that profounds it. Her letters create allusion to her mother's garden and identify the wrath and oppression that produced those anonymous gardens. The gardens play the major role regaining archeology by contrasting the tradition of the present.

The black female characters in Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye* and Sula and Alice Walker's *The Color Purple* and *Meridian* undergo the lack of familial support and communal support. Meridian is humiliated and harassed both physically and psychologically in the College but she ignores and pursue to higher studies. Later, she proves herself involving in activist movement. The black female believe that their music like Jazz, blues and dance and sisterhood bonding helps them to regain the women race.

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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.

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 19th 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 make up, 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 artifacts 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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Emergence of New Woman in Paulo Coelho's

The Witch of Portobello

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Abstract: Paulo Coelho is one of guiding free spirits who carries us with his creative and penetrative writings, close to his own margins to develop into a better human being. Through his novel *The Witch of Portobello*, the writer grants us with his own inimitable perception on the position of woman and her rights. This paper brings light to Coelho's amazing and heartbreaking account of a young woman's marginalization. The protagonist, Athena symbolises all the possible conversions in the life of a woman as daughter, student, friend, lover, mother, wife and a truly spiritual guide.

The story is an expedition into Athena's life and has many issues that are related to cultural crisis of woman in the society. Throughout the novel, Paulo Coelho packs in Athena's trouble how to hook up her divine division to diverse situations in life and his intention is to insist on experience and attainment of divinity with no meticulous religious passion. Athena receives two different descriptions as saint and witch. The cultural domination threatens Athena and calls her a witch. However, she should be adored as mentor. This paper locates integral theory to assess the existing concepts and makes out reality in this novel.

Key words: Marginality, Spirituality, Custom and against Custom, Female Energy.

Even though the world endows with the equality of sexes, the spiritual society is male dominated and women are confined with only a secondary status in the major organised religions. There are countless writings which have narrated stories of women characters that allow for a revolution of the women who are set off from identity created by the didactic images towards a female individuality. Literature does not merely gender conflicts. There are different kinds of readers with diverse flavours. The gender of writer does not fix on whether a novel is of high quality or terrible, and noteworthy or irrelevant. Gender studies, marginalization of woman and Feminism have been done much. Many writers grant significance to women and their agonies in their works. Some possible identities of woman have been shown in traditional world writings which focus to sympathise the circumstances of women. For instance, they include the problem of female feticide, the practice of dowry system, illiterate women, marriage and economical subordination and other vital issues. However, only some writers knock at the door of the feminine side of religion. Paulo Coelho gives attention to women on a sacred angle to change the features of liberated women.

This paper focuses on an exceptional spiritual observation on the feminine side of God with reference to Paulo Coelho's *The Witch of Portobello*. Paulo Coelho is a talking head of the innovative faith in the world longing for the universality. All of his novels are an account of the new-fangled spiritual passion with a noticeable twist. He is not only a delightful writer but also a guide surprisingly accomplished with self-identification. In *The Witch of Portobello*, he confronts the feminine aspects to breed a society in which women folks are truly free towards the religious rights. Transformation in point of fact is certain and it happens for varying reasons. It happens for the reason that somebody stimulates the ethics of humanity such as slavery; it comes about in a nonviolent way through legislation, takes place through wars and it also occurs through the absolute course of time. The commencement of Christianity is itself the chronicle of a revolution against oppression. Once the initiative of the oppressor's power is questioned, it is endangered and the conclusion is by no means far, which is a grand forward step for civilization.

The Witch of Portobello has been made known in the structure of a biographical survey. The plot of the novel is constructed around Athena recognized as Sherine Khalil, since she is the protagonist. There are fifteen tellers of stories who contribute to their stories about Athena. Paulo Coelho sketches Athena who discovers her true self and in due course turns out to be an influential and leading sacred leader. When a woman finds her spiritual growth, the major organized world religions raise a controversial proclamation to diminish the female power. The fact is that human history sadly shows us that there are, and always have been, only male who carries out spiritual teaching in all major religions including Christianity, Islam, Buddhism and so on. In this novel, Athena is named as a witch by the male dominated religious society while she is a mentor of spiritual light. In the beginning of the novel, it states that she has been murdered as a consequence of "modern witch hunt".

In Dan Brown's *Da Vinci Code*, he states that the women in history have been hunted since the authority and the religious supremacy is not supposed to be shared with the female society. The effect of this is bias on a variety of positions- religion, politics, and other dominant concerns. The self-identity and divine

individuality are often found in Paulo Coelho's works. Principally, inner expedition has often happened at legendary level. This legendary expedition is to stumble on one's inner truth besides to discover divinity in oneself. Paulo Coelho connects his works to disclose the expedition for meaning in life. His novel shows signs of the pious ride of human and human in relation to God. His works have a mythical significance. In his novels, the journey is a metaphor for discovery. Paulo Coelho's protagonists undergo transformations, or realise something about them and soul's examination of the world. The Integral theory and feminism are used to support the concept of pursuit for destination and the expedition of the new woman. The concept of female divinity seems is questionable for orthodox.

Athena, an ambitious woman when was born, was regarded an illegal infant in Romania. Her biological mother is Lilliana who is a gypsy woman. After Athena is given up by her mother, she is adopted by a Lebanese couple, Samira and her husband. Her gypsy identity has been hidden due to the result of social discriminations. As a child, she lets her parents notice a powerful spiritual career and reveals her parents as if seeing angels and saints, which in cooperation overwhelms and threatens her parents. She becomes skilled at the gospels at an early age which turns later to be equally a lucky thing and blight. In secret, she resolves to grow into a saint in future. Samira says:

From very early on we discovered that she had a strong religious vocation – she spent all her time in the church and knew the gospels by heart; this was at once a blessing and a curse. In a world that was starting to be divided more and more along religious lines, I feared for my daughter's safety. It was then that Sherine began telling us, as if it were the most natural thing in the world, that she had a series of invisible friends – angels and saints whose images she was accustomed to seeing in the church we attended. All children everywhere have visions, but they usually forget about them after a certain age. They also treat inanimate objects, such as dolls or fluffy tigers, as if they were real. However, I really did feel she was going too far when I picked her up from school one day, and she told me that she'd seen a woman dressed in white, like the Virgin Mary. (23)

Due to civil war, Athena and her adoptive parents move to London from Lebanon. She gets married with Lukas and has a male child named Viorel. Unfortunately, their married life grows bad so they get divorced because of the child and Athena takes the child with her. Since she has been brought up with the Christian faith, she concentrates on the church formal procedures on a customary basis. She starts to engage herself in the spiritual acts in the church. She meets Rev. Fr. Giancarlo Fontana in the Church. Shortly, she is forced to give up her visiting Church, because Father Fontana refuses to give the divorced woman Athena spiritual union. The woman's integral strength is her religion and she lives in a world of bias. She goes to Pavel's apartment and decides to rent for her shelter and home. She is introduced to dance by Pavel as it is a sacred act. He gives her a paper which consists of the information about the secret of dance. That piece had been written by Pavel's grandfather. When she reads it, she is so energized. Since she has already been interested in the secret of spiritual dance, she is able to understand her completion through dance. This takes her a footstep accompanying in her quest to fill her empty spaces. She shares her experience at work place. She believes that the esoteric dance is one of the spiritual arts which help people to touch the heaven from the earth. She names it "Vertex" (highest point). "The Vertex is hidden inside us, and we can reach it if we accept it and recognize its light" (62).

She finds solution to other's problems and offers them a spiritual experience through dance. Then she moves to Dubai to work for a real estate company where she meets Nabil who teaches her the art of calligraphy. It moves to a psychosomatic work of the connotation of a word by sheer absorption and linking with the word. She says that she can dance obeying only her soul to contact with God and soul can communicate with brain which would be able to change everything. She believes that the music should be necessary for people, since it is created by God. After getting known about Athena, Nabil teaches her calligraphy and the philosophy of calligraphers. He says, God is an invisible hand who guides people. Before Nabil starts the lesson, Athena dances in the desert which she regards the most appropriate for the spiritual world. Nabil is skilled in the implement of Sufism and makes clear to Athena the divergence of the dance ceremony and the ceremony of calligraphy. As he means, Calligraphy looks as if to renovate the writer through tranquility and endurance, whereas dance is a conversion through progress. The indication to Sufis' dance revolves around one's individual alliance and refers to make over the meaning of a word into creative writing, lead to a transformation of writing. She feels everyone must know their root. She wants to fulfill the blank spaces. She tells her parents:

I learned calligraphy while I was in Dubai. I dance whenever I can, but music only exists because the pauses exist, and sentences only exist because the blank spaces exist. When I'm doing something, I feel complete, but no one can keep active twenty-four hours a day. As soon as I stop, I feel there's something lacking. You've often said to me that I'm naturally a restless person, but I didn't choose to be that way. I'd like to sit here quietly, watching television, but I can't. My brain won't stop. Sometimes, I think I'm going mad. I need always to be dancing, writing, selling land, taking care of Viorel, or reading whatever I find to read. (305)

Athena leaves her son with her parents and starts her journey in search of her biological mother. When she goes to Romania to find her birthmother, she meets Heron Ryan the journalist, and Deidre O' Neill (Edda). Deidre becomes Athena's teacher later and helps her to connect with the mother goddess (St Sarah). While dancing, Athena grows ecstatic and speaks to others as the spirit of Hagia Sofia. She starts some spiritual dance and turns into Hagia Sofia. She talks about love, the soul, blood, and the body of the great Mother. She says love is not a habit or anything. Her mission is the preparation of the way for the Mother.

When she arrived, she was received with applause, handwritten notes and requests for help; some people threw flowers, and one lady of uncertain age asked her to keep on fighting for women's freedom and for the right to worship the Mother. The parishioners from the week before must have been intimidated by the crowd and so failed to turn up, despite the threats they had made during the previous days. (276)

Athena wants to continue a tradition that has been suppressed for centuries. The woman's innate nature requires love, dependency, sense of belonging and the physical and emotional comfort. At the same time, there is an intense urge to be autonomous, so she is torn between the two. She suffers quietly the constraints of conventional middle class feminists and swings between reason and desire, autonomy and dependent security, individual and social identity. This novel makes all in depth analysis of the modern society in which woman finds her true self by attaining freedom from conventional social bondage. This paper builds up a sophistication to make clear that the indulgence of woman's part in religious conviction with the character of Athena on the mystifying advancement of modern spiritualism, a tactic identified as the world's commonest concern. Athena is a very exceptional universal woman in the novel. No gender is greater or inferior on the road to the other. Meanwhile, every individual is very stimulating by uplifting the strength of mind in one way or other way. In general, the parallel of belief about woman is based on the historic resistance among Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, even though other religions are over and over again included.

Paulo Coelho takes the Biblical-Christian vision as a means of dealing with the issue of free will, its restrictions, and pleasure. In other words, he hands over figurative possessions which give expression and help inhabitants to deal what their expressivity demands. This is connected to the need to bestow significance to this religious autonomy, while at the same time dropping the nervousness that springs from this freedom. In general, the religious biography of Athena initiates from the Catholic base of her childhood. She then happens to be involved with the solid side of spiritual power in various arts, and later becomes a sacred mentor, although under very diverse conditions, that is, non-traditional ones, related to the impulsive development of the self. Therefore, Paulo Coelho is considered as an excellent example of emerging new woman through his writings.

Women are humans first and women next. The spirit of adventure is in women and there is a desire for change which is common to everyone. This perception comes from the generally held idea that women are upholders of tradition. In every culture all around the world, there is still gender discrimination. Being the world writer, Paulo Coelho takes responsibility to fight for feminine rights through his analysis of the female side of spirituality since his views are for the growth of individual human. The orthodox society in the world is revolted against by the holy tutor; Athena like Paulo Coelho's other protagonists. On the whole, in this novel, *The Witch of Portobello*, Athena is able to bring out the need for equality of the genders and the ways for the emancipation of woman piously. Paulo Coelho grants us with his own peerless insight on the position of woman and her rights. Towards an untraditional spiritual course, Paulo Coelho handles his protagonist Athena who has the courage to acquire the celebrated life with pleasure. Thus, Athena symbolises a new woman in the modern society.

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Portrayal of Cultural discrepancies in Chetan Bhagat's 2 States: *The Story of My Marriage*

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Abstract: This paper discloses the cultural discrepancies portrayed in the India's most loved writer Chetan Bhagat's 2 States: *The Story of My Marriage*. A Culture is a way of life of a group of people – the behavior, beliefs, values and symbols that are passed along by communicate and imitation from one generation to the next. India is a land of clustering culture which is diverged on the basis of religion, linguistics, geographical location etc. Modern cultural entities are governed by the religious belief system and social or economic status. In the novel, Krish Malhotra, a Punjabi boy and Ananya Swaminathan, a Tamil girl, who are hailed from entirely diverged culture, falls in love; how their cultural differences can affects their matrimonial alliances and how the couple has to fight against their destiny to be in the wedlock? At the end whether the firm cultural discrepancies succeed over the love or the latter conquer over the cultural differences? This novel highlights the attitude of the individual and the society has to understand and appreciate the cultural differences to lead peaceful life.

Key Words: Cultural discrepancies, love, matrimony.

Chetan Bhagat is the leading commercial novelist in Indian writing in English. *The New York Times* called him the 'the biggest selling English language novelist in India's history'. Some of his bestselling novels are – *Five Point Someone*, *One Night @ the Call Center*, *The 3 Mistakes of My Life*, *2 States: The Story of My Marriage* and his recent novel *half girlfriend* (2014). Some of Bhagat's novels turn to be the films in Bollywood, which gained him a good reputation. Chetan Bhagat understands the pulse of youngster and majority of his novels circles round the theme of youth in India and their culture; so he is popular among the youngsters. People looking for intellectual stuff may not like his writing. But all romance lovers should go for his novels.

A Culture is a way of life of a group of people – the behavior, beliefs, values and symbols that are passed along by communicate and imitation from one generation to the next. The life styles of Indians are streamlined by culture. The Indian culture is often labeled as the amalgamation of several cultures, which are diverged on the basis of religion, linguistics, geographical location etc. these values are differ from place to place within the country. One of the very important factors of the all the culture is 'marriage'. For centuries, arranged marriages have been the tradition in Indian society. Even, today the majority of Indians have their marriage planned by their parents and other respected family members. A recent study of *The Financial Times* suggests that Indian culture is trending away from traditional arranged marriages. In an article labeled as *India in Love* by Ira Trivedi published in 2014 and cited in Wikipedia reported that the proportion of "love marriage" has soared in India in the most recent decades; still some 70% of unions are arranged.

Like rainbow, India has a spectrum of cultures bounded with its own values and principles. The cultural ceremonies of these cultures and rituals, customs really astonish the westerners. Though the elements of cultures are differs from state to state, people are united in an umbilical cord called 'India/Indian'. Unfortunately the people of India fail to appreciate the diversity of Indian cultures. In the novel *2 States: The Story of My Marriage*, Chetan Bhagat clearly visualizes how the love of Krish Malhotra, a Punjabi boy and Ananya Swaminathan, a Tamil Brahmin girl from diverse cultures are in deep love with each other and desires to get united in wedlock. The real problem lies in their honesty to convince their family for wedlock despite their cultural discrepancies. The lovers fight hard to turn their love into a love marriage. As depicted in the *Sonnets* of Shakespeare, the course of true love never did run smooth; here Krish and Ananya are no exception for this.

The main focus of *2 States* is about cultural discrepancies. In this novel the cultural anthropology discloses about cultural differences of North Indian families and South Indian families presented in a funny way. The crispy story line is that, how the lovers convince their respective state stereotyped parents for interstate and intercommunity marriage in India. The title *2 States*, not originally refers two states in India – Tamil Nadu and Delhi, but throws light on the diverse state of mind of people hailing from the two states also. In this novel Chetan Bhagat portrays the Indian marriage scenario and the grip of the youngsters in 21st century. It is nostalgic novel as it brings back the old memories of one's own pre-wedding days.

Like majority of the formula of the love stories, the play begins the concept of love at first sight. When Krish meet Ananya for the first time in IIMA mess falls in love with her. Even in the first meeting between them reveals the notion of North India boy towards South Indian girl (as any boy toward a girl). "She stood two

places ahead of me in the lunch line at the IIMA mess. I checked her out from the corner of my eye, wondering what the big fuss about this South Indian girl was” (2 states. 3).

Krish is really moved by her beauty and no exception falls in love with her at the first sight. After some series of events, they become familiar with each other. Since the environment is new, she would like to have friendship with Krish, as she believes that he is a “safe-zone guy”. She wants to be “just a friend” with Krish. He wonders what make all the charming girls to be a friend with guys. He says “Why would any guy want to be only friend with a girl? It’s like agreeing to be near a chocolate cake and never to eat it...” (2 states. 9)

The friendship between them makes them to meet frequently. When a boy has a friend in opposite gender or a girl has in vice-versa, they dare to do some helps and its quite common. Here with the condition of just friend, Krish extends some help academically, which really gives a unique position in the heart of Ananya. When Krish proposes to her, she does not deny. The actual problem arises in the affair of Krish and Ananya, when they decide to be honest with their parents. They want their parents to be happy at their wedding ceremony. Both families are diverse in their culture and customs, so the lovers decide to make the families familiar with each other and invite them for the convocation ceremony. In country like India, it’s necessary that the parents must approve the love relationship of the children. They try to turn their love into a love marriage and their first step is to impress their in-laws at the convocation ceremony to convince them to accept their marriage proposal.

Chetan Bhagat satirizes the stereotype North Indian attitude of contempt towards South Indian in a funny way at the convocation. Krish’s mother ridicules Ananya’s family by calling them “Madarasi”. Then Krish begs her to call them as Tamilians. She hates South Indian heroine too, she believes that have trapped Punjabi boys. She says.

“.....These South Indians don’t know how to control their daughters. From Hema Malini to Sri Devi, all of them trying to catch Punjabi men” (2 states. 48)

After the convocation ceremony, the lovers have planed take their families to Sabarmati Ashram. Since it is the place where Mahatma Gandhi lived and stood for national integration. They decide to let their families know their love relationship in that historical place. However, the plan is not go hand in hand as they expects. Even Ananya’s mother isn’t exception to the stereotype attitude. When Krish’s mother posts a silly question at the Sabarmati Ashram, Ananya’s mother passes a comment on his mother. She says, “Intellectually, culturally zero...” (2 States. 51) All the initial attempts of Krish and Ananya to make their families friendly are end in failure.

When Krish is in Delhi, after placement and waiting for his call letter, he tries to convince his mother and impress her in the matter of Ananya. Her initial notion of south Indian are ‘dark complexion’ and is dissolves when meet Ananya, as she is fair in complexion. However for some reasons, she doesn’t like her. Krish’s mother wants his son to take up a job in Delhi and marry a girl of her choice. She says “I can show you Punjabi girls fair as milk”. (2 States. 57) The lovers want to straighten up the problems in their families and win the heart of the family members. So, Krish chooses Chennai as his work place, posted in City Bank, as Ananya has also accepted job in HLL, Chennai. Krish feels like a fish out of water in new environment, work place and obviously struggles to comprehend to the culture of Ananya’s family.

In our society, every stream are catching up modernity, villages have grown into towns, towns into cities, and cities into metropolises. But still we seem to be slave to tradition that has long lost out on logic. Modernity hasn’t erased deep-rooted ideologies. Although the caste system was abolished years ago, people in India are still following it blindly. When Krish comes to Chennai, he gives his opinion of Tamil language script by saying, “The Tamil font resembles that optical illusion puzzle that gives you a headache if you stare at them long enough” (2 states. 77). He also passes witty remarks on the Tamil culture and taste of Tamilians, when he sees the film posters, says “the city is filled with film posters”. (2 states. 77) The images of heroes make him feel that even his uncles can become movie stars.

Even Ananya’s father has also prey to the North Indian – South Indian conflict. He expresses his agony to Krish, since he is in the drunken state. He remains loyal to his profession and sector, expecting in future he will become GM of the Bank, twist comes there. The Bank has send Mr.Verma as a GM. Verma said the reason, why they have sent him,Verma said, “Swaminathan do you know, why they made you deputy GM and sent me to become GM?”

“He said, it was because South Indians are top class number two officers, but horrible in number one position” (2 states. 143)

Swaminathan, father of Ananya express the reason, why he hates North Indians. He says “...Any way, Krish I had offers. Ten years back I had offers from multinational banks. But I stayed loyal to my bank. And I was patient to get my turn to be GM. Now I have five years to retire and they send this rascal North Indian.” (2 states. 144)

Krish struggles to cope-up with South Indian cuisines and culture. He startles in the beginning with the custom of using banana leaves as plates. Many of his behaviors irritate Ananya’s parents. Later Krish and Ananya makes up a plan to impress the parents in the matter of Krish. Slowly, Krish wins the hearts of

Ananya's parents. He begins his impression plot by coaching Ananya's brother for IIT entrance. He helps her father by preparing a power point presentation which gained him a good reputation in his office. As a most significant task, he gives a singing chance to her mother in his office client meet. His deeds delighted the family of Ananya and finally, they express their approval of the love relationship of Ananya and Krish to be turned as wedlock.

When Krish serves as a Customer Service Manager – Priority banking in City Bank, Chennai; his firm encounters a serious blow in the business market and in order to review it a country manager from North India is sent by the company. His South Indian boss, Bala pleads Krish to be the scapegoat and take responsibility over the loss in the business. He convinces Krish that North Indian official will Krish but not him, the reason he says, "The country manager as it is doesn't like me. He is North Indian. He will forgive you but not me". (2 states. 114)

Its Ananya's turn to wins the heart of the Krish's family. The initial attempts to impress Krish's mother are futile. Krish fetch Ananya to his cousin's marriage believing it could have given a chance for Ananya to be familiar with his kith and kin. Unfortunately there comes a problem in the wedding ceremony, which really makes Krish's family tensed. Ananya couldn't tolerate the Punjab marriage custom where the family of the groom dominates and demands a lot from bride's family. It's not only the perception of Punjabi culture, in Indian marriage setting, the family members of bride groom consider to be superior than that of bride's family. Ananya cleverly resolves the problem, which impresses not only Krish's mother and even the entire family too. Finally, the relatives of Krish and his mother join hands together to arrange marriage between Ananya and Krish.

The actual problem begins when the families meet once again in Goa to plan for their children's marriage. The cultural discrepancies of Punjab and Tamil take its true colour and shape, when Krish's mother of Punjabi tradition expected a lot of respect and wealth to groom's side from bride's family. She becomes upset when Krish helps Ananya's parents to taking their bags. She feels that they have trapped her son. Then, series of issues upset both the families and this time their cultural differences victory over not only the parents but the lover also depart in the opposite direction. The relationship between Krish and his father isn't smooth in the beginning itself. His father has deep-seated love towards his son; very often his words and deeds are harsh. He served as a peace-maker and convinces Ananya's family without the knowledge of Krish. When Krish comes to know about the effort of his father, he understands the paternal love.

In India, the wedding ceremony consists of various rituals in accordance with a concern culture. Chetan Bhagat exposes the backward mentality of India, nuances of regions and religions and how inter-caste and inter-state marriages are still seen as a social stigma. In 2 States, he vividly projects the wedding rituals of Punjabi and Tamil. Punjabi can be seen enjoying their Punjabi marriage with so much pomp and show. Punjabi marriages are conducted lavishly and celebrated with extreme gaiety. Some of the wedding rituals of Punjab are Roka Ceremony- exchanging gifts, sangeeth, where female members of the family perform dance and sing to celebrate the occasion, jaimala, kanyadaan, etc., Tamil Brahmin marriage rituals, on the hand too different the Punjab, they have *Nischaiyathartham*, which means engagement, Vrathan, Malai Matha and Kanya Danam etc., though some of the ritual are same, it carries a different names in the concern culture. Later, when the families of Ananya and Krish approve of their love relations, a South Indian marriage take place with simple in funny way and ritual. There lies the beauty of the India. These rituals not only give us laughter and amazement, but also give a chance to peep through various cultures and understand its importance. The rituals of one culture seem to be funny to the other. With the autobiographical touch, Bhagat comically depicts the wedding rituals of Punjabi and Tamil. His description of tamil ritual sometimes tickles the readers. For an instance

'Six-thirty muhurtam', the priest said.

'In the morning?' Rajii mama said, shocked.

.....
'This is a wedding or torture? It's like catching an early morning flight', Kamala aunty said. (2 states. 254)

These dialogues of Krish's family underline the different scenario of Punjabi culture.

In the end, the speech of Swaminathan, Ananya's father make the reader realizes the uselessness of being proud of particular culture, rejecting other cultures. He announces at the marriage reception of his daughter to a Punjabi groom. He declares, "Yes, the Tamilian in me is little disappointed. But the Indian in me is quite happy. And more than anything, the human being in me is happy. After all we've decided to use this opportunity to create more loved ones for ourselves" (2 states. 266)

Chetan Bhagat suggested a piece of advice to the lovers of India in an exclusive interview to IBN live. He asks the lovers to seek parents' consent like Krish and Ananya before marriage. "Be patient. Understand everyone's perspective. Negotiate on the basis of the belief that there is a win-win possible here. Be firm but patient. Ultimately, people just need to feel secure, loved and not ostracized by the community, even if it is

your parents. Once that is in place, the approvals are not as big a deal". (*Contemporary Research in India: Vol.4. Issue: 2. 68*). The scenario of love marriage is clearly illustrates at the paper back of *2 States*, that

Love marriages around the world are simple:

Boy loves girl. Girl loves boy. They get married.

In India, there are a few more steps:

Boy loves girl. Girl loves boy.

Girl's family has to love boy. Boy's family has to love girl.

Girl's family has to love boy's family. Boy's family has to love girl's family.

Girl and boy still love each other. They get married. (*2 States – Paperback*)

Though the love of Krish and Ananya is sandwiched between the cultures of Punjab and Tamil; their honesty and desires to make their parents make happy at their wedding ceremony comes true. It also vividly depicts the love of the parents; how they give concern over the choice of their children. Overall notion is that, the love of Krish and Ananya, their patience and efforts conquer the rigid cultures at the end. This paper doesn't suggest that all the ethics and values of culture has to be redefined or to dissolve but it suggests the so-called culture should somehow relaxes it multi-aspects for the well being and inclusion of human race.

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**Dance, the Mirror of Ambience: Interiorisation of
Interdisciplinary Culture in Ntozake Shange's
*From Okra to Greens / A Different Kinda Love Story:
A Play / With Music & Dance***

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Abstract: *The culture of African American, that is indigenous as that of the Africans in America, confines within itself various cultural traditions of African ethnic groups. In spite of great restrictions to practice their tradition as slaves, the Africans have succeeded in with holding their cultural traditions in music, art, literature, religion, food and holidays, that survived over time along with the incorporation of European American culture. The Black Art Movement in the 1960's encouraged the improvisation of black arts and culture in literature. The Black Theatre Movement which was a part of Black Art Movement produced plays those established a collective cultural identity for the African American. The African American theatre being an ethnic theatre has been born out of the historical conflicts in which the quest for cultural identity has been the ultimate goal. The black theatre of 1960's and 1970's were influenced by traditional minstrel show that included music and dance of African ethnic group. African American dance, like other aspects of African American culture, finds its earliest roots in dances of various African ethnic group. Africans recognise Dance as the elixir of their lives. Africans believe that dance has an urgency of direction and purpose that is to communicate. Dance for them is a magic that heals their body, mind and soul. The dance empower and educates them. The Africans use their body as tool through which they contemplate every imaginable emotions and events. African American dramatist, distinctively the female dramatist, employed a wide range of dance not only of the African ethnic group but of all parts of the world. Ntozake Shange stands surpassing all the other dramatist in adopting various cultural dances for her choreo dramas. In her play *From Okra to Greens / A Different Kinda Love Story: A Play / With Music & Dance* Shange has incorporated dance forms, like the adagio, belly dance, venacular dance and tribal dances of the Asanthi, Yoruba and Ewe groups to celebrate every emotional event in life of the characters. Dance, for Shange, is a therapeutic factor and defence mechanism that also urges on keeping hold of ties between continents.*

Key words: *African American culture, African American cultural movements, Dance therapy, Shange and dance.*

Enriching cultural knowledge is the traditional way of to achieve intellectual development. Matthew Arnold in his book *Culture and Anarchy* supports culture education. Arnold equalises love for culture to 'love for perfection.' Understanding various cultures enable people to overcome the economic and political barriers. It also supports in the progress of universality. Any society that respects, encourages and adapts the culture of others, collaterally develops its own cultural values and the value of the 'self.' The African American culture has emerged from such a heterogeneous root accompanied with the history of the African American along with the middle passage. This cultural consciousness of the African American has been given the predominant place in most of their art and literature.

The richness of cultural knowledge in African American literature has reached its regimes through their analogical and philosophical tradition. The African American culture in America sustains within itself different kinds of African ethnic group culture. The Africans carried with them across the oceans, the vast traditions of art and literature of the continent. The impact of the colonial and sovereign enterprises helped in the rationalization of African American society and culture. The centuries-long struggle for freedom provided the African Americans to become the vanguard of the American culture. This permitted the African American to establish literary and cultural skills in and outside their cultural orbit. The African American culture deviated from the mainstream American culture because of the desire of the Africans to practice and develop their own culture. The creolization of the African culture and the American culture, over time, produced various genre forms in arts and literature.

African American engaged in redefining and re-examining themselves during the 1920's. The Harlem Renaissance that spanned from 1918 until the mid of the 1930's established a new African American cultural expression. Black arts and literature were produced in a unique style as a counter act to racial consciousness. The effort of American intellectuals to distinguish from Europe culture forced them to interlock with the African American intellectuals to create a new culture.

The next movement that contributed in the African American cultural development is the Black Art Movement of the 1960's and 1970's. These decades provided ways for new ideas that led to the invention of new cultural norms nationwide. African American artists of these decades got engaged in creating work that explored the African American cultural and historical experience. This racially exclusive movement motivated a new generation of poets, writers and artists those who marked the beginning of a new aesthetics and also created a social landscape for themselves as they have been excluded from the conventional art world. The induction of the early hip-hop expressions that has become common practice in terms of style, vernacular and music was also developed during this period. The poets of these decades were heavily influenced by the blues and jazz.

Black Theatre Movement was a part of Black Art Movement those produced of Black Consciousness Plays. The black theatre movement was highly influenced by the minstrel phenomenon and the black musicals of 1890's and 1920's. The dramatists of this period brought back the ancestral treasures of African culture into their plays. They thought African American culture would serve as the best weapon for liberation. In the view point of W.E.Abraham,

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)

Black culture had a real influence on dance and other art forms in the 20th century. In New York the district of Harlem became home to black people from different cultural traditions with their own dances and music. The influence of Harlem Renaissance on music and dance spread into Europe. Harlem clubs brought together dance and music that was alive and exciting. The opening of black musical on Broadway created an interest in black dance in the theatre. The show also developed opportunities for individual black performers and dancers. In 1923 the Broadway hit *Running Wild* came to England and the Charleston became the dance of the decade. The emergence of a black modern dance movement was inspired by the work of many black American women like Katherine Dunham and Pearl Primus. But the work of Ntozake Shange stood extraordinarily out from all the other writers for its incorporation of diverse culture. Shange included in her plays various art forms those aroused a multiculturalist sentiment through her characters in searching the 'self.'

Shange considered dance as an essential art form of aesthetic and religious expression. Her dance spoke about the ephemerality of life. It aimed for the perfect moment of self-realization. The characters, particularly the female protagonists of Shange found solace and mental ripeness through dance. Dance exhibited their mood, consoled them and gave happiness. On speaking of Shange's dance Kimberly W. Benston says,

But for Shange, dance might better be seen as a reflexive vehicle for inquiring into meaning's possibility, a polemical, if passionate, means of foregrounding the body's presence as it inscribes itself within and against an already highly- semiotized space. It is true that her characters share the Preface's ebullient antigravitational instinct, the urge to soar through the moment's messy uncertainties to a possibly idealized origin of Africanicity.(87)

For Shange music and dance were very powerful forces of religion, apart from being theatrical and political. They normally elucidate and keep hold of the sacred and primitive well-being of black people inside and outside America. The belief of "African-based tradition" is that Shange exhibits in her usage of dance, music, poetry, and ceremony. Like many other African writers, Shange also visualizes her home land as the incarnation of a bond system connecting Africans and African-Americans. Shange refer to Africa as an isolated but accessible homeland and source of selfhood on blowing up a stability of cultures from Africa to black America. On referring to the characteristics of the African dance the African American writer Kariam Welsh-Asante states,

African dance forms are strong, virile and vital with a feeling of dynamic thrust and resistance. They are exceedingly controlled, having the power to project the gentle wind or the raging atom. Raging from walk and its variations, the techniques of the African dance embrace the leap, the hop, the skip, the jumps, falls of all descriptions and turns which balance the dancer at the most precarious angles with the ground.(5)

Dance supports intellectual, emotional and motor functions of the body. Dance as an expressive therapy looks at the correlation between movements and emotions. Dance serves as a therapeutic agent for over than a century. It is used as a healing ritual in the influence of fertility, birth, sickness and death beyond ages. Establishment of dance as a therapeutic factor arouse during the 1970's and 1980's.

The subject matter of African dance is all inclusive of every activity between birth and death- the seed which trembles to be born- the first breath of life- the growth, the struggle for existence- the reaching beyond the every day into the realm of the Soul- the glimpsing of the Great Divine- the ecstasy and the sorrow which is life, and then the path back to the Earth. This is the dance! (welsh-asante, 6)

The famous dances in the sixties demonstrated the fun and high-spirited energy of the decade. These dances were often associated with a song and in some cases the lyrics instructed listeners how to perform the dance. The most popular dances of America in the 60s were cakewalk, black bottom, charleston, swing dance, lindyhop, twist, the madison, jerk, mashed potato, watusi, bougaloo, the dog, pony, the bump, poppin&lockin, Bus stop, double dutch, breakdancing, clowning/krumping, souljaboy, bankhead bounce, crip walk, Freddie, Frug, Hitch-Hike, Loco-motion etc.,

Traditional dance in Africa expresses the life of the community more than that of individuals or couples. Early critics commented on couple dancing for such dancing was thought immoral in many traditional African societies. In all African dances there seems to be no evidence for sustained, one-to-one male-female partnering anywhere before the late colonial era. Most of the traditional African American dance culture features in line and circle except occasions of mass movement, free dancing or individual performance.

African dances teach social patterns and values and help people work, mature, praise or criticize members of the community while celebrating festivals and funerals, competing, reciting history, proverbs and poetry; and to encounter gods. African dances are largely participatory, with spectators being part of the performance. With the exception of some spiritual, religious or initiation dances, there are traditionally no barriers between dancers and onlookers. Even ritual dances often have a time when spectators participate. African dance insists on clarity along with the articulation of rhythms in the body.

Theories of dance insisted on the point that the body and mind are inseparable. The movements of the body affected the total body function. Movements of the body enlightens the symbolic function of revealing unconscious process. Dance serves as a sort of nonverbal meditation where reception of early object relationship is permitted through movement improvisation. Dances celebrate the passage from childhood to adulthood or spiritual worship.

Shange has made use of dances of various cultures in her coreo drama *From Okra To Greens / A Different Kinda Love Story: A Play /With Music And Dance*. The whole play is a feminist love story applicable to any culture for its global turmoil and social injustice. Unlike the traditional love story of boy-meet-girl the play is an introduction to female sensibilities that Okra, the female protagonist, offer to Greens, her male counterpart, in the form of a gift that allows him a complete sense of living. The author has engaged five dancers in the play who do not take part in improvisation of plot but exhibit the mood of the couple.

The black female Okra gives the black male Greens her socio-political views on a black woman's existence within a local, national, and international scheme. In the end, it is a baby symbolically, this feminist poet Okra offers Greens. This play is a very different poetic portrayal of Shange for she cults a "heterosexual couple's romantic and sexual experiences" along their encounter with society and politics as minorities living in racist North America.

Okra is black poetess who lives alone. She meets Greens who is also a poet. They court each other and marry. In course of time Greens turns disloyal to Okra who falls in relationship with some other lady. This cleavage of relationship of Okra and Greens create circumstance for both of them to realize the emptiness of life when apart. They express their affection for each other and reconcile. Okra becomes pregnant and they honey moon on a beach.

The blurring of dance and physical contortions from pain allows Okra's physical body to take their charge literally. In this case, Okra's mental tempo is physically visible. Her self-alienation leads to isolation and withdrawal. Okra is led by an indefinable misery and psychological suffering as a result of social cruelty and isolation. This misery and suffering of this black women is made even more vivid by the writer through the images of bones cracking, shattering, and being mutilated. It is to be noticed that the people around her remain oblivious to or deliberately unmoved by such suffering. Okra encounters Greens, a black man, in her isolation and their romance begins officially. A sexual encounter at an earlier stage allows Okra to escape herself from her social and personal pains.

In the beginning even Greens does not realize that, "he didn't know what a stood // up straight man felt like". This spiritual union accompanied by the physical love is a new experience for him, an experience that allows him to stand upright also. Greens narration of his experience of love ends with first-person plural pronouns "we" and "our" creates evidences that his spiritual connection to Okra grows out beyond their physical intimacy. Their meeting constitutes the first section of the choreopoem, the second section and the greater portion of the play constitutes by Okra and Greens personal life.

As a literate and modern couple with liberal morals, Okra and Greens do not hesitate to establish their relationship upon sexual compatibility. Their first intimate encounter, which omits power plays or gender role prescriptions, enables them to disclose their fears and fantasies to each other. Though not purposeful, their conversations about politics and about life in general identify them as sexual beings.

The irresistible power of love is acknowledged by Okra and Greens when they discuss their connection with phrases as "you take" and "make me.", Okra's faithfulness and innocence is identified when

she admits that she “cant help but love” Greens. Their exchange of love is identified as is both tranquil and passionate when they speak of deep kisses, animal sounds, and wet fingers. Despite Okra and Greens’ openness and mutual commitment, their marriage is not without conflict. Greens’ infidelity-he falls prey to the sexual allure of glamorous women, which allows them both a chance to reassess their relationship. When Greens abandons her, Okra’s loss reaches the core of her existence. Explaining her emptiness during Greens’ first absence, she again searches for words to express her pain. Without Greens, Okra is the crooked woman before she finds a male companion. Shange’s prescription is that a woman must have a man in her life romantically in order to be a whole. Rather this emptiness is a vulnerability of anyone who finds love and experiences the feelings associated with losing that love.

As already stated Okra questions the adequacy of verbal language to express pain and loss. Yet their relationship survives his disloyalties; he returns to Okra with humble apologies. Just as their relationship began with a sexual encounter, Greens offers his renewed faithfulness through lovemaking. As he beckons Okra “to make love tonite” (47), he admits that the glamour and allure of other women do not compare to the sustained force of the affection he feels for and receives from Okra. In accepting his apology, Okra admits an infidelity also. She has fantasized being married to “Bob Marley/ for at least 17 years” (47). Okra, however, does not act out her romantic fantasies with another lover.

Dramatically, her monologue relieves the tension of the moment in a tit-for-tat, playful manner. In this test of their relationship, Okra and Greens find renewed strength in their understanding of themselves and each other. With humour and their willingness to forgive and empathize with the other-evidenced in their interchanging voices-they survive martial and romantic difficulties that can plague any couple. They speak almost incantatorily and with encouragement to each other and to other couple with similar experiences

Making mistakes, acknowledging them to oneself and to ones partner, practicing forgiveness, understanding, tolerance, then moving on in the relationship is the advice that Greens and Okra offer to other lovers committed to maintaining a mutually satisfying relationship.

In this play Shange has utilized this traditional African dance as dance of celebration in the very opening of the poem. She borrows the movements for this from the Ashanti, Yoruba and Ewe tribes. The characters in the play are introduced to the audience through these dances. The dances exit after approaching the high point of these dances. These dances stand as a symbol of celebration.

Asaadua is the name of the dance of the Ashanti tribes. Asaadua was once a popular recreational musical type among the Akan people of Ghana. Emphasizing individual talent, Yoruba dancers express communal desires, values, and collective creativity. In the Yoruba touching while dancing is not common except in special circumstances. Master dancers are particular about the learning of the dance exactly as they are taught. Children must learn the dance exactly as taught without variation. Improvisation or a new variation comes only after mastering the dance, performing, and receiving the appreciation of spectators and the sanction of village elders.

The Ewe has an intricate collection of dances, which vary between geographical regions and other factors. The Adevu is a professional dance that celebrates the hunter. The Agbadza, is traditionally a war dance. The Atsia dance is performed mostly by women is a series of stylistic movements. Agahu is both the name of a dance and of one the many secular music associations of the Ewe people. The ewe dances are synchronized with lead drums.

The African American Vernacular dance travelled from the ship to minstrel shows to the mainstream and took off during the Harlem Renaissance in the 1920's. Shange uses this vernacular black dance steps to make fool of Greens. The whole episode of the poem 'you are such a gool' is engaged by this vernacular dance form. The anger of Okra towards Greens disloyalty is expressed through an improvised dance manner. The dancers exhibit violence and revenge in their dance.

The change of mental temperament of Okra towards reconciliation is celebrated with ritual Arabic dance moments performed by the dancers. The traditional Arabian dance is mostly done by the women when they are together with other women mostly for the fun of it, for the expression of joy. Belly Dance is a type of Arabian ritual dance that has been used throughout generations for marking the ceremonies of life and celebrating community. Belly Dance features in every wedding. Along with the professional belly dancer who entertains the guests, the women and men of the two families would enjoy a dance together as well. Dances are also done on other rituals like child birth and other common gatherings. Traditional belly dance is essentially spiritual movement. The dance involves the belly dancer sending out good wishes and blessings to the audience, through her finger motions. This dance is done by the dancers in *From Okra to Greens* who perform the dance by rounding up the couple. Shange has incorporated this dance for the couple to be blessed.

Adagio is a type of aerobics. Shange has used this dance for duet performance of the couple. The duet performance of partner acrobalance poses an associated movement that involves stationary balances by a pair of performers. Adagio is performed in professional circus, in various dance disciplines including acro

dance and ballet in pair skating and as a hobby in university circus groups. Shange uses this dance technique for the reconciliation of Greens and Okra. After Greens has deceived layla of being dishonest he realizes that he has hurt her. He comes back to her to console her. It is here the two exhibit their reconciliation through the adagio dance.

Dance for Shange, like music, serves as a therapeutic agent, a defense mechanism, apart from keeping hold of ties with Africa. On recalling her dance training in San Francisco, Shange articulates in the preface of *for colored girls who have considered suicide when the rainbow is enuf* (1975).

with dance I discovered my body more intimately than I had imagined possible. With the acceptance of the ethnicity of my thighs & backside, came a clearer understanding of my voice as a women & as a poet. The freedom to move in space, to demand of my own sweat a perfection that could continually be approached, though never known, waz poem to me, my body &bind ellipsing, probably for the first time in my life.... insisted that everything African, everything halfway colloquial, a grimace, a strut, an arched back over a yawn, waz mine. (xi)

Shange believes that the 'interdisciplinary culture' of black Americans call upon a theatre of 'more than verbal communication,' one that demands to all the 'physical senses.' Shange's employment of various cultural dance have served as a torch to blaze a trail out of the serious world.

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