

UGC Approved Journal (Journal No. 46467, Sl. No. 228)

(Valid till may 2018, All Papers Published in it were accepted before that date)

ISSN-L 0537-1988

56

2019

THE INDIAN JOURNAL OF ENGLISH STUDIES

Editor-in-Chief: Dr. Chhote Lal Khatri

Prof. of English, T.P.S. College, Patna (Bihar)

DSW, Patliputra University, Patna (Bihar)

Editorial Advisory Board

Prof. A.K. Bachchan (Darbhanga)	Prof. R.P. Singh (Lucknow)
Dr. Binod Mishra (Roorkee)	Prof. S.Z.H. Naqvi (Jhajjar)
Dr. T. Sai Chandra Mouli (Hyderabad)	Dr. P.K. Singh (Chandauli)
Dr. M.S. Wankhede (Nagpur)	Dr. R. Manjula (Anantpur)
Dr. K. Nageswara Rao (Tumsar)	Dr. K. Vijaya Bhaskar (Guntur)
Dr. P. Nagasusheela (Guntur)	Dr. Alapati Purna Chandra Rao (Vijaywada)
Dr. Shiv K. Yadav (Patna)	Dr. K. Jaya Raju (Guntur)
Prof. Indira Jha (Darbhanga)	Dr. Roopesh Chaturvedi (Mandsaur)
Prof. Kalikinkar Pattanayak (Puri)	Dr. Sheela Tiwari (Bilaspur)
Prof. Kumar Chandradeep (Patna)	Dr. Meenakshi Choubey (Betul)
Dr. Deena Nath (Gaya)	Dr. Vijay K. Sharma (New Delhi)
Dr. Satendra Kumar (Hazaribagh)	Prof. (Retd.) Ram Bhagwan Singh (Patna)
Dr. Veerendra K. Mishra (Roorkee)	Dr. Sameer K. Sharma (Patna)
Dr. Sunil K. Naveen (Katil)	Dr. Saryug Yadav (Ajmer)
Dr. Hitendra B. Dhote (Desaigunj)	Dr. Urmila Dabir (Nagpur)
Dr. Smita Naik (Goa)	

The Indian Journal of English Studies (JES) published since 1940 accepts scholarly papers presented by the AESI members at the annual conferences of Association for English Studies of India (AESI). Orders for the copies of journal for home, college, university/departmental library may be sent to the Editor-in-Chief, Dr. Chhote Lal Khatri by sending an e-mail on drclkhatri@rediffmail.com. Teachers and research scholars are requested to place orders on behalf of their institutions for one or more copies. Orders by post can be sent to the Editor-in-Chief, Indian Journal of English Studies, Anand Math, Near St. Paul School, Hamichak, Anisabad, Patna-800002 (Bihar), India.

ASSOCIATION FOR ENGLISH STUDIES OF INDIA

ISSN-L 0537-1988

56

THE INDIAN JOURNAL OF ENGLISH STUDIES

VOL LVI

2019

FIFTY SIXTH YEAR OF PUBLICATION



ASSOCIATION FOR ENGLISH STUDIES OF INDIA

THE INDIAN JOURNAL OF ENGLISH STUDIES

VOL LVI

2019

ISSN-L 0537-1988

UGC Approved Journal (Journal Number 46467, Sl. No. 228)
(Valid till May 2018. All papers published in it were accepted
before that date)

Cosmos Impact Factor 5.210



56

**THE INDIAN JOURNAL
OF
ENGLISH STUDIES**

An Annual Refereed Journal

Vol. LVI

2019

Editor-in-Chief

Dr. Chhote Lal Khatri

Professor of English, T.P.S. College, Patna (Bihar)

DSW, Patlipurta University, Patna (Bihar)

The responsibility for facts stated, opinions expressed or conclusions reached and plagiarism, if any in this journal, is entirely that of the author(s). The editor/publisher bears no responsibility for them whatsoever.



**THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF ASSOCIATION
FOR ENGLISH STUDIES OF INDIA**

THE INDIAN JOURNAL OF ENGLISH STUDIES

Editor-in-Chief: Dr. Chhote Lal Khatri
Professor of English, T.P.S. College, Patna (Bihar)
DSW, Patlipurta University, Patna (Bihar)

The Indian Journal of English Studies (IJES) published since 1940 accepts scholarly papers presented by the AESI members at the annual conferences of Association for English Studies of India (AESI). Orders for the copies of journal for home, college, university/departmental library may be sent to the Editor-in-Chief, Dr. Chhote Lal Khatri by sending an e-mail on drclkhatri@rediffmail.com. Teachers and research scholars are requested to place orders on behalf of their institutions for one or more copies. Orders by post can be sent to the Editor-in-Chief, Indian Journal of English Studies, Anand Math, Near St. Paul School, Harnichak, Anisabad, Patna-800002 (Bihar) India.

**ASSOCIATION FOR ENGLISH
STUDIES OF INDIA**

Price: ₹ 350 (for individuals)
₹ 600 (for institutions)
£ 10 (for overseas)

Submission Guidelines

Papers presented at AESI (Association for English Studies of India) annual conference are given due consideration, the journal also welcomes outstanding articles/research papers from faculty members, scholars and writers.

Contributors can send the soft copies of their articles, creative writings and book reviews to the Editor-in-Chief at clkhatri134@gmail.com or drclkhatri@rediffmail.com followed by hard copies at the editor's address: Dr. C.L. Khatri "Anandamath", New Harnichak, Anisabad, Patna-800002, (Bihar) India.

The editor retains the copyright for republication in e-form or in print but he is obliged to send the contributor a copy of the book/journal in which it is used by the editor. However, the copyright of that intellectual property remains with the concerned authors who are free to republish them once they are published in the journal. However, they are supposed to inform the editor-in-chief and acknowledge their first publication in IJES.

Authors are requested to strictly adhere to the following guidelines:

- Compliance to MLA Style Sheet latest edition.
- Paper Size: A4 (margin 1 inch on all four sides).
- Full Title of the paper: Times New Roman, 14, Bold.
- Main body of the paper: Times New Roman, 12, Justified, 1.5 line space.
- Length of the paper: About 3000 to 4000 words including Works Cited.

The paper should be accompanied with:

- An abstract in about 150-200 words along with 5 to 8 keywords
- A declaration that "It is an original research work of the author and has not been published anywhere else or has not been sent for publication anywhere. And that it is free from plagiarism; all external sources in the paper are duly acknowledged and documented."

- A short bio-note of the contributor(s) indicating name, designation, institutional affiliation and brief career history.

The contact details of the contributor(s)–postal address along with Pincode, mobile number and email address.

Peer-review System

All Research Papers/Articles received at the Annual Conference of AESI and those submitted to the Editor-in-Chief directly are sent to the two referees/reviewers for peer-review following a double blind peer review system in which the reviewers and the authors do not know each other.

As the journal is funded by the Association and is freely distributed among members in the Conference, it charges “NO FEE” either in the name of processing charge or publication fee. All sale proceeds or subscription go to the the Association’s Bank Account which is operated jointly by the elected Chairman and Treasure of the Association.

The Journal is uploaded on the official website in pdf and is free for all to read and even download.

Publication Ethics

The Journal is committed to upholding the intellectual property rights and publication ethics as per the guidelines of COPE Committee on Publication Ethics. Authors are encouraged to follow the same ethical practices.

Authors are advised not to infringe the copy rights of other authors, make due acknowledgement and ensure that their papers are free from plagiarism. They are asked to submit an undertaking for the originality of the paper. Their papers are also subjected to duplication-checking software. If a formal complaint is lodged, it is investigated and the author is denied publication in the journal in future. However, the disclaimer is published in the journal stating that the responsibility for data presented, opinion expressed or conclusions reached and plagiarism, if any, is entirely that of the author(s) and the editors/ publisher bear no responsibility for them whatsoever.



COSMOS IMPACT FACTOR



CERTIFICATE OF ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This is certified that our reviewers reviewed INDIAN JOURNAL OF ENGLISH
STUDIES

ISSN L-0537-1988

The journal has done blind peer reviewed and the journal got Impact
factor for the year of 2016 is 3.210

01.06.2017
Mr. Sumanda Das
Director
South-East Asia Division
Cosmos Impact factor

This is subjected to change during different year

www.cosmosimpactfactor.com

Contents

Editorial	<i>xiii</i>
—C.L. Khatri	
Globalization: Emerging Trends in English Language and Literature	1
—Prof. C.R. Visweswara Rao	
Indian English Books for Children and Young Adults	22
—Shyamala A. Narayan	
‘Touching the Roots’ Cultural Immersion Model of Teaching English	36
—R.P. Singh	
Towards the Indianisation of English: Trends, Perspectives and Politics of Identity	45
—Jaydeep Sarangi	
Upamanyu Chatterjee’s <i>English, August: A Critique</i>	56
—Dr. Bhaiya Lal Vishwakarma	
—Dr. Vinod Kumar Singh	
Search for Self-Identity in Anuradha Roy’s <i>The Folded Earth</i>	66
—Alapati Purnachandra Rao	
Cultural Unity in Amitav Ghosh’s <i>The Shadow Lines</i>	73
—R.P. Kachhway	

(viii)

Hubris and Digital Humanity: An Explication of Ethics Through Social Media	82
—Gagana B. Purohit	
Multilingualism and English Language in Our Schools	92
—Kanhaiya Kumar Sinha	
<i>Oranges are Not the Only Fruit:</i> Lesbianism in Post Modern Literature	101
—Pranamita Pati	
Reverse Orientalism: Re-reading the Diasporic Discourse of the Postcolonial Indian Diaspora Writers with a Special Reference to Amitav Ghosh's <i>The Hungry Tide</i>	108
—Prasun Banerjee & Dina Nath	
Teaching Literature through Film Adaptations in the 21st Century	120
—Yugeshwar Sah	
(Dis)located Diaspora: Mapping Travels, Writing (Hi)Stories	133
—Prerana Sinha	
Bye-Bye Bertolt Brecht: Strategies of Bondian Theatre	143
—Antara Mukherjee	
The Invisible Hand of Compulsions Behind all Actions with a Special Reference to Jhumpa Lahiri's <i>The Namesake</i>	160
—Deepak N. Pawar	
Rusty's View of India: "The Land of Hidden Desires"	169
—Jayeeta Ray	

Instruments of Self-deception and Brutishness in Harold Pinter's Plays	174
—Somasree Santra	
Ethos of Indian Woman in Nissim Ezekiel's Poetry	185
—Dr. Kiran S. Khandare & Sandeep K. Thorat	
The Emotional Intelligence in Binod Mishra's <i>Multiple Waves</i>	194
—Dr. Chandra Shekhar Rajhans	
Controlling Reader's Gaze: Visual Representation and the Object of Violence in <i>I, Phoolan Devi</i> and <i>Bandit Queen</i>	201
—Sakshi Singh, Eva Sharma, Madhav Dubey	
The Focus on a Subaltern and the Voice of a Reinvented Mythic Figure in Mahasweta Devi's <i>Draupadi</i>	220
—Dr. Satyendra Kumar	
Speaking Silence: A Comparative Study of Rajinder Singh Bedi's "Lajwanti", and Amrita Pritam's <i>Pinjar</i>	229
—Iffat Shaheen	
Interrogating the Patriarchy: A Feminist Reading of Khaled Hosseini's <i>A Thousand Splendid Suns</i>	240
—Sweta Kumari	
Feministic Interpretation of the Fairy Tale "Beauty and the Beast"	247
—Nigel Peter O'Brien	
Hero: A Universal Perspective	252
—Sunil Kumar Navin	
John Donne as a Poet of 'Shringara'	259
—Richa Biswal	

Depicting the Social Realism: Portrayal of the Truth in Binod Mishra's <i>The Multiple Waves</i> and C.L. Khatri's <i>Two-Minute Silence</i>	273
—Goutam Karmakar	
Dukhi and Velutha: A Tale of Two Dalit Protagonists	285
—Ghanshyam Kumar	
Negotiating the Abused Woman Body: A Study of Select Woman Authored Plays from the 1980s	295
—Pinaki Ranjan Das	
Magic Realism and Thematic Patterns in G.V. Desani's Mystical Epic <i>Hali</i>	319
—Prof. (Dr.) Kumar Chandradeep	
Social Matrix of Post-Partition India with special reference to "LOC" and "The Scent of Man"	325
—Dr. Vikash Mohan Sahay	
SHORT STORY	
Teacher of Humanity	332
—Ramesh K. Srivastava	
POETRY SECTION	
Sweet and Sour Tales	343
—D.C. Chambial	
Can a Teacher Scold Students?	344
—Dr. K. Balachandran	
Mosquito	345
—Dr. K. Balachandran	
4 POEMS	347
—R.K. Singh	
Hard Times	349
—Pashupati Jha	

(xi)

Being Indian	350
—Dr. Kalinkar Pattanayak	
The Laughing Buddha	350
—Binod Mishra	
BOOK REVIEW	
Gagana B. Purohit, <i>Tracing Roots of Indigenous Poetry in English</i>	353
—Dr. Sanjay Sharma	
Wankhede, M.S. <i>Dalit Writings: Reality of Marginalized Communities in India</i>	355
—Dr. Satish Barbuddhe	
<i>Interrupting the Monologue: The Poetics and Politics of Motherhood</i> Ed. Dr. Nazia Hasan,	357
—Dr. K. Balachandran	
<i>Revisiting Literary Theory and Criticism</i> Edited by R.N. Rai, M.S. Pandey, Anita Singh	363
—Prof. Ram Bhagwan Singh	

Editorial

The term 'post-colonial' refers to a period after the end of colonial rule. Obviously 1947 is the starting point in India. But what about the finishing mark? Is it endless in time span? Some scholars wonder if we have really come to a post-colonial phase interpreting coloniality in a wider perspective and not just a political phenomenon, and they talk of decolonizing the mind and neo-colonial situation in this context. On the contrary, some scholars strongly argue that 'post-colonial' phase came to an end in 1990's with the rise of globalization and the post-colonial theories were taken over by theories pertaining to technology, electronics and cyber. 'e' has become the buzz word in this cyber age that has made real time data, connectivity and accessibility possible and ushered in an age of transparency, digital and virtual reality.

Whatever may be the theoretical predilection, I begin with this presumption that the post - independent India from 1947 till date is viewed as post-colonial and take into account major developments over the years particularly in the 21st century that have greatly impacted our literary and cultural discourse. Post-colonial studies are primarily concerned with European Imperialism and its effects: construction of Eurocentric master discourse, its resistance, identity, gender, class, migration and subaltern. Feminist and Subaltern or Dalit discourse as well as activities at the level of society and governance be it enactment of law for their fair representation in democratic and administrative bodies, for their safeguard and empowerment or mass awareness campaign in the society for their enablement launched by various social and cultural groups from within and outside have been in the centre stage. Post-colonial theories at the world level challenged the Eurocentric notion of the third world, 'cultural viscosity of Europe' that addressed third world countries as 'others' of Europe.

In India Feminist and Dalit discourse, theories and activities were used as a potent tool to challenge and subvert the patriarchal and Brahminical order of society and to claim not just equal right for women and Dalit castes but also seek compensation for the injustice meted out to them in the name of caste and sex hierarchy. Unfortunately, they are still victims of the flawed social order. Consequently, the institution of marriage, varna system, classical literature, scriptures and the entire social system have come under attack. From time to time it also resulted into bloody conflict between Swarnas and Dalits and tribals and non-tribals. But the consistent Feminist and Dalit movements have borne fruit. They have not just led to the development of aesthetics and rich body of literature but have mitigated to some extent the untouchability and discriminatory hierarchy of caste system, and victimization of women in the family. Their position at all levels of human index has significantly improved. Until 1980's and 1990's legal, political and social interventions have been redressing their grievances, safeguarding and empowering them despite the fact that reports of atrocities against minorities, women and Dalits have been coming in. But now they are becoming headlines and are being strongly protested at national scale by all sections of people. This is a major shift in the later post-colonial phase. Thanks to hyper active social media, vibrant and easily accessible print and electronic media, aggressive posturing of social and political groups, student unions and pro-active judiciary.

This age can be characterized as the age of technology, all pervasive technology-Robotics, Artificial intelligence, genetic science, synthetic organisms and bio-mechanics, Information Communication Technology (ICT), Computer Mediated Communication (CMC), digital and virtual existence-that has greatly impacted life on this planet in all manners, physiologically, psychologically and theologically. There are both positive and negative fallouts of this development. But we have reached to a point where going backward or standing aloof of this current is no option at least for a society or a nation. Besides physiological changes which are too obvious, technology has brought out changes

in our behaviour, attitude and perspective to life. The fast speed of technology world has induced a sense of urgency and impatience in us, and has made our life machine-like. The corporate/ market sector that is spearheading technology has led to the corporatization of all facets of life even religion, ethics, aesthetics, art, agriculture, pastoral life which were innocent of it. We tend to be more pragmatic in our outlook. Consequently we do not write for posterity or *swantahsukhaya* but for result in the present.

Market ethics has taken over religious ethics and our priorities in all walks of life have shifted for example art has become a market product, knowledge based education has given way to skills oriented professional education, personal communication is being replaced by hyper text/ machine communication, in the domain of sex, which is no longer a taboo, cyber sex has made its entry; relationship is not made in heaven but in Facebook, not for seven births but for convenience. Practice of live-in-relationship, contractual marriage and discourse on LGBT are on rise. So we have a dynamic value system rather than a universal code of conduct. The postcolonial challenges of ‘otherness’ and ‘difference’ are more effectively countered by technology of today subverting any ‘universal or normative postulation of rational unanimity.’ (Leela Gandhi: *Postcolonial Theory*, 27) Everyone has his own take and is being heard by target group as well as vehemently opposed by the opponents. Multiple voices in literature/art/ cinema/ media have come to be recognised. Even the concept of a uniform standard language has changed and we come to accept many Englishes within the English language-British English, American English, Hinglish, Tamil English, etc. and we also talk of English for special purposes. The centre has broken into multiple centres ‘where centre cannot hold’ (Yeats: “Second Coming”). We are in for a world of perpetual conflict and contradiction and each dissenting voice has a place in the public domain. Each talent has a platform to prove, a tea vendor can be the Prime Minister. It offers a world where knowledge is free for all and accessible from all places. Thanks to social media-Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, YouTube channels, web portals, e-library, Wikipedia and the like.

It is all positive and uncomplaining. You are driving a car and you take a wrong route. Your GPS does not complain of not following its direction, rather adjusts itself and suggests the right way from there. Above all technology is non-discriminatory, and devoid of human follies. It does not differentiate on the basis of caste, class, religion, race, gender, region, nation or relation. It can prove to be a game changer for the deprived ones. It offers a platform for all business, art, literature, film and media to all and at all places without discrimination. E-learning, M-learning, virtual class with the help of ICT and CMC are transforming teaching-learning process, making education/ courses damn cheap, more effective, interesting and open for all.

Nonetheless, everything has its own pitfalls. Technological development has indented on human capacity and has posed a threat to human autonomy and authority and led to a jobless growth with the growing craze for automation and now artificial intelligence in the corporate world. It has adversely affected interpersonal relationship, communication and conventional social fabric. A child can be seen glued to his smart phone even while sitting before the family members or guests. Communication between man and machine is a new dimension in communication theory. Combination of man and machine into a cyborg is the current project in tech world. Now relations are made not in heaven but in Facebook, Linked-in, Instagram etc. So we are losing personal touch in our interpersonal relationship. Email cannot generate the same feeling that a handwritten letter used to do. Similarly, virtual class or video conference cannot be a substitute for personal meeting and real class. A serious sociological concern is our overdependence on technology for addressing social and psychological issues like fundamentalism, communalism, intolerance, social and economic divides, terrorism and poverty. For example, the state invests far more on surveillance, electronic means of communication, infrastructure and on weaponry than on socio-psychological measures like education, counselling, communication with people, recognition of their dissenting identity and invest in the human capital. It is a matter of concern that human values and cultural mores and seriousness of art are being diluted in this cyber age.

This socio-technological background of Indian society sets in the basic premises of the recent developments in Indian English literature. As a matter of fact literature or literary and cultural theories draw upon the contemporary society and the tradition for narrative feeding and critical postulation. On literary front India has witnessed rapid increase in critical output with mushrooming growth of online journals, publication houses of ebooks and conventional books in the last two decades. Some big publication houses like Penguin have launched self-publishing schemes with professional packages for editing, designing, publishing and marketing. It has been fuelled by the UGC policy of ‘publish or perish’. Since publication platforms are easily available to all even in the remote places without any screening, writers particularly poets have outnumbered the readers and poems of umpteen tastes, and scores of other writings are pouring in. There is hardly any benchmark or yardstick of quality to guide this longing for romantic chaos. We have come to the age of complete freedom where every writing—scurrilous, frivolous, flimsy as well as marvelous is/are raining in the public domain. The only preconditions it requires are one’s urge for publication and access to internet. Keki N. Daruwalla rightly maintains, “The best thing about Indian poetry in English is that there is no “school”, no poetic congeries, no Gurus and no disciples”. (Daruwalla (ed): *The Decades of Indian Poetry*, 1960-1980: XXXV)

Indian English Novel has witnessed an unprecedented growth of pulp or popular fiction meant for casual, time pass reading so much so that the serious literary novel has gone to the back seat. It has all happened because of a shift in the philosophy of writing. Earlier novelists used to speak their own mind, and created taste and gave direction to the society with their writings. Now writers are guided by the market forces— agents, editors, publishers and PROs. They are rarely masters of their own texts particularly the emerging ones. Chetan Bhagat is said to be the pioneer of this popular trend with *Five point Someone*, and other novels. Interesting divisions of popular literature have come up like chick-lit, lad-lit, tech-lit, campus-lit, etc. Chatty style of college goers,

SMS lingo and contemporary popular colloquial expressions have made their way in English fiction. Take for example Varsha Dixit's *Right Fit Wrong Shoe*: "Irritating life out of him was as natural to her as salt to a Bloody Marry or *kanda to paav bhaji*" or look at the titles of Gautam Malkani's *Londonstani*, Soma Das's *Sumthing of a mocktale* or Smita Jain's *Krishna's Konfessions*.

However, our hope lies in what is being threatened that is our dynamic culture. It is the strength and beauty of Indian culture that it does not give up its core strength even while assimilating new things. It has been proved time and again in history be it the long history of foreign invasion or the global recession in the recent time. Jawaharlal Nehru said about Indian culture that 'it is ever flowing, ever changing, yet ever the same.' We are passing through a transition phase and we can hope that a time will come when technology will forge harmony with sociology for a better world for all its stakeholders to live in and a more technocultured human resource trained to navigate through differences, dissents, conflicts and contradictions with a smile on the face.

I take this opportunity to express my gratitude to the distinguished members of AESI for electing me Editor-in-Chief and reposing their faith in me. I am also conscious of the great responsibility it holds to edit a journal of this historic stature with a luminous legacy of editors like Late R.R. Shrestha, Prof I K Sharma, and later on Dr R.K. Dhawan, Dr Suman Bala, Prof B.K. Das, Dr Binod Mishra. I have tried my level best to do justice with the job with whatever little experience I have of editing and I express my commitment to improve upon it with your suggestions and feedback. I am thankful to all members of the editorial board for their cooperation and to the contributors comprising mainly AESI members and the guest contributors particularly Prof Shyamala A. Narayan, a great literary historian of Indian English literature for the fruition of this endeavour.

Wish you all a very happy and creatively fruitful New Year-2019!

C.L. Khatri

IJES, Volume LVI, 2019

**Globalization: Emerging Trends in
English Language and Literature
(62nd All India English Teachers'
Conference President's Address)**

**Prof. C.R. Visweswara Rao*

Osmania University Centre for International Programmes, a jewel in the crown of Osmania University, is an outstanding institution and a vast repository that has contributed significantly to the promotion of research in Literature, Humanities, and the Social Sciences. The Association for English Studies of India, the longest standing forum for English teachers from all over the country, has held the mirror up to the course of English language teaching, literary studies, and creative writing in English in the context of the nation, its urges, aspirations and priorities. That these two have collaborated to mark the centenary celebrations of one of the most distinguished institutions in the country, Osmania University, known for its solid contribution to several fields of knowledge, in the organization of the 62nd All India English Teachers Conference on the theme “Globalization: Emerging Trends in English and Literature” is a welcome sign for the promotion of English studies in the country. On my part, I am deeply beholden to Osmania University Centre for International Programmes and the Association for English Studies of India for their kind invitation to me to deliver this Conference President’s Address, which I consider a great honour bestowed upon me.

H.G. Widdowson in his *Defining Issues in English Language Teaching* quotes from Goldsmith’s *The Deserted Village*:

***Prof. C.R. Visweswara Rao**, Former Vice-Chancellor, VSU,
Andhra Pradesh. E-mail: crvrao@gmail.com

While words of learned length and thundering sound,
Amazed the gazing rustics ranged around;
And still they gazed, and still th wonder grew,
That one small head could carry all he knew.

This was the school master we knew. He was a treasure-house of knowledge. His ostentation baffled people into reverence. With our knowledge of “Is There a Text in this Class?,” its discovery of the “structure of the reading experience,” its assertion that to someone who believes in determinate meaning, disagreement is an imperative, its assumption that the text is not a special object but the occasion for a temporal experience, we turn our attention to English Language Teaching. In the field of English Language Teaching there is a visible shift of focus to post-globalization methodologies, learner-centred approaches with their contention that language teaching is not “packaged for learners” but made by them. With this we have moved far from teacher-centrism implied in *The Deserted Village*.

Globalization is a keyword in both academic discussions and popular discourses on economy, society, technology, and culture. It is still understood, in Giddens’s terms, as “the intensification of worldwide social relations which links distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa.”¹ In Malcolm Waters’ terms globalization is “a social process in which the constraints of geography on social and cultural arrangements recede and in which people become increasingly aware that they are receding”². An important issue here is the extent to which globalization is regarded as a homogenizing process. While some commentators view it as promoting uniformity and standardization³, others evaluate it by the use of concepts such as hybridization,⁴ and glocalization⁵ to make the point that globalization entails a synergetic relationship between the global and the local. Again, while some see globalization as hegemonically Western, as an extension of American imperialism⁶, others make the point that the process is more complex than this argument implies.⁷

Globalization is seen by some authors as coterminous with postmodernism, while others reject this proposition. This debate is particularly salient for those social theorists who examine questions of cultural identity, that is, what it means to be of a particular nationality, ethnic group, or religious tradition. Globalization changes the conditions under which language learning takes place. In this sphere as in others, some of the most significant changes are social and economic. “Communication skills” and the new literacies demanded by new technologies, as well as competence in one or more second/foreign languages, all represent valuable “linguistic capital”, to use Pierre Bourdieu’s term.⁸ Some commentators have suggested that languages are coming to be treated more and more as economic commodities, and that this view is displacing traditional ideologies in which languages were primarily symbols of ethnic or national identity⁹. The commodification of language affects both people’s motivations for learning languages and their choices of which languages to learn. It also affects the choices made by institutions (local and national, public and private), because they are resource allocation bodies for language education.

We have noticed that changing political conditions have raised important questions for language teaching professionals. Since the early 1990s, issues of linguistic imperialism have been much debated, especially in relation to English language teaching.¹⁰ There are conflicting views among analysts, as has already been traced, as to whether globalization represents an extension of Western geopolitical dominance or whether it opens up new possibilities for local resistance on the part of subaltern groups. It is evident that the questions raised by globalization for language teaching are both diverse and complex. Our aim is to discuss how broader debates on the meaning and significance of globalization are taken up in the field of applied linguistics.

Deborah Cameron¹¹ in “Globalization and the Teaching of ‘Communication Skills’” examines the discourse on communication skills. She argues that what is emerging is a global ideology of

“effective communication.” On the surface there are many different languages, but under the banner of ‘effective communication’, all become vehicles for the expression of similar values and the enactment of similar subjectivities. We are familiar with the idea of the ‘text as linguistic object’ in English Language Teaching, where texts are gutted for linguistic structure. Indeed much reading instruction has traditionally taken this form. We can equally see texts as *cultural* objects or artefacts in the sense that they embody the values and belief systems of the societies and communities from which they arise.

If we examine texts in English in a range of forms, genres, and discourses, we begin to see how across linguistic and cultural boundaries genres are interpreted in different cultural settings. This macro awareness of texts can then be refined by more micro analysis of specific linguistic and discursal selections of the kind promoted in Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) approaches.¹² Cyberspace and the ICT are frequently invoked as a ‘zone of contact’ where distant individuals may ‘meet’ on equal terms, and language teachers are increasingly exploiting the opportunities it seems to offer for real and meaningful interaction between learners and native speakers. In a close analysis of some computer mediated exchanges between American college students and their peers in France, however, Claire Kramsch and Steven Thorne in *Globalization and Language Teaching*,¹³ show that this kind of communication is rendered problematic by differences which manifest themselves not at the surface level of the linguistic code, but at the deeper level of genre.

The ICT is expected to function as a tool for promoting quality in India. For the adaptability to the ICT, it may be necessary to think of modernization of the curriculum, development of suitable pedagogical strategies for the language classroom, and core competency development and mapping of the teachers participating in the endeavour. In our adoption of technology we must not lose sight of the fact that a thorough examination of the issues ranging from conceptual design to complete life-cycle development has to

take place, taking into account features like reliability, user-friendliness, portability, validation, online testing, and compatibility evaluation for which methodologies have to be developed. Let us also be reminded of the pitfalls of technology against the background of a conjectured predicament: “Technology is a Faustian bargain.” For every advantage to be derived from it, there is a corresponding disadvantage. Different technologies have different content biases. The young mind should not be surrendered to the false lure of equating access to information with access to knowledge. Education, as it has been rightly warned, cannot be King Midas converting whatever it touches into IT-related solutions.

It is often observed that discussions of method have an ‘academic’ quality about them. It is because in the real world of the classroom teachers’ practices are influenced by multiple factors. Their practice seldom exemplifies a specific method in its pure or paradigmatic form. One real constraint on teachers is the kind of teaching materials available to them, and this is the topic addressed by John Gray in his *Globalization and Language Teaching*.¹⁴ Gray investigates the ‘global coursebook’, a kind of text designed to be used in English language teaching worldwide. He suggests that the imperatives of the market combined with the capabilities of new technology seem more likely to increase diversity than homogeneity. Course books could become ‘glocal’, with a generic formula being customized for different local or regional markets. Such a development would not displease the EFL teachers Gray interviewed in Catalonia, Spain, who spoke of their desire to ‘build bridges’ between the world of English and the world their students live in. The question then is, is ‘glocalization’ an opportunity for the local empowerment of teachers and students? Or do we have to take it that it is an instance of contemporary capitalism’s surrogate for power, namely increased consumer choice?

Education too is increasingly affected by the advent of new technologies and media. These are having a significant impact on second language teaching¹⁵. In the process, questions about the potential of technology to radically change the experience of

learning languages are raised. It is often claimed that globalization is a transnational phenomenon and therefore it tends to weaken the nation-state as an economic and political entity. Yet the nation-state clearly continues to exert significant influence in many areas of its inhabitants' experience, including their experience as users and learners of languages. Both language and education are areas where, in modern times, agents of the nation-state have played a major role in planning and policy. Globalization cannot easily make that role superfluous. But there is the contrary feature to take note of. Global developments, particularly in the economic sphere, are still perceived as putting national interests at stake, and therefore as demanding a coordinated national response. The interplay between 'global' and 'local' considerations produces different outcomes in different places. Let alone the global and the local having an interplay in curriculum design, we have not taken adequate note of the phenomenon of "understanding the language classrooms."

By and large we have ignored the participation and active involvement of the student in diverse classroom activities related to language learning and the acquisition of the four skills. That language teaching is not packaged for learners is a concept that involves focus on methodology and contextualization. Learner-centeredness prompts responsive, collaborative, problem-oriented, and democratic learning in which the student and the teacher ideally decide how and when learning occurs and with what objectives and deliverables. With methodology as the focal point and with a learner-centric objective, David Nunan¹⁶ came forward with the Active Learning Method and with the conceptual framework for "understanding the language classrooms". Throughout his book, theory and research are illustrated with extracts from authentic classroom interaction. By providing a balanced introduction to theory research and practice—and particularly by presenting portraits of teachers and learners in action in the classroom - Nunan makes an important practical contribution to our understanding of second and foreign language learning and teaching. There is a wide gap between student needs

and what is taught at the tertiary level. Teaching English without knowing the language gap and the language need of the students is like prescribing a medicine without diagnosing the disease. Teachers are not transmitters and students not mere sponges. Margie Berns¹⁷, an expert in the field of communicative language teaching writes, explaining Firth's view, that language is interaction and that it is interpersonal activity. It has a clear relationship with society. In this light, language study has to look at the use (function) of language in context, both in its linguistic context and in its social or situational context of who is speaking, what the social roles of the speakers are, and why they have come together to speak.

Task-based Language Teaching (TBLT) is one of the most discussed methodologies in language teaching and learning contexts. The term 'task' is on the lips of just about anyone attending a language teaching conference in any part of the world. It appears in language teaching course books and is increasingly becoming part of the discourse of language teachers around the world. Further, it is sustained by the most well-developed research strand in the field of second language acquisition (SLA) today, which revolves round the Interaction Hypothesis as proposed by M. Long, in his essay, 'The Role of Linguistic Environment in Second Language Acquisition'¹⁸ (published in W. Ritchie and T. Bhatia (eds) *Approaches to Second Language Acquisition*). In this instructional cycle, tasks are strategically developed with a focus on conveying meaning, eliciting language that is used by the learner for communicative purposes, and facilitating interaction and collaboration while utilizing focal language features. The Interaction Hypothesis attempts to explain the role of interactions in the language learning process. As opposed to internally-driven acquisition approaches, the IH is in line with a socio-interactionist approach, which emphasizes the influence of the environment in which a learner lives.

The Interaction Hypothesis is based on the notion that language learners learn by using language in context while concentrating on communicative tasks. Communicative tasks are understood to be real-world-like speech events during which interlocutor sex change

information. Central to this understanding of communication as information transaction is the construct known as negotiation for meaning. There are certain shortcomings in this construct as a way of 'framing' communication which is part of a general global tendency towards the technologization of discourse. As Cameron and Fairclough point out, in recent times there has been a tendency to frame interpersonal and workplace-based communication as a set of technical skills that can be defined and quantified. This process may be 'technologization of discourse', or more specifically, the 'conversationalization of institutional discourse'. Ritz calls this 'McCommunication' emphasizing the fact that the process relies on a frame which over-rationalizes communication and commodification. This commodification and spread of McCommunication is manifested in the worldwide sales of books (e.g. Gray 1992) which engage in what Cameron (1996:36) calls 'verbal hygiene', that is, 'a diverse set of normative metalinguistic practices based on a conviction that some ways of using language are functionally, aesthetically or morally preferable to others'. This raises rather a depressing possibility: consumption will soon be globalized like eating, shopping, and holidaying across different geographical locations and our ways of communicating in institutional contexts and our personal lives will also come to be similar. Let us thus be wary of the advantages and pitfalls when we adopt certain of these trends in our praxis.

Now let me touch upon the theme of literature and globalism. Saskia Sassen says that "a good part of globalization consists of an enormous variety of micro-processes that begin to denationalize what had been constructed as national—whether policies, capital, political subjectivities, urban spaces, temporal frames, or any other of a variety of dynamics and domains."¹⁹ Five broad definitions of globalization are available: It is represented by large and growing flows of trade and capital investment between countries. A second usage views globalization as liberalization, that is, as a borderless world economy. A third conception equates globalization with universalization, that is, as a synthesis of cultures leading to a global humanism. A fourth definition equates globalization with

westernization or modernization. Globalization in this sense is sometimes described as imperialism. A fifth idea identifies globalization with deterritorialization that no longer maps social spaces in terms of territorial places and territorial borders.

An important difference between Wallerstein's modern world system theory and globalization theory is that for Wallerstein globalization is an overwhelmingly economic phenomenon, while for globalization theorists, it is also cultural. Negating the old theories which label cultural and national identities as victims of globalization, John Tomlinson suggests that "globalization, far from destroying it, has been perhaps the most significant force in *creating and proliferating* cultural identity. He claims that "globalization actually proliferates rather than destroys identities," and hence for him "globalization is really the globalization of modernity, and modernity is the harbinger of identity."²⁰ Tomlinson studies the relationship between globalization and contemporary culture, explaining the importance of time and space concerns, cultural imperialism, "deterritorialization," the impact of the media and communication technologies, and the possible growth of more cosmopolitan culture.

More than the definitions or conceptualization of the term globalism, the word is fast turning into a shibboleth, a magic incantation, that unlocks the gates of understanding as it creeps into literary studies. It has led its way alongside other far more familiar terms that are transgressive of boundaries for literary studies, such as postmodernism and postcolonialism. The term gained currency largely outside literature and literary studies, at the behest of sociologists and social theorists. But it surely is beyond their ken too and makes its impact felt on a variety of disciplines. Through diffusion, through several accruals of meaning, globalism is deployed now in relation to local, regional, nation-state, transnational, and glocal issues.

As one of the most challenging concepts in contemporary cultural criticism, the term postmodernism has impacted various disciplines—architecture, philosophy, literary studies, history, social

theory, cultural studies, and globalization as well. This multimodality renders it difficult to explain postmodernism, as Ihab Hassan²¹ believes. Postmodernism established itself in the aftermath of artistic Modernism, with a sense of “exhaustion” reflected in the work of Samuel Beckett among others, and with the huge cultural impact television and popular music have made on society. Contemporary studies describe postmodernism as a “fact of a global change of epochs,” in which “modernist Eurocentrism is replaced with postmodern global polycentrism.” Postmodernism has been a much-contested term from its early appearance in literature, with literary critics such as Leslie Fiedler and Frank Kermode using the term as a definition for experimental fictional writing, which followed modernism. It is only after the publication of Jean-François Lyotard’s *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge* (1979; 1984), that for the first-time theory became associated with postmodernism. In Lyotard’s conception, postmodernism is essentially characterized by “incredulity toward metanarratives.” Similarly, the French sociologist Jean Baudrillard²² describes the “simulacra” of postmodern life which have taken the place of “real” objects. He argues that in the postmodern world it is the production of images and information and not the production of material goods that is important.

The study of postmodernism and globalization can be seen in a conjoined direction as the former invests in literature and literary studies and the latter in sociology and social studies. Suman Gupta²⁴ says that postmodern theory constantly seems to seep out of geopolitical boundaries to spread across the boundaryless domain of continua which can extend to everything—to the contemporary world at large. Continua such as language, text, discourse, space, and audiovisual fields are conventionally instantiated in cultural products and forms. Therefore the entire postmodernist perception of the world seems to become a kind of cultural discernment, an autonomous cultural production itself. It seems to contain all aspects of the world within its cultural gaze. Another main frame of literary studies, besides postmodernism and

relevant to globalization, is postcolonialism. Postcolonial theory, especially its textual and cultural practices, provides clear models for understanding how local communities achieve agency under the pressure of global hegemony. Postcolonial theory is very useful in its analysis of the strategies by which the “local” colonized engage larger hegemonic forces. Among the many challenges facing postcolonial writers are the attempts both to resurrect their culture and to combat preconceptions about their culture.

From one standpoint postcolonial theory has emerged from an interdisciplinary area of study which is concerned with the historical, political, philosophical, social, cultural and aesthetic structures of colonial domination and resistance. Jonathan Culler says²⁴: “Since 1980s a growing corpus of writings has debated questions about the relation between hegemony of Western discourses and the possibilities of resistance, and about the formation of colonial and postcolonial subjects: hybrid subjects, emerging from the superimposition of conflicting languages and cultures.” Another perspective also needs to be taken into consideration here. During the 1980s, sociology and political economy took over globalization discourses. But during the 1990s, the debates of globalization moved to different focal points, “from expressions of the process as “cultural imperialism” or neo-imperialism to analyses of the hybridization, diffusion, relativization, and interrelationship of global societies.” (Robertson 1992: 8).²⁵

It is generally agreed that Homi K. Bhabha and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, in addition to Edward Said and others, played a major role in providing postcolonialism with a “treasure of terms”. Bhabha is preoccupied with questions of cultural exchange and identification that are determined not by problems of geographical distance and overt forms of political inequality, as in colonialism, but by the contiguity of cultures (characteristically from the former colonial “peripheries”) sharing the same (usually metropolitan) space within the former imperium. Such issues make Bhabha see a complex set of negotiations between postcolonialism and postmodernism. His theory entails a scrutiny of nationality,

ethnicity, and politics with poststructuralist ideas of identity and indeterminacy. This gives rise to defining postcolonial identities as changing, hybrid constructions. Bhabha maintains that members of a postcolonial society have an identity which has been shaped by their own unique cultural and community history intertwined with that of the colonial power. He therefore says: “These hyphenated, hybridized cultural conditions are also forms of a vernacular cosmopolitanism that emerges in multicultural societies and explicitly exceeds a particular national location” (“The White Stuff,” 23). These themes of hybridity and multi-rootedness—in part, expressions of the subjective experience of globalization—are increasingly prevalent in literary texts. The new paradigm for literary studies therefore involves multiculturalist interrogation of the traditional Eurocentric canon from four perspectives—Third World, feminist, minority, and class perspectives. And in addition to the third world and within it there is the Fourth World pointing in the direction of another kind of hybridity. Third World literature emerged in the 1960s as a sort of alternative canon—(Aijaz Ahmad, *In Theory: Classes, Nations, Literatures*. London: Verso, 1992: 78-86).

Bhabha criticizes the presumed dichotomies between colonized and colonizer, center and periphery, self and other. Instead, he proposes a dialogic model of nationalities, ethnicities, and identities characterized by hybridity. They become something new, emerging from a “Third Space” to cross-examine the givens of the past. In his essays in *The Location of Culture* (1994), Bhabha reflects on important issues. Three essays in particular—“Sly Civility,” “Signs Taken for Wonders,” and “Articulating the Archaic” develop the most extended discussions of agency on the part of the colonized, suggesting that culture’s “in-betweenness” can be employed in ways that reveal contradictions within narratives that would otherwise uphold a linear, progressive model of Western history and civilization. In this way, his discussion of contact between cultures revises the narrative of progress or modernity, associated particularly with the Enlightenment. In “Signs Taken for Wonders” he elaborates ambivalence and mimicry through hybridity.

Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak has been one of the most influential cultural critics in the field of postcolonial studies. She is seen as one of the members of “the holy trinity” of postcolonial theorists (Robert Young coined this phrase for the triad, Said-Spivak-Bhabha in his work *Colonial Desire*, 1995). Spivak’s work is immensely influential in the field of colonial historiography, feminist studies, cultural studies, and postcolonial studies. Her writing seeks to bring together the insights of poststructuralism, deconstruction, Marxism, psychoanalysis, and feminism in active collaboration. In her prominent essays “Subaltern Studies: Deconstructing Historiography” (1988) and “Can the Subaltern Speak?” (1993), she explores the possibility of recovering the voices of those who had been made subjects of colonial representations, particularly women, and she reads these narratives as potentially disruptive and subversive. In “Can the Subaltern Speak?” rather than making the subaltern as female seem to speak, she raises the question of the representational systems which rendered her mute in the first place.

Critics such as Arif Dirlik²⁶ and Arjun Appadurai²⁷ among others have exercised thought on the ways in which local communities engage the forces of globalization. The most trenchant criticism of postcolonial thought comes from Neo-Marxist critics such as Arif Dirlik. He accuses postcolonial criticism of being “no more than ideological reflection of capitalism” (Dirlik qtd. in Scott, *Refashioning Futures* 137). These critics focus more on the link between the local and global and the agency of local subjects in appropriating, transforming and consuming global phenomena. Appadurai believes that we now live in globally imagined worlds and not simply in locally imagined communities. Ethnoscapes allow us to recognize that our notions of space, place and community have become much more complex: indeed a ‘single community’ may now be dispersed across a variety of sites. Appadurai’s theory focuses on disjunctions, or points at which different processes go in different directions and cause ruptures, tensions or conflicts. We also live in a world in which deterritorialization, the breaking-down of existing territorial connections, is a major force to reckon with.

And disjunctions or ruptures have become the site of tension between “cultural homogenization and cultural heterogenization.” The language that enables conjuncture or disjuncture comes directly from the grammar book of postcolonial theory. In this sense, one can argue that what makes current theories of globalization different from those associated with modernization in the 1950s and 1960s is their strategic deployment of postcolonial theory. Where do we locate postcoloniality? Is it in the spaces between and across cultures and traditions or in national states? Don’t the nation-states, in spite of a certain crisis of legitimacy, still continue to demand affiliation from their citizens and subjects? Globalization constitutes, in this regard, what Appadurai calls “a complex overlapping, disjunctive order that cannot any longer be understood in terms of existing center...” The themes of hybridity and multi-rootedness—in part, expressions of the subjective experience of globalization—are increasingly prevalent in literary texts.

Paul Jay approaches the topic of globalization by asking what globalization will do to the discipline of English. In his article “Beyond Discipline? Globalization and the Future of English”²⁸ Paul Jay strongly sides with those like Friedman and Appadurai to argue that globalization also involves processes of exchange, dissemination, and transformation that are cultural and symbolic. He explains that the future of English lies squarely at the conjunction of these two fields: globalization and postmodernism. On the one hand, the discipline has moved away from a narrow focus on literature per se in the increasing attention it pays to a range of cultural forms. But on the other hand, we have come to realize the inadequacy and even arbitrariness of studying literature and culture within the borders of nation-states, and borders are seen to be restrictive and even distorting. Globalization studies provide a context for studying literary texts not simply as aesthetic objects but also as cultural objects. That is because they are caught up in complex systems of transnational and intercultural exchange, appropriation, and transformation. Globalization offers a context for dealing with the proliferation of English literatures

written in diasporic conditions, literatures that would otherwise be assimilated to a narrow, nationalist paradigms (“Anglo-Indian” or “Asian American”).

Let me turn my attention now to the English teacher engaged in teaching literature and his curricular, literary critical concerns and anxieties. It is customary that an address of this kind goes beyond striking the keynote to touch upon this theme. A teacher’s career is a long period of gestation for the profession during which he trains himself in the classroom and through his interactions with his peers. It is also shaped by a variety of syllabuses he handles, the fast changing outlooks on them, and the debates about them that he participates in. It thus covers practical, theoretical, and methodological aspects of teaching in the classroom and also incidentally lets him face some features of the “anxiety of teaching” that Elaine Showalter referred to in her book *Teaching Literature*. It makes him experience a recurrent teacher-anxiety phenomenon of the kind that Michael Berube explains: students’ keen assessment of the approach adopted by the teacher and the response on the part of the teacher to the unexpected that calls for accumulated years of “teaching experience and weathering night(s) of anxiety dreams.” (quoted in Chapter 1 “The Anxiety of Teaching” in *Teaching Literature*, 2002, p. 2).

The debates raging today between traditionalist and radical English teachers over the canon, literary theory, and feminist, queer, and postcolonial theories and the consequent curricular innovations may not be at the centre of our teaching at many places but we need to keep pace with these developments and discussions. Mark Bauerlein makes observations in *The New Criterion*, November 2014 (pp. 4-9) on the consequences of the canon wars in the American universities as follows: (Humanities Professors) “have sacrificed the great tradition that was their *raison detre* to a vain belief about themselves. They have exchanged their meal ticket for a moment of counter-cultural roguishness.” This is one aspect. We need to consider Gerard Graff’s *Beyond the Culture Wars* (1992) in this context. The

debate on the hegemony of Western culture as against the subversive incursions by women, minorities, and the post-colonial world is an interesting topic for debate and cannot be bypassed in the universities and the curricular innovations they make. In her lucidly argued book, Gerard Graff points attention to “teaching conflicts.” She laments that our curriculum is so offered that at one class the student learns that the Western literary tradition inculcates values that are timeless and universal while at another he is taught that everything is political, agenda-based. Both courses offer something of value. The student should be enabled to acquire a sense of this dichotomy so that he places what he learns in a larger perspective. Therefore we can make out a case for incorporating something of the culture wars into the curriculum so that the student is exposed to a variety of perspectives—from the great tradition to the multicultural canon, from humanistic criticism to feminism, Marxism, deconstruction, and the New Historicism.

In the field of literary theory, Hartman, Derrida, Stanley Fish, and others continued to heed the classics, but postcolonialists, feminists, ecocritics, queer theorists, and political critics of the left kind addressed literature not as texts to be studied but as pretexts for an agenda. A monolithic structure of the curriculum should be avoided and at the same time intellectual foundations for knowledge of one’s own culture should be created. Gender studies, cultural studies, cinema and media studies, postcolonial studies, the New Historicism, to mention but a few, are interdisciplinary forms of knowledge that have been nurtured in their early phases of development by departments of language and literature whose intellectual frontiers have, as a result, extended in scope and scale and increased in expertise. Poststructuralism and its aftermath have witnessed drastic curricular experimentation, with the humanistic tradition giving way to identitarian issues.

Jonathan Culler’s contention is that theory provides “the discursive space” within which literary and cultural studies now occur, even if theory itself is not seen as the cutting edge or as a vanguard movement. Therefore it is not as though theory eclipses literature. It alerts us to versions of “literariness” at work in

discourse and thus reaffirms the centrality of the literary. When the “poetics” of the Russian formalists and the French structuralists was superseded by the American poststructuralism committed to theory, probably literature was relegated to the role of a “handmaiden,” as it appeared to some. But Jonathan Culler tries to reverse this understanding in order “to articulate the role of the literary in theory” and at the same time enhance our understanding of certain theoretical concepts that inform our sense of “literariness” today.

The canon wars are an important feature of the present day academic scene. Like all human capacity, the capacity to think needs nourishment and support which can only be provided by the presence of men taking diverse points of view, as Hannah Arendt says. The principled objection to the canon of the 1980s yielded place to its disregard in the twenty-first century. The hard radicals have denounced standard literature courses as racist, sexist, Eurocentric, and considered the canon a political formation. However, as the Modern Languages Association survey reported in 1992, authors such as William Shakespeare and Nathaniel Hawthorne, thought by some to be in danger of being displaced by the rise of multicultural studies, in fact continue to dominate the so-called “meat-and-potato” survey courses. Shakespeare is indeed our contemporary, as Ian Katt said. Harold Bloom, in the manner of Coleridge on *Hamlet*, said, “In so far as we ourselves value, and deplore, our own personalities, we are the heirs of Falstaff and Hamlet, and of all the other persons through Shakespeare’s theatre of what might be called the colony of the spirit” (Bloom, *Shakespeare: The Invention of the Human*, Riverhead Books, 1998:5) and he further observed, “Shakespeare perspectivizes his dramas so that, measure for measure, we are judged even as we attempt to judge (Bloom:5). It is well to remember that in a 1991 interview, Jacques Derrida appealed against disregarding the classics by stating that if one was not trained in the tradition, deconstruction meant nothing: “I think that if what is called ‘deconstruction’ produces neglect of the classical authors, the canonical texts and so on, we should fight it.”

“Bountiful inclusivity” is the new dispensation in literary studies and it cannot be viewed as our being “cabined, cribbed, confined” in a critical straitjacket. Let us brace ourselves up to the idea of “curricular liberalism,” which involves a heterogeneous offer of classic and contemporary, traditional and multicultural, Eurocentric and others. Liberality, as we may call it, leads in its turn to fashionable formulations. When someone says that he teaches at the intersection of transnational Asian/American studies, queer theory, and science fiction, it only means that literary works serve for him as occasions for raising topical interests. While Matthew Arnold held that the task of reading is “to ascertain the master-spirit in the literature of an epoch,” Frank Kermode in his own characteristic way in “An Appetite for Poetry” (Harvard, 1989) reaffirmed his belief in the value of reading literary classics as a way of gauging ideals of permanence as well as forces of change. The widening of the literary canon, the debate about the canon itself, the beyond the canon approach, teaching students from a range of ethnic backgrounds—all these have diversified scholarly interests. We see how in the postcolonial space disparate cultures and identities contest, collaborate, and negotiate with one another. Geoffrey Hartman in his intellectual memoir (described as a “bibliography”) held, that an academic writer, instead of subordinating a poem or novel or film to present day concerns, can so enhance it that “something of the text, in the text, remains strengthened, brought back into cultural memory, even when criticized or vehemently controverted” (*A Scholar’s Tale: Intellectual Journey of a Displaced Child*, 2007, pp. 130-131).

Let us finally bear in mind and focus on the experience and perception of value. I quote F.R. Leavis here: “Literary criticism provides the test for life and concreteness; where it degenerates the instruments of thought degenerate too, and thinking, released from the testing and energizing contact with the full living consciousness, is debilitated, and betrayed to the academic, the abstract and the verbal. It is of little use to discuss values if the sense for value—the experience and perception of value—is absent.”

References

1. A. Giddens, *The Consequences of Modernity*, Cambridge: Polity Press, 1990: 64.
2. M. Waters, *Globalization*, London: Routledge 1995: 3, emphasis in original.
3. John Gray, *False Dawn*, London: Granta Books. 1998 and Ritzer, G. *The McDonaldization Thesis*, London: Sage, 1998.
4. J.N. Pieterse, 'Globalization as Hybridization', in M. Featherstone, S. Lash and R. Robertson (eds) *Global Modernities*, London: Sage, 1995.
5. Robertson, 'Globalization: time-space and homogeneity-heterogeneity', in M. Featherstone, S. Lash and R. Robertson (eds) *Global Modernities* London: Sage Publications. 1995: 25-44.
6. G. Ritzer, *The McDonaldization Thesis*, London: Sage. 1998 and Schiller, H.I. (1985) 'Transnational Media and National Development', in K. Nordenstreng and H.I. Schiller (eds) *National Sovereignty and International Communication*, Norwood, NJ: Ablex, 1985.
7. J. Friedman, *Cultural Identity and Global Process*, London: Sage. 1994; Robertson, R. *Globalization: Social Theory and Global Culture*, London: Sage, 1992.
8. *Language and Symbolic Power*, introduced by J.B. Thompson (ed.) trans. G. Raymond and M. Adamson, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1991.
9. For example, Heller in *Linguistic Minorities and Modernity: A Sociolinguistic Ethnography*, London: Longman, 1999.
10. M. Holborow, *The Politics of English*, London: Sage Publications. 1999; R. Phillipson, *Linguistic Imperialism*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992.
11. Deborah Cameron, "Globalization and the Teaching of 'Communication Skills'" in *Globalization and Language Teaching*, London: Routledge, 2002, edited by David Block and Deborah Cameron, 67-82.

12. For example, Wallace, 'Critical literacy awareness in the EFL classroom', in N. Fairclough (ed.) *Critical Language Awareness*, London: Longman, 1992.
13. Claire Kramsch and Steven Thorne in *Globalization and Language Teaching*, London: Routledge, 2002, 83-100.
14. John Gray, *Globalization and Language Teaching*, London: Routledge, 2002, 151-167.
15. Warschauer, M. and Kern, R. (eds) *Network-based Language Teaching: Concepts and Practice*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.
16. David Nunan, *Language Teaching Methodology: A Textbook for Teachers*, 1991 and *Task-Based Language Teaching; From Theory to Classroom Practice*, 2004.
17. Margie Berns, *Contexts of Competence: Social and Cultural Considerations in Communicative Language Teaching*, 1990.
18. M. Long, 'The role of linguistic environment in second language acquisition', in W. Ritchie and T. Bhatia (eds) *Approaches to Second Language Acquisition*, London: Academic Press, 1996 and Gass, S. *Input, Interaction, and the Second Language Learner*, Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 1997.
19. Saskia Sassen, *Territory, Authority, Rights: From Medieval to Global Assemblages*, Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2006: 1.
20. John Tomlinson, *Globalization and Culture*, University of Chicago Press.
21. Ihab Hassan, "Towards a Concept of Postmodernism," *The Postmodern Turn*, ed., Steven Best and Douglas Kellner, 1987.
22. Jean Baudrillard, *Simulacra and Simulation*, 1987.
23. Suman Gupta, *Globalization and Literature*, 2009.
24. Jonathan Culler, *The Literary in Theory*, Stanford University Press, 2007.

25. Roland Robertson, *Globalization: Social Theory and Global Culture*, Sage, 1992.
 26. Arif Dirlik, "The Postcolonial Aura: Third World Criticism in the Age of Global Capitalism," *Critical Inquiry*, Vol. 20, No. 2.
 27. Arjun Appadurai, "Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy," *Theory, Culture and Society*, Sage, Vol. 7 (1990), pp. 295-310 and *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*, 1996.
 28. Paul Jay, "Beyond Discipline? Globalization and the Future of English," *PMLA*, Vol. 116, No.1. Special Topic: Globalizing Literary Studies (Jan. 2001), pp. 32-47.
- Certain references have been mentioned in the body of the essay itself for the sake of convenience.

IJES, Volume LVI, 2019

Indian English Books for Children and Young Adults

**Shyamala A. Narayan*

There was a paucity of Indian English literature for children in the first half of the twentieth century other than retelling of folk tales and stories from mythology, in books like *Bengali Folk Tales* by Lal Behari Day, published in 1883 and *Indian Fairy Tales* (1946) retold by Mulk Raj Anand. The only significant writer of this period is Dhan Gopal Mukerji. Literature for children came into its own in the third quarter of the century. Publishers like Tulika Books and Pratham that focused on this genre have played a major role in the growth of literature for children and young adults in India. Foreign publishers such as Scholastic, Puffin and Harper Collins are now publishing Indian authors. A major advance in the twenty-first century is authors writing books for young adults, taking up serious issues like female infanticide, sexuality and homosexuality, sexual abuse and care for the differently-abled people.

Some earlier novels like Anita Desai's *The Village by the Sea* (1982), Salman Rushdie's *Haroun and the Sea of Stories* (1990), Farrukh Dhondy's *Poona Company* (1980) and Jayant Narlikar's *The Return of Vaman* (1989) can be read with profit and interest by children and adults alike. Some mainstream writers like Shashi Deshpande, Partap Sharma, Sudha Murty, Kavery Nambisan and

***Shyamala A. Narayan**, a renowned literary historian, Former Professor & Head, Dept of English, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi.

Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni write for children. Others, like Arup Kumar Datta, Neelima Sinha, Deepak Dalal, Paro Anand, Devika Rangachari, Deepa Agarwal (*Adventure in the Hills*, 1996 and *Traveller's Ghost*, 1997), Roopa Pai and Annie Besant write predominantly for children.

Dhan Gopal Mukerji (1890-1936) was a nationalist and a deeply religious man, who wrote many books on Hinduism, such as *Devotional Passages from the Hindu Bible* (1929), and a biography of Ramakrishna Paramahansa, *The Face of Silence* (1926). His only novel, *My Brother's Face*, was published in 1924. He wrote twelve books for children. *Kari, the Elephant* (1922), *Jungle Beasts and Men* (1923), *Hari, the Jungle Lad* (1924), *Ghond, the Hunter* (1928), *The Chief of the Herd* (1929), and *Bunny, Hound and Clown* (1931) are reminiscent of Rudyard Kipling's *The Jungle Book*, but Mukerji is more realistic than Kipling. His descriptions of Indian village life are authentic and based on first-hand experience. *Gay-Neck: The Story of a Pigeon* (1927), which won the Newbery Medal for children's books, is the best of Mukerji's books for children; it was very popular and is still in print. He also wrote interesting versions of Indian legends for children, which include *Rama, the Hero of India* (1930), based on the *Ramayana*, and *The Master Monkey* (1932) about Hanuman.

Ruskin Bond has published more than fifty books of stories and poems for children, in addition to twelve novellas and collections of short stories for adults. His earlier books, such as *The Blue Umbrella* (1968), *Grandfather's Private Zoo* (1969), *Angry River* (1972), *Tales and Legends of India* (1982), *Getting Granny's Glasses* (1985), *The Eyes of the Eagle* (1987), and *The Cherry Tree* (1991) continue to appear in print, such is his appeal—some stories have been published as graphic novels. The series of six books with Rusty (*The adventures of Rusty*, 1986; *Rusty, the Boy From the Hills*, 2002; *Rusty Runs Away*, 2003; *Rusty and the Leopard*, 2003; *Rusty Goes to London*, 2004 and *Rusty Comes Home*, 2004) is semi-autobiographical, tracing his life from early childhood to his twenties. *Mr Oliver's Diary* (2010)

has a very different protagonist: Mr. Oliver, who keeps a shrew as a pet, is the new teacher at a school in Shimla. Most of the stories in *The Kashmiri Storyteller* (2011), *Thick as Thieves: Tales of Friendship* (2013), *Ranji's Wonderful Bat and Other Stories* (2015), and *The Whistling Schoolboy and Other Stories of School Life* (2015) centre on children. *Tigers for Dinner: Tall Tales by Jim Corbett's Khansama* (2013) has the cook telling the lonely child fantastic stories of his adventures with "Carpet Sahib" (as the Indians called him). *Friends in Wild Places: Birds, Beasts, and Other Companions* (2016) are suitable for children as well as adults.

Arup Kumar Dutta (b.1946) is one of the first to write for Indian children, with exciting adventure stories like *The Kaziranga Trail* (1980), *The Blind Witness* (1985), *Revenge* (1986), *Crystal Cave* (1987), *Smack* (1990) and *Trouble at Kolongjam* (1997). Ranjit Lal (b.1955) is one of India's leading nature writers, with books like *Mostly Birds, Some Monkeys, and a Pest: Nature In and Around Delhi* (2000), *Enjoying Birds* (2007) and *Birds from My Window and the Antics They Get Up To* (2011). He has written a wide range of children's books which can also be read by adults. *The Life and Times of Altu-Faltu* (2001), like his earlier novel *The Crow Chronicles* (1996), is a satirical view of contemporary India presented as an animal fable. Altu-Faltu is a Rhesus monkey, in love with Rani-beti, daughter of the mighty Chaudhury Charbi Rai Sahib, of the Flagstaff Tower Macaques. Most of the animals are given suggestive names, but the non-Hindi reader would not be able to appreciate the meaning of Altu-Faltu ('Useless, frivolous') or Charbi ('fat, lard'), to mention just two examples.

Straight forward adventure stories for children include the three novels in *The Bossman Adventures* (2004) and *Bossman and the Kala Shaitan* (2005), featuring an ugly bulldog who belongs to a family living near the Delhi Ridge. The interaction among the children, fourteen-year-old Alope and his sisters—the pretty Shalini and the nine-year-old "toofani" twins, is presented realistically. *The Battle for No.19* (2007) has eight girls from a

school in the hills on a tour of Agra; they reach Delhi the day Indira Gandhi is assassinated. A violent mob kills their jovial old driver Kartar Singh just because he is a Sikh. Led by sixteen-year-old Puja, they take refuge in an empty house, but find that it belongs to a Sikh family, targeted by the evil mob. In *That Summer at Kalagarh* (2010), the protagonist is twelve-year-old Gitanjali, whom her cousins call “hathini” because she is very fat. When the family travels to Kalagarh in the Kumaon hills, they realize that she has a special relationship with elephants. *The Deadly Royal Recipe* (2012) has the princess of Kamargarh joining a school; a trio of girls there helps her to outwit villains. *The Tigers of Taboo Valley* (2014) brings the animal world to life; the “protagonist” is Rana Shaan-Bahadur, alpha-male tiger of Sher-Kila National Park. Poachers as well as rival male tigers and the underground group of porcupine terrorists want to kill Shaan. *The Secret of Falcon Heights* (2014) is set in a remote hill station. Seventeen-year-old Sandeep and his younger brother, Manish, are quite bored till they start investigating why all the people of the town avoid contact with the family living next door. In *The Trees of Medley Gardens* (2017), sixteen-year-old Vishwajit, the narrator and his eleven-year-old sister explore the neighbouring house; they find that the trees there can talk, and the children learn a lot about the secret life of the banyan, neem, mango and peepal trees.

Ranjit Lal’s books for young adults take up serious social issues like female infanticide, sexual abuse and care for the divyang. *Faces in the Water* (2010) which won the *Crossword Award for Children’s Writing*, uses fantasy to highlight the son-preference prevalent in India. The Diwanchand family has only sons, and credits the water from a magical well for this “good fortune”. A fifteen-year-old boy sets out to look for the well, and the faces of three girls look up at him from the water, and invite him to join in their games. Seventeen-year-old Maya in *Black Limericks* (2011) is struggling with a poor self image, as her parents always favour her younger brother, a brilliant student; she also has to combat her obnoxious cousin Harry who attempts to blackmail her to have sex with him. In *Taklu and Shroom* (2012)

seventeen-year-old Gaurav is inconsolable when the prime minister's security guard shoots his pet dog Rani. He shaves his head in mourning, earning the nickname Taklu ("baldy") and vows vengeance. When his parents take him to a hill station to recover, he meets Rukmini ("Shroom"), a cancer survivor who is bald as mushroom. Ranjit Lal gives a sensitive account of their growing friendship, and the consequences when he finds that she is the prime minister's grand-niece. *Smitten* (2012), written from the point of view of fifteen-year-old Samir and his neighbour Akhila, deals with the issue of sexual abuse; Lal has also mentioned websites and contact numbers of four organizations a victimised teenager can look for support. *Miracles* (2013) is a coming-of-age story: sixteen-year-old Trisha learns to cope with her mother's cancer and an abusive grandparent. In *The Dugong and the Barracudas* (2015), Ranjit Lal takes up the issue of prejudice against a child with "special needs". When she first sees Sushmita, a slow learner, the principal of Rugged Rocks High School is worried. "Putting that lovely child amongst our kids? It's like putting a dugong into a tank of barracudas." The novel has a "feel good" ending as Sushmita successfully combats bullying. *Our Nana Was a Nutcase* (2015) has four siblings being brought up by their grandfather, as the parents are jet-setting diplomats. The grandfather, a retired army officer, is an endearing personality with a great sense of humour, who orders their life with military precision. The story takes a serious turn when they realize that he has started suffering from Alzheimer's disease.

Lal has also written short stories which employ humour and his knowledge of nature to expose shortcomings in human society. *The Caterpillar Who Went on a Diet* (2004) has fourteen short stories which provide a hilarious picture of the lives of insects; the title story has a caterpillar who wants to look like a stick insect. The ten stories in *When Banshee Kissed Bimbo and Other Bird Stories* (2005) present relationships in bird families to satirize human society; the Minister for Cultural Propriety is offended when Banshee, a barn owl, kisses his beloved in front of him.

The Chandipur Jewels (1981) was the first children's book written by bilingual author Neelima Sinha (b.1939). She admits that she wrote primarily for her own children, because children's books during those days were mainly from the West. She has also written historical fiction, short stories, plays and biographies for children. Award-winning books such as *Vanishing Trick at Chandipur* (1984), *Adventure on the Golden Lake* (1985), *Adventure Before Midnight* (1987), *SOS From Munia* (1990), and *The Yellow Butterfly* (1991) have been reprinted in the twenty-first century. New works include *Rishabh in the Land of the Flying Magicians* (2003), *Mystery of the Falling Mountains* (2004) and *Search for the Sacred Gem* (2012), and a story from the *Ramayana*, *The Great Adventure of Luv and Kush* (2005). *Red Blooms in the Forest* (2013) is more suitable for adults: the protagonist Champa is a teenager caught up in the violence of the Naxalite movement. Based on her personal experience of Hazaribagh, her husband Yashwant Sinha's constituency, Neelima Sinha gives both sides of the picture—the insurgents' and the government's. Recently, she has written picture books for the 5-7 years age group, in the "Read and Grow" series of Vishv Books, New Delhi: *The Lonely Princess* (2013), *Give Back My Ball!* (2013), *Stranger at the Farm* (2014), *A Time Together!* (2014), *The Grumpy little Owl* (2015), and *The Great Show* (2015) deal with everyday experiences children can relate to. *A Little Lie* (2013) is for the 7-9 age groups.

Subhadra Sen Gupta (b.1952) has written more than forty books for children on a variety of themes: mysteries, adventure stories, stories of ordinary school children, and historicals. *Good Times at Islamgunj* (1982) was followed by *The Mussourie Mystery* (1986). Four teenage girls comprise the "Foxy Foursome" who go around solving mysteries with the help of Jahan's feisty aunt Razia in the three books—*Double Click* (2008), *Star Struck* (2010) and *Foxy Foursome* (2014), which has four distinct narrative voices for Charu, Padma, Jahan and Mandy. Sen Gupta effectively uses the diary format to present the psyche of the protagonists in two novels: *Secret Diary of the World's Worst*

Cook (2011) and *Secret Diary of the World's Worst Friend* (2014). Her most important contribution to children's writing is the presentation of historical characters, based on meticulously researched details of the lives of people in the bazaars and palaces. *Bishnu, the Dhobi Singer* (1996) and its sequel *Bishnu Sings Again* (1998) are set in the court of the Mughal emperor Akbar. *A Clown for Tenali Rama* (2002) belongs to King Krishna Deva Raya's time. *Kartik's War* (2002) and *Kartik and the Lost Gold* (2004) feature a military spy turned detective at the court of Ashoka the Great, which is also the setting for *A Mauryan Adventure* (2013). *Let's Go Time Travelling! Life in India Through the Ages* (2012) provides an entertaining glimpse of life in the past. *Caring for Nature* (2013) is a series of four books where stories centre on historical figures like King Ashoka, Rabindranath Tagore and Bapu (Mahatma Gandhi), conveying the importance of conservation. She has also written biographies of historical personages like Akbar, princess Jahanara, Ashoka, Mahatma Gandhi, his wife Kasturba, and Sukumar Ray, the great comic writer, and *A Children's History of India* (2015). Books like *Exploring India: Kings and Queens* (2016), *Exploring India: Battles and Warriors* (2016), *Exploring India: Unknown Indians* (2016) and *A Bagful of History* (2018) make history very interesting. Her travelogues can be read by children as well as adults. She has also published comic strips and graphic novels, with illustrations by Tapas Guha, who has illustrated most of her children's books.

Deepak Dalal gave up a career in chemical engineering to write adventure stories for children. His books featuring teenagers Aditya and Vikram are set in different parts of India, and provide a wealth of information about wildlife and ecosystems. A teenage girl joins them in some of the books. *Ranthambore Adventure* (1998), the first book in the series, is set in the game sanctuary; it is as much about the adventures of the teenagers combating poachers as about the life of a tiger from its birth to adulthood. *Lakshadweep Adventure* (2000) captures the beauty of the coral reefs running parallel to India's western coast, 300 kilometres

away. *The Snow Leopard Adventure* (2000) based on Dalal's expedition to Ladakh, has the young boys investigating the illegal trade in tiger bones and shahtoosh. *Ladakh Adventure* (2000) captures the natural beauty of the place, even as the boys get involved in rescuing a Tibetan boy who is abducted. Two books set in the Andamans (*Andaman Adventure: The Jarawa*, 2000 and *Andaman Adventure: Barren Island*, 2003) were followed by *Sahyadri Adventure: Anirudh's Dream* (2010) and *Sahyadri Adventure: Koleshwar's Secret* (2010) set in the Western Ghats. Dalal has now launched "Feather Tales", a series about birds; three books have appeared so far, *Talon the Falcon* (2015), *A Flamingo in My Garden* (2016), and *The Paradise Flycatcher* (2018).

Roopa Pai, author of the bestselling *The Gita for Children* (2015) has authored the "Taranauts" series of eight books. She creates a new universe called Mithya, which has eight spherical worlds bobbing in an endless sea, around a volcano called Kay Laas. Their worlds are lit up by 32 Tarasuns, four for each world, threatened by the evil Shaap Azur, who shuts out the light of the Tarasuns. They can be saved only by solving the riddles Shaap Azur has hidden in each world. Three children with special powers: Zvala, the child of fire, Zarpa who can twist her body into any shape, and Tufan, the child of the wind who can blow up a storm with his powerful lungs comes to the rescue. A knowledge of Hindi would enable the reader to appreciate Roopa Pai's choice of names, such as Zvala (which suggests Jwala, 'fire'), and Tufan (storm, hurricane). The carefully crafted riddles are a great attraction for young readers.

Payal Dhar has written books of fantasy and science fiction. Maya Subramaniam, a twelve-year-old school girl, is the protagonist of *A Shadow in Eternity* (2006) and its sequels, *Key of Chaos* (2007) and *The Timeless Land* (2009). By day, she leads an ordinary life, but travels to another universe at night. *Satin: A Stitch in Time* (2011) is the first book of another series set in the fantasy land of Kuzerazi. *There's a Ghost in my PC* (2012) is set in contemporary India, with a touch of the supernatural

presented in a very credible way. The protagonist is Madhu, “the only twelve-year-old in the whole world” whose “mother knows more about computers than she does”. *Slightly Burnt* (2014) is for young adults, and takes up the issue of alternate sexuality. Sixteen-year-old Komal is shocked when her childhood friend Sahil confesses that he is gay, and attracted towards her younger brother Vikram.

Another novel which explores this issue is *Talking of Muskaan* (2014) by Himanjali Sankar. The introductory chapter has her classmates Rashika, Srinjini, Aaliya, Divya and Subhojoy being called to the school principal’s office; she tells them that Muskaan is in hospital, after attempting suicide. The rest of the novel employs the narrative voices of her classmates Aaliya, Subhojoy and Prateek to show the varied responses to a lesbian. Subhojoy, the brightest student in the class, is from a poor family; he feels an outsider because he cannot mingle with the other rich students. His elder sister studying in college has already sensed that Muskaan is different, so she is not shocked, and can relate to Muskaan’s angst of not fitting in. Prateek, “one of the stupidest boys in the class” is the other extreme. He is very rich, and decides that Muskaan is “quite a weirdo” because she refuses to go out with him. His father advises him to avoid “such people”. Sankar’s other books like *The Magical Adventures of Skinny Scribbles* (2001), *The Stupendous Timetelling Superdog* (2013) and *Missing: A Magnificent Superdog* (2015) are for younger children.

Jyotin Goel has written a series about a handicapped octopus. *Sept-opus: Adventures of an Almost-Octopus* (2015), *Septopus and the Secret of Captain Kidd’s Cove*, and *Septopus: Trouble on the High C’s* feature Rot as the superhero; born with seven and a half limbs, scientists have fitted him with a variety of tools as prosthetics. Anushka Ravishankar, dubbed India’s Dr.Seuss, writes for younger children in books like *Tiger on a Tree* (2002), *To Market, to Market* (2007), *Moin and the Monster* (2012), *Excuses, Excuses* (2012), *Moin the Monster Songster* (2012), and *Catch That Crocodile* (2013).

Annie Besant is a prolific children's writer; picture books for young children include *Mala's Silver Anklets* (2011), *Sam's Christmas Present* (2011) and *When I Grow Up* (2012). Books like *Tara Cooks up a Surprise*, *Tara's Secret Book*, *Tara's Day Out* etc. about a little girl are part of Scholastic Publishers' "Early Reading" series. *Can We Be Friends* (2014), *Zoya and the Bee* (2014) *The Magic Tree* (2015), and *The Thief in the Garden* (2015) have been published with activity books for school children. *The Pterodactyl's Egg* (2014), the story of nine-year-old Sam who looks after a Pterodactyl with the help of his sister and mother, is for older children.

Some established novelists have written children's books before devoting themselves to adult fiction. Kavery Nambisan (Bhatt) has written *Once Upon a Forest* (1986), *The School Upon a Hill* (1992) and *A Ticket to Home and Other Stories* (1996). Shashi Deshpande's *A Summer Adventure* (1978), *The Hidden Treasure* (1980), *The Only Witness* (1980) and *The Narayanpur Incident* (1982) are meant for children, so are Eunice de Souza's *All About Birbal* (1969), *More About Birbal* (1973), *Folk Tales from the Himalayas* (1973), and *Folk Tales from Gujarat* (1975). Suniti Namjoshi's *Aditi and the One-eyed Monkey* (1986), Kalpana Swaminathan's *Ordinary Mr Pai: Two Urban Fairytales* (1999) and Zai Whitaker's *Andaman's Boy* (1999) are other such novelists.

Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni (b.1956), an author of eight novels for adults, has written four novels for children. *Neela: Victory Song* (2002) is the story of twelve-year-old Neela in pre-independence India. When she befriends an underground freedom fighter, Samar, her interest in India's struggle begins to consume her every thought. Her father has joined Mahatma Gandhi's peaceful civil disobedience movement, and she is determined to help him and Samar fight for her country's freedom. Without holding up the narrative, Divakaruni presents good descriptions of the Bengali countryside and Indian customs. Her "Brotherhood of the Conch" trilogy, *The Conch Bearer* (2003), *The Mirror of Fire and Dreaming* (2005) and *Shadowland* (2009), combines

adventure with fantasy, magic and time travel. Anand is a poor boy living in Calcutta who is entrusted with a conch shell with special powers; he has to return it to its rightful owner in the Himalayas. The master healer, Abhayadatta, and Nisha, a poor girl, help him to reach the Silver Valley, high in the Himalayas. The second book has Anand travelling back in time to Mughal India, where he fights against sorcerers and jinns. *Shadowland*, the final volume, raises ecological and class issues in an adventure story. Anand and his friend Nisha go in search of the magical conch, which has disappeared from the Silver Valley. They travel through time to arrive at a devastated city; the rich live in hermetically sealed domes, while the poor struggle to breathe the polluted air.

Bilingual novelist Sudha Murty (b.1950) has written short stories for children, collected in books like *The Magic Drum and Other Favourite Stories* (2006), *The Bird with Golden Wings: Stories of Wit and Magic* (2009), *Grandma's Bag of Stories* (2012) and *A Cure for Laziness* (2013). *The Magic of the Lost Temple* (2015) is a short novel. Her stories based on real life incidents, such as *Wise and Otherwise: A Salute to Life* (2002), *How I Taught My Grandmother to Read* (2004), *The Day I Stopped Drinking Milk: Life Stories from Here and There* (2012), and *Something Happened on the Way to Heaven* (2014) can be read by children as well as adults. She has also published stories from mythology, in *The Serpent's Revenge: Unusual Tales from the Mahabharata* (2016), *The Man from the Egg: Unusual Tales about the Trinity* (2017) and *The Upside-Down King: Unusual Tales About Rama and Krishna* (2018).

Salman Rushdie has published a sequel to *Haroun and the Sea of Stories* with the title *Luka and the Fire of Life* (2010). Luka is the younger brother of Haroun, living in the city of Kahani in the land of Alifbay. Their father Rashid, the story-teller, falls into a deep sleep. To save him, Luka has to go to the world of magic and steal the Fire of Life. Various magical creatures help and hinder him in his quest. The sequel lacks the imaginative power and the wider allegorical significance of the earlier book.

Partap Sharma (1939-2011), a novelist and playwright, published four children's books—*The Surangini Tales* (1973) *Dog Detective Ranjha* (1978), *The Little Master of the Elephant* (1984) and *Top Dog* (1985)—before his novel for adults, *Days of the Turban* (1986). The stories about the dog Ranjha gained great popularity when they appeared as a comic strip in the children's magazine *Tinkle* in 1982. *My Father's Magic Briefcase* (2011) is a collection of stories that he had made up for his daughters when they were young. He wrote *Songs for Zen* (2011) for helping his grandson learn to count.

Easterine Kire, a poet and novelist from Nagaland, has published eleven novels, including three for children. *Once in Faraway Dorg* (2011), her first children's book, is about a planet called Dorg inhabited by round-faced creatures called Dorgels. Everything on Dorg is round, the flowers, and houses, even the eyes of the Dorgels. Seven-year-old Imtinokcha, the protagonist of *The Log-Drummer Boy* (2013), dreams of becoming a log-drummer one day, so his grandfather carves a miniature log drum for him. At harvest time, Nockha sprains his ankle and is forced to stay back in the village, while the rest of the villagers are out in the fields. His drumming skills save the village from enemy warriors. *Different Strokes* (2013) aims at creating awareness among school children about differently-abled kids. In *The Dancing Village* (2015), seven-year-old Rongsen bridges the cultural divide between two Naga tribes by making Ao Naga villagers dance to the rhythm of a Zeliang Naga dance. The book provides an insight into Naga culture and folk dances. *Naga Folk Tales Retold* (2009) can be read by children as well as adults.

Andaleeb Wajid's fiction for children has proved to be as popular as her novels for adults. The trilogy *No Time for Goodbyes* (2014), *Back in Time* (2014) and *Time Will Tell* (2015) has a young girl living in Bangalore travelling back in time when she picks up an old photograph. She finds herself in the nineteen-eighties, when her mother is a teenager; the only familiar thing is her grandmother's cooking. She wants to get back to 2012, but falls in love with Manoj, her mother's friend. The books offer vivid

representations of the Bangalore of the past, when it was a sleepy little “pensioner’s paradise”. *When She Went Away* (2015) strikes a serious note; the protagonist is a sixteen-year-old schoolgirl trying to come to terms with her mother’s sudden disappearance. Her father and brother are shattered, and it is rumoured that her mother has left her family to live with her former boyfriend. In *Asmara’s Summer* (2016), college girl Asmara’s grandparents live on Tannery Road, a lower-middle-class area of Bengaluru, a fact she hides from her friends; her life changes when she has to spend a month with them.

Samit Basu, author of science fiction for adults, has published school stories for children: *The Adventures of Stoob: Testing Times* (2014), *A Difficult Stage* (2015), and *Mismatch Mayhem* (2016) have ten-year-old Stoob (Subroto Bandopadhyay) narrating his experiences with his classmates Prithvi, Rehan and Ishani.

Duckbill Books, a publisher specialising in children’s books, has published nine books by Mainak Dhar, author of thrillers like *Line of Control* (2009) and *Vimana: A Science Fiction Thriller* (2011). *Zombiestan* (2012) has zombies roaming around Afghanistan, a land devastated by war. These undead come from Taliban soldiers who died fighting for Jihad. A series of eight books beginning with *Alice in Deadland* (2013) and ending with *I, Neil* (2014) features a fifteen-year-old girl living in a wasteland. She follows a bunny-eared Biter down a hole, and gets sucked into gory adventures with undead Biters. These fast paced thrillers targeted at young adults have too much violence.

Some other novels, such as Mini Shrinivasan’s *Just a Train Ride Away* (2010) and Manisha Anand’s *The Assassin Nuns of Pistachio* (2015) deserve special mention. Siddhartha Sarma’s *The Grasshopper’s Run* (2009) is based on extensive research and travel through East Assam, Nagaland, Manipur and Western Myanmar. Gojen, a thirteen-year-old studying in Calcutta in 1944, goes back home to avenge the murder of his best friend, killed when a psychotic colonel of the invading Japanese army wipes out his entire village. Sarma presents different perspectives on the war through short third person narratives of three other characters,

one British and two Japanese. It is not a simple war novel; it presents the society and culture of the Ao Naga tribe.

There is not much verse for children. Ruskin Bond is the only author who writes fiction as well as poetry. *To Live in Magic: A Book of Nature Poems* (1985), *An Island of Trees: Nature Stories and Poems* (1992), and *Granny's Tree Climbing and Other Poems* (2000) are meant for children. His recent books include *A Little Night Music* (2004) and *Hip-Hop Nature Boy and Other Poems* (2012), which contain delightful poems like this one: "If a tortoise could run/ And losses be won, /And bullies be buttered on toast;/ If a song brought a shower/And a gun grew a flower/ This world would be nicer than most!"

Animal Antics (2012) by K.E. Priyamvada is a collection of 26 poems about common and rare animals; every poem has a note on the scientific name of the animal, and its habitat. Literary critic and translator Alok Bhalla's *Wild Verses of Wit and Whimsy: From Alpha to Zeta in 26 Movements* (2014), with line drawings by Manjula Padmanabhan, can be enjoyed by children as well as adults. *Hey, That's an A* (2015) by Jerry Pinto with illustrations by Sayan Mukerjee makes good use of visuals to introduce the alphabet. The beautifully illustrated *Book of Beasts: An A to Z Rhyming Bestiary* (2016) by naturalist M. Krishnan contains many less known scientific facts. *The Right Kind of Dog* (2013) by Adil Jussawalla would appeal to young adults.

Indian English literature for children and young adults has come into its own in the twenty-first century. The variety of themes is impressive—there are picture books for young readers, books of adventure set in various regions of India, books presenting Indian history through entertaining anecdotes, stories dealing with simple incidents of day-to-day life, and fantasy writing. Indian children need no longer turn to Enid Blyton or Hardy Boys or Nancy Drew for their leisure reading.

IJES, Volume LVI, 2019

‘Touching the Roots’ Cultural Immersion Model of Teaching English

**R.P. Singh*

Abstract

In the present scenario, the traditional construct of classrooms and the conventional pedagogies are challenged. Every step is questioned, and every move needs justification. Here we need creative methods, and authentic tools to put the message across. In language teaching various methods are used towards achieving optimum results. In many cases, a big gap between the theory and praxis of methods and their applicability is seen. Reasons are so many; ranging from crowded classrooms to the issue of the lack of motivation in the communicator and the audience. Irrespective of all these we stand, move and excel. In this context, the present paper proposes Cultural Immersion Model of Teaching English. It is based on the steps of contextualizing, Reverberations and Implications. The paper offers a discussion on the contexts and connotations of the Cultural Immersion Model of Teaching English.

Key Words: Cultural Immersion Model, Teaching English, Contextualization, Postcolonialism

*Type of the wise who soar, but never roam;
True to the kindred points of Heaven and Home!*
(William Wordsworth’s *To a Skylark*)

***Dr. R.P. Singh** is Professor of English, Department of English & Modern European Languages, University of Lucknow, UP.

Human being soars high but lands on earth. Sky is for glamour but the earth to recline. We can enjoy the borrowings from others but ultimately search a sense of belonging with the roots, and yes it may be a rebuilt pedestal from many a borrowing, gain, laurel, dividend received from others. These are the flicks and sparks—the thoughts that usually hark my mind, and persuade me to look at teaching English from a fresh perspective which is 'glocal'. In a sense, this approach is a kind of *Madhyam Marg* but this *Madhyam Marg* or middle path, in no way, subscribes the idea of mediocrity or less substantial exchange of thoughts in the process of teaching. It believes in interpreting the content and context of any text, taking it to the natural association and acceptance of the receiver, shedding away all the conventions of the colonial/elitist high brow. From this 'familiarization', I intend to transfer the spirit of the academic discipline to the students in gradual ways with an aim of 'evolving' the knowledge/idea in place of 'imposing' the content. More or less, we all realize that the twenty first century classrooms are very complex, and the teacher observes divergent propensity here. In the present scenario, the traditional construct of the classroom and the conventional pedagogies are also challenged. Every step is questioned, and every move needs justification. Here we need creative methods, and authentic tools to put the message across. In language teaching various methods are used towards achieving optimum results. Diane Larsen–Freeman finds that by using language teaching methods, the teachers become, "clear on what they stand, teachers can choose to teach differently from the way they are taught. They are able to see why they are attracted to certain methods and repelled by others. They are able to make choices that are informed, not conditioned. They may be able to resist, or at least argue against the imposition of a particular method by authorities." (*Techniques and Principles in Language Teaching*, ix). But in reality, I find a big gap between the theory and praxis of methods and their applicability. Various reasons may be soughtranging from crowded classrooms to the issue of lack of motivation in the communicator and the audience. Irrespective of all these we stand, move and excel.

In this context we naturally go for keen action research, and ultimately emerge as the Manager. The role of a teacher is that of a hard task master and a competent Manager. The effect of market and media reverberate even in the classrooms, posing spectacular totems off and on. The emergence neo tribe(s) in the global village is no less a detractor and shows many sub-cultural issues based on economy, technology, ideology culminating into new stratifications. In these situations, I see a big scope of editing and creating our own tools and stands for teaching. The state of affair motivates me to look at pedagogies in a fresh mode. Postcolonial questioning supports me here, and in this context the following statement of Meenakshi Mukherjee helps me to carry forward the studies towards cultural immersion:

Post-colonialism is not merely a chronological label referring to the period after the demise of empire. It is ideologically an emancipatory concept particularly for the students of literature outside the western world, because it makes us interrogate many aspects of the study of literature that were made to take for granted, enabling us not only to read our own texts in our own terms but also to reinterpret some of the old canonical texts from Europe from the perspective of our specific historical and geographical location. It brings severely into question the old idea of the autotelic nature of literary text and the sealed anti-septic notion of 'artistic' value uncontaminated by the political circumstances of its production and reception—forcing everyone involved in the discipline to rethink the limitations of the Eurocentric/ universalist aesthetic norms. ('Interrogating Post-colonialism' 4)

Under the inquisitive strain, I explored the references towards finding an indigenous model of teaching English in India but could not convince me with any, although some works in this line have been carried over the sea. We find Chinwe H. Ikpeze's (2014, 2015) Cultural Responsive Pedagogy (CRP) and the cultivation of "Third Space" in classrooms and online environments. Ikpeze proposes to train the teachers for adopting new pedagogy in a cross-cultural context. He understands that all the classrooms are

multicultural in the contemporary scenario. M. Battiste, B. Kavanagh and H. Colleen Merchant's work in Canadian context also draws attention if someone thinks in the line of touching the roots. Their researches focus on the aboriginal communities in Canada. Battiste observes that the "aboriginal communities that have assumed control of their schools are still plagued by questions of how to implement education in the twenty-first century... How do we represent our cultures in school? What is appropriate, meaningful, and necessary?" (Battiste, 1999, p. XIV). Barbara Kavanagh (2006) perceives education holistically, and includes children's intellectual, spiritual, physical and emotional development at par with the instructions in the subject concerned. She states many points with reference to teaching the children of the First Nations in Canada, and proposes that, "it is important to gain an understanding of a community's history and culture". H. Colleen Marchant (2006) emphasizes the importance of community connections and the relationships between parents, families and First Nations schools. She suggests that the teachers should, "before accepting a teaching position, do a thorough investigation of the history, culture and life of the First Nations community." (106). Colleen further advises:

- Ask for a proper orientation process that explains your role, relationship to the community and the cultural activities in the school and community.
- Seek a mentor from a respected, culturally knowledgeable member of the school staff, to guide you through the learning process.
- Attend cultural and language classes with your students to enhance your knowledge.
- Don't isolate yourself. Form networks with colleagues, parents and community members. Participate in community events.
- Make yourself visible. (Merchant 2002, 106).

Although these discussions and suggestions relate with the contexts of the First Nations of Canada, with reference to an

indigenous community in a multicultural setting, yet it holds value, and draws a connection with with my project. I want to focus on teaching English to the students of Bhasha (vernacular) medium in India who are not much familiar with the cultural context of English language and literature. The purpose of the project is to come up with the Cultural Immersion Model in practice.

The Cultural Immersion Model is based on the following assumptions:

- i. English is taught as a second language in India. Its impact is visible in almost every shade of teaching English, be it language, literature or communication studies.
- ii. The students from Bhasha language (vernacular) background and with less exposure to socio cultural contexts of the texts feel it difficult to associate with the linguistic or literary contexts of English.
- iii. The students who can associate with the contexts of English texts come up with better ideas on the topic.
- iv. Scaling the culture of the learner with the contextual culture of the second language which is of course English in my model, we can bring better results.

It is appropriate to mention here that the proposed model does not take into account the teaching learning patterns of the early learners of English language. It addresses the aspirations of the High School (10th), Intermediate (12th) and the undergraduate (10+2+3) students of literature and communication classes in degree colleges and universities.

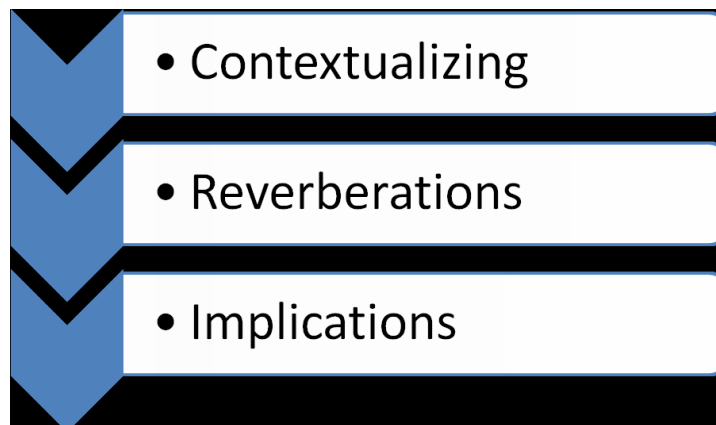
Findings from the Pilot Survey

Before finalizing the new plan of action and developing a model, I decided to conduct a preliminary survey, and therefore, studied the contexts and interests of the stakeholders for five years at different levels. In this pilot survey towards developing the 'Cultural Immersion of Teaching English', the respondents were selected from two categories-the teachers and the students. It was conducted both ways with the use of closed and open questionnaires.

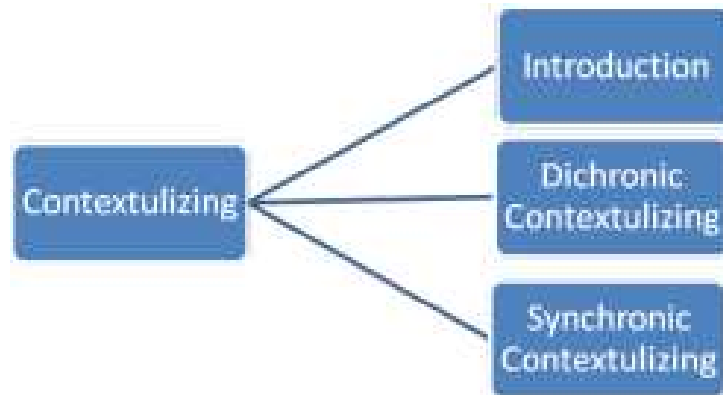
A keen and close observation of the situation was also given a priority. Approximately 80% teachers responded in my survey that they had followed the established/institutionally prescribed methods and go by the existing tradition of teaching the lessons. In case of the TGTs and the PGTs, the teaching methods as mentioned in the English Language Teaching Methods' books are followed. The respondents from the degree level institutions mostly use traditional classical interpretation in imparting the lessons. They rarely use any other method. Due to socio cultural pressures they imbibe the ideally defined patterns of teaching English literature and language. Eight percent respondents say that they have many innovative methods of teaching but in most of the cases either they were hesitating in using it or restrained from doing so due to the constraints of time or the lack of teaching aids. The institutional pressure of completing the syllabi along with performing different non-teaching duties also prove detrimental in using any innovative method or model. We know it too well that innovation requires leisure, perseverance and inclination.

2: Model (Cultural Immersion Model of Teaching English)

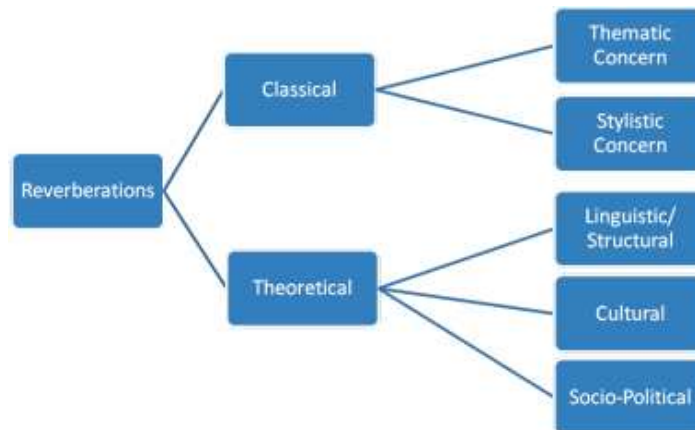
It is set to follow the following pattern:



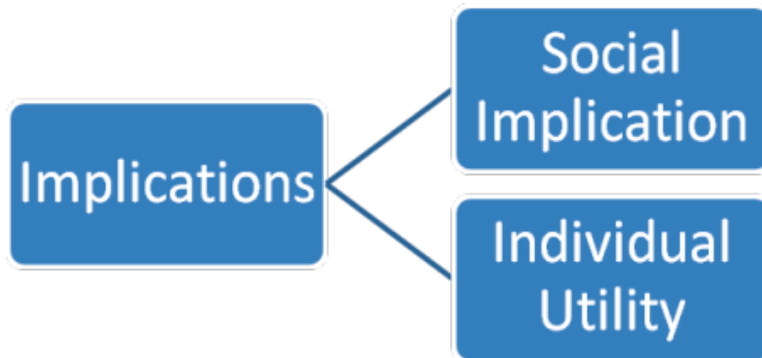
In teaching any text from second language/literature, a teacher shall begin in a comparative mode. The act of interpretation shall move from contextualization to implication.



In the phase of contextualization, the teacher shall associate the text with the culture and life of the audience. After a general introduction, a diachronic and synchronic contextualization stands on agenda.



By reverberation, I mean interpretation of the text. In the human competent brain, every text has a new effect and meaning, and it is only that. Usually we explain the thematic concerns and style of it. It is classical reverberation in my model. Once the general understanding of the text is reached, it is read between the lines with different theoretical stands like linguistic /structural, cultural and socio-political.



In the practical world of today, every human activity faces a lot of queries on its utility. This endorses my idea of implication .Under the model; we explain the social and individual uses of the text. How can we draw the utility and relevance of the text with society and individual? What are its implications to life as a whole, and to the individual concern? These are the forte in this phase.

The model has been used by my core team at different levels. The findings in our studies and practices come to the fact that the association of new knowledge with the familiar patterns of indigenous setting brings miraculous effects in teaching learning process.I have a firsthand experience of it while discussing the socio cultural contexts of Victorian literature with my students at the University of Lucknow. The same scaling and parallel pattern has been used while explaining the issues like ‘Canon formation in the New Literatures in English’, discussing ‘the Construct and Focus of problem plays’ and many more. Further, I have had the conviction of touching the roots while scaling Dalit Literature and African American Literature, and have observed greater level of satisfaction on the face of my class, in the situation where new trajectories of knowledge particularly those from foreign setting are explained and elaborated with reference to indigenous grounding like using cultural idioms, trends, movements practices and patterns. It is all done in addition to explaining the context in the institutionally established pattern of teaching the content concerned. And here lies the skill and art of the practicing teacher. As I call

it *Madhyam Marg*, and the model is a tight rope walk, proper scaling at proper time is required. Too much localizing can mar the effect of teaching and the basic purpose of the prescribed text, and the SLOs shall get a setback.

Researching and practicing cultural immersion of English studies is a relevant and fruitful issue. Much has been done in the field of decolonizing the mind, by offering many things branded as *Swadeshi* as against the borrowed realities and standards, yet there is a need to explore the field as discussed above. Since my research group has tested the model with different batches of students in different institutions, and have got satisfactory results, I can affirm that the model has a considerable validity and rationale.

Works Cited and Consulted

- Battiste, M. Introduction. In M. Battiste & J. Barman (Eds.) *First Nations Education in Canada: The Circle Unfolds*. Vancouver, B.C.: UBC Press. 1999.
- Freeman, Diane—Larsen. *Techniques and Principles in Language Teaching*. New Delhi : OUP. 2009.
- H. Colleen Marchant. *Indigenous Ways of Learning, Being and Teaching: Implications for New Teachers to First Nations Schools*. M. Ed. Dissert. University of Victoria. 2009.
- Ikpeze, Chinwe H. *Working Cross-Culturally: Identity Learning, Border Crossing and Culture Brokering*. Leiden: Sense Publishers. 2014.
- . *Teaching Across Cultures: Building Pedagogical Relationships in Diverse Contexts*. Leiden: Sense Publishers. 2014.
- Kavanagh, B. *Teaching in a First Nations school: An Information Handbook for Teachers new to First Nations Schools*. West Vancouver, British Columbia: First Nations Education Steering Committee. 2006.
- Mukherjee Meenakshi. 'Interrogating Post-Colonialism'. In *Trivedi, Harish and Mukherjee, Meenakshi*. Ed. *Interrogating Post-Colonialism: Theory, Text and Context*. Shimla: Indian Institute of Avanced Study. 1996.

IJES, Volume LVI, 2019

Towards the Indianisation of English: Trends, Perspectives and Politics of Identity

**Jaydeep Sarangi*

Abstract

English is conditioned by Indian geography, linguistic habits and socio-cultural patterns. There are the webs of Indian life, experience and speech habits that don't admit of translation into corresponding English terms. A linguistic project is expected to convey the message of the source text to target readers; however, there is no exact translation between any two languages. One of the biggest challenges faced by me is to recreate before the English reading audience, the unfamiliar artifacts, culturally loaded terms, dialects, specific cultural nuances and emotions of life experienced. Cultural Identity is always a kind of representation of oneself to Others. There is a power pyramid between the *Bhasa* text and the translated one. Therefore, a cultural as well as linguistic gap always prevails between an Indian author and a foreign reader of the text. English is the main Indian language, the link among the educated people of different ethnic and linguistic groups of the country. This article expounds the relation between language use and types of situations in literary contexts for use of English in India.

Keywords: Indianization, nativisation, dalit, dalit feminism, bhasa.

***Jaydeep Sarangi** is Professor and Principal, New Alipore College, (University of Calcutta), Kolkata, India. He may be reached at: jaydeepsarangi@gmail.com

Every normal human being has his first Language, generally known as his mother tongue. He also learns one or more languages if he feels the needs for him. In the absence of an atmosphere for the natural flourish of English in India, we cannot conceive of a situation in which English would be used for verbal communication except in trade centers, metropolitan cities, so-called elite schools and colleges by no-native speakers. Only a handful of status-biased bureaucrats speak English as a matter of prestige. The speakers of English in India may not be more than 5% of the total population of the country. In spite of this shocking reality, Indian writers in English have earned their fame and readership internationally. Their English is conditioned by Indian geography, linguistic habits and socio-cultural patterns, but it cannot cross the imperatives of so-called 'Standard English' as it prevails in English. Indian Writings in English rise above its contemporaneous significance. There are occasional peculiarities of Indian life, experience and speech habits that don't admit of translation into corresponding English terms. Therefore, a cultural as well as linguistic gap always prevails between an Indian author and a foreign reader of the text.

Before Indians could write novels in English, two related preconditions had to be met. First, the English language had to be sufficiently Indianized to be able to express the reality of the Indian situation or the indigenous experience. Secondly, Indians had to be sufficiently Anglicized to use the English language to express themselves. The first of those two conditions, the Indianization of the English language began much more before the second, the Anglicization of the Indians. Due to the socio-cultural transmission English has become in India, as in other British Colonies, a passport to privilege. The 19th century witnessed the institutionalization of the British imperialism in India. A despotic (iron-fisted) economic and socio-political system was put into place, which highlighted the existing difference between the British ruling class and a vast populace of native Indians. This basic inequality resulted in various degrees of compromise and resistance to divergent cultural forces in cultural contacts. The tension between the alienating language

(English) and Indian sensibility constitute the minds of the Indian novelists in English. According to Raja Rao (1996: 17-18), India is not a country (*desa*), it is a perspective (*darsana*), it is not a climate but a mood (*rasa*) in the play of the Absolute; it is not the Indian who makes India but 'India' makes the Indian, and thus India is in all." The spread of English throughout India, via colonization, trade and commerce, cross-cultural contacts, personal socio-economical needs, etc. has spawned "number of fluent outriggers capable of contributing to English literature" (Updike 1997: 156). In a multi-cultural, and multi-lingual context like India, the novelists in English write against a sound background of native tongues and patois (dialect spoken by common people of a geographical! political region and differing from the so-called standard language of the country) to express the indigenous experience. According to Professor Iyengar (1985: 04), Indian English Literature is "a curious eruption, an expression of the practical no less than creative genius of Indian people." The real flowering of Indian writing in English began to take place after our independence. People started to display increasing ease and confidence in handling the English tongue, and consequently, English became the medium of self-expression in lives of the intellectuals. After late 1970s, Indian writings in English shot into international limelight. Indian writers in English received universal recognition and gained fabulous royalties and prestigious awards.

The Indian novel in English has carved out a new bench mark, a new vision—a vision that is "replete with an unswerving faith and hope, myths and traditions, customs and rites, our great country has enshrined in her bosom from the time immemorial" (Prasad 2000: vii). If we go deep into the novels of the Indian stalwarts of English novels, it is revealed that their works are not an imitation of English literary tradition but highly creative as well and Indian both in theme and presentation. They have given a new shape and colour to English language and literature in the same way as the Americans and Australians have evolved their own language and literature in their respective countries. Indian writing in English has proved to be a stronger and more significant body

of work than most of what has been produced in the “official languages” of India, the so-called vernacular languages. We now have an impressive body of Indian writing translated from our Bhashas into English and clearly this points to a vibrant literary culture in our country. According to Nabaneeta Dev Sen, a famous Bengali poet and literary critic (1997: 72), “Every language is like a snail, it carries its social and cultural history on its back.” Language is not just a linguistic phenomenon unrelated to life and society. Language is not a monolithic object. It is a human phenomenon, which is as complex as human relationships in a society. We talk to our family members, our friends, our teachers, family friends, etc. We talk face to face, over telephone or by e-mail, and everyone responds with more talk. Television and radio further swell this torrent of words. My study of Indian novels in English involves an analysis that goes beyond the level of mere linguistic structures. It’s a study of literary discourses, verbal or nonverbal linguistic transactions, transmissions and exchanges. After all, English is the main Indian language, the link among the educated people of different ethnic and linguistic groups of the country. My study expounds the relation between language use and types of situations in literary contexts.

One of the important features of Indian novels in English is the truthful portrayal of the Indian society—a society, which is sandwiched between so many social forces and tensions. Indian novels in English generally began with Mulk Raj Anand. His novels of social interest merit attention. *Untouchable* and *Coolie* show how the downtrodden, the vulnerable and marginalized have to face tyranny, injustice, insult and abuse without reason. R.K. Narayan believes in creative pattern of art rather on its suggestive appeal. He, like a natural observer, snaps a small group of men and their peculiarities and creates imaginary places like Malgudi, which is the Casterbridge of the novelist. The Guide “guides us not only into the heart of a man having strangely comic encounters with himself but also into the soul of a country full of natural beauty, superstitious and prejudiced people and a host of tradition-bound life-ways.” Raja Rao, the youngest of the famous ‘trio’ is

contented to deal with the socio-political furore of the villages of India during the Gandhian age. His *Kanthapura* and *The Serpent and the Rope* show a harmonious blending of spiritualism and mysticism of our age-old heritage, its rites, custom, decorum and practices. He figures earlier than R.K. Narayan in my thesis for his major novel *Kanthapura*, which was published long before R.K. Narayan's *The Guide*. *Kanthapura* discusses the distinctive Indian sensibility with peasant life-ways even in the second language situation. *The Serpent and the Rope* is a document of the Hindu view of life. Bhabani Bhattacharya, a social realist, like his predecessors was richly influenced by the doctrine of Mahatma Gandhi and the evils and perils of society. His *So Many Hungers* and *He Who Rides a Tiger* reflect a confrontation between the high and low, the rough and the sublime. *A Dream in Hawaii* is a novel about the encounter of a Hindu yogi from the East with the American society in Hawaii. The dominant impression that we form of Indian society from this novel is one of spirituality with Swami Yogananda as its chief representative. Khushwant Singh's *Train to Pakistan* deals with a great Indian political issue—the partition of the country. It is a socio-political reality that Indians had to face. Women novelists have also shown their extraordinary calibre and immutable imprint in the realm of Indian novels in English. In Rama Mehta's *Inside the Haveli*, the lives of women in Purdah upholding the custom of their ancestors are poised against the desire for modernity and scrapping of traditional attitudes in the heroine, though ultimately there is only deference, duty and respect for tradition, because it brings security and peace. *Inside the Haveli* reminds the readers Mrinalini Sarabhai's novel *This alone is True*. *This alone is True* (1952) projects the growing conflict of the modern Indian women as it grapples with the changing milieu of tradition in the context of personal freedom. Anita Desai has added a new dimension to the achievement of Indian women writers in English novels. She is of mixed Indian and German descent. Her education took place in Delhi. Anita Desai's novels are distinctly singular compared to that of her contemporaries. Ruth Jhabvala's works lay greater emphasis on

the social background rather than the characters, which enact the various comedies, tragi-comedies and farces. In Kamala Markandaya's novels the focus is as much on the major characters as on the diverse backgrounds: economic, political, social and cultural. Anita Desai's novels deal with human mind and the inner climate of sensibility.

Arundhati Roy's portrayal of the plight of the untouchable is very near to that of Mulk Raj Anand. *The God of Small Things* shows a patriarchal domination of a caste-ridden Indian society where men dominate over women, the possessed over the non-possessed, and the powerful over the powerless and the touchable over the untouchable. Amitav Ghosh's novels reflect his socio-political awareness of the time. The narrator in *The Shadow Lines* is exposed to the experience of life in India and action of his family members, and journey towards what may be called a spiritual goal. Amitav Ghosh's *The Calcutta Chromosome* ranges back and forth in time from an unidentifiable period, the future to the nineteenth century search of 'Calcutta Chromosome.' The novel exhibits malaria puzzle, religious cults and advancement of computer science and information technology.

The sociolinguistic approach involves a serious and methodical application of linguistics to literary studies. Our analysis of Indian novels in English indicates a chronological maturity in handling English language in Indian socio-cultural context. The non-native English Writers' experimentation with language, form and theme raises several questions. Indian novels in English in the pre-Independence period count for linguistic creativity and resourcefulness. Our analysis of the novelists of this period includes Mulk Raj Anand and Raja Rao. We make an attempt for a comprehensive study of Mulk Raj Anand's *Untouchable* and *Coolie*, and Raja Rao's *Kanthapura* and *The Serpent and the Rope*. All these four novels reflect the indigenous sensibility. These novels reflect the thematic as well as linguistic Indianism. V.K. Gokak in his Foreword to Asit Bandyopadhyay's *History of Modern Bengali Literature* (1986: viii-ix) writes:

By 'Indianism' is generally meant a word, phrase, idiom, expression or point of syntactical usage which is not apart of current English or American usage and involves a shade of meaning or usage which is peculiarly Indian or is reminiscent of the lexis, idioms, phrases, or syntax current in one of the modern Indian languages.

A careful sociolinguistic study of pre- Independence Indian English novels makes it abundantly clear that Indian writers have found their own voices and have produced a significant body of Indian English novels that are truly Indian, Do Mulk Raj Anand and Raja Rao's introduction of native language and use of nativised style make their contribution obscure? It's hard to accept that linguistic deviations have Indian and PanIndian intelligibility. These are natural consequences of the socio-cultural and lingual-cultural condition in the Indian context in which English is used. Indian regional languages exercise imperceptible influence on the use of English in India.

We notice a historical maturity of Indian novels in English in the hands of the novelists of the post-Independence phase. Some major themes that reflect Indian sensibility in their treatment are: East-West encounter; struggle for independence; the great impact of Indo-Pak partition; contemporary social issues. East-West encounter in its different shapes appears as the prime issue in the novelists immediately after the Independence. Khuswant Singh's *Train to Pakistan* is the novel about the great partition. Bhabani Bhattacharya's *A Dream in Hawaii* examines the clash of values between the East and the West. Our analysis of the novelists of the immediately after Independence consists of R.K. Narayan, Bhabani Bhattacharya and Khuswant Singh. All their representative novels reflect Indianness both in theme and treatment. A common device that the novelists of this period have adopted for maintaining linguistic realism is the use of sprinklings of Hindi or/and Bengali expressions, mainly words, with or without translations. The interpersonal rhetoric of *The Guide*, *So Many Hungers*, *He Who Rides a Tiger*, *A Dream in Hawaii* and *Train to Pakistan* are marked by Indianisms. The major thrust of these novels has been

to look at the use of English by non-English speaking characters in a non-English-speaking world.

In order to express a different world view “the resources of the English language have to be fully exploited; the language must be dislocated into meaning” (Ray 2002: 17). The creative and resourceful use of the English language in the hands of the Indian English novelists of 1970s and 1980s show tremendous vitality, strength and possibilities. In Rama Mehta’s *Inside the Haveli*, a premium is placed on orthodox moral values, especially in matters relating to the man-woman relationship. The novel makes use of Indian English sociolinguistic conventions in interpersonal greetings, compliments, politeness principles and interpolation of native language. Anita Desai’s ‘mind-style’ involves the representation of sequences of thought which results in the projection of the point of views of the character and presents the unique mental world of the character. There are the marks of nativisation in her representative novels.

The recent Indian English novels in India exhibit the confrontation between modernity and post-coloniality in various ways. The novelists of 1990’s don’t find the so-called insurmountable problem of expressing one’s own social and cultural heritage in an alien language. Contemporary novelists are concerned with global readership of their novels. Therefore, they hardly transgress the orthodox conventions of the Standard English. Arundhati Roy’s *The God of Small Things* doesn’t fall in that line. *The God of Small Things* is set in Ayemenem near Kottayam and it “captures the sounds, sight and smells of the area accurately” (Ramanan: 49). It is a whirlpool of images, symbols, antithesis, sex and sensation. The structural pattern and the architectonics of *The God of Small Things* have vehemently brought about a revolution in the literary scenario. The book has an architectural shape. Like an expert architect who is in a habit of creating new words and phrases the author has turned and trusted language to conform to the feeling, as a result of which we have broken sentences, illogical statements, unrestricted use of italics, bizarre phrases, ungrammatical and creative constructions, unconventional rhythm,

gross Indianisms, etc. *The Calcutta Chromosome* is a scientific thriller, which is a compressed masterwork that further consolidates Amitav Ghosh's premiership in contemporary Indian novels in English. *The Shadow Lines* brings together the forms of the autobiographical novel and the family chronicle. As a post-colonial writer and a member of a small group of English-speaking (and writing) Indians, catering to an international community of English-speaking (and writing) people, Amitav Ghosh clearly adopts a globally acceptable stance.

Thus this survey of Indian novels in English shows that Indian novelists have acquired an immutable and inevitable place in the realm of English fiction. They are being conferred on not only national but also international awards. All of them have tried to portray as well as nakedly expose the realistic picture of Indian socio-cultural life, which is enmeshed in the web of superstition, corruption and hypocrisy. The major achievement of these writers was the creative adaptation of English to Indian needs and the assertion of an Indian identity by dealing with Indian issues, both large and small, in their own inimitable style of story telling. The doyens of English literary studies in India have helped in establishing this search for authenticity in Indian Writing in English as a justifying discourse that authorises the native canon. Sociolinguistic parameters reveal different aspects of Indian sensibility as printed in the pages of Indian Writing in English. In the present thesis I've tried to trace out Indian sensibility by applying sociolinguistic parameters in representative Indian novels in English.

Recent years have witnessed the rise of novels by dalits from another cultural position in India. Translation from regional languages to English plays an important role in transferring power dynamics in a stratified caste pyramid in Indian society. This 'cultural rigging' endorses the fact of 'cultural silence'. We may use an Anglo-Bengali expression to explain it and that is what we call the 'Nirbakaization' (silencing) of dalit culture. The most common feature found in case of Dalit literature irrespective of whichever Indian regional language it is written, exhibits the application of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's thought and philosophy. The aim is to build

the society in new form in this postcolonial phase. Dalits are seen to raise voices of protest against torture unleashed upon them in each of the states. Women who lack consciousness, knowledge and power to change their condition in life are not represented in the mainstream feminist discourse. This is evident in the case of Dalit women in India whose voice has completely been excluded from the Dalit Movement and the Women's Movement. A call for Dalit Feminist Standpoint is necessitated which privileges the day-to-day lived experiences of Dalit women in India. Most of these novels are written in regional languages, except a few in English. This marks how the literary medium and the power of word helped marginalized women not only to articulate but also demand redress for their grievances. Urmila Pawar's *The Weave of My Life* is a narrative account of her lived experiences and the experiences of other dalit women who bear the burden of multiple oppressions and are dehumanized, reduced to the category of beasts of burden and face culture of sexual exploitation, humiliation, violence, silence and impunity. This corpus further strengthens the call for Dalit Feminist Standpoint. This engaging body of discourse by dalit novelists glitters with militant use of metaphors, words, phrases and punctuations and achieves laurels in the reading world with a semiotic tag, 'writing as resistance'.

Works Cited

- Dev Sen, Nabaneeta. 1972, "An Open Letter to Salman Rushdie". *The Indian Magazine*. Vol. 17, Aug.
- Gokak, V.K. 1986, "Foreword", *History of Modern Bengali Literature*. Calcutta: Modern Book Agency Pvt. Ltd.
- Iyengar, K.R.S. 1985, *Indian Writing in English*. New Delhi: Sterling Publishers Pvt. Ltd.
- Prasad, A.N., 2000, "Preface", *Indian Novelists in English*. New Delhi: Sarup & Sons.
- Ramanan, M., 2000, "Some Aspects of Recent Indian English Fiction." *Kakattya Journal of English Studies*. Vol. 20. Warangal.

- Rao, Raja. 1996, *The Meaning of India*. New Delhi: Vision Books.
- Ray, Mohit Kumar. 2002, "Indigenous Sensibility in Post-colonial Indian English Fiction". *The Quest*. Vol. 16, No. 2. Ranchi.
- Updike, I., 1997. "Mother Tongues Subduing the Language of the Colonizer." Rev. Of *The God of Small Things*. The New Yorker.

IJES, Volume LVI, 2019

Upamanyu Chatterjee's *English, August*: A Critique

*Dr. *Bhaiya Lal Vishwakarma &*
**Dr. *Vinod Kumar Singh*

Upamanyu Chatterjee's maiden novel, *English, August: An Indian Story* was published in the year 1988. In this novel, the theme of alienation, dislocation and the real portrayal of the Indian administration in a remote area of India have been presented through the character of a young anglicised Indian whose thoughts are dominated by sex, women, literature and drug. The novel depicts the identity crisis of the protagonist and a quest of journey to discover himself. While portraying the rural life of India, Chatterjee has touched on the pathetic condition of the tribals living in remote forest areas in the most unliving conditions. The novel also comments on Naxalism in India and government's perspective on the Naxal movement. Through the character of Baba Ramanna, Chatterjee has presented the theme of social service. Upamanyu Chatterjee has also mentioned the activities of the Christian missionaries in India and their meaningless attempts to convert the innocent tribals to Christianity. Upamanyu Chatterjee has discussed the plight of the older generation in our urban society very briefly. Chatterjee mocks at the reservation policy in India because it very often forces the authority to choose the most

*Dr. **Bhaiya Lal Vishwakarma**, Lecturer in English, DSMNR University, Lucknow.

Dr. **Vinod Kumar Singh, Prof. Department of English, DSMNR University, Lucknow.

inefficient candidates. The paper explores various themes in the novel like Indian bureaucracy, corruption, tribal development, moral turpitude among the ruling class, etc., but nowhere in novel the novelist assumes the role of a preacher which is quite appreciable.

Keywords: Emergent, Dislocation, Anglicanised, Turpitude, Obscenity, Scarcity, Asylum.

Radhika Mohanram points out, "The corpus of Upamanyu Chatterjee is not vast but his is a power emergent voice in Indian post-colonial literature." (Mohanram: 2001) He has depicted the inner vulgarity of the Indian milieu with a minute psychological and realistic observation with tinges of sharp humour and satire. His five novels are *English, August: An Indian Story* (1988), *The Last Burden* (1994), *The Mammaries of the Welfare State* (2000), *Weight Loss* (2006) and *Way to Go* (2010). Among his short stories *The Assassination of Indira Gandhi* (1986) and *Watching Them* are particularly praiseworthy. His novels are written in a humorous style and are intended to go beyond the basic concept of comedy. *English, August* won him the Sahitya Akademi Award for writing in English in 2000. He was honoured for his contribution to contemporary literature by the French Government with the prestigious Officer des Arts et des Lettres (Officer of the Order of Arts and Letters) in 2008. His novel *Way to Go* was shortlisted for the Hindu Best Fiction Award in 2010. In 1990, Chatterjee lived as writer in Residence at the University in Kent, U.K. In 1998, he was appointed as the Director (Language) in the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India.

His novels can be divided into three categories on the basis of subject matter and style of presentation.

1. In the first category come those novels which are related to corruption and debauchery prevalent in bureaucratic and political world of India. *English, August: An Indian Story* and *The Mammaries of the Welfare State* come in this category.

2. In the second category come novels focusing on the intricacies and complexities of human relationship and family problems. *The Last Burden* and *Way to Go*.
3. In the third category comes his novel that explores the sexual and spiritual degeneration in the life of post-modern man. *Weight Loss* comes in this category.

More than an administrator, Chatterjee is known in the corridors as a Litterateur who created amazing English fiction. He has the background of rich Bangla literature. He is brought up in English school surroundings and thus has a very good grip on English language and literature. He also studied French literature. He has knowledge of Hindi too which gets reflected in his writing. Being an IAS officer himself, he has better chance to see the society, to observe the hollowness of the highest authorities and to look at the helplessness of the lowest. Anjana Sharma equates Chatterjee's vision of humanity with W.B. Yeats. She writes:

Eighty years apart, cultures, civilizations, even craft and temperament apart, Yeats and Chatterjee share an identical vision of a de-centred, de-natured world.(Anjana Sharma: 2001)

Through the novel *English, August: An Indian Story* Chatterjee discusses issues that revolve around the 'urban educated youth' and pictures a class of 'Westernized people' who are unnoticed in regional and English fictional work. Upamanyu Chatterjee says,

English, August: An Indian Story speaks of a world we (Indians) are all familiar with but at the same time it is a world which hasn't been reflected in fiction. India tends to be romanticized and English, August is anything but romantic. (Rai: 2012)

The basic plot of the novel centres around a westernized youth, Agastya Sen, also known variously as August, English, Ogu, and just plain Sen, the twenty-four year old officer in training of Indian Administrative Service. He lives the dissolute care free life of the privileged in Delhi, with his uncle Pultu Kaku. His father, a man of ideology and principle is the Governor of Bengal. His

mother, a catholic from Goa dies from meningitis when Agastya is just three years old. Life is "to be enjoyed, not endured" is his motto.

Following his father's path he also participates in the IAS examination. After his selection he is sent for one year training as an IAS Officer to a distant country town named Madna. It becomes quite clear from the very beginning that Agastya is not meant to be in this service. In the training period he proves himself to be a heroic shirker of work, an incorrigible pot smoker, a compulsive free loader and an almost pathological liar. Despite his best efforts to do little or nothing Agastya ingratiates himself into the local society and actually learns bits and pieces of his future job. The novel can be studied as a manual for the administrative service in India. Upamanyu Chatterjee, himself an IAS has portrayed the Indian bureaucratic system and its functioning in India in a very realistic way. The novelist has very minutely described the class consciousness and the feeling of discrimination among the IAS itself. Again there is a rift between IAS and the IPS Officer.

The novel depicts the identity crisis of the protagonist and a quest of journey to discover himself. He comes across a variety of people who are so unlike him and in a way quite unproductive and wasted as IAS cadets and officers. His posting to a small town called Madna most unlike the places he is accustomed to live in starts off as a cultural shock for Agastya. In Madna, he has his first experience of dislocation and such condition of mind so lonely, so alienated and so dejected. He ponders over his miserable condition. He tries to find out the cause of his problems but finds none. Though he tries to conceal the sense of dislocation, resulting in complete loneliness and non-adjustment in his letter to his father but he continues to suffer in the Collectorate. His mind is always dominated by marijuana, masturbation and meditation of Marcus Aurelius, images from his previous profoundly urban life, though his work in Madna ideally requires him to be a devoted servant of the people. His confusion is enhanced by a great quantity of liquor which he is habituated to drink and the marijuana which he

smokes very often and also partly due to lack of self confidence and self importance. Agastya as a person is a perfect image of several Indians who are in the same dilemma. The feelings of loneliness and dislocation compel him to be in friendship with people like Govind Sathe, Multani Bhatia and others. He wants to know the reason not the institution. After a long speculation, he comes to the profound conclusion that loneliness was a petty and private thing, that the human reason was inadequate—now all that seemed puerile and dull, the desultory cogitations of a healthy mind. Now he no more gets pleasure even in masturbation. The meditation of the authors of the Gita and Marcus Aurelius don't seem to help him in any way in his struggle with his loneliness and he comes to believe that whoever could have made the effort to write down all these things could have felt them with any intensity. There is nothing, no word or phrase which could express any genuine longing for emptiness. There is no one in Madna or perhaps anywhere with whom he can share the conflict which always continues in his mind. He becomes apathetic to the world outside him. At last the time comes when he gets an opportunity to go back to his old life in Delhi for a ten days vacation during the Durga Puja festival. Agastya gains maturity day by day during his stay in Delhi. This maturity is reflected in his behaviour when he returns to Madna and is posted as Block Development Officer to Jompanna where he does the best of his duty keeping his loneliness, alienation and dislocation aside. The novel throws light on the fact that the urban Indians like Agastya are the victims of an alien cultural discourse which has been internalized by them in the course of their educational cultural nurturing.

While portraying the rural life of India, Chatterjee has touched on the pathetic condition of the tribals living in remote forest areas in the most unliving conditions. The novel also comments on the Naxalism in India and government's perspective of the Naxal movement. When Agastya is posted as a Block Development Officer to Jompanna where the majority of the population is tribals, he makes a tour to a remote village named Chipanti and comes across with their pathetic and pitiable condition and living standard.

The money issued for the tribals is mostly spent on non-tribals to strengthen their vote bank. Chatterjee has drawn a realistic portrayal of the acute water scarcity which the inhabitant of the area has been facing. When Agastya makes his visit as BDO to the village Chipanti, he is surprised to see the way the people were collecting drinking water from a dried well. Chatterjee writes :

... there seemed to be no laughter and no conversation. The village did have children but they were all busy. Women were tying them to ropes and letting them into the well. After a while the ropes were bringing up buckets. He went closer. The buckets were half full of some thin mud. (EA, pp. 255-256)

The tribals are forced to drink the muddy water. Rao, the mouthpiece of the tribals, blames the government for not doing any thing for their development. He states, "The tribals are trapped, and your government development can't save them because sitting in those big cities, you have no idea of how they live." (EA, p. 262) The injustices done to the tribals turn them towards Naxalism, the self proclaimed social workers of the tribes. Sathe, when comes to know that Agastya is being posted to Jompanna, informs him :

The Naxalites are there, too, trying to get the tribals to think, instead of wasting their lives, drinking, and killing one another for their wives and watching their children die, and waiting to be overworked and exploited by forest contractor... (EA, p. 192)

The innocent tribal women are the easy victims of sexual exploitation. The forest contractors never pay the tribals enough for the oilseed and tobacco leaves that they collect for them.

Through the character of Baba Ramanna, Chatterjee has presented the theme of social service. He was a doctor with a lucrative practice in Bangalore but having been influenced by Mahatma Gandhi, he left his profession and started a rehabilitation centre for the leprosy patients without taking any kind of assistance from the government. He has included his whole family in his mission of curing leprosy from the mind of the people. No

one came forward to support him, not even the government officials though now they are requesting the centre to accept their assistance because a German Organisation has started funding him. Shankaran Karanth, the son of Baba Ramanna complains :

...most district officials are deaf. Before some German organizations started funding us, none of them ever came here. Now it seems they can't leave us alone. They want to force a loan down our throats. Forty years later, they want to officially recognize the Home, which means, interfere in it. (EA, p. 236)

Shankaran karanth tells Agastya, "The really important and difficult thing was their psychological rehabilitation, to convince them after their flesh had stopped rotting, that they were not freaks or monsters." (EA, p. 236)

Upamanyu Chatterjee has also mentioned the activities of the Christian missionaries in India and their meaningless attempts to convert the innocent tribals to Christianity. They use all means—money, power and pressure to convert the sick and illiterate people to Christianity. The novelist mocks at their futile attempt. Chatterjee writes:

He wondered at motivation: what had induced the Dutch to build a hospital of charity in an obscure corner of india, or the Germans to fund an Indian curer of lepers? But he was greatly amused, a few weeks later, to learn that the Dutch missionaries at the hospital were converting tribals to Christianity.... God, he laughed, when will these Christians ever grow up? (EA, p. 245)

Upamanyu Chatterjee has discussed the plight of the older generation in our urban society very briefly. The old people are thought useless and hence neglected by their own sons and daughters whom they gave everything of their lives. In this situation of complete helplessness the parents take shelter in asylum, inspite of being perfectly sane and healthy because they just want a house to live in. Similar is the case with the widows of Varanasi. While talking to Shankar Agastya says:

But I read in an article somewhere that some of the inmates of the Ranchi Asylum are perfectly sane, they are just

unwanted at home, and it's just cheaper to keep them in the asylum. Then the widows at Varansi.... (EA, p. 31)

Chatterjee mocks at the reservation policy in India because it very often forces the authority to choose the most inefficient candidates. When Agastya visits Bajaj, the DDO, he invites him to "Watch fun" of the interview for the selection of primary teachers. The posts are reserved for the tribal candidates. In spite of agreeing to the fact that no single candidate present in the interview was able for selection, he is compelled to choose the less inefficient ones.

Although there are many themes in the novel like Indian bureaucracy, corruption, tribal development, moral turpitude among the ruling class, etc., but nowhere in novel the novelist assumes the role of a preacher which is quite appreciable and this quality of Chatterjee differs him from the other writers. To quote C. Sengupta,

Upamanyu Chatterjee's maiden novel, *English, August : An Indian Story* is a subtle metaphor of contemporary youth's quest for self realization.... The novel describes a journey—sometimes pathetic, sometimes humorous, even ridiculous—a journey from rootlessness to maturity, a struggle to come to terms with oneself. (C. Sengupta: 1993-95)

Chatterjee portrays a new class of westernized people who are on the verge of becoming a class, which was hitherto ignored in the regional and the English fiction of India. Chatterjee's "Urban Elite" are much different from the American materialist class. It is a class of people who have classical western sensibilities and the novelist is a torch bearer of this very class.

Chatterjee has made bold experiments in the novel so far as language is concerned. He uses the language commonly used by the young chaps in their conversation going beyond the rigid rules of grammar and syntax. In the very first page we find Agastya and his friend Dhrubo using a unusual English. He has made a very generous use of local Indian words in the novel like Almirah, ayah, bhabi, bhai, chhee, dal, rickshawwala, roshogulla, tehsil, tonga, yaar, etc. The book is written in a third person narrative

with dialogues between characters. Chatterjee has also used soliloquies and monologues to enlighten the reader with the thoughts that go on in the mind of Agastya. The novelist has employed the stream of consciousness technique and there seems to be no distance between the author and the protagonist so as to prompt any ironic observations. They both seem the same people and the book appears to be autobiographical. The novel is known for its humour and sarcasm. The humour in the book ranges from the comical to the stupid, from the farcical to satire, from the blunt and crude to the delicate, but rarely does any humour come across as forced. And in all the humour, Chatterjee manages to take photoshops at an enormous variety of Indian mindsets and vices. But his humour turns into dark humour when he takes up the scatological terms. Chatterjee does not spare the idea of satirizing even religion to produce a kind of dark humour. In *English, August*, we don't find ornately descriptive paragraph. Instead the length of the sentences are much shorter in comparison to his other novels which are very often designed for comic relief before or after some serious or boring paragraphs. The novel makes its beginning with a grave symbol. The third line of the opening paragraph of *English, August* is highly symbolical. The novel starts with the conversation between August and his chum Dhruvo. When August informs him that he is going to Madna for one year training Dhruvo asks him: "So when shall we meet again ! (EA, p. 1) This reminds one of the opening lines from the play *Macbeth* where the witches's words prove to be supernatural. The line echoes the uneasiness as well as the dreary world Agastya and the calamities which are waiting for him in Madna.

In *English, August* obscenity and explicit sex are placed alongside lofty sentiments. On the one hand, there is the generous use of the taboo four letter word, while on the other hand one finds the display of philosophical speculations also.

Works Cited

- Radhika, Mohanram, "Contemporary Novelists 2001,"
www.cf.ac.uk/n/mohanram-radhika-blunt.
 Sharma, Anjana. "Milking an Icon," *The Hindu* January 21, 2001.

Rai, "The August Babu," Isahitya.com/index.php...465_upamanyu.Chatterjee_the_august_babu August 09, 2012.

Sengupta, C. "*Upamanyu Chatterjee's English, August : An Indian story*: Metaphor of Contemporary Youth's quest for self realization," *Common wealth Review*, 51, 1993-95.

Anonymous, "Patriarchy in command, Upamanyu Chatterjee," Shodhaganga-inflibact.ac.in/bstream/10603.

Chatterjee, Upamanyu. *English August : An Indian story*, Noida: Penguin Books in Association with Faber and Faber, 2002.

IJES, Volume LVI, 2019

Search for Self-Identity in Anuradha Roy's *The Folded Earth*

**Alapati Purnachandra Rao*

Abstract

Anuradha Roy tries to make her own mark with her talent describing 'woman' as the central character. Her depiction of complex human nature makes her writings pertinent to current circumstances in Indian society. Anuradha Roy's novel, *The Folded Earth* has a beauty in narration as it surrounds the fragrance of the landscape in the foothills of Himalayas. She attempts to analyze the role and position of middle class women in the contemporary Indian society. Roy asserts the individualistic nature of women through her characters how they try to satiate their 'self' in every walk of their life. The protagonist of the novel, Maya spends her own life taking refuge in Ranikhet, a hill station when her life is disturbed. In this journey, she faces many challenges which do not shatter her confidence in leading a life of her own. Roy deftly handles subjects of Maya's desolation and her successive recovery in the novel.

Keywords: human nature, landscape, confidence, challenges, self-identity.

The role of women in Indian Writing in English is immense who portray the different shades of the Indian society and its

***Dr. Alapati Purnachandra Rao**, Associate Professor of English,
Prasad V. Potluri Siddhartha Institute of Technology, Kanuru,
Vijayawada, Andhra Pradesh.

dynamics in varied colours. She has earned a distinct space in Indian writing in English for her particular attention towards the plight of women and social injustice. Her sensitive depiction of complex human nature makes her writings relevant to current situation in Indian society. *The New Yorker* states: "Roy sorts out the love knots with a touch that is both bold and gentle, but the bigger delight of the book is its intimate, comic glimpse into everyday life in a small hill town, from the local bureaucrat's earnest sanitizing mission to the church-owned jam-making co-operative" (1). Roy's talent lies in her ability to introduce typical aspects of social and political reality into a narrative that stimulates reader's interest.

Anuradha Roy's second novel, *The Folded Earth* is narrated by Maya, a young Hindu woman who is disinherited by her pickle-industrialist father for marrying a Christian. When her husband dies on one of his mountaineering expeditions, Maya leaves the Deccan to move to Ranikhet, a hill station in the Himalayas. As she hides herself within the simplicity of village life, Maya forges relationships with those around her that includes brave village teenager Charu, her half-wit uncle Puran and mother Ama, and aging aristocrat Diwan Sahib who keeps alive the memory of pre-Independence India. Mr. Chauhan is present as well, a stuffy, self-important civil servant, as is the General, even older than Diwan Sahib, and Veer, Diwan Sahib's nephew, whose arrival in town threatens Maya's semi-frozen existence.

It is observed that the women characters depict their yearning, love and desire in a very subtle way. Roy explores the issues of education, independence and ambition in the novel. She also addresses the continuing difficulties that even a relatively independent woman faces in a patriarchal society. The main protagonist, Maya is disowned by her industrialist father because she has married Michael, a Christian. Her parents reject the relationship to safeguard their status and dignity in the society. This points out the system of patriarchy and class discrimination. Charu's love with Kundan, a cook is rejected by her grandmother because of his existing status in the society. Roy depicts it clearly

that women cannot express their needs and expectations because it is only the patriarchal society that determines the life of women. Most of the female characters in *The Folded Earth* highlight the traditional role of women in a particular culture.

The novel, '*The Folded Earth*' exposes the status of women and their physical and psychological suppression in the patriarchal society. The women characters in the novel reveal oppression of women and the denial of human rights for women. Anuradha Roy has skillfully characterized the life of Indian women in the present world. She has done an excellent job by depicting the life of Maya, the protagonist who is a Hindu girl. Maya's struggle starts with her love marriage with Michael, a Christian which is not accepted by her father, society, religion and custom. Maya, the daughter of wealthy and well educated family is brought up with all love and luxurious life but her decision to marry Michael shatters the relationship with her parents. She gets detached herself from her birth place and parents for the sake of her love for Michael. Thus, leaving behind everything, Maya marries the love of her life, crossing all the boundaries set by society, religion and caste. It explains how a woman seeks autonomy in leading a life of her own.

Anuradha Roy explains religious consciousness that exists in the Indian society. Maya is disowned by family for the sake of religion. Her mother plays the role of a submissive mother who cannot overcome her husband's order when she is split between the methodical words of the husband and her love for her daughter, Maya. She meets her secretly without the knowledge of her husband: "My mother was too intimidated by him to do more than steal out for occasional trysts with me at a temple" (11). Anuradha Roy points out the incapability of Indian women who remain voiceless and helpless under the control of their husband. The women are always denied of enjoying 'Self' or an identity in the patriarchal world.

The sensitive emotions of women are neglected in most of the Indian families either in the role of father or husband. Maya is

alienated from her wealthy family in Hyderabad after marrying a Christian. Her father instantly disclaims her, but Maya and her husband, Michael, begin their life together in Hyderabad happily. Her problems begin soon after her marriage with Michael. Having given up everything for the love of Michael, Maya's married life with him does not last long because Michael's passion for mountaineering is stronger than that of his love for Maya. She senses the feeling which shows that Michael has given much importance to his passion of mountaineering but not to Maya. She is considered only as an object that has been procured in the name of love and marriage. Her inner 'self' is unnoticed and unidentified in the name of marriage.

Michael often goes on long expeditions to the statue like mountains sitting on India's northern border. In his last dangerous trekking to reach Roopkund, he breaks his ankle and meets his fatal death, leaving Maya a widow at the age of twenty four. Life becomes miserable for Maya who has lost her parents for her love marriage and her husband in a very short span of time. The death news of Michael makes Maya to behave madly: "I had been out all day on scorching streets, walking at random, getting into buses without looking where they were going, pausing at parks, shops, then walking on, until shops shut and traffic thinned" (10-11). It shows the restless condition of Maya who is left alone to face the alarming truth of her loneliness.

Roy portrays Maya as an individualistic character having the spirit to lead an independent life. She never returns to her family asking for help or to apologize for her mistake of taking a wrong decision. Her self-respect reflects the identity of new woman in the modern Indian Society. In that hapless condition, Maya seeks refuge in Ranikhet. Her life is disturbed with the arrival of intruders like the power-hungry politicians and Veer, the nephew of Diwan Sahib. Maya is unable to overcome her dilemma to choose between the past life she left and the present life she lives in. While trying to escape from her complicated past, she finally takes the village to be hideout place. But with the arrival of Veer, her idyllic world begins to fall apart when she finds herself attracted to Veer.

Loneliness makes some women prey to tactics of opportunists. Maya's dream of solitude is shattered and her relationship with Veer becomes the disturbance. And for Veer, he has just taken Maya's loneliness to exploit and use her to fulfill his needs from her. Besides, he has never shared his time with Maya. Maya discovers the truth only in the end that Veer has cheated her and he has been the reason for the decline in Sahib's health and death. Maya is stunned when she finds that her lover, Veer has been Michael's last trekking companion.

Charu, another character, also experiences the same feeling of Maya when she starts loving Kundan who comes to the village to cook for his employees. The writer depicts the changes that take place in Charu. In Indian family system, a woman cannot reveal her feelings and for Charu, the best friend is Gowri Joshi to whom she is able to share her secret feeling for her lover. After the entry of Kundan in Charu's life, changes are witnessed by Charu's grandmother Ama and Maya. Charu is completely lost and behaves strangely as Kundan has completely taken over Charu's mind. She educates herself through Maya to communicate with Kundan who has left for Delhi with his employers. Love between Charu and Kundan develops so strongly that Charu leaves behind the only world she has ever known. Roy depicts her as a strong girl who makes her own decision in life to reach her lover very boldly crossing her only known village and people behind. On her way through the forest to the highway, she meets the driver and the helper who try to compel her to travel with them. But Charu easily identifies them as men with bad habits and very smartly manages the situation.

Anuradha Roy proves the fact that women are not always an easy prey to the cunning need of men. It is noted that Charu is different from the conventional characters who lose hope and confidence whereas she remains ambitious in her life and finally meets Kundan. Charu successfully marries Kundan and settles in Singapore. The teenage village girl has gained a new woman identity because of her strong willed nature.

Anuradha Roy has characterized Ama, an elderly village woman. She is the grandmother of Charu who plays an important role in the novel. Roy elevates Ama's role by depicting her as a strong character. Though she belongs to a downtrodden community, she holds self-dignity and self-respect. This uneducated woman proves herself to be independent even at the age of sixties. She has disowned her younger son, Charu's father because he is drunkard and always picks up quarrel and fight with his family and neighbours. His unbearable behaviour made his wife put an end to her life by leaving her only daughter, Charu under the care of Ama. Roy characterized Ama as the most beautiful woman in Ranikhet. She bravely disowns her son and supports the family with her single income to raise Puran and Charu. Though she has two sons, no one supports her even though Puran remains as a half-witted person. But, Ama does not lose hope; she does all types of work to support her dependents.

Although Ama is uneducated, she prefers to give the best education to her grand-daughter, Charu and puts her in an English medium school. According to Ama, Charu should be educated to face the challenges in her life. Through Ama's point of view, educating a girl is seen as a mark of dignity in the society that will help her to face any problem. She is shown stereotypical but she is the first to sense mysterious character of Veer and has always suspected his disappearance and appearance. And she has been predicting that Diwan Sahib's health deterioration takes place because of Veer, who supplies him more drink and worsens the health of Sahib. Roy reveals that besides education, knowledge can be acquired from observing the real life which is reflected in Ama's words: "A girl learns what she needs to know."(19)

Anuradha Roy's woman character is anxious to express herself in an authentic voice that is to be heard and appreciated. She begins to be assertive and dominating to express her emotions boldly, though she is living in the realm designed by man. She always longs to renew her abilities in order to enjoy much autonomy in the society. *The Folded Earth* has a beauty in narration as it surrounds the fragrance of the landscape in the

foothills of Himalayas. Anuradha Roy attempts to analyze the role and position of middle class women in the contemporary Indian society. Lisa Hill in her review asserts: “Like others in the long list it deals with significant issues—the impact of an uncertain future on small towns with traditional ways; the clash of competing religions and the spread of hatred; economic imperatives that dissolve links with family and home; and the wash-up of colonialism” (1). She asserts the individualistic nature of women through her characters how they try to satiate their ‘self’ in every corner of their life. The protagonist of the novel, Maya faces many challenges which do not shatter her confidence in leading a life of her own. Roy deftly handles the subject of Maya’s desolation and her successive recovery in the novel.

Works Cited

Roy, Anuradha. *The Folded Earth*. Maclehorse Press, Quercus. London. 2011.

The New Yorker, Review. *The Folded Earth*, May 21, 2012 Issue. 1. <<https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2012/05/21/the-folded-earth>>

Hill, Lisa. Anzlitlovers Blog. Jan 10, 2012. 1.

<<https://anzlitlovers.com/2012/01/10/the-folded-earth-by-anuradha-roy-bookreview/> 1>

IJES, Volume LVI, 2019

Cultural Unity in Amitav Ghosh's *The Shadow Lines*

*R.P. Kachhway

Abstract

Amitav Ghosh occupies a unique place in Indo-Anglian fiction. The stories of partition, independence and the Second World War have influenced him. Therefore, they have become an integral part of his novels. *The Shadow Lines*, written by Amitav Ghosh, reflects that the earth is divided by the national boundaries drawn on the map, and that they are only the shadow lines which cannot divide our cultural unity. People living in Bangladesh and Bengal have the same language, same dresses, and the same thought process. They have the same love affection, emotions and feeling. They should not suffer from national prejudices; rather they should have the feeling of *vasudhaiva kutumbakama*.

Keywords: Indo-Anglian, nations, boundaries, unity, culture.

Every author is a product of his own age. He is the child of his age. The growth of his personality is affected by the internal as well as external atmosphere of the age which has produced and nurtured him. The external atmosphere influences his external growth and internal atmosphere internal growth. By "internal atmosphere" I mean social, political, cultural, and economic

*Dr. R.P. Kachhway is Professor at the Postgraduate Department of English, Nalanda College, Biharsharif, Nalanda, Bihar. Email: drkachhway@yahoo.com

conditions of the society. All these things shape the sensibility of the author. Similar is the case with Amitav Ghosh who has an outstanding place in Indo-Anglian fiction. Ghosh has heard the stories of partition, independence, and the Second World War from his parents, family members and neighbours. The narratives and socio-political changes in India have a great impact on Amitav Ghosh. This is the reason why these stories have become part and parcel of his novel. So far as the novel *The Shadow Lines* is concerned, it chiefly reflects that the earth is divided into several nations by the boundaries which are merely the shadow lines, and that these lines cannot divide the culture that encompass both West Bengal and Bangladesh. The present paper is an attempt to explore the cultural unity in *The Shadow Lines*.

The novel deals with the story of the two families of Mr. Justice Chandrashekhara Datta Chaudhary and Lionel Tresawson. Though they belong to different religions, races, and regions, they are friends; Lionel Tresawson has left his native village, Mabe, in Southern Cornwall, to work as an overseer in a tin mine in Malaysia. During his service period he has travelled different countries of the world such as Fiji, Bolivia, the Guinea Coast, Ceylon. He has worked sometimes in mines, sometimes in warehouses or plantations. Lastly, he comes to Calcutta, and here he establishes his own factory at Barrackpore. He also starts a Homeopathic Clinic in a village near Calcutta. In his old age he becomes interested in spiritualism and he starts attending the meetings organized by theosophical society in Calcutta. In this meeting he gets an opportunity to meet several leading nationalists. He also attends séances conducted by a Russian medium. In one of the séances, he comes across Mr. Justice Chandrashekhara Datta Chaudhary and forms friendship with him. This friendship is maintained by the succeeding generations of the two families.

Lionel Tresawson returns to England and his daughter marries a man who has been her teacher in a college. His name is SNI Price, but he is known as Snipe. Mrs. Price has given birth to two children—one male child and another female child. Her son's name is Nick Price, and her daughter's name is May Price. This

family of Prices has settled in London, but they have sweet relations with the family of Mr. Justice Chaudhary.

There is another family living in Dhaka. In this family there are two brothers. Professionally, they are lawyers. After the death of the father the elder brother wants to maintain unity in the family but fails in his mission. Ultimately, the walls are erected to divide the house. No communication is seen between these two families. The younger brother has two daughters—Mayadebi and Thamma. Mayadebi is married to Shaheb who is in the service of Diplomatic Department. Her elder sister, Thamma's husband is an engineer in railway in Burma. But he dies of Pneumonia in 1935. Now she is alone leading her life as a widow. She has a lack of money. This idea gets a vivid expression in the following lines:

She had no savings and she had never worked in her life but that merely made her all the more determined to see her son through school and college. (138)

Fortunately, Thamma is a graduate from the University of Dhaka. Therefore, she is appointed as a school teacher in Calcutta with the help of her husband's colleague. She continues her service for 27 years. Even she becomes the Principal of that school and she gets her retirement as a successful Principal in 1962. After her retirement a grand farewell is given to her. This idea is reflected in the following lines:

It was a touching ceremony in solemn kind of way. The Calcutta Corporation sent a representative and so did the Congress and the Communist party. There were many speeches and my grandmother was garlanded by a girl from every class. Then the head girl, a particular favourite of hers, unveiled the farewell present the girls had bought for her by subscription. It was a large marble model of the Taj Mahal; it had a bulb inside and could be lit up like a table lamp. She made a speech too, but she could not finish it properly because she began to cry before she got to the end of it, and had to stop to wipe away her tears. (127)

Mayadebi is married to the son of Mr. Justice Chandrashekhar Datta Chaudhary. She has three sons. They are Jatin, Tridib and

Robi. Jatin is an economist in United Nations Organization. Robin is in Indian Administrative Service. Tridib is doing his Ph.D. in Archaeology. Jatin and Robi remain out of Calcutta in relation to their services, and occasionally, they come to Calcutta during their holidays. Jatin is always transferred from one country to another. His daughter, Illa, also lives with her father. Therefore, she gets a golden opportunity to travel along with her father.

Tridib is not like his two brothers. He is a research scholar doing his Ph.D. in Archaeology. Therefore, he lives in his ancestral building in Calcutta along with his grandmother, Thamma. The work of an archaeologist is to rebuild the old cities and cultures. Therefore, Tridib has a belief that he can discover cities with the help of terra cota pieces and fossils about their situations and cultural backgrounds.

In the present era we are passing through the age of globalization. The whole world has changed into a village. For this the credit goes to science for its developments in the area of information technology, communication, and transport. But the fact is that competition in these fields is increasing more and more. This competition has brought the feeling of nationalism in the mind of the people. But nationalism has brought about enmity between the two countries though they have strong cultural ties between them. India and Pakistan are neighbouring countries, and they have the same culture, the same dresses and the same language. But they are the enemies of each other. The reason is that the lines on the map have separated them from each other and their heart is filled with national feelings.

The political lines on the map are the shadow lines which separate one country from another. The people of the neighbouring countries are different though there is unity in their cultures. Bangladesh and West Bengal cannot be separated by any political boundaries as they have the same culture, the same language and the same food habits. Rabindranath Tagore has been worshipped in both the countries. The people of India and East Pakistan have great respect for him. In both the countries Rabindra songs are sung. They have blood relations. How is it possible for them to

be separated from each other? Amitav Ghosh has made his attempt to reveal this point to the readers. The narrator, who is the hero of this novel and the grandson of Tha'mma, draws lines on the maps to discover that the places are not as distant as they are taken to be. A circle of 1200 miles in radius will cover more than half of the world population. This idea gets a vivid expression in the following lines:

Beginning in Srinagar and travelling anticlockwise, it cut through the Pakistani half of Punjab, through the tip of Rajasthan, and the edge of Sind.... It was remarkable circle more than half of the mankind must have fallen within it (255).

If the nations have proximity with each other, how can they be different in cultures? In other words, we may say that these nations cannot have enmity for each other. According to the narrator, the mistake is committed by the politicians who beguile the common people. In this regard, the narrator points out:

They have drawn the borders, believing in that pattern, in the enchantment of lines, hoping perhaps that once they had etched their borders upon the map, the two bits of a land would sail away from other like the shifting tectonic plates of the prehistoric Gondwanaland. What had they felt, I wondered, when they discovered that they had created not a separation, but yet undiscovered irony—the ivory that killed Tridib the simple fact that there had never been a moment in four thousand year-old history of that map, when the places we know as Dhaka and Calcutta were closely bound to each other than after they had drawn their lines—so closely that I, in Calcutta, had only to look into the mirror to be in Dhaka; a moment when each city was the inverted image of the other, locked into irreversible symmetry by the line that was to set up free—our looking glass border (257).

This truth is again revealed when the narrator's father explains to his mother, Tha'mma, that there is nothing in this world which may bring split between Bangladesh and India though this is shown on the map. In this connection the idea is reflected in the following lines:

My father laughed and said, why did she really think the border was a long black line with green on one side and scarlet on the other, like it was in a school atlas. (167)

Tha'mma is much surprised to hear it and she puts a question:

If there is no difference, both sides will be the same, it will be just like it used to be before, when we used to catch a train in Dhaka and get off in Calcutta the next day without stopping. What was it all for them, partition and all the killing and everything—if there is not something in between. (167)

Dhaka is the capital of Bangladesh where Tha'mma is born. Presently, she is living in Calcutta, but her uncle lives in Dhaka. When she makes her plan to go to Dhaka to bring him back to Calcutta, she is not in a position to understand whether she is coming or going to Dhaka. Ultimately, she thinks that it is just like home-coming to her. Here the narrator asks his grandmother:

Tha'mma, Tha'mma, How could you have come home to Dhaka? You do not know the difference between coming and going. (168)

After a few years, the narrator himself goes to Dhaka. He admits that he has no knowledge of the sounds and the smells which his grandmother remembers. But he thinks that there is same alchemy in the sounds and dialect and the smell of vast, mile-wide rivers “which alone had the power to bring upon her that comfortable lassitude which we call a sense of home-coming” (213) it is natural that to go to Dhaka for Tha'mma means home-coming for her. Here it is quite apparent that the sense of belonging to a place is so deep that no one can consider himself to be an alien on the land of his own birth place. In this world there are thousands of persons who are born in one country, but at present they are living in other countries. Still they have love and affection for their birth place, because they have emotional attachment with the friends with whom they had played, the school where they had read. Similar is the case with the uncle of Tha'mma, Jethamoshai. Tha'mma goes to Dhaka and meets her uncle who has grown so old that he can't recognize his niece. When he is asked by his

niece to come to Calcutta, he does not like to leave his native place. Regarding this he tells:

I understand very well, I know everything. Once you start moving you never stop that is what I told my sons when they took the trains, I said. I do not believe in this India—Shindia. It is all very well, you are going away now, but suppose when you get there, they decide to draw another line somewhere. What will you do then? Where will you move to? No one will have you anywhere. As for me, I was born here, and I will die. (237)

In spite of this relationship, people become nationalists and they want to destroy their neighbouring countries. The governments do not like to know the truth about the political issues; rather they send them to fight with their neighbours. The propaganda machinery also works as a catalyst for them. It instigates the people so much that the people of one country want to kill those of the other countries. This happens with Tha'mma. Her heart is so much filled with patriotism that she donates her thin gold chain with ruby pendant to the war fund. This chain is her husband's memento, but she sacrifices it for the sake of the welfare of his countrymen. Here she expresses her national feelings to the narrator:

I gave it away; I gave it to the fund for the war. I had to, don't you see? For your sake, for your freedom, we have to kill them before they kill us; we have to wipe them out. (261)

These national feelings come into the mind of Tha'mma, particularly when the war between India and Pakistan breaks out in 1964. The neighbours have anger for each other; they see with jaundiced eyes to each other; they are also ready to fight with each other. They are thirsty for each other's blood. At this critical moment, Tha'mma is ready to donate her blood. This idea is reflected in the following lines:

I must go to the hospital, she said to herself, perfectly calm now. I mustn't waste all this blood. I can donate it to the war fund. (262)

In this way, Tha'mma has been inspired by her patriotic feelings. But people do not express their anger violently even

when, their relatives lose their life in the local riots. After sometime they forget that riots had occurred. The narrator reveals that people had vivid memories of 1962 war with China, but they had forgotten the riots of 1964. This idea gets a vivid expression in the following lines:

The theatre of war, where generals meet, is the stage on which states disport themselves. They have no use for memories of riots. By the end of January 1964 the riots had faded away from the pages of the newspaper, disappeared from the collective imagination of responsible opinion, vanished without leaving a trace in the histories and bookshelves. They had dropped out of memory unto the crater of a volcano of silence. (254)

People having national feelings are indifferent to the calamities occurring in the neighbour countries. Nothing exists in their heart except war. The narrator rightly observes that people do not want to know about their neighbouring countries unless the war starts. This idea gets a vivid expression in the following lines:

With my limited knowledge, I tried to imagine an event, any event that might occur in a city near the periphery of that circle (or indeed much nearer)—Stockholm, Dublin, Casablanca, Alexandria, Istanbul, Kiev, in any city in any direction at all I tried to imagine an event that might happen in any of those places which would bring the people of Milan pouring out into the streets. I tried hard but I could think of none. None, that is, other than war. (256)

In *The Shadow Lines*, Amitav Ghosh has tried his best to show the cultural unity in that part of Indian subcontinent which covers West Bengal and Bangladesh. Human society is divided into countries, states and regions on the basis of caste, creed, religion, region, race etc. But all these *divides* are basically constructs. They are only shadow lines drawn by men. They cannot separate one from the other, for we have the same love, affection, emotions and feelings. These are the elements which bring cultural unity in the society. We should rise above national prejudices. We should have the feeling of *vasudhaiva kutumbakama* to maintain our cultural unity.

Work Cited

Ghosh, Amitav. *The Shadow Lines*. New Delhi: Penguin Books, 2009.

IJES, Volume LVI, 2019

Hubris and Digital Humanity: An Explication of Ethics Through Social Media

**Gagana B. Purohit*

Abstract

Hubris has Greek origin referring to any moral deviation on part of the individual, the ultimate result being unfortunate fall from a moral pedestal. In keeping with the present day requirement, Gregory Bateson's re-definition of the term "hubris" as the "lack of systemic wisdom" in his watershed account *Steps to an Ecology of Mind* would go a long way to explain away humanity's mad rush for an absolute involvement with social media. Access to social media is, no doubt, considered as a vital cog in the humanity's wheel in contemporary parlance. But tragic blindness is reinforced when it begins to shake the very fundamentals upon which it is built; it is invented to benefit humanity, but unlike its expected goals, it has started consuming humanity and its future prospect in its stride. Various modes of social media have come here to stay but humanity needs to keep them in safe custody in order to reap benefits, minimizing its adverse and subversive impact. All we need to overcome the problem at hand is to use social media judiciously without being an addict or slave to digital media. The solution lies being the master of the occasion.

Keywords: hubris, social media, digital humanity, artificial intelligence, blue whale game.

***Dr. Gagana B. Purohit** is Senior Lecturer in English, R.N. College, Dura, Berhampur, Odisha.

Human beings, by their admittedly complex standard, are far from being true to themselves in a digitally driven world. The more we try to unravel the subtle strands, the greater becomes our degree of incomprehensibility, out of reach of our plain morality. More than good acts, the bad acts are part and parcel of a sensible human being, resorting to irrational means by presumably the most rational being on the earth. We experience everyday perplexity while interacting with others and accessing information from social media which act as our window to the world. The truth derived from it gets better of us in more than one ways, which in turn underpins dangerously our ethical stake in the multidimensional digital world. How it manages to take the upper hand of the ethical values of human beings is still an open secret. The present paper intends to explore into the potential adverse effects of social media on people's behavior, psychology and social pattern taking recourse to the Aristotelian concept of hubris.

This is not to deny the positive impact of social media on our day to day life and, in fact, it has taken the whole world by surprise in a very short span of time. Its quick fixes could be considered as a boon in social engineering carried to its clinical perfection across a series of successful missions beginning from social adjustment to violent and aggressive stereotyping and construction of reality. There is always almost a group of optimists who would argue that the outcome of social media, if used with good intentions by good people, can lead to good results for one and all. If not for some gross misuse, it is assumed, social media would have worked wonders irrespective of scientific regions and geopolitical set up. We are concerned about how social media engineered cyber crime affect the life style of people, their "linguistic and cognitive" insight. Of graver concern facing the world today is how the app age has deliberately forced upon us an antisocial stance, how children have fallen prey to its lure by imitating the on line of moon walk shows and blue whale menace involving life risks, and finally how the young men of the world, especially students have gone mad after the negative impact of social media as a whole. Of the total 18 working hours in a day we do not

hesitate to spend up to 12 hours without having any serious cognitive development. In other words, social media consumes vital part of our life which is not auguring well for humanity, to say the least. The question that perturbs humanity scholars all over the world today is what type of education and ethics we imbibe from such an outfit. This lack of foresight could be fatal in the long run from which the humanity has to be rescued on an urgent mission. If we fail to do so, it would be our tragic flaw inviting our inevitable down fall. Aristotelian concept of 'hubris' would best describe the present plight of social media woven around humanities across cultures.

The impact of social media on us cannot be denied, but it is high time we asked the question how much benefit we get out of this subversive involvement with an all out act? A sort of soul-searching will do. The talk of social media being involved with mindless controversy moving beyond its boundary is doing the rounds in both social and intellectual circles. Man's obsession with social media in an increasing and alarming rate has nothing but hubris to explain, for such a low morale. Aristotle's concept of hubris would come handy at the crisis- ridden moment of man-media conflict.

Ancient Greeks had always believed that the destined end of human life is all about happiness and social welfare (Greek term *Eudaimonia*) with an ultimate aim of perfection and flourishing. The aim of Greek *polis* being arriving at a common goal, "music, movement and words" (Lilan 66) were entrusted with serving the purpose of education. These three concepts corresponded with three respective parts of human practice; reason which enables human beings to distinguish between good and evil; the spiritual accomplishments for emotional displaying of pride, anger, fear, and it is used to serve man's safety standards, and finally to appease the requirement of our body to fulfill our "desire for eating, drinking and obtaining sexual gratification" (Lilan 66). In the mad rush for achieving unparalleled success, man has accounted for pride which in turn leads to his inevitable fall and the Aristotelian concept of hubris explains it perfectly.

The word *Hubris* is the Anglicised form of the Greek which means “wanton violence, arising from the pride of strength or from passion, insolence,” (Liddell & Scott). Hubris, intentionally dishonouring behaviour, was a powerful term of moral condemnation in ancient Greece, and in Athens, and perhaps elsewhere; it was also treated as a serious crime. The common use of hubris in English to suggest pride, over-confidence, or any behaviour which may offend divine powers rests, it is now generally held, on a misunderstanding of ancient texts, and concomitant and oversimplified views of the Greek attitudes to the gods which have lent support to many doubtful and often over-Christianizing, interpretations, above all of Greek tragedy. The best ancient discussion of hubris is found in Aristotle’s *Rhetoric*: his definition is that hubris is:

Doing and saying things at which the victim incurs shame, not in order that one may achieve anything other than what is done, but simply to get pleasure from it. For those who act in return for something do not commit hubris, they avenge themselves. The cause of the pleasure for those committing hubris is that by harming people, they think themselves superior; that is why the young and the rich are hubristic, as they think themselves superior when they commit hubris. (*Rhetoric*: 1378b 23-30).

This account, locating hubris within a framework of ideas concerned with the honour and shame of the individual, which took a central place in the value-systems of the ancient Greeks, fits very well the vast majority of texts exploiting the notion, from Homer till well after Aristotle’s own time. While it primarily denotes gratuitous dishonouring by those who are, or think they are, powerful and superior, it can also at times denote the insolence of accepted ‘inferior’ persons, such as women, children, or slaves who disobey or claim independence; or it may be used to emphasize the degree of humiliation actually inflicted on a victim, regardless of the agent’s intention; some cases, especially applied to verbal insults, may be humorously exaggerated; and revenge, taken to excessive or brutal lengths can be condemned as constituting fresh hubris.

Philosopher Hannah Arendt (1978) argues that “There are no dangerous thoughts; thinking itself is dangerous” (176) which sets out the tempo of thinking as a subversive means suggestive of side effects of social media. Marshall McLuhan’s seminal book *Understanding Media: The Extension of Man* (1964) also persuades us to get to the hindsight, not the foresight, of every media activity. The blue whale menace is not alone to caught humanity in wrong foot, but it certainly does not help. Children falling prey to the side effects of social media is an accepted fact in popular and recent parlance. This time around, the student community is fretting over its use of social media for wrong reasons. They have misused the social media to their disadvantage and it has clearly cost their respective careers dear. Who knows how things may have turned out had they not been misused the negative side of the social media. Sometimes, one wrong decision by a student is all it needs to turn his life into a living hell. Success is all about confidence, and it is no surprise that our depleted community—out of touch with their regular studies, social media playing the spoilsport here—are one of the worst sufferers.

Two things come out as clear winners out of this notorious intellectual churning; they are terribly low on their confidence and their concentration not going. Both these pessimistic approaches are not doing anything to contribute to their career building which is so vital for their future life. When a student starts to miss an opportunity it starts to consume him both physically and mentally in an overwhelming way, opportunities being limited, in any case. How much time a student wastes in social media and that to not adhering to his academic needs, is any body’s guess now. Nobody wants to waste time without any good act but the social media has not even spared the so-called intelligentsias.

Be it an important seminar or a serious discussion on matters of immediate concern, the entire gathering barring the speaker, resorts to smart phone heroics forgetting his responsibility in respect of the purpose for which they have been assigned there. We cannot deny the importance of the outreach of social media in every nook and corner of the world but are nowhere near in

understanding the bad impact of this perilous ploy. It simply kills our ability to find out natural and innovative solutions to subtle problems of life. A small addition puts pressure on our mind compelling us to trust our smart phones instead which is certainly a time consuming process.

The rate at which ‘Blue Whale’ game is claiming lives is alarming. Why we reached to such a low in moral digression? Are our children devoid of moral values that they take resort to such killer games? In past children used to be more social and were fond of outdoor games; now lost and immersed in subtleties of social media are after virtual friends and up against sterner stuff. Such a radical shift from strength of character to a feeble pleasure plain is no mean a perversion by any stretch of imagination. We need to put the records straight before it is too late to recover from this impasse. We can act through by prescribing sterner strictures but it is matter of whether it is in our interests to do so. It is a harsh and sad reality that our young minds have fallen prey to the menace of the killer game and virtues of restraint seem to be the only answer at this critical moment. Dereliction has no excuse in this context from which we have to save our generation from a sure death trap. No one seems to be interested in why children do what they do and why they say what they say.

Lewis Mumford argues that man has become victim of machine by his increasing addiction to technology. Man’s movement from “hunter-gatherer” to the finest technical accomplishments has not taken away the tag of primitive tool user or better still, tool maker from human beings:

The definition of man as tool-using animal, even when corrected to read “tool-making” would have seemed strange to Plato, who attributed man’s emergence from a primitive state as much to Marsyas and Orpheus, the makers of music, as to fire-stealing Prometheus, or to Haphaestus, the black-smith god, the sole manual worker in the Olympic Pantheon (345).

We have come this far communicating the content rather than compete it for attention. Our effort has been balancing the

contradictory claims and preferring an order which favours transparency over typicality, an easy elegance over exaggerated and antagonistic effect. The “paradoxes of plurality” which aims at exploring “ontological Pluralism”—an assertion that truth is derived from many interpretations rather than one—leads to absurd and meaningless conclusions. An immortal paradox which Jorge Luis Borges introduces as the eternal race of Achilles and the tortoise best suits our present purpose. His apt appreciation of the paradox stands out:

Achilles, symbol of speed, has to catch up with the tortoise, symbol of slowness. Achilles runs ten times faster than tortoise and so gives him a ten-metre advantage. Achilles runs those ten metres, the tortoise one; Achilles runs the metre, the tortoise runs a decimetre; Achilles runs the decimetre, the tortoise runs a centimetre, Achilles runs the centimetre, the tortoise runs a millimetre; Achilles runs the millimetre, the tortoise the tenth of the millimetre, and ad infinitum, so that Achilles can run forever without catching up” (cited in Pannerselvan, *The Hindu*, Dec 4, 2017, 9)

That social media makes constant efforts to reach the acme is represented symbolically by Achilles’ mad running spree. But the achievement, like the philosophical tortoise, goes in vain, asking for more sustained labour, notwithstanding earnest and agile perseverance. The unconquered gap reminds one of mythical Sisyphus when man continues to strive to catch up.

Social media revolution has taken the world by surprise and we, no doubt, are reaping immense benefits out of it. Such a revolution has a huge impact upon the world, and the social media minuscule and its technological trajectory, similar to what Caxton’s printing machine had gifted us during the time of Renaissance, boasts of its success story, of course, sowing the seeds of human hubris, asking for a certain peril. That is, man has to be credited with and blamed for being an immediate beneficiary and also a long term victim indulging in this vigorous exercise. Aimed at reaching out to every nook and corner of the globe, social media has become the darling child of every layman, but not without its side effects.

At the dawn of the communication revolution, speech was the only mode of communication which, it was believed, was equal to God, but with writing man has brought about a significant change. Of course, Socrates had objected to writing as being a “deformed technology”, coming in the way of creative communication. In due course, writing became a prized asset of an elite class who preferred over men who could only speak. Speech was considered inferior to writing for a long time until its remarkable revival in the form digital media. But the kind of speech proliferated by digital media has nothing to with Socrates model of natural speech with very little creative potential.

We have invariably fallen prey to the Faustian quest of pleasure principle of digital media where raring reification of technology has very often proved to the bane of mankind. Careful precision and minute record of use of gadgets would only checkmate the onslaught of dehumanizing technology. Digital technology has totally taken humanity in its stride. Our original and innovative process of thinking has been replaced by the mad rush of devices from the virtual world. The talk of artificial intelligence and machine learning being a potent threat to human potential is not far away. How badly our depleted memory is dependent on computer, losing sight of our natural and biological potential has been excellently explicated by Viktor Mayer-Schonberger’s seminal book *Delete: The Virtue of Forgetting in the Digital Age* (2009). He gives a very good formula of restoring our memory in its revival path doing away with our marriage with digital technology: “comprehensive digital remembering collapses history, impairing our judgment and our capacity to act in time. It denies us humans the chance to evolve, develop, and learn, leaving us helplessly oscillating two equally troubling questions: a permanent past and an ignorant present (127, kar, 23). We have to act against currents detrimental to the present generation.

Virtual library and online learning programmes have proved handier to our young minds than stern test of the real library, the storehouse of knowledge is only a goggle search away. Reading done with pleasure and practice has been a thing of past, even

the so-called intellectuals have taken the side of digital technology contributing to the hype and popularity of social media. Stimulation of creative energy has become a zero-sum game; electronically available information has rather become an effective mode of knowledge transmission. We have perpetually been condemned to a state of what Nicholas Carr says, “Perpetual locomotion” (166). Learning involves a lifelong process contributing to creativity, reflection, contemplation and a meaningful and logical conclusion. In the app age of digital technology instant result is the centre of attraction where time consuming activities of LSRW has become effete and worn out. Teachers’ direct class room knowledge imparting has been replaced by language labs, which is like implementing digital set up without any practical import. Students trust with digital technology is even horrible. Each student is readily equipped with a smart phone, but more than the positive impact of the smart phone, it is the user—hostile features that have proved potential threat to both their present and future career. The newly emerging lower class, for whom the government is doing so much, is the worst victim. In a provocative but thought provoking book, *Not for Profit: Why Democracy Needs the Humanities* (2010) philosopher Martha Nussbaum argues that our instant craze for digital technology has come only at the expense of democratic culture being propagated by life demonstration of class room teaching. Carr has made valid argument when he says in his book *Shallows* that “The greater danger we face as we become more intimately involved with our computers...is that we begin to lose our humanness, to sacrifice the very qualities that separate us from machines’ (Kar, 23).

In conclusion, it can safely be said that digital technology has come here to stay, its contribution being immense. But we need to balance between our priorities and the prices we have to pay for out of our excess indulgence in the virtual world on an urgent basis. If I am allowed to use the mythical metaphor of Goddess Durga coming to the rescue of the world annihilating Mahisasur by treating the demon in his own trap it would be enough to explicate a readymade remedy, to deal with this potential threat, at our

disposal. That is, near immortality was Mahisasur's asset, but human intelligence was not. Similarly, Artificial intelligence and machine learning are human creations devoid of human intelligence, all one needs is a remote control. Humanness must not, at any cost, be dispensed with while dealing with technological advancements.

Works Cited

- Arendt, H. *The Life of the Mind*. San Diego, C.A.: Harvest, 1978.
- Carr, Nicholas. *The Shallows: What the Internet is Doing to Our Brains*. New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 2010.
- Kar, Prafulla. "The Study of Humanities in the Digital Age", *Anekaant: A Journal of Polysemic Thought* (No. 1) 2013. pp. 21-25.
- Linan, Laura Trujillo. "Catharsis and Media : An Approach to Ethics through Mass Media", *Anekaant: A Journal of Polysemic Thought* No 5, 2016-17 (Spring).
- Mayer-Schonberger, Viktor. *Delete: The Virtue of Forgetting in the Digital Age*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009.
- McLuhan, Marshall. *Understanding Media: The Extension of Man*. Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1994.
- Mumford, Lewis. *Tool-Users vs. Homo Sapiens and the Megamachine*", *Philosophy of Technology*. Ed. C. Scharff & Valdusek. Malden: Blackwell, 2003. pp. 617-37.
- Nussbaum, Martha C. *Not for Profit: Why Democracy Needs The Humanities*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010.

IJES, Volume LVI, 2019

Multilingualism and English Language in Our Schools

**Kanhaiya Kumar Sinha*

Abstract

Knowledge is power. Human history is not just a wonderful tale of war, conquest and glory. It is also a story of the evolution of knowledge, science, technology, engineering and their use for human development. Today, the land of Aryabhata, Charaka, Ramanujama, Ramana and others has nothing that can remotely compare with Nalanda and Vikramashila universities in their heyday. It is time we should examine what has gone wrong in our quest to be the global centre for learning, knowledge and wisdom. English Language, in modern digital global scenario, is one of the richest sources of improving, enhancing, expanding and empowering our knowledge. It has become a major link language at national and international levels and is a commonly used language in administration, offices, business, industry, internet, media, social media, etc. It plays a vital role in higher education, research for aesthetic aspects and employment too. Reference books necessary for carrying out higher education and research are available mostly in English language. Books from many other languages are translated into English language in order to enable non-

***Dr. Kanhaiya Kumar Sinha** is Assistant Professor, Department of English, Shakya Muni College, Bodh-Gaya, Magadh University, Bodh-Gaya, Pin Code 824231 Email id: kksinha.sinha1@gmail.com

native speakers benefit in their day-to-day life. So, teaching of English in schools has acquired an immense importance in the education system of our country.

Keywords: Multilingualism, English Language, Education Policy, Cognitive, Teaching.

INTRODUCTION

India is a multilingual country with numerous languages and dialects. Multilingualism and multiculturalism are present in many parts of our country. We cannot deny that we live in societies that are constantly drawing on and using multiple languages. Multilingualism represents a challenging issue for schooling contexts. It also refers to contexts where more than one language is used in or out-of-school setting. Research in second language acquisition has increasingly focused on multilingual contexts thus “acknowledging the Second Language Acquisition nowadays should be seen as the acquisition of multilingual and multicultural competencies even if the object of instruction is one standard linguistic system” (Kramsch, 107-128).

English as a language has been in our country for more than a century. One cannot disagree with the importance of the widespread desire for English in our country. It has occupied a place of prestige and honour in our societies. This desire, traditionally seen as antagonistic to the interests of indigenous languages and literatures, need not be so if we were to frame the debate differently (our post-colonial location offers such a possibility) and we should find out the new techniques and practices to combine English language learning with multilingualism.

English learner is entitled to English Language education. As a key learning area, English Language Education seeks to develop learners’ English proficiency for study, work and leisure; provides them with opportunities for personal and intellectual development, extend their knowledge and experience of other cultures through the English medium, and help them overcome the challenges of the rapidly changing and keenly competitive knowledge-based society.

EDUCATION POLICY

India's education policy discriminates against children from backward and economically backward class families. Government schools serving them are badly run and the medium of instruction is usually the regional language even when parents desire a transition to English. A sound public education system is the best guarantee of equal opportunity for all. Successive governments have failed children and society on this front and tried to compensate through irrational reservation policies. This has opened up new fault lines in society as fresh caste agitations keep undermining social stability. Governments may finally be waking up to the problem by pushing back against nativism and emphasizing on learning outcomes. To illustrate, a new initiative which asked schools to devise a format to allow students to rate their classroom experience is a step in the right direction. Learning outcomes and teacher accountability should be the government's priority, not school's infrastructure which is a focal point in the Right to Education Act.

Our country's education policy needs radical reform. Instead of private institutions, government should focus on public schools which today languish for want of attention. If accountability is enforced and learning outcomes improved, it will directly benefit children from poor families and bring about a fairer society. Education is in crying need of big bang reforms which move away from hackneyed solutions of reservations and heavy handed state control.

PRESENT SCENARIO**Status of English in Primary Classes**

There is a little bit improvement in the competency of class III students to read English whereas class V students' status remains the same. In the year 2009, 28.5% students of class III were able to read the general words of English language. In 2016, this figure has increased to 32%.

Last year, 24.5% students of class V could read general words of English language. After 2009, there has not been any significant change in this scene though marginal betterment was noted in class

V students of the government schools of Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Haryana, Maharashtra and Kerala. Improvement has also been noted in the private schools of Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Assam, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana.

Status of English in Secondary Classes

In the year 2009, 60.2% students of class VIII could read the simple sentences of English language. This figure was found declined in the surveys of the years 2014 and 2016.

In the year 2016, 60% students of any class who could read English were also able to understand the meaning of words. This competency has remained 62.47% in class V students. In comparison to 2014, there is not any significant change in this scene (Prabhat Khabar Jan. 25, 2017).

Modern Bihar has an inadequate educational infrastructure creating a huge mismatch between demand and supply. This problem is further compounded by increase in population. Also, English has been non-compulsory since 1967. The craving for higher education among the general population of Bihar has led to a migration of the student community from the state. This has led to a 'flooding' of students to seek educational opportunities in other states such as New Delhi and Karnataka, even for graduation level college education. Researchers have found out that 37.8% of Bihar's government teachers are not found present during unannounced visit to school, the worst teacher absence rate in our country and one of the worst in the world.

English reading competency of 11.1 million students between 6 to 15 years of age from Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and UP has remained below average. Total number of school children in our country is 25.2 million. If the education standard of these four states does not improve, in the year 2020, our country will be deprived of from 86.9 million possible working populations.

TEACHING METHODS

- A. Grammatical Approach**—The traditional grammar-translation method focuses on the translation of texts

and the explicit teaching of grammatical structures. Especially since the 1960s, this method has fallen into disuse, as the direct method and the audio-lingual methods have been adopted. In the direct method, teachers model language patterns that students repeat without any translation. In the audio-lingual method, students practice patterns and dialogues to develop particular language structures. Although different, the grammar-translation, direct, and audio-lingual methods rely on a grammatical approach that is based on behaviourist theories of language learning.

- B. Communicative Approach**—In contrast, the communicative approach was derived from a constructivist theoretical framework that suggests that language learning occurs as students draw meaning from experiences and interpersonal interactions. This approach was developed in response to the failure of audio-lingual method and the increased need for communication across communities. Immersion methodology and integrated content-based methodology (ICB) are used frequently in bilingual education programmes to develop bilingualism, as well as in specialized English-only programmes for monolingualism. Teachers plan content and language objectives concurrently, and the additional language is used slowly and with simplification. Graphic organizers are used to scaffold instructions. Whereas the emphasis of immersion methodology is on the learning of content knowledge alongside second language development, the stress of ICB is more on the development of language and literacy in a second language.
- C. Cognitive Approach**—Moving away from the communicative approach, language learning started to be recognized as being as much cognitive as it is social

and interactive. The emphasis of the cognitive approach is on learner's active control over the cognitive processes used in learning an additional language. This approach supports the transfer of knowledge stored as schemata or production systems in one language to the learning of new tasks in an additional language. Language is seen as a process that is an integral aspect of our thinking, meaning-making selves. Learning a language involves action movement, and the perception of affordances or relationships of possibility within different communicative events (Lier, 133). Whereas the communicative approach supports language learning through authentic communication, the cognitive approach involves explicit teaching and modelling of learning strategies and language.

D. Language Arrangements—One of the most accepted principles of language education for bilingualism is that the two languages must always be used in isolation, a remnant of the prevalence of the direct method. This is what Cummins (2007) refers to as “the two solitudes” (Cummins, 221). In most language education programmes, whether foreign language, second language, heritage language, the philosophy has been that the students' home language practices can never be used, and that the teacher should exclusively use the additional language. Even in bilingual education programmes, the two languages are most often allocated strictly according to different teachers, different subjects, different times of day, or different places. However, in practice, most language education programmes use language flexibly. Sometimes this flexibility is random and is used to draw students towards the dominant language. However, if used strategically, the flexible multilingual use of different language practices has an important purpose in language education.

OTHER SUGGESTIONS

The globalization of the Indian economy in the 1990s seemed to signal the need for a globalized workforce. Academic and ideologue, Kancha Illaih notes that since the backward class people of India “had no entry to the colonial English world”, the new move to teach English in all government schools becomes a welcome one. He disagrees with the upper caste contention that “English will destroy the culture of the soil”. Logically speaking, he says, “the next step would be the abolition of the gap between the prevalent English medium schools and the government schools in terms of both teaching and infrastructure” (The Deccan Herald, Sept. 12, 2012).

The most important question is that how can we fulfil the widespread demand of English learning? Could this perhaps be done by the introduction of new variants of English, say of the “basic kind” that the English critic I.A. Richards had spoken of? Additionally, it should be considered that in the given scenario, we must have a national policy for English language learning with matching resources and increased institutional support.

Indian English has come of age, and has been accepted as a legitimate category the world over. Consequently, we must develop our own expertise suitable to our own conditions. English language and literature must be brought into the fold of the literatures and habitat of post-colonial India. It is here that the teachers of English must address their task in an innovative and professional manner.

As far as the question of English and multilingualism is concerned, we must develop new paradigms and tools for the teaching of English in our country. Instead of an approach that upholds a cordon sanitaria between English and Indian languages, English teaching must not be “context neutral”. To be effective, “it has to take into account factors like learner’s position, textual implication, assumptions like teaching methodology, etc.” (Mishra, 10). This could also be furthered by “critical bilingualism” i.e. “the ability to not just speak two languages but to be conscious of the

socio-cultural, political and ideological contexts in which the language operates” (Walsh, 99).

CONCLUSION

Multilingualism and English language in our schools will remain a challenge because most educational systems are organized by nation states, which continue to exert their power and influence by manipulating language in ways that benefit them exclusively. If fruitful bilingual and multilingual education programmes are to be developed, education systems must turn from reflecting the interests of the nation state to sustaining learners, notably children, who, through their dynamic language practices, have to make sense of their increasingly multilingual world.

Our vision of the global English of “the brave new world” should focus to indigenise and localise the teaching of English language and literature even as we aspire to play our legitimate role in the global turf. English language learning in our country should be made compulsory and go hand-in-hand with multilingualism. By such actions, we will be sensitive to plurality in the classroom situation and relate to the varied language/caste/class backgrounds the students come from. This must be as true of our cultural politics as of English teaching in the classroom.

Works Cited

- Cummins, Jim. “Rethinking Monolingual Instructional Strategies in Multilingual Classrooms”, *Canadian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, pp. 221-40. ISSN 1920-1818.
- Kramsch, Claire. “Authenticity and Legitimacy in Multilingual SLA”. *Critical Multilingual Studies* 1:1, 2012.
- Lier, L.V. “The Ecology and Semiotics of Language Learning”: A Socio-cultural Perspective (Educational Linguistics). Kluwer Academic Publishers Norwell, MA, USA (2004). p. 133. ISBN: 1-4020-7904-4.
- Mishra, S. & Muralikrishna, C. “Communication Skills for Engineers”, Pearson India, 2011.
- “Prabhat Khabar”, *The Hindi Daily*, Jan. 25, 2017.

“The Deccan Herald”, (The English Daily, Sept. 12, 2012).

Walsh, Catherine E. “Pedagogy and the Struggle for Voice”:
Issues of Language, Power, and Schooling for Puerto Ricans
(Critical Studies in Education). Newyork: Bergin & Garvey,
1990.

IJES, Volume LVI, 2019

***Oranges are Not the Only Fruit:* Lesbianism in Post-Modern Literature**

**Pranamita Pati*

Abstract

The Indian society is not yet ripe enough to accept whole heartedly the lesbians as they accept the gays. Even Western writers like Aldous Huxley and Oscar Wilde are silent about lesbians. In fact, some self-conscious persons who had tried up their own sex revolted against it. After the World War II, lesbians and homosexuals were looked down upon by the USA and other countries. They write about heterosexuals but not about their own sexuality. This paper is a survey of such writings in the historical perspective and the present day position in India.

Keywords: Communion, autonomy, rustic, patriarchal, lesbian

“To be a woman who belongs to no man is to be invisible, pathetic, inauthentic, unreal.” The paper begins with the above quotation from the essay *The woman-Identified woman* (1970) written by Karla Jay and Allen Young. It shows how the lesbians who strive hard to be honest to themselves, remain invisible. A lesbian is the target of animosity of all women condensed to the point of explosion. Lesbians like gays protest against the rules laid down by the so called society, engineered by male hegemony. The attack most of the time comes, not from the males or gays, rather

***Dr. Pranamita Pati** is Assistant Professor of English, Janata College, Satmile, Odisha.

from women who suffocate, without any complaint, under the male hegemony. In spite of their rebellious instincts they preferred to be labeled as “subaltern”. They crave for sympathy, patting, coaxing, cajoling from male counterparts. Naturally they remain deprived children of the earth. They are deprived because they are obstructed from having a communion with their inner self. Lesbians may appear to be up-starts off the track but they are not hypocrites. They are in constant communion with their self. Hence, they are more sanitized, more sacrosanct than the heterosexuals. All religious scriptures come to one understanding that each one of us is born naked. The highest Indian philosophy that is ‘*tat twam asi*’ means ‘thou art that’. One of the commandments of the Ten Commandments that is ‘know thyself’ or ‘love thy neighbor as thyself’. What does it mean? Does it mean you love your neighbor? As what? As thyself. It means you love your own self-your nude self-totally nude to yourself, and find the hidden music and unity in you. Lesbians find the same unity when she sees another lesbian of her. Both are made of the same flesh and the same anatomy. By facing each other they are revealed to their own self. There is no sense of helplessness as it would happen when she meets with the opposite sex. There is no complex or fear before a phallus. So they have better confidence in each other. No fear of betrayal, no fear of left in lurch, no fear of *La Belle Dame Sans Merci*.

The society is not yet ripe enough to accept wholeheartedly the lesbians as they accept the gays. It is because the age-old ideas held against female sexuality. Even writers and intellectuals even Christopher Isherwood, Aldous Huxley, Julian Huxley, Russell and above all Oscar Wilde are silent about lesbians. They were homosexuals. Even some of them were punished by law. It is primarily because they transgressed against the social norms set out by the males signatored by the man-made religions. A woman was guided by the male cultures. Male consigned women to sexual and family functions. They are excluded from defining and shaping the terms of their own life. They are denied to come to terms with

their dreams. They were called authentic, legitimate if they are guided by male hegemony.

How long it would have continued? How long? Some self-conscious persons who had tried up their own sex revolted against it. Virginia Woolf or even Catherine Mansfield or American poet Emily Dickinson would have come out of the cocoon. But the time was not ripe enough for them. Nevertheless they hinted at this through the writings like *A Room of One's Own*, Mansfield's the story *The Bliss* and Emily Dickinson's *poems*. Even a writer like Thomas Hardy gave a hint of lesbianism in his novel *The Woodlanders*: on a moonlit light Marty South and Mrs. Melbury came together, very intimately although both loved Guiles Winterbourne. Marty South was jealous of Melbury; Melbury did not take any cognizance of Marty South as she was poor, uneducated a rustic but beautiful lady. Strangely enough, during that moment they forgot their animosity and experienced an intimacy of beatitude.

It is the primacy of women related to women creating a new consciousness of and with each other, which is at the heart of women's liberation, and the basis for the cultural evaluation. When a woman is in harmonious relationship with another woman China wall falls, London bridge falls. Pride and ego disappear. Karla Jay writes "we see ourselves as prime, find our center inside of ourselves (109)." Alienated selves of women disappear. A woman finds a room of her own. Jay again writes "with that real self, with that consciousness, we begin a revolution to end the imposition of all coercive identifications, and to achieve maximum autonomy in human expression." (110)

Two important books by Alfred Kinsey, *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male* in 1948 and *Sexual Behavior in Human Female* in 1953 paved the way for an understanding for homosexuality and lesbianism. Prof. Kinsey with his team interviewed thousands of men and women, taking detailed sexual histories. These two books gave a jolt to the public. These two books dug out what was already there in the world. It is like Freud

admitting the existence of Junior Oedipus and his queen/mother before Freud's theory of Oedipus complex. There are misconceptions about lesbians. Monique Wittig, a French philosopher and feminist is famous for arguing that "lesbians are not women." Following Simone de Beauvoir, the French existentialist who argued that "one is not born a woman" but learns the cultural expectations of womanhood and femininity as a part of her lived experience. Wittig argued that in heterosexist patriarchal system the category "woman" only makes sense in relation to men. According to her lesbians invested in woman-to-woman relationships thus abandon significant relation to men and are therefore not women. As Wittig explains "It would be incorrect to say that lesbians associate, make love, live with women, for woman has meaning only in heterosexual systems of thought, heterosexual economic system. Lesbians are not women." (178) Of course, many other women and lesbian thinkers such as Adrienne Rich disagree stating that lesbians are women who must confront both homophobia and sexism in a patriarchal and male-dominated society. (178)

Adrienne Rich, perhaps, fails to understand the mind of Monique Wittig. Lesbians don't depend on males for tidbit of life. They are independent, self-sufficient. Sex engenders in them to live dangerously. Nietzsche's Zarathustra asked the youth of his time to live "dangerously". Lesbianism or for that matter, lesbians are not frightened of human existence. The moment we use the word 'woman' many ramifications come into our way: social, political and individual. The world is yet to need to understand the homosexuals or lesbians or what we call the LGBT.

Jeanette Winterson's *Oranges are not the Only Fruit* which deals with lesbianism, won the 1985 Whitbread Prize. It was also adapted for television by Winterson in 1990. Winterson in her *Memoir* asserts her own sex:

A lot of older people I knew, my parents' generation, quoted Shakespeare and the Bible and sometimes the metaphysical poets like John Donne, without knowing the source, or misquoting and mixing. (29)

Winterson is very cynical about the old assumptions of a woman's body. Be it Shakespeare or Donne, they are only half-understood or not understood at all. A woman, she remains unknown, unfathomed, unlamented very often taken for granted. Jeanette is very critical about Vladimir Navokov's *Lolita*. Navokov only treats Lolita from a male perspective. Strangely enough, Navokov does not write about mother daughter relationships. Jeanette Winterson is right when she writes in her *Memoir*:

Why should a woman be limited by anything or anybody?
Why should a woman not be ambitious for literature?
(3-4)

After the World War II, lesbians and homosexuals were looked down upon by the USA and other countries followed it. 60s brought about a change in the West. It is called the counter culture revolution. It saw the rise of the hippies, Beatles, homosexuals and lesbians. Daniel Bell in his book *The Coming of Post-Industrial Society! A Venture in Social Forecasting* talks about the counter culture in late 21st century. Again society has become conscious of the predicament of transgender, homosexuals, bisexuals and lesbians. Lesbians cry out, "There are markings here, raised like wells. Read them. Rewrite them. Rewrite the hurt."

However, Havelock Ellis in his two volumes *The Psychology of Sex* opened the cover of the pressure cooker and the vapors came out. Ellis has narrated the story of a lesbian and her agony even ecstasy in the section "History XXXVI—Miss It, aged 30."

There are many lesbians in India, but very few lesbian writers. They write about heterosexual but not about their own sexuality. It is because to an Indian thought it is sin to see your body. An Indian woman wants to be appreciated of her body by a male one, but not by her own sex. Even she does not look at her own body in the mirror. She remains like Auden's 'An unknown citizen' as somebody's daughter, somebody's mistress. She is lost in the wilderness.

A post-modern literature is a literature of new found land. It's a literature of "Brave New World". No more is there a theatre

of the absurd or hanky-panky with sex and science. They are not prepared for another world, at least not in their thoughts. They join their hands with Allen Ginsberg, "I here declare the end of the war!"

Digitization has given a lip service to act locally, think globally. Digitalized man is a dead man, hollower than Eliot's hollow man. It has led to apathy towards human sexuality. One is reminded of the typist girl in Eliot's *Love Song of J Alfred Prufrock*, "hurry up, hurry up".

It would be a sheer travesty of truth to claim that literature can be written without human sexuality. Michel Foucault boldly wrote in his book *History of Sexuality* "never did sexuality enjoy a more immediately natural understanding and never did it know a greater felicity of expression" (Foucault 77). In the post-modern literature sexuality is not confined to man woman or heterosexuality. It has unraveled the mysterious relationship between human beings going beyond the gender specific. In this sense, post-modern literature is very important. It is a new opening of a brave new world, of course, unlike Miranda's brave new world. Surrogate mother has replaced the idea of mother mine mother mine. Post-modern literature has put emphasis on one's body-actualization of self through same sex relationship which registers more independence and more enriching experience than stereotyped.

The writers like Jeanette Winterson have depicted her predicament when she falls in love with one of her own sex. Even the radical lesbians argued specially for a lesbian nation (Johnson). In a manifesto titled "The woman—Identified woman" praised the "primacy of women relating to women" as a way of achieving unity. Even Alice Walker, Tony Morrison have soft corner for lesbians. Indian writers like Manju Kapoor (*A Married Woman*) and Shashi Deshpande (*The Binding Vine*) deal with lesbian themes. Only problem is the Indian writers are not courageous as western writers. All said and done, sex remains a taboo in human society, in spite of Freud and Havelock Ellis. Literature can alone cross the Laxman Rekha.

September 6th, 2018 is a landmark in the modern history of India. The highest Apex Court of the country decriminalized 377 IPC and LGBT was accepted as a respect to individual dignity of the Honourable Chief Justice of India: “I am what I am. So, take me as I am.” (as quoted by Gurucharan Das in his article Gays and Colonial Brainwashing, Learn from India’s open, exuberant past and respect those who differ from us, TOI 12/09/2018).

With these 157 years of tyrannical colonial law was made null and void. Britain had understood their mistake that “sexual orientation is natural and people have no control over it” (as the court’s judgement said). The Britishers had accepted this but our people have not till 6th September 2018. Without any iota of doubt, it can be said that post colonialism and post modernism in literature should start from 6th September 2018. It will not be a travesty of truth to say that living aside ancient and medieval literature in India so called modern writers only, rather obliquely express the western thoughts in vernacular languages. Hence, Jeanette Winterson’s *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit* has got the special significance for an Indian reader. S/he can enjoy the novel in an uninhibited mind. An Indian mind can understand the last sentence of the novel “This is Kindly Light calling Manchester, come in Manchester, this is Kindly Light.” (182)

Works Cited

- Ellis, Havelock. *Studies in the Psychology of Sex*. New York: Random House, 1937.
- Bell, Daniel. *The Coming of Post-Industrial Society! A Venture in Social Forecasting*, India: Arnold–Heinemann. Publishers Pvt. Ltd. 1974.
- Hardy, Thomas. *The Woodlanders*. Surjeet Publications. New Delhi. 1989.
- Winterson, Jeanette. *Oranges are not the Only Fruit*. Pandora Press. London. 1985.
- Foucault, Michel. *The History of Sexuality*, Editions Gallimard. 1978.

IJES, Volume LVI, 2019

**Reverse Orientalism: Re-reading the
Diasporic Discourse of the Postcolonial
Indian Diaspora Writers with Special
Reference to Amitav Ghosh's *The
Hungry Tide***

**Prasun Banerjee & **Dina Nath*

Abstract

Since the time of its inception into the critical lexicon, the term 'diaspora' has been much politicized and theorized in terms of its literary perspective. However, the introduction of the discourses of imperialism, colonialism-postcolonialism have some what problematized the traditional notion of the term. In the wake of British colonization in the 19th and 20th century the term, 'diaspora' has started getting regarded not as a singular phenomenon but as historically varied and heterogeneous in its aspects. In the postcolonial set-up this consciousness has often been used as an instrument for the proliferation of the neo-imperialist strategies of the capitalistic forces. This paper attempts to re-read the works of some of the writers of Indian diaspora with special reference to Amitava Ghosh's *The Hungry Tide* in this light to show how often diasporic discourse takes the shape of a capitalist 'product', and can be identified to be generating a process of reverse

***Mr Prasun Banerjee** is Assistant Professor & Head of the Department of English, Kabi Joydeb Mahavidyala, Illambazar, Birbhum.

****Dr. Dina Nath** is Associate Professor & Head of the Department of English at J.J. College, Gaya.

Orientalism. In this novel written at the back drop of the Sunderbans and its habitat, Ghosh pretends to depict both the environmental and societal ecology of the coastal region of Bengal and the surrounding delta with a view to delineating man's relationship with nature and how they remain integrally connected especially in the Third World countries. The book caters to the age-old occidental desire to see the East as the landscape of erotica and exotica, and presents only a globalised version of the local flora and fauna, without caring to go into the depth of both the natural and the mental ecologies.

Keywords: diaspora, colonialism, postcolonialism, neoimperialism, ecology, orientalism

Since the time of its inception into the critical lexicon, the term 'diaspora' has been much politicized and theorized in terms of its literary perspective. Etymologically, it may refer to general process of 'dispersion', both forced as well as natural, of one linguistic and ethnic community from one geographical space to the other for various ends. However, the introduction of the discourses of imperialism, colonialism-postcolonialism have somewhat problematized the traditional notion of the term. Right from the time of its Biblical interpretation, 'diaspora' has been interspersed with the notions of 'exile' or 'nation' in terms of what Rushdie calls the 'imaginary homelands (Rushdie, 2010)' which get somehow interlinked with the ideas and discourses of the Jewish Diaspora. But at the wake of British colonization in the 19th and 20th century when the phenomenon of globalization, spurred by free trade and increased capital flow, has accelerated the movement of people, commodities, ideas and cultures across the world, the term, 'Diaspora' has started getting regarded not as a singular phenomenon but as historically varied and heterogeneous in its aspects. Agnieszka Weinar (2010) marks the expansive use of the term, arguing that recently, "a growing body of literature succeeded in reformulating the definition, framing Diaspora as almost any *population* on the move and no longer referring to the specific *context* of their existence" (Weinar, 2010). It can also

be noted that as charismatic Christianity which as part of the hegemonic colonizer's culture becomes increasingly globalized, many Christians have started conceiving themselves as a Diaspora, and form an imaginary set up that mimics salient features of ethnic diasporas. It is probably from here the colonial discourse has started having a dominating influence in shaping and reshaping the diasporic consciousness, so much so that in the postcolonial set up this consciousness has often been used as an instrument for the proliferation of the neo-imperialist strategies of the capitalistic forces. In this paper, I am going to re-read in this light the writings of some of the writers of Indian diaspora with special reference to Amitav Ghosh's *The Hungry Tide*.

A prominent postcolonial critic Promod K. Nayar has identified six salient features of diasporic literature in his 2008 book *Postcolonial Literature: An Introduction* (p. 190):

- (a) the shift, contrast and the relation between centre (from where their ancestors/parents originated) and the periphery (into which they dispersed)
- (b) the memory—individual or communal—of home, including details of childhood landscapes, historical events, people
- (c) the sense of alienation in a new society/culture/land
- (d) a need to retain features from the 'homeland'
- (e) a reclamation of history of the homeland and childhood spaces
- (f) a conscious attempt to assert ethnic identity in terms of the homeland, while simultaneously seeking acceptance/assimilation in the new cultures (quoted in (Sengupta, 2014).

However, a careful study of the Indian Diaspora writers reveals that all these features could not be found in a uniform way in their writings, rather they have entered the Indian diasporic consciousness at different stages. The dispersion of the Indian community to various parts of the world started much before the colonial settlement, and can be traced in three phases. The earliest is recognised as 'the ancient and the medieval phase' when the

Indians crossed the borders of the homeland for trade or commercial purposes or on religious missions starting from the 6th century onwards to the 13th and 14th century. This dispersion does not really give birth to any 'diasporic' literature as such, as the settlers are chiefly peasants or indented labourers (Tinker quoted in Bhakar TLS). The deportation of Indian labourers to European countries were continued, rather increased in 'Colonial Phase', especially from the 1830s to 1930s, as the colonial exploitation of the British regime of the Indian pageantry led to mass unemployment, and also the abolition of slavery in Britain in 1830 made the colonizers import the labour force from its colonies to mitigate the acute shortage of labour, especially in sugar plantations. However, besides contract labourers and peasants, there were willing migrants from the affluent class, who went overseas for studies or personal enterprises. But even then no sizeable amount of 'diasporic' literature was produced in this period, as these people often came back to their homelands bringing with them Western models of culture and literature. Literatures of Indian Diaspora mainly constitute of the writings of the 1st and 2nd generation of immigrants that settled in Europe or European colonies in 'the Post-colonial Phase'. These settlers were chiefly of the middle-class fed on the diet of Westernised education in India having considerable proficiency in English. Having not found relevant job opportunities commensurate with their kind of education, they migrated to chiefly the developed countries like the US or the U.K. in prospect of a better career and life. Having been well conversant of Western discourses and set up through their education, these people find it not to difficult to adapt to Western living condition. However, they (especially the 1st generation immigrants) find it difficult to forsake their ethnic and cultural identity, rather assert it by the creation of cultural ghettos or by strict adherence to the cultural and religious rituals. They continue their involvement with their homelands form overseas, such as in the category of long-distance nationalists, as identified by Benedict Anderson. Their 'homelands' stay alive to them in the form of memories, nostalgia, language, cultural rituals and resistance to the

change in the new environment. Their literature, thus, becomes an attempt of asserting their cultural and ethnic identity as well as a desperate search for their roots.

But both this assertion and search become problematic for the second generation of the Diaspora writers who has no first hand memory of her/his homeland. Their notion of homeland is largely constructed upon their parents' memory of their land, which again can be highly coloured and idealised, their occasional visits of the country of their ancestors purely as an outsider and mainly on the Westernised discourse about their homeland. Thus their search for their roots make them stand poised between their upbringing in the West and their ethnic identity with which they no longer feel any affinity. On the other hand, their ethnic identity which they carry with them in the form of their Indianised names and community identity, make them an outcast in the land they were born. This dichotomy, very often, leads to existential crisis and intellectual fragmentation, plaguing their consciousness. In terms of literary sensibility, the fragmentation persists as the conflict regarding going back to literary consciousness of their native language and culture, and remaining true to the Eurocentric forms and genres, creates a kind of aporic anxiety. Most of the times, the notion of nation or homeland that they posit in their texts, or the genres that they seek to resort to, betray their duality and stay purely constructed rather than truly reflected.

Amitav Ghosh's *The Hungry Tide* seems to be a case in point. In this novel written at the backdrop of the Sunderbans and its habitat, Ghosh pretends to depict both the environmental and societal ecology of the coastal region of Bengal and the surrounding delta with a view to delineating man's relationship with nature and how they remain integrally connected especially in the Third World countries. To give the impression that it is an authentic documentation of the Third world situation presented from an insider's point of view, he patterns his narrative in a typical exotic way as found in regional Bengali novels. The narrative is fraught with Bengali words and with references to local topographies. But in spite of the effort to give it local habitation and a name, the book fails to

understand the interconnection of the environmental and social ecologies so often found in Eastern part of the world, and becomes merely a reiteration of Eurocentric ideologies and discourses. It looks at the Oriental nature with the same occidental gaze, sometimes romanticizing and sometimes mystifying it. The book caters to the age-old occidental desire to see the East as the landscape of erotica and exotica, and presents only a globalised version of the local flora and fauna, without caring to go into the depth of both the natural and the mental ecologies. He has devoted more than fifty percent space to the description of nature but the novel does not really become a book about nature.

Felix Guattari, one of the major thinkers of the contemporary era, uniquely interprets the man-nature relationship in his book the *Three Ecologies* (2000) in terms of three different but interlinked ecologies—‘mental ecology’, ‘social ecology’ and ‘environment ecology’. The relationship between these three ecologies is very complex and even a slightest change in any of these brings out of a corresponding change in all of them. In the words of Dr. Jai Singh,

This relationship between these ecologies is established through linguistic genes that are peculiar to human beings, the most important constituent of nature at this moment. The relationship between men and nature is mediated by the necessary and developing relations known as society, which is constituted of linguistic genes as living beings are constituted of biological genes (Singh, 32).

For the postcolonial Diaspora writers, a large part of socio-linguistic genes or cultures is inherited from colonizers. The forceful amalgamation of these foreign genes which often are moulded by the linguistic idiosyncrasies and deliberate strategic patterning of the colonizer’s culture with the badly mutated native linguistic genes, often make a dangerous equation with their temporal location in globalized-capitalized market. And to satiate the demands of this market, the capitalistic forces try to homogenize the world but at the same time they also foreground the differences according to their needs. Thus, they not only design the ‘product’

but also design the minds of the consumers who would value the product. In *Hungry Tide* Amitav Ghosh, too, homogenizes Third World's relationship with nature but foregrounds the differences too just only to make it a successful novel in the International market that targets Third World educated masses as their target readership. At the outset Ghosh seems to be sympathetic to both the poor masses and the animals living in Sunderbans but underneath he is only commodifying them for intellectual consumption. In the book, however, Amitav Ghosh proceeds to criticize both the State Government of West Bengal under the communist rule and the socialist Central Government of India under Morarji Desai but one may argue here that in both cases his criticism looks external and from outside being guided by international perspectives and lack the insider's point of view. 'He is actually caught up in the capitalist policy to take up both stances- protagonistic as well as antagonistic so that control can be complete' (Singh, 33). Whereas anyone who wants to write about nature should understand that:

'Viewed objectively this active subject-object relationship is science, viewed subjectively it is art, but as consciousness emerging in active union with practice it is simply concrete living—the whole process of working, thinking and behaving like a human individual is one world of individuals and Nature (Christopher Caudwell: 279 quoted in Singh, 33)

Therefore, for an ecologist or a writer concerned with the preservation of the Natural elements it is essential to understand that the existence of man is integral for the existence of Nature or vice versa and one's case cannot be argued in contradistinction to the other but only by understanding its complementary nature.

The failure to understand this organic relationship of man and nature in Western Diaspora writers writing under the capitalist order can be interpreted from the Marxist point of view. Before the Capitalist mode of production were set in vogue, man enjoyed an organic relationship with nature when man through his own actions, medicates, regulates and controls the metabolism between himself and nature but an irreparable rift had emerged in this metabolism as a result of capitalist relations of production which

as Karl Marx paints out, is “built on systematic alienation from all forms of naturally-based needs. Hence under the artificial regime of capital, it is the search for exchange value (that is profit), rather than the servicing of genuine, universal, natural needs, which constitute the object, the motive for production” (Marx, 873). Some mutations in social linguistic genes that Bateson calls “epistemological fallacies” in the western civilization that spread to almost the whole world through colonialism, which was both the cause and product of capitalism. Capitalistic structure follows Charles Darwin’s theory of natural selection according to which the unit of survival was individual/ family or species. But in reality, as Bateson argues, ‘the unit of survival is organism plus environment. We are learning by bitter experience that the organism which destroys its environment destroys itself’ (Bateson: 484). This epistemological error of choosing the wrong unit ends up ‘with the species versus the other species around it or versus the environment in which it operates. Man against nature’ (Bateson: 484). This tendency in Amitav Ghosh is directly reflected when he says,

‘At no moment can human beings have any doubt of the terrain’s utter hostility to their presence, of its cunning and resourcefulness, of its determination to destroy or expel them. Every year dozens of people perish in the embrace of that dense foliage, killed by tigers, snakes and crocodiles’ (Amitav Ghosh: 8).

He legitimises the colonizer’s plundering of nature as a characteristic of universal human being in the following words “In school his teachers taught him that life’s most important lesson is ‘labour conquers everything’, even rocks and stones if mud be even mud’ (Amitav Ghosh: 49).’ Later on very cleverly to suit the needs of capitalism, he criticizes the newly elected state government through Kusum for national and international problems of Bangladeshi refugees and preservation of natural environment knowing fully well that the State Governments in India have very little say for the solution of these problems:

Who are these people, I wondered, who love animals so much that they are willing to kill us for them? Do they know

what is being done in their names? Where do they live, these people, do they have children, do they have mothers, fathers? (Amitav Ghosh: 261-262).

‘These responses of Amitav Ghosh to the “Morichjhāpi incident”, which “was widely discussed in the Calcutta press, English as well as Bengali” shows’, as Dr Jai Singh observes, ‘that capitalism has full hold over his mental ecology that is why he can see only a distorted view of things in the social ecology and therefore this discourse on environmental ecology will help only the plundering of natural resources at the hands of capitalistic forces.’

This adherence to the capitalistic structures or being the agents of the colonizer’s neo-imperialistic strategies has become the trademarks of postcolonial Diaspora writers. Along with the allegiance to the colonial ideology there are the demands of the commodity-centric economy that create a thrust towards homogenization of culture. And their choice of English as the main language for communication makes the process of homogenization more feasible. English, which is hegemonised by the capitalistic order to be the language of economics, commerce, science, arts, and literature and above all the language of upward social mobility, becomes the most effective means of cultural homogenization. In its importance it replaces even in the minds of the natives the vernaculars, the mother tongues to be a symbol of power, authority and status quo. As spoken by a large number of people it simplifies the kinship terms to suit a supposedly Western model. After the spoken skill is mastered and established, reading and writing naturally follow this trend. And this becomes an established social norm when it is backed up by the education system which has also become one of the major tools for the speedy proliferation and dissemination of the colonial culture and literature since the time the Macaulayan ‘doctrine’ of educating the Indians with Western educational models, as imprinted in his *Minute*, were put into practice. Meenakshi Mukherjee observes:

When prescribed in university curricula, novels certainly get a wider currency. Unfortunately, in Indian universities,

English departments by and large continue to be orthodox in their course of studies, and even though some might prescribe Homer, or Dostoevsky or Ibsen in English translation, inclusion of Rabindranath Tagore's *The Home and the World* (1916) or O. Chandu Menon's *Indulekha* (1889) is strongly resisted on the grounds that a student of English only be given books that are composed in that language. (Mukherjee: 197).

This obsession with Euro-American literature has resulted in colonizing the Indian sensibility to a large extent in India too; as a result of which a new class of writers has emerged. Their very material may be Indian, but their target readership goes beyond the borders of countries and continents especially touching the chords of the Indian Diaspora or the Non-Residential Indians who are settled in various countries abroad but suffer from the same confused notion of the loss of the 'imaginary homelands'. With a keen desire to cater to the likings of these sizeable community either for money, or popularity or both, their writings miss the mark that they were set to achieve or falls short of their declared goal of understanding the 'imaginary homeland'. Full of contradictions and confusion, this can easily be termed as Orientalism in reverse.

These Diaspora writers mythicize the contemporary reality by manipulating Western forms—fabulist narratives and postmodernist fantasies to delineate the local legends and popular fables, and by doing that they become both rootless and displaced. They neither feel belonging nor feel committed to any culture, society or nation because they consider themselves a part of global culture, which is actually constructed by the neo-imperialistic and neo-capitalistic strategies of the former colonizers. In this context the famous Srilankan-Candadian poet, Marx Ondaatjee's reflection on the situation of Diaspora writers seems to be right on mark when he describes his fictional characters, as "born in one place, choosing to live elsewhere. Fighting to get away from our homelands all our lives." (Ondaatjee qtd. in Meenakshi Mukherjee: 180). These Diaspora writers hang between the desire to get away from their roots and compulsions to write about those very roots, because on the one hand education system and forceful supply of

capitalized cultures convert them into intellectual refugees, they are outsiders in India as well as in West on the other hand the market forces demand them to write about India. Under these circumstances Indianness for Indian Diaspora writers becomes a thing to be sold, and for the neo-colonial forces it is necessary to impose it on Indian subcontinent because it propounds a particular way of comprehending reality that suits these powers. The anxiety of the new generation writers may be attributed to the pressures of global market that project them as the sole representatives of Indian culture and society at the international level. The forces of globalization and internationalism produce a new class of readers and writers, “for whom only the literary document produced in English is a national document. All else is regional, hence minor and forgettable.” (Aijaz Ahmad: 75). In a very subtle way English, the language of colonial rulers has emerged as the only means of expressing national culture and identity, which is also a product of colonial interventions. Most of the Indian writers of international repute like Amitav Ghosh, thus, write under the anxiety to appear ‘Indian’ because they write for diffused readership that include even those who have no firsthand experience of India. This anxiety in many cases manifest itself in the homogenization of reality that can be seen as an inability to perceive the realities situated outside the cognitive limits imposed by English.

Works Cited

- Ahmed, Aijaz. *In Theory*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1992.
- Bateson, Gregory. *Steps to an Ecology of Mind*. Ballantine: 1972, New York.
- Bhakar, TLS. & quot; *Indian Diaspora*: Chapter-2. & quot; Vers. PDF. 2011. Shodhganga. 17 February 2015<shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/bitstream/10603/1827/8/08-chapter2.pdf>.
- Caudwell, Christopher. *Illusion and Reality*. New York: International Publishers. 1937.
- Genosko, Gray “Introduction” *The Guattari Reader*, Felix Guattari. Oxford: Basic Blackwell. 1996.

- Ghosh, Amitav. *The Hungry Tide*. New Delhi: Harper Collins. 2004.
- Guattari, Felix. *The Three Ecologies*. Trans. Ian Pindar and Paul Sutton. Continuum: London, 2000.
- Marx, Karl, *Early Writings* (New York: Vintage, 1974).
- Marx, Karl. *Capital* Vol. I. New York: vintage. 1981.
- Mukherjee, Meenakshi. *The Perishable Empire*. New Delhi: OUP, 2007.
- K. Nayar, Pramod. *Postcolonial Literature: An Introduction*. New Delhi: Paerson Longman, 2008.
- Said, Edward W. *Culture and Imperialism*. 1993) (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1994.
- . *Orientalism*. New Delhi: Penguin Books. 2001.
- Rushdie, Salman. *Imaginary Homelands: Essays and Criticism 1981-1991*. London: Vintage, 2010.
- Sengupta, Pradipta. " *Texts Talk Back: A Study of Pater Carey's Jack Maggs*." Polyphony: A Journal of Association for Literary and Societal Interaction (ISSN 2319-6424) III (2014).
- Singh, Dr. Jai. " *An Eco-critical*." Polyphony: A Journal of Association for Literary and Societal Interaction (ISSN 2319-6424) III, 2014.
- Weinar, Agnieszka. "Instrumentalising Diasporas for Development: International and European Policy Discourses." *Diaspora and Transformation: Concepts, Theories and Methods*. Ed. Rainer Bauback and Thomas Faist. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2010.

IJES, Volume LVI, 2019

Teaching Literature through Film Adaptations in the 21st Century

**Yugeshwar Sah*

Abstract

“The study of literature casts light on the meanings in the films, and the study of the film can illuminate the full value of the literature” (Ronald Perrier). There has been an age old relationship between literature and film adaptations. Film adaptations began since the inception of cinema. Although the inception of cinema is not very old, it has emerged as one of the most popular and effective genres of literature in the 21st century. There has been a paradigm shift in our culture from text-based to image-based teaching. We prefer watching films and film adaptations to reading texts. Literature has remained the eternal source of inspiration, influence and imagination for the films and film makers. Filming fiction has been very popular, effective and successful in Hollywood as well as in Bollywood Cinema. Film is a mass medium whereas literature is confined to the academics and intellectuals only. There is an acute crisis of readers and readership in this century since students do not want to turn up the pages of the texts. So, in this critical situation, it is very handy to use film adaptations as visual aids in the classroom.

***Yugeshwar Sah** is Assistant Professor, Department of English, C.M.J. College, Donwarihat, Khutauna, Madhubani. E-mail: yugeshwar.sah@gmail.com

This paper seeks to explore the role and relevance of film adaptations in the teaching of language and literature in the 21st century. It also aims at exploring film adaptation as an interpretation. It emphasizes on adaptation as literary discourse and discipline. The paper presents adaptation as a vehicle for democratizing and disseminating the knowledge of literature to the uneducated masses. This research paper examines the interface between literature and film adaptations and critically analyses the variations between fiction and film, and the reasons behind such variations. It focuses on the problems and prospects of film adaptations and how the themes of the literary texts are appreciated, appropriated, altered and adulterated. With the emergence of intertextuality, the notion of the texts has gone under tremendous change. So, the purpose of the paper is to review and reevaluate film adaptations as original texts not as secondary, peripheral and derivative texts. A huge emphasis has been given on using visual aids in the classroom for effective teaching. Film adaptation has been a very popular process and a productive mass medium to reach to the masses and educate, empower and encourage them through entertainment and enjoyment.

Keywords: Film Adaptation, Translation, Literature, Teaching, Cinema, Interpretation and Pedagogy.

Introduction

Film adaptation has emerged as one of the most effective and popular pedagogical strategies to teach language and literature in the 21st century. As we have become “digital natives” so we have access to media as pedagogical tools in this fast changing time and technology. With the emergence of technology and expansion of globalization, there has been pedagogical revolution in the domain of education especially in the field of teaching English language and literature. There has been paradigm shift in the teaching of language and literature from word-based culture to image based. The teaching of language and literature has travelled a long way from “fidelity” (Loyalty to the source texts, and comparing texts to films and finding gaps between them) to “intertextuality” (multi-directional Perspectives that shed lights on

myriads connections/relations between the original and adaptation). With the rise of the discourse of intertextuality, the notion of the texts has changed completely. Now anything can be a text whether it is film or painting. In order to keep pace with the fast changing time, we need to accommodate and adjust audio-visual pedagogical approaches in all the teachings especially in the English classrooms. “Teaching adaptations occur in classes of all kinds, including history, modern language, psychology, sociology, political science (aka “civics”), math, and even the hard sciences such as biology and chemistry, to name but a few” (Film Adaptations: Strategies for Teaching a Complex Narrative Practice by Jason McEntee: 2017). As this paper is based on my personal experience and experiment with reading and teaching texts through film adaptations. When I was pursuing M.A. English at University of Delhi, my teachers used to teach texts first and then they used to show us adaptations and discuss them with us critically and comparatively. Now when I am a teacher, I have been applying and experimenting the same method to develop literary taste to my students, enrich them with literary knowledge and hone their linguistic, critical and analytical skills.

Defining Adaptation

The term adaptation has been derived from the Latin word ‘adaptare’ which means ‘to make fit’. According to Vinay and Darbelnet “adaptation is a procedure which can be used whenever the context referred to in the original text does not exist in the culture of target text, thereby necessitating some form of recreation”. The Oxford English Dictionary defines it as to “make suitable for a new use or purpose, to alter or modify, adjust one thing to another or, to become adjusted to new conditions.” It is also defined as “a work in one medium that derives its impulse as well as number of its elements from a work in different medium (Konigsberg, 1986:6). Adaptation is a type of translation which provides ‘after life’ to the source texts and creates the scope for new discussions for evaluation and interpretation. Brian MacFarlane is of the view that adaptation is “replacing one illusion of reality for another”. For this process, there are two terms, i.e., adaptation

and appropriation which are used frequently as synonyms but have technically different connotations. According to Critical Idiom Series “an adaptation signals a relationship with an informing source text or original. On the other hand appropriation frequently affects a more decisive journey away from the informing text into a wholly new cultural product and domain”.

Adaptation: For and Against

The writers across the globe have been divided into two groups on the issue of adaptation. A group of writers including E.M. Forster, Virginia Woolf, D.H. Lawrence etc. is not in favour of cinematization of literary texts where as another group of writers consisting Tolstoy, Cornard etc. is in favour of it. Virginia Woolf, in her work, *The Movies and Reality* (1926) stated that relationship between literature and film was “unnatural” and “disastrous” to both. She is of the opinion that film adaptations distort the original works. Van Vugt views film adaptation as a secondary, derivative, peripheral and unoriginal work of art. Where as Belton states that film adaptation “offers an opportunity for film makers to reread a narrative from another age through the lens of their own time and to project onto that narrative their own sense of the world.” According to Hannah Arendt problem with adaptation is that Films use literature as a raw material to attract the masses when there is shortage of stories and ideas. The point of contention is that “material...must be prepared and altered in order to become entertaining”. It is these changes that are pernicious to the source texts. As Plato feared that the emergence of writing would destroy the art of memory so as some of the modern authors are afraid of the inception and emergence of the cinema as the most dominant art-form especially film adaptations. Have reading and writing been deteriorated and declined due to the emergence of cinema particularly film adaptations? “Today the words ‘memory’ and writing could be replaced with ‘literature’ in so far as writers and literary critics from the very beginning of film history, were deeply suspicious of cinema, especially adaptations of literary works” (100 + Years of Adaptation or Adaptation as the art form of Democracy, Cartmell, Deborah: 2014).

Adaptation as Translation

‘Adaptation is considered to be one of the most potent types of translation. It is very difficult to draw the fine line between them. Scholars and critics of the adaptation studies and Translation studies are not sure of “where does one end and other begin?”. Critics like Joao Agenda and Marcelo Moreira use the term “transadaptation” or “tradaptation” for this process and product. They raise questions “do not translators adapt when they translate” (in the essay titled “Translation and Rewriting: Don’t Translator ‘Adapt’ When they Translate?”, 2012). According to Susan Bassenett, “all texts are translations of translations of translations” (1991: 78-79). But many critics do not agree with this view and argue that both translation and adaptation are transfers but they differ in terms of media. Mark O’ Thomas interprets that adaptations “take place across media rather than cultures” (O’Thomas, 2010: 48). Though most of the critics discuss that process and product of translation are different from adaptation yet they find it difficult to make universally acknowledged distinction between them. It seems that Mark O’ Thomas is able to determine the working difference between these two when he states that one occurs across cultures and other across media.

Roman Jakobson, in his essay entitled “On Linguistic aspects of translation”, categories translation in three broad terms i.e. “Interlingual translation” (in different languages and linguistic codes), Interlingual translation (within the same language) and intersemiotic translation (verbal and non-verbal translation, between the medium). If we adhere to these types/categories of translation then adaptation falls in the category of inter semiotic translation (from word to image and vice-versa). Hence, according to Jakobson adaptation is one of the types/forms/categories of translation between two different media. David Mitchell in an interview given to *The Wall Street Journal* on the complex process of adapting his popular fiction *Cloud Atlas* into film, and stated “adaptation as a form of translation and all acts of translation have to deal with the untranslatable spots” (Trachtenberg, 2012).

Literature and Film Adaptation

There is symbiotic relationship between cinema and film adaptations. Film adaptations has been in vogue since the inception of cinema for instance *Raja Harishchandra* (1913), the first full length silent feature film in India, is based on the legend king Harishchandra, narrated in the great epics the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana*, and *The Squaw Man* (1914), the first full length feature film of Hollywood, has been an adaptation of Edwin Milton Royle's 1905 stage play of the same name. The practice of film adaptations is more popular, effective and successful in Hollywood rather than in Bollywood. Hollywood has adapted most of the novels, dramas, stories into films and television serials from Shakespeare to Herold Pinter, Daniel Defoe to Ian McEwan and J.K. Rowling (*Harry Potter Series*). Epics, scriptures, autobiographies, comic books video games and stories of myths and legends too have been filmed in all cinema industries across globe for example the most successful adaptation *Bahubali*, based on the mythology of South India. Literature and cinema have been the mirrors of our society. Literature has been the eternal and inexhaustible source of imitation, inspiration, imagination and influences for most of the films and film makers. Sometimes cinema becomes influential and instrumental for literary creations. Literature helps us to delve deeper into the meanings of the films and cinema brings out the full values and different interpretations of the literatures. "The study of literature casts light on the meanings in the film, and the study of film can illuminate the full value of the literature" (Perrier Ronald, from Fiction to Film). The film makers adapt different genres of literature because they want to give authenticity to the cinematic creation, to gain social acceptability and commercial mobility. Watching movies give us new meanings and interpretations to literary texts because film makers are also the readers and they portray on the screen whatever they get from the particular texts. Many readers, many meanings. So, literature and cinema are not different things but they are complimentary and supplementary to each other. Both have the same purpose but different paths. The only difference is that of medium.

Why Film Adaptation Matters in Literary Classrooms:

As “every act of communication is an act of translation” (Gregory, Rebassa) so every act of translation is an act of adaptation and vice versa. Traditional mode of teaching is outdated in this fast changing time and technology. Film adaptation matters more now in the 21st century than it was before. It is used to attract learners, draw attention, cement memory power, connect students culturally and linguistically, develop interest, motivate the spirit of learnings, provide visuality and variety in the classroom, save time and money, to hone four fundamental skills (LSRW), to make teaching more easy, effective and popular. Film adaptation is a ‘mass medium’, so it reaches to the masses easily and effectively. It is the most popular medium of communication and dissemination of ideas not only among students but also among people. Stephen Bush reiterates that “It is the business of the moving picture to make (classic novels) known to all” (Bush cited in Boyum 1985: 4). There is always possibility of new meanings and interpretations of the texts through film adaptations. Reader-response theory hints at that as many readers so many responses/ receptions of the texts. A text may have multiple meanings and there is always a scope for new interpretations. Hutcheon defends film adaptation and emphasizes that film adaptations do not “leave it dying or dead, nor is it paler than the adapted work. It may, on the contrary, keep the prior work alive, giving it an after-life it would never have had otherwise (2006: 176). Film adaptations matter more in the literary classes of rural or remote areas where students have least exposure to the outward world. They learn more from adaptations and videos. As an assistant professor of English, posted in rural area, I have experimented and tested this strategy in my Classrooms. When the students watch adaptation, they see the visual images on the screen which they have not even dreamt of them. Whelehan emphasizes that film adaptation has the potential that can generate interest in reading and understanding literature. She, further, says that the writers like Virginia Woolf who was more or less accessible to the readers during her time gained a huge crowd of readers when her two texts *Dalloway* (1997) and *The Hours* (2002) were adapted into films.

Film Adaptation as a Pedagogical tool/strategy

Film adaptation as a pedagogical strategy has revolutionized all the Disciplines and Discourses of teaching and learning methodologies. It has made teaching-learning process easier, more effective and more interesting. Siegfried Kracauer, an early film theorist, realized the pedagogical potential of the film. His observation is apt and appropriate when he says unique feature of the film is its capacity to “make one see and grasp things which only the cinema is privileged to communicate” (Kracauer, 1973). Spack asserts that film adaptations are the huge educational materials for teaching literature. Narratives adapted into films are of paramount importance since “the films provide students with a visual interpretation of the stories and present the costumes, scenery, and sounds of the works” (1985: 710). Using it as teaching tool in the classroom will benefit both teachers and learners and there are several advantages of it.

- **To develop interest through entertainment:** Film attracts and appeals the students without any much ado. It captures all the senses of the learners and holds their attention. As it makes teaching interesting with the help of visual images, music, songs, violence and valour so gradually students get interested in learning process. Initially students are not used to read literary texts but after watching the adaptation and having discussion with the teacher, they gradually try to read the texts and cherish it.
- **As a Metaphorical Tool:** Prose and poetry are packed with metaphors to perform certain functions. Metaphors can serve the same purpose when films are used in the English classrooms. Sense of sight will offer better understanding and apt interpretations of the metaphors and other figures of speech.
- **Motivation:** A mind without motivation is like a body without brain and blood. Nothing has ever been achieved without motivation. Perhaps that's why, as I think, there

has been a great tradition to invoke poetic Muse for inspiration in composing epic poetry as Milton did in *Paradise Lost*. Tieston observes “because most students are familiar with and enjoy the motion picture, it is an excellent motivator” (Tieston, 2005: 333).

- **Visuality and Variety of a film:** Visuality is about interpreting the language in a complete visual contexts. Visual contexts help students to comprehend complex concepts such as stream of consciousness (*Mrs. Dalloway*, *The Portrait of Artist as a Young Man* etc...), Flashback narrative technique, existential angst, absurdity (*Waiting for Godot*) to name but few, intricate images for instance Heath (*King Lear*), somnambulism (*Macbeth*), Gothic construction/structure, sea, oceans, mountain, castle, court etc... and difficult scenes for example dagger scene, witch scene, potter scene (*Macbeth*).
- **Enhancement of Critical and Analytical skills:** adaptation provides us a platform and space to analyse the scenes, images, lyrics, dialogues and characters critically to understand the texts and contexts better. Debate and discussion with the teacher on a particular scene hones analytical abilities.
- **Economical:** Film adaptation serves as an engaging and entertaining economical pedagogical strategy in the 21st century where every individual, whether teachers or students, realize that there is paucity of time and money (finance). Many a time students have to go on field duty or trip in order to understand something but that involves huge time and money. “Films also are an economical substitute for field trips and other real world visits. While most films are fiction, they can offer powerful experiences that students are unlikely to have in a classroom” (Champoux, Joseph. E, 2007: 240-257). There is always a huge pressure on the head and heart of the students to finish so many texts within stipulated time period so they do not go through the texts. There is crisis of readership

in this post modern age. Reading habits and hobbies are gone not only among students but also among teachers. In order to tackle these relevant issues, we must rely on film adaptations which give us proper understanding and new interpretations of the texts without much efforts through entertainment and enjoyment. As a student, I have read some difficult texts such as *Waiting for Godot*, *Mrs Dalloway*, *Macbeth*, *Umrao Jaan Ada*, *Tamas*, *Pinjer*, *Discovery of India*, *Shatranj ke Khiladi* etc... through watching film adaptations. It has been also very successful in inculcating reading habits and hobbies among the learners.

- **Linguistic Skills Development (LSRW):** LSRW is the four fundamental skills of any languages which can be honed through film adaptations. Learners listen to the dialogues of the film so attentively that they develop listening skill which leads them to speak fluently and flawlessly since listening is directly linked with speaking. Watching a film is like reading a text.
- **Cultural Diversity:** Learning language and literature becomes easy if we know and understand the culture of that particular society since literature is a product of social currents and cultural conflicts. We cannot provide huge cultural contexts through texts but with the help film adaptation we can offer our students a huge cultural diversity to enrich their literary knowledge. Literary studies are ineffective, incomplete and insufficient without the profound study of culture/cultural studies.
- **Mass Medium:** Being a 'mass medium', adaptation has reached to the hands, heads and hearts of the masses. With the adaptation of the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, the knowledge of these two epics has been assimilated and digested even by the illiterate common folks of the remote areas. It is the most effective and entertaining medium to disseminate and discuss literary knowledge among pupils and people. Text has its own limitations since

it can be read and understood only by educated and academicians. *Godaan* has been read by very few people but when it was adapted into film, it was seen and appreciated by all, and its message was disseminated among most of the illiterate people. Film adaptation is easily accessible to all irrespective of their education, employment, etc.

- **Caution and Conclusion:** After reading and teaching through adaptations, I have come to the conclusion that adaptation has been a very interesting, effective, engaging, and entertaining pedagogical tool to enhance, enrich and engage the students, to inculcate literary taste in them and install literary texts and contexts in their hands, heads and hearts. This pedagogical strategy is more successful among the students of rural areas where students have least exposure of the outside world and it is through the adaptations only that they can see the vast panorama of life, language and literature. In the initial phase students do feel and face the literary, linguistic and cultural barriers but gradually they overcome them. Success of this methodology/material also depends heavily on the selection of film adaptations and how we interpret and analyse the texts and films, and establish the relationship between them. So, we have to be very cautious while selecting the adaptations as there are multiple versions/adaptations of one particular text. Not all adaptations are good and worth watching. If we watch *Omkara*, *Maqbool* and *Haider* adapted from Shakespeare's *Othello*, *Macbeth* and *Hamlet* respectively by Vishal Bhardwaj then we can never understand the great tragedies of William Shakespeare. And at the same time if we watch the English adaptations of these tragedies then we can easily understand them profoundly. There are film makers who destroy the very soul of the texts for their commercial success and box office hit. I am not against the transformation of texts in the process of adaptation but

that should be proper and in the right direction and it should never spoil the soul of texts as far as theme of literary works is concerned. Loyalty/fidelity to the source texts is desirable and needed to some extent. For the success of this innovative technique, there is also need proper infrastructure which should be equipped with modern equipments and instruments which we generally lack them in the colleges of remote rural areas.

Works Cited

- Bellver, C.G. *Literature and Visual Aids: Textual, Contextual and Intertextual*. Hispania, American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese. 72(4), 1989, pp. 1078-1082.
- Belton, E. *Reimagining Jane Austene: The 1940 and 1955 Film Versions of Pride and Prejudice. Jane Austene on Screen*. Cambridge. Cambridge University Press, 2003.
- Boyum, J.G. *Double Exposure: Fiction into Film*. New York: Plume, 1985.
- Champoux, J.E. "Film as a Teaching Resource" *Journal of Management Inquiry*, 8(2): 1999, pp. 206-217.
- Champoux, Joseph. E. "Film as a Teaching Resource", *Journal of Management Inquiry*, 8, 2007, pp. 240-251.
- Chan, D. and Herrera, C. Using Film to Teach Languages: A Teacher's Toolkit, 2010. <http://www.cornerhouse.org/resources/>
- Cuban, L. *Teachers and Machines: The Classroom Use of Technology since 1920*. Newyork: Teachers College Press, 1986.
- Felder, R.M. *Foreign Language Annals. Learning and Teaching Styles in Foreign and Second Language Education*, 28(1), 1995, pp. 21-31.
- Frey, N. and Fisher D. *Teaching Visual Literacy: Using Comic Books, Graphic Novels, Anime, Cartoons and More to Develop Comprehension and Thinking Skills*. California: Corwin Press, 2008.

- Barmer, J. *How to Teach English*. Essex : Longman, 2001.
- Hutcheon, L. *A Theory of Adaptation*. Newyork; Routledge, 2006.
- Konigsberg, I. *The Complete Film Dictionary*, 2nd Ed. NY: Penguin Puntam, 1998.
- Kramsch, C. *Context and Culture in Language Teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993.
- Kumar, L.M. and Haney, P.J. And ... Action! Using Film to learn about Foreign policy. *International Studies Perspective*. 2, 2001, pp. 33-50.
- Malchow, R. *Re-evaluating Fidelity: Film Adaptation in the Language Classroom*, 2001.
- Prensky, M. Digital Natives, Digital Immigrants. On the Horizon. MCB University Press, 9 (5), 2001, pp. 1-6.
- Rahmoun, O. and Benyelles, R. "Film Adaptation as a Pedagogical Tool in the Teaching of Literature. BEST": *International Journal of Humanities, Arts, Medicine and Sciences*. 4, Issue 11, Nov. 2016, pp. 15-26.
- Spack, R. *Literature, Reading, Writing and ESL. Bridging the gaps*. TESOL Quarterly, 19, 1985, pp. 703-725.
- Stephens, J.L. Teaching Culture and Improving Language Skills Through a Cinematic Lens: A Course on Spanish Film in the Undergraduate Spanish Curriculum, ADFL Bulletin, 33(1), 2001, pp. 22-25.
- Tileston, D.W. *Best Teaching Practices*. 2nd Ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, 2005.
- Van Vugt, B, A. Film Adaptations Alternative Cinema and Lynchian Moments of Transposition. [http://www.nickvanvugt/Nick Van Vugt.-MRP pdf](http://www.nickvanvugt/Nick%20Van%20Vugt.-MRP.pdf)
- Whelehan, I. Adaptations. The Contemporary Dilemma; in Cartmell, D and Whelehan, I (eds). Adaptations. *From Text to Screen, Screen to Text*. London: Macmillan, 2006.

IJES, Volume LVI, 2019

(Dis)located Diaspora: Mapping Travels, Writing (Hi)Stories

**Dr. Prerana Sinha*

Abstract

Postcolonialism has undoubtedly made an impact on global culture. Salman Rushdie applauded the historical shift by saying proudly in *Commonwealth Literature Does Not Exist* about how the Diaspora from different pre-colonized nations are now rapidly remaking the English language, domesticating it, and using it to suit their purpose.

Unlike the earlier generation of diaspora which had mainly migrated as exiles and expatriates, the above mentioned writers belonging to the second generation diaspora writers, have gone one step ahead in disengaging themselves from the debates of Nationalism and associating with the trending globalization. Living close to their market, in the comforts of the suburbia they are making good use of their raw material from the inexhaustible imaginative resources of Indian subcontinent.

Keywords: Postcolonialism, Global culture, Bombay, Empire, Commonwealth literature, Diaspora.

Pico Iyer's remark succinctly records his impression on the impact Postcolonialism had already made while he was enroute from Bombay to L.A. (U.S.A). He says,

***Dr. Prerana Sinha** is Assistant Professor of English at ARSD College, Delhi University, New Delhi.

I happened to stop off for three days in London. There I found West Indian sitcoms crowding the airwaves and *samosas* filling the sandwich bars. Culturally, the talk of the town was a new movie written by a twenty-nine-year-old Pakistani, *My Beautiful Launderette*

A little later he says,

... the colonials were effectively staging their own take-over, erecting *tandoori* palaces in their former rulers' home, introducing their own pungent terms into the culture (during the 80s, the highest literary trophy in Britain, the Booker prize, had been won by an Indian, an Australian, a New Zealander and a South African). The empire had struck back. (—video Night in Kathmandu) English literature has decidedly come out with the phenomenon of what *Time* magazine had called 'the new makers of World Fiction'. (Mukherjee, 46-66)

Meenakshi Mukherjee, however, sees this phenomenon as brief and feels that such writers need not feel comfortable. She expresses her dismay at the Indian English writers of the glorious 1980s gaining fame and says,

They can thrive on easy international accessibility that may be attributed to the pressures of the global market place which demand that Upamanyu Chatterjee's *English August*—a zany existential comedy—be subtitled 'An Indian Tale', and Shashi Tharoor's playful intertextual exercise *The Great Indian Novel* be perceived as a national allegory. 'the new makers of World Fiction'. (Mukherjee, 166)

She also takes up 'Third World Cosmopolitans', proposed by Timothy Brennan, in 1989, a new category of novelists who are globally visible and include writers like Lhosa, Walcott, Rushdie, Marquez, Bharati Mukherjee but not those (as they appeared later like Ondaatje or Okri). These writers, she avers, would be highlighting the experience of colonialism as metaphor, yet, colonialism does not seem to be the subject any longer in the Indian novels. Moreover, theme of partition has taken over and other such subjects related to dislocation, oppression concerning the *bhasa* writers today while the colonial experience has been relegated to the background.

And then she also takes up the manipulated narrative forms which she sees as 'western' form such as fabulist narratives and the postmodern mode with local legends and popular fables as a means to mythicize contemporary reality. Also mentions cultural hybridity as the norm recently which tends to negotiate the collisions of people from different ethnicities and languages. (Mukherjee, 188)

Meenakshi Mukherjee's anxieties related to Indianness can be categorized thus:

She is unable to accept the different categories as Indian Writers, those who

1. Do not care about promoting *bhasa*, in terms of language and its sentiments.
2. Without showing connectedness with Indian writers of 1930s and onwards, these writers have come out with their own form of narratives and style,
3. Even the Third world categorization has not ensured allegiance to Indian experience ,
4. Lastly, the fame of these authors at the global scale she sees, as a consequence of commercial market that tends to promote their works which are largely based on Indo-western experience.

Mukherjee's concerns nevertheless epitomize a sense of indifference of writers towards their nation and nationality perhaps, which the Postcolonial critics have argued and which as evinced by Partha Chatterjee in his omnibus, *Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World: A Derivative Discourse* in 1986 is that for Third World countries, the only models left for drawing upon Nationalism are the forms available by Europe and the Americas. Hence, the onus of constructing Indianness lies on these emerging novelists whatever they deem fit.

Interestingly, even though she may not approve of Vikram Seth as an Indian writer to reckon with, in spite of the novel having passed the test of translation, as *Koi A chchaasa Ladka* (tr, Gopal

Gandhi, 1998), she imagines the book to have been written in Bangla where a tradition exists of long three-decker realistic stories about families. (Mukherjee, 183)

In her *Notes*, she also confirms that in 1999, the novel got translated into Bangla as *Satpara* by Enakshi Chatterjee and was also well received. She approves of other novels based on Nation myth, Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* and Amitabh Ghosh's *The Shadow Lines* but is quite apprehensive of the several new ventures taken up by writers living in the age of multiculturalism. On the contrary, in the words of Makarand Paranjape, Third World Novel is

That work which tries to legitimize a world view which is different from the dominant world view that the western world conveys. (Hand, 19-32)

The new diaspora record their experiences away from Indic experiences and even if they look back at their homeland, it is for the subjects, myths and not with 'nostalgia' as they try to map their Histories/stories.

It also makes us recall what Bharati Mukherjee had to say about her mixed heritage:

I have joined Imaginative forces with an anonymous driven underclass of semi-assimilated Indians with sentimental attachment to a distant homeland, but no real desire for permanent return....Instead of seeing my Indianness as a fragile identity to be preserved against obliteration (or worse, a 'visible' disfigurement to be hidden) I see it now as a set of fluid identities to be celebrated.....Indianness is now a metaphor, a particular way of comprehending the world. (Mukherjee, 181)

Mukherjee relates to fluid identities of such Indian Americans who have no 'real desire for permanent return.'

Let us take example of Jhumpa Lahiri, one of the best known Indian American novelists, who shot to fame with her collection of short stories, *Interpreter of Maladies*, that won her Pulitzer prize in 2000.

Colonization imposed/imparted the language, English to the colonized which got gradually fashioned and perfected for the use of Diaspora writers across the globe. 1970s and 80s itself saw large scale migration of diaspora to North America, already a country historically built on immigrants, (after the Immigration act of 1965. It became home to several writers such as Anita Desai, Rohinton Mistry, Amitav Ghosh, Vikram Seth, Kiran Desai, JhumpaLahiri, ChitraDevakurni.

Meena Alexander, the eminent writer who taught at Hyderabad earlier, defines herself as a poet writing in America. She felt lost by the multiplicity of identities she could possibly claim—a woman writer, a South Indian woman writer, a South Asian writer, a third world woman writer.’ (Bala, 8)

The list of identities is indeed mindboggling, yet, it is a truth that manifests multiculturalism, a quintessential global phenomenon.

Later, she candidly confesses how in the multicultural and free society of America, it is possible to become whatever one wants to be.

In the case of Jhumpa Lahiri, we see her unusual educational background which paves way for the prolific writer she becomes; she did B.A in English Literature, and M.A. in English, M.F.A. in Creative Writing, M.A. in Comparative Literature, and a Ph.D in Renaissance Studies. She also took a Fellowship as well as taught Creative Writing in U.S. (Boston). Born in London, brought up in America and after marriage she is settled in Rome, Italy. Her writings as a result, span three continents, moving effortlessly from Boston to London, to memories of India as Calcutta and even Dhaka that quite often form the backdrop of her novels. Her stories tell us about the lives of Indian immigrants, of people navigating between the strict traditions they have inherited and the baffling New World they encounter every day. (Bala, 9-12)

Speaking about these writers, author Dieter Riemenschneider in his *Essays on Indian Writing in English* says that these diaspora writers take a more holistic look at today’s world by crossing the line that encircles the ‘Indian’ experience as perceived

along national and diasporic trajectories. He cites for instance, Vikram Seth's *An Equal Music* (1999) and *Two Lives* (2005).

He says, Seth's *An Equal Music* is exceptional in that it is so far removed from the Indian context that it stands quite apart while its composition gives reason to speculate on the emergence of a discrete subgenre of the Indian English novel. It is quite laudable that Seth, the Indian writer provides complete western, rather European sensibility to the novel, in terms of characters as well as content. He explains,

It is a very private story told through the highly subjective voice of the European musician Michael whose main interest lies in talking about himself as the member of a famous string quartet and as a man who loves Julia, also a musician, who turns out to be deaf. (Riemenschneider, 108-9)

Little later he adds,

... far more exciting than this love story of sorts is the musical story with its exquisite presentation of details pertaining to examples of classical European composition particularly by Schubert and Bach.... and the composition of Maggiore Quartet.....including the portrayal of their different personalities. (Riemenschneider, 108-9)

He adds that we must acknowledge Seth's profound immersion into and sensitive understanding of a European as a narrative stance we have not come across in Indian English writing.

In fact he evinces, "*An Equal Music* is not even seen as a transcultural text", we need to see it as a contribution to the European Classical music tradition and that *Equal* in the title might suggest that European classical music matches its counterpart.

In fact, *A Suitable Boy*, the Indian novel by Seth had already revealed the glory of Indian classical music when it got published way back in 1993.

The critic also takes the case of another such European project of Seth, the double biography, *Two Lives* (2005), which like *An Equal Music*, for its greater part is located in London and Seth

goes on to tell us the story of his great grand uncle, settled in Germany, married off to German Jewish refugee woman, who managed to escape the holocaust, thus it becomes story of two Exiles; again an aspect of diasporic writing we hardly come across. The double biography enables Seth to intertwine

Biography, memory, documentation and essay-like excursions into European History and national psychogrammes highlights how unstable the borderlines of traditional literary genres have become. The book brings home the message of looking back at experiences of people in the 20th century so as to understand the present with its allegedly global cultural wars, the increasing chasm between “us” and “them”. (Riemenschneider, 109-10)

For me personally, the main impetus of writing this unique book emerges from Seth’s urge to unravel the great support his great grand uncle Shanti provided to him while he was alone, struggling to get things right in an alien land. Above all, author must have always felt curious about meeting of two exiles from different nationalities, about what eventually must have brought them together.

Seth’s valuable reflection on their relationship cannot be ignored. He describes how two different exiles, in their solitary lives found a strong and shelteringharbour in each other. Both had

Passed their years and decades of the latter half of their lives feeling neither very much at home nor very obviously foreign in a land that could be seen as either coolly indifferent or blessedly uninterfering, even tolerant. (Sinha, 401)

Regarding their relationship which he confesses was in no way an ideal love relationship, Seth asks a very pertinent question regarding the quintessential, human life seeped into existential anguish when one is pitted against ephemeral quality of mortality, against uncertainties,

What’s perfect? in a world with so much suffering, isolation and indifference, it is cause for gratitude if something is sufficiently good. (Sinha, 237. Two Lives..435)

Vikram Seth too travelled widely like Jhumpa Lahiri: his gamut of works of art evidence several geographical locations like Delhi, Patna, etc. where his mother Leila Seth was the High Court Judge, Dehradun (school he went to) and later European countries for education (eg Germany), followed by Stratford university in San Francisco (California), China, he went for research and now he straddles between his homes, an European country and India. His creative genius motivated him to try different genres. He has a collection of poems to his credit which he wrote from time to time, tried Novel in verse form when he wrote *The Golden Gate*, the work that actually got him noticed. His travel book, *From Heaven Lake: Travel from Sinkiang and Tibet* written in 1983 earned him Thomas Cook award.

Despite all his European subjects, even genres, Seth received immense popularity when his novel based entirely on Indian sensibility *A Suitable Boy* was published in 1993. Meenakshi Mukherjee informs how Harish Trivedi, a critic as biculturally perceptive as him has commented on how the novel naturally flows into Hindi. He appreciates the novel for the 'languages' he has used, which he refers to as "polyphonic mosaic". She elaborates,

Despite the initial impression of the novel being entirely documentary without verbal resonance, the variety of linguistic registers it plays with turns out to be wide-ranging. Ghazals of Mir, Ghalib, Vali Dakkani and Mast are as easily embedded in the text as are the nonsense verse of Sukumar Ray, *chaupais* from *Ramcharitmanas*, *parodied lines of Rabindra Sangeet*, long passages of *Marsiya* at Muharram, as well as Landor's epitaph for Rose Aylmer. (Mukherjee, 183)

Trivedi praises verbal verbosity that Seth imparts to the rustic Urdu spoken at Debaria which is made to sound different from the courtly grace of Saeeda Bai's conversation or from Haresh Khanna's studied English and finally he evinces,

In an unobtrusive way Seth manages to capture the linguistic diversity of Indian life even though he is writing in English. (Mukherjee, 184)

Indian English writers have inundated many other forms of writing and one novel which deserves to be mentioned as another great work is *The White Tiger* by Aravind Adiga which like Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* received Man Booker prize in 2008. And in Mukherjee's analysis, through this novel, globalization has at least created a space from which the literary market is open to the fictional native subaltern voice. (Ramone,153)

The novel presents a subaltern figure, Balram who uses the tools of globalization and deterritorialization to express the changing position of the subaltern in global capitalism. The novel encapsulates the present global economy envisaging widespread tourism, social mobility, rising diasporic communities resulting in continual overlapping of cultures giving rise to a fluid/hybrid culture. Adiga uses shock technique to bring attention of the privileged class to the wants and desires of the proletariat who can take the modern capitalist route of entrepreneurship to improve his lot not through education or caste position but through capital investment and a spark of ingenuity.

We can endlessly enter into different views and arguments about locating Indianness in our literature whether its regional, ('bhasa') or diasporic or Partition; there can be endless categories. But dislocation caused by travel, migration, expatriate or exile phenomena, which has been an essential norm of globalization as early as 300 B.C. (which however acquired momentum in the last few decades) is bound to create new categories, new complexion of Indian literature through the varied experiences gathered by writers. Latin American writer like Julio Cortazar for example, attempts to interrogate the existential anguish of expatriate and the metaphysical question of loneliness in the postmodern world where he talks about violence of technology and expresses his war with western rationalism.

We are likely to have much more creative genius, writing stories, re-writing histories like a few writers examined in the paper.

Works Cited

- Mukherjee, Meenakshi, "The Anxiety of Indianness", *The Perishable Empire; Essays On Indian Writing in English, The Empire Writes Back*, Pico Iyer, *Time*, 8 February 1993.
- Mukherjee, Meenakshi, "The Anxiety of Indianness", *The Perishable Empire: Essays on Indian Writing in English*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 2000.
- Hand, Felicity, "Translating India into English: A Suitable Boy", ed. Murari Prasad, *Vikram Seth's A Suitable Boy: An Anthology of Recent Criticism*, Pencraft International, Delhi, 2005
- Makarand R. Paranjape's "The Ideology of Form: Notes on the Third World Novel," *The Journal of Commonwealth Literature*, Vol. XXXVI, N 2, 1991:19-32,
- Mukherjee, Meenakshi, *The Anxiety of Indianness, The Perishable Empire: Essays on Indian Writing in English*, Oxford India Press, Delhi 2005.
- Bala, Suman, Introduction, *The Fiction Of Jhumpa Lahiri: A Critical Response*, Khosla Publishing House, New Delhi, 2014.
- Riemenschneider, Dieter. "Crossing National Borders, The Indian English Novel since the 1990s", *Essays On Indian Writing in English: Twice Born or Cosmopolitan Literature?* Rawat Publications, Jaipur, 2016.
- Sinha, Prerana. *Two Lives: A Double Biography- An Overview, Vikram Seth: The Suitable Writer: A Critical Response*, Creative Books, New Delhi, 2007, Vikram Seth's *Two Lives* Viking Penguin Books India pvt. Ltd, Books.
- Mukherjee, Meenakshi. "The Anxiety of Indianness", *The Perishable Empire: Essays on Indian Writing in English*, Oxford India Press, Delhi 2005.
- Ramone, Jenni. *Native and Nation, Postcolonial Theories*, Palgrave Macmillan, London, 2011.

IJES, Volume LVI, 2019

Bye-Bye Bertolt Brecht: Strategies of Bondian Theatre

**Antara Mukherjee*

Abstract

Although much energy has been spent in smelling Brechtian flavour in Bond's works, as a craftsman, Edward Bond, as the paper proposes to argue, is original enough to create an independent space for himself. True, Bond shares with Bertolt Brecht the Marxist conviction that theatre is a powerful instrument for social change. He also admits that the contribution of Brecht to the creation of Marxist theatre has been enormous but, at the same time, he writes to Peter Holland, that the job is not yet done. Thus although Bond started from, he has not ended in Brecht. Hence, in his plays, Bond shies away from Brechtian philosophies and forges new dramatic devices to complement his dramatic vision. The paper intends to explore the myriad reasons for Bond's conscious distancing from Brecht and reassess his replacing of Brechtian famed techniques, 'Alienation effect' with 'Aggro effects', in his plays. The paper further includes Bond's refining of his own technique, 'Aggro effects' as 'Theatre Events'. Finally the paper re-evaluates the effectiveness of such refinement, for it was

***Dr. Antara Mukherjee** is Assistant Professor of English (W.B.E.S) at the Dept. of English, Government Girls' General Degree College, Kolkata, West Bengal, India. E-mail : antaramukherje@gmail.com

primarily done to give paramount importance to details at a later stage of Bond's dramatic career.

Keywords: The Berliner Ensemble, Epic Theatre, Rational Theatre, Alienation effect, Aggro effects, Theatre Events, Meta-text.

Fined for staging a play without a license, banned by the censorship office for delineating the so-called outrageous theme of lesbianism and, marginalized by the main stream British theatre, Edward Bond (1934 –) had quite a tumultuous start to his dramatic career in post Second World War Britain. He stormed the stage when the fire of the fifties almost fizzled out and a sort of stagnation gripped the British theatre. George Goetschius pertinently points out that the stage was set for a “new Jimmy Porter” who would “give up the sweet stall, abandon some of his sexual obsessions and class-inflicted self-consciousness, and even the nostalgia of ‘slim volumes of verse’ and say something relevant to Britain in the ‘sixties’, a Britain which has moved so far beyond the angry young man and the kitchen sink as to give the impression that these were somehow involved in the Irish question and the Easter rebellion (34)”. Edward Bond was to be this new voice. Since the sixties, Bond unflinchingly exposes the nexus of power, the root of human misery and demonstrates the sources of human strength. In order to explicate his dramatic vision, Bond forges devices which not merely set aside the time-honoured conventions, but are also, in turn, re-modified to suit his more matured vision.

While criticising the commodification of the post-fifties techno-crazy British society, Bond in a letter to Beatrice Gonville, dated 18 May 1994, opines that everything now has become a product and people have become consumers. So “human aspiration for a better world has been replaced by the provision of better goods” (*Edward Bond Letters 4 45*). English theatre too is a part of the process and so it is no less than a consumer product, controlled and maintained by the dominant ideology. Writing to Odile Quiro he delineates the commodification of art in this technocratic era: “now TV saturates our lives, we feed on the exotica of the supermarket: the stage is taken onto the street and into the home.

More and more this is living theatre being controlled by ad-men, by bankers, by money-making" (*Edward Bond Letters* 4 55). However, Bond optimistically notes that since no "Ideology is secure, no repression... total" (*Edward Bond Letters* 4 54), it could still be used to re-interpret reality. Hence the objective of his "Rational Theatre" is to demonstrate the need for the rational in the "seemingly irrational" (*Plays: Two* xiv) scheme of things. In order to achieve this aim, Bond had to shy away from Bertolt Brecht, his greatest influence and the reigning god of post-war British theatre, and his methods. Incidentally, implementation of Brechtian theatrical techniques was in vogue in post war British theatre. In 1955 Joan Littlewood, for instance, acted and directed *Mother Courage* at the Taw and Torridge Festival. In the following year Oscar Lewenstein produced Sam Wanamaker's *Threepenny Opera* at the Royal Court. In the spring issue of *Times Literary Supplement* a lengthy appraisal of Brecht's work by John Willett was published and this served as a prelude to the summer visit of the Berliner Ensemble to London. Later in the year, the English Stage Company mounted *The Good Woman of Setzuan*. Added to this, Kenneth Tynan campaigned for Brecht in the theatre journal *Observer*. The main source of advocacy for Brecht, however, was the theatre magazine *Encore*, founded in the mid 1950s to maintain "an intelligent response to the theatre in general and encourage new developments in Britain" (Holland 25). George Devine, the first Artistic Director at the Royal Court, along with dramatists from the Court, regularly contributed to the magazine. Within a year of its launch, in 1956, the Berliner Ensemble visited London.

The Berliner Ensemble looked upon theatre as a craft that requires intelligence, training and commitment. The Ensemble, however, was a revelation not only for the amateur dramatists like Bond, but also for the new wave playwrights in the fifties. The use of episodic montage of self-contained scenes, bare stage, lights, placards to indicate location or to state the essential point of a scene, half curtains etc. were, for instance, strikingly different from all that the British theatre stood for in the 50s. This contrasted

the naturalistic approach that had dominated the British stage since Bernard Shaw. The production and playing styles were widely accepted even by those “who knew no German and so couldn’t follow the text” (Reinelt 7). The techniques also exposed the mechanics of performance as well as a critical attitude towards the art of acting itself. This anti-illusionist model of the theatre that preferred immediacy and directness became in vogue for the new wave playwrights. Martin Esslin pertinently comments:

So Brecht became the focal point, the rallying cry of the younger generation of theatrical artists who had realised that the future of the theatre as a serious vehicle of ideas, enlightenment, and beauty depended on the recognition that the commercial system was no longer able to provide the basis for viable drama. (77)

The Brechtian style of acting became one of the main areas of analysis and experimentation at the Royal Court. Before Bond became a member of the Writers’ Group¹ at the Court, he saw the performances of Ensemble and was hugely impressed by Brechtian techniques. His excitement is recorded in a letter he wrote to Peter Holland: “They were speaking a foreign language and I had no theatrical education, but I recognized his importance then [...]” (“On Brecht: a Letter to Peter Holland” 35). When Bond joined the Writers’ Group at the Royal Court, he not only learnt Brecht’s methods of staging but also assisted William Gaskill, who succeeded George Devine as the Artistic Director of the Court, in improvising Brecht’s plays. Brechtian overtones are, therefore, naturally conspicuous in his early plays. His first play, *The Pope’s Wedding* (1962), for instance, was mounted almost on an empty stage with just a bench or an apple used as props. This banishment of decorative staging was complemented by reduction of illumination, for instead of wholesome lighting, here a faint patch of light was seen to glow up the stage. But despite his having intertwined territories with Brecht, Bond gradually outgrew Brechtian hangover as he found it inadequate for his dramatic purpose.

It is to be regretted that the originality of Bond’s dramaturgy, has rather been overlooked by critics who hasten to tag him as

Brechtian. Tony Coult, for instance, opines that Bond is “a Brecht-like writer in many ways” (83). Peter Holland in “Brecht, Bond, Gaskill and the Practice of Political Theatre” (1978) similarly links Bond with Brecht and says that Bond’s perception of his society “has produced a theatrical mode that is profoundly Brechtian” (33). These misconceptions have perhaps originated from some of Bond’s own comments. For example, in his reply to Peter Holland, Bond has described his play *Narrow Road to the Deep North* as “somewhat Brechtian in shape” (35). Although much energy has been spent in smelling Brechtian flavour in Bond’s works, as an artist, Bond is original enough to create an independent space for himself. True, Bond shares with Brecht the Marxist conviction that the theatre is a powerful instrument for social change. He admits that the contribution of Brecht to the creation of Marxist theatre has been enormous but the job is not yet done. While replying to Peter Holland’s article, “Brecht, Bond, Gaskill, and the Practice of Political Theatre”, he says:

The tragedy of twentieth century drama is that Brecht died before he could complete a last period of plays: the plays he would have written as a member and worker of a Marxist society. The loss is very severe. But we have to write the plays he left unwritten. (34)

Thus, Bond clearly writes to Peter Holland that although he started from, he has not ended in Brecht. This conscious attempt to maintain distance from Brecht is neither due to any anxiety of influence nor is it an egotistical self-assertion. This distancing, again, is not an insignia of his literary fashion to be deliberately different, for there are post-war dramatists like Tom Stoppard who have carved out a niche for themselves without following Brecht. Bond, in short, found Brechtian techniques inadequate for articulating the social problems that he wanted to dramatise. One cannot remain, as Bond opines, frozen in the methods of one’s predecessor, for he is “not ‘in the maelstrom with you’”(original emphasis. *The Hidden Plot*, 172). For audience of a different milieu and with a divergent cultural baggage, Bond felt the need to devise new techniques so he is “not a Brechtian—and cannot be” (*The*

Hidden Plot 173) if he has to write of his own times. Living at a time when leap in scientific knowledge has altered the relation between man and his society, Bond feels that adherence to Brecht would be unwise. If he is biting the hands that fed him, he is doing so for his creative freedom, and was inwardly dictated to do so by his commitment to the cause of the social function of his art.

A socially conscious dramatist, Bond, for a proper diagnosis of the cause of contemporary social woes, opted for what is known as epic structure for his plays. For Bond epic is not merely a style but a philosophical undertaking. Bond thinks that this structure is not an invention of Brecht. In fact any writer, Bond holds, who is conscious of the problems of social relationship has written that way. Incidentally, the discussions on epic poetry dates back to Aristotle who in his *On the Art of Poetry*, Chapter V, translated by I. Bywater, observes that while action in a tragedy operates “as far as possible within a single circuit of the sun, or something near that” (34), the epic has “no fixed limit of time” (34). The epic therefore, as S.H. Butcher says in *Aristotle’s Theory of Poetry and Fine Art*, sums up the ethos of a period. For instance, the classical epic *Aeneid* celebrates the emergence of a nation. The action moves through decades rather than concentrating on one moment of conflict. This ‘length’ of epic poetry, as Aristotle observes in Chapter XXIV of *On the Art of Poetry* “makes it possible for one to describe a number of simultaneous incidents” (82) in “episodes of diverse kinds” (82). The structure of the Epic, therefore, is episodic, each one complete in itself as a short narrative, yet the episodes are linked by the clearly stated objective behind the continuity of the central figure. Whereas Aristotle’s concept of the epic endorses society’s or the nation’s sense of its principles and practices, Brechtian epic intends to challenge contemporary societal practices and principles by reinterpreting stories from the past and by creating an awareness of reality. However, Brecht should not be given the credit of discovering “Epic Theatre”. It is the German director Erwin Piscator who in his book *The Political Theatre* (1929) uses the term ‘epic’ to designate a new theatre where the role of the audience would be

as important as that of the author, director and actor. Intending to create a revolutionary, Marxist theatre, Piscator uses epic in the sense of a political style of expressing the revolutionary view of the world. In *The Political Theatre* he says:

It is not his [man's] relationship to himself, nor his relationship to God, but his relationship to society which is central.... It is no longer the private, personal fate of the individual, but the times and the fate of the masses that are the heroic factors in the new drama. (187)

“Epic Theatre” requires new style of articulating the action which could be met by mechanization, projecting film backdrops and designing auditoria to break the conventional proscenium arch which separates the actors and the audience. Piscator also affirms that “Epic Theatre” should not only extend beyond the dramatic framework but at the same time must also clarify the background to the action. Thus those who would watch such plays could see things in a different light and react to them afresh. Piscator’s “Epic Theatre” was given a new shape by fellow German dramatist Bertolt Brecht by inventing the famous “Alienation effect” or *Verfremdungseffekt* (hereafter V-effect). Through this device Brecht forces the audience into a radical reassessment of response normally encouraged by the social and political convention. In other words Brecht’s “Epic Theatre” by a process of alienation, which is produced by the combination of three dramaturgical concepts like *gestus*, epic structure and historicization, does not allow the audience to submit to an experience uncritically and thus resist the so called natural responses to a theatrical event. The audience are forced to come to terms with the latent contradictions within their own selves and the theatrical experience continues to operate beyond the walls of the playhouse. Eric Bentley in *Then Playwright as Thinker* gives a detailed description of the technique:

The Epic stage is artificial: instead of assembling on the stage real rooms, buildings and their furniture, it uses slides, charts, film projections, simultaneous scenes, and tableaux tolled across the stage on treadmills...the actor must not

pretend to be the character. He must play the role from the outside...the playwright, for his part, brings back choric commentary by introducing narrators, songs, soliloquies, and other 'interruptive' devices. (217)

By using this technique Brecht shows "Human behaviour" as "alterable; man himself as dependent on certain political factors and at the same time as capable of altering them" (Brecht 86). In aspiration Bond's theatre comes close to the spirit of Brechtian "Epic Theatre" although in mode of execution it differs substantially from the latter.

Since Bond shares with Brecht the intention of activating his audience for changing the exploitative social order, he too prefers epic structure. But his epic structure has to be sketched differently for Bond faces the challenge of motivating an affluent society for change that seems no wrong in its social structure and cultural segregation and unflinchingly boasts of its irrational technological usages. In his plays, therefore, the marginalised gets involved in the struggle to create a space for them since it is denied by the dominant in the society. These men are victims of the unjust social structure and learn to respond urgently for changing the same. Their journeys are captured in the episodic structure of the play. It is interesting to note that Bond started drabbling in drama, as he explains in "Drama and the Dialectics of Violence" with a "three—actor" (11) but he soon realised that he could not expose the false world views which contaminate reality in a "long-winded sort of way" (11). To keep track of the sudden reverses and changes that happen in different parts of the play he switched to the episodic mode of presentation. In "Drama and the Dialectics of Violence" Bond explains the reason for the switchover: "it was important to know what was happening in the room I might happen to be in, but also what was happening in that room over there, that house down the road" (11). The episodes in a Bondian play are varied conforming to the nature of epic poetry. For example in *The Pope's Wedding* (1962) the first two scenes focus on Scopey and just when the audience expect another scene centring Scopey, Bond lights off Scopey episode and lights up another part

of the stage by taking us inside the ramshackle hut of an old recluse, Alen. The parallel focussing on the two apparently distinct characters in the manner of epic narrative is necessary to understand Scopey's obsessive zeal to possess what he lacks but what he believes Alen is in possession of. Despite the diversity among the episodes, they none the less enact the story. But the story is not told in an elaborate way; only what is immediately relevant to the situation is presented. In *Lear* (1971), for example, while constructing the character of Cordelia Bond does not dwell on the detailed life of the woman to show her uniqueness. Rather one meets a pregnant woman, married to a Gravedigger's Boy. She is anxious about their safety as her husband has brought a fugitive home. She tells her husband that she is "afraid something will happen" (*Lear* 35). Her anxiety turns into reality when her husband gets killed by the soldiers who come in search of the fugitive. Her misery aggravates as she is raped by the soldiers and consequently suffers a miscarriage. This wronged woman matures to become a revolutionary leader: "I watched and I said we won't be at the mercy of brutes anymore, we'll live a new life and help one another" (*Lear* 83). She therefore heads a military regime that prepares to overturn another oppressive rule. It is her experience of her life that makes her the guerrilla leader. Presenting relevant information Bond builds a vivid and convincing portrait of an individual. As audience we do not share her experience but realise the changes that comes to her due to social and political circumstances. Moreover, the focus is on her action and not on the emotional, psychological development. This lends objectivity to the epic form.

In "Note to Young Writers" included in "The Activists Papers", Bond opines that an epic play not only "tells a story" but also says "why it happened" (*Plays: 4* 108). Thus the scenes of *The Pope's Wedding* not only tell the story of Scopey but also explain the reason for the change that gradually comes to Scopey. The 'cause' of Scopey's gradual change is first explained in socio-economic terms in the first few scenes and then in the remaining scenes Bond meticulously shows the 'effect'. A victim of social inequalities,

Scopey tries to escape from the rigid society that confines him into the unknown, mysterious world of Alen. He replaces his wife Pat as Alen's caretaker. He not only burns his finger while cooking for him—'Sod! I burnt my finger' (*The Pope's Wedding* 58) - but also takes care that Alen eats properly. He decides to paint Alen's hut and fix Alen's place. Such excessive care for Alen contrasts Scopey's negligence towards his family and friends. Stupidly believing that Alen has access to unknown truths which would bring fresh air in his otherwise monotonous life, Scopey cuts himself off from his society. He thus turns back on the irrational social structure that fosters social inequality. Having established the cause of Scopey's alienation, Bond, next, proceeds to depict its effect in the remaining scenes. The shocking recognition of the banality of Alen's existence breaks his illusion and drives him to despair. In his desperation he finally murders Alen. The play ends with Scopey wearing the coat of Alen as Alen's body lies beneath his feet. In chapter XXXIV of *On the Art of Poetry* Aristotle rightly points out that whereas the epic is inclusive, tragedy is exclusive. The way Bond relates the different incidents in the life of Scopey may lack dramatic precision. But it is a must to actualise Bond's vision that any person who is blind to social irrationality is unlikely to come out successful when he confronts the challenges of life. Scopey attempted to escape the reality of his existence and so faced the consequence. He did nothing to improve the ragged condition and as a result he could not save himself. Naturally Bond could not accept the philosophy of the Absurdist School that dramatises the absurdity of human endeavour and dwells on the need for passive resignation to an indifferent and incomprehensible world. The elaborate epic way of exploring the cause of individual crisis in a Bond play disturbs the complacency of the audience, involves him and inspires him to "find out more about them, and do something about them" (Bond 13). Therefore, Bond's plays, unlike those of Brecht, do not alienate an audience from his social surroundings by insisting on the theatrical nature of the performance but rather involves him and forestalls his being passively sympathetic towards the victims of social circumstances.

The importance of involvement with a performance is seminal to Bond because he attempts to strike at the conscience of those people who might read about something grave in the newspaper or have been part of a serious issue without understanding it properly. This happens, as Bond says in “Drama and the Dialectics of Violence”, because people view things from “a partial point of view” (13). Bond does not shy away from depicting the violent nature of post-war society and so Bond’s play doesn’t present a partial view of things. The violent moments in Bond’s plays which are remembered by the audience long after the performance, in stark contrast to Brecht’s “Alienation effect”, is technically known as “Aggro effects”². Brecht’s “Alienation effect” was a theatrical strategy to compel the audience to respond to the action of the play intellectually, instead of responding emotionally, so that the spectators without any illusion of reality realise that they are sitting in a theatre. The precondition of “Alienation effect” is, therefore, attenuation of identification of the audience with the character on the stage. But while in Brecht’s intellectual theatre understanding of social situations comes from withdrawal and reflection, Bond holds that emotional involvement is more effective in sensitizing our consciousness. For Bond emotions and reason should function together to comprehend drama in its totality. He portrays violent moments which are unapproved by the society. The purpose is to strike at the root of situations that gives rise to aggression. However, violent moments are not the concluding statement of a Bondian play. They are extreme situations where Bond’s characters, driven to the brink of destruction, journey through those moments and so interact with their society; rather than standing aloof from it, they finally accept their responsibilities and societal commitments. “Aggro effects” are thus a Bondian strategy to promote social change through emotional involvement.

At a later stage of his dramatic career Bond refined “Aggro effect” to create another effective device known as “Theatre Events” (hereafter TE). This device was meant to make the stage useful for the audience by bringing it closer to the audience’s world. In his “Commentary on the War Plays” Bond says that

drama is “not about what happens but about the meaning of what happens” (*The War Plays* 300). By making the stage useful, TE reveals the meaning of what is shown on the stage. In other words, it aims at disclosing social truths which are otherwise ignored by the audience due to their chained existence. TEs bind the actor, character and the audience in a triangular relationship. The space within the triangle is filled in by the spectator’s realisation of his limitedness of his existence from which he must make himself free. Explaining the operation of TE, Bond writes to Thurstan Young dated 2nd December 1995, that it “takes the point where reason and emotion are joined in an ideological explanation (a critical point) and re-describes it—so that the spectator is obliged to re-describe it, to accept responsibility for the description” (*Edward Bond Letters* 5 11). TE, thus, is a way to put back into the stage human responsibility. During TE, the turning points of a play are used to create new use that is, acted with a different meaning imposed by the actor on the character. The aim is to enable the audience experience the moment or situation in a different way. Bond says to Ilaria Paoletti in a letter dated 13th July 1997, that in order to seek new meanings, the audience must subject the turning points “which the audience either doesn’t notice or assumes they understand” (*Edward Bond Letters* 5 153) to radical interpretation. This is because social problems are often solved in a dehumanised way by the present consumerist society. During TE an event is re-exhibited and the audience re-experiences it. By doing this an audience, as Bond writes to John Clemo, “reproduce the pattern people are actually living...” (*Edward Bond Letters* 1 52). Instead of alienating the audience, they are “integrated into the production of psychology” (*Edward Bond Letters* 1 50) of the audience. TE thus helps to understand social truths. It is like an explosion, as Bond writes to Dic Edwards dated 4th September 1992, which when detonates “lights up the fuse, and the wounds and the bombers” (*Edward Bond Letters* 3 74). Thus new meanings are generated, as Bond writes to Mangan in a letter dated 12 April 1997, in addition to the “written meaning” (*Edward Bond Letters* 5 135) of the text. In other words the

“written meaning” of the text, as he says to Mangan in the same letter, “must be added to by use” (*Edward Bond Letters* 5 135). No wonder Bond tells to Dic Edwards that “the TE is not the text but what is done to the text: the use” (*Edward Bond Letters* 3 74). TE is thus the ability to use a particular scene or moment or character or line of a play to seek meaning or learn to survive in the society just like a toddler who seeks balance.

The precondition of TE-ing a moment is to give paramount importance to small things or details. These details are like the ripples created by throwing stones in water. Both the character and situations from the story can be used to form TE. However, TE does not use subtext which might be coloured by the interpreter’s ideology. Instead it prefers “Meta-text” which is “inferred and created by studying and rehearsing the written text” (*The War Plays* 313). It may contain some ideas and emotions found in the written text but it also adds to the written text. This “Meta-text” is the site for TE. For example, the “Meta-text” of *Red Black and Ignorant*, one of the plays of the War trilogy, can be used as TE as described by Bond. In the play a soldier comes home with the order to kill someone in his neighbourhood. His mother dresses him in his uniform and sends him to kill. The text gives reason for what they do. They might have other motives which forms the subtext. But the “Meta-text” will reveal something else. It touches on the nature of society. Though the soldier is obeying the orders of his officers, the process started years earlier when his mother sent him to the army. Bond says she was “already training him in the obedience a soldier needs when he kills” (*The War Plays* 313). Thus the “Meta-text” of the play reveals a vital truth: “it takes a lot of culture to make us killers” (*The War Plays* 314). The situation where the mother, while dressing up her son hurriedly, drops the jacket from her hand, Bond suggests, could be used as TE by an actress. In his “Commentary on the War Plays” he writes:

Then slowly she stoops to the floor to pick up the jacket.
The stooping can be slightly metaphorized so that it seems
as if she bows to the ground before the soldier. He stands

ram-rod straight at attention. Is he awkward at being treated as a child as he prepares to “act like a man”? At being in a killer’s uniform in the family kitchen? At the sudden obeisance- which he demanded in his song but had not expected from his mother? For the audience his awkwardness is in the metatext because the mother’s bow puts it there. The TE turns “mother and child” into “soldier and victim”. (*The War Plays* 315)

In this use of the “Meta-text”, TE points to a tragic social truth. Thus TE shows how people are made to be what they are; so things happen as they do and not what must happen because people are what they are. So Bond’s “Theatre of TE” (*The War Plays* 340) is a “part of the social process and does not stand aside as mere entertainment or relief” (*The War Plays* 340).

TEs are not “withdrawal or redemption” (*The War Plays* 340); rather they are markedly different from “Alienation effect”. In the “Commentary on the War Plays”, Bond exalts TE over the “Alienation effect” on three grounds. Firstly, by stressing on the intellectual faculties of the audience, Alienation appeals to objective judgement but does not “secure the means of achieving it” (*The War Plays* 325). Objectivity, again, cannot penetrate “passion or complacency” (*The War Plays* 325) so due to “Alienation effect”, drama in its totality is not perceived. On the contrary, TE interprets emotional situations by analysing the interaction of cause and effect and so pervades “the processes which make the social mind” (*The War Plays* 325). Secondly, due to Alienation effect, Brecht’s mature works in particular, becomes authoritative by nature where the playwright controls the thought process of the audience. Alienation, like an external authoritative agent, fractures the perception of the audience and compels them to see things through the playwright’s lens. But in TE the audience are part of the producers of meaning so the authority is within the triangle and not applied externally. Hence in TE, the audience are made responsible for their own authority. Finally, the “Meta-text” produced is not autonomous in nature. “Meta-text” is a space for commitment where the audience commits themselves to judgement.

They confront social truth which in real life is unacknowledged due to various social pressures.

Bond fashions Brechtian techniques afresh so that the audience cannot ignore what they otherwise do in their real lives. A citizen who in real life could be callously indifferent to the bombings of the German town by the British force during the World War II, could hardly remain passive to the dramatisation of the murder of a baby in a pram in *Saved*. Forced to emotionally commit, a Bondian audience tries to make sense of what he sees on stage. Bondian strategies of theatre, thus, help an otherwise accustomed-to-societal violence audience chart out the operation of an unjust social order. Bond bids adieu to Brecht with this hope that the audience's experience gathered within the playhouse would play a decisive part in their daily lives.

Notes

1. Writers' Group: A group consisting of writers who "either had one show produced or who were thought to show promise" (Hay & Roberts 17-18). This group was formed and fostered by The Royal Court Theatre. By forming the group, George Devine wished to encourage new writers, make them feel a part of the company. The first meeting of the group was held in January 1958. The group concentrated on offering writers a direct experience of acting techniques. After Devine, it was William Gaskill who became the mentor. By this time the group comprised of members like Ann Jellicoe, John Arden, Arnold Wesker, Keith Johnstone and Wole Soyinka. Eventually Bond became a member of the group and remained attached to the Court for the next seven years.
2. "Aggro effect": "Aggro" is the abbreviated form of aggravation or aggression. Bond uses the term in a theatrical context to describe violently shocking moments in his plays. Questioning the detachment method of Brechtian alienation, Bond confronts the audience by using frightening, disgusting and shocking moments in order to extract emotional reaction; the purpose is to start a thought process about the significance of what

is shown on the stage. He, thus, involves the audience with the act and demands emotional response from them. Once involved, the audience is compelled to analyse the causes by which the event occurred.

Works Cited

- Aristotle. *On the Art of Poetry*. Trans. Ingram Bywater. New Delhi: OUP, 1977.
- Bentley, Eric. *The Playwright as Thinker*. New York : Harcourt, 1946.
- Bond, Edward. "A Note on Dramatic Method". *Plays: 5*. London: Methuen, 1996.
- . "Commentary on The War Plays". *The War Plays*. London: Methuen, 1985.
- . Interview by A. Arnold. "Drama and the Dialectics of Violence". *Theatre Quarterly*, Vol. 2, No. 5 (1972): 4-14.
- . *Lear*. London: Methuen, 1972.
- . "Letter on Brecht". *The Hidden Plot*. London: Methuen, 2000.
- . "On Violence". *Plays: One*. London: Methuen, 1971.
- . *Plays: 4*. Great Britain: Methuen Drama, 1992.
- . *Saved*. London : Methuen, 1965. Print.
- . "The Rational Theatre". *Plays: Two*. London: Methuen, 1978.
- . "The Activists Papers". *Plays: 4*. Great Britain: Methuen Drama, 1992.
- . *The Pope's Wedding*. London: Methuen, 1969.
- . *The War Plays*. London: Methuen, 1985.
- . "To Beatrice Gonville". 18 May 1994. *Edward Bond Letters 4*. Ed. Ian Stuart. Vol. 29. Australia: Harwood Academic Publishers, 1998.
- . "To Calum MacCrimmon". 6 March 1989. *Edward Bond Letters I*. Ed. Ian Stuart. Vol. 5. Australia : Harwood Academic Publishers, 1994.

- . “To Dic Edwards”. 4 September 1992. *Edward Bond Letters III*. Ed. Ian Stuart. Vol. 14. Australia: Harwood Academic Publishers, 1996.
- . “To Ilaria Paoletti”. 13 July 1997. *Edward Bond Letters 5*. Ed. Ian Stuart. Vol. 40. London: Routledge, 2001.
- . “To John Clemo”. 12 February 1990. *Edward Bond Letters I*. Ed. Ian Stuart. Vol. 5. Australia: Harwood Academic Publishers, 1994.
- . “To Micheal Mangan”. 12 April 1997. *Edward Bond Letters 5*. Ed. Ian Stuart. Vol. 40. London: Routledge, 2001.
- . “To Odile Quiro”. 22 June 1994. *Edward Bond Letters 4*. Ed. Ian Stuart. Vol. 29. Australia: Harwood Academic Publishers, 1998.
- . “On Brecht: A Letter to Peter Holland”. *Theatre Quaterly* Vol. 8, No. 30 (1978): 34-35.
- . “To Thursten Young”. 6 January 1996. *Edward Bond Letters 5*. Ed. Ian Stuart. Vol. 40. London: Routledge, 2001.
- Brecht, Bertolt. “A Short Organum for the Theatre”. *Brecht on Theatre: The Development of an Aesthetic*. Trans. & Notes by John Willett. London: Methuen, 1964.
- Esslin, Martin. “Brecht and the English Theatre”. *Reflections*. New York: Doubleday, 1969.
- Goetschius, George. “The Royal Court in its social context”. *10 Years at the Royal Court. 1956-66*. London : Royal Court Theatre Publication, 1966.
- Holland, Peter. “Brecht, Bond, Gaskill, and the Practice of Political Theatre”. *Theatre Quaterly* Vol. 8, No. 30 (1978): 24-34.
- Piscator, Erwin. *The Political Theatre*. Trans. Hugh Rorrison. London: Eyre Methuen, 1980.
- Reinelt, Janelle. *After Brecht: British Epic Theatre*. USA: The University of Michigan Press, 1994.

IJES, Volume LVI, 2019

**The Invisible Hand of Compulsion
Behind all Actions with a Special
Reference to Jhumpa Lahiri's *The
Namesake***

**Deepak N. Pawar*

Abstract

Among all the major and minor traits of fiction, man-woman relationship in the Indian Writing in English has now become the pivotal aspect of the novels as a genre. Unlike the earlier writings, the previous or present century writing has emerged as a guiding star, enabling the contemporary writers to pave their path in the same direction. As the thematic concerns of the earlier writings differ from the present ones, action in the Aristotelian sense of the word, has gained ground in this area. It is this action that leads the characters to their destination—happy or sad. It means that the characters don't meet their destination by chance or by the decree of a supernatural power or even by a divine design. This all happens because every individual character is governed either by some internal compulsions or by some external ones.

The present research is meant to bring into light the lives of Jhumpa Lahiri's characters, in her novel *The Namesake*, who are trapped in the thrust identities and their struggle to find their own identities. Though the characters in *The Namesake* are not destined to act according to the divine plan as in Greek tragedies, they are still helpless in the hands of compulsions—emotional or cultural. They, like

***Deepak N. Pawar**, Dept of English Vivekanand Vidya Mandir,
Maharashtra

Shakespearean tragic heroes, act in response to such compulsions and incur the tragedy.

Keywords: destination, compulsions, divine plan, thrust identities, supernatural power, tragedy, traditions and culture.

Although Jhumpa Lahiri doesn't fall in the category of Indian writers in English, still most of her works have roots in India. That's why, in spite of being born in London and raised in Rhodes, Jhumpa Lahiri takes pleasure in writing about and of Indian traditions and culture. Apart from this, she can well judge the strain between the two cultural moves as she belongs to both the cultures. She has the first-hand knowledge of the two worlds with all their extremities.

The present research is meant to bring into light, the lives of her characters in her novel *The Namesake*, trapped in the thrust identities. It is about their struggle to find their own identities and also about their shuttling between the compulsions.

Though the characters in *The Namesake* are not destined to act according to the divine plan as they are supposed to in Greek tragedies, they are still helpless in the invisible hands of compulsions—emotional and traditional or cultural all the same.

To understand the exact role of compulsions on human behavior let's have a look upon how the compulsions lead the human beings.

There are two kinds of compulsions, which cause a particular behavioural pattern of human being. They are internal compulsions and external compulsions. To get to know about these notions and their nature, it would be preferable to consider Wilhelm Stekel's research on *compulsions*.

He has put these compulsions juxtaposed for better understanding in his book *Compulsion and Doubt Vol. 1*. According to him, the internal compulsions originate in the organ and satisfaction of physical urges brings pleasure. But the resistance to such organ compulsions encroaches upon some of the child's instinctive urges that, eventually, can be manifested in defiance reactions.

External compulsions, on the other hand, come up with the child's upbringing. The virtue of being good and the vice of being bad are often highlighted during such upbringing. The difference between being good and being bad encompasses the child's entire psyche. Obviously a child is forced to be 'good'. And during all the while, the child comes to know that it will be punished for being bad. This punishment may be an infliction of pain or a sort of withdrawal of pleasure. Thus the fear of punishment rules over child's psychology and makes the child to renounce some of its instinctual desires, the satisfaction of which might have offered pleasure.

Internal compulsions comprise of emotions, passions, strong mental or physical urge, whereas the external compulsions consist of behavioural and social codes, traditional and cultural values and morals. Stekel rightly observes—"Our whole culture is based upon fear and compulsion. Morals are compulsions, ethics are compulsions, and religions are compulsions." (Stekel:2015:43) One has to accept these compulsive restrictions or be ridiculous in the community.

Compulsions, may they be internal or external, are indeed very mighty. They can change the whole course of all humanity.

Considering, the so far discussed key word in the topic viz. compulsions, enables us enough to sum up that, compulsions play a pivotal role in all the evolution and revolution of human behavioural responses. And thus we may easily conclude that man, as a whole, is affected either by emotional compulsions, on one hand or by traditional and cultural compulsions on the other. The research topic also induces the action- action in Aristotelian sense. The action of the characters in the novel comprises their navigation between internal and external compulsions—a voyage between cultural, traditional and emotional compulsions, leading them to an unknown, undesired and unexpected destination where, sometimes, they find themselves submitting, retreating, or rebelling.

Both the compulsions catch hold on human beings. They hover all the times over the human psyche. In short, they lead the human

actions. Although, a character is led by these compulsions, we cannot put the character into watertight compartment of particular compulsion at a time, for the character doesn't respond just to one compulsion throughout his or her life. If it is so, it would have been a stereotype character, predestined to reach its end, and would, consequently, fall short in meeting the qualification of a Shakespearean tragic hero. If there is no navigation from emotional compulsions to the traditional and cultural ones, and vice versa, there would really be no action at all.

Jhumpa Lahiri's *The Namesake* is one of such works that comprise this action on the part of characters. The novel moves around the American (?) people who have their roots in India. Hence needless to say that though Jhumpa Lahiri's characters are set in completely modern social milieu; their lives are overshadowed by their Indian traditional and cultural beliefs. That's why the characters, obsessed by the traditional and cultural compulsions, pose themselves against their own self, which is governed by the emotional compulsions. This navigation between the compulsions abates the pleasures of the characters they try to seek. Though Gogol, centres the theme of the split identity in *The Namesake*, Jhumpa Lahiri has also created several characters in the novel who navigate between these compulsions. If we go through the novel carefully, we can easily figure out that Jhumpa Lahiri has sketched two characters—Ashima and Gogol, constantly torn between two identities.

As for Ashima, she is a typical Indian woman married to a typical Indian man Ashoke. Ashima follows her husband to this new land of America. We come across, in the very beginning of the novel, the typical Indian custom of accepting the name and place of husband, when we learn that Ashima flies to America for her husband. Jhumpa Lahiri has used this phenomenon of accepting the new identity as analogical with accepting the identity of a completely foreign land. For Ashoke, though he has come over there in America voluntarily, it is a thrust identity of the World, he has never been a part of. For Ashima, it is a thrust identity altogether.

Still Ashima's attachment to her Indian roots is seen every now and then throughout the novel. She has been an icon of the typical *Bhartiya Naari*, an emblem of self-effacement and self-complacency. Her self-effacement is seen when she moves to the apartment—her first abode in America. The apartment lacks the minimal amenities. It falls short to her anticipation. "But she has complained of none of this. She has kept her disappointment to herself, not wanting to offend Ashoke, or worry her parents". (30)

She sticks up to this identity of wifedom constantly even in the land where these ideals have little space. Jhumpa Lahiri has portrayed Ashima as non-confronting with her self, since she is completely engrossed, merged into the interest of her husband, children and the customs, an Indian girl, a wife and a mother is ever expected to. But it doesn't mean that she is not obsessed by the emotional compulsions. The emotional compulsions, however, don't pose against her own Indian traditional and cultural beliefs, but they necessarily do against the newly encountered culture of America. Hence she is found at constant confrontation with this undeniable new culture. There is no trace of her rebel against this suffocation. Her only act of rebellion is seen when she gives birth to Gogol in this unknown country without familiar people except her husband by her side.

She urges her husband to go back to India. But she doesn't go back. She keeps her Indianness all alive in the small but significant customs that belong to Indian culture. She insists upon having her son named by her grandmother. But when they don't receive the letter from India and when she is suggested to name her son after his grandfather's name, she refuses. Here, we find the clutches of the Indian culture at work. She tries to maintain the tradition of her family.

Every now and then, we find Ashima to be clinging to the age-old practices she has been once a part of. For example, her son's visit to a grave yard as a school activity disturbs her. She refutes—"Death is not a pastime" (70) Needless to say that such and other inhibitions are just a matter of traditional and cultural compulsions in her case.

Though Ashima is not a rebellious woman who tries to pursue her own pleasures, she cannot find herself at peace and equanimity with the changed world, she has been now a part of. Her constant pull back and pull forth from one culture to other has been a big hindrance in her life. Though she makes no point, at any time in her life, about her own pleasures and her demands, we find her life less involved in the world around.

Her son Gogol's condition is not different from her. The novel deals with an identity given to an American boy born to Indian parents. As far as Gogol's condition is concerned, he is struggling for the identity from the very beginning of his life literally and metaphorically. His name is lost somewhere between two nations- India and America, as his parents don't get the letter from Ashima's grandmother- the letter that contains his name. The very mishap of the missing name is suggestive of Gogol's lost identity. He is named after a Russian writer whose name brings no sense to people, as the people know that it's his last name and not the first one. In the beginning, Gogol doesn't bother of being named after his father's favourite writer. In a way, it is a thrust identity that, in a course of time, incurs all the hurdles in developing meaningful and fruitful relationships in his life.

Soon Gogol begins to feel the restlessness with the name, as its mention often incurs people's winked eyes. The name is emblematic to the traditions and culture he, though unknowingly, hires from his parents. He finally determines to change it to some other uninterested one. And when he eventually changes his name, he feels relieved at once. The new identity also brings him the comforts and bliss the boy of his age seeks for.

“...he is brave that evening, kissing her lightly on the mouth as she is talking to him...It is the first time he's kissed anyone, the first time he's felt a girl's face and body and breath so close to his own.” (96)

This experience spurs him and he is determined to cling with this new identity. The change of name has been analogical. The name itself stands for the new identity associated with the new lifestyle Gogol thinks he is deprived of. Kim's kiss represents the

world of romantic life and his new name- new identity becomes a gateway to this world. We find the emotional compulsions dominant in Gogol that leads him to change his name officially. Obviously, this incurs, though small, a strain in the family as his parents observe the tradition of giving the children the pet names. It's a matter of Bengali tradition. Finally, Gogol gets his name changed. The novelist has used this episode beautifully to imply Gogol's bent of mind. And from this episode we are constantly aware of Gogol's tug of war between the world of his parents, where Indian culture is always at top, and the one where Gogol thinks himself absolutely free from the traditional and cultural clutches.

From this on, Gogol falls for a number of girls irrespective of his parents' wish and tries to love them ardently. But each time he turns out to be a bad match. Though he doesn't try to cling to the practices his parents often try to maintain, he is never a free bird to live his love life either. The familial and cultural impressions often dog him wherever he goes. It's they that prove to be the big hurdles in his carnal life. He is serious in love with Ruth, an American girl, but "As much as he longs to see her, he cannot picture her at the kitchen table on Pemberton Road, in her jeans and her bulky sweater, politely eating his mother's food. He cannot imagine being with her in the house where he is still Gogol". (115) And unexpectedly the relation comes to an end.

Jhumpa Lahiri has used different places, food items to exhibit the subconscious theme of the story. For example—Gogol's constant efforts of fleeing from his roots pop up every now and then, throughout the novel. When Maxine comes in his life "He prefers New York, a place which his parents do not know well, whose beauty they are blind to, which they fear". (126)

Here New York is not restricted just to a name of a place. It becomes the symbol of a free life Gogol has ever dreamt of. But in spite of his efforts of escaping from his parents' world, he remains the same. The glimpses from their life spring up recurrently whenever he is about to merge into the life he has

chosen. He is completely obsessed by the emotional compulsions. With Maxine “He feels free of expectation, of responsibility, in willing exile from his own life.” (142) He admires Maxine’s parents’ life style and also remembers his own. He is determined to go and live with her parents for his own pleasures but at the same time “he is conscious of the fact that his immersion in Maxine’s family is a betrayal of his own.” (141)

This constant navigation from one compulsion to other keeps Gogol torn between the two extremes that eventually results in unhealthy relationship and excommunication with Maxine. Then again he comes in contact with Bridget, an American married woman. He develops physical relationship with her but this relation too does not last for long, as Gogol’s inheritance of traditional values become prominent once again and he starts feeling guilty all at once. Again there is a break up. Jhumpa Lahiri has given the accounts of several American girls and women with whom Gogol cannot establish a meaningful and happy relationship.

We may come to a conclusion that perhaps it may be because of some clash or at least the rift between two nations. But Jhumpa Lahiri has deliberately introduced Moushumi who is also, like Gogol, born to Indian parents. Though their dates are arranged by their parents their marriage proves to be the worst relationship. Gogol loves her ardently in spite of having the knowledge of her promiscuous relations in the past. But she cannot get rid of her past. She, responding to the emotional compulsions, develops a secret relationship and thus the present one with Gogol disappointedly comes to an end.

Through this failed relationship, Jhumpa Lahiri might be willing to highlight that both Gogol and Moushumi belong to the same traditional values and roots in India but both act in response to the compulsions. Both Gogol and Moushumi try to change themselves but they are helpless at the hands of their respective compulsions. Jhumpa Lahiri has well described this attachment to roots and impulses through the characters of Gogol and Moushumi. It may be described as—the more one tries to change the more one remains the same.

By projecting such relationships Jhumpa Lahiri perhaps wants to indicate that in spite of the places they live in, the parents they are born to, and the upbringing in the family, it is a particular compulsion that proves to be dominant in their case that eventually leads them in a particular direction of life. We find the invisible hand of compulsions- emotional, traditional or cultural constantly at work.

Works Cited

Stekel Wilhelm M.D., *Compulsion and doubt*. Vol. I. Translated by- Emit Gotheil M.D. (Symonds Press, 2015).

Lahiri, Jhumpa. *The Namesake*. New Delhi, Harper Collins, 2005.

IJES, Volume LVI, 2019

Rusty's View of India: "The Land of Hidden Desires"

**Jayeeta Ray*

Abstract

Ruskin Bond's novels be it *The Room on the Roof* or *Vagrants in the Valley* come across as instances of Adolescent literature. Moreover, they go even further than being mere tales of adolescents and cover areas like ecocriticism, racism, gender, class and other serious issues. *The Room on the Roof* comes across as Rusty's search for identity and his consequent wanderings. It encapsulates India and the people of this country through the perspective of its protagonist Rusty. It follows the genre of auto-biographical novels and like any other work of that genre, it bears traces of the author's life.

Keywords: adolescent literature, forbidden land, division of loyalties.

Ruskin Bond, a contemporary writer was born in Kasauli, Himachal Pradesh and lived in Delhi, Mussorie and Dehradun and the beauty of the plains had a telling effect on his writings. This writer possesses a genuine faith in life and celebrates love and bonds between people. Ruskin Bond is a versatile genius who has written and continues to write essays, novellas, poems, and a whole lot of novels. He has also written five hundred short stories and articles published in anthologies. His novel, *The Room on the*

***Dr. Jayeeta Ray**, Assistant Professor (Stage II), Department of English, Rabindra Bharati University, Kolkata.

Roof encapsulates India and the people belonging to this country. This novel has been awarded the John Llewellyn Memorial Award.

Rusty is a shy, introverted character who defies all control and authority and escapes his family to be with his friends, roam in the bazaar and have “chaat” from the local chaat shop and even play a “barbaric game” like Holi very much to the consternation of his guardian Uncle and Aunt, Mr. and Mrs. Harrison. The first few chapters make us aware of the consideration of race and how natives are viewed by Europeans where Rusty’s guardians wish to bring him up on “strictly European lines”. Rusty’s transgressing the class and race boundaries points to his fate where he would be disowned by his guardian who first punished him and later he takes revenge by hitting his guardian Mr. Harrison and scandalises these people who are left with no clue for its cause. One of Rusty’s Indian friends, Ranbir apologizes to Rusty for taking him away from his guardian but Rusty says he is not bothered.

Rusty comes across as the hidden desire in every man, here in this case English for the forbidden here comes in the form of “golguppas”, “chaat” and is called “filth” by his guardian for such rustic tastes. Indian culture represents the suppressed desires which surface in the behaviour patterns of this Anglo and proves ironical. Like Rusty there is another character in the novel, Kishen who though from an affluent family also shares similar tastes,

Against his parent’s wishes, Kishen Kapoor spent most of his time in the bazaar, he loved it because it was forbidden, because it was unhealthy, dangerous and full of germs to carry home. (45).

Moreover, he soon becomes the best elder brother to Kishen whom he is to tutor for a room on the roof where he could live without rent and have free meals. Rusty falls in love with this room at first sight and urges Somi, “come on to the house and see the room. It’s the kind of room in which you write poetry or create music” (56). But in this deal he also involuntarily falls deeply in love with Kishen’s very attractive and rather young mother with whom he carries on his sexual escapades. They make love in the

jungle when all of Rusty's friends along with Kishen, Meena and Kishen's father had gone for a picnic.

Rusty's receiving the room as a gift helped him grow as an independent being.

Rusty though, an Anglo and to Kishen's family a foreigner, fits into their lifestyle and manners. The Kapoors rather started liking Rusty, Kishen liked him for his company, Kapoor liked him for his flattering conversation and Mrs. Kapoor or Meena harboured some special feelings for him which were reciprocated.

In Kapoor's family, Rusty forgot the earlier fear and apprehension of being chastised by the authority like the case with his guardian and enjoyed himself thoroughly. The entire family accepted him with arms open and he too never felt like an outsider here. Ruskin Bond has highlighted on the filial bonds here as well as the bonds of friendship. However, what Rusty longed for most was to have a sight of Meena and hear her words but his urge in him got stifled forever when Meena met with a car accident and passed away leaving the husband behind on their trip to Delhi on business. Rusty felt very lonely and felt that their lives have drifted apart." ...Kishen has gone, and part of my life has gone with him, and inside of me I am all lonely". In this phase of loneliness, he became fretful and the thought of drinks came to his mind. Kapoor had left with him the keys to the back door where he sat and drank and in "his room that night he drank the whiskey neat". But the drinks did not provide him the pleasure, rather he drank to forget the world.

The rains in India brought a sense of relief to Rusty. The children came running out of their houses, "Barsaat, barsaat!" they shouted. The rains had arrived and Rusty marvelled at the way the entire world changed. The roof became a bathing place for every one. The children, the dogs and every one enjoyed their bathing exploits on the roof. The maidan too took on a lively appearance. It became alive with footballs. The game was called monsoon football and it was played in slush and the mud was ankle—deep. The fresh rains along with the lush green nature brought Rusty a momentary elation.

India throbbing with Indianness thrilled Rusty. The platform of the railway station with coolies lifting heavy luggage,” trundling barrows up and down the platform”, oranges, betel—nuts, “halwai sweets and flies swarming on them” provided Rusty with a heady sensation, Rusty’s love for Dehradun grows intense for he knows that he would never return here. Every sight and sound gathered vivid impressions on his mind: “the gesticulations of the coolie as the train drew out of the station, a dog licking a banana skin, a naked child alone amongst a pile of bundles, crying, the fruit—stalls and all such native images swam before his eyes”. The sensations had their say over Rusty’s maturity for after all the frenzied happenings, and his taking leave from all in Dehra, Rusty felt that another life was finishing.

India unravelling before the eyes of the British is interesting but for Rusty it is even more fascinating as the train hurtled past the “chaat shop, the bazaar, past Somi and all those he loved and his inner most desires. He was ‘lost and lonely and tired and old, nearly seventeen, but old...” (107).

Indian experience was raw where Rusty saw monkeys screeching from tree—tops, the train becomes a means for Rusty to view and taste rural India—cultivated land, maize and sugar—cane fields, going past squat mud huts villages and teams of bullocks ploughing the soil leaving behind only a trail of smoke. The scene that we remember most is that of village children, brown and naked children who waved to the train.

Rusty and Kishen got along well together probably because Kishen had been one of his first friends with whom he had grown from childhood to adolescence. Rusty had been most at ease with Kishen and with Somi and with his other friends Ranbir and Suri. His mother had died when he was quite young and his father had not lived much longer. He hated his guardian who had looked after him when his father died. In the early years, when five, he lived in India as protected as if he was still in England for the only Indians that he was acquainted with were the servants. But as he grew older the forbidden India—the real India of bazaars and temples and sprawling villages was discovered. (*Vagrants of the*

Valley 132). And the real essence of this forbidden land was had when he made Indian friends. After his quarrel with his guardian he had left their residence and started living with the Kapoor family giving lessons to Kishen and adjusting to a very Indian lifestyle.

At first everything had been different—the feel and look of Indian clothes, eating Indian food “chaat” and other indigenous food, bathing in an Indian fashion. Though old enough to have already absorbed certain English and western values, was young enough to adopt himself to new and unfamiliar environment and absorb something of Indian values. He “felt no division of loyalties” in himself, rather enjoyed an existence of a “double inheritance”.

Works Cited

Bond, Ruskin. *The Room on the Roof & Vagrants in the Valley, Two Novels of Adolescence*. India: Penguin Books, 1993, reprinted 2014.

—. *The Children's Companion*, New Delhi: Rupa Publications India Pvt. Ltd., 2013, 2014.

IJES, Volume LVI, 2019

Instruments of Self-deception and Brutishness in Harold Pinter's Plays

**Somasree Santra*

Abstract

It is the edgy, equivocal and bewildering plot of Harold Pinter's plays that discriminates itself from others. This appears from the vent between the text and the subtext—the superficial measures and concealed connotation, myriad of interpretations and momentousness, hyped illusions and masked reality. The scheme of pause, silence, pretence, violence and three dots succoured the significant proponent of the Theatre of the Absurd to accomplish the colossal task. The spatial and optical proportions of the play are administered by these apparatuses. The pauses and silences in dialogues determine the hassles encountered by the characters. In Pinter's plays language becomes the deceitful apparatus of atheism, disarray, disharmony, inefficaciousness and angst. Language mislays its linguistic potential and magnitude in Pinter's absurd cosmos and brings the preposterous human situation to the audience which swallows the logical world and paves the way towards the world of infinite. This article attempts to depict language as a silent, violent and pretentious medium brimming with dots and pauses in Pinter's *The Birthday Party* (1957), *The Caretaker* (1960) and *The Homecoming* (1965), which act as a hindrance in the articulation of eloquent speech.

***Somasree Santra** Assistant Professor of English at Amity University, Kolkata. Email id. somasree07@gmail.com

Keywords: Theatre of the Absurd, illusions, masked reality, pause, silence, pretence, violence, three dots.

“One way of looking at speech is to say it is a constant stratagem to cover nakedness”—when the Nobel prize winning English playwright, Harold Pinter uttered the significant sentence in a New York Times interview, he conspicuously proved his capability of employing the diverse aspects of language through his absurd plays. The playwright, poet, actor, director and screen-writer, Harold Pinter (1930-2008), who died at the age of 78, was the most authentic, mystifying and voguish writer in the post war-revival of British theatre. Pinter’s profoundly known literary idiosyncrasy has been the momentous halt in dialogue between characters who felt moderately intimidated and which became a recognised aspect of his writing was addressed by the term “Pinteresque”, suggesting a disguised peril and an aura of surmise where real characters speak impractically. This aspect has entered the vernacular stream and is frequently used. Pinter’s work incorporates a massive influence of Samuel Beckett, who created radical theatrical culmination through silence-saturated pauses.

The twentieth century British theatre embodies many movements encompassing the social, realistic, poetic, angry and absurd. It was Harold Pinter who portrayed the dauntless nerve to helve modern themes by affirming the European tradition to the conservative requirements of the British theatre and its audience. Pinter cultivates an unparallel style of his own by imbibing things from each of these traditions. He emphasized on the amalgamation of discrete language material to naturalize modernistic dramatic art. This article intends to portray the remarkably divergent role of language in the absurd dramas of Pinter.

Modern drama being the composite, compelling and charismatic expression of modern life is an aftermath of accumulated action and a counterpoise of the abominable situation of modern life. The elemental transformation in romantic life which is antiquated by anarchy and abstruseness was mirrored through the literature of the period. As the substantive problems of Modern community were dealt with, the strayed and estranged modern man was

presented as a forlorn and pessimistic individual in an annihilated society by the Modern stage which posits that the world “is not a pleasant little nest made for our protection, but a vast and a largely hostile environment.” (Klapp 302) As the modern schools of drama embraced the psychological theories to stimulate the characters in modern drama, the exploitation of the theatrical traditions of symbolism, realism and expressionism became apparently conspicuous. The modern dramatists devoted themselves to detecting the panacea to the conundrum of modern existence precipitated by the “collapse of spiritual values and the failure of science and materialism” (Bently 340). Being rancorously fascinated by the atrocious determinant of modern life, Pinter construes modern individual as someone who is agonized and anguished by inscrutable trauma and ordeal.

Pinter prefers to modify typical urban language, which was complacent to the concreteness of life’s poetic way. It could also operate in that manner to evoke the modern sense of being. He protrudes the modern sense of being by using familiar, colloquial dialogue with afresh quality of intensity, punctuated speech accompanied by silence, pauses and other non-verbal actions. Words alter their meanings under distinctive conditions in Pinter’s play as they do in poetry. The meaning of such a play is frequently positioned in the constriction between delight and disgust. Pinter was intensely inspired by Beckett and Kafka and he confesses, “I admire Beckett’s work so much that something of its texture might appear in my own.” (Hinchliffe 33)

Through the outlandish aperture of inanity, where people imbued with inherent dignity and egocentricity are incompetent to flourish valued interconnection, *The Caretaker* is a non-quixotic play projecting a distressing sphere. Within the context of this play, uniqueness and confinement thrive to become the elemental quest. According to Pinter, this desolation is a crucial human nature to avert transmission with the external cosmos, as Naismith comments in his *A Faber Critical Guide: Harold Pinter*, “*The Caretaker* might be seen as presenting a very bleak vision of the isolation of mid-century urban man” (Naismith 125). As soon as the

invasion of their personal arena is signalled, Pinter's men become thoroughly engaged in forceful combat concocted by expression, movement, commotion and quietness. The knowledgeable and intellectual characters try to conceal their real identity and promote a deceptive image of them through the use of language to befuddle the less luminous people by provoking vague and hazy affairs and arguments. In *The Caretaker* Pinter employs language to beguile the other. David, in spite of his dislike for both his brothers, tries to appear as a confidant to them. Aston adopts the language for honest self-exhibition when he talks regarding the shock treatment as he lacks in the inculpability to construct a mask of words. Mick also proves himself to be competent in defraudation. However, the others use language for converting the self. Aston's exposition also propounds a factor of retention- from Davies to Aston we harken a meta-language devised with reluctancy and stumbleness. For instance, when Davies is accorded the duty of a caretaker, he finds it bothersome to articulate himself with clarity:

Davies: You see what I mean to say ...what

I'm getting at is ... I mean, what sort of job...? (Pinter *The Caretaker* 48)

Set in a single room with the denizens who are intimidated by coercion or by the populace and wrestle for continuance or individuality, Pinter's plays emerge from a distinct and compelling ocular appearance. Being a mode of conversation as well as an armament, the undercurrent that streams beneath the flow of the language incorporates the silence of dismay, angst, fury and supremacy. While presenting existential glances of eccentric or appalling moments in the lives of the masses, Pinter scorns to dispense coherent rationale for action. "Pinter's dialogue is as tightly-perhaps more tightly- controlled than verse," Martin Esslin writes in *The Peopled Wound* (1970). "Every syllable, every inflection, the succession of long and short sounds, words and sentence is calculated to nicety. And precisely the repetitiousness, the discontinuity, the circularity vernacular speech are here used as formal elements with which the poet can compose his linguistic

ballet.” On several junctures in the play, as Davies alters the topic put forth by Aston, he displays his indifference towards Aston’s fascination and intrigue by repudiating to reciprocate pertinently to his remark, even though Aston exposes his magnanimity of soul through his forbearance of Davies.

Aston: I went into the pub the other day. Ordered a Guinness. They gave it to me in a thick mug. I sat down, but I couldn’t drink it. I can’t Guinness from a thick mug. I only like it on a thin glass. I had a few sips but I couldn’t finish it.

Davies: If only the weather would break then I’d be able to get down to Sidcup. (Pinter *The Caretaker* 19)

The instruments of violence are oblivious, essential voices of combination. They ascribe to the existential dread of the self gliding away from one’s grasp and treated as media for invoking the sense of fear and uncertainty. Unlike the traditional man who accepted death as an hour of tradition, modern writers highlighted the aspect of the self which begins and ends in the mundane world. When the individual self fails to gain parity with death in the absence of faith, he wrestles to surpass it in his cognizance and tries to exist; as a result of which it is empowered by a nihilistic force. This coercive power is the agent of violence and duress and also may be a manifestation of ‘nothingness’ that the individual shudders from. Pinter’s plays of violence surely do revolve around these ambits- the assailants could be an extrinsic psychological tremor of the victim in *The Room* and *The Birthday Party*. The axial theme of dominance is prominent in Pinter’s play where language is exercised as a game. As we can witness Goldberg in *The Birthday Party*, who possesses a mellifluous speaking capability and dictates his ascendancy over the other:

Where did you come from?
 Why did you come here?
 Why did you stay?
 Why did you kill your wife?
 Why did you never get married?
 Chicken? Egg? Which came first?

You are dead, you cannot live, you cannot love.
You are dead?

(Pinter *The Birthday Party* 46)

Absurd dramas convey an understanding of human conditions, like music. One person is fully isolated from another in *The Birthday Party* as the characters try to enshroud themselves by implementing language in such a manner in which the reciprocal cognizance between them is unfeasible. The milieu of this play revolves around agitation, dread and menace to the natural symmetry of life. The characters speak complete nonsense as they converse through silence, pause, repetition and non-verbal expression. Pinter's apprehension and urgency of defiance is genuinely exhibited in *The Birthday Party*. Analogous to the Nazis rendering of concentration camps as "Jewish vacations", Pinter portrays the terror and peril through the framework of Stanley's birthday in the drama. As Esslin avers in *Pinter: A Study of his Play*, "Words become weapons in the mouth of Pinter's Characters. The one who gets hold of the more elaborate or more accurate expression Established dominance over his partner" (Esslin 49), the deception and subjection of innocent people imprint its continuance through the euphemisms. The unrevealed looming peril against the characters who want to abscond from the forces of evil does not subside, even though Pinter relies upon the form of comedy rather than tragedy. Akin to Oscar Wilde, his plays have been appositely called *Comedies of Menace*. Pinter has delineated ardour and venting to the forlornness and malaise of the individual in the modern society, like the existentialist playwrights. The defeatist heroes of Pinter behave as a device under the thrall of the dictating hegemony.

The diegesis of the play, *The Birthday Party* revolves around the solitary soul, Stanley who accommodates in Meg and Petey's fetid house near the beach. In spite of the couple's constant endeavour to ensure a comfort zone for Stanley, a disruption in the amicable ambience occurs due to the unanticipated occupancy of McCann and Godberg who intends to claim Stanley. Through this emissary of bizarre and obscure forces, Pinter presents

individual disintegration, disenchantment and deterioration within the absurd linguistic structure of the story which encompasses its descriptive portrayal and thread of action. The language which portrays the absurdity of the sentiment, characters, disposition, kinship and condition torments Stanley and devours him within its mischievous clutches. The unpredictability and frailty in Stanley's life are prominently illustrated through the absurd ideas. Even Meg and Petey experience a perception of futility in their married life through the absurdity in whimsical insight. Pinter's engrossment with fright and distress is reflected through the strain that Meg experiences through the uncanny conduct of Stanley, who becomes distraught, tormented and petrified for untold causes as McCann and Goldberg infiltrate the plot. As Stanley dreads the deprivation of safety and indulges in the absurd thoughts after the alarming arrival of the two men, Meg is terrified and insecure about losing Stanley, "You wouldn't have to go away if you get a job" (*The Birthday Party*: 9). The agitation and perturbation that Stanley experiences becomes distinctly protuberant as he says:

"They're coming today."

Meg: Who?

Stanley: They're coming in a van.

Meg: who? They'll carry a wheel barrow in a van.

Stan: They're looking for someone.

Meg: No they're not.

(Pinter *The Birthday Party* 24)

Through the equivocal employment of dialogues in his plays, Pinter tactfully manages to discomfit and startle the audience with a heavy jolt and unzip disparate approaches for elucidation.

Bernard F. Dukore classifies the third group of plays with the apparent language of silence as 'memory plays', whereas, 'memory games' is the identification done by Simon Henderson. The plays in this group comprises of *The Basement*, *Landscape*, *Silence*, *A Night Out*, *Old Time*. Though violence and pretence can be seen in these plays to some extent, the dominance of silence is profoundly evident in these works. Time revolves back and forth

and as such the linear sequence gets disrupted- without any interpersonal dissemination people talks about the past. Characters are unstimulating and motionless in *Silence* and *A Night Out*. Kate and Desley differs on their past memories in *Old Times*-Anna's ghostly appearance on the stage makes the contentment of the present with the time past- the present and the past amalgamate on the stage.

Pinter is redolent of poetic meanings and is inclined towards a musical aspect in his employment prose. In music, a rhythm is generated through pause and silence.

Lenny: Just give me the glass.

Ruth: No

Pause

Lenny: I'll take it, then.

Ruth: If you take the glass ... I'll take you.

Pause

Lenny: How about me taking the glass without you taking me?

Ruth: Why don't I just take you?

Pause

Lenny: You're joking ...

She picks up the glass and lifts it towards him.

Ruth: Have a sip. Go on. Have a sip from my glass ... Sit on my lap. Take a long cool sip ...

Lenny: What was that supposed to be? Some kind of proposal?

Silence

(Pinter *The Homecoming* 42-43)

There is a profound and intense implication of silence in Pinter's plays as is evident from the above lines of his play, *The Homecoming*. During a fretted squabble between the characters, nothing can be said until the vehement agitation is alleviated. The dialogue predominantly changes its track after the antecedent silence.

Language is an instrument to conceal or elude the reality acquiescing to Pinter as he once said in his work, *The Birthday Party: Comedy of Menace*, “I think we communicate only too well in our Silence, in what is unsaid” (Pinter 132). Confirming to the dramatics of horror, *The Birthday Party* projects the inescapable foggy net of words as the incessant perception of dread exists through a situation where “communication becomes too alarming.” (Quigley 289). The characters take a leap to initiate a struggle and mark distinctness by willing to liberate from the clutches of the gloomy life and rebelling against the unacceptable state of affairs.

Pinter prioritizes the failure of communication and stresses on designing the dialogues in the absurd plays to flash the paucity of language. He utilizes language to exhibit a spectacle of the paralyzed state of man- which signifies an absurd condition. Pinter, very tactfully dwindles the thread between the real and unreal as he postulates that “There are no hard distinctions between what is real and what is unreal, nor between what is true and what is false. A thing is not necessarily either true or false; it can be both true and false.”¹

‘Pinter’s agitation and dread of the time ahead is echoed through the mystical element of the play which mirrors the malfeasance and exploitation of the world. As he takes a glimpse of life from the murky and cataclysmic side, life becomes nonsensical, ludicrous, vague and trivial. Through the idiomatic undiversified repetitiousness and incoherent mannerisms of the stage protagonists, who succor as objects of interest, Pinter arouses the undercurrent of trepidation and anxiety.

Notes

1. Harold Pinter’s Nobel Lecture on Art, Truth and Politics delivered at the Swedish Academy, in Stockholm, on the evening of 7 December 2005.

Works Cited

Bently, Eric. “Trying to like U, Neil”. *U, Neil and his play: Four Decades of Criticism*, edited by Oscar Cargill, New York, 1961.

- Esslin, Martin. *Pinter: A Study of his Play*. London, Eyre Methuen, 1977.
- . *The Peopled Wound: The plays of Harold Pinter*. London, Methuen and Company, 1970.
- . *The Theatre of the Absurd*. New York, Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group, 2009.
- Gale, Steven H. *Critical Essay on Harold Pinter*. Boston, G.K. Hall & Co., 1990.
- Ganz, A. *Pinter: A Collection of Critical Essays*. New Jersey, Prentice Hall, 1972.
- George, Mercy. "Language of Silence in the Plays of Harold Pinter". *International Journal of English Language, Literature and Humanities*, Vol. 2, No. 6, Oct. 2014, pp. 79-87.
- Hinchliffe, Arnold P. *Harold Pinter*. New York, Twayne Publishers, 1967.
- Klapp, Orrin E. "Tragedy and the American Climate". *Tragedy: vision and Form*, edited by Robert W. Corrigan, California, Handed Publishing, 1965.
- Naismith, Bill. *Introduction. A Faber Critical Guide: Harold Pinter*. London, Faber and Faber, 2000.
- Peacock, D.K. *Harold Pinter and the New British Theatre*. Westport, Greenwood Press, 1997.
- Pinter, Harold. *Plays One: The Birthday Party; The Room; The Dumb Waiter; A Slight Ache; The Hothouse; A Night Out; The Black and White; The Examination*. London, Faber and Faber, 1991.
- . *Plays Two: The Caretaker; Night School; The Dwarfs; The Collection; The Lover*. London, Faber and Faber, 1991.
- . *Plays Three: The Homecoming; Tea Party; The Basement; Landscape; Silence; Night; That's Your Trouble; That's All; Applicant; Interview; Dialogue for Three; Tea Party (short story); Old Times; No Man's Land*. London, Faber and Faber Ltd., 1991.

- . *The Biography of Menace*. London, Faber and Faber Ltd., 1991.
 - . *The Birthday Party: Comedy of Menace*. London, Faber and Faber Ltd., 1991.
 - . *The Essential Pinter: Selections from the work of Harold Pinter*. New York, Grove Press, 2006.
 - . *Various Voices: Prose, Poetry, Politics 1948-2008*. London, Faber and Faber, 2013.
- Quigley, Austin E. "The Language Problem". *Critical Essays on Harold Pinter*, edited by Steven H. Gale, Boston, G.K. Hall & Co., 1990.
- Saraci, Marinela. "The Sense of Insecurity and the Language of Pinter's Absurd Play The Birthday Party". *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, Vol. 4, No. 11, Oct. 2013, pp. 384-388.
- Wellwarth, G. *The Theatre of Protest and Paradox: Developments in the Avant- Garde Drama*, London, Mac Gibbon and Kee, 19.

IJES, Volume LVI, 2019

Ethos of Indian Woman in Nissim Ezekiel's Poetry

**Dr. Kiran S. Khandare &
**Sandeep K. Thorat*

Abstract

Nissim Ezekiel is an Indian poet to the core writing in English. He occupies a unique position among Post-modern Indian English poets. He opposes the idealism and romanticism of the earlier poets and tries to reflect Indian woman and her ethos peeping into typical Indian situation with an alienated insight. In his poetry, Ezekiel has pointed out the typical Indian issues of man-woman relationship. While developing man-woman relationship, the paper makes an attempt to express the ethos of an Indian woman performing various roles such as daughter, mother, wife and an object of sex in poems such as "Poem of the Separation," "Morning Walk," "Motives," "Marriage," "Servant," "In India," "The Couple," "Haiku." Ezekiel has sustained the quality of verse in Indian English Poetry. He is recognized as a major poet in the history of Indian English Poetry. Almost every critic in and outside has taken special care of Ezekiel's poetry because of its unique characteristics.

***Dr. Kiran S. Khandare**, Associate Professor and Head, Department of English Dr. H.N. Sinha Arts and Commerce College, Patur, Dist. Akola (M.S.)

****Sandeep K. Thorat**, Assistant Professor of English & Head, S.S.S.K.R. Innani Mahavidyalaya, Karanja (lad), Dist. Washim (M.S.) Email: sandeepk_thorat@rediffmail.com

“His respect for craft makes his poetry much more than a mere fulsome expression of an emotion or an idea” (Abide 287). Ezekiel could achieve these characteristics of his poetry because of his Indianness. It was his close relation with Indian environment that endowed a rare significance to his poetry:

Keywords: Ethos, Indian Woman, Ezekiel, Poetry.

Ezekiel focuses on each thread of Indian life in his poetry. He is aware of the treatment of woman in his poetry. He frankly depicts the various roles played by an Indian woman. Somewhere in his poetry, she is depicted as affectionate mother, wife, and beloved, but somewhere else she plays the part of a seductress. Somewhere she is abolished all her rights and is locked only to home and hearth. Many times, she has become the victim in the midst of male-oriented Indian society. In man-woman relationship, she is shown as an object of entertainment in some of Nissim's poetry. He deals with the issue with an optimistic approach and reveals woman's cultural ethos regarding the various situations in life.

In *Hymns in Darkness*, the darkness symbolizes the fall in spiritual and cultural values. The volume continuously presents the degradation of religious, political, social and spiritual values. Ezekiel's love for the depiction of a pagan woman is not disassociated from his recent poetry. The most embracing fact of Ezekiel's poetry written in his last phase is his description of woman's seductive attitude. In *Hymns in Darkness* the seductive attitude of woman is highlighted in “Three Women”, “Motives”, “In Twenty Four Hours” and “Haiku”. The woman pretends not to make a sex play, yet ‘connives all the same’ to force the man to sexual union. In “Motives”, the man's frank attitude of considering woman as a sex object is also reflected:

My motives are sexual,
aesthetic and friendly
in that order, adding up
to have with you. (CP 154)

As he comes close to woman, her anatomy, majestic and charming, casts a magic spell on him and he says: "Yours thighs are full and round / thin and flat I'd love them too / There go my aesthetics" (CP 154). In "Haiku" the woman blatantly—"brought out her small / breasts, to be caressed" (CP 174). Ezekiel's quest for identity makes him a minute observer of Indian society as well, its persona and institutions which lack normal humanity. It helps him to be satirical in tone. As a result of it, his poem "Three Women" is a satire on morally loose women who offer people not only food but also love and the poet says:

They spoke the language
of food and love
naturally
as a mother-tongue
no problem here
or accent or of intonation. (CP 151)

In *Latter-Day Psalms* woman's seductive attitude is captured in "Nudes II 1978":

This one announces every act
of pleasure as she does it.
'I love undressing', she has to say,
as she undresses. The verbal
and the visual join in her.
'Is this a part of you?' she asks,
as she holds it, stares at it.
Then she laughs. 'Put your finger
There,' she pleads, as if
I need instructions. It's only
impatience, though, becoming frenzy
as I penetrate. 'Now,' she claims,
you are within me. Aren't you
within me?' And she makes me say, 'I am.' (CP 246)

In this poem, the poet paints the nude woman from the eyes of an artist. He tries to see her nude beauty from the point of view of art and painting. This realization makes him understand life. In this manner, Bruce King comments:

The naked is scientific, the nude is cultured. We see the world with a naked eye. People are nudist not nakedists. Ezekiel uses this distinction both to examine the social arts that accompany seduction and to draw a parallel between his poems and a painter's series of nude portraits in which format qualities and matter are of equal interest. Thus, the poems shift rapidly between discussion of the women as forms, as art, as objects of desire, as individuals, and there is a constant secondary significance, as discussion of form and experience can also refer to the art of poetry. (King, 48)

Again, the image of a pagan woman appears in Ezekiel's poetry. On the other hand, one noticeable thing in Ezekiel's poetry is that male persona's attitude does not treat woman on an equal level. He does not think that woman has a mind for sexual fulfillment along with flesh and blood:

A close study of the essence of the male persona's attitude in such relationships as presented in these poems gives the impression that the male persona's aim in these encounters is not fulfillment or consummation of love but an indifferent observation to analyze, testify and prove or disprove some point. (Kurup 88)

Thus, in his recent poetry "The tone of indifference and empathy in attitude is evident" (Kurup 88).

Ezekiel's poetry is a living record of Indian values and its changing face. Exploring the man-woman relationship, Ezekiel's tongue does not slip to expose the changing attitude of lover and beloved. It is felt that Ezekiel tried to reveal the change in attitude based on past love experience of people in the real life. He very skillfully handles the theme of love and sex and exposes lover's changing attitude of breaking up the affair. In "Poem of the Separation," Ezekiel describes his sufferings when he has to

break up with his beloved. He remembers the meetings with his beloved:

Any man may be a whirlwind,
any woman lightning
but buses take us to our meeting,
trains to our destination.
In these, and in cafes,
on beaches,
and on benches in the park
our music was made. (CP 196)

The poem "The Couple" is one of Ezekiel's many love poems. It appeals that love can be genuine, emotional spiritual and physical. Ezekiel believes in physical love of sex. Man always expects to get full satisfaction from woman. Therefore, he praises her and makes her feel that she is beautiful. He calls her a wonderful woman and she exposes her body in full co-operation:

She did it pretty enough,
demonstrating
with childlike glee
a trick or two. (CP 183)

Indeed, the poet goes deep into the hearts of Indians either they are lovers or ordinary persons. Thus, woman is flexible to co-operate at any condition. While speaking about love and sex, Shiv K. Kumar's poetry seems to be arresting for its different thoughts. He thinks that love and sex are one and essential in maintaining the relationship between man and woman. In his poem, Shiv K. Kumar says:

Even in bed
myself
Copulates with its own dry bones
leaving her body
pensile on the tide's crest. (qtd. in Satish Kumar 218)

In Shiv K. Kumar's poetry, love and sex are intuitive as Satish Kumar points out:

Love, sex and marriage occupy an important place in Kumar's poetry. He glorifies intuitive love and the natural satiation of sexual urge. Love is self-surrender. It is beyond logical comprehension and intellectual discussion. Falling in love at first sight is not based on logical reasoning; it is purely intuitive, involuntary response to life. Love and sex are one. Sex is a form of intuitive energy which needs instantaneous outlet. To Kumar sex is the basis of all emotional relationship between man and woman, and it, therefore, should not be condemned as ugly or indecent. Sex stands for openness, acceptance and self-surrender. In the course of the act of love or in the moment of sexual union there are no spoken words, no verbalization, no discussion. He discards the intuition of marriage because it hinders the free flow of love. (Kumar, 218)

However, he is aware of every detail of Indian life and minutely observes the condition of Indian woman. While speaking about his 'Servant', Ezekiel explores a very common Indian attitude of marrying the daughter at a light age of twelve or fourteen. The ethos and culture of accepting every suffering without protest of Indian wife is revealed. These poor servants are ill-treated by their husbands. There is an interesting family situation where the poet's mother tells the ethos of these female servants. Here woman is shown conscious of one thing only:

At twelve or fourteen, married off
 To the usual brute,
 She has a child,
 and tells my mother every time
 her husband beats her
 for the fun of it.
 weal on the back and thighs. (qtd. in Karnani 161)

But she complains before her mistress instead of her husband. Thus, it is a picture of typically suppressed Indian wife:

That is a fate of a suppressed Indian wife. In addition to hint at the dirty practices of child-marriage, the poet also

tries to comment on man and his destiny. The tormented wife is quite used to it as she thinks it to be quite inevitable in her fate. There is no way out. The poet can observe it as a distance. Nothing can be done as it is one of the several cases of misfortune. (R. Mishra 11)

Again, Ezekiel throws light on the cultural ethos of maid-servants in his poem "Ganga." The poet voices against the treatment given to them by their part-time mistresses. He says:

She always gets
a cup of tea
preserved for her
from the previous evening,
and a chapatti, stale
but in good condition.
Once a year, an old
sari and a blouse
for which we could
easily exchange a plate
Or a cup and saucer.
Besides, she borrows
Small coins for paan
or a sweet for her child.
She brings a smell with her
and leaves it behind her,
but we are used to it. (CP 202)

The poem brings the characters of both the maid-servant, Ganga and her mistresses. Apart from her wages, Ganga gets something extra like a cup of tea, left-over food, old sari, blouse, sweets for her child as a token of her mistresses' generosity. The poem presents everyday fact in Indian society. It brings forth the false generosity of Indians.

While exploring ethos of Indian woman, Ezekiel drives deep in the psyche of male and female persona. His poem "Song to be Shouted out" depicts the family problems in India. Where, the

wife yells at the husband on coming home in the evening. The husband describes the situation:

I come home in the evening
and my wife shouts at me:
Did you bank that cheque?
Did you buy those tickets?
Did you ask if cheese is in stock or not? (CP 241)

He, in typical Indian English, narrates the ethos of the husband troubled by the wife in the poem "Song to be Shouted out," from *Songs for Nandu Bhende*:

Shout at me, woman!
Pull me up for this and that
You're right and I'm wrong
This is not an excuse,
It's only a song
It's good for my soul
To be shouted at.
Shout at me, woman!
What else are wives for? (CP 242)

The incident exposes the true love between husband and wife, though their method of expressing it is different. They fight with each other, but are not ready to live separately. Indian culture could not allow them to take final action. This is the genius of the poet to reflect Indian ethos and culture through small events in human life.

Ezekiel, with his keen, sharp and penetrating eyes, observes husband-wife relationship. In "Servant," the poet concentrates on typically suppressed Indian wife. The wife is innocent, as she does not protest when her husband beats her. She is unaware of her rights. She bears all types of sufferings with open eyes. Ezekiel also travels through the Indian homes and finds out Indian life is full of crisis. In "Dead End Story," Ezekiel captures the rift between the mother-in-law and daughter-in-law that occurs in every Indian family. It reveals the domestic Indian ethos and culture of the both

women. Ezekiel's intention behind reflecting the cultural ethos of characters from Indian families serves as remedy. "Ezekiel's deliberate dig at the urbanized modern sophisticated families proves to be therapeutic in effect" (Mohanty 91)

In fact, in his poetry, Ezekiel tries to bring out the weaknesses of humankind through the portrait of various characters from Indian society. Ezekiel points out the seductive attitude of woman. Once upon a time, woman was worshiped as Goddess. She was the epitome of shyness then. But she has changed her culture and become seductive as presented in his poems like "Three Women" and "Motives." The poet expresses the changed tendency of woman to force man for sexual union. At the same time, the poet also depicts the changed attitude of Indian man to treat woman as a sex object.

Works Cited

- Abidi, S.Z.H. *Studies in Indo Anglian Poetry*. Bareilly: Prakash Book Depot, 1978.
- Ezekiel, Nissim. *Collected Poems*. New Delhi: O.U.P., 2005. Text. All subsequent references to Ezekiel's poems shall be from this edition.
- Karnani, Chetan. *Nissim Ezekiel*. New Delhi, Arnold Hemingway 1974.
- King, Bruce. *Three Indian Poets*. Madras: Oxford, 1991.
- Kumar, Satish. *A Survey of Indian English Poetry*. Bareilly: Prakash Book Depot, 2001.
- Kurup, P.K.J. *Contemporary Indian Poetry in English*. New Delhi: Atlantic P. and Distributors, 1991.
- Mishra, Rajendra Nath. "Post-Independence Anguish in Nissim Ezekiel's Poetry." *Contemporary Indian Literature in English, A Humanistic Perspective*. Ed. Mithilesh K. Pandey. New Delhi: Kalyani P., 1999.
- Mohanty, Niranjana. "Self within Self: A Study in the Poetry of Nissim Ezekiel". *Nissim Ezekiel: Dimensions of a Poetic Genius*. Ed. Surya Nath Pandey. Delhi: Doaba House, 1999.

IJES, Volume LVI, 2019

The Emotional Intelligence in Binod Mishra's *Multiple Waves*

**Dr. Chandra Shekhar Rajhans*

Abstract

The present paper defines Emotional Intelligence, its nature and function ever since this term was used by Michael Beldoch. Binod Mishra's *Multiple Waves* has been studied at length to see his social concern, art of poetic composition, problems of disintegrating family and the problems of failing social sites and technologies and the dangers to ecosystems and water crisis. His poetic art seems to be a result of his emotional intelligence and passion towards the rich values of personal as well as professional life. His familiarity with computer engineering and programming language is evident in his choice of imagery in his poems.

Keywords: Deficit, Quotient, Fatigue, Alchemy, Avatar.

“Emotional Intelligence (EI), also known as Emotional Quotient (EQ), is the capability of individuals to recognize their own emotions and those of others, discern between different feelings and label them appropriately, use emotional information to guide thinking and behavior, and manage and/or adjust emotions to adapt to environments or achieve one's goal(s).” (Wikipedia). This term Emotional Intelligence or EI was first used by Michael

***Dr. Chandra Shekhar Rajhans**, Associate Professor & Head,
Dept. of English, Swami Vivekanand Govt. P.G. College,
Narsinghpur, M.P. email: csrajhans@gmail.com

Beldoch. It is understood that people with high EI have greater mental health, job performance and leadership skills. Scientist Daniel Goleman has also contributed greatly to popularize this term as a powerful construct of personality. He explains in his book 'What Makes a Leader' that emotional competencies are not innate talents, but rather learned capabilities that must be worked on and can be developed to achieve outstanding performance. Goleman conceives that individuals are born with a general emotional intelligence that determines their potential for learning emotional competencies.

EI helps to acquire the ability to identify and manage own emotions and the emotions of others. After *Silent Steps and Other Poems*, *Multiple Waves* is the second collection of poems by Binod Mishra, voicing his social concerns and anxieties, intellectual idealism and acute humanitarian concerns. His poems capture four major subjects namely a. the art of poetic composition, b. the problems of disintegrating family and ageing people, c. the problem of failing social sites and technologies and d. the acute dangers to ecosystems and water crisis. His poems reveal his growth and maturity as an artist with chronological vastness, and his exquisite attempts to inculcate a language, evolving out of the 'mother tongue versus foreign language dichotomy'. The famous poet and critic Charu Sheel Singh writes in the foreword, "Binod Mishra's image and symbol weave a texture that seems to become an Indian *Saree*." (Foreword, *Multiple Waves*) His poetic art seems to be a result of his emotional intelligence and passion towards the rich values of personal as well as professional life. His familiarity with computer engineering and programming language is evident in his choice of imagery in his poems. His poetic world is essentially *A Child's Family* which "includes everyone living in her apartment in separate flats." (*A Child's Family*. 3) The wholeness of a child's world of innocence is deformed by education, systematically, "once she learns/making words, sentences, lines, circles and semi-circles." (*A Child's Family*. 3)

Roman Jakobson formulated that the aesthetic function of poetry is the 'literariness' (that what makes a given work a work

of literature) of poetry. (Mallik and Batra. *A New Approach to Literary Theory and Criticism*. 26) In his *A Poem*, Binod Mishra writes that composing a poem means “ looking for suitable words... and become immortal/ for ages to come.” (*Multiple Waves*. 5) A poem is a ‘half-clad moon’ and ‘an alley leading to highway’. This is also a ‘divine game’ and ‘a discovery of truth’.

This is the time of theory-fatigued readers and writers; there is a fast decline in the interests of reading literature. It may not be outrageous to say that theory has become a discipline in itself; knowing theory is considered self-sufficient; these ‘great’ theorists have pushed ‘literature’ to the second place. In such an overloaded atmosphere of theory, Binod Mishra’s poem *The Poet* draws a picture of consolation and hope:

... he

Forges a balance between known and unknown,
 Thinks of mountains and seas;
 A poet in the making,
 They envy his suppressed smirk
 And call him a quirk. (*The Poet*. 7-8)

His poem *The Laugh of a Poem*, presents a poem as a freshly bloomed eye-catching ‘well clad maiden / spreading her youthful fragrance,/her bewitching smile....’ (43) Another poem *Words and Structures* by Mishra is a beautiful account of the ‘fighting, competing and falling words and structures in the process of poetic creation. Like his first poetic volume, Binod Mishra’s love for using rhyming words like ‘yearn-earn’, ‘wreath-heath’, ‘abound-sound’ continues in this poetic volume also.

The emotional intelligence of the poet Binod Mishra helps him accept bravely the disintegrating family structures and the post retirement issues of the old age. His poem *Mother* is a marvelous composition portraying a loving mother whose eyes sparkle seeing her ‘only’ son return after a decade; the insensitive child presents the awkward excuse, “Responsibilities, Ma, he said, -/have made me busier than ever./No time for phones/ who writes letters these days?”(16)

Among all other positive things, the growth of multinational companies and job opportunities has certainly brought in a wide gap between the expectations of the old and new generations. The likes and dislikes of the old parents are mercilessly ignored and the old are often planted/grafted in new situations, to adopt and accept the new 'suitable' ways of life. The emotional trauma of 'attention deficit' is the reward from the children, in whom a father invests his hard earned pennies. Binod Mishra's poem is an eye opener to the new generation and a strong urge to behave sensibly. In his poem *The Rising Sun*, he speaks about the problems of old age and the absence of caring children nearby.

Robert Frost said that poetry is all about what is lost in translation. Binod Mishra's poem *Absence* is another superb poem exhibiting his sense of realizing 'coveted dreams' at the cost of the desertion and loneliness of the ageing parents. The autobiographical tone is essentially felt. The emotional crisis of the poet (the father) is unbearable in the concluding stanza : Today I am all alone/ you left me half way as others, /Our children have lost our addresses. (35) In his poem *Money Plant*, he describes his failures to keep a money plant alive, 'in imitation of prosperous neighbours'; the plant died because "it surely lacked in the alchemy/ of minerals and fertilizers/ to grow in a digital world." (49) One cannot miss to note the personal association of the poet in these lines.

Even with use of WhatsApp, Facebook and other technologies of social media, the crucial problem of the loss of identity remains unattended. "Identity is a misnomer,/one fames, flames and fumes/ yet assumes a new identity/ in a chatroom smiling,.... (*Identity*. 19) Human worth is reduced merely to a 'busy bee' on a cell phone. Moreover, such a use of technology has adverse impacts on the married life, in a way that the wife secretly checks the 'call logs' on her husband's cell phone. Her efforts 'to keep vigil' gives mutual love a newer connotation and 'trust feels forsaken'. (*Whatshapp*, 28) Artificiality and 'branded smiles' are 'shopped, sold and sheltered by unsheltered avatars.' Bitter experiences and anguish of the poet force him to label life simply as 'a run of days

and months adding to years.’ Such a nullified vision of life is not a happy situation. The achievements mean only the USP, i.e. the Unique Selling Proposition or point; the day to day life has been enslaved and captured by strategies of advertisements and marketing, ‘where talents trade on traditions’. His poem *Life* protests against the inhuman commercial tricks that lead to suicides in different forms and the poet advises the readers, “Let us look back and grieve for what is lost/ for that alone can stir innovation and life.” (*Life*. 26)

His poem *Block You* is a splendid metaphor of modern day life. Despite the technological advancement and the freedom of Googling knowledge in any amount, anytime, anywhere and anything, the world suffers badly from the crisis of ideology. The commodification of knowledge has developed strange ways of interaction of youngsters. Now, in modern social media, individual emotions become ‘status,’ emotions are ‘texting’ and anger results in ‘deleting/ blocking’. This poem is a technical poem about the machine like behavior of individuals. The poet finds these “unsuccessful, the modern day avatars of virtual world/ find themselves deaf, dumb and defeated”. (*Block You*. 32)

His poem *Lakshmi* is a dramatic narration of the birth of a girl child in the family. The growth and upbringing of a girl is an experience of ‘suppressed joy and mixed sorrow’, as for her, all happiness bear a ‘price tag’ of the luxurious items that she shall have to carry as dowry to her in-laws’ house. Binod concludes effectively the volumes of misery of a girl’s life, “She grieves in a corner like the fridge, sneezing/ yet cooling everyone’s whims save her father’s.” (31) Binod Mishra’s poem *Lakshmi* reminds us of Jayant Mahapatra’s famous poem *Hunger*. When the fish turns inside the empty stomach, the body economics forms a different morality and culture. “I heard him say: my daughter, she’s just turned fifteen.../ Feel her, I’ll be back soon, your bus leaves at nine.” With a sense of propriety, the father treats the daughter as a commodity or an item.

Binod Mishra’s another concern is the crisis of pollution and scarcity of water. In several of his poems, he laments on the

miserable condition of our holy rivers. His poem *What the Water Says* personifies water and narrates the story of water and the majestic journey of Bhagirath's Ganga. The poet points towards the impending war for 'a bowl of water'. The 'free gift of nature' is shamelessly 'draped in different labels', of bottled drinking water. The beauty of this poem is in these words—"I too can have my private tears/ that ooze out my soggy shape/ shouldering my own chimera to a forlorn land/ where none can hear my woeful ballad/ where the heights alone can hide my depth/ where gods alone can save my chastity." (34) His next poem *The River and the Bridge* is also a continuation of his intellectual concerns about the natural resources and ecological imbalances. Even in his first volume *Silent Steps and other Poems*, Binod Mishra has written poems like *My Wish* and *Dear Ganges*, condemning strongly the maltreatment given to our water bodies.

One environmentalist said that the most important function of literature today is to redirect human consciousness to full consideration of its place in a threatened natural world. Man belongs to the earth in much the same way as animals and plants do. The poet Binod Mishra is fulfilling his social responsibilities of an intellectual, by drawing attention to this crisis in his poem *Funeral Song*:

Once a mother to several civilizations
my sterile womb – a mere skeleton
my bed a litter of electronic wastes where
neither wind finds space nor night sneaks in
where frustrated desires of a civilized world
write my funeral song. (39)

The need of 'the act of greening the earth' is necessary for our ecosystem. His poem *Flood* speaks of the 'compunctions' of an ailing agitated river. Flood is a kind of reminder to man who is always at war with Nature.

Thus Binod Mishra's poetic compositions exhibit his rich Emotional Intelligence or Quotient. The last poem *A Happy Man* is an eye opening document for every reader. Happiness cannot

result from relentless struggles, oily manners, friendship with 'people with power' or 'wise' investments in mutual funds and share markets; happiness does not come from bank balance, 'jagran and puja' and grand parties. Happiness in life is an ethical enterprise. Every individual is having a sea of stories, and needs to have a dialogue, as the valuable basic need to be happy.

Works Cited

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Emotional_intelligence

Mallik, R.S. and Jagdish Batra. *A New Approach to Literary Theory and Criticism*. New Delhi; Atlantic Publishers, 2014.

Mishra, Binod. *Multiple Waves*. New Delhi; Adhyayan Publishers, 2017.

—. *Silent Steps and Other Poems*. Delhi; Adhyayan Publishers, 2011.

IJES, Volume LVI, 2019

Controlling Reader's Gaze: Visual Representation and the Object of Violence in *I, Phoolan Devi* and *Bandit Queen*

**Sakshi Singh, **Eva Sharma,
***Madhav Dubey*

Abstract

The representation of sexual violence in text and media not only determines the active (passive) role of the reader and audience but also controls their responses towards such acts. The responses to sexual violence is filtered through and guided by the author/director's representation, and therefore reader/viewer may become a voyeur, a violator, or a victim while undergoing such representations. The article argues that the display of sexual violence can be represented differently in text and film, and the researchers take the example of an autobiography and its cinematic adoption to support their claim. When medium changes the responses to the same act also change-trivialized and consumable representation entails pornographic and seductive viewership while autobiographical narrative conforms to and creates counterpublic of the former viewership. The study problematizes contemporary standpoint-literary as well as critical-which argues for the absence of the author.

***Sakshi Singh**, Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University Katra, Jammu. email: sakshi3344@gmail.com

****Eva Sharma**, Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University Katra, Jammu.

*****Madhav Dubey**, Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University Katra, Jammu.

Instead it claims that author has already negotiated in the hermeneutic process through personalized narratives and cinematic representation.

Keywords: sexual violence, cinematic representation, autobiographical narrative, counterpublic, absence of the author.

The paper claims that the representation of sexual violence in different narratives not only moulds the reader's or audience's role in an act of sexual savagery but it also controls the reader's gaze and reactions to a demonstration of violence against women. The exhibition of sexual violence in various mediums (narratives and cinema) evokes different reactions out of the readers/ audience which are purely initiated by different representations. Laura E. Tanner's essay "Reading Rape: Sanctuary and *The Women of Brewster Place*" (1993), brings up significant issues with respect to different portrayal of sexual violence and the result of these representations focuses on how a reader is impacted and influenced by the power of representation of a rapist and with the defenselessness of the victim. Tanner's article focuses on writings that fuse questionable, hostile, and disrupting representations of violation of body and the different reactions that are generated from the readers indirectly.

Laura E. Tanner in her essay, emphasizes on the works such as, Marcel Duchamp's room-measure fine art, "Etant Donnes: I la chute d'eau, 2 le gaz d'eclairage" (1966), Faulkner's *Sanctuary* (1931) and Gloria Naylor's *The Women of Brewster Place* (1982), discussing that these works majorly exhibit the objectification of a woman and different portrayals of sexual violence which evoke different responses from the reader as a voyeur, violator or a victim, respectively. The canvas painted by Marcel Duchamp, which can be seen just through an expansive hole in a wall, gives the foundation of a scene that is excellent with a blend of charming trees, a hypnotizing waterfall, fake sparkling lights that is by all accounts an ideal portrayal of a natural view, however, the gaze of the viewer is coordinated towards a naked hairless body of a woman whose assaulted vagina is on a full display before the

viewer's eyes (Tanner, 71). The hole in the wall is placed in an ideal arrangement with the woman's vagina so that the viewer's gaze gets unquestionably caught in that specific part of the woman's naked body. The viewer is forcefully made to look at the assaulted body through the imperceptible, undetectable hands that jolt the viewer's head in position every time he/she tries to redirect his/her eyes somewhere else in the painting, hence, making the viewer participate as a voyeur (Tanner, 71). The distinctive boundaries between aesthetics and reality are broken down by representation of sexual savagery as art itself creates a desire in the viewers for violence because they cannot distinguish between the portrayal of that brutality and the actual violation (Tanner, 72) and therefore, unknowingly, partake in attaining the role of a voyeur.

Representation as a tool often becomes significant in playing with the minds of the readers to generate different outcomes and emotions out of them. Every story can be demonstrated through different mediums to attract the audience's attention, along with controlling their perspectives. While a reader or a viewer might be constrained into the trap of becoming voyeur, it can also be forced by the writer to participate in a text's violence. Laura E Tanner deliberates on how William Faulkner in his novel, *Sanctuary* not only makes sure for the readers to see the sexual violence from the point of view of a violator but also influences them to participate as a violator who designs, executes and forces the assault on the casualty by utilizing the narrative for enacting the violation in reader's psyches (Tanner, 72). Tanner exemplifies the role of the reader as a violator when she discusses Faulkner's *Sanctuary* where the whole act of sexual violence is not explicitly described rather, "invokes the conventions of high literature to authorize *Sanctuary* as a work of art rather than a piece of popular fiction, the novel relies upon its readers to create the scandalous story of violation that it only suggests" (Tanner, 72). Therefore, as Tanner mentions "the novel itself continually fails to satisfy the appetite for lurid description that it...creates" (Tanner, 72) and hence, transfers the responsibility to the readers who indirectly

become the creator of the assault and take part in the action as a violator.

The different representations of sexual violence create a medium through which the reader is able to transcend himself beyond the structured realms of the world and this shift becomes visible when the reader identifies with the victim on the screen or in a text. The visual barriers that secure the boundaries between what is real and what is not, vanishes once the reader/audience crosses them with the help of a literary text or a cinematic screening. The representation of sexual violence which Gloria Naylor depicts in *The Women of Brewster Place*, the victim Lorraine is not narrowed down to an object, rather, it is the violator whose body is objectified because the reader in this case, unconsciously enters the body of the victim; through the efficiency of the narrative, the reader identifies with the pain of Lorraine and views the violator through her eyes and the roles of a subject and an object get reversed (Tanner, 87). Instead of giving subtle indications of the episode, Naylor's representation drives her readers in the middle of the act, into the body of the victim, deliberately leaving no chance for them to move towards voyeurism. The "patriarchal gaze" (Tanner, 82) that Laura Mulvey discusses in her essay "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema," is projected outwards from the victim's body, as the readers get locked behind Lorraine's corneas and experience her pain and agony that the violator inflicts upon her. Naylor prevails with regards to conveying the casualty's torment upon the readers who feel her desolation and sufferings, thus, identifying with the victim.

It is examined that distinctive portrayals of sexual violence demonstrate how the reader's gaze is being controlled and maneuvered which generates different responses from them as a voyeur, violator or a victim. Laura E. Tanner's essay centers around the impact of representation of sexual viciousness and how different methods of portraying an incident can impart different roles to the readers. Taking the conception of Tanner as a framework, the paper attempts to analyze how the episode of sexual violence concerning Phoolan Devi is represented differently

in two different mediums, i.e. narrative and the cinematic representation and how these distinct portrayals of the same incident generate different impressions on the readers/viewers with the shifting of the two mediums. Phoolan Devi was born in a low caste family called *Mallahs*, who survived a child marriage, kidnapping and repeated violations of her body, eventually becoming a prominent dacoit. In an attempt to translate her journey on screen, Shekhar Kapoor made a full fledged feature film called *Bandit Queen* (1994), trying to depict the repeated sexual violation that Phoolan Devi had to endure along with facing struggles due to her low caste. However, the film deviates from its real purpose of bringing forth her sufferings to create a sympathizing audience; rather the director succumbs to the stereotyped representation of sexual violence with a sheer focus on objectification of her body. The explicit depiction of sexual violence, overt display of naked bodies reduces the film to a piece of pornography reflecting obscenity. Hossein Fazeli, a popular documentary film maker commented on the film saying, "I have a lot of respect for Kapur and I think he's a very interesting filmmaker, but I think *Bandit Queen* is a bad film; it gets a lot wrong,...At the time it was made, there were a lot of rumors and legends and not a lot of facts" ("The Life and Legend of India's Bandit Queen"). Kapur's direction presents a very serious incident of sexual violence as a grotesque act settling on making his audience virtual rapists by widening their spectrum of imagining a scene of sexual brutality and enjoying the suffering of a woman. For instance, in the film, when Phoolan Devi is diverted by dacoits to the gorge where she is repeatedly raped by Babu Singh Gujar, the Thakur pioneer of the group. The scene demonstrates Babu Singh Gujar—"lying on top of her, his naked bottoms jerking" ("The Great Indian Rape-Trick I"). The scene of violation picturized in the film is offensive where the pain of a woman is being ignored by trapping the viewer's attention on the jerking motions of a naked butt rather than the woman's plight. Such representation of a gruesome act is indicative of the voyeuristic inclinations which it projects through its explicit display of exposed bodies, thus, involving the viewer to participate as

voyeur. Tanner avers, “the violence to which the naked woman’s body bears testimony is reenacted in the guise of art; the viewer becomes a violator whose gaze perpetuates the violence of a crime that reduces the woman to object” (Tanner, 71). In an endeavor to indicate brutality there emerges a requirement for a detailed description of “bodily positions, the angles of assault that serves as a transcription of the violator’s story” (Tanner, 83). The viewers become so involved with the narration that they forget the distinction between the director’s manipulation and their own perception of the scene and helplessly take part as a violator or a voyeur.

It is evident in the film *Bandit Queen* that Kapur makes a deliberative effort to present the incidents of sexual violence of Phoolan Devi in the most blatant and exposed manner so as to gather the attention of his viewers and make them follow his lead. He attains the viewership by giving the audience a vivid imagination of a victim being sexually manhandled, thus trying to entice them with voyeuristic pleasure. In another rape scene of *Bandit Queen*, Phoolan gets gang raped, and the scene is shown to be completely woven out of context as she is brought in by Shriram, the brutal gang leader with the name, “Behmai village” prompting up on the screen, to let the viewers know that the infamous rape is about to happen. By doing this, the director is preparing his audience for a voyeuristic experience by keeping them on an edge and getting them to anticipate the sexual violence. Poor Phoolan is helplessly tied down in a rustic room of a house, when Shriram enters and slowly opens up his *dhoti* in front of her and starts hitting her, due to which she vomits. At this point the condition of Phoolan is ignored by the viewers because they were made to anticipate the rape scene by the subtle hints provided by the director, for instance, when Sriram, in his first meeting with Phoolan eyes her in a lustful manner. Therefore, in the brutal scene, the viewer’s attention gets trapped in the way Sriram forces himself upon the victim with a full view of his underwear, the hints making it apparent that a rape is about to happen and in a few seconds Shriram forces Phoolan to open up her pants, after which he pulls her legs apart and thrusts

into her forcefully, the thrusts being so brutal that Phoolan screams and shouts for him to stop. The scene has such an effect on the viewers that they actually begin deriving pleasure which is apparent when one of the viewers commented, “बहुत ही मजेदार है” (“It is very pleasurable.”) (Subal Chouhan, 2017) and the other simply called it, “Porn” (Binod Kumar, 2017).

Every scream and cries of the victim can be heard here, but these pleas have no effect on the viewers as the main focus of the director is on the sexual angle where for the first few seconds the camera angle is on Sriram's jerking motion of his body. The highlight of the whole scene does not remain Phoolan's helplessness to cringe the audience, rather it becomes an enjoyment for the audiences as Arundhati Roy mentions that, “the Rape of a *nice* Woman (saucy, headstrong, foul-mouthed perhaps, but basically *moral, sexually moral*) - is one thing. The rape of a nasty/perceived-to-be-immoral woman, is quite another. It wouldn't be quite so bad. You wouldn't feel quite so sorry. Perhaps you wouldn't feel sorry at all.” (“The Great Indian Rape-Trick I”). As Duchamp held the viewer's gaze on the “wounded vagina” (Tanner, 71) of the violated woman in his painting which according to him were “a strong pair of hands that jerk the viewer's head into position and hold it there. Similarly, having chosen to look, the viewer is held captive by the artwork, locked into the position of a voyeur without prelude or conscious choice” (Tanner, 71). In accordance with Tanner's analysis, it is perceived that the process of representation often makes the viewers an indispensable part of the film's violent scene by creating the image of the sexual violence occurring in the psyches of the readers. The writer himself puts the scenes of violence in the conscious of the viewers which they expect to be their own interpretation. The portrayal gives crude structure of the savage depiction which the viewer is compelled to disentangle, thus, building those crude structures into a depiction of rape. The director begins giving varied, subtle details of the assault, which lures the readers further and they turn out to be more engaged in pondering how the assault happened instead of why it happened. Shekhar Kapur with his film acts like

an author of Phoolan's life, hence, giving support to the already existing Auteur theory which investigates the ideas of individual imaginative vision and control in film. As mentioned by Sarah Pickering in her article, "Truffaut was quoted as saying, controversially, 'There are no good and bad movies, only good and bad directors.'" ("auteur"), vitally arranges the film as the described yield of an inventive individual and traces the hegemonic power of the director which he misuses by making the audience develops unnecessary voyeuristic desires. The picture begins with the director's vision where he acts as an anchor between the fiction and the audience by presenting them with what he feels would fulfill their insatiate sex drives, showing that the film is governed by presumptuous sexual scenes that manage to become a source of entertainment for the audience.

As a matter of contention, it is examined that the vulgar and indecent exhibition of Phoolan's sexual violence in *Bandit Queen* is often defended by the director with the view that such explicit scenes are a demand of the film to demonstrate the grave reality of the general public and to agitate and escalate the reader towards the representation of sexual severity. At the premiere screening of *Bandit Queen* in Delhi, Shekhar Kapur introduced the film saying, "I had a choice between Truth and Aesthetics. I chose Truth, because Truth is Pure" ("The Great Indian Rape-Trick I"). Again and again, we are assured, in interviews, in reviews, and eventually in writing on the screen before the film begins, "This is a True Story" ("The Great Indian Rape-Trick I"). However, it is argued that there does not seem any compulsion to demonstrate a rape scene in such an explicit way, as the same act could have been effectively proposed. To assume that, the greater part of the viewers in India are critically equipped to comprehend a scene that shows elaborative visuals of violation of a body is not plausible, as many viewers are not gender sensitive. The representation of sexual violence has the power to impose the writer's/director's intentions on the readers/viewers in many ways that they are unable to identify with and, therefore, cannot critically evaluate those pretensions. In many Indian motion pictures, the directors

don't endeavor to popularize a rape scene yet they successfully evoke fear and pain to be felt by the viewer alongside the victim. In a particular scene of *Bandit Queen*, Phoolan Devi is brutally raped by Babu Gujjar, and the camera angle could have been focused upon the victim's facial expressions and severity to evoke outrage from the viewers, yet the director felt the camera point to be centered around a stripped man's butt that demonstrates a jolting movement and transforms a scene of sexual brutality into a scene of erotica just to slant viewers towards voyeurism. In the scene, the violator is seen thrusting himself into Phoolan while some squelching noises can be heard in the distance with his butt on full display for the audience to view as he thrusts himself which makes the audience focus on the rape as an erotica rather than a sexual disparity. Tanner in her essay argues that William Faulkner's novel *Sanctuary* gives the readers suggestive inclinations of sexual violence that further unsettles the reader and powers them to transform into a violator by envisioning a scene of savagery that the author described in equivocal terms, "the narrative provides the raw materials of violent description, while the reader's heightened anticipation of the event constructs those materials into a representation of violence" (Tanner, 75). However, critiquing Tanner's point of view, it is advocated that there can be distinctive kinds of suggestive inclinations to demonstrate sexual severity as each suggestive method cannot compel the readers to end up becoming a voyeur or a violator. The system of suggestive sexual violence has been utilized by the Indian motion pictures where the focus of the camera is around the casualty's frightful facial expressions, the embellishments of lightning, abhorrent chuckle of the violator, a background score that truly brings out the dread out of the viewers. For instance, in movies like *Nirdosh* (1973), the actress is seen entering a room where a man stares at her lustfully from top to bottom and offers her a drink, when she refuses, he forces himself on her and in an attempt to try to get away, she ends up getting trapped between men who eventually, tear up her clothes. She tries to throw a vase at the men approaching her which accidentally breaks an aquarium and

a fish is shown fluttering on the ground, which becomes an obvious suggestion for the sexual violence taking place. While the scene is being conducted, an emotional background score starts playing which further, becomes imperative in making the viewers identify with the victim. Thus, a feeling of empathy can be evoked without being shown explicit naked scenes thus serving the purpose of the director.

The emerging need of representing sexual violence with an intention to defer the seriousness of the crime often arises when there is a certain amount of monetary benefits attached to it. In order to secure a financial assistance, the director does not mind translating a grievous social offense as a voyeuristically pleasurable spectacle, thus, catering to the demand of the bourgeois capitalist society. Shekhar Kapur with his film promotes commercial voyeuristic culture that is harvested in the film industry wanting to grab the attention of the viewers. Arundhati Roy remarks that the movie is indeed, “just a classy version of your run-of-the-mill Rape n’ Retribution theme that our film industry churns out every now and then” (“The Great Indian Rape-Trick I”). Kapur becomes the new author in the contemporary world of cinema by presenting a woman’s life story with the overt representation of her repeated sexual violations in *Bandit Queen* as well as advertising these incidents which become mandatory for the director to grab the audience for his movie. For instance, Kapur in his film, makes Phoolan Devi walk naked in front of a whole village forcefully by Sriram, just to fetch a pot of water from the well, after which the villain grabs her from the hair and parades her in front of men to further show her that women can never raise their heads in a patriarchal society. Her body is completely exposed in front of the villagers as well as the audience watching it in the theatres, making her a vulnerable object which can be dehumanized. The incident, however, did not happen with the real Phoolan Devi as in an interview, she said, the film made her feel like she was being exposed over and over, “I was exposed once, but the film (*Bandit Queen*) exposed me several times” (“Remembering the Life and Times of India’s *Bandit Queen*”). In

this scene, the women of the village are seen taking the children inside of their houses as they feel disgust watching a naked woman walking around, but the men of the village settle down beside the well to watch the humiliation of a helpless woman being unfold. Similarly the audience sitting in their seats do not feel disgust or shame, rather they enjoy the disparity of Phoolan as they consider it merely as entertainment because, “it’s a class thing. If the controls are turned up too high, the hordes will get excited and arrive. To watch the centerpiece. They might even whistle. They won’t bother to cloak their eagerness in concern like we do. This way, it’s fine, It’s just Us and our Imagination. But hey, I have news for you—the hordes *have* heard and are on their way. They’ll even pay to watch. It’ll make money, the centerpiece. It’s hot stuff” (“The Great Indian Rape-Trick I”). Laura Mulvey in her article “Visual Pleasures and Narrative Cinema”, deliberates upon the same thought when she focuses on the manner by which the “unconscious of patriarchal society” has influenced film to frame. She discusses scopophilia where the viewers disassociate themselves from the onscreen persona by generalizing them and subsequently, infer voyeuristic delights. The viewers are under the control of the gaze of the director which in a roundabout way turns into their own gaze. The director, too, is a capitalist who exploits the audience by catering to the materialistic and voyeuristic feelings to gain capital. Like a capitalist, the director attaches to the individual needs by supplying the viewers with explicit sexual scenes that indirectly entices the audience, making them participate in an exchange economy where in return the viewers offer money to the director. As Roy puts it, “every time the Director has been faced with something that could disrupt the simple, prefabricated calculations of his cloying morality play, it has been tampered with and *forced* to fit” (“The Great Indian Rape-Trick I”). Therefore, a grave societal issue becomes an instrument for business achievement regardless, the motion picture prevails with regards to gathering more and more viewership.

The autobiographical work of Phoolan Devi, on the other hand, adapts a different course of representing sexual violence as it is

based on a personal experience, which she tries to put forward in her work *I, Phoolan Devi* in 1996. Unlike the movie *Bandit Queen* which shows explicit rape scenes in the form of an erotica, the novel projects different representations of the same sexual violence aimed to feel empathetic towards the victim. The authentic description by Phoolan in the novel *I, Phoolan Devi*, acts as a counter narrative to the movie, *Bandit Queen* in which a true portrayal of sexual violence is accounted to attract sympathy from the readers, rather than tempting them towards voyeurism, as depicted in its cinematic representation. In *I, Phoolan Devi*, Phoolan's voice reaches the hearts of the readers, who feel nauseated at a thirty year old man assaulting a ten year old child in the name of marriage. A moderately aged man seeking a child, who can barely comprehend the rationales of life, and telling her frightful things like, "...we are married, I'll show you what married people do...Don't be scared. I am going to teach you a new game..." (Devi, 97). For a young child who only knew how to play with dolls, was now solicited to take an interest in the consummation of a marriage. The way this occurrence is described through the portrayal, leaves the reader bewildered and irritated beyond imagination. A reader in his review of the novel claims that, "while I was reading this book, I'm into tears....she suffered a lot of humiliation and hatred from high caste men..." (Manmohan, Amazon book reviewer). Phoolan Devi with her narrative counters the on screen portrayal of her life by concentrating on the emotional aspects, she attempts to make an impact on readers where they are compelled to think about the repercussions of the violence.

Phoolan Devi offers her readers the true glimpse of her past, sufferings and violations in an effort to rile up the readers, in order them to feel the extremities of the pain of a rape victim; her biopic initiates the process of making the reader aware of her situation and sympathize with her. In one of the instances, Phoolan talks about a time when the Sarpanch's son and a group of people invaded her home one night and raped her in front of her family. She states, "my spirit flickered like a lamp and began to fade. All

the cries and the grunts and all the insults seemed far away. Two bodies; two hurried rapes. I shut my eyes tight and gritted my teeth so hard my gums bled” (Devi, 172). Devi, discusses her emotional life history which is loaded with suppositions and sentiments that really help the readers connect with her in the most empathizing way possible. Phoolan getting raped aggressively is already a blow to the minds of the readers which is substantiated by one of the readers who writes, “during reading this book, it was not very easy for me to continue as it shows harsh and merciless life...” (Masayoshi Tamura, Amazon book reviewer) but knowing that she was raped in front of her parents and siblings, gains her certain affinity from her readers. Ullman in *Talking about sexual assault: Society's response to survivors*, highlights that, “sexual assault is a traumatic experience for any woman. Furthermore, many victims who tell others about their assault must endure a “second assault” in the form of negative reactions, such as victim blaming and disbelief. One third to two thirds of victims may experience such reactions, which have negative mental and physical health effects on the victims.” Phoolan Devi shares the same experience when her mother rebukes her for being sexually violated, “what did I deserve to have a daughter like you, Phoolan? Why did I bring you into this world? I'm ashamed!” (Devi, 172). Due to the representation in the novel the reader may identify with these social conditions that prevail in our society as the book “...shows exploitative nature of our patriarchal society” (Saket Bihari, Amazon book reviewer), and the writer makes sure to dwell the feelings of such situations in the reader which in turn makes them understand Phoolan's condition in a much compassionate way.

The novel by Phoolan Devi further counters the film *Bandit Queen* by emphasizing on episodes which were fabricated only according to the director's will with no authenticity in real life. As observed in the movie, an irrelevant aspect is shown where the gang leader Babu Gujjar is lying on top of Phoolan with his naked butt on display and moving in a jerking motion, implying the act of sexual violence in the most explicit manner. But the novel

describes no such incident, only mentioning that Babu Gujjar merely threatened to rape her after which Vickram Mallah shoots him dead. Devi, humiliated and insulted at the false concoction remarked, (*Pioneer, August 15 [1994]*) they're no better than the men who raped her. This producer/director duo" ("The Great Indian Rape-Trick I"). The Behmai scene in the novel is also written down in an implicit manner where Phoolan Devi's presents herself as a vulnerable and defenseless:

I heard people there as I was thrown to the ground. Then it started...Shri Ram was the first, then the others, *Thakurs*, anyone who was around. I heard Shri Ram encouraging them, telling them to use me, to take advantage of me while they had me tied up like that. They passed me from man to man...For the first hour, I still had the strength to beg. I implored Kusuma to help me. I couldn't see her but I could hear her voice, as dry as a crow's. "Call your husband to save you now!" she cackled. "You were so proud, you thought you were so clever, now you're getting what you deserved!" (Devi, 369).

It is implored that the author presents the victim as a silent being who has no right to speak but the violation that was being forced on her was righteous in every way. The readers are forcibly put in the middle of the rape scene which in turn gives rise to the discomfiting proximity of two human faces locked in violent struggle which is affected not by eroticism but by the pain inflicted on one and suffered by the other. According to Tanner, " 'the silent image of woman' is haunted by the power of a thousand suppressed screams; that image comes to testify not to the woman's feeble acquiescence to male signification but to the brute force of the violence required to "tie" the woman to her place as 'bearer of meaning'" (Tanner, 576). In the novel, the reader's gaze is focused inside the woman herself, they are bolted into the victim's body, situated behind Phoolan's corneas, from where they start to experience the same violence that destroys the woman's life,:

I even begged them to kill me as well. They fell on me like wolves. They dragged me and picked me up and I fell and

they dragged me up by my hair again. I saw things I would never be able to forget. I saw crowds of faces and I was naked in front of them. Demons came without end from the fires of Naraka to rape me. I prayed to the gods and goddesses to help me, to let me live, to let me run through the damp fields, climb the ravines, to let me have my revenge and slay the red-haired demon. Then the darkness returned, and another man was grunting over my body, an old man, a spirit sweating with the stench of death (Devi, 370).

With a specific goal to catch the reader's gaze, the writer utilizes only those words and expressions that, he knows are effective in influencing the readers to feel the victim's anguish through imagination. With a detailed description of her own miserable condition, Phoolan Devi as an author compels the readers into the same shoes as hers consequently, making it unimaginable for them to get away from the universe of Phoolan without feeling pain and desolation. The novel gives a detailed description as to how Phoolan is left violated and naked on the ground; the sun burning up the wounds given by her perpetrators and she was frantic and powerless because she could not do anything to protect her body, leaving her spirit devastated. She even seeks help from another woman, "I beg you, sister, cover me. Please cover me. I too am a woman like you. But the woman disappeared and Shri Ram was standing in her place" (Devi, 370). The writer tries to heap torment upon torment, each one an ordeal of distress that the reader may contrast with his or her own particular experience and then leaves them to imagination and hence, "...brings the reader to the edge of experience only to abandon him or her to the power of the imagination..." (Tanner, 578). The author contemplates the readers to do his work for him as they begin filling the gaps with their imaginations of the victim's agony that the writer powers upon them. Any woman, as a reader, might feel associated with Phoolan's assault since they live in a world where experiences such as these attacks, could happen to them as well. As per Marxists, even writing itself is a social establishment and has a particular ideological capacity, in view of

the foundation and belief system of the writer. The reader is made to get zapped into the life of Phoolan from where he begins to experience same brutality as the protagonist. As Laura E. Tanner says, "Situating within the margins of the violator's story of rape, the reader is able to read beneath the bodily configurations that make up its text, to experience the world-destroying violence" (Scarry, 53) required to appropriate the victim's body as a sign of the violator's power" (Tanner, 577). The text is deeply rooted in the socio-political context of our times and therefore, the author's ideology in the form of the representation, dictates the text and the text controls the ideologies of the readers. The writer strips the reader of his opportunity and pins them down to the victim's body conveying an experience of rape, where it doesn't make a difference which gender they really have a place with, yet they associate themselves with the victim. In another incident of the novel, Phoolan is sexually assaulted by a group of policemen who, on the orders of the Thakurs arrest her and blame her for theft. This was a mere excuse to lock up Phoolan and humiliate her and the family in front of the whole village. The policemen addressed to her as a "little whore", who, "won't say anything" (Devi, 194). She was stripped naked in front of her father in the cell, "they didn't take me anywhere. They stripped me right there in the cell, tearing off my sari, my blouse and my petticoat. They made me stand there naked in front of my father... They put my hands under the legs of the chair and one of them sat down on it... I could not say how many of them were there. They did not see my face and I did not see their faces. My eyes were shut like stones. I was a stone" (Devi, 195). According to Tanner, the author here, "...invokes a referential system that focuses on the bodily manifestations of pain" (Tanner, 578). Phoolan cannot feel the pain that was being exacted on her, rather she feels like a "stone". The writer shoves the torment of Phoolan Devi in the readers, every one of them being loaded with misery that the writer estimates, reader would compare with his very own experiences. The readers are compelled to fill in the spaces of torment that the victim is persevering by putting himself/herself into the

shoes of Phoolan Devi. The readers, therefore begin to possess the body of the victim which drives them to experience Phoolan's agony.

The paper explores and concludes that there exist different representations of sexual violence that can influence a reader's mind in various ways by emitting different sentiments. The representations by the author or director bring forth a situation through which a reader may generate feelings depending upon their own psyches, however, the process of representation makes use of various techniques to get the viewer/reader involved in the respective narratives. The paper observes through the analysis of Laura E. Tanner's essay that a representation of sexual violence can evoke different responses out of an individual reader, as a voyeur, violator or a victim which completely depends on the representation of sexual violence. It is also analyzed how different representation techniques effect the minds of the readers and the viewers when the medium shifts between the narrative and the screen with reference to the autobiography *I Phoolan Devi* and the cinematic representation named *The Bandit Queen*. On one hand, the director of the movie represents sexual violence as something outrageous and explicit giving it the fervor of pornography, promoting voyeurism, on the other hand, the author of the novel presents the same scenes in different manner evoking altogether different reactions of empathy from the readers.

It is further observed that the director proves himself to be a part of the capitalist bourgeoisie patriarchal structure catering to satisfy the desperate sexual demands of the audience rather than employing suggestive techniques to serve the purpose. It is further examined that the reader or the viewer is also not critically equipped to comprehend the explicit scenes of sexual violence on screen as a reflection of the actual reality, rather the audience involuntarily get driven to enjoy the representation as voyeurs. Moreover, it is also explored that the novel, *I Phoolan Devi* acts a counter narrative to the on screen representation giving the actual account of Phoolan Devi, influencing the readers to associate with her predicament.

Works Cited

- Bandit Queen*. Dir. Shekhar Kapur. Perf. Seema Biswas. Kaleidoscopic Entertainment, Channel 4, 1996. Film.
- Binod Kumar. (2017). Re: *Phoolan Devi Bandit Queen Parte 1 Legendado PtBr* [Video file]. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e3LdPPkm334>
- Bloom, Harold. *William Faulkner's Sanctuary*. New York: Chelsea House, 1988.
- Devi, Phoolan, Marie-Therese Cuny and Paul Rambali. *I, Phoolan Devi: The Autobiography of India's Bandit Queen*. London: Warner Books, 1997.
- Duchamp, Marcel. *Etant Donnes: I la chute d'eau, 2 le gaz d'eclairage* 1966, Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia.
- Iser, Wolfgang. *The Act of Reading: A Theory of Aesthetic Response*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978.
- Manmohan. *I, Phoolan Devi*, Phoolan Devi, Marie-Therese Cuny and Paul Rambali. Amazon, 26 November, 2017. Retrieved from <<https://www.amazon.in/Phoolan-Devi-Autobiography-Indias-Bandit/dp/07515196>>
- Masayoshi Tamura. *I, Phoolan Devi*, Phoolan Devi, Marie-Therese Cuny and Paul Rambali. Amazon, 15 February, 2016. Retrieved from <<https://www.amazon.in/Phoolan-Devi-Autobiography-Indias-Bandit/dp/07515196>>
- Mulvey, Laura. "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema." *Screen* 16, No. 4 (1975): 6-18.
- Naylor, Gloria. *The Women of Brewster Place*. New York: Penguin Books, 1983.
- Nirdosh*. Dir. S.M. Sagar. Perf. Yogita Bali. Navsampati Productions, 1973. Film.
- Pickering, Sarah. "Auteur." *The Chicago School of Media Theory*. 2010. Retrieved from <<https://lucian.uchicago.edu/blogs/mediatheory/keywords/auteur/>>
- "Remembering the Life and Times of India's Bandit Queen." *telesur*. 10 August, 2017. Retrieved from <<https://>>

www.telesurtv.net/english/news/Remembering-the-Life-and-Times-of-Indias-Bandit-Queen-20170810-0033.html>

Roy, Arundhati. "The Great Indian rape-Trick I." Arundhati Roy. Retrieved from <<http://arundhati-roy.blogspot.in/2004/11/great-indian-rape-trick-i.html>>

Saket Bihari. *I, Phoolan Devi*, Phoolan Devi, Marie-Therese Cunny and Paul Rambali. Amazon, 7 September, 2015. Retrieved from <<https://www.amazon.in/Phoolan-Devi-Autobiography-Indias-Bandit/dp/07515196>>

Snyder, Michael. "The Life and Legend of India's Bandit Queen." Roads & Kingdom. Nathan Thornburgh, 13 November, 2017. Web. Retrieved from <<http://roadsandkingdoms.com/2017/indias-bandit-queen/>>

Subal Chouhan.(2017). Re: *Phoolan Devi Bandit Queen Parte 6 Legendado PtBR* [Videofile]. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xGSLvWYIUN4>

Tanner, Laura. E. "Reading Rape: Sanctuary and *The Women of Brewster Place*." *Critical Perspectives Past and Present*. Ed. Henry Louis Gates, Jr. and K.A. Appiah. New York: Amistad Literary Series, 1993. 71-89.

IJES, Volume LVI, 2019

The Focus on a Subaltern and the Voice of a Reinvented Mythic Figure in Mahasweta Devi's *Draupadi*

**Satyendra Kumar*

Abstract

Mahasweta Devi champions the cause of the tribals as well as women in general. In this paper a tribal woman Dopadi's story of sexual exploitation has been studied first as a subaltern and then as a mythic figure in relation to Draupadi. However, this tribal Dopadi is a revolutionary for whom her sexuality becomes the means of harsh indictment of an exploitative social system. In the epic Draupadi serves as a singular example of polyandry as husbands are pluralised. The tribal Dopadi is a hapless victim of sexual cruelty. Unlike the classical Draupadi this Dopadi stands up and castigates the male chauvinism. She has been reinvented for her invincible spirit.

Keywords: Notorious, Subaltern, Hegemony, Crucial, Stereotype, Feminism.

As a social activist with an acute sense of Indian history, Mahasweta Devi has interrogated into the intersection of politics, gender and class. She is incessantly engaged in portraying the inner lives of the tribal communities and landless labourers in her novels, short stories and plays. Her powerful and haunting tales of exploitation and struggle offer us a rich site of feminist discourse. In this paper I will be reading "Draupadi" the story that

***Dr. Satyendra Kumar**, Asst. Prof. Dept. of English, St. Columba's College, Hazaribag. E-mail- drsatya.hzb@gmail.com

first appeared in 'Agnigarbha' (Womb of Fire) a collection of loosely connected short political narratives. In the introduction Mahasweta tries to make her objective clear: "Life is not mathematics and the human being is not made for the sake of politics." (Mahasweta, 8) Here an attempt will be made to explore into Devi's venture of rewriting an episode from the great epic Mahabharata. As a feminist response to the myth of Draupadi she invents a cultural history and shows how this deconstructs the representation of women in cultures, images, stereotypes and archetypes. Significantly enough, the politics of interpretation has most often been the politics of gender.

The force of the story lies in its grounding in the subaltern's body, the female body which is only exploited. In the reinvented mythic image of Draupadi, the body of Draupadi figures forth the unutterable ugliness and cruelty as she articulates a truth that speaks of her situation. The relationship between the tribal and classical characters of Draupadi, the gaze and voice of the subaltern Dopadi at the close of the story, the reading of Senanayak's proper name Arijit and Dopadi's unusual employment of the term "Counter" are some of the focal points of my paper.

Dopadi becomes the medium through which the nature of women's exploitation within the patriarchal structure of family and society is explored. As Gayatri Chakraborty Spivak in "A Literary Representation of the Subaltern" says that Mahasweta Devi has always been "gripped by the individual in history." She writes of what may be called "history imagined into fiction". (Spivak: 1993: 95) The plausibility of Draupadi is that she could have existed as a subaltern in a specific historical moment imagined and tested by other assumptions. The term subaltern is used to denote the category of people who are subordinate in terms of class, caste, age, gender and office.

In her trenchant, powerful & satiric fiction she has carved a niche for herself as a long time champion for the political, social and economic advancement of the tribals whom she characterizes as "Suffering spectators of the India that is travelling towards the last century". (Spivak: 1987: 35) She has a penchant for interweaving

myth and history with the prevalent condition of tribal lives and shows how their lives are being exploited by society. In an interview in April 1983, she told Samik Bandopadhyaya: “a writer should document his own time and history. The socio-economic history of human development has always fascinated me. So I chose to resurrect older periods in history in their immediate physicality, as if they were nothing less than contemporary”. In “Draupadi” she has invented the mythic figure of Draupadi to highlight a legacy of the exploitation and subjugation of tribal people and erode the foundation on which the patriarchal society stands.

The protagonist Dopadi is a gendered subaltern who is disposed of, discarded, rejected and humiliated. As Jasbir Jain observes “Gender continues to govern the individual’s interaction with society and gender is both a social and cultural construct”. (Jain: 2002:) As a tribal she is subjected to double “jeopardy”.

“Draupadi” is perhaps one of Mahasweta Devi’s most widely known stories that has been reprinted and translated in several collections. Like most of her works it is set among the tribal communities in Bengal. Draupadi or the aboriginal Dopadi (as her name appears in dialect) is a rebel, hunted down by the government in their attempt to subjugate these groups. The government callously employs all forces available to them like kidnapping, murder and rape and a tribal death in custody is invariably known as an accident. But Dopadi is not so easily tamed. After continuous days of rape and abuse, deprived of food and water, the story ends with a magnificent final scene in which she musters up the courage to face her abusers naked and bloody, but fiercely strong, hiding an awesome rebellion in her starved belly.

The seriousness of Mahasweta’s purpose while writing this story stands in stark contrast to the simple language used by the writer. For instance, “Now Dopadi spreads her arms, raised her face to the sky, turns towards the forest and adulates with the force of her entire being. Once three times. At the third burst the birds in the trees at the outskirts of the forest awake and flap

their wings. The echo of the call travels far. (Mahasweta: 2002: 34)

Devi's language perhaps must have been very hard to translate. That's why the English intentionally startles the reader into an awareness that there are words and world beyond the English translation.

Devi's stories are remarkable for the fact that she never indulges in sentimentality. The hard life story of the subaltern who is oppressed by her master/mistress, is conveyed convincingly, as the rape, the most heinous violence by the authorities of the state. Whenever there is war, there is the rape and abuse of women. Right from the Trojan war to the Middle East conflict, this has been a tactic of war. Rape is the worst female degradation, that can happen to a woman for it at once strips her off honour and humanity. Devi's narrative reminds one of Sadat Hasan Manto's story "Open it" where a young girl is raped by young men of her community. But unlike Manto in "Draupadi" the unveiling of clothes highlights immense female power though, both the writers employ the stripping off of the dress to create a dramatic climax. But they convey contrasting ideas about the sexual violence and degradation of women.

In Spivak's question "Can the subaltern speak?" the encouragement for the efforts of the subaltern studies group led by Ranjit Guha is implied. But she also criticizes them. As Ranjit Guha has appropriated Gramscie's term 'subaltern' (the economically dispossessed) in order to locate and reestablish a voice or collective locus of agency in India in the post-colonial scene. Subalterns should be allowed to speak for themselves. (<http://postcolonialweb.org/poldiscourse/spivak>) A subaltern like the tribal Draupadi speaks out and reclaims a cultural identity that reinscribes her oppressed position in society.

In Devi's text Draupadi/Dopadi Mejhen, is a tribal revolutionary for whom her sexuality becomes the means of a harsh indictment of an exploitative social system. After being gang-raped in custody, she quickly turns the terrible wounds her breasts into a counter

offensive. Devi has chosen her from the plethora of renewed images of mythic women whom she recreates. The tribal Draupadi is the “object” of her feelings instead of simply being viewed as the “other” and portrayed as the object of male desires. Many feminist writers have employed different textual strategies to restore women to their rightful place in literature. The feminist response to myths forms a vital focus of critical distance. Highlighting the significance of recasting the past tradition and creating a new history for women, Adrienne Rich observes: “Revision, the act of looking leack, of seeing with fresh eyes, of entering an old text from a new critical direction, is for women more than a chapter in cultural history, it is an act of survival...” (Humm:1986)

Nabaneeta Dev Sen, another Bengali writer has rewritten many epic tales. In a series of stories, she reinvents the epic women like Amba, Caushalya, Sita, Suparnakha and Shakuntala. Most of the time, the epic women are used as pawns to prepare the grounds for the heroic deeds.

Mahasweta Devi’s while rewriting the episode from Mahabharata grant Dopadi a freedom of speech. In the epic Draupadi serves as a singular example of polyandry, a scarcely found marriage system in the Indian society. She becomes the wife of the five sons of Pandu. In the patriarchal context Draupadi becomes singular whereas her husbands are pluralized. The story questions this singularity because Dopadi is placed first as a comradely activist monogamous marriage and later in a situation of multiple rape. The classical character of Draupadi is used as a pawn to pave the way for heroic deeds. As a wife among husbands, she only highlights the male glory. Like Sita in Ramayana and Helen in The Trojan War she is shown to be the cause of the crucial battle. Her eldest husband Yudhistira is on the verge of losing her in the game of dice. When Duryodhan the enemy of chief begins to pull her saree, she prays to Lord Krishna to save her honour. As divine miracle, she sees herself to be infinitely clothed and consequently, she cannot be publicly stripped off.

The reconstructed mythic figure of Draupadi foregrounds a tribal named Dopadi, who was not entitled a heroic name. The pious name was given to her by the Brahmin mistress. The aboriginal name signifies the mark of her distance from the upper rung of the ladder. The onset of the story clearly puts things in proper perspective.

An exchange between two medallioned *uniforms*.

First Medallion. What's this, a tribal called Dopadi? The list of names I brought has nothing like it!..

Second: Draupadi Mejhen. Born the year her mother threshed rice at Surja Sahu (killed)'s at Bakuli. Surja Sahu's wife has given her the name.

Second: Most notorious female. *Long wanted in many...*
(Devi: 16).

The entire action of the story revolves round the search for Dopadi until she is apprehended. The last disastrous scene finds her in a situation when she becomes a hapless victim of the most atrocious sexual cruelty. Devi offers one of most terrifying and stark critique of the dominant cultural perceptions. The story inhabits the space of the 'subaltern' that has feminism inscribed within it. Devi works actively to move the subaltern Draupadi into hegemony and she in turn, is pushed towards another episteme that results in an awakening of a reinvented mythic figure in the gendered subaltern. Unlike the classical Draupadi, the tribal woman, does not seek for a benign help of the almighty, she discovers an ingenious way to counter sexual battering because of her moral strength. She is brought to the fore as figure of refusal as she blatantly explodes the Hindu traditional imagination of the female.

The tribal Draupadi "loves her husband, Dulna, more than her blood" (p. 25). When we first see her, she is thinking of washing her hair. She is so tactful that she never responds when she hears her own name being called. She "has seen in the panchayat office just today the notice for the reward in her name." (p. 27) The reinvented mythic figure of Draupadi adores her ancestors.

“Drapadi’s blood was the pure unadulterated black blood of Champabhumi. From Champa to Bakuli the blood could have been contaminated Dopadi felt proud of her forefathers. They stood guard over their women’s blood in black armour” (p. 31). It is fit to remember that the classical Draupadi’s honour could not be saved by the elderly Bhism Pitamah. Here we come across the reconstructed mythic figure who leaves an indelible mark on the minds of the readers.

Drapadi sits up as soon as she heard ‘move! And asks, where do you want me to go?

Drapadi fires her red eyes on the tent, says, come, I’ll go.

Drapadi stands up. She pours the water down on the ground. Tears her piece of cloth with her teeth.

...The commotion is as if the alarm had sounded in a prison. Senanayak walks out surprised and sees Draupadi, naked, walking towards him in the bright sunlight with her head high. The nervous guards trail behind (pp. 35-36).

When Draupadi stands finally fixed and naked in front of the police officer, “thigh and pubic hair matted with dry blood. Two breaths, two wounds” (p. 36). Even after being gang-raped in custody, her indomitable spirit remains intact. It seems as if a phoenix like Draupadi dies in the rape and a new figure comes out of the ashes. Significantly enough her weakness becomes her greatest strength.

“Drapadi” comes closer. Stands with her hand on her hip, laughs and says, the object of your search, Dopadi Mejhen. You asked them to make me up, don’t you want to see how they made me?

Drapadi’s black body comes even closer...

Her ravaged lips bleed as she begins laughing. Draupadi wipes the blood on her palm and says in a voice that is terrifying, sky splitting, and sharp as her ululation, What’s the use of Clothes? You can strip me, but how can you clothe me again? Are you a man?

...What more can you do? Come on, Counter me-Come on, Kounter me...?

Draupadi pushes Senanayak with her two mangled breasts, and for the first time Senanayak is afraid to stand before an unarmed target, terribly afraid? (p. 37)

After undergoing the third degree in violence, She musters up courage to speak if not for herself at least for her comrades. A subaltern like the tribal Draupadi speaks out and reclaims a cultural identity that reinscribes her oppressed position in the patriarchal society.

Spivak's essay "Can the Subaltern speak?" perhaps best exemplifies Devi's concern for the processes that invite post-colonial studies to ironically re-inscribe and co-opt neo-colonial imperatives of political domination, economic exploitation and cultural erase. Draupadi's political/sexual enemy is Senanayak. It is not for nothing that he is named Arijit one who is victorious over enemy. It is his voice that gives Draupadi the courage to speak if not for herself at least for her comrades. With the entry of this subaltern at the close of the story her gaze and voice, the army officer is baffled and outwitted. Despite the fact that she does not know English, she uses the English word "Kounter" in an ingenious way. In her introduction Spivak argues, "In "Draupadi" what is represented as an erotic object is transformed into an object of torture and revenge where the line between (hetero) sexuality and gender violence begins to waver". (Spivak: 2002: vii)

After being gang-raped in custody, she emerges as a terrifying super object Devi perhaps never conceived of the modern story as a refutation of the ancient. One must agree with Spivak when she says "Drapadi is (as heroic as) Draupadi. She is also what Draupadi- written into the patriarchal and authoritative sacred text as proof of male power-could not be. Dopadi is at once a palimpsest and a contradiction."

In her interview "Telling History" Gayatri Chakrovorty Spivak observes that Draupadi was a fighter: "She fought in the end in a woman's way-Senanayak was afraid in front of a woman's body". (p. 18) It is not for nothing that M. Devi declares in unequivocal terms: "By just making them non-existent they do not exist for her, all this, male stuff, they are trying to do this, by mass

raping, by gang raping also, you just cannot destroy a woman's spirit, she does not recognize their existence, they are non-existent for her" (Spivak: 2002: Introduction).

And this is precisely what makes the gaze of a subaltern her counter offensive. This re-invented mythic figure of Draupadi will always be one of the memorable creations of M. Devi's cultural activism. The invincible spirit of the reconstructed Dopadi has secured a place for itself in the annals of sub-altern literature.

Works Cited

- Devi, Mahasweta, *Agnigarbha* Calcutta. 1978.
- , *Imaginary Maps* Trans. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, Calcutta: Thema. 1993.
- , "Draupadi" in *Breast Stories* Calcutta: Seagul, 2002.
- Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty. "A Literary Representation of the Subaltern" *Subaltern Studies*. New Delhi Oxford University Press, 1987.
- Jain, Jasbir, *Writing Women Across Cultures*, New Delhi and Jaipur Rawat Publications, 2002.
- <http://postcolonialweb.org/poldiscourse/spivak/spivak2.html>
- Humm, Maggie. *Feminist Criticism: Women as Contemporary Critics*. Great Britain: The Harvester Press, 1986.
- "Telling History" Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak Interview M. Devi in *Chotti Munda and His Arrow*, trans. & Introduced by Spivak 2002.

IJES, Volume LVI, 2019

**Speaking Silence: A Comparative Study
of Rajinder Singh Bedi's "Lajwanti",
and Amrita Pritam's *Pinjar***

**Iffat Shaheen*

Abstract

The holocaust that followed in the wake of partition of the country is considered one of the bloodiest upheavals of history that claimed innumerable lives and loss of property. There is no doubt that irrespective of gender, everyone shared a collective memory of the pathos of partition, but it is also a fact that women's experience varied from that of men as they had to endure not only the destruction of their homes, displacement and violence but also abduction, rape, kidnapping, forced marriages. They were treated as symbols of community's 'honour' and not as 'individuals'.

The voices of abducted women during partition were lost under the dominant ideologies of martyrdom, purity and nationhood. The present paper intends to focus on the depiction of voices and the varied experiences faced by women in Rajinder Singh Bedi's "Lajwanti" and Amrita Pritam's *Pinjar*. In these novels the central characters negotiate their multiple identities in order to survive the events of partition. Here the possibilities for survival in the aftermath of violent experience and the difficulties faced by women have been explored.

Keywords: partition, holocaust, collective-memory, displacement, multiple identities, rehabilitation.

***Iffat Shaheen**, Research Scholar, Dept.of English, M.U. Bodh-Gaya

The most awaited dawn of Indian independence, along with the gaiety of freedom also brought the gloom of partition of sub-continent. The day of joy came with the severed limbs and blood drenched bodies of innocent men, women and children. The holocaust that followed in the wake of partition of the country is considered one of the bloodiest upheavals of history that claimed innumerable innocent lives and loss of property. The Hindu and Muslim families, who lived in unity became the victims of bloodshed and treachery, making the partition one of the worst nightmares in the history of Indian independence. In fact, this event which resulted in the barbarity of the most heinous kind and in the massacre of not fewer than two million people, was terribly tragic and heart-rending because it was deliberate, and not a natural disaster like earthquake or flood. Partition has left unforgettable impact on people's life as it was not just the division of the territory, it divided each singular human heart. It brought untold suffering, tragedy, trauma, pain and violence to communities who had lived together for years. Krishna Sobti has well defined partition as something which is "difficult to forget but dangerous to remember." (Butalia 1998: 269)

There is no doubt that irrespective of gender, everyone shared a collective memory of the pathos of partition, but it is also a fact that women were the worst sufferers of the whole process because violence is generally instigated by men and in most of the cases women are at the receiving end of violence as its victims – whether they are raped, widowed, killed or whose children and husbands are sacrificed at the altar of religion. This has been aptly summed up in the following lines:

I am a woman
I want to raise my voice
because communalism affects me.
In every communal riot
my sisters are raped
my children are killed
my men are targeted

my world is destroyed
and then
I am left to pick pieces
to make a new life. (Mallik 2007: 19)

On both sides of newly created borders women were kidnapped, abducted, raped, and brutally killed. Women in this communal violence became the most vulnerable and least protected victims. In these incidences women were subjects to “stripping, parading naked, mutilating and disfiguring, tattooing or branding the breasts and genitalia with triumphal slogans, amputating breasts, knifing open the womb, raping of course killing fetuses...all these atrocities have a symbolic meaning in regard to the male’s logic of domination; to humiliate the women, her family or their community, to desexualize women, to mark them as ‘polluted’ or to highlight that their men were unable to protect them. (Menon and Bhasin 1998: 43-44) They were treated as symbols of community’s ‘honour’ and not as ‘individuals’. The male of both the communities took revenge by committing most barbarous crimes on the womenfolk of opposite community. Robbing them of their honour becomes the means through which male power is destabilized, community’s identity is threatened and the nation’s pride is defeated. Susan Brown Miller has rightly stated:

In one act of aggression, the collective spirit of women and of the nation is broken, leaving a reminder long after the troops depart. And if she survives the assault, what does the victim of wartime rape become to her people? Evidence of the enemy’s bestiality. Symbol of the nation’s defeat. A pariah. Damaged property. A pawn in subtle wars of international propaganda. (News week.com)

Women faced violence not only from the men of other community but also by their own community, men, and families. Lenny, the protagonist of *Ice Candy Man* emphatically states that women’s suffering during partition “had less to do with fate than the will of men.” (Sidhwa 1988: 222) In many cases death was preferred than living with such kind of dishonouring atrocities. Many women committed suicide in order to avoid being tortured,

raped or abducted by an enemy. Many women were even killed by their male relatives in order to 'protect' their family honour.

In the aftermath of the division, Indian women suffered once more as the newly independent states of India and Pakistan attempted to reinforce their legitimacy by forcibly recovering abducted women, a process in which women's own wishes were deemed irrelevant. Women, on whom the operation was to be implemented, were nothing more than insignificant sites, mere pawns with no choice in the matter. They were considered as objects of men, officials and countries and had to obey them. Furthermore many of the women who desired to be reunited with their families had to suffer the pangs of rejection by their communities which viewed their experiences too shameful to facilitate reintegration. In conflict women suffered as an icon of their community but in post-violence phase women who had been victimized by the men of outer community were revictimized at the hands of their own male relatives. The suffering of such women has been given words by Anees Qidwai in her autobiography *Azadi ki Chhaon Mein*, which echoes the predicament of a young girl who had been sexually abused by several men and then 'restored' to India. She writes:

Today she sits by my side, silent, a question-mark. Her terrified, startled eyes ask me and call out to every human being to tell who [what] she is?...she has lost all hopes, agility,...youthfulness...beauty. Will readers be able to tell us whether we acted criminally in bringing them back? Or whether it would have been a [greater] sin not to have brought them? (Pandey 1994: 217)

The depth of the human morass of the partition massacre is never likely to be fathomed to the full. The ultimate experiences of the people during partition is indescribable and beyond words. It is beyond the power of human agents to represent it except in fragments. But indeed some commendable attempts have been made in the literary field. As literature is the reflection of society and lived reality, it was no wonder that after the initial shock, the writers gave vent to this unmanageable grief and trauma through

their writings. The fiction produced during this period answered a range of need—the initial response of shock, outlet for grief, coming to terms and healing process. Such fiction attempts to assimilate the enormity of the experiences and presents the history of the live experiences of the common people who lived through the partition. The trauma of partition continues to engage the consciousness of the writers of the Indian sub-continent even today. The tragedy of partition has given way to literature in almost all languages and genre, of the Indian sub-continent particularly Hindi, Urdu, Bengali and Punjabi and other vernacular languages. Few of the literature describing the human cost of independence and partition comprises Khushwant Singh's *Train to Pakistan*, several short stories such as *Toba Tek Singh* by Saadat Hassan Mantoo, Urdu poem such as "Sub-e Azadi" by Faiz Ahmad Faiz, Bhisham Sahani's *Tamas*, Manohar Malgonkar's *A Bend in the Ganges*, Bapsi Sidhwa's *Ice-Candy Man*. *Freedom at Midnight* is a non-fictional work by Larry Collins and Dominique Lapierre that chronicled the events surrounding the first Independence Day celebration in 1947. There are also a few films related to the independence and partition like *Garam Hava*, *Tamas*, *Pinjar*, *Earth* to name a few.

However, "Lajwanti" stands out from rest of the other stories written on partition as Bedi has not restricted himself only to the depiction of rape, abduction and dishonor of women like other male writers but he has gone deep to look into their psychological impact. He had not only portrayed the victimization of women but also their mental trauma—their pain, suffering, endurance and resilience. Originally written in Urdu by Rajendra Singh Bedi it focuses on the aftermath of the partition. Rajendra Singh Bedi is one of the well-known Urdu short story writers and is perhaps "Lajwanti" his best and the only work written on the theme of partition. He has very brilliantly written this story as he himself has undergone the suffering of partition and as a consequence of it he has to leave his place. Lajwanti does not deal with the immediate suffering which the partition brought but it deals with the aftermath of the holocaust incident.

“Lajwanti” stands as one of the earliest literary accounts on partition which focus on the social stigma faced by abducted women who returned to their families and community through the recovery operation process. Bedi has very brilliantly given words to their feeling and suffering. The protagonist Lajwanti as her name signifies is the chaste as well as the delicate one like the flower of the name is survivor of rape. She is the symbol of endurance and contentment who lives happily even after being beaten by her husband. Even after the most violent beating by him she has to do nothing but often break into giggles saying “Beat me again and see what happens!” (Bedi 1989: 52)

The real cruelty to the women in many cases came when they returned to their homeland. They were neither accepted by their family members nor by their husbands. The women in our patriarchal society do not own anything, not even a space to live and breathe. The women who were recovered had no fault of their own, who themselves were victims but they were treated as if they are the only culprits. They could not understand that it was not the abduction that was immoral, rather it was the abductors that were lecherous:

There were many among the abducted women whom their husbands, parents, brothers or sisters had even refused to recognize. Why couldn't they have killed themselves?... To save their honour they could have taken poison or jumped into a well. They were indeed cowards to have clung to their life... thousands of women had taken their own lives before giving the ravishers a chance to dishonour them. (54)

These lines underscore the action that is expected in the midst of communal violence. By pointing out the fact that a large number of women were forced into death to avoid sexual violence against them, to preserve their chastity and to protect individual, family and community ‘honour’, Bedi throws light on the fact that women’s sexuality occupies an important place in our patriarchal society. It is the irony of our society that on the one hand the women are considered as ‘worthless’ while on the other hand they

are thought to be powerful enough to maintain something as prestigious as the family 'honour' and are expected to kill themselves in order to maintain that.

However, the suffering of Lajwanti is different from the suffering of these women. When she returned she was a bit suspicious about how her husband, Sunderlal would react to her sexual contamination. The narrator comments:

He used to treat her unkindly and now as she stood there she wondered what kind of fate awaited her when she was returning after living with another man. (59)

But to her surprise Sunderlal accepts her without any question and they proceeded to their home as if "Sri Ram Chandra and Sita returning to Ayodhya after their self-imposed exile. People had lit lamps to celebrate their return among whom there were many who looked downcast and repentant at the privations and hardships the royal had suffered for no fault of theirs." (60) Though, Sunderlal publicly argues for the acceptance of abducted women, he does not have the capacity to cope with the same situation in his own life. Though he accepts Lajo back in his life, at heart he is more like those who refuse to do so, the only difference is that he cannot speak it out as he is the precursor of the local rehabilitation campaign. Now he calls his wife as 'Devi' instead of Lajo and thus she becomes an object of his worship, he enshrined Lajo "like a golden idol in the temple of his heart and sat outside zealously guarding it." (60)

This new status accorded to her is, however really a subtle way of reminding her of the stigma of abduction. In a way elevating her to the status of a Devi, becomes a strategy to distance himself from her. Just as his earlier violence had denied her the right to a life of kindness; his new solicitude fails to satisfy her affectionate regard. He begins to regard her as a 'devi', though she only wants to be accepted as a victim of circumstances, as a human being with flesh and blood who has endured a lot. She wanted her husband to feel that she is physically alive and her only wish is his generosity of love. The paradox is that he can

treat her extremely well or extremely bad but never as an equal. Their relationship goes a tremendous change the older master slave relationship is replaced by all new goddess- devotee relationship. When she looks at herself in the mirror, she thinks "...that never again could she be the same Lajo. She had got everything and yet she had lost everything. She was rehabilitated and she was ruined." (60)

Most unlike Lajo of "Lajwanti", Poroo of *Pinjar* defies patriarchal and territorial boundaries and chooses to stay in Pakistan, though this refusal does not relieve her from the agony of her past. Her refuge comes in a form of reconciliation with her fate and her abductor, Rashida. She too was the victim of the patriarchal society as her parents refuse to accept her when she succeeds in escaping from the clutches of her abductor. Poroo's hope to live her life again was shattered as his father expressed his inability to take her back as she would bring social disgrace to the family. He says:

Daughter, this fate was ordained for you, we are helpless...who will marry you now? You have lost your religion and your birthright. If we dare to help you, we will be wiped out without a trace of blood left behind to tell of our fate... It would have been better if you had died at birth!
(Pritam 2015: 22-23)

In fact rejection from her own family to accept her was a bigger blow of pain than her abduction. The author throws light on the fact that sexual 'purity' entirely determines women's inclusion or exclusion in the society. If the former is 'defiled' she is automatically stripped from the latter. After all it's the family and society that determines the destiny of a woman. Even death had slammed the door in her face, leaving her with no other option than marrying her abductor, Rashida and thus becomes Hamida as renamed by him. But this transition was not simple. Though Rashida is now her husband and protector, it does not erase the fact that—"he had robbed her of her future." Thus her acceptance to live with her abductor can be seen as a symbol of defiance against society which is the actual cause of her suffering. The shift

from Poroo to Hamida fluctuates between her two identities. The split 'self' gives her unbearable pain. Now she is Poroo only in her dreams and in her reminiscences of her parent home:

It was a double life: Hamida by day, Poroo by night. In reality, she was neither one nor the other; she was just a skeleton, without a shape or name. (25)

Poroo's dilemma is further repeated when Lajjo, her sister-in-law gets abducted. She forgets her sorrow and helps Lajjo to join her family. The narrator questions the sexual hypocrisy and the double standard of the society as well as the arrogance of a male dominated patriarchy. She ironically comments on the new government policy of recovery carried across the lines of religion:

When it had happened to her, religion had become an insurmountable obstacle; neither her parents nor her in-laws-to—be had been so willing to accept her. And now, the same religion had become so accommodating. (100)

Poroo gets a golden opportunity to go back to her family along with Lajo, only she had to say that she is a Hindu and that's enough. But she refuses saying "when Lajo is welcomed, take it that Poroo has also returned to you. My home is now Pakistan." (127)

The irony in both these stories is that the narrator wishes to be united with her family and friends whom she has left behind. On the one hand we have Lajwanti who has returned to her country but is still facing identity crisis among her own near and dear ones. "how a world which was so familiar had suddenly become a world of strangers," while on the other there is Poroo who chooses to stay back in her abductors household and tries to build a new world, thus choosing survival over death or rejection. Thus these stories just not only relate with the plight of women during the bloodiest time of partition and the period just preceding and following it but they also describe the male dominating nature of the society and how women are bound to accept the decision. No one cares for the 'human self', who appears cursed for their 'woman identity'. Through these narratives, the authors try to

unveil the facet of women's trauma which the political history has bypassed.

Though it has been more than seventy years of independence, many problems are still the same. There are many Lajo and Poroo who are treated as 'other'. The 'other' whose lives do not matter, whose voices are silenced, whose identities are subjugated and who remain at the periphery of power struggle and power equation continue to be marginalized and displaced at the cost of 'self' even today. These novels thus give a voice to this 'other' and their concerns of displacement, marginalization, dual identity and powerlessness.

To conclude we can say that remembering these women and drawing strength from them can help women empowerment and can effectively solve the reiteration of violence against them. Besides what is needed most is a change in the attitude of man. The past and the present time tell the same story of women's suffering and dishonour because "men have not yet changed." (*What the Body Remembers* 1999: 538)

Works Cited

- Baldwin, Shaun Singh. *What The Body Remembers*. New Delhi: Harper Collins Publishers, India, 1999.
- Bapsi, Sidhwa. *Ice-Candy Man*. New Delhi: Penguin, 1988.
- Brownmiller, Susan. *Making Female Bodies the Battlefield*. Newsweek.com 3 January 1993. Web 12 June 2014.
- Gabrick, Deitrich. *Some Reflections on Women's Movement in India*. Delhi: Horizon, 1992.
- Hashmi et al. *Post-Independence Voices in South Asian Writing*. Islamabad: Alhamra, 2001.
- Menon, Ritu and Kamla Bhasin. *Borders and Boundaries. Women in India's Partition*. New Delhi: Brunswick, Rutgers UP. 1998.
- Malik, Seema. *Partition and Indian English Women Novelists*. New Delhi: Prestige Books, 2007.

Pandey, Gyanendra. *The Prose of Otherness. Subaltern Studies VIII* (1994) Pritam, Amrita. *Pinjar*. New Delhi: Tara Research Press, 2015.

Ratan, Jai. (trans.) *Rajinder Singh Bedi's Selected Short Stories*. New Delhi: Sahitya Akademi, 1989.

Urvashi, Butalia. *The Other Side of Silence: Voices from the Partition of India*. New Delhi: Viking Penguin Books India, 1998.

IJES, Volume LVI, 2019

Interrogating Patriarchy: A Feminist Reading of Khaled Hosseini's *A Thousand Splendid Suns*

*Sweta Kumari

Abstract

The word 'patriarchy' is used to replace the word 'sexism' and 'male-chauvinism'. The general notion about patriarchy is that it is a belief in the political-social system, wherein males are considered to be dominating one, and to rule over weak, especially females. In a patriarchal society, women are subject to physical and emotional brutality at the hands of their men counterparts.

Khaled Hosseini, an Afghan-born American writer locates all his novels in Afghanistan and presents Afghan as the protagonist in his novels. His masterpiece, *A Thousand Splendid Suns* is set in Afghanistan from the early 1960s to the early 2000s. *A Thousand Splendid Suns* is based on the theme of marriage, education of women, true love, friendship, jealousy, subordination, violence, gender discrimination and women's predicament.

A Thousand Splendid Suns narrates a story about the lives of three Afghan women, Nana, Mariam and Laila. Mariam, the main protagonist of the novel, faces her childhood life as an illegitimate girl. After her mother, Nana's death, Mariam's fate changed miserably after her marriage with Rasheed, who is a widowed shoemaker. The present study depicts how these women, especially

*Sweta Kumar, Research Scholar, Dept. of English, Magadh University, Bodh Gaya (Bihar). Email. Id.sweta777sah@gmail.

Mariam and Laila are discriminated against owing to the existing patriarchal tradition in a society. The paper also seeks to highlight how these two women, Mariam and Laila voice against the patriarchal set up and continue to fight against the brutality of their husband Rasheed. Besides, it explores the inner strength of these women in course of their struggle and how these women succeed in their fight despite their bleak condition for living an honourable life.

Keywords: patriarchy; sexism; male-chauvinism; submissive; consciousness; subordination; gender discrimination; women's predicament.

Patriarchy is a social system wherein males dominate not only in the family or society but in the whole world. In this system, males are considered to be superior to women. Besides, men have more control on economic, social and political resources. The patriarchal tradition treats women as subjugated and inferior. This patriarchy is not the result of any war or revolution. In fact, since beginning, it has been people's mindset to consider woman as subordinate. If we look at the history of Afghanistan or any other nation, women have been the oppressed victims of their own indigenous patriarchal culture. They were denied their own basic rights like right to education and freedom of decision in comparison to their male counterparts. It is not only the case of Afghanistan but the whole world wherein women's place have always been questioned in such a patriarchal society. Khaled Hosseini himself observed, "when I began writing *A Thousand Splendid Suns*, I found myself thinking about those resilient women over and over. Though no one woman that I met in Kabul inspired either Laila or Mariam, their voices, faces and their incredible stories were always with me, and a good part of my inspiration for this novel came from their collective spirit." (Internet) Khaled Hosseini shares his knowledge about the real situation of women at the time of Taliban rule:

It is undeniable that the treatment of women in some Muslim countries including my own has been dismal. The evidence is simply overwhelming. In Afghanistan under the Taliban,

women were denied education, the right to work, the right to move freely, access to adequate healthcare, etc. (Internet)

The title of the novel, *A Thousand Splendid Suns* has been derived from Josephine Davis's translation of the poem entitled *Kabul*. Khaled Hosseini wrote *A Thousand Splendid Suns* after visiting his native, Afghanistan in 2003. The novel is evident to be a milestone in the literary career of Afghan American writer, Khaled Hosseini. *A Thousand Splendid Suns* is basically divided into four parts. Each part covers the respective individual story. The first part is about Mariam's divided life around her parents, her forceful marriage with Rasheed and entry of other female character Laila. This part is basically about the journey of Mariam from an illegitimate childhood life to an unsuccessful married life. The second part is about Laila's love life with Tarique and their separation from each other later on. The third part is about strong bonding between Mariam and Laila, Laila's encounter with Tarique, and Mariam's punishment for Rasheed's death. The last and fourth part ends with Mariam's and Tarique happy reunion.

The novel prominently focuses on women's predicament in Afghan patriarchal society. Washington Post writer, Jonathan Yardley also remarked regarding women in the novel, "the central theme of *A Thousand Splendid Suns* is the place of women in Afghan Society" (<http://en.m.wikipedia.org>). The novel highlights the multiplicity of issues besides women in Afghan and patriarchy such as education, male-domination, physical and mental torments, sexual abuse, restrictions, gender discrimination, child-bearing, female bonding and inferior treatment with women and their oppression. These are possible only in such patriarchal society. Moreover, *A Riverhead Trades Weekly Review* points out regarding Hosseini's *A Thousand Splendid Suns*:

Patriarchal despotism where women are agonizingly dependent on fathers, husbands and especially sons, the bearing of male children being their sole path to social status. (<http://en.m.wikipedia.org>)

It is the patriarchal traditional society wherein a daughter lives under the control of her father when she is child, if she is married,

she lives her life according to her husband and when grows into a mother, she has to be dependent on her son. This has been the determined place of a woman in the whole world since the beginning of culture. Here, Mariam too, has no choice to live her life according to her own terms and conditions. She is totally dependent on her father after her mother, Nana's death. Mariam has her own dreams and desires as every individual has. But, she is helpless to accomplish living in such patriarchal set up. It is Mariam's marriage time when no one values her choice and forcibly fixes her marriage with a widower, Rasheed. However, she expects her father to support her dream and desires of her life, but he disappoints her too, keeping silent. However, Mariam opposes this marriage, "I don't want to. She looked at Jalil. I don't want this. Don't make me." (Hosseini 2013: 48) Khaled Hosseini depicted Mariam in the image of new woman, wherein Mariam takes stand for herself. But it is the traditional norms which restrict her to fulfil her desire. Khaled Hosseini very well said about a woman's place in a society through the character Nana when Nana alerts her daughter, Mariam and tries to make her aware with the real face of the society:

Learn this now and learn it well, my daughter: like a compass needle that points north, a man's accusing finger always finds a woman. Always. You remember that, Mariam. (7)

In this regard, Bell Hooks's opinion in her essay *Sisterhood: Political Solidarity between Women* is quite relevant regarding man's ideology towards women, in a patriarchal society, "Male Supremacist ideology encourages women to believe we are valueless and obtain value only by relating to bonding with men." (Hooks 1984 : 3) Here, Mariam too, finds her opinion and stands for herself as valueless before her father, Jalil. Ultimately, she agreed to his decision of marrying Rasheed. At that very moment, Mariam feels that her existence doesn't matter to anyone and recalls her mother's words:

But where do I belong? What am I going to do now? I'm all you have in this world, Mariam, and when I'm gone

you'll have nothing. You'll have nothing. You are nothing!
(Hosseini 2013: 40)

Rasheed is the perfect example of patriarchy in this novel. Rasheed warns Mariam in the very beginning regarding her limit as a wife. In other words, for Rasheed, a woman is an object of decorum and private property. She has to obey her husband's words and follow his path. In the most acclaimed book, *Understanding the Patriarchy*, Bell Hooks very well defined patriarchy and women's place in a patriarchal society in comparison to men, "Patriarchy is a political social system that insists males are inherently dominating, superior to everything, and everyone deemed weak, especially females, and endowed with the right to dominate and rule over the weak and to maintain that dominance through various forms of psychological terrorism and violence". (Hooks 2016: 2) This is evident in the following quote:

But I'm different breed of man, Mariam where I come from, a wrong look, one improper, and blood is spilled. Where I come from, a woman's face is her husband's business only. I want you to remember that. Do you understand? (Hosseini 2013: 69)

Mariam feels his words as imposing and immovable as an individual. Besides, he brings 'burqa' for Mariam but she feels such clothes as suffocating kinds of thing. However, Rasheed imposes his idea to use 'burqa' saying, "With time. I bet you'll even like it." (71) Mariam soon comes to know Rasheed's real face that he is a double-standard man, who preaches something and practises something else. Mariam is lost in thought when she comes across some magazines regarding women in his room. She thinks that, "Had she been a disappointment to him in this particular regard? And what about all his talk of honour and priority..." (81) Mariam is an oppressed victim at the hands of her husband, Rasheed when she proves failure seven times in giving birth to a male child. For Rasheed, a woman is valuable only if she gives birth to a son. It is very common in a society like Afghan and it also highlights the issues of gender discrimination wherein girl child is treated as inferior. Mariam no longer matters to Rasheed except

as a burden on him. Mariam's life miserably takes a new turn, when Rasheed marries Laila. However, Mariam tries her best to adjust herself with Rasheed's divided life. In the beginning, Mariam is not happy with Laila. However, Laila makes effort to comfort Mariam:

I will still cook and wash the dishes, you will do laundry and the sweeping. The rest we will alternate daily. And one more thing. I have no use for company. I don't want it. (220)

Laila is also a victim of mental and physical abuse like Mariam after she gives birth to a girl child, Aziza. Owing to this, they become good companions especially for sharing their secrets with each other in the absence of Rasheed. Gradually, Mariam and Laila start understanding each other after Aziza's birth. They grew into good friends with time and become supportive to each other, "Mariam slowly grew accustomed to this tentative but pleasant companionship." (245) This female bonding grows even more stronger, "Mariam knew that she and Laila had become one and the same being to him, equally wretched, equally deserving of his distrust, his disdain and disregard" (267) But Rasheed is not happy seeing their strong companionship and questions Laila, "what happened to you" he said. "I married a pari and now I'm saddled with a hag. You're turning into Mariam." (267) Rasheed becomes even more violent in his behaviour towards Laila and Mariam. Mariam makes every effort to please Rasheed. She questions herself not as a typical traditional wife but as an individual:

Had she been deceitful wife? She asked herself. A complacent wife? A dishonourable woman? Descreditable? Vulgar? What harmful thing had she willfully done this man to warrant his malice, his continual assault, the relish with which he tormented her? Had she not looked after him when she was ill? Fed him, and his friends, cleaned up after him dutifully? Had she not given this man her youth? Had she ever justly deserved his meanness? (338-339)

One day, Rasheed was almost to kill Laila when he comes to know about Laila's meeting with Tarique. But Mariam hits

Rasheed with shovel in saving Laila. Mariam does not feel even a bit guilty for killing Rasheed. In fact, she finds the moment of beauty after his death and feels her life with Rasheed as unkind. But she wishes to meet Laila once and to see Aziza growing up. After some moment, Mariam ponders over her whole life's journey:

She thought of her entry into this world, the 'harami' child of a lowly villager, an unintended thing, a pitiable, a regrettable accident. A weed. And yet she was leaving this world as a woman who had loved and been loved back. She was leaving it as a friend, a companion, a guardian, a mother. A person of consequence at last. No. It was not so bad, Mariam thought, she should die this way. Not so bad. This was a legitimate end to a life of illegitimate beginnings. (361)

To conclude, Khaled Hosseini's *A Thousand Splendid Suns* sets an appropriate example for interrogating patriarchy through the lives of three Afghan women-Nana, Mariam and Laila. These women's struggle against such culture determines their place in the same Afghan society. None of these women find themselves worthy in the presence of their male counterparts. Either it is about Nana, Mariam or Laila, all had to suffer miserably at the hands of the patriarchal set up. But, these are the same oppressed women, who interrogate the patriarchal structure for living their life with respect and dignity whether it results into Rasheed's death or Laila's reunion with Tarique after his death.

Works Cited

Hosseini, Khaled. *A Thousand Splendid Suns*. New Delhi: Bloomsbury, 2013.

Hooks, Bell. *Sisterhood Political Solidarity between Women, Feminist Theory: From Margin to Centre*. South End Press. 1984.

Bell, Hooks. *Understanding Patriarchy*. Louisville Radical Lending Library. web. 01 November 2016. Available: <http://ImagineNoBorders.org>

www.ijeser.com

IJES, Volume LVI, 2019

Feministic Interpretation of the Fairy Tale “Beauty and the Beast”

**Nigel Peter O’Brien*

Abstract

The ancient fairy tales have their own lives, each with unique, eccentric qualities. Part of the richness is that the same story will have different lessons for each person who listens. Stories can be like the Holy Grail, which, when passed from person to person, let them drink what they alone desired. Also, when we come back to the same story after a time, it will tell us new things. Stories can speak to us in several ways at once. The practical aspects of our personalities appreciate the assistance they provide in prudent decision-making. Our playful child-like energies find the stories to be great fun. The quiet, spiritual side is grateful to have some time invested in reflection. Fairy tales are a visual experience. Any one of the symbols in a classic story is worthy of a close look. If we meditate on the flow of images, and reflect on the meanings it presents to us, the rewards can be great. In this article we would be focusing on the feministic interpretation that we come across in fairy tales like *Beauty and the Beast*.

Keywords: Entrapment, Feminism, Identity, Symbolism, Vulnerable, etc.

Fairy tales carry many insights which are, at once, a commentary on social values, a vivid example of family tragedy,

***Nigel Peter O’Brien**, Faculty of English Department, Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology, Bhubaneswar

and a bit of personal psychology. Fairy tale is compacted wisdom literature that yields more information with each reading. There is much we can learn by reflecting on the stories heard in childhood. Magical characters such as the Pied Piper, the talking frog and the fairy godmother are likely to remain in the imagination for a lifetime. The adventures these stories describe often reflect challenges we face in our journeys. The tales hide a wealth of insights just below the surface. They are clearly more than mere entertainment for children.

These tales are psychological mirrors and we become more complex as we mature. The storytellers intentionally load the adventures with heavy symbolism to reveal more meanings as we develop a deeper awareness of ourselves. Bedtime stories have enormous influence over our identities. People identify with certain characters in the stories they heard in childhood. To some degree, many live out these stories, largely unaware of how much the old tales may be shaping our lives. It is a great treasure to know and reveal which tales from our childhood have a hold on us. Once the general pattern or storyline becomes evident, the challenge is to participate in the rewriting of our own story. We may not be able to create the rivers that carry us along but we can certainly navigate the little boats of our lives. Fairy tales can be immensely influential in children's developing gender identity, so it is important to analyze the messages that are being transmitted through the tales that reflect and reproduce the patriarchal values of the society that created them.

When my kid asks me why there are no mothers in the fairy tales and are replaced by fairy godmothers who always help the tortured protagonist, I wonder what to reply. I feel the answer could be that earlier the mothers told these stories themselves, to share with their own daughters, preparing their daughters for a life without them. A mother had to bequeath a gift, a story. And a daughter had to be ready. For her mother's disappearance—and for her own, too. Long, long ago, when the first fairy tales were being dreamed up, mothers were always on the verge of disappearing. To be an adult woman was to live a precarious

existence at best. Too soon you could be sure of violence, of rape or beating or even murder. Too soon you could be sure of illness or death in childbirth. Too soon you could be gone, replaced with the next young fertile woman, still able to suckle your young. (The story of stepmothers is a whole other essay.) In those days, you had to create something you could leave behind to light the path, to keep throwing those bread crumbs, to clear the thorns from the thicket. Hence, one can find a feministic approach toward such stories. I guess the fairy tales were aimed at empowering young girls and women of all ages.

And I suppose that's what these mothers were doing, the ones who made these stories. I don't suppose they wanted to frighten their daughters or nieces or grandchildren, any more than I want to frighten mine. But they knew what girls needed to know about the wide, wicked world. Even if they needed to invent a tree or fox or fairy to tell it.

Historian Sylvia D. Hoffert defines a gender ideal as "the cluster of characteristics, behavior patterns, and values that members of a group think a man or a woman should have, a set of cultural expectations". I think fairy tales were feminist, or rather I think they are, but not by our modern definition of feminism. Traditional fairy tales were created long before any such notion existed, and I'd say they help women, rather than lift up women. They warn, rather than extol. They're useful, which is a much older kind of feminism. That said, there are many modern writers who've taken traditional fairy tales and made something more explicitly feminist of them, in part by simply subverting expectations.

The makers of some of these tales were spinning long, long ago—thousands of years, in some cases. Life was hard, and short, and brutish, particularly so for women. And yet even this late in history, women and girls are still friendly with that darkness where fairy tales operate best.

The warnings still ring true.

In "Beauty and the Beast," the merchant's daughter (Belle) eventually falls in love with her own captor (Beast, who acts

malicious for the first part of the story, but he's not acting out of evil intentions as much as he's consumed by anger and despair at being trapped in the body of a beast while his chance to regain his humanity is slowly ticking away), or at least pretends to. Fairy tales represent the problematic of being a woman, as vulnerable consumers, vulnerable through their positions in the home (Belle in "Beauty and the Beast" who willingly gives herself to the Beast to allow for her father's release), through their irrational desires, their confused mentality, their yearning for something good to happen (Belle is regarded as odd by the other townspeople for her love of reading and for being the daydreamer that she is; she has a hard time finding someone other than her father to befriend), inability to control their mind, and through their incapacity to make informed choices about their own bodies—and all these situate women in contrast to the masculine, rational production sphere. Beauty itself is a kind of entrapment that dominates most of the prominent fairy tales. An exclusive physical beauty that is often highlighted is also a kind of entrapment used in fairy tales.

Moreover, sacrifice is also associated with female characters in fairy tales. Belle in *Beauty and the Beast* is discouraged from pursuing self-actualization. Gaston, a vain hunter who vies for Belle's hand in marriage and is determined not to let anyone else win her heart, is egotistical and the main antagonist. He tells her:

"it's not right for a woman to read. Soon she starts getting ideas, thinking."

This shows a kind of indirect injunction about how reading injects new ideas into female mind, and therefore this habit of her has to be discarded.

The unwillingness or inability to fight is shown as unmanly in fairy tales. If men express aggression, this is also taken as a normal behavior, and is expected that normal women should tolerate this behavior and take responsibility for keeping men's violence at bay. In *Beauty and the Beast*, Belle endures the Beast's abusive behavior in hope of bringing out his tender side. Belle reforms Beast first by standing up to him and then with more gentle

affection. She's technically a captive with no authority the whole time, and yet she manages to turn the situation to her favor as much as it's possible. Belle is most definitely a dreamer who dreams of a fairy tale romance and adventure. She often lives her fantasies and dreams through reading novels. Belle is instrumental in pulling the Beast out of his depression and self-loathing. Especially notable because she has to learn this about him the hard way first and initially brushes off the servants' insistence that he indeed isn't that bad once you get to know him. Specifically, the Beast originally appeared to be irritable, temperamental, and stubborn, and came off as very mean and serious. He had a very bitter and negative, extremely cynical outlook, and was quick to become frustrated and give up when things did not work his way, showing a spoiled side to his personality. Once he begins to care for Belle after rescuing her from a pack of wolves, he becomes more agreeable and gentle. He even attempts to become civilized again for Belle's sake, relearning table manners and feeding birds. The Beast has been a symbol for male sexuality—"active, male culprit"—and that Belle (Beauty) symbolizes the prey—"passive, female victim". The narration of the story indeed shows how the element of love and the emotions shown by Belle changes the storyline. Thus feminine characters played an important role in most of the fairy tales.

Regardless of what may have been left out, it is of course Fairy Tales and Feminism's feminist locus that gives it its power and usefulness not only in fairy-tale studies but in feminist and literary studies as well.

Works Cited

- Grimm, Brothers. *Beauty and the Beast*. 125 Water street Exeter, NH 03833, UK: Exeter Books, 1987.
- Griswold, Jerry. *The Meanings Of "Beauty and the Beast". A Handbook*. Broadview Press, 2004.
- Hoffert, D. Sylvia. *When Hens Crow: The Women's Rights Movements in Antebellum America*. 601 North Morton Street, Bloomington, IN47404, USA: Indiana University Press, 2001.

IJES, Volume LVI, 2019

Hero: A Universal Perspective

**Sunil Kumar Navin*

Abstract

The age we are living in presents a bleak and dismal picture. Very often we confront horrifying and nerve-shaking experiences. King Jong Un's overriding ambition to belittle the US and check its ego of being the sole super power on the strength of doubtful missiles had brought the world virtually on the brink of World War III. Devastating and catastrophic terror attacks by ISIS in Syria and Iraq and other terror outfits involved in senseless killings in other parts of the world do not feel ashamed in justifying their acts of violence and brutality on the innocent run of humanity. There are certain bullying nations who through selfish political agenda ensure hegemony over weaker nations and subvert their sovereignty in the garb of trade and commerce. Our recent history is replete with uncalled for perpetration worldwide. In the Indian context, the recent upsurge of Babas and Mullahs, the religious heroes and leaders on whose shoulders rest the moral and ethical health of the country, are found brazenly involved in sexual crimes. Un, Baghdadi, Ram Rahim and others like them have been heroes for fairly a large chunk of population. The former Pak President, Musharraf holds Hafiz Saeed as his hero. This is a blatant case of moral turpitude. The question

***Sunil Kumar Navin**, Associate Professor of English, Nabira Mahavidyalaya, Katol, Nagpur (M.S.).

is whether they are our modern heroes. They can never be called heroes. A hero is a person whose real strength is his spirituality. In no circumstance the hero wears a fake garb. He is made of sterner stuff. He takes it as his responsibility to ensure harmony which might have been disrupted for a while. In my opinion this is the universally accepted measure to judge a hero.

Keywords: anarchy, annex, hegemony, sovereignty, moral turpitude, heroism, physical prowess, harmony, spirituality, fortitude courage.

The age we are living in unequivocally presents before us a bleak and dismal picture. It seems that it is uncontrollable anarchy, social disorder and upheaval, the acts of mindless violence and atrocious moral degradation which rule the world. Every now and then we confront horrifying and nerve-shaking experiences. There seems to be no room and space for sanity.

North Korean dictator, King Jong Un's overriding ambition to belittle the US President, Donald Trump and check his ego of being the sole superpower on the strength of dubious missiles had brought the world virtually on the brink of World War III. Any misadventure on his part will destroy world cultures and civilization. Devastating and catastrophic terror attacks by ISIS in Syria and Iraq and other terror outfits involved in senseless killings in other parts of the world do not feel ashamed in justifying their acts of violence and brutality on the innocent run of humanity. There are certain bullying nations who through selfish political agenda ensure hegemony over weaker nations and subvert their sovereignty in the garb of trade and commerce. Our recent history is replete with uncalled for perpetration of violence worldwide. In the Indian context, the recent upsurge of Babas and Mullahs, the religious heroes and leaders on whose shoulders rest the moral and ethical health of the nation, are found brazenly involved in sexual crimes. Un, Baghdadi, Ram Rahim and others like their type have been heroes for fairly a large chunk of our population. Even the former Pak President, General Musharraf shamelessly holds Hafiz Saeed his hero. These are but a few glaring examples of moral turpitude.

They can never be called heroes from the universally accepted sense as they have brazenly violated ethical and moral code of conduct and used nefarious designs either to quench their sensual desires or to annex a part of other's land by the use of force and crookedness.

The word hero is usually applied to many different types of people who exhibit extraordinary acts of physical prowess and courage, such as rescuing someone from a burning house or from the fury of flood or from volcanic disaster or the earthquake. However, physical courage is not the only component of heroism. Those who exhibit moral courage risk their own lives and reputations to do or say what is right rather than what is merely popular are no less heroic. Heroes can even be those who by their noble acts and fortitude of minds do not surrender meekly to adverse and otherwise difficult conditions. Such persons we wish to imbibe and make our role models. Many sports persons have risen to the zenith of success and led their countries to glorious successes. They have faced extremely difficult and adverse conditions in the beginning. They have led their nations and brought coveted laurels of victory. One such hero is Indian cricketing star Mahendra Singh Dhoni.

A hero by dint of his demeanor and toughness of mind, his contribution to the community and the general constructive approach to life, his resoluteness against unfavorable circumstances and then defeating the evil forces inspires and motivates the average run of people. Such a person occupies a very high stature and deserves to be called a hero.

One such heroic man was Dashrath Manjhi, the mountain man of Gaya, Bihar. While crossing Gehlour hills to bring him lunch, his wife slipped continuously and seriously injured herself and eventually succumbed to the injury. He was deeply disturbed and that very night decided to carve a path through the Gehlour hills so that his village could have easier access to medical help which his wife couldn't get. He carved a path 110m long, 7.7m deep at places and 9.1m wide to form a road through the rocks. He

completed the work in 22 years (1960-1983). The path reduced the distance between the Atri and Wazirganj sectors from 55 km to just 15 km. He died at the age of 73. He was given state funeral by the Govt. of Bihar.

In A.J. Cronin's story *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, the two boys Nicola and Jacopo are no less heroic. The town Verona hardly offered any job prospects after the war. But the two brothers sold fruits and newspapers, polished shoes, and ran errands to earn some money only to pay for their sister's treatment who suffered from tuberculosis of the spine.

Joseph Campbell echoes Carlyle when he says, "The hero, therefore, is the man or woman who has been able to battle past his [or her] personal and local limitations to the generally valid, normally human forms." In other words, heroes begin life as normal people, but through some extraordinary gift, they are able to begin on and succeed at the journey upon which they will prove their heroism. Heroes are motivated by profound respect for human life. Their vision goes beyond that of others, they possess great courage and they are not dictated by public opinion. Miriam Polster cites as one of her examples Antigone, from Sophocles' play. Antigone at great personal risk to herself buries the body of her brother Polynices against the wishes of her uncle, the king. She is a hero here because her driving motivation is respect for her brother's life. She knows she must honour this life, even in death. The word 'hero' first appeared in Homer's *The Iliad*, when the name was given to all those who had participated in the Trojan wars and about whom a story could be told.

As a matter of fact the concept of heroism has been open to debate and controversy for centuries, given that it is culturally and historically contextualized. It also has been confused with related, possibly contributing factors such as altruism, compassion and empathy and identified with popular celebrities, role models and media-created fantastic heroes of the comic book genre. Heroism and heroic status are always social attributions. Someone or some group other than the actor confers that honor on the

person and the deed. There must be social consensus about the significance and meaningful consequence of an act for it to be deemed heroic, and for its agent to be called a hero.

Heroic action is the antidote to evil, and it starts with heroic imagination. At its core, it is the personal and social creation of a 'bright line' of morality on a given issue that is defended, upheld and promoted despite a host of pressures to do otherwise. Heroism, in fact, is the expression of a superb spirit. It is associated with courage and integrity and a disdain for the cramping compromises by means of which the unheroic majority manage their lives. Heroes are capable of something momentous—the defeat of an enemy, the salvation of a race, the preservation of a political system, the completion of a voyage—which no one else could have accomplished.

Definitions of heroism are always culture-bound and time-bound. To this day, puppeteers enact the legend of Alexander the Great before children in remote villages of Turkey. In those towns where his command posts were set up and his soldiers intermarried with villagers, Alexander is a great hero, but in towns that were just conquered on his relentless quest to rule the world, Alexander is portrayed as a great villain, more than a thousand years after his death. In recent times, in San Francisco the October 12 Columbus Day Parade had been time of celebrating the heroic voyage of this great explorer. It was an honor for the citizen chosen to portray Christopher Columbus. Not so any more for some people, given the recently-discovered abuse and exploitation of his arrival on the indigenous populations. To become part of any culture's history, acts of heroism must be recorded and preserved by those who are literate and who have the power to record history or to pass it on in a persistent oral tradition. Impoverished, illiterate peoples that have been colonized retain few widely acknowledged heroes because there are few available records of the acts.

Sam Keen, in *Faces of the Enemy*, talks about the ways in which certain situations have the power to trigger hatred of other people, creating a psychology of enmity. Hostile imagination

borders on thinking of other people as objects, as unworthy, as less human – in short, dehumanizing others. The end product of this is creating the conditions of wanting to destroy the ‘other’. This is the kind of belief which results in Great Calcutta Killings type of unfortunate incident and gives rise to a hero of a particular community. Mohammad Ali Jinnah to exert pressure on the British that Hindus and Muslims cannot live amicably together under one umbrella gave a call for Direct Action on 16th August, 1946 which took the toll of thousands of innocent lives. Jinnah became the hero of Muslims; made Pakistan, perhaps, on ill conceived notions on the basis of religion and two-nation theory. His two-nation theory wooed the dust in 1971 when Pakistan’s own military persecuted Bengali Muslims beyond all human perception. Resultantly Bangladesh became a separate state under the heroic leadership of Mujeeb. The very situations that inflame the hostile imagination in some can inspire in the heroic imagination in others. It is a mindset—a set of attitudes about helping others, caring for others, being willing to sacrifice or take risks on behalf of others. When the heroic imagination motivates pro-social behavior, it becomes heroic action.

In fact, we all are ‘heroes-in-waiting’. It is a choice that we may all be called upon to make at some point in time. In John Updike’s ‘A & P’, Sammy, the supermarket cashier who tells the story, abruptly quits his job when his manager is disrespectful to three teenaged girls who enter the store. In the grand scheme of things, this action might not seem noteworthy. But in the world of the A & P, it certainly is. Sammy has respect for the worth of three girls as human beings. Besides, he has vision. He doesn’t want the A & P to be his life; he is thinking of the future and how he can contribute toward it in a more meaningful way than simply standing behind the cash register.

We can conclude that by making heroism an egalitarian attribute of human nature rather than a rare feature of the elect few, we can better foster heroic acts in every community. Everyone has the capability of becoming a hero in one degree or another. Sometimes we might not realize it. We are all heroes to

someone when we make vital sacrifices on their behalf that enhances their quality of life. This concept acknowledges that many of us will never be 'big time heroes' because we will not be given the opportunity to challenge big time evil or give aid in times of natural disasters, yet there is much of the social habits of heroism that can be portrayed on a daily basis by each of us—as everyday heroes.

Works Cited

1. Understanding Heroism: b3cdn.net/raproject/ed834126c90786b1e_93mi2aqj.pdf
2. Literary Heroism: <https://literacle.com/literary-heroism/>
3. The Problem of Heroism: <https://heroismscience.wordpress.com/2015/08/21/the-problem-of-heroism/>

IJES, Volume LVI, 2019

John Donne as a Poet of ‘Shringara’

**Richa Biswal*

Abstract

John Donne is one of the most influential poets of 17th century. He can be considered as one of the greatest love-poets of English as he is quite original and true in presenting love situations and moods which are based partly on contemporary common experiences and partly on his own. Donne was fond of writing love poetry as he was born at a time when the writing of love poems was both a fashionable and literary exercise. Thus, his poetry can be well-analysed from the perspective of *Shringara-rasa*. Though *Rasa* is an Indian theory still it has not escaped from the pens of other writers of any language including English (Indian and British both). Donne is one of the most prominent writers who were influenced by *Rasa*-theory.

The paper deals with some of the significant areas of inter-sections between the Eastern and Western branches of aesthetics to provide universality and relevance of *Shringara-rasa*. Donne’s poems consist of all such features of *shringara-rasa* mentioned in Bharata’s *Natyashastra*. His poems can be well-analysed from the perspective of

***Richa Biswal**, Research Scholar, Dept. of English & MEL
University of Allahabad, Allahabad-211002. Email:
richabiswal123@gmail.com

several theories of Indian Poetics including the best *rasa*-theory.

KEYWORDS: *Rasa*, *Shringara*, Bharata, Love, Donne

I

Indian Aestheticians of *Rasa*-School consider *Shringara* to be the most prominent Sentiment or *Rasa* (*Nātyashāstra* 6/45, *Dhvanyāloka* 2/7, 3/38, *Kāvyalankārsutra* 14/38, *SāhityadarpaGa* 3/186). According to Bharata, *Rasa* is the product of the combination of the determinants (*vibhāvas*), consequents (*anubhāvas*) and the transitory feelings (*vyabhichāribhāvas*).

Shringara is the only *Rasa* as it is relished. *Shringara* is not only the cause or means of the aesthetic experience but also the object of aesthetic experience. (*Shringara Prakāsha*, Ch. 1). *Shringara* primarily means love as aesthetically experienced and a person who has immense liking for the aesthetic experience of love is spoken of as *Shringari*. *Shringara* is the conventional word for the aesthetic experience of love (*Abinavabhāratī*, 301). Bhoja says that *Rasa* is called *Abhimana-Alankara* and *Shringara* and emphasizes that *shringara* is the only *rasa* (*Sārasvata Kanthābharanam*). According to K.C. Pandey, love in the context of aesthetic experience is very different from the emotion that human being feels at the empirical level. Love at the empirical level is transient. It persists as long as the state of infatuation exists. (Pandey, 202).

Shringara is based on the permanent dominant emotion (*sthāyibhāva*) of sexual love (*ratī*). The hero and the heroine deeply attached to each other are its supporting causes (*ālambanavibhāvas*). The exciting situations (*uddipānavibhāvas*) of this sentiment are four fold—the merits, gestures, the ornaments of the supporting causes and independent factors of the time and place. Consequents of the *shringara-rasa* in the case of a young lady are the various embellishments: physical, natural and unborn, which are the expressions of romantic love. Besides these, all the psycho-physical consequents (*sāttvikabhāvas*) act as

the physical expression of the emotion of love. All the transitory feelings except indolence (*ālasya*), fierceness (*ugratā*) and disgust (*jugupsā*) feed and nourish the erotic sentiment. Bharata speaks of two types of erotic sentiment (*shringara-rasa*) i.e. love in union (*sambhoga* or *samyoga shringara*) and love in separation (*vipralambha* or *viyoga shringara*). All other theorists (Bharata, Anandavardhana, Rudrata, Vishvanātha, Bhojarāja, Abhinavagupta) recognize the two states of the *shringara-rasa* except Dhananjaya, who classifies the *shringara-rasa* into three kinds: *āyoga*, *viprayoga* and *sambhoga*. The love in union and the love in separation are not the varieties or diversions of *shringara-rasa* but its two states only. Even in the state of union of lovers, there may be the feeling of separation and in the state of separation there may prevail a hope of reunion. The *shringara-rasa* is, therefore, characterized by the combination of both the states of union as well as separation. Its color is light green (*syāma*) and deity is Lord Vishnu.

The *samyoga shringara* is rich in pleasure, connected with desired objects, enjoyment of seasons, garlands and similar other things and it relates to the union of man and woman. The *samyoga shringara* is based on the *sthāyibhava* of *rati*. *Vibhāva* of this type are the pleasures of the favorable season, the enjoyment of garlands, ornaments, enjoying the company of beloved persons, objects (of senses), splendid mansions, going to a garden and enjoying and roaming there, seeing the beloved one, hearing his or her words, playing and dallying with the beloved, flowers, music, poetry, graceful movement of the limbs, gentle breeze, and call of night birds, anything beautiful or desirable. *Anubhāva* of this kind of sentiment are clever movement of eyes, serenity of the eyes and the eyebrows, glances, soft, delicate and graceful movement of limbs, sweet and smiling words, kissing, embracing, holding hands, looking sideways, coy glance, satisfaction, delight and similar other things. *Vyabhichārins* of this sentiment are bashfulness, infatuation, agitation, eagerness, pride, cogitation, vacillation, gladness, recollection, joy, dreaming,

lassitude, suspicion, and jealousy. When the lover enjoys the company of his or her mate, their nearness gives them excessive pleasure. These do not include indolence, cruelty and disgust. In *samyoga shringara*, lovers are the *ālambans* of the sentiment of love. Moonlight, beauty of the beloved, verbal or spring season and gardens are the *uddipनाविभāvas*. Moving of the eyebrows, sideways, glances and kisses are the *anubhāvas* of the sentiment. The *vyabhichāribhāvas* are rashness, indolence and fright etc. It is divided into two types: *Nāyakarabdh* and *Nāyikārabdh*.

The *viyoga shringara* has *anubhāvas* of indifference, languor, fear, jealousy, fatigue, anxiety, yearning, drowsiness, sleep, dreaming, awakening, illness, insanity, epilepsy, inactivity, fainting, death, tiffs, pride, journey and other conditions. When lovers are separated from each other, they become worried and long for each other. This intense longing to meet each other becomes more acute in separation. Memories of the past play the role of *uddipनाविभāvas*. Detachment, tears, anxiety, jealousy, sleep, dream, awakening, disease, attachment, self-deprecation, doubt, fatigue, brooding, drowsiness, dreaming, fits, feelings of discouragement (*nirveda*), apprehension (*shankā*), envy (*asuya*), depression (*dainya*) and impatience (*autsukya*) etc. are the *vyabhichāribhāvas* of the *viyoga shringara*. Some critics have divided it as predisposition and curse (*purvarāga* and *shāpa*), pride and jealousy (*māna* and *irshyā*), journey (*pravāsa*), separation (*virahātmaka*), (grief) *karunātmaka*.

John Donne is one of the major love poets of 17th century. As a poet of love, Donne holds a unique position. Donne's love poetry is considered great because it expresses diverse experiences of love. He has described many moods of love from brutally cynical to most idealistic one. His personal experiences of love must have been the root cause of most of his love poems but it does not seem proper to associate all his poems to the events and episodes of his own life. There is hardly any aspect of love between man and

woman which has not been described by Donne in his love poems. His descriptions of the joys of union as well as separation, in love are delightful. While some of his poems describe tortures, agonies and torments of unreciprocated love the other deal with reciprocated love between the lovers. Donne's love poetry is great because it expresses diverse experiences. Donne is considered one of the greatest amongst the English love poets. But his attitude towards love is totally different from that of the Elizabethan love poet and his own contemporaries.

His poetry can be analyzed from the perspective of *Rasa*-theory. The theory of *Rasa* is an Indian concept but it cannot escape from the pen of any writer of any language. John Donne is one of the most prominent writers who was influenced by the *Rasa* Theory or basically the *shringara-rasa* as love is the most common theme he has talked about. Here in this paper some of his poems are analyzed below in the light of Bharata's *Rasa*-Theory. In the set of eight *rasas*, the *shringara-rasa* is treated first because love is the most sensitive emotion of universal experience. Acharya Vishvanatha, says that the term *shringara* denotes the awakening of the God of love or emotion of sexual love. *Rati* is considered as the king of emotions. It is love that makes the world go round. It rules the courts, the camps, the hills, the valleys, the dales, the fields, the men below and the gods above. According to *Atharvaveda*, 'Desire came into being in the beginning'. Desire is the primal seed and germ of spirit. The literature of the whole world is eloquent on its supremacy and universality. The Erotic Sentiment has been traditionally exalted as the monarch of all *rasas*, the greatest, the sweetest and the most delectable. It stands supreme among the eight sentiments like the sweet flavor among the six tastes. It consists of bright and pure attire. Whatever is seen pure, bright and beautiful in this world is compared to *shringara*.

In English literature love is considered legitimate or illegitimate and legitimate love is considered good while

illegitimate is not considered good but in our Indian context of *rasānubhiti* there seems to be no scope for such illicit love. Here even the love of *parakiya* leads to *moksha* as the love of *parakiya nayika* too generates *shringara-rasa* to the highest extent. So in *shringara-rasa* whether it is the love by *svakiya nayika* or *parakiya nayika* both lead to *moksha*. So this gives a wider aspect to love in Indian poetics and wider view to John Donne as a poet of love. As Donne talks about both *svakiya nayika* and *parakiya nayika* in his poetry. He can be understood best in the light of Indian Poetics. Hence it can be concluded that Donne when seen from the lens of Indian poetics can be considered a great poet of love in comparison to the lens of western poetics.

To understand John Donne truly one has to turn back to Indian Poetics. Else many aspects of Donne as a love poet will remain hidden. According to Grierson, only three strains of love are present in Donne's poetry. But in Indian Poetics the *shringara-rasa* is divided into two types: *samyoga shringara* and *viyoga shringara* and that too are further sub-divided. The first one is divided into two types 1. *nāyakarabdha* and 2. *nāyikarabdha* and the second one is divided into five types which are as follows: 1. predisposition and curse (*purvarāga* and *shāpa*), 2. pride and jealousy (*māna* and *irshyā*), 3. journey (*pravāsa*), 4. separation (*virahātmaka*), 5. grief (*karunātmaka*). And almost all the above types of erotic sentiment are present in John Donne's poetry. So through the lens of Indian Poetics one can see a wider aspect of Donne as a poet of love or *shringara*.

II

C.S. Lewis traces three levels of sentiment in the love-poems of John Donne: Lowest, Middle and Highest. In the lowest level imagination as well as nervous system of the reader is affected. On the highest level he describes the poems of virtuous love like *The Exstasie*. Between these two extremes, lies the third or the middle level in which most of the love poems of Donne are categorized. At this level

the medieval tradition is continued in which love is treated as god and the lovers his clergies. In the opinion of Lewis, Donne's love poems are basically based on five themes which are: 1. on the sorrow of parting and death 2. on the miseries of secrecy 3. on the falseness of the mistress, 4. on the contempt for love and 5. on the fickleness of Donne himself. Lewis writes that Donne's love poems of separation are as good as his love poems of union. According to Lewis, the merit of Donne's love poetry is that, he writes in a chaos of violent and transitory passions. He says Donne's love poetry is not simple rather it is complex and intellectual. Lewis suggests that Donne's love poetry is less true than that of the Petrarchan because he omits most of the important issues according to his own will. Donne's love poetry is parasitic as his love poems cannot exist without analyzing the love poetry of other poets. Lewis says that Donne's love poetry is 'Hamlet without the prince'. There is a particular theme in almost all his love-poems. (Lewis 90-99)

George Saintsbury stated that the psychological variety of Donne's love poetry has made him an accomplished poetical artist. Donne, in his love poetry, focuses on the infinite quality of passion as well as on the relapses and reactions arousing from passion. Saintsbury mentioned that in the love poems of Donne, love acts as a force to Donne which quickens his mind and opens new vistas of thoughts making his soul intensely alive (Saintsbury 13-22) Rina Ramdev in her article discusses that Donne's love poetry is different from traditional love-poetry because Donne's love lyrics are independent of his beloved's charms (Ramdev 181-197) Catherine Blesey is correct in saying that in the love poems of John Donne desire is not only boundless, unrestrained and urgent, but it is also formulated in a series of imperatives (Blesey 217-232)

In Naresh Chandra's opinion, Donne's love poems can be divided into 3 categories. The first is based on false erotic idealism, second on personal experience and third on the

display of wit. Chandra says, in his serious and sincere love poetry. According to him there are four stages in the growth of love in Donne's love poetry: 1. Pre-natal stages i.e. love between two souls before they manifest themselves in fleshly bodies. 2. Love between two embodied souls. 3. Growth of love after the union of ecstatic experiences. 4. Love between the souls beyond the gates of death. He is of the view that there is always a thought of death in Donne's love poetry. For him separation from his beloved is equal to death.(Chandra 92-137) Helen Gardner stated that Donne's range of mood and experience in his love poetry is greater than any other non-dramatic writer. Each and every mood of man and woman in love is expressed vehemently in the love poetry of Donne. Donne's love poetry has compact imagination. Donne's love poetry does not contain a brooding tone of memory or the poignant note of hope. The love poems of Donne, in which the mutual identification of the lovers is lost, have been rated high by the critics. In the words of Helen Gardner, the poems of Donne in which 'Thou' and 'I' are merged into 'We', are Donne's most original and profound contribution to the poetry of human love (Gardner xvii-xxx) Achsah Guibbory says that Donne's love poems are as fresh and immediate as if they were written today. He is of the view that Donne's love poetry consists of those poems that are marked by an energetic wit as well as an irrelevant attitude towards authority figures (Guibbory, 133).

According to Joan Bennet, Donne's love poetry is not about the difference between marriage and adultery; but about the difference between love and lust. He says the sentiment of Donne's love poems is easier to describe than its manner, meaning Donne's poems are not about lust or desire but they are about intellectual love. Bennet considers that the greatness of Donne's love poetry is due to his experience of the passion that ranges from the lowest to the highest. (Bennet, 142) Joan Bennet has discussed the inter relationship between Donne's personal experiences

and his love-poems. He says that by reading John Donne's biography and love-poems, it can be confirmed that he had scorned, hated, loved, and worshipped. Donne had experienced all phases of love: platonic, sensuous, serene, cynical, conjugal, and illicit. Joan Bennet considers that love is an ideal thing which has been found in some of the best lines of Donne's love-poetry. His search was for an eternal love which triumphs over temporal love. Donne's love poetry shows that as a man, he has felt almost everything about a woman i.e. scorn, self-contempt, anguish, sensual delight and the peace and security of mutual love (Bennet 134-155)

For Louis Martz, human love dominated by change and death is the basic theme of Donne's love poetry (Martz, 169). In Croft's opinion, every word in Donne's love poetry is resonant with his voice and every line seems to bear the stamp of his peculiar personality (Croft, 14). While for Usmani, Donne's love poetry has multifaceted images of the beloved, lovers, and the pattern of love. He says the total effect of Donne's love poetry is kaleidoscopic. He suggests that it is baffling for a critic who comes to his love-poetry with a particular notion of love in mind. Promiscuity, misogyny, hopeless adoration, intimate tenderness, bitter hate, platonic adoration, frivolous cynicism, brothel-lust, monogamous devotion are the various patterns which are described as love in Donne's love poetry. (Usmani, 26).

Grierson is correct in saying that Donne's genius temperament and learning gave a certain quality to his love poems which arrests the attention of his readers. He says Donne's treatment of love is entirely unconventional (Grierson, 6). Grierson suggests that Donne's love poetry is less classical than the medieval doctrine in which pastoral and mythical imagery was used. He writes Donne's love poetry is more dialectical i.e. it is scientific, philosophic, realistic, homely and less picturesque meaning Donne develops his theme for his love poetry dialectically and abstractly. Grierson holds that Donne draws images from

science, travels, everyday life, maps, sea discoveries, alchemy and astrology which give Donne's love poetry totally a different look (Grierson 2-21) Giving an allusion to Donne's originality as the poet of love, Grierson says that, Donne's love-poetry is realistic and distracting. He says Donne's temperament and learning gives a certain quality to his love poems which arrests the attention of the readers immediately (Grierson 23-35)

III

John Donne has written various love poems. Though many of his poems are written on the theme of love we will here talk about one poem i.e. '*The Sunne Rising*'. The theme of the poem '*The Sunne Rising*' is one that has been treated in a number of poems and this theme is the self-sufficiency of love but in this poem it has been described with remarkable originality. The poem begins with the narrator shouting at the sun for disturbing him and his beloved in love-making. He says lovers are not bound to accept the seasons that are formed on account of the sun's movement. He says Love, which remains the same in all circumstances, is free from the effects brought by the changes of season or place; hours, days, month etc. which are the components of them, have no effect on genuine love.

Love, all alike, no season knowes, nor clyme,
Nor houres, dayes, moneths, which are the rags of time.
(Lines 9-10)

This is one of Donne's loveliest love-lyrics. In it the lover is so happy and contented with his beloved that he chides the rising sun, who is creating a nuisance in his love-making. For him his beloved is all treasures of heaven and earth. He won't bother for a court, a king, for gold and spice, or for states, when she is lying in the bed beside him.

In the second stanza the narrator asks the sun why it (sun) imagines its beams all-powerful, when he could blot them out by closing his eyes, though he won't do so, because he doesn't want to lose the sight of her beloved

even for an instant. He says to the sun that when next time it would go on a round of the earth, it will find that both the East Indies (i.e. famous for spices) and the West Indies (i.e. famous for gold) are not where they were before, but here with the narrator, while all the kings of the earth are here in bed- for she is the world and the narrator is its ruler. He says he himself and his beloved are the only true reality. He says to the sun that his duty is to warm the world; and it can be done by simply warming us, since we are the whole world.

Thy beames, so reverend, and strong
Why shouldst thou thinke?
I could eclipse and cloud them with a winke,
But that I would not lose her sight so long:
If her eyes have not blinded thine,
Looke, and tomorrow late, tell mee,
Whether both the' India's of spice and Myne
Be where thou leftst them, or lie here with mee.
Aske for those Kings whom thou saw'st yesterday,
And thou shalt heare, All here in one bed lay. (Lines 11-20)

The third and the last stanza is a subtle and highly striking elaboration of passion and love. It establishes that in the world only two people exist, they are the narrator and his sweetheart. Every other prince or kingdom is merely an imitation. He says to him, she is the essence of all the kingdoms together. And to her, he is the substance of all the princes in the world. To each other by love, they make up a universe. There is, for them, nothing outside it. He is the lone prince of that universe of love. All the princes of the world are only his images and reflections. His sweetheart is a glorious kingdom. Compared to her, even a most estimable kingdom is an imitation; all wealth is as worthless. He and she make up a world in their bedroom. The duty of the sun is to warm, and revolve round the world. It will be fully discharging its duty, if it shines only

over them and moves round their bedroom. This bedroom is your center. And the space around its walls is its orbit along which the sun should move around the world.

She's all States, and all Princes, I,
Nothing else is.

Princes doe but play us; compar'd to this,
All honor's mimique; All wealth alchimie.
Thou sunne art halfe as happy' as wee,
In that the world's contracted thus;
Thine age askes ease, and since they duties bee
To warme the world, that's done in warming us.
Shine here to us, and thou art everywhere;
This bed thy center is, these walls, thy spheare. (Lines 21-30)

In this poem the narrator and his beloved are the *ālambanavibhāvas* being *āshraya* and *vishaya* to inspire love in each other respectively. The young age, beauty, imposing appearance etc. act as the *uddiponavibhāva*. The *anubhāvas* of their love have not been painted vividly but it may be the love for each other. The *vyabhichāribhāva* of eagerness (*autsukya*), languor (*glāni*), attachment (*moha*) and exhaustion (*sh[ama]*) are present in this poem. Here also according to behavior *Svakiyā Nāyikā* is described as she is faithful to her lover. And according to situation she can be treated as *Svādhinpatikā Nāyikā* as she is somewhat swollen with pride of her beloved's love and devotion.

Conclusion

To conclude, we can say that John Donne's love poetry can be evaluated, analyzed and criticized in two perspectives - one the western view and the other the Indian view. The heroines in the love poetry of John Donne make a communion with the lover leading to that utmost concentration which symbolizes the eternal bliss and so it is well justified to study him in Indian perspective also. Thus, John Donne's poetry is an amalgamation and

coalescence of both types of *shringara-rasa*. A consummate artist that he is, Donne presents events in such a way as to arouse *bhāvas* in the readers. While reading his poems the readers derive aesthetic pleasure. In the poetry of John Donne the *shringara-rasa* is found in abundance. John Donne is one of the most influential poets of 17th century. His poetry can be analyzed from the perspective of *Rasa*-theory. The theory of *Rasa* is an Indian concept but it cannot be escaped from the pen of any writer of any language. For example, we may take the name of John Donne.

Through this paper an attempt has been made to do a critical assessment of the reflections of Bharata's *Shringara-Rasa* in the poems of John Donne. Donne was a versatile writer. During his long creative career he wrote several poems, prose pieces as well as essays. His poetry consist of all the features mentioned by Bharata in his *Nātyashāstra*. Usually *rasa* is a fountain of joy and recreation, immeasurable delight and refreshment. But it is significant to note that *rasa* is not only associated with pleasurable things but also with contempt, grievance and dread. Thus, the evaluation of Donne's poetry from the perspective of Bharata's *rasa* theory can make the reading highly interesting and illuminative.

Works Cited

- Ansari, Asloob Ahmad. (ed.) *Essays on John Donne*. Dept of English, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh 1974.
- Bennet, Joan. "The Love Poetry of John Donne - A Reply to Mr C.S. Lewis." *Donne*:
- Bharata. *Nātyasāstra*. Ed. R.S. Nagar. n.p. Parimal Publications, 1984.
- Bhat, G.K. *Rasa Theory*. Baroda: n.p., 1984.
- Blesey, Catherine, "World of Desire in Donne's Lyric Poetry", *Sidney, Spencer and Donne: A Critical Introduction*. (ed.) Rina Ramdev, Delhi: Worldview Critical Editions, 2002.

- Booth, Roy, (Ed). *The Collected Poems of John Donne*. Hertfordshire: Wordsworth Poetry Library, 2002.
- Chandra, Naresh. *John Donne and Metaphysical Poetry*. Delhi: Doaba House, 1991.
- Chaudhury, P. J. "The Theory of Rasa". *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, vol. 24(1), pp. 145-149. (1965).
- Donne: *Songs and Sonnets* (Casebook Series) ed. Julian Lovelock, Macmillan Press Ltd. 1973.
- Gardner, Helen. (ed). *John Donne: A Collection of Critical Essays (20th Century Views)* New Delhi: Printice Hall of India Pvt. Ltd., 1979.
- Gardner, Helen. "The Love Poetry of John Donne: General Introduction". *John Donne: Gardner, Helen. The Elegies and The Songs and Sonnets* (ed.), Oxford: Oxford UP, 1965).
- Ghosh, M. *Nātyashāstra*. Kolkata: Manisha Granthalaya, 1967.
- Grierson, Herbert J.C. "Donne's Love-Poetry" *John Donne: A Collection of Critical Essays* (ed.) Helen Gardner. New Delhi: Prentice Hall of India Pvt. Ltd., 1979.
- Guibbory, Achshah. "Erotic Poetry". *The Cambridge Companion to John Donne* (ed.) AchshahGuibbory, Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2006.
- Keast, William R., (ed). *Seventeenth Century English Poetry: Modern Essays in Criticism* New York: Oxford UP, 1962.
- Lewis C.S., "Donne and Love Poetry in the Seventeenth Century" *John Donne: A Collection of Critical Essays* (ed.) Helen Gardner. New Delhi: Prentice Hall of India Pvt. Ltd., 1979.
- Lovelock, Julian. *Songs and Sonnets*. (ed.), London: Macmillan Press Ltd. 1973.

IJES, Volume LVI, 2019

**Depicting the Social Realism: Portrayal
of the Truth in Binod Mishra's
The Multiple Waves and C.L. Khatri's
*Two-Minute Silence***

**Goutam Karmakar*

Abstract

Writers over the years have been using thousands of threads to weave their pieces and each thread carries within it the individuality of the writer's creative faculty. One such thread is social realism which compels the writers to weave the plot of their pieces without romantic subjectivity and idealization. They try to show the naked truth by exploring the ugly realities of the society and in a dispassionate manner they record what they see in the society. Through their socio-realistic pieces they not only want to understand the nature and function of the society but also want to intellectually penetrate the social process. While poets from all over the world actively engage themselves to portray the realities of the society, Indian poets writing never stand far behind. Binod Mishra and C.L. Khatri, two of the contemporary Indian poets through their poems adopt this realistic mode of narration and in their poems they weave this truth through the waves of reality that lies beneath the cultures, traditions, behaviors, ethos, politics and policies of the society. By implying a moral awareness, their poems heighten the consciousness of their people through their

***Goutam Karmakar**, Assistant Professor of English, Barabazar Bikram Tudu Memorial College, Sidho-Kanhu-Birsha University, Purulia, West Bengal. Email: goutamkrmkr@gmail.com

realistic understandings of the social milieu. And this realism in their poetry comes from their commitment to the society. Taking into consideration the above mentioned facts of Binod Mishra and C.L. Khatri, this paper makes an attempt to show how these two poets realistically depict the elements of the society, conditions of the underprivileged, plight of the silent voices, treatment towards Nature and the condition of the human beings in general in their poems.

Keywords: Nature, Reality, Society, Truth, Woman

Introduction

Before going to make a socio-realistic study of Binod Mishra's *The Multiple Waves*, it is necessary to have a brief discussion on social realism. The term 'Realism' is used by the literary critics in two different ways. The first way identifies the historical period in literature and this literature comprises the nineteenth century naturalistic or realistic texts. Writers like George Eliot from England, William Dean Howells from America and Honore de Balzac from France write novels with their naturalistic outlook. The second way of defining realism means nothing but the realistic representation of human life and their experience in detail. While the origin of the term is French, the use of the term is found in the paintings of the 19th century. Steven Earnshaw remarks: "When talk about realism as a philosophical attitude, it is a particular way of seeing and understanding the world, and when we speak of 'literary realism' we are identifying a class of literature that adheres to some version of this realist stance, and treats and presents its material accordingly... In this sense realist literature has conventions, it is not 'natural' in the way that it is sometimes taken to be" (3). 'Social Realism' is a part of realism where society along with its customs, manners, cultures, ethos, beliefs and ideas are presented in a realistic way. Social realism doesn't believe in the ideas of ruling class and presents the negative aspects of the society. The writers dealing with social realism attempt to delineate the class conflict, religious and political corruptions, exploitation of the lower classes, nature and women in general. Their writings dramatize the social inequalities and thus

their works become the explicit criticism of the contemporary social system. In this context what Josna Sebastian opines is worth mentioning: “In literature, a branch of realism, especially significant in Russian writing, that focuses on the lives of middle and lower class characters. At its worst, the movement becomes mere propaganda to highlight bourgeois evils, proletariat virtues, and glorifies the Soviet Union under Stalinist regime. At its best, this movement exposes ideological mystification and presents accurate depiction of incipient class conflict” (183).

Social Realism in the Select Poems of Binod Mishra

Binod Mishra’s image and symbols weave a texture that seems to become an Indian Saree. His poetry is largely a response to occasions, situations, and moods. He, no doubt, excels in all of them. *Multiple Waves* composes poems of various natures. The poet begins his collection with the poem entitled ‘Night before the New Year’ and ends with ‘A Happy Man’. In between there are poems on life, death, mother, child, and many other titles that, in some way or the other, affect our human lives.

–Foreword, *The Multiple Waves* XI

The above quoted lines taken from the foreword of Binod Mishra’s *The Multiple Waves* are sufficient enough to prove the fact that Binod Mishra’s poems include social sense, experience, social insight and social consciousness. If one can take a look at the title ‘Multiple Waves’, then one can understand that his poetic world is an endless sea and every wave couples with appropriate thought process, language, characters, images, symbols and narrative technique which purport to portray the manifold aspects of the society and its functions which are complex. By adopting the socio-realistic approach he wants to exhibit truth in an artistic way. His poems involve cultural, economic, ecocritical, social and individual changes with their nuances and intricacies. His poems dive deep to explore the truth with his realistic representation of women, Nature, underprivileged, religious, political, economic standard of the society. With his realistic depiction of society his poems prove his social, emotional and artistic involvement with his

surroundings. By showing the reality of all the spheres of life his poems not only depict the harsh realities of the society but also provide a way to build an idealized utopian society where oppression, corruption, exploitation, subjugation will take their steps back and only by this a degenerate and pessimistic outlook of a society will change to a heroic and optimistic one. *The Multiple Waves* begins with the poem “Night before the New Year” and here the eternal exploitation, subjugation and deplorable condition of woman are shown. For the woman a new year brings nothing. The poet says here: “Night before the New Year/least bothered about her tear/gulps everything bitter though/like pungent pills...” (*Multiple Waves* 1). They can’t enjoy the sunshine of the New Year’s morning where as her eyelids laden/with desire/to see its new master” (1). Light only permits the world to see her pale face, unquenched thirst and unfulfilled desire. The poem ends with a note of optimistic pessimism when the poet declares: “Light may not be her privilege though/her nightly gown soothes the bruises of the world/albeit much in absurdity/shaping the noises and silences of all tomorrows” (2).

Mishra keenly observes the condition of women in the society and he decides to stand for them. In his “A Child’s Family”, he depicts the innocence of a girl child who doesn’t know her dreadful future. A girl child is as innocent as a lamb but from the very beginning she is used to shape herself according to the needs of the society and the poet testifies it: “She bleats alphabet and numbers exactly/as her teacher planted in her tender memory/yet she sparkles with a vision/even adults fail to foresee” (3). That girl child wants to be loved by everyone and that is why she asks: “Do you know my family members?/Mom, Dad, Tanu, Mangal and Lizzi/D’ Souza uncle, Khan auntie, Raghu Kaka—/They live in our lane and care for us always” (3). But in reality society only endows her with painful memories. In his “Woman”, the poet again shows to the world the plight of the woman. A woman’s life is full of sacrifices and compromises and in return she incurs “heat, hate and harshness” (4). She is a caged bird who does all the household chores and still her groans are unheard while her life is consecrated

“to raise civilization after civilization” (4). For a grown up girl’s marriage dowry is postulated and here the girl’s upbringing, her ability to adapt to any situation, her management skills and educational background fail to detect a suitable match. Mishra shows his concern in this context in his poem *Her Bag* where he says: “Her laptop kit a tarot card/to bring her dowry down./Can these bring her a suitable match?” (10). Her life, her choices and her love are sold here in this society and the poet conjures up when he questions: “How can business transaction allow/Love to get some room between/things sold and things bought?” (10). Responsibilities of a woman never come to an end and when she becomes a mother her concerns for her children are ineffable. In his “Mother”, the poet shows a mother’s concern for his son who is now too busy to show his love and care for his mother. The son says defiantly: “Responsibilities, Ma, he said,—/have made me busier than ever./No time for phones/who writes letters these days?” (16). His mother fails to make his son the father of a man and it shows how modern society is creating mechanical relationships.

Mishra comments temerarily on the society and its customs, manners and ethos. In his “Grown Up”, he shows the highly ambitious motives of young generation. Youths are now busy with technology and “future belongs to them/their limits expanding/with dotcoms/savvy they have become/clicking the mouse.” (11) The poet compares this generation to those birds which may not return to their motherland as “their wings aching with the sojourn/Or be a part of the cosmos unknown?” (11) In his “The Rising Sun”, the poet again expresses his views regarding the mind-set of young generation. The young generation gives very little importance to older generations. The poet feels pity for the elderly people who have spent all their savings for their children. Lines like “do you ever bother to know/what I like the most?/You should think like others-/I like chocolates and ice cream the most./Or you could think I prefer/the company of my children/in whom I invested/my hard earned pennies the most” (30) limn the realities of this old generation and only the Rising Sun keeps them warm in all the

winters given by their children. Comments on the general human behaviour can be found in his poem "Identity". Here he shows the identity crisis of modern man as man is now not satisfied mentally, physically and naturally from a psychological point of view he is searching for long lost identity. For the human being "Identity now is a misnomer,/one fumes, flames and fumes/yet assumes a new identity...Identity now is in a flux/fixed one rusts and fair one fouls./Innocence fled to spiritual world/Shyness found in smitherreens/Beauty bidding adieu to branded smiles/shopped, sold and sheltered by/unsheltered avatars." (19) Man in this society never lives in peace for he is entangled in societal norms and familiar bonds. Through his poem "The Superannuated Babu", the poet shows the journey of man. Even after his retirement man is "prompting to many uninvited worries/for the delight of his umbilical cords." (18) The perpetual wait of man never comes to an end and thus a simple knock at his door frightens him and "forces him to stare at/his decrepit better half complacently." (18) For Mishra family holds utmost importance. Absence of near and dear ones of the family creates a sense of loneliness in man and in his poem "Absence" the poet shows this by showing the loneliness of the parents. This loneliness is created by their children who leave them to fulfil their dreams and the parents utter: "With children gone, we had more time/to sit together and imagine them/realizing their coveted dreams/at the cost of parents' loneliness/ready to grow every day." (35) But the children often fail to impart value to their sacrifices as after fulfilling their dreams they forget their parents addresses and the parents look for their belongings in every corner/and soothe myself in silence/with your absence marking your presence." (35) The stern realities of family are found poignant expression here. Predicament of modern man is seen in Mishra's "A Happy Man". He shows how a man struggles in day and night, makes friend with powerful people and visits "temples and mosques to give in alms/both cash and kind to needy ones/in every *jagran* and *puja*" (51) A happy man throws parties to show his pride, wealth and status but all these go in vain when he sees that a poor person's happiness lies in a fried samosa only.

Modern man wants to achieve everything and thus he never enjoys his life and the last part of the poem shows the realisation of a man who thinks himself to be a happy one: “His pride met a mighty fall/to see a poor wage earner/ravenously gulping a fried samosa,/unaware of the hole in his torn pants,/the flash of happiness visible through his/dark eyes on his dark face.” (51)

Apart from showing concern for human beings, the poet raises question over the human-nature relationship. Mishra’s poems here in this context are ecocritical in nature. Mother Nature and her surroundings are one of the central themes for the poet. In his Nature he shows the need of Mother Nature in our life. Kind and compassionate Mother Nature fulfils “everyone’s needs/in all seasons.” (13) She receives gladly humans’ sorrows, severity and shriek “and never deceive(s) like humans/in love, friendship and brotherhood.” (13) While she creates new meadows in deserts, human fail to learn anything from this and thus they exploit her in various ways. But this unwanted meddling with Nature results in natural calamities like flood, drought and earthquake. In his “Flood” he shows the devastation caused by flood. This flood is the result of the deforestation and Nature punishes the humans in this way. But still “Man is always at war with Nature,/Land rovers and high towers alone the future;/where noises of machines abuzz around/and merciless music rant the sky.” (41) How draught can snatch away humans’ happiness can be found in Mishra’s “Time’s Fool”. This drought is also the result of anthropocentric attitude of people towards Nature. The downtrodden class becomes helpless in the time of drought and thus humans’ own action takes revenge on them. The opening lines show the deplorable condition of the farmer’s looking at the azure sky for some rainfalls are realistic enough to make people conscious ecologically. The poet shows here: “The cracks in the field/like the lines of anxiety on the farmer’s face/deepening every passing summer day/looking towards the azure sky/wishing it to turn black and beautiful/like lovers’ dismal face—tired of waiting.” (42) Mishra shows the ruthless activities of man in his poems. Man pollutes the natural elements of Nature and in his “Funeral Song”

he shows the water pollution and its aftermath. Industrial developments and human need make the rivers and seas polluted and the funeral song of water bodies is unheard by the humans. For those the poet raises his voice by saying: “Once a mother to several civilizations/my sterile womb—a mere skeleton/my bed a litter of electronic wastes where/neither wind finds space nor night sneaks in,/where frustrated desires of a civilized world/write my funeral song.” (39) In his “The River and The Bridge” the poet also discusses the inhuman activities of human beings. So Binod Mishra through his compositions makes an attempt to decode the truth and his depiction is extremely realistic.

Social Realism in the Select Poems of C.L. Khatri

C.L. Khatri, one of the leading contemporary Indian poets in English, realistically draws the portrait of the society in his compositions. In his *Kargil* (2000), *Ripples in the Lake* (2006), *Two-Minute Silence* (2014) and *For You to Decide* (2016) he shows the society with all its negative aspects, social inequalities, religious and political corruptions, the deplorable condition of women and nature etc. He not only depicts the philosophical views on life but also satirically comments on the life. For him the entire universe is home where human should live peacefully. His *Two-Minute Silence* is no more exception as this book also shows the poet’s socio-realistic outlook. Sudhir K. Arora in his book review of *Two-Minute Silence* aptly says: “C.L. Khatri’s third poetry collection, *Two-Minute Silence*, contains thirty-four poems and fifty-five haiku aimed at awakening humanity’s consciousness to traditional cultural values now threatened by globalization in the name of modernization. The poet stands on the threshold, sees the past and the present, and then shares the best that he finds in the past” (n.pag). Khatri believes that the present culture looks glorious from outside only but humans makes it shallow and vulnerable from within. The society lacks love, virtue, morality, rationality and equality and so the centre which holds together personal, social, political, economical and religious activities of the humans is lost and “the poet intends to makes people understand that they are not machines but human beings who, with cultural

values, are capable of spreading love, peace, and happiness” (Arora n.pag).

The book begins with “A Peaceful Soul” and from the very outset the poet wants the human beings to introspect themselves in order to seek peace. Here he speaks about different attitudes of men and makes his readers believe that perceptions matter and differ. A person who becomes a prisoner in his own eyes interprets life differently from an average man and so one should be aware of the modes of interpretation. The poet says here: “A prisoner of his own images/sees things through his grey glasses/and everything appears grey” (*Two-Minute Silence* 13). Khatri justifies the dictum that poetry is born of suffering, pain, misery, anxiety and angst. The journey of life sometimes never comes to an end and in “River” the poet shows this. Human beings should be realistic and any sort of illusion can lead them in weary ways. Here the poet compares the life with the river which he thought that he would walk across it but the poet utters sadly at the end of the poem: “I kept on swimming/kept on moving/the river also kept on moving./I crossed so many ends/but the ends turned into weary ways” (15). The poet is disillusioned with so many things like educational systems and various definitions of mother in this society. In his Government Schools, he comments on the modes of education provided by Government schools. A good future of students is impossible to be dreamt of here because here the poet says: “two lakh teachers/without any features/the minister pleads/building blocks of future/the poet cries/Fucking Future” (19). While Khatri’s “Homage to Maa” gives a fitting tribute to all the mothers in this world, another poem “Mother” raises question over the definition of mother as the beginning of the poem suggests this: “They say, “A Son may be anti-son/A mother can’t be” (27). The poet becomes speechless when he sees the various inhuman activities of so called mothers who sell, leave and kill their own children. He says: “In Kalahandi a mother was reported/to have sold her son.../In Kedarnath flood a woman left/her dying son on the roadside with a slab/in his chest.../Her sagging bones send her children/for child labour and she lives on their loaf;/their sweats

and her sweets/She is also a mother” (27-28). Time has come to change these mentalities as a woman who claims to be called a mother should behave like a true mother only.

Khatri's poems vividly portray the postmodern dilemma of modern man and in his “Poetic Justice” he shows this. Regarding this poem Rajiv Ranjan Dwivedi aptly comments: “The expression like ‘There is truth eclipsed in truth’ in the poem, Poetic Justice is not only reminiscent of ‘word within a word, unable to speak the word’ in Eliot’s “Gerontion” but is also emphatic in the communication of truth ‘swaddled’ with a mist of nebulous decisions. It seems as if Eliot is reborn in Khatri to perpetuate the grave concerns of postmodern dilemma which takes over all decisive actions of humanity” (126). Khatri believes that there is truth beyond the truth as poetic justice in this corrupted and hollow society is like a day dream. Not always the guilty ones are punished here. He thinks that “there is something rotten in the state/of Denmark,’ whispers the ghost/Surely poetic justice is at hand./Poetic justice!/of the deposed!/In street!” (31). Everyone should be given equal opportunity to flourish and then only a better balanced society can be made. In his “Flower of Opium”, he shows this through the medium of fish in an aquarium, a caged bird, animals in circus and flower of opium. Fish, birds and animals shouldn't be caged. But all these are trapped because “Nations in race of weapons/Harvesting atom fruits/Hand grenade roots/...Their race lands them into a blind alley/of multi storeys graveyard/With a handful of ashes” (32). Khatri notices the social and economic differences between the rich and the poor people and distributional injustice is one of the main reasons behind these differences. In his “New Year-2014” he shows the importance of ‘Aam Adami’ as these ordinary people are the backbone of the society and therefore they shouldn't be exploited and subjugated. The poet speaks on behalf of them: “The murder of trust is more dangerous/Than the murder itself, remind the leaders/Aam Adami runs the show, they say/And pay the world till doomsday/Nurture the nascent tree of democracy/With an oath of blood, sweat and secrecy” (34). This kind of difference is again shown in

“Conversation” where the plights of a peon and a mother are shown. Lower class people are bound to give respect to the upper class as ‘brain is superior to brawn’ (35). The girl in this poem asks her father some questions regarding this class difference and her father replies typically: “Why does he pranam you?/Peon is a lower employee/What makes one lower?/Brawn./What makes one higher?/Brain/...Mummy also works with brawn./Is she your peon?/No. Peon is paid, mummy not./Oh! She is worse than peon./ Shut up!” (35). It’s the high time to open mouth for the liberty and equality. The title poem of the volume *Two-Minute Silence* can sum up the discussion in the most befitting way. The poet wants to bid good bye to all the evils of the society which all are associated. And thus he says ironically: “Let’s observe two-minute silence/On the uprooted microphone/On the broken chair in the parliament/On the torn pages of the constitution/...on your death, on the death/of your fear and defence/to your vows and values/...on the death of dhoti and pugadi/oxen and coolies are replaced by wheels/chopped up hands and lame legs./on the shrinking space, shrinking sun/stinking water of the sacred rivers/sleeping birds, falling leaves/watermelon being sliced for quarrelling cousins” (67-68).

Conclusion

Binod Mishra’s and C.L. Khatri’s poems are perfect examples of social realism in its various manifestations. Through their realistic mode of narration and imagination, they want to decode the truth that lies underneath and within the society. With the use of commonplace incidents, lucid languages, plausibility, truthfulness in thought patterns they show the real picture of the society. Their writings observe complete fidelity along with pure faithfulness in the objective world. They uphold the unseen and untold truths before us. These two poets don’t want to escape from reality and naturally their compositions capture in a linear logical sequence all the prevalent social customs, ethos, topographies, daily life of people, experiences of the downtrodden class, exploitation of certain class and Nature, political, social, economic and religious happenings. Their primary goal is not to amuse the readers but

to make people conscious of the evils. With their concrete representation of the society their works attempt to make a revolutionary development for the betterment of the society. Social realists demand that all creations or art should depict a few aspects of man's struggle towards socialist progress and in this contest Binod Mishra and C.L. Khatri can be called social realists. These two poets allow all forms of experiments in their compositions and in doing that they become harsh, brave, straight forward, satirists and their poems attempt to trace a journey from pessimism to optimism.

Works Cited

- Arora, Sudhir K. "Two-Minute Silence by C.L. Khatri." *Worldliteratutetoday.org. World Literature Today*, March, 2015. Web. 8 Sep 2018. <<https://www.worldliteraturetoday.org/2015/march/two-minute-silence-c-l-khatri>>
- Dwivedi, Dr. Rajiv Ranjan. "Review of C.L. Khatri's Two-Minute Silence." *Verbal Art: A Global Journal Devoted to Poets and Poetry* 1.2 (2015): 125-130.
- Earnshaw, Steven. *Beginning Realism*. New Delhi: Viva Books Pvt. Ltd., 2010.
- Khatri, C.L. *Two-Minute Silence*. New Delhi: Authorspress, 2014.
- Mishra, Binod. *Multiple Waves*. New Delhi: Adhyayan Publishers & Distributors, 2017.
- Sebastian, Josna. *Literary Terms in English*. New Delhi: Commonwealth Publishers, 2009.

IJES, Volume LVI, 2019

Dukhi and Velutha: A Tale of Two Dalit Protagonists

**Ghanshyam Kumar*

Abstract

Dalit writing portrays even what is beyond our naked eyes. In this sense Dalit literature presents an ultrasound image of Indian society. Most of Dalit writings particularly based on Lalit (non-Dalit) writers' speculation failed to justify the innermost agony of the people on the margin. Dalits' suffering can be portrayed to the point only through Dalit-conscious writings, adopting Ambedkarite ideology. The paper in question is a sincere attempt to compare and contrast the plight and predicament of the two Dalit protagonists—Dukhi and Velutha. One, from Premchand's Hindi short story *Sadgati* (Pursuit of Salvation), and the other, from Arundhati Roy's debut novel *The God of Small Things* (1997). Both, being Dalit, are destined to embrace death, unnatural and premature. But resistance against Dalit oppression is undercurrent in both of the works. However, Lalitization of the entire socio-political system imposes a heavy barrier in the way of Dalits' assertion.

Keywords: Ultrasound image, Dalit protagonists, resistance, Lalitization, Dalit assertion.

***Ghanshyam Kumar**, Research Scholar, Department of English, LNMU, Darbhanga, Bihar, India. ghanshyamballia4@gmail.com

“When thinking of India, it is hard not to think of caste...Caste has been seen as omnipotent in Indian History... Caste defines the core of Indian tradition, and it is seen today as the major threat to Indian modernity.” Nicolas B. Dirks

That the need of Dalit literature was greatly felt by Dalit writers because the Lalit (Mainstream) literature has failed to take the whole Dalit concerns with socio-literary justification is absolutely true. No doubt, the latter has almost neglected the innermost agony and the very painful experience of the people occupying the lowest strata. But it is also true that Dalit writings based on Lalit (Caste Hindu) writer's speculation have compelled Dalit authors to present the scene in Dalit's perspective and to do Dalit-conscious writings based on self-experience or direct experience. Thus Dalit literature is an essential supplement to Indian Literature. Needless to mention that Dalit literature in diverse Indian languages with the inclusion of Marathi, Gujarati, Malayalam, Hindi, Oriya et al have come into being, creating a significantly independent place at the (inter)national level. But very painful to express that the representation of Dalit discourses in Indian English has been very rare. Given this, to our sheer pride, much less through English texts and much more through English translation works, Dalit literature on a par with Black literature and Subaltern literature happens to have attained a considerably prestigious apogee forming the integral part of the world literature.

Having been influenced by the Black Panther Movement in 1960s the Dalit Panther Party revolutionized Dalit concerns in Marathi, exercising its influences on almost all major Indian languages. With the humanitarian point of view there must be no confrontation between Lalit (Mainstream) literature and Dalit literature. On the contrary, both must be treated as a united whole with no discrimination on any front. The categorization of literature is required to be taken with a view to enhancing its utility and potentiality, serving our socio-academic as well as socio-literary purposes. Premchand's view that “literature is a torchbearer to all the progressive movements in society” (Prasad, 21) is really very striking in the sense that it expresses all the social concerns

in a wider circumference. Moreover, Arundhati Roy's opinion that "The secret of great stories is that they have no secrets" (TGOST, 229) reveals that literature, if written for life's sake as well as for a great cause, must depict the clear cut picture of society in its totality, maintaining no secrecy, exhibiting no reluctance, evading no reality. In this way, Dalit literature is also a progressive social movement that aims to inculcate in the worst sufferers the sense of dignity and the assertion for identity, empowering them to fight for their rights against socio-political hypocrisy.

This paper tends to explore and compare and contrast the plight of two Dalit protagonists—Dukhi and Velutha. One, from Premchand's short story "Sadgati" and the other, from Arundhati Roy's semi-autobiographical debut novel *The God of Small Things*. Both represent two different phases of India,—pre-Independence India and post-Independence India respectively. Both are destined to meet an adverse fate. Even if circumstances are quite different, they both, being Dalits, have to embrace death, unnatural and premature, creating a low intensity upheaval in the existing social establishments. As a result, some changes with positive signals are in view of our society. The conditions of the majority of the most unfortunate lot who are none but Dalits and Mahadalits are badly required to be ameliorated. And it is possible only when all the 'narrow walls' be demolished. It is the reason why Dr. Ambedkar reiterates to decaste and declass the society we live in. De facto, Lalitization of the whole of the socio-political system imposes a heavy barrier in the way of Dalits' liberation.

Sadgati, originally written in Hindi and later anonymously transcreated into English under the title of "Pursuit of Salvation", a short story from the book *Munshi Premchand*, is a heart rending story that, demonstrating the ugliness of Brahminical culture of the then India, strikes a heavy blow on the heinous sophistication of Brahminism. The story revolves round Dukhi Chamar, the protagonist, who is a god-fearing person. Dukhi has firm faith in Pt. Ghasiram, a village priest whom he (Dukhi) thinks a man of god, a link to Heaven. Selfless service to the priest, as does Dukhi believe, is the only way to salvation. One day without having had

any food, he leaves for Pt. Ghasiram's house for the purpose of getting known the auspicious days and dates for the solemnization of his daughter's marriage. As and when Dukhi gets at the Priest's, he is set to work. Dukhi is asked to hew a very old knotty Sheesham log. A hungry Dukhi, abiding by a ruthless Pt. Ghasiram's order, starts hacking the log. Dukhi tries and tries to splinter the log at the best of his attempt. Dukhi takes it for granted that the priest is meant for taking, not for being taken from. Chikhuri Gond, Dukhi's villager, suggests him to ask Pt. Ghasiram for food. At this, Dukhi replies: "How can I ask a Brahmin? One gives to them, one doesn't take from them." (Sadgati, 51) Then Chikhuri Gond remarks in utter despair: "Not even food in return for a day's work," (Sadgati, 51).

Truly said, if food is not had at the time when strong hunger is felt, then it gets lost. The same happens to Dukhi. He suffers from the loss of appetite. Still he continues to work like a machine for nearly an hour. At last a crack appeared in the trunk and very soon it was cut into two bits. Dukhi somehow gets success in splintering the log into two pieces succumbing to over exertion. Here, "the knotty old log' symbolizes the diehard rigidity of the age old *vrnavyavastha* that gets affected with its (the log) turning into two pieces, supposedly giving the birth of two major ideological forces—Gandhian and Ambedkarite" (Thakur, 151).

Dukhi's blind devotion and dedication to Pt. Ghasiram causes him to be an easy prey to priesthood or Brahminical hegemony. The plight and predicament of Shudras have been excruciatingly thought provoking from time immemorial. In this context Dr Ambedkar's quote from a Brahmnical scripture: "The Shudras should never abandon his master whatever the nature of degree of distress into which the latter may fall" (Who Were the Shudras, 143) must compel the 21st century society to ponder over the vicious circle of miserableness the untouchables are trapped in.

After the death of Dukhi Chamar, Pt. Ghasiram sends the message to the Chamars' ghetto to take the body. But no one turns up following the harsh warning by Chikhuri Gond, who frightens

the people of his Dalit community in the name of the police. “The matter must be reported to the police tomorrow, Chikhuri advised, and warned them that if any one went to get the body, he would also be handed over to the police” (Sadgati, 53). Out of fear no Chamars dare to take the body. It is because for them the fear of the police was more powerful than the fear of losing a place in heaven. It shows that Chamars, who were Dalits and untouchables, silently protested the Brahminical domination in the then society. At last Pt. Ghasiram himself drags ‘the body outside the village into the field. Out in the fields, the jackals and the vultures start collecting around Dukhi’s carcass—a fitting reward for a life of devotion, service and faith in the form of a tanner’s assumed salvation.

Ironically, Dukhi attains salvation, sparking a direct but silent protest against the inhuman attitude of priesthood. Mustering courage to gainsay the brahminical system during the pre-independence India was not a cake walk in the then social circumstances. The story *Sadgati* exhibits that Premchand must have been under the ideological influence of Ambedkar too who was considered to be the epicentre of the Dalit movement that stresses the principle of freedom, fraternity and equality. Through the story Premchand reveals the clandestine oppressive attitude of the rotten Brahminical mentality still prevalent in our socio-political and religio-cultural precincts in some form or the other.

As for *The God of Small Things*, its narrative centres upon a love affair between Ammu, a high-caste woman and Velutha, an untouchable. The intense love between the two is nipped in the bud. The voices of Ammu and Velutha, the protagonist, end in their tragic deaths. There is no body to help Velutha in his crisis. The whole humanity happens to turn against him. Velutha possesses multifarious qualities. He is a dexterous worker at the Paradise Pickles Factory. He is an avid swimmer as well. He is at home in all the machinery works of the factory. Moreover, he is at home in carpentry and mending radios, clocks, water pumps, and what not. He has also the expertise in plumbing and all the electrical gadgets. Mammachi, Ammu’s mother, often says of Velutha that

“If only he hadn’t been a Paravan, he might have become an engineer” (TGOST, 75).

In the Pickles Factory, touchable as well as untouchable workers work together. Notwithstanding all his skillfulness, Velutha gets less than a touchable carpenter. Mammachi understands the meaning of the being of Velutha very well. So “To keep others happy and since she knew that nobody else would hire him as a carpenter, Mammachi paid Velutha less than she would a Touchable carpenter but more than she would a Paravan.” (TGOST, 77). Velutha feels economically exploited in the factory. Velutha, being a Dalit, is not allowed into the Mammachi’s house until needed. “Mammachi didn’t encourage him to enter the house (except when she needed something mended and installed)” (TGOST, 77).

Almost everything goes on well in Ayenemem till the love affair between Velutha, an untouchable and Ammu, a ‘touchable’ is disclosed by his father, Vellya Paapen, himself, who accidentally sees the two in a compromising condition with his naked eyes. Vellya Pappen thinks they both have made ‘unthinkable thinkable and the impossible really happened. Vellya, out and out loyal to Mammachi, offers “to kill his son. To tear him limb from limb” (TGOST, 256). Arundhati Roy writes: “He (Vellya) was taken completely by surprise. Part of the taboo of being an Untouchable was expecting not to be touched. At least not in these circumstances of being blocked into a physically impregnable cocoon” (Ibid).

Of course, Velutha falls head over heels in love. He takes an exemplary step, mustering his courage, to love Ammu, a divorcee and mother of swarthy twins, Rahel and Estha. Notwithstanding his cognizance of the imminent consequences, he continues to make love to her. But their love affair does not last long. The caste pride nips it in the bud. Velutha has to pay the cost of love in losing his life. The outcome of such an affair in the caste conscious society is hardly surprising. It was just to come off. But here, the most remarkable thing is that even without caring for his life, Velutha swims against the turbulent current of social hierarchy with his indomitable grittiness. No doubt, his love for Ammu is based on her pressing carnal demand. It is really flawless and

heartfelt as well. Love knows no fair or foul outcome. Velutha has a sense of impending doom. So does Ammu have.

However, Velutha's bold step for love is a direct protest against the social establishment that does not allow lovebirds belonging to two different social statuses as well as two different castes, lower and higher, to exercise their human rights. It is true that a new societal change demands incessant struggle and sacrifice. But a meaningful and fruitful change seems to be a pipe dream in the present context.

Ambedkar, advocating for a casteless and classless society, rightly opines, "The strength of a society depends upon the presence of points of contact, possibilities of interaction between different groups called 'organic filaments' i.e. the elastic threads which help to bring the disintegrating elements together and to reunite them. There is no integrating force among the Hindus to contract the disintegration caused by caste" (Annihilation of Caste, 73). This might have been expressed targeting the caste deformities we find in the Hindu society. But it is equally true to every society in India whether it is Christian or Muslim or the other. "India is generally known as the classic land of castes and creeds. Caste is said to be in the air, and even Muslims and Christians have not escaped infection" (Majumdar, 195).

When Velutha, who remains totally unaware of what his father reveals to Mammachi concerning his affair with Ammu, appears before her, she humiliates him extremely inhumanly showing her intense anger. Mammachi spat into Velutha's face. "Thick spit. It splattered across his skin. His mouth and eyes" (TGOST, 284).

Baby Kochamma, taking the advantages of the existing circumstances, labels the charges of rape and abduction on Velutha. She brings a complaint to the police against him. Kochamma informing the police, says that...a few days ago he (Velutha) had tried to force himself on her niece (Ammu), 'and kidnapped her children. Velutha comes to have already lost his place in the eyes of Baby Kochamma and the other family members. It is because Velutha was once seen in the communist

party march. The procession surrounded the blue Plymouth being driven by Chakho to the Abhilash Talkies carrying Rahel, Estha, Ammu and Baby Kochamma. The protesters demand that they must not be humiliated calling their caste with their name. Rahel, Ammu's daughter, sees "Her most beloved friend Velutha. 'Velutha marching with a red flag. Velutha is seen "In a white shirt and mundu with angry veins in his neck" (TGOST, 71).

Apprehending his immediate arrest, Velutha first thinks to save himself somehow from the clutch of the police. Thinking so he meets Pillai, the party leader and asks him for help. But flatly ignoring a helpless Velutha's grievances, Pillai, a high caste Communist leader, instantly replies, "But Comrade, you should know that party was not constituted to support workers' indiscipline in their private life" (TGOST, 287).

Eventually Velutha is arrested, badly battered and put behind the bars. Consequently, he succumbs to grave injuries just under the police custody. Ammu reaches the police station for his rescue but in vain. The Police do not think it feasible to probe into the matter. An innocent Velutha loses his life to the police who stand for 'Politeness, Obedience, Loyalty, Innocence, Co-operation, and Efficiency'. What an irony! Actually, Pillai sees in Velutha a rising radical future leader of the workers and untouchables. Pillai must have thought that if Velutha becomes the leader as the latter gains ground, the former might lose the ground to the people. What's more, having known that Velutha has been a communist party worker, the police inspector sends for Pillai to discuss the issue. The later flatly refuses to help Velutha. Comrade Pillai tells Inspector Thomas about his acquaintance with Velutha, but omits to mention that Velutha is a member of the communist party. Thus we find that the whole humanity is dead against Velutha. Really the whole system is blindly in favour of the powerful. The powerless are small things. Only loss is destined to them. They are gods of small things. Even the constitutionally recognized or established bodies empower the men of power and weaken the powerless.

Frankly speaking, both Dukhi and Velutha meet the same tragic fate. Their lives are of little value. The loss of 'small lives' hardly creates ripples. They get victimized by 'structural violence' that is easily perceived in our society even now. In his book "Violence Reflections on a National Epidemic", James Gilligan defines structural violence as "The rates of death and disability suffered by those who occupy the bottom rungs of society, as contrasted with the relatively lower death rates experienced by those who are above them" (Gilligan: amazon.com).

As a matter of fact, death is the ultimate reward of love and devotion, blind faith and selfless dedication. Dukhi is a mute sufferer in the hand of brahminical dominance in Indian society. On the contrary, Velutha does not believe in the conventional setup of social life. The former is a fatalist whereas the latter, a political activist. One is dogmatic and superstitious while the other, dynamic and radical. Dukhi wades through the stinking stagnant water whereas Velutha swims against the turmoil tide. Only due to his blind reverence to Pandit Ghasiram, an illiterate Dukhi loses his life. It is said that illiteracy leads to the dense darkness of life and good education fills one's life with light of knowledge. Velutha is driven to end his life in making love to Ammu owing to which he is easily victimized in the pretext of honour or horror killing that is in vogue even today in India while Dukhi is victimized by his innocence as well as plain mindedness that causes him to garner his firm belief in the Brahminical system. Dukhi's bowine meekness arouses pathetic feelings but Velutha plays a trend setter inspiring his likes to fight for life. A high school pass out Velutha wants a tremendous social change. His death is life blood to the society he belongs to and a fountainhead of aspiration to the coming generation of his community. Rightly remarked, life takes on bright colour in sailing against the stormy wind.

In *Sadgati*, having been alarmed just after the pathetic death of Dukhi, Chikhuri Gond of his village defends the dignity of his own Dalit community against the adamant walls of Brahminical hegemony that is often termed as "intellectual goondaism". Moreover, the air of strong protest is underlying in *The God of*

Small Things as well. A rebellious Velutha challenges the status quoism of the upper castes' dominance. In both of the works evil overpowers good, compelling us to bring about a substantial social change for the holistically humanistic approach to Dalit life.

Works Cited

- Ambedkar, Dr. B.R. *Annihilation of Caste*. Samyak Prakashan, New Delhi, 2011.
- Ambedkar Dr. B.R. *Who were the Shudras*. Samyak Prakashan, New Delhi, 2011.
- Banerjee, Dr. Renuka, editor. *Munsi Premchand : "Sadgati"*, translated as "Pursuit of Salvation". Tulsi Paper Books, Delhi—7. [https://www.amazon.com/Violence Reflections on a National Epidemic](https://www.amazon.com/Violence-Reflections-on-a-National-Epidemic/)> Accessed on 25/01/2018.
- Majumdar, D.N. and T.N. Madan. *An Introduction to Social Anthropology*. Mayoor Paperbacks, Noida, 1986.
- Prasad, Kamla, editor. *The Clarion Call: Progressive Writers Association (PWA). 14th National Conference: 9-11 April, 2008*.
- Roy, Arundhati. *The God of Small Things*. India Ink, New Delhi, 1997.
- Thakur, Harinarayan. '*Dalit Sahitya Ka Samajshastra*'. Bhartiya Jnanpeeth, New Delhi, 2009.

IJES, Volume LVI, 2019

Negotiating the Abused Woman Body: A Study of Select Woman Authored Plays from the 1980s

**Pinaki Ranjan Das*

Abstract

Simone de Beauvoir in *The Second Sex* argues that 'woman is her body as man is his, but her body is something other than her'. What is central to such an understanding is that women's experience of their bodies is different to men, for, women 'lack' control over their bodies and is instead managed by men. Traditions, customs, rituals, marriage, religion, history, literature, science and other socio-cultural artifacts and discourses have conventionally put the female body under male subordination. It has therefore emerged as a site which is at once the location of male desires and fantasies, and vulnerable to violence. Hence the feminists have looked upon violence as gendered. Sexual harassment, rape, pornography, prostitution, sati, dowry deaths are some of the forms of violence that women have traditionally suffered. But when Indian women's theatre took up women's living experiences of violence in the 1980s, forms of psycho-sexual abuse, have led to more varied and unexplored areas of critical understanding. This research paper, reads Dina Mehta's *Getting Away with Murder* and Manjula Padmanabhan's *Lights Out* in order to explore how Indian Women's Theatre

***Pinaki Ranjan Das**, Assistant Professor, Dept. of English,
Nehru College, Bahadurganj, Kishanganj, Bihar, Email:
mepinaki1@gmail.com

produced a vocabulary of their own in comprehending the abused woman body.

Keywords: Body, Violence, Sex, Woman, Difference.

Engagement with the complex notions of nation, war, class and caste, freedom and desire in the Indian context, has been some of the obvious features of Indian women's theatre in the last two decades of the 20th century. But the politically turbulent 1970s and '80s also initiated discussions on body and abuse, an affair which has continued in the Indian theatre of the new millennia as well. One of the prime reasons behind the sustenance of such themes in Indian theatre (or any theatre as such) is that the very 'doing' of theatre itself enables the discussion on 'body'. Colette Conroy in her book *theatre and the body* observes that theatre facilitates thinking on body at least in four different ways. Making and watching theatre is directly connected with the actors playing roles of different characters on stage. A particularly trained body of an actor under specific directorial convention, projects itself on stage in a way that would affect the audience differently under different conventions. Again, when seen as a 'site of power', 'body' in theatre permits the exploration and interrogation of power as a 'site', which immediately and inevitably suggests its volatility. The body of the actor synthesizes performance and culture and thereby allows the 'spectating body' (Conroy 6) (audience) to analyse the 'working of power upon the body in culture' (5). Finally, Conroy argues that theatre allows the distinction between an ideal body and the real physical bodies; the ideal body being that dispassionate medium *communiqué* which dawns any character on stage without interfering in the audience's process of analysis, while the real bodies are 'physical objects that vary hugely from each other' (6). The interaction of the audience and theatre therefore enables the exploration of the potential and the real body as well as the reconsideration of the real through the potential body. Buoyant with the opportunities of pushing 'the extremes of cultural imagination' theatre provides 'space, structure and context for the contemplation of actual and potential' (Nevitt 6). Exploring such possibilities in theatre, however, must involve the audience,

imagined as individual on the one hand, and social and corporeal on the other. This paper explores Indian women playwrights' (and directors') engagement with theatre's nuanced relation with women's body on stage and 'violence', which I critically differentiate from and interpret as abuse.

Manjula Padmanabhan's *Lights Out* and Dina Mehta's *Getting Away with Murder*, the plays I choose for this paper were first performed respectively in 1986 and 1990. Though a number of plays composed in the 1990s and 2000s thematically address the issues of body and violence, my choice of these two plays primarily rests on the fact that they were composed in the 1980s. What is the contribution of 1980s to 'Women's theatre'? The question does not entail easy answers. For, it is to be found in the role theatre played in producing the 'enormous cultural significance' (Mangai 29) of women's movements that began in the late 1970s.

After the failure of women's trade unions (founded by the Gandhian Socialists) in encouraging debates about women's issues, the women's groups which emerged as wings of Left political parties around 1975, initiated feminist debates and associated feminism with other social movements of the time. Inspired by Badal Sircar's 'third theatre', some of the groups 'took to organizing theatre and art groups from amongst their staff. These groups would develop a set of plays and skits which would then be performed during campaigns and protests.' (Mangai 30) One such example is RUWSEC, a women's group in the 1980s, in Chenglapattu, Tamil Nadu, which used theatre skills of its members to put across a non-literate dalit women audience, matter of labour, health and violence women suffer within the family. Conversely, theatre groups like Tripurari Sharma's "Alarippu" performed regularly in public squares, railway platforms, ghettos and *bastis* in order to disseminate women's 'concerns' amongst the public. Theatre and women's groups therefore in the 1980s proved complimentary to each other. The women's groups (following the strategy set by left/ right wing political activists) brought theatre out of the auditorium to the streets and *mohullas*; and affective/ interventionist as it is, theatre took different forms, such as the

'street theatre', 'engaged theatre', 'oppositional theatre', 'radical theatre', 'theatre of liberation', 'free theatre', 'applied theatre' etc.. Hence the stimulus theatre acquired from the women's movements in the late 1970s (and after) cannot be annulled.

Lights Out and *Getting Away with Murder* (none of which was composed to be performed as 'activist' plays), in their own rights, encapsulate what Helen Keyssar describes in *Feminist Theatre and Theory* as 'productions of scripts characterized by the consciousness of women as women; dramaturgy in which art is inseparable from the condition of women as women; performance (written and acted) that deconstructs sexual difference and thus undermines patriarchal power, scripting and production that present transformation as a structural and ideological replacement for recognition; and the creation of women in the subject position (1). The 1980s, provided playwrights like Padmanabhan and Mehta the necessary impetus for synthesizing politics and aesthetics in their plays but they also preserved their separation from being generalized as 'political' theatre activists.

Apart from engaging theatre and activism on the national level, the 1980s are notorious for the 'corporal turn' in academic feminisms worldwide, a nebulous reflection of which is also found in the plays chosen. Since violence on women is the epicenter of both *Getting Away with Murder* and *Lights Out*, the female body remains the site of major critical explorations. In this regard, the plays are in consonance with Indian feminist approaches to 'embodiment', which draws at various levels from the Western feminist notions of embodiment, but at the same time, are critical of them. While the 'First Wave' Anglo-American Feminism rarely focused on the body as a site of critical enquiry, engagement with body during the 'Second Wave' was structured by the inheritance of Cartesian dualism in which the split between mind and body traditionally privileged the mind over body and associated women only with the latter. Uncritical relegation of women to the body is also one of the reasons behind the separation between men and women in terms of their socio-cultural and political roles. For Simone de Beauvoir, the body is 'problematic' for women,

because, it limits their 'freedom'. Arguing for a dematerialized view of gender, the liberal feminists accepted de Beauvoir's position, but the radical feminists 'looked at the female body (nonetheless subordinated and controlled) as the source of empowerment and having the potential to effect social change in being the 'source of actual lived and experienced pain, distress and pleasure'' (Howson, 49). Hence, a number of radical feminists like Koedt, Brownmiller, Greer, Millett and Firestone (to name only a few), writing in the 1970s, addressed the connotations that female body supplies to women's experience of subordination with respect to sexuality, rape, representation and reproduction (48). In accordance with Susan Bordo, Alexandra Howson argues that the radical feminist texts were 'grounded in a language of activism and quite explicitly engaged with a range of women's bodily experiences, 'from foot-binding, corseting to rape and battering to compulsory heterosexuality, forced sterilization, unwanted pregnancy, and explicit commodification'' (48). In the 1980s, however, the female body came to be seen as 'specific, subordinated matter that could be important in transforming social relations and arrangements.' (49). Howson, therefore, lauds the 1980s' radical feminists such as Adrienne Rich for re-conceiving the ways in which the 'female subject' and the 'female embodiment' may be entwined in order to comprehend the body as a "resource' for women rather than as an inevitable psychological and biological destiny' (49).

Dina Mehta's *Getting Away with Murder*, explores the female body both in terms of being considered as 'destiny' as well as 'resource' for a transformed social arrangement. The play revolves around three upper middle class women who are trapped within their 'private' psycho-social spaces of subordination and surrender, amidst the ambivalence of a re-formed social structure. It offers three different perspectives on the sexual/ anatomical reductionism in gendered relations. Sonali, who has been a victim of child sexual abuse, is desperate to reassert her control over her body. Her friend, Mallika, though a successful entrepreneur, is apprehensive of going against the social norms in marrying Gopal

(Sonali's brother and her fiancée) who is younger in age. Raziya is a medical doctor but unquestioningly compromises with the cultural structures that force her to carry on a failed conjugal relationship with her husband who is set to marry another woman. All three women in the play hail from the 'empowered' upper-middle-class section of the society and have enough scope for economic and individual liberty, but each one of them privately continue struggling with embodied social stratifications. Though the play is written in English and targeted to an educated urban audience, Mehta never projects essential narratives on the living experiences of women in India. Gopal's random display of photographs before Mallika, may be referred to as a technique to supplement Mehta's contentions.

Malu: ... What's the matter with her face?

Gopal: It's smeared with muck. That's Indumati. The mob at her heels is drumming her to the river, where they'll kill her and throw her in.

...

Gopal: This one is a close-up (*switches off a light and projects picture on a wall*). See the tension in her neck? Her eyes looking straight at me, accusingly? I had snatched her moments of deepest dread and humiliation—and was about to walk away with them for public display, like a trophy. I ran all the way to the police station instead ... Indumati was saved in the nick of time.

...

Gopal: ... This is Dulkha Devi of Tharwar. The day after I snapped her in the bazaar, she was stripped naked within sight of the police station, her face blackened, head shaved, forced to run around the village while the men beat her with burning brands and sticks till she died (*switches off*).

...

The village priest denounced her as a witch. She had once repulsed him, it seems, so after her husband died of consumption the *pujari* took his revenge by accusing her of eating him up!

...

Gopal: And these are widows and deserted women who live in Chaibasa. (*Another projection*) Male relatives have accused them of being witches in order to usurp their land. Many such cases are pending in the courts.

...

Gopal: (*Offhand*): That? (*stammering suddenly*) She – she’s from Barisola village. ...she’s a widow – that’s her 3-year old daughter with her – and their lives are in danger because her brother-in-law, who covets her land, has accused her of being a witch. (79-81)

The random presentation of slides as a dramaturgic innovation reflects Antonin Artaud’s dramatic strategies of presenting forms of cruelty through minimum rhetoric and props. But most explicit is Mehta’s strategy of projecting the difference in lived experiences of Indian women in different regions of the country. The Dulkha Devi of Tharwar is a victim of patriarchal violence, while Mallika and Raziya are trapped in the structures of socio-patriarchal expectations. Sonali on the other hand is undergoing post-traumatic experiences of child sexual abuse but in her resistance against being subject to any further control, she finds support in her husband. Hence, the images of women that emerge throughout the play not only recognize the socio-patriarchal ideologies operating behind the reduction of women to their bodies but also suggest that reclaiming control over the body may transform the existing social arrangements.

With regard to the above proposition, the play is in sync with the Western materialist feminists of the 1970s and 1980s. They held that the female body’s experience of discomfort or liberation is conditioned by its specific location in the socio-economic and political structures. The British sociologist, Ann Oakley situates women’s bodily experiences amidst a social framework where capitalist structure is fused with the patriarchal. Exclusive women’s experiences, such as the menstruation and the menopause, are never accommodated in the capitalist economic structure and even pregnancy sometime goes ‘invisible’ in a more oppressive frame. Though women’s bodily experiences are strategically ignored,

women's autonomy over their bodies did not go uncorrupt. The technological innovations in bio-medicine have situated woman's body (especially during the elaborate process of reproduction) not only under the patriarchal surveillance but reified the body in terms of parts and fragments. 'The surveillance of the female body', as Howson observes, is 'part of a more general shift towards visualizing the unseen' (52). Hence, questioning the socio-patriarchal 'normative' structures associated with the 'nature' of women's bodily experiences brought the materiality of women's experiences into more deliberate focus. But such attention conferred to the social shaping of experience, unwittingly associated experience with gender as a topic of sociological enquiry. Gender, therefore, is different from sex on the one hand and a blank category to be filled with socio-cultural assumptions and praxis on the other. Consequently, the body came to be seen as a site where the social assumptions of gender are mapped on. The sex/ gender distinction thus sought, defines the hitherto capricious relation between the anatomy of a woman/ man and her/ his gender identity. For Christine Delphy, even sex is enmeshed within the 'practice of social and cultural determination that transforms 'a physical fact into a category of thought' (57). What follows then is that sex is not a historical but a culturally mediated social product constituted of historically acquired value. Thus, Indumati of Ranchi, Dhulka Devi of Tharwar, the widows of Chaibasa, Sonali, Mallika and Razia are similar in being looked upon and projected as 'sexed' bodies. Following Foucault's contention that 'body' is discursively constituted through forms of power which germinate not in the macrocosmic institutions of state but the 'micro-practices of everyday life' (73), and that power materializes through its operations on individual bodies, it may be argued that the female body continuously evolves as the produce of 'new knowledge and orthodoxies' (74), and involves itself in the social formation of femininity.

But considering the women characters in *Getting Away with Murder* as Foucaultian 'sexed' bodies has its own problems. For, the notion of the 'sexed body', which was rooted in its specific

genealogy of production and projected against the Cartesian privilege of the mind over body, has been criticized for failing to acknowledge the *difference* in gendered embodiment of male and female. This *difference*, however, has been addressed by Judith Butler in the context of self-other distinction using the post-Lacanian psychoanalytic framework which focuses on writing and textuality. For Butler, discourses are constitutive but not seminal to the body. The latter has 'something' in excess to what is constituted by the discourse. This 'something' is the 'imaginary space' that characterizes the 'excess of difference', which according to Hawson, 'can only be understood through knowledge of text rather than through substantive knowledge derived from observations and understandings of bodily experience rooted in material locations and practices' (85). But to look at the body as text, it is necessary to espouse the Derridian notion 'There is no outside-the-text', which Derrida himself elaborates as signifying that 'one never accedes to a text without some relation to its contextual opening that a context is not made up only of what is so trivially called text, that is, the words of a book or the more or less biodegradable paper document in a library' (Bennington, 841). Hence, for Derrida, the 'context' of a text is very important. Moreover, for Derrida, *textuality* is characterized by *difference*, *deference* and *multiplicity* of meaning. Therefore the Derridian structure promotes an ambiguity within a system of shifting signifiers, which puts into rapture any constructed whole, and disturbs its fixity and encourages non-stability. Derived from the idea of textuality, and its 'undecidability', 'woman' for Derrida is 'undecidable'. For feminists, this undecidability provides them the greatest opportunity to break away from the 'fixed' binary categorization (Howson 86). Derrida's aim of 'destabilising the logocentricity, by rethinking the oppositional binary' (86) is championed by the feminists who advocated the rejection of male/female binary. They used Derrida's deconstructive methods to 'demonstrate how women come to embody difference' (87). Likewise, some feminists have disrupted sex/gender distinction arguing against the exclusivity of physiological or social category.

Padmanabhan's *Lights Out* rejects the 'feminist' models that reduce woman to her anatomy and discusses the socio-political and ritualistic factors that collaborate in constituting the 'female' as a separate category. The protagonists of the play, an upper middle class couple (Leela and Bhasker) are 'annoyed' by the spectacle of gang rapes in their colony. They are gradually joined by a number of friends, viz. Mohan, Naina and Surinder (Naina's husband), but none of them take the initiative to come out of the apartment and help the victim(s); instead the scene becomes a cynosure of sex-battle among the male and female characters. Composed with a 'bystander effect', *Lights Out* recognizes the female body as subject to patriarchal control, repeated sexual abuse and a matter of continuous socio-cultural, political and religious debate. But at the same time, the play provides scope for reworking the sex/gender distinction as 'a stylized repetition of acts... understood as the mundane way in which bodily gestures, movements, and styles of various kinds constitute the illusion of an abiding gendered self' (Butler 140). Manjula Padmanabhan portrays Leela as the typical woman and Bhaskar and Mohan as the typical men indoctrinated in gender roles. Leela is empathetic towards the women who are raped regularly in the colony but depends upon Bhaskar for acting against the atrocities. As an 'ideal' Indian wife, Leela remains passive, and subordinated to her husband throughout the play. But Padmanabhan introduces Naina as a foil to Leela. She not only challenges the vague masculine explanations of rapes, but also urges the men to act. Hence, both the women appear 'relational' to the 'material' condition they represent. As Judith Butler proposes, body acts as the medium through which each sex enacts itself both in acquiescence with and through the disruption of norms. For Butler, gender is not absolutely detached from sex; rather it is mired in the complex structure of heterosexuality that not only creates but also attempts to establish 'an illusion of stability and fixity ... produced through repetition and enactments (typically interpreted as habitual practice) that make it seem as though gender (as identity) is fixed and attached to sex (as in the 'sexed body')' (111). Materiality of sex-

gender dichotomy, therefore, is *not* a mere 'given'; it is a product of the process of materialization through repetitive practice which generates the 'effect of boundary, fixing and surface' (111). Body, as a result comes to be seen as 'matter (immutable) over time' (111). In *Bodies that Matter*, Butler develops her idea of materiality and body. While the former is constituted of 'power' that makes materiality seem 'given', the latter for Butler can only be comprehended through the process of linguistic signification, for, return to the body as matter, is possible only in return through signs. As a product of the system of signs, body emerges as relational (30).

We can perhaps understand 'female body' in *Lights Out* as limiting and conscious of its boundaries that physiologically separate it from others. It is discursively produced in relation to a complex socio-political network of dependency/ interdependency/ non-dependency. That women who are raped in the building adjacent to Leela and Bhasker's, Naina and Leela have female bodies, are situated in the physical and linguistic realm of things. Hence, they are never devoid of connotations. Padmanabhan presents her characters through layered representations of gender performativity, which is at best an 'enactment' in relation to the 'compulsory' social norms that are made obligatory through the machinations of heterosexual hierarchical forms of power. Body, then emerges as the material site through which 'gender performatives' are enacted, ratified and questioned. The female body is especially intriguing here, because it has been historically compelled to undergo social, political, economic and 'religious' subjugation and denied human subjectivity and agency. But reading the body as text, argues Helene Keyssar, 'risks biological essentialism' (168). 'The body's role in theatrical representation poses some particularly complex issues for material feminists because, despite the extent to which 'gender' and 'character' may be social and/ or theatrical constructions, the facticity of the actor's biological sex always reinscribes the performer with the cultural codes associated with his/ her gender' (168-9). This is in accordance with Jill Dolan's argument that body can never be free

of connotative signs (Dolan 63). Hence, when a female body is presented on stage as a 'speaking subject', as it is also in the case of the plays by Indian women playwrights, the 'body' relatively acquires multiple significations. My main contention in this paper, however, is to locate the thematic and dramaturgic uniqueness that Indian women playwrights arrive at, with respect to the female body when it is subject to violence.

With the publication of Susan Griffin's 1971 article *Rape: The All-American Crime*, the 'Western' view on violence came to be gendered. Her essay refers to some cultures where violence is invariably equated with masculinity. The feminists in the late 1970s and early '80s have cited her essay in order to argue for the 'maleness' of violence (Price 11). R. Emereson Dobash and Russell Dobash define violence in conjugal terms. In *Violence Against Wives: A Case Against Patriarchy* they argue that violence is 'the persistent direction of physical force against a marital partner or cohabitant' (11). Hence they argue for a heterosexual definition of violence, where woman is the obvious victim. Later, Anne Jones widens the scope of violence by identifying the use of physical force as only an aspect or form of violence, for the latter also includes 'Behaviour you might not think of as 'violence,' behaviour you might think of merely as getting things off your chest ... if it coerces or frightens another person' (88). However, if causing fear is looked upon as the touchstone of violence/violent behaviour, then it not only denies the misogynist dimension of male violence, but its sexual nature as well. Sonali in *Getting Away with Murder*, is a victim of 'sexual' abuse. Suffering from forced sexual subjugation, Sonali embodies the experience of discrimination between boy and girl. 'My mother used to exhaust herself over her household tasks—may be because she was grateful to Uncle for taking us in after Father died. She drove herself—and turned me into her satellite: I had to run her errands, mouth her opinions, feel her feelings... Of course, Gopal escaped all that because he was born with an extra set of accessories' (Mehta 59). Hence, the gendered nature of violence can never be denied.

Price locates two schools of thinkers who understand violence and sex in two different ways—‘Violence is sex’ and ‘Violence *not* sex’ (Price 18). She quotes Radford saying in an interview ‘while men are murdered more frequently than women, men are rarely murdered simply because they are men’ (16). For women, Radford says, it is the ‘misogynous’ attitude that causes their murder the most. Hence the obvious question that she raises, is about the role of sexuality in violence. She builds up a feminist approach to ‘rape’ in order to vindicate the difference in positions of the aforementioned schools. That rape is a matter of violence which involves no sexuality, is a view espoused by Dorrie Klein, Judith Herman, Peggy R. Sanday and Carole J. Sheffield. For them, rape or for that matter even incest, though carried out on the body (‘female’), are expressions of power and domination wrought with the patriarchal notion of control instead of being erotic. Price also includes Susan Brownmiller, who conceptualizes rape as a theft of property. In her book, *Against Our Will: Men, Women and Rape* (1975), she argues,

Like assault rape is an act of physical damage to another person, and like robbery it is also an act of acquiring property: the intent is to ‘have’ the female body in the acquisitory meaning of the term. A woman is perceived by the rapist both as hatred person and desired property. Hostility *against her* and *possession* of her may be simultaneous motivations, and the hatred for her is expressed in the same act that is the attempt to ‘take’ her against her will. In one violent crime, rape is an act against person and property. (185)

Clark and Lewis agree with Brownmiller and consider rape to be simply an act of larceny of sexual property. They argue,

A sexual attack is, in itself, neither better nor worse than any other kind of attack. ... to treat rape as a sexual offence simply because it involves a penis and a valuable vagina, only reinforces the connections between women as property and women’s sexuality as the source of their property value. (179)

Hence, for Clark, Lewis, Brownmiller, and other proponents of “violence *not* sex’, sexuality is always *absent* for both the victimizers and the victims. They leave altogether the very question of sexual identity. Among the notable advocates of ‘violence is sex’ proposition, are Carol Smart, Catharine MacKinnon and Susan Cole. For Smart, in its process of execution violence always incurs ‘pleasure with power’ (18). Speaking about the rapists, women murderers, the molesters and child abusers, Mackinnon’s views are especially intriguing for she asserts that violence meted out to women by men are always already enmeshed in sexual pleasure. Price cites her thus:

[They] enjoy their acts sexually and as men, to be redundant. It is sex *for them*. What is sex except that which is felt as sexual? When acts of dominance and submission, up to and including acts of violence, are experienced as sexually arousing, as sex itself that is what they are. ... Violence is sex when it is practiced as sex. (19)

Therefore, for MacKinnon, sex and violence are not only complimentary but also emerge as synonymous when held in the context of masculine violence over women. Also worth mentioning is Susan Cole’s reading of rape by men using ‘weapons’ such as the ‘broomsticks’ instead of penis. She argues that even if weapons are used for raping, it does not erase the sexuality involved in the act, for the weapon is used as penis to penetrate the *vagina* of women. It is the involvement of vagina instead of other parts of a woman’s body in raping that makes explicit the ideas of sexual pleasure. She says:

That the penis is not a weapon in the assault does not mean that sex is not involved: saying rape is about power and not sex leaves out the crucial fact of where the attackers put their weapons. If rape is about power and not sex, why don’t attackers just hit women, and exercise their power that way? Because *rape is sex to them*. (118)

When rape is sex, for the theorists who equate violence to sex argue that the victim also sees and remembers rape as a forced traumatic sexual experience.

However, both the group of theorists who advocate 'violence not sex' and 'violence is sex', can be criticized on the ground that they take essentialist positions in arguing their cases. For the 'violence not sex' proponents, violence and sex are two extremely separate categories where the presence of one denies the other, while for the 'violence is sex' theorists, violence and sex are so enmeshed in each other that they fail to appreciate the subtle differences that the two categories may propose owing to the socio-cultural situation of the bodies in contention. Moreover, both the schools tend to theorise violence as a mere set of actions and sex as 'given'. The perpetrator of violence (considered male)—his intentions and instruments (penis or weapon) in fracturing/ dominating/ controlling/ causing fear/ sexually possessing the female body remains the privileged point of focus. My proposition here is to consider 'violence' both as a 'verb' and 'noun'; that one abuses the 'other' and the 'other' suffers the abuse; and then there is the third 'other': the witness who is party to the entire event, who may either seek pleasure or feel empathetic for the victim. Hence the affect must loom large. Leela and Naina in *Lights Out* are empathetic towards the women who are raped in the colony but Bhaskar and Mohan prefer to discuss not just the credibility of rape but also seek to justify it as a matter of taboo or just another domestic brawl. Their discussion suggests 'masculine' sexual pleasure involved in the spectacle of inflicting abuse on women.

Lights Out recreates an eye-witness account of an incident that took place in Santa Cruz, Bombay, 1982. It may be mentioned here that in Bombay, in the period 1985-89, 504 cases of rape were registered, only 469 were charge sheeted, of which there were 15 convictions and 10 acquittals, and 441 were pending trial in 1990. Also a large number of convictions in the Sessions Courts were overturned on appeal, or the sentences reduced. At the end of the play there is 'no curtain call' (Padmanabhan 53). A dramatic innovation in the 1980s Indian women's theatre, some messages appear on the curtain in form of slides. The first slide makes the audience remember the Bombay incident of 1982. The next four slides build the familiarity with the incident and establish a bridge

between the play and its context. But there is 'no curtain call' (53). Even though there is no formal end to the play, Padmanabhan's objective is reached. The play is not a general piece about crimes against women. With 'no curtain call' (53), the play travels with the audience wherever they go. It is not just another play that gives a commentary on an isolated event. It talks with the audience, making them uncomfortable. It arrests their attention and makes them relate the incidents on stage and lived lives. When the play was adapted with some changes by "Lights Off" production for performance in Alliance Francaise de Bangalore in 2012, the audience could relate with it as in its first production.

The change that did get announced is that the play is no longer set in 1984 and is set in 2012, making this production of *Lights Out*, a contemporary version and an adaptation of the original and not an original in itself anymore. The audience was surely taken by surprise when the actors walked onto the stage from their seated position from amongst the very same audiences. This method of introduction or curtain call, if one may, definitely adds justice to the original play and its purpose to reach out to everyone in the audience. (Joseph)

The play was even used with a definite purpose of critiquing contemporary events in 2010. According to a report on 13th March, 2010 in "The Times of India", the play was performed on *Gyan Manch* by a Kolkata-based theatre group *Tree Hat*; the response of the audience was 'overwhelming': '*The full house attendance for Manjula Padmanabhan's Lights Out was overwhelming to say the least.*' The director of the performance, Shubhayan Sengupta, is quoted, "*Lights Out* is our second production. We took a joint decision to stage Manjula's play that talks about social awareness. Though the actual events had taken place in the 80s, we don't see much of a change in the reaction of people to disturbing events happening right in front of them. Our play was intended as an eye-opener." (Dasgupta)

What emerges from these accounts of audience reception is that the play has evoked 'similar' tensions in the audience across

regions and generations. Woman abuse therefore remains a common reference for experience in India, even though the country is making forays into international politics and establishing itself as one of the major players in world economics. The play suggests a narrative of the modern Indian response towards 'organised' sexual abuse. The characters on stage maintain distance from the 'event' and indulge in discussions as to what if it's not rape? What if it is just a domestic brawl? Is it decent to interfere into other's familial matter (however violent it may be)? What if it's a religious taboo? Is it right to 'hurt' someone's religious sentiments (even if it abuses women) in 'secular' India? What if it's just a superstition or an act of 'exorcism'? What if the raped woman is a whore? Can a woman who is not decent be raped at all? Is it *being* woman that makes one vulnerable to rape? If one has to act, how must he act? What weapons one must use? Knives? Bulbs? Acids? Petrol? Combinations of acid and petrol? Guns? Is it not better to click pictures before stopping the gang rape? Won't the live photos of gang rape earn money? Padmanabhan gradually points to the general urban reluctance to act at the face of someone else's misery.

Padmanabhan's intentions behind locating her characters at a remove from the incident which puts the audience twice removed from the actual event, might have been to critique the ordinary forms of theatre production and audience response. In *Light Out*, the audience is constantly informed about the rape but never shown. They are teased till the 'end' through the gestures, actions and reactions of the characters on stage. Hence the dramaturgy involves the Brechtian apparatus of 'gest' to a good effect. In *Leela*, Padmanabhan portrays a woman who is in distress seeing/hearing the 'violence' unfold before her apartment. The audience may be drawn towards believing her but she is never authenticated throughout the play. She is constantly bullied by her husband and his friend, Mohan. Bhaskar says, 'You're (Leela) making too much of it!' (Padmanabhan 5) (bracketing mine), '...Leela's hypersensitive these days' (35). However, the audience cannot believe Bhaskar either, for, through the entire course of the play

he denies what is obvious in the colony. Hence the audience always finds itself in a position of 'uncertainty'.

Bhasker, who has seen women being raped 'once or twice' (Padmanabhan 6), however, mentions the motif of enjoyment in the process (9). But Mohan presses on looking at the 'rape' taking place. Both try to establish that the 'victims want us (them) to watch' (23) (bracketing mine). They graphically describe the actions—

Bhasker: Naked. They are usually naked. ... They start off clothed and then begin to loose them.

Mohan: All of them? The assailants too?

Bhasker: Well, the assailants tear the clothes off the victims and then, perhaps in the general excitement, remove their own clothes as well. (24)

The detailed discussions of the 'ceremony' of unclenching before the act of violence, points to the male sexual arousal at the description of sexual violence on women, defined as 'gorenography' by Jane Caputi:

This equation of sex and violence is the essence of gorenography, and I will see the term here to refer to those materials that, although not sexually explicit enough to qualify as pornography (that is, not enough close-up nudity or graphic sexual acts), nonetheless are pornography ... in that they present violence, domination, torture, and murder in a context that makes these acts sexual. (210)

While the act of sexual abuse on women can produce sexual arousal in men, the same, can create fear in women. Throughout the play, Leela complains that she is afraid and Bhaskar offers her different methods to keep the fear out. Leela exemplifies the 'timid body' and therefore is sheltered, tamed and taught by Bhaskar. She repeatedly asks Bhaskar to call the police but never calls herself. She refers to her children and the strategies of mothering she has adopted to protect them from the cynic effects of the spectacle of rape. Hence, in playing the ideal wife and mother, Leela ceases to be the 'speaking subject'. She remains

a woman who is not only reified by the others, but also one who has reified herself.

Raziya in *Getting Away with Murder* is to a certain extent a counterpart of Leela in *Lights Out*. Raziya, as we meet her in the play having dinner with Mallika is not the 'Razzle Dazzle' (Mehta 59) she formerly used to be. She has reduced herself to such an inner 'anxiety' that she will not claim or assert her sexuality any more. She confides to Mallika that her husband, Habib, is going to marry a young girl of 19, and she is happy that by the Muslim laws, she will continue to be the 'first wife' of her husband. In an apologetic tone, she divulges Malu that she can't give a child to her husband, 'the fault lies with me (her). The fatal flaw. I'm that joke of nature—a barren woman.' (Mehta 79) (bracketing mine). She is repentant about the fact that her body defies the 'fundamental' aspect of reproduction. It is not that Raziya is unaware of the discursive constructions of the body; that the present connotations of the body have been genealogically produced via the interaction of multiple discourses, but her helplessness is, as she herself puts it, 'an ancient tyranny at work within me (her) that makes me (her) believe that a man's desire for children must be satisfied' (78) (bracketing mine).

Though Raziya capitulated before the cultural expectations of a (barren)woman, Sonali who has been subject to repeated sexual abuse from the tender age of 8, is desperate to (re)claim autonomy over her body. She has experienced throughout, that her body is a site of other's control but she asserts her body as site of resistance too. We understand that Sonali's body consciousness is a result of the devaluation and abuse she has been sexually subject to. She is made aware that the penis is socially more desired and hence privileged over uterus and breasts. Her own physical features arouse sexual desire in her uncle and reduce her to *his* 'possession'. The body, looked upon as a 'given', therefore, relegates as an object which is shaped by the social perspectives inscribed on it. Sonali remains traumatized. She feels being watched, controlled and constantly put under surveillance. She substitutes her mother-in-law with her uncle who wanted to see

her naked every time she went to bathe. Mehta draws Gopal in absolute contrast to Sonali. He has never been taught to share, never expected to be responsible towards the house and therefore in Gopal we find a freelancer who always avoids being abided by any commitment.

For Sonali, body remains the primary source of apprehension. Hence she claims authority over it. She asks Mallika to request Raziya for a legally banned test, 'aminocentesis', which no doubt is an innovation in medical science, but at the same time, an instrument lending greater access to woman's body. But Sonali's own emphasis in doing the sex-determination test, is shaped by her previous experiences. She wants to be sure if the foetus is a boy or a girl. If it's a girl, she would abort her pregnancy, for, 'To be born a girl is to be subject to violence and servitude' (Mehta 63). She wants to preserve her choice for she remembers the tickles and the touches of her uncle from her childhood; the discrimination between her and her brother; the social education that her mother left her with – if the husband physically abuses the wife, the latter must 'enjoy' it. Hence, the lack of penis looms large in Sonali's anatomical and social perception of the body. But as Mallika says, '...At least Sonali is tearing herself up—injecting chaos in her world—to disrupt an order she finds oppressive' (77).

Though Mallika finds Sonali more impressive over Raziya in her assertion of choices and desire for 'emancipation' (63), Mallika herself is presented as one who is 'helpless' in her relationship with Gopal. She loves him but is apprehensive of marrying because she is six years older to him. Raziya condemns her for 'assessing yourself (her) through male eyes' (73) (bracketing mine). Mallika's reluctance in moving out of the relation with Gopal and repeated forgiveness of latter's 'mistakes' of getting into sexual liaison with different girls, may be read, as Mallika's reification of her own body resulting from the social and cultural indoctrinations. But at the same time, Gopal's inability to move away from Mallika forces us to consider Mallika in a different light too. She may epitomize be argued to epitomize the major shift in woman's position from the desirable to the *desiring*. This may also be identified as

Mehta's major breakthrough in understanding the changed location of the 'emancipated' working women.

However, Mehta is also aware of the hindrances that women face in industrialist capitalist structures. That they can be strategically reduced to their bodies even in corporate business is represented through Thelma, who was subject to the sexual advances of Mr. Pinglay, Mallika's business partner. When she refused, she was blackmailed for some trivial phone calls. Thelma's case may be explained by Adrienne Rich's use of Catherine A. Mackinnon's idea that "sexualization of the woman" is part of the job. Central and intrinsic to the economic realities of women's lives is the requirement that women will market sexual attractiveness to men, who tend to hold the economic power and position to enforce their predilections'. (641) Also worth referring is Mr. Pinglay's chauvinistic attitude towards women in business. In one instance, Mallika complains to Sonali about Pinglay's high handedness thus:

Yesterday Pinglay had the gall to tell me that women should stick to secretarial work—or, at best, PR work. Knowing full well that I'm out there on the front-line, getting all the business, running the entire office. (Mehta 61).

While Mehta intelligently puts the 'feminist' concerns with the masculine denial of women's capacity for cerebral works in the public sphere, Padmanabhan in presenting a debate over the visualization of rape in the colony subtly subverts the masculine rhetoric with a female one. When Leela finally comes out with a conviction that the brutality outside her apartment is nothing else than rape, Bhasker and Mohan deny it vehemently. They argue that the very act of repeating the abuses every night, must refer to a certain ritualistic exorcism which must be performed at the same time for the 'fits' come at 'regular times, every day' (Padmanabhan 38). Naina denies the explanation, saying, that it is rape can easily be figured out by looking outside the window.

Naina: Three men, holding down one woman, with her legs pulled apart, while the fourth thrusts his – organ – into her! What would you call that—a poetry reading? (39)

Bhasker immediately echoes the theorists who argue for 'violence' as not sex.

Bhasker: But the beating, then? The brutality? If all that they wanted was a little *sex*, why would they go to the trouble of so much violence? (39)

Naina retorts, 'Most forms of rape, especially gang rape, are accompanied by extreme physical violence. (39) Hence, Naina apparently brings an end to the sex/violence debate, by positing violence as complimentary to sex in rape. To this, Bhasker and Mohan add a new dimension. They argue that women, who are 'raped' daily in the colony, may be whores and if they are whores, they cannot claim to be raped because only 'decent' women can be raped. Hence they shift focus from the *bodies* of the victims to their moral standards.

Naina questions why a whore can't be raped, for rape involves the questions of *choice* and a whore can exercise her choice, when she is choosing clients.

Bhasker: Whatever rights a woman has, they are lost the moment she becomes a whore. (41)

Bhasker's words subtly suggest choice as evocative of desiring women, who must be looked upon as deviants. They can be hysterical but they cannot claim any rights. The extremely didactic stand that men take at this point also ventilates the general masculine anxiety of losing control over women's sexuality. A whore is sexually 'liberated' and not under the aegis of any particular male. Naina questions Bhasker about the standards that separate a whore from the 'decent'. Bhasker replies: 'It becomes difficult once their clothes are off and they're covered in blood and filth. (42). Hence, the entire debate between decent and non-decent comes down to the body as a plain slate which frustrates the processes of rationalization and cultural/ social/ political identification. The naked body emerges as an anatomy which is potentially devoid of any cultural signification. Naina, therefore, asks -

Naina: By losing their vulnerability to rape, whores lose their right to be women? Is that what you mean?

Mohan: Right. After all, finally, the difference between men and women is that women are vulnerable to rape.

Bhasker: And men are not. (43)

Hence Mohan and Bhasker consent to the fact that a woman's body is inscribed with sexual significance in terms of male desire. What follows, then, is that the 'male body', anatomically different as it is from the female, has no significance unless and until 'desired'.

Naina pulls the debate a little further, this time, with finer web of words, and Bhasker and Mohan fall in the strategic trap they themselves have framed until now.

Naina (getting into the litany): And women believe they are vulnerable to rape –

Mohan: And men do not.

Naina: And women are decent enough to be raped ...

Mohan: And men are not. ...

Bhasker: After all ... what is a woman but someone decent enough to be raped?

Mohan: And what is a man but someone too indecent to be raped?

Naina: But if men are too indecent to be raped does it mean that men are whores? (43)

Hence, Naina, contriving a language of her own, at the end of the debate subverts the man/woman hierarchy in terms of decency, body and abuse.

Manjula Padmanabhan and Dina Mehta, therefore, try to build a vocabulary through which the gender/sex dichotomy is not only broached in terms of body and abuse but also re-questioned, interpreted and finally subverted in a way that puts them in separation from the feminist theatre practitioners of 'home' and the 'world'.

Works Cited

Bennington, Geoffrey. 'Deconstruction is Not What You Think'.
Martin, McQuillan.(ed.) *Deconstruction: A Reader*. London:
Taylor and Francis, 1989.

- Butler, Judith. *Gender Trouble*. New York and London: Routledge, 2007.
- Butler, Judith. *Bodies that Matter. On the Discursive Limits of "Sex"*. New York: Routledge, 1993.
- Caputi, Jane. "Advertising Femicide: Lethal Violence Against Women in Pornography and Gorenography." Jill Radford and Diana E. Russell eds. *Femicide: The Politics of Woman Killing*. Burmingham: Open University Press. 1992.
- Clark, Lorraine M.G. and Debra J. Lewis. *Rape: The Price of Coercive Sexuality*. Toronto: Womwn's Press. 1977.
- Cole, Susan G. *Pornography and the Sex Crisis*. Toronto: Amanita Press. 1989.
- Conroy, Colette. *theatre & the body*. London: Palgrave Macmillan. 2010.
- Dasgupta, Priyanka. *This play was an eye opener*. Times of India. 13 Mar. 2010. Web. <<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/entertainment/events/kolkata/This-play-was-an-eye-opener/articleshow/5672404.cms>>
- Dolan, Jill. *The Feminist Spectator as Critic*. Ann Arbor, Mich: University of Michigan Press. 1988.

IJES, Volume LVI, 2019

Magic Realism and Thematic Patterns in G.V. Desani's Mystical Epic *Hali*

**Kumar Chandradeep*

It would be relevant to quote the statement of Govindas Vishnoodas Desani on the genesis of epic-like poetic play *Hali*:

I had a personal tragedy—a serious love affair. *Hali* is a monument to this affair and tragedy . It took me a very long time to write *Hali*. I planned it so carefully as to make people moved to tears and therefore reduced the whole to essentials without any padding whatsoever . I was then carrying a deep hurt in my heart and *Hali* was to be a gesture of loyalty to the love I bore a friend. After this tragedy I felt so helpless that I would have been killed by the sorrow but for some kind friends... (Vasudev:1973:25).

G.V. Desani was an adept practitioner and scholar of ancient Eastern spiritual and mental-culture traditions. His play *Hali* is more than a tragic play. It is unique—unique in its theme and in its style. It is refreshingly original piece of literary work. A solitary experiment by Desani on drama and a second venture after his comic farce *All About H. Hatterr* (1948), *Hali* was published in 1950. It is articulated by the playwright who has seen many aspects of truth.

Apart from the Prologue and the Epilogue, *Hali* has four mini Sections, namely—Thus Raha, the Lord ; Thus Mira, the mother

***Prof. (Dr.) Kumar Chandradeep**, Professor, P.G. Dept. of English, College of Commerce, Arts & Science, Patna, Patliputra University, Patna

of Hali, to her son; Thus Rooh, to Hali and Thus Hali. The main characters of the play are Isha the Lord, Rahu the adversary, the natural mother Mira, the foster- mother Maya, the beloved Rooh, the Magician, the narrator, and the nucleus figure Hali himself. The book has been dedicated to Kanhayalal Sevaldas. The events in the play happen in a very rapid succession. Many aspects are clearly narrated in the Prologue part, while some are reflected either in monologues or in dialogues.

Hali is a story of the protagonist's passion and of his vision of good and evil, or something beyond them both. In other words, the theme of this play is man's predicament, his confrontation with the forces of good and evil, with life and death, with illusion and reality and, of course, man's attempt to rise above these categories. The different titles of the sections themselves suggest that the fabric of the play has been woven by Raha, Mira, Rooh and Hali.

Hali as a child is named after a Muslim saint. He was so handsome that the "hill women used to cast glances at him as he passed them by." (Desani: 1950: 17) This was the reason why his mother Mira "gave him a girl's name, before she called him Hali, for she could not believe that a boy could be so beautiful." (Russel: 1952: 21) He had at that time long hair and so Mira used to deck it with flowers and gave him bangles for his wrists and anklets for his feet. Hali, with his mother Mira and dear Sha, was enjoying "in the hills of India." (p. 17)

Hali's pilgrimage to joy turns into pain. The viewless and voiceless fate works. Afflictions come one after another to him. He loses his mother. He "saw her fall from a rock and saw the Ganga make her a grave." (p. 18) The beautiful flowing water of the river and its foam were not now objects of his pleasure—"The blue water of the river churned, the reeds shook, there was foam, then the river was still." (p. 18) Not only his mother but also his toy-like fawn Sha was snatched from his hands. A boy of only eight years was left alone. Then a good woman, like a good Samaritan, comes from the plains to balm his wounds. She "nursed him, healed his eyes, picked thorns from his feet, and

called him son.” (p. 18) When Hali grows to be a young man “the most beloved being God ever made” stirs his heart. Rooh says— “Were I flower, at thy feet would I be. Were I dust, at thy feet would I be.” (p. 30) But this beautiful lady of Hali’s love has also been torn away from him. She too followed his mother’s path. “Ten days now, since Rooh died, and I have no peace,” (p. 40) says Hali. Unsatiated, broken-hearted and fate-ordained Hali starts his journey of life from attachment to detachment. Like Buddha, he realizes the very quintessence of the human condition—that Man, entrapped in ‘the snare of dreams’ in the sorrows of life, must ultimately accept the fact that beauty and felicity are all the subjects of transitoriness. The Magician, no doubt, comes and invokes Hali’s past, but he too is unable to annul his agony. So far Rahu is concerned, he only taunts and threatens Hali.

Disturbed and broken with whole atmosphere, Hali turns to Isha—“Oh, should I despair of thy grace, and prophesy thy fate? Thy dread fate? (p. 50) So, Hali would go beyond good and evil:

Why would I let my destiny be linked with a clan, a country,
a faith, and a place of birth? May, I would be free, free
and know no loves, no hates... (p. 38)

Hali’s sole reality would be his beloved’s love. Like the great epic poet Dante of the *Divine Comedy*, addressing Beatrice, Hali apostrophizes Roohi:

... and no more parting, but all things, and beings part of
three, than deathless changeless Spirit! ever of mercy! ever
beloved! all shapes and forms merged into thee, thus Raha,
thus Bhava, all unto thy infinite tenderness. O ever friend!
ever lover! ever child! ever light! (p. 47)

Hali goes further and invites Bhava—

Oh, be of my form, Bhava! forbearing friend! and say to
my sisters, all things of love and all things of beauty are
theirs, theirs to be! And say, I shall be nigh, as air, as air
bearing love! (p. 53)

G.V. Desani, thus, wants to convey that all the miseries of the world can be replaced through love and love only. One has to die almost to gain or deserve such love. Mira is dead. Sha is dead,

Rooh is dead and even Hali is dead. It is only love that can take man beyond all barriers. Only through love, everything can be achieved. Love is the religion. It is the only panacea of all the miseries or ills of the modern world. Without love, there is no meaning of life.

Hali finds peace in the thought that Man must transcend human love. He must go beyond life and death and even leaving behind his limited idea of godhead, he must develop in himself a godlike love. When the play ends, Hali has achieved his goal.

We are the summit—city at last. This summit-city, where the highest aspirations reach. (p. 43)

Hali has to “travel beyond, farther than this summit- city...” (p. 44)

Desani's *Hali* has received very high praise from the Western as well as the Eastern critics, both for its thematic richness and its unconventional style. Desani wrote *Hali* in London of the post war years. It was “originally a work of nearly 300 pages, and written and planned as an epic,”³ but was later abridged into a play of six thousand words in poetic prose. As Eliot's *The Waste Land* was abridged “from a jumble of good and bad passages into a poem” (Eliot: 1938: pp. 92-93) by Ezra Pound. Desani himself condensed it according to his own convenience. T.S. Eliot considers *Hali* “a striking and unusual piece of work” (Foreword, *Hali*) and E.M. Forster finds “difficulty in describing” (Foreword, *Hali*) it. Some of the critics have even called it “strange” and a “highly complex” work of literary art. Indian critics like K.R. Srinivasa Iyengar, author of the comprehensive *Indian Writing in English*, is of the opinion that it is an “entirely different kind of play” (Iyengar: 1985: 243), while M.K. Naik considers it “a much more complex” (Naik: 256) and experimental work.

The stage of *Hali* is not the usual stage of a common play. It is symbolic and the action of play takes place only in Hali's soul. Each characters comes one by one, speaks his or her lines, introduces himself or herself and is replaced by the next and so *Hali* is closest to an pageant. Hali's mother Mira and his beloved

Rooh do not speak when they are alive. They speak only after they are dead. In other words, Mira and Rooh are shadowy in life and life-like in death.

Hali also reflects supernatural powers. Durga is a goddess, Isha is the creator of God and Rahu is anti-God. Here the icon of Lord Shiva, the God of reproduction and destruction, casts a shadow over the play.

Myth is one of the most favourite devices of the great literary artists. Through it they symbolize certain deep aspects of human experience. In contouring *Hali*, Desani has also used it. For Example, Maya, Rahu, Isha are drawn from Hindu mythology, while Hali himself is named after a Muslim Saint Maya, that is illusion, comforts Hali. Rahu, that is the dread spirit, literally 'one who abandons', tests Hali at the time of crisis. He prophesies war, discord and destruction.

...she shall seek the earth, seek they earth, maimed stabbed
by a pain not known to thy mortal soul. Stricken with grief,
panting from sorrow, she shall be possessed of a dread not
known to thy mortal soul. (p. 35-36)

And Isha, that is God provides him power to think. The protagonist Hali himself, to quote M.K. Naik, "stands for humanity in both its male and female aspects" (Naik: 257), although he exclaims:

It is, however, a moot point whether the hybrid and tenuous
mythology employed by Desani is an adequate vehicle for
the existential experience he has tried to express in the play.
(Naik: 256)

The fact is that *Hali* is the combination of beauty, peace, love and holiness.

All the characters of *Hali* speak in a philosophical way. Every voice, is pregnant with deeper thoughts. The dead Rooh's voice "Oh, do not dream, but watch the East and see the gates of heaven open like the eyelids of a waking angel. (p. 39) reminds the reader of Blake's poem "The Little Black Boy" Hali wishes for a new world:

I, Hali, as a child, often dreamed I would free the earth of the tyrants and of this earth, make a garden. Would I seek renown, riches, honour? Nay, I would free the earth of the tyrants and this earth, make a garden will I! (p. 45)

In short, through *Hali* Desani takes us on a psychedelic trip, where we see things somewhat awe-struck, hear different voices all in a kind of stupor. And when we come out of it, we are left with a lingering feeling of richness of complexity. Most of it somehow eludes our comprehension, but like a haunting dream leaves, behind a mark on us. Covered with magic realism, Desani's *Hali* is nothing but painting in words, painted in black and golden colours on a mythological canvas. It is a modern classic that teaches and entertains, inspires and elevates the reader. Desani's voice is not an individual voice but the voice of the Spirit of the Age.

Works Cited

- Desani, G.V., *Hali*, The Saturn Press, London, 1950.(All the subsequent references are from this edition.)
- Eliot, T.S., "On a Recent Piece of Criticism", *Purpose*, 10 No. 2, April-June, 1938.
- From 'Foreward', *Hali*
- Iyengar, K.R. Srinivasa, *Indian Writing in English* Sterling Publishers, New Delhi, 1985.
- Naik, M.K., *A History of Indian English Literature*, New Delhi, Sahitya Akademi.
- Russel, Peter and Singh, Khushwant (Ed.), *G.V. Desani: A Consideration of his All About H. Hatterr and Hali.*, Karel Szeben, London and Amsterdam-C, 1952.
- Vasudev, S V., "G.V. Desani", *The Second Writers Workshop Literary Reader*, (Ed.) P. Lal, Calcutta, 1973.

IJES, Volume LVI, 2019

**Social Matrix of Post-Partition India
with special reference to “LOC” and
“The Scent of Man”**

**Dr. Vikash Mohan Sahay*

Abstract

The conflagration of partition of India even after seventy years of its independence continues. The scar of partition is still afresh. The latest literature on partition “Footprints on Zero Line” keeps its ambience along the line of control. It has been observed that religion never remained having separate existence from politics. It’s not a thing confined to private life. Hindi and Urdu were the two scripts of the same language. The colonial forces ignored religious and language disparities. They ignored the philosophies of South Asian Islam. They projected as a unified religio-political community. Lord Mountbatten perceived that compromise between the League and the Congress could not be possible on the basis of united India. Therefore, he worked on the principle of partition of India, which could be agreed upon both the Congress and the League.

“Footprints on Zero Line” is one of the most recent creations on Indian partition. It’s an anthology comprising fiction, non-fiction and poem. For Gulzar the partition is not merely an act of severance, a historical event located in a certain time and place; for him it is an ‘opus de profectus’, a work in progress. The partition of 1947 seems to use above its time and circumstances and speaks to him

***Dr. Vikash Mohan Sahay**, Professor, P.G. Department of English & Research Centre, Magadh University, Bodh-Gaya.

not just once or twice but to borrow a metaphor from cinema, as a “voice over”. In this anthology Gulzar revisits what has been left behind, sometimes through dreams, sometimes in actual fact, occasionally through a retelling or a remembrance. Sometimes he reexamines the consequence of partition- consequences that range from the political to the emotional and psychological. The old adage of “the personal is the political” acquires a new meaning when one reads a story such as “LOC” and “Scent of Man or a nazm such as “Bhameri” and “Eyes Don’t Need a Visa”.

Keywords: Conflagration, partition, severance, political, historical and emotion.

Gulzar has laid many milestones in Indian film industry as lyricist and director. Gulzar Deenvi is the pen name of Sampooran Singh Kalra. He is popularly known as Gulzar in film as well as literary world. He is the doyen of Urdu poetry and Hindi film lyrics. He is a recipient of **Sahitya Akademi** award, the **Padma Bhushan** and several other film industry awards. As a creative writer, he is not as widely acclaimed as in Indian film industry. He is an Indian poet, lyricist, director and short story writer. He primarily writes in Urdu and Hindi. The short stories in the present anthology *Footprints on Zero Line* establish him in the creative form of short form of prose narrative. Both the stories in this article are taken from this anthology, which comprises thirteen short stories and nineteen poems. In an interview with Kausar Munir he says, “You ask how I stay relevant even after more than five decades of writing?” He points to his table, “By feeling the pulse of the gully-mohalla, the nation, the globe that I live in. Being master of Urdu doesn’t interest me, being part of the global society does breathing hope into that society matters to me.” (HT magazine, 1-2)

The conflagration of partition of India even after seventy years of its independence continues. The scar of partition is still afresh. The latest literature on partition is “Footprints on Zero Line” by Gulzar. For him ‘the partition is not merely an act of severance; an historical event located in a certain time and place but for him

it is an action 'opus de profectus', a work in progress (Gulzar,198). In Indian sub-continent religion never remained having separate existence from politics. It's not a thing to remain confined to private life. The colonial forces ignored the philosophies of South Asian Islam. They projected as a unified religio-political community. Lord Mountbatten perceived that compromise between the League and the Congress could not be possible on the basis of united India. Therefore, he worked on the principle of partition of India, which could be agreed upon both the Congress and the League.

"LOC" and "The Scent of Man" are the two impeccable imprints of partition of India by most renowned poet and lyricist of Indian film industry. The two short stories makes the readers realize the harsh reality of partition. "LOC" was first published in his twenty-gripping tales published in a collection titled " Half a Rupee". "LOC" and "The Scent of Man" are two absorbing stories told in Gulzar Saheb's style. The first story refers to Line of Control; the border between India and Pakistan. The second story depicts complexity of relationship on either side of the border. Major Kulwant Singh in "LOC" finds that his subordinate is getting the delicacies from across the border, that also from the home of opposing army. Captain Majid brings the sacrificed meat on the occasion of "Baqreid" : 'Cheers... and Eid Mubarak once again! So how did your sister send this across....' (94). Captain gives the detail how his sister sent it across. The socio-political antagonism remains live very much on either side of the border in this short story but on the other side it keeps human values vibrant.

Major Singh recalls the days when Phatto Masi of Saharanpur used to prepare very delicious meat with black gram for him. After partition she migrated to the other side of the border. Captain Majid discloses his relationship with her. He also discloses "her dearest wish was that she could travel to the shrine of the Khwaja Moinuddin Chisti and make an offering with her own hands". (96) But the war is waged just as the Major Singh arranged the visit for the old friend Mushtaq's mother to visit his own family and to the shrine at Ajmer. The religious faith of the people of the two

countries for the shrines on either side remains same what they had during the pre-partition period.

Major Kulwant Singh dies in the skirmish on the LOC with eleven soldiers. Pakistani forces invaded on Chambh on 1st August, 1965. Indian forces captured Haji Pir. War between the two countries is the outcome of a political decision but the writer emphasizes that ultimately it is the human relationship, which prevails. PhattoMasi takes the assistance of her friend Biji, the mother of Major Kulwant Singh in cooking meat at Saharanpur. The writer has very vividly discussed that LOC is the demarcation of the physical existence of the two countries India and Pakistan. The migration remained a feature of this historical event. The partition has given the citizenship of the two different nations. But it cannot keep apart the cultural proximity of the two neighboring countries. The love and reverence of the generation before partition for the shrine of Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti is one of them.

“The Scent of Man” is another significant short story of this anthology. The form of it is of a fable. The two characters of this short story are a palm tree and a kite. The palm tree addresses the kite as ‘Phuphi’, and asks ‘Phuphi, where does this smoke come from?’ (151) The conversation continues, ‘from the basti of human beings’. The kite has no answer of why, simply said, ‘Aadam-boo...The Scent of Man.’ (151) In this story the writer has depicted the socio-political condition of the civilians in Lal Chowk area. Anmol, a shopkeeper is surprised to see the entry of the terrorists with highly sophisticated weapons in his shop, which is situated in a tight security zone. The way, in which the action takes place, he thinks that it might be a part of rehearsal. But the ghastly action takes place, a few innocent passerby were killed. The military takes the charge and after seventy-two-hour exchange of fire the terrorists were shot dead. The corpses of innocent pedestrians were taken away and the bodies of slain terrorists were dumped. It is an action taken by the security forces but the writer has projected the impact of such actions on the life

of common people. This one action devastates the life of a civilian Anmol. When he thinks of compensation:

The local leader reasoned with him, 'Are you mad? It isn't a question of one shop; it concerns all of India and all of Pakistan. We shall have to prove that these terrorists had come from Pakistan.' (153)

Anmol a common citizen becomes a victim of political tantrum of the two countries. Gulzar Saheb has shown his concern about the life of the people of bordering areas. In a talk with Namita Devidayal, he says, "In fact, Maharana Pratap had Afghan commanders fighting against the Mughals. So it was never a fight of religion. It was the British who defined religion to divide and rule. That is what created the heat." (TOI, Pune, p. 24) The local leaders flash the news of attack of Pakistani forces and killing of five soldiers. 'Our government is asking for the heads so that torso's may be identified.' (FOZL, 154) Meanwhile another political theory comes in limelight that on that night :

"Pakistani terrorists had worn Indian uniforms and infiltrated into our side. Our soldiers captured them, beheaded them and threw the heads across the border." (155)

The neighboring country demands the proof that those corpses are of Pakistani terrorist. The political theory is deduced again as the thread used in stitching those uniforms is from Pakistan. Here, the writer has focused on the complexity of the relationship of the countries with these arguments. But the ultimate sufferers are the citizens of the two countries.

Indian forces capture the check post at the peak and find the dead body of Pakistani army officer. The sudden appearance of Pakistani soldier surprises Indian Sikh soldier, who commands him to surrender. He surrenders but wants to take the dead body of the officer. He desires it because the dead was his friend. He wants to bury the corpse of his friend after a proper 'namaz-e-Janaza' in the motherland of his friend. Considering his friend's feelings, he dares to risk his life even. The Sardar questions his sincerity and commitment:

'The Pakistani soldier snapped back: Look here, you are a sardar and I am pathan. I have no greater proof to offer!' (158)

Gulzar Saheb through this short story establishes that it is only human values and relationship, which remain. The cultural proximity is always on the anvil to suggest the bonding. The story has been presented through a fable, whose characters are palm tree and kite. The two characters are anthropomorphized. The main characters in his short stories face conflict of man versus man and man versus society. The succinct fictional story leads to a moral lesson showing the enormity of human values, which is not governed by the religion, the Line of Control and the country. It is very difficult to conclude that Gulzar is a fabulist, but it is certain that through this literary genre, he has very explicitly communicated to the readers the feelings and concern of the people residing along the border. Anmol loses everything as he resides in an area, which is often hit by terrorism. "LOC" depicts the relationship of the two sides of the border. The complexity of bonding of families and old friends that ended up on either side after partition has only love for one another while the two countries are fighting intermittently. The settings of stories range the north-west front of bordering area of India and Pakistan on its eastern part. Both the short stories revolve around Kashmir. The action of his short stories takes place during the partition and after the partition of India. The actions are not different from the contemporary Kashmir. The two short stories witness the situation in Kashmir as a consequence of partition. Gulzar gave his opinion when Namita Devidayal asked him, "Do you believe that Hindu and Muslims can coexist peacefully?" He is of the view, "If they can live together anywhere else- in America or England- why not here? Your religion is your personal belief. It is not a sword, it is the glow on your forehead. I find the question redundant." (TOI, p. 24) The writer feels that the incidents taking place along the border are long term effects of partition, which is still in progress. The political issues of both the countries remain unresolved. The present stories are the result of neutral observation of horrific toll of that historical event of

partition by the great writers as being part of the global society. It is true that he is an ageless poet but these short stories establish him in the creative form of short-form prose narrative.

Works Cited

The Hindustan Times Magazine, November 05, 2017.

Gulzar (2017). *Footprints On Zero Line*. Noida, India; Harper Collins Publishers.

The Times of India, Pune, January 21, 2018.

CREATIVE WRITING

SHORT STORY

Teacher of Humanity

**Ramesh K. Srivastava*

Dr Mohinder Singh was a dentist. To visit him was to take a lesson in humanity and human relationships. His small two-room dental clinic was in the heart of the Shastri Market on way to the Golden Temple in Amritsar. It was a highly congested area in which even two-wheelers wriggled out of the traffic with difficulties, turning right and left, requesting a lady here or warning an old man there to give him a passage. No four wheelers were allowed to operate there.

Since Dr Mohinder Singh charged a very low amount of fee for all dental problems—root canal treatment, filling of cavities, fixing of crowns on broken or partially damaged teeth or even in preparing dentures for old men and women—his clinic always remained crowded by patients of middle and lower classes.

In the centre of the room, there was the patient's chair with all paraphernalia while in one corner of the clinic, his son-in-law Sohan Singh worked on fixing and filing teeth embedded in one mould or other so that the dentures fit in comfortably in the mouths of his old toothless patients. It was a very long procedure which was done meticulously by Sohan Singh under the supervision of Dr Mohinder Singh. He had a small motor with several small attachable files for rubbing away the superfluous material and a candle with which he fixed the artificial teeth in the moulds of dentures. Occasionally, he was asked to help the dentist in extracting a decayed tooth whose roots were so deep that the old

***Ramesh K. Srivastava**, 46/1, C. P. Mission Compound Behind
Post Office, JHANSI (U.P.) 284 003

dentist found it difficult to uproot as if it were a well-rooted stump of an otherwise skeletal tree.

Dr Mohinder Singh was a well-dressed man often in a pair of pants and half shirt, a turban over his head and steel-rimmed eye glasses which together lent a shade of attraction to his fair-complexioned personality. Unlike other Sikh gentlemen of the Punjab who were healthy and large-sized, he looked to be very slim. Even though his moustache and beard were white, they were well-glued so that they obediently remained fixed to the place where they were ordered to be in the morning.

The dentist called each patient one by one but without assigning any token number or writing their names in a register. Rather than completing the work of one patient fully and then freeing him, he would do a little work on a couple of patients one by one and then ask them to wait in the next room or outside, making each one feel comfortable with a feeling that they were being cared for simultaneously and that they would not have to wait for a long time for their treatment. The dentist's casual talk with each patient made him feel at home that his antecedents were known to the dentist and this personal touch reassured him that a good care would be taken of his teeth.

I was working in the University of Amritsar. Since I was from Patna in Bihar, Dr Mohinder Singh would particularly feel more warm towards me, god knows why. I had many tooth-related problems, such as, cavities and root-canal treatments. For filling the cavity of a tooth, he would drill my infected tooth, clean it well, and then place Betadine-soaked tiny piece of cotton swab into it and then would let me wait outside. Many times for filling purpose, he would place some silvery powder stuff in a tiny glass mortar, asking me to grind it very slowly with a very small pestle and then he would place it in the cavity of my tooth. When the question of making payment finally came, I would ask him, "How much to pay to you?"

In response, he would simply fold both of his hands and say, "Nothing. I am obliged you came to my clinic."

The question was repeatedly asked by me but each time he folded his hands and finally told me, "It is an honour to be of any service to a learned man like you."

Without asking further questions, I would place a certain reasonable amount in his hands and come back to my residence after practically learning a lesson in courtesy, generosity and humanity.

x

x

x

The incidents of terrorism in Punjab were increasing day by day in the early 1980's. There was an undercurrent of fear all around which no one articulated in words or behaviour but one could read it on their faces. The atmosphere was such that when someone went out of station within the Punjab, the people were not sure of their survival and safe return till they actually came back home.

My parents and relations asked me to come back home in Bihar, leaving Punjab as the violent conditions kept everyone on thorns and brambles. The newspapers carried long stories of Hindus being killed at all the places in the Punjab. First of all the terrorists targeted rickshaw-wallahs and petty kiosk owners selling betel leaves and pouches of tobacco who formed a good number in cities and hailed from Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh. Afterwards, they targeted the rich and influential Hindus from Punjab itself so that their assets may be taken over after their elimination as also to demoralize the rest of the Hindus. To come even to the dentist's clinic was not easy, though the good part was that he was a very gentle Sikh person who paid great respect to me. Even otherwise, the days were safer than nights and due to it, I voluntarily observed dusk-to-dawn curfew hours for a number of years.

When the hardcore terrorists had taken shelter in the basement of the Golden Temple, even a visit to it was not considered safe. There were rumours that even those Sikh young men who got recently married and went to pay their obeisance to the temple, and if their wives happened to be beautiful, they alone were held

back for the “blessings” which was a sort of code word for kidnapping within the temple itself. The husbands were given stern threats of the elimination of their entire families in case they reported the matter to the police or law-enforcement agencies which made them seal their lips against the incidents. Though I did not believe in such rumours, people continued to relish them, adding salt and pepper to make them quite juicy. Such stories were repeated among the people of all religions, making them naturally quite nervous.

Amid all this violence, the dentist’s clinic was an island of peace and humanity. Dr Singh treated each patient with kindness and affability as if each one were an ambassador from God coming on this earth with assigned duties. It was with me that he particularly discussed many things and even when he was treating others, he would make me sit on a stool in a corner of the working room in order to talk with me.

One day when other patients were outside, I casually asked him, “Doctor Sahib, I have a simple question. You are uniformly good and behave well with all your patients, but you are extra kind and considerate to me. Why this special favour?”

Dr Mohinder Singh smiled, continued to think, then came to me and placing both of his hands on my shoulders, slowly whispered, “Most of my patients are from poor families and are not even literate with whom one can discuss the country’s affairs. You are educated and intelligent, teaching in the university, have come from abroad and above all you see things in their totality and hence talking with you is not only a matter of pleasure but enlightening in certain ways.”

He went out, talked to all patients whom he knew personally and then called one of them inside to be in the patient’s chair. I thought over all his words, wondering whether it was an exaggerated account of me or it had an expression of his genuine feelings and the latter appeared to be true. Whenever I sat outside, I looked at the clothes of his patients, tracked their conversation and found that most people talked about their miserable ways of living, occasionally accompanied by their half-naked children. Dr

Mohinder Singh treated them with the same attention and care as he would me.

A patient was sitting on the dentist's chair with a slightly swollen face. Dr Mohinder asked him, "What is the problem?"

"A tooth is giving me unbearable pain."

"Which tooth?"

"You go to the balcony and then the last seat in the last row—I mean the last tooth—on the right hand side."

Dr Mohinder Singh smiled and asked him, "Do you work in some movie theatre?"

"Yes, but how do you know sir?" the patient asked in surprise.

Dr Mohinder might have understood, as I had, by the way he had described the location of the troublesome tooth, but he said nothing; instead, he smilingly asked, "In which theatre do you work?"

"Krishna Theatre," he said in excitement. "Please come to see any movie sir. I'll arrange a free pass for you."

While sitting in the clinic, many poor patients were treated who had no money to pay his fees, Dr Singh not only gave them full attention but did not charge anything from them. In addition, he gave them medicines free of charge. Seeing his attitude towards the poor, I said, "Sir, I know of many physicians and even dentists who charge exorbitant fees from the poor and yet none treats them with so much consideration as you do."

Stopping the drilling work, he cleaned the patient's cavity with a thin jet of water from a syringe, gave a Betadine-soaked tiny cotton swab and then said, "If God has made me capable of doing something, I feel blessed and do so accordingly. I am an old person, capable of doing nothing else. I feel happy in doing this little bit for the poor in the name of humanity. I really feel pleasure in doing so."

x

x

x

After a couple of visits to the dentist, we felt somewhat close to each other. He had already introduced his son-in-law Sohan

Singh to me. When he was not in the clinic, Dr Mohinder Singh told me a few more things about his family. He said that he has a beautiful daughter Preeti, who is exceedingly beautiful.

“I can imagine her from your handsome face.”

“No, you cannot, as she is far more beautiful. You come to our residence on the next Sunday. I would like you to meet and talk to her a little about simple sentences of spoken English but remember she is totally blind.”

“Blind?” I was shocked.

“Yes, since birth,” he said.

“But she is married. Isn’t Sohan Singh your son-in-law? How did he marry her?”

Smiling, he comforted me by placing his hands on my shoulders and said, “Randeep Lal, the world has both good people and bad people. I found an honest orphan, that is, Sohan Singh, who willingly became prepared to marry her and to stay on with us after marriage. This arrangement keeps all of us happy.”

On Sundays, I began to visit Dr Mohinder Singh’s residence and made his daughter learn a few simple sentences in English. She felt visibly happy in learning them and internalized them.

As we were sitting, a small beautiful child came with a small bottle, asking the dentist, “Badde Papaji, please put this oil in my head.”

“No my dear son,” he said, taking away the bottle of hair-fixer from him. “This is not good for you.”

“When you can use it, Badde Papa, why can’t I?” the boy questioned.

Kissing him, he said, “It turns one’s hair white.”

“Oh, that is why you have white hair.”

After Preeti too had gone inside, Dr Mohinder Singh sat very close to me and said, “The boy Sohan Singh is very poor and has none else in the world. By marrying my daughter and staying on with us, he has a family, Prreti has a husband and a child as well as her parents!”

“Wonderful arrangement,” I said and then after a pause, “How is Sohan Singh?”

“Extremely gentle and religious-minded. Though Preeti is blind, he takes her to the Golden Temple happily every now and then. We are very happy with each other. Now my son who is abroad is to be married off. I hope we get a good bride.”

x

x

x

One day Dr Mohinder Singh came quite late and appeared somewhat worried. He observed the usual courtesies but the ever-present cheerfulness was missing from his face. As his habit was, he asked each patient what the problem was and if some patients told of complicated cases which demanded too much of time, he folded his hands courteously and asked them to come later as he was to go home soon.

When I too asked his permission to leave, he hinted at me to stay on. After taking care of two patients who needed urgent attention, he called me. I wanted to have a cavity of my tooth cleaned and filled in. When I sat on the dentist’s chair, I asked him, “Doctor Sahib, what makes you so worried? You may tell me if it is not too confidential.”

He kept quiet and murmured, “There is nothing so confidential that I cannot share with you.”

“You were quite busy in arranging your son’s wedding. Everything was done in an excellent manner. Now you should be happy and take a week’s holiday. I saw in the wedding ceremony that your daughter-in-law is exceedingly beautiful. Please don’t mind if I say that she is as beautiful as any Bollywood actress.”

One does not know what happened but suddenly there were tears in his eyes, and before I could ask him anything, he went to a corner of the clinic. I could see his body jerking convulsively as if some invisible force were shaking him. Then wiping off his tears, he folded his hands, requesting me to go away.

I came back home but it troubled me to see what could have been the reason for the tears of this stoic person whose

cheerfulness had become an inseparable part of his personality. A Sikh gentleman who was very close to Dr Mohinder Singh and through whom I had begun to know the dentist was diplomatically quiet about it. When I probed with insistence, he said, "Do you promise that you won't tell anyone about it?" After I had assured him of not leaking out anything, he confided, "You were in the marriage of his son and had seen how beautiful his daughter-in-law is. His son along with his newly-wedded wife went to the Golden Temple to seek the blessings but some terrorists, finding his daughter-in-law exceedingly beautiful, whisked her away. Taking the husband in a corner, a gun-toting terrorist told him in clear words the unwritten law that he was to file no complaint to the police station and to say nothing to others or else the entire family would have to bear the consequences.

What had happened was not unusual but something always feared. After sending his son back to the U.S. for his safety, Dr Mohinder Singh moved quietly from place to place even though most well-meaning people advised, even warned him that his efforts were futile and the more he talked about it, the more problems would have to be confronted by him not only in terms of the loss of his reputation but also from revengeful terrorists.

I continued teaching English once a week to his daughter, though occasionally I failed to come for several reasons. His blind daughter told me that Dr Mohinder Singh was so much upset that many times he would walk up and down for hours in the night.

"Did you see it yourself?" I casually asked.

She smiled and then said, "I wish I could see, but I am familiar with his footsteps."

"I am sorry, but this is what I meant."

"It's all right," Preeti kept quiet, staring as if she were looking at some particular place and then added, "It is painful to hear him pacing up and down. Many times just in the middle of night whenever any sound of footstep is heard in the street or near the door, he just opens it to see if his daughter-in-law had come!"

I had to go to Patna in summer vacation. After a month when I came back to Amritsar, I went to Dr Mohinder Singh's residence to see the dentist as well as to teach his daughter. When I pressed the call bell, I confronted a man I had not seen in the past. He was a clean-shaven man without a beard and a turban. Probably he was Dr Mohinder Singh's brother, because the facial features, height and complexion—they were similar to those of the dentist.

After taking a seat, I asked him, "Has Doctor Sahib gone somewhere? I am Randeep Lal who taught his daughter Preeti on Sundays. I never met you before, sir. You must be Doctor Mohinder Singh's brother, though he never told me about you."

He smiled and said, "I am your Doctor Sahib."

It was a stunning moment. Had he declared that he had become a terrorist, I would not have been shocked as much as I was on seeing him clean-shaven, short-haired, turban-less person. Refusing to believe his words, dumb-founded initially, I thought that his brother—younger or elder—was trying to fool me. Since I knew the dentist so well, he was not going to succeed in confusing me. Hence I said, "Though I have never met you before, sir, you have the same voice, the same height and the same facial features as those of the doctor. Where has he gone?"

Hugging me warmly and addressing me by name, he said, "Randeep Lal, it is I, Dr Mohinder Singh, in a new incarnation. As we had discussed in the past, religion without humanity is merely an exhibition of external features—like a cover on any book—a cap, a tilak or a turban. What is happening in the holiest of our shrines? My newly married daughter-in-law was kidnapped inside the shrine! My attempts to trace her resulted in several threats to my family night and day. Since I ignored their threats, they whisked away your blind student Preeti too when she was visiting the temple with Sohan Singh, while the high priests of the religion say nothing. In my helplessness in this old age, I can do nothing but penalize myself. I cannot commit suicide because so many people depend on me but I can renounce the religion which has been a part of our ancestry."

Saying this and hugging me again, he cried like a child, and then mumbled, “You can’t understand Randeep Lal, how painful it is to abandon something which has been with us for generations, but that is the way of my simple protest, since I can do nothing else against the powerful institution.”

As I was leaving with leaded steps in my own helplessness, his wife and Sohan Singh begged me not to leave the dentist alone but to visit him more frequently as the latter was quite upset and might do something unexpected. Realizing his pathetic condition and keeping in mind his kindness and affability towards me all along in the past, I began to visit his house as usual on Sundays, now not to teach his blind daughter Preeti, as she was no longer there, but to take Dr Mohinder Singh out of Amritsar in visiting various places.

Both of us would go to some place or other in Punjab in order to change his mood. With him, I too enjoyed seeing various places in the state which I had not seen earlier. We would take a passenger train or a bus to nearby places so that we could come back to Amritsar in the evening, such as, Batala, Gurdaspur, Pathankot, Khadoor Sahib, Beas, Phagwara, Wagha Border and many other places. Such visits did bring a change in the dentist and he began to forget the tragedies of kidnappings of his daughter and his daughter-in-law. He even occasionally cracked jokes which made me feel very happy that in certain ways, I was paying him back in dribbles what he had given to me in bucketfuls. One day he proposed that we go to Taran Taran—a historical place—which has a grand Gurudwara. I expressed my hesitation because it was one place which was known to be haunted by terrorists, but he said they operated in the night and therefore there was no fear during daytime.

After enjoying our visit to Taran Taran including its grand Gurudwara, a little before sunset, we caught a passenger train to Amritsar. It was quite crowded as most people were returning to their homes. When it was just one station away from Amritsar, there were ominous sounds of shots being fired. We heard the pathetic cries and wailings of passengers from other compartments.

Before I could understand what was happening, Dr Mohinder Singh asked me to lie down under the wooden long seat of the compartment and nearly shoved me below it. Then he also lay down the same way, covering me by his frail body. Since it was dusk, we dreaded with our palpitating hearts what was to happen. I proposed to him to let him go inside whereas I would cover him from outside, but he insisted that since he was a Sikh, there was a chance of his being saved, but being a Hindu I would definitely be shot.

For a moment, I wanted to tell him that he did not have the visible symbols of Sikhism and might be misunderstood as a Hindu but there was no time for discussion as he placed his hand on my mouth, asking me to be quiet. Within a few seconds, many more people lay down under the long passenger seats, but all of them could not have done so. Meanwhile, two gun-wielding, masked men came and blindly shot those passengers sitting or lying down who had no beards or turbans. There were yells and cries all around. Then the terrorists disappeared in the dark. Before leaving the place, they ordered the driver to take the train to Amritsar.

After the train had begun to move, I called Dr Mohinder Singh again and again, first slowly, then loudly, shook his body vigorously but there was no response. I pulled him out from below the wooden seat but found him all silent. Even though his body was bleeding profusely, I shook his head again, sprinkled drops of water on his face, sought the help of other passengers but they all said that he was senseless. As soon as the train reached Amritsar, I took him to a nearby hospital but the physicians declared him dead on arrival.

The next day, the newspapers reported the deaths of thirty five Hindus in the shootings in the Taran Taran passenger train. I sat gloomily having a terribly miserable feeling at home with a sense of realization that I had lost a great teacher of humanity.

POETRY SECTION

Sweet and Sour Tales

**D.C. Chambial*

The sun gradually comes up
From behind the eastern hill
Lifts the lid off night's box
Scatters pearly rays all around
In the earth-box; makes things
Visible clearly to the seeing eye.

The night's silence shifts to
Day's din: music; birds' songs
Rivers' warbling, and the wind'
Whispering. These all come
Stealthily and whisper in the ear
Their sweet and sour tales

Of summer and winter,
Of rains and of autumn.
The young mild sun too
In due course grows adult
And strong, hot and haughty
And, of course, arrogant too.

Then silently slips from apogee
To behind the western hill

Far off there behind the tall trees.
The lid that's opened at dawn
Again is drawn after the dusk.
Deep darkness envelops

Merry earth in its shroud sombre
Of slumber till the next dawn.
The world swims in the sea
Full of daring, devious dreams.
The air is so silent to let the sound
Of a pin drop escape to farthest seams.

***D.C. Chambial**, Editor: POETCRIT, Maranda -176 102 (HP)

Can a Teacher Scold Students?

**Dr. K. Balachandran*

Karnataka, Chitradurga district, Iriyur
Taluk, Hariharapura Janaki Ramamoorthy
Her daughter Anuroopa (19) studying B.Sc.,
Agri. in a college at Bapur village
On 27th July the students have to
Take their exam for which Anu preparing
In the class room. When the teacher
Entered the room, was she writing something
On the table? “ Hey, what are you doing?
Is it table copying for the exam?
Don't you have sense?” scolded her
In front of other students. Wounded

And pained much, waiting for the
Time after all students went out of
The room hanged herself by using
Her thupatta in the fan of the class
Room. Is it necessary to put an
End to your life so shamefully?
Don't you have the guts to stand
Any accusation boldly? If all students
Follow your footstep, in each class half
Of the students have to hang
Themselves. The letter which she left
"Since the teacher scolded me in front
Of other students I felt much ashamed
I don't like to live. I donate my eyes
And other parts. Utilize them to people
Who need them." It's good that you
Want to live even after your death.
But can suicide be the solution to any issue?

***Dr. K. Balachandran**, Chennai

Mosquito

***Dr. K. Balachandran**

Some may argue, "Sympathize with
Innocent mosquitoes. They are killed
Mercilessly for a drop of blood.
As mosquitoes bite us, we may
Bite them in retaliation, but

Killing is unjust!" Is this not
Unacceptable? Are mosquitoes innocent?
Are they not harmful to humanity?
Don't they spread malaria, dengue,
Pneumonia, elephantiasis and viral
Fever to young and old alike?
Mercilessly when they infect us,
No doubt, they must be killed!
Not only they suck our blood
But also infect our whole
Blood flow with life killing
Virus. Can any one bite a mosquito?
Is it not a harmful foolish
Idea ? Is a mosquito an apple, wood
Apple, custard apple, rose, apple
Mango, guava, cucumber, gooseberry,
Pear, jujube fruit, water melon?
Why, there are many advertisements
Against mosquitoes? "Buy mosquito net
To protect you!" "Use All out."
" When there is a symptom of
Head ache or fever rush to the
Hospital for early check-up and
Timely treatment to guard yourself."
For, mosquitoes are your life killers!

***Dr. K. Balachandran, Chennai**

4 POEMS

**R.K. Singh*

1. SWEET SAVOURS

Strayed far from the nest
I'm fed up living with dust
for years fleeting shade

bereft
of melody
of spirit I sink to
the hades of utter loss
I can't

reckon hidden mysteries
I have lost the sea
for a mere cupful

void of patience and
peace now as I touch the breasts
of the field I crave

for a pure breath
native to
my being I search
sweet savours

of love

2. NOW

My time is now
the day of salvation

where is Father?
playing patty cake?
I sit a potted plant
and wait at the doorstep
tumbling sun and shade

3. MOTH

I gave you my love
what more do you seek
to lighten the night
my beloved
let the fire burn
and consume the moth

4. BLOOD MOON

Waking to a morning
tainted with prayers
on the toilet seat
nude nature waves to a dull sun
smitten by the night's long eclipse

***Ram Krishna Singh**, till recently Professor and Head, Dept of Humanities & Social Sciences, Indian Institute of Technology-ISM, Dhanbad, has authored over 160 academic articles, 170 book reviews, and 44 books. His recent collections of poems include *I Am No Jesus And Other Selected Poems, Tanka and Haiku* (English/Crimean Tatar, Romania, 2014), *You Can't Scent Me and Other Selected Poems* (New Delhi, 2016), *God Too Awaits Light* (California, 2017), and *Growing Within* (English/Romanian, Romania, 2017).

Hard Times

**Pashupati Jha*

Here is the winter season now
with life a skeleton tree
sapless and bereft of leaves;
hanging on as yet
in the hope of spring
that may be unduly delayed
this year.

The sun-orphaned air is heavy with
tons of suspended dirt
that make breathing
both dangerous and difficult.

This elongated life
has given me many unkind cuts
that fester inside
in the absence of
healing touch.

I trudge on still
holding within the rusted nails
as trophies to Him
Who rules indifferently
far away from above.

***Pashupati Jha**, Humanities Dept., IIT Roorkee.

Being Indian

**Dr. Kalinkar Pattanayak*

Being Indian
Is not without a meaning;
Striving to know the Truth
My motherland manifests
I move to the temples
And meditate on diverse acts:
on the walls the carvings
of the couples cohabiting;
before the deity the priest chanting
and outside, the women gossiping-
The idea occurs to me;
the sensual, the spiritual and the social are one.
The apparent diversity mothers essential unity.

**Dr. Kalinkar Pattanayak, kalinkar.pattanayak@gmail.com*

The Laughing Buddha

**Binod Mishra*

Placed on a pedestal
in a liminal space,
puzzling me for years
to unravel the riddle of your pronged teeth

simpering throughout, a simple truth
we keep deciphering for ages
in utter darkness.

A part of every symposium
where one theory contradicts the other,
You keep unmoved, spaced
though in spacelessness
allowing the savants across seas
mulling over their winged ways
to prove their wisdom, reasoning
to claim their coveted desires.

Now after five decades I envy
why your impenetrable walls
still stand intact against
the twists and turns of time
where the web of lies and ties
override each other like mute soldiers
surging towards their martyrdom.

Your closed eyes could see it all——
where me could creep like robots
where faith could compete with changing dresses
where bubbling Bakhas retreat in all ages
to hear the cries in sacred places
where Veluthas put to cross
for breaking love laws.

You alone our sheet anchor in a godless age
where my baggage of faith disallows me

for not toeing their line

You alone my relational chord, allowing me
to unlearn all that learned under mercury lights
the maya playing hide and seek with a button
pushing me to relapse ad rejoice in your laughs.

***Binod Mishra**, Associate Professor of English, Dept. of
Humanities & Social Sciences IIT Roorkee, Roorkee,
Uttarakhand-247667.

BOOK REVIEW

Gagana B. Purohit, *Tracing Roots of Indigenous Poetry in English*, Jaipur: Aadi Publications, 2018, pp. 268. Rs. 1350

In the multitude of critical books on Indian English poetry Dr. Gagana B. Purohit's book draws attention by its focus on five luminaries of the firmament of Indian English poetry. Four out of these Jayant Mahapatra, Bibhu Padhi, Niranjana Mohanty and Nandini Sahu have their roots in Odisha while Prof. C.L. Khatri, the reputed poet, translator and editor of the noted journal *Cyber Literature* is from Bihar. All of them are now poets of established reputation and their poetry invites fresh critical appraisal. The present book is a masterly attempt at this kind of literary appreciation.

Mahapatra is now a source of inspiration for several younger generation poets both in India and abroad. He deals with human relationship, love, social problems, sex, marriage, human nature, morality and Nature. In his poetry, he appears a man of the people where he shares the misery and agony of common man. He focuses on the local issues that need worldwide attention. Poets like Mahapatra have made Odisha visible on the poetic map of the world. The next chapter is devoted to the tremendous poetic achievements of Bibhu Padhi. His belief in the Eliot's notion of the dual personality of the poet is highlighted. He has cut a niche for himself with eleven poetic volumes to his credit. The exceptional quality of his poetry and its originality has brought international recognition to himself as well as to his country.

Niranjana Mohanty needs no introduction. The next chapter is dedicated to examination of his greatness as a poet. "The land and landscape of Odisha, the all conquering concept of time, the ultimate truth of human life and death, search for roots and identity,

permanence of love and value system.... all find expression in the poetry of Mohanty.” (132)

Like Mahapatra, Padhi and Mohanty Nandini Sahu turns to her indigenous roots to provide an original flavour to her poetry. His poetry is the poetry of the new found freedom of women. Her understanding of the tribal culture of Odisha is extra-ordinary. The hardships of personal life have made her a Nature poet. The depiction of native place and landscape, Indian myth and religion, allusions to the *Ramayan* the *Mahabharata* and the *Gita* give added impetus to her creative genius.

Prof. Khatri is a well known figure and readers have already got glimpses of his poetic genius in the poems published in Cyber Literature over the years. His poetic volumes have received tremendous critical attention and acclaim. His poetry is the representative poetry of the post-modern Indian scenario. He excels in possession and patriotism. “His reliance on cultural, national and cultural myths only serve the post-colonial thrust on indigenous tropes as an efficient write-up for the long-due out of possession native representation.” (233) The ugly contemporary reality, the loss of values, the all pervasive corruption, the growing hollowness of human relations, the falsehood that has taken deep roots in human life- all these result in cynicism which seems to overwhelm the poet. But Prof. Khatri is, at the same time, a poet of strong optimism. He believes in cyclic motion of life. The present downfall is sure to be followed by revival and regeneration of the values and valuables of life.

The poetic oeuvre of these fine poets asserts the strength of the Indian poetic tradition. It underlines the fact that there is nothing objectionable in accepting the good and relevant portions of Western literary thinking but with all this alternative ways of study based on our long standing roots must not be underestimated.

Dr. Sanjay Sharma, Assistant Professor, Department of English,
P.S.M. P.G. College, Kannauj

Wankhede, M.S. *Dalit Writings: Reality of Marginalized Communities in India*, Jaipur: Yking Books, 2018, Price Rs 1650/-, ISBN-978-96-87945-11-1

Here is a book with a difference rather than several differences. It speaks about the silence of the marginalized and the oppressed and the present scenario. Dr. M.S. Wankhede tries to explain the complete history of Dalit literature since its beginning to the present time. But his chief focus is on selected Dalit Autobiographies by marginalized male and female writers. The present volume contains five illuminating and exhaustive chapters. In the preface, the author quotes Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar's views on class. In his (Dr. Ambedkar's) opinion social democracy is more important than the political democracy for India. But in reality we find lack of sincerity and commitment at the political level.

The first chapter vividly presents the brief social history of India. At the very beginning, the author makes it clear that though literature is supposed to be the mirror of the society, it may not be true to its sense as far as literature in Indian languages is concerned. He further states that the real life experiences of untouchables or Dalits are not honestly portrayed in the literatures in Indian languages. Various drawbacks of Indian social system are narrated. This chapter also examines how Dalit writers have used literature as a powerful tool of expression of their suppressed thoughts and unrest.

The second chapter focuses chiefly on the three Dalit female autobiographies. Author's observation about Dalit writers is true in its sense, when he says "Dalit Writers do not care for the nature of the narrative". In this chapter we get the clear view of tortuous struggle these three female writers have experienced right from their childhood. It's the outpouring of their sufferings narrated in prose.

'Karukku' is an autobiography of Bama, a Tamil Dalit writer. The author compares the Dalits with African Americans. He

further says that Dalits are subhuman in India but not Africans. It's a matter of colour there in Africa, whereas in India it's a matter of caste. The plight of Dalit women in Tamil Nadu is extensively portrayed in 'Karukku'. There, Dalit women are not allowed to attend school after attaining puberty.

Baby Kamble's 'The Prisons We Broke' is the translation of 'Jina Amucha', the Marathi original by the same author. It's an expression of protest against the inhuman conditions of existence.

Urmila Pawar's 'The weave of my Life' is the English translation of Marathi original 'Aaydaan'. It's a strong protest against the caste system and the suppression of Dalit voice. These three autobiographies are seriously examined to analyze the present social scene.

The third chapter is the careful study of six male autobiographies. They are aptly discussed in the context of 'Issues and Interpretations in the Dalit Writings'. The author appropriately highlights the discriminations resulted from Varna and caste in the Hindu Social Order. The first male autobiography is 'Upara' (Marathi), meaning 'Outsider', which was published in 1980. It's a landmark in Dalit literature. It gives us a vivid account of Laxman Mane's (writer of 'Upara') struggle in life. 'Upara' is considered as a landmark in Dalit literature for its lively depiction of the life of the downtrodden, honest and authentic depiction of his experiences and his strong struggle for social justice.

The other autobiographies are closely examined are- 'The Outcaste' (*Akkarmashi*) by Sharan Kumar Limbale, 'The Banded' (*Uchalya*) by Laxman Gaikwad, 'Outcaste: A Memoir' (*Aamcha Baap An Aamhi*) by Narendra Jadhav, 'A Dalit's Life' (*Joothan*) by Omprakash Valmiki and *Scar (Vadu)* by K.A. Gunasekaran. All these autobiographies narrate the painful past, inner feelings and sufferings of the writers. These autobiographies are full with poignant memories narrated with fresh style. Each autobiography is different from the other. Each one is a significant document of the writers' life struggle. It shows the dark side of their lives and their continuous struggle for their survival.

The fourth chapter is the interpretation of Dalit autobiographies as the outcome of the lived-experiences of untouchables and tribes. These autobiographies show us another world, totally different from 'mainstream literature.' The last chapter draws conclusion of the exhaustive study of the marginalized communities in India.

The scope of the book is wider than the title suggests. It is strange but true that for thousands of years many tribes have been living in India almost unknown to the so-called sophisticated society. This volume speaks extensively about such illiterate rural and tribal communities, who live a very miserable life in the 'other' India, far away from the civilized world. The book provides a very valuable and much needed dimension to the study of Dalit literature and it's helpful for the research scholars as well as for the teachers. We are tremendously grateful to Dr.M.S. Wankhede for the clear and lucid presentation of the subject. The cover design displays the female characters in distress. Their pain is clearly visible from their portrayal on the cover.

Dr. Satish Barbuddhe, Guest Faculty, B.S. Patil College,
Paratwada, Dist. Amravati (Maharashtra)

***Interrupting the Monologue: The Poetics and Politics of Motherhood.* Ed. Dr. Nazia Hasan, Kittab International, Singapore, 2018, pages 343, Price Rs. 699/-**

Interrupting the Monologue: The Poetics and Politics of Motherhood is a collection of 17 articles, edited by Dr. (Mrs.) Nazia Hasan, dealing with one of the most important stages of women, motherhood. Though it is a blessed stage often a mother is put in tight corners, due to very many factors both in India and abroad. Is motherhood a separate entity? Does it have any connection with nationalism, heroism (heroism) and patriotism?

Kipling's words, "God could not be everywhere, and therefore, He made mothers" and Prophet Mohammad's dictum, "Paradise lies at the feet of your mother" are really thoughtful and truthful.

Nazia Hasan's "The Poetics and Politics of Motherhood" sets the ball rolling by her initial article. When Nazia writes, "Nobody prayed for a girl's independence, success or honour but for her becoming a mother...." (p. 1), all will not agree with her. Again when she asserts, "A woman is a mother sans person, sans freedom, sans a breath of her own" (p. 2) is debatable. Similarly she argues that a mother's life is "soaked in remorse" (p. 4). A mother is heroic "when she does something manly". She cites Maxim Gorky's *Mother* a revolutionary brave soul, Mammachi in *God of Small Things*, Mrs. March of Louis May Alcott's *The Little Woman*, Mrs. Bennet in Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*, Mrs. Rupa Mehra in Vikram Seth's *A Suitable Boy*, to prove her arguments. She asserts, "Men tried to tame the outside hostile world, women as wives and mothers cultivated inner values of sacrifice and service to others with unconditional love" (p. 7). Monique Witting warns, "any glorification of the feminine can only be dangerous leading to an 'essentialist trap'"! What do women want from menfolk? Don't underestimate women. Okay. If women are glorified why do they feel they are trapped? Simone de Beauvoire may argue, "woman was 'fearsome'". Why are not men fearsome about women? 'Womb envy' of men and 'penis envy' of women are not acceptable in the smart phone age, since sex with the same sex is seen. Adrienne Rich may argue "female gods are displaced and dislocated in many of the world cultures" (p. 11). It is not so in Indian culture. Here both Gods and Goddesses are equal. Lord Shiva has given his left side to Her (Sakthi Goddess) and hence He is called Arthanareeswara! Goddess Madurai Meenakshi, Kanchi Kamatchi, Melmaruvathur Adi Parasakthi, Samayapuram Mariyamman, Kanyakumari Amman, Chidambaram Sivakami Amman temples prove that female Gods are not displaced and dislocated. Hasan asks, "Am I a different mother than my own mother? Slightly differences are few in motherhood whereas things have changed drastically in all other

aspects” (p. 15). Hasan bewails that men remain the same whereas women go through a sea change. She ends by suggesting that “Women should become less womanly and men become less manly.” Can the sun become the moon and vice versa? Can a mountain become a river and vice versa?

Dr. Tatiana Prorokova from U.K. in her article, “Evelyn Piper’s *Bunny Lake is Missing* and *The Nanny*: Psychology and the Roles Imposed on Women in the 1950s” is about the problem of gender inequality in the U.S. Piper deflects her heroines from the normal social norms and delineates the difficulties women face when they reject the traditional norms of the patriarchal society.

Dr. Mir Nurul Islam’s “Mothers in Postmodern Writings: J.M. Coetzee” discusses Coetzee’s emphasis—“motherhood is a definitive pain, motherhood is a longer enabling condition which involves choice” (p. 47). To Coetzee motherhood is a sign system to indicate the crucial feature that a mother plays in the society. His novels “reflect the conditions of the mothers as human condition, more than a gender – condition” (p. 49). In his narrative, “Pain, Love and Care are inter-related elements” (p. 61), and they are dependant on each other as a relational category.

Dr. Sucharita Sarkar in her article, “To be *Maa* or to be Me? The Evolving Journey of the Bollywood Mother” is very upset after seeing ‘Bollywood’ films for, “there are few stories or maternal figures in Bollywood films” (p. 64) and quotes what V. Mishra in his book, *Bollywood Cinema: Temples of desire* writes—the Bollywood mother seems to be “a semantic and structural invariant” who mostly renounces “everything for her husband and her son”. Sucharita Sarkar finds this unacceptable but any ordinary Indian (man or woman) will appreciate this stand—a mother sacrificing for her life partner and son. When Historians consider motherhood in India reached a greater height and they were divinized is a truth unerasable. She takes films like *Aurat*, *Mother India* to cite how Mothers established their public figure. Films like *Deewaar*, *Amar Akbar Anthony*, *Karan Arjun*, *Maine Pyaar Kiya*, *Dilwale Dulhaniya Le Jayenge*, *Hum Die De Chuke Sanam*, *Seetha Aur Geeta*, *Chaalbaaz*, *Taare Zamean*

Par, Paa, Jaane Tu.... Ya Jaane Na, English Vinglish, Kahaani, Vicky Donor, Gippi, Momare taken to study the significance and role of mothers and how they have become a more authentic and multi-layered mother representation.

Dr. K. Balachandran in his “Myriad shades of Motherhood in Indian Poetry” writes, “Motherhood always commands respect irrespective of religion, caste, land and country” (p. 85), and without mothers there is no world. He cites Swami Vivekananda who considered Goddess Kali as mother; Gnanakoothan’s portrayal of the negative side of motherhood; Chandrasekara Kambara treating the river Ganga in a mythological shade; Sunil Kumar Mishra considering Goddess Kali (Goddess Mahalakshmi and Saraswathi) in a theological shade, celebrates Divine Motherhood; Nizzim Ezekiel “eulogizing mother as a matchless icon”; Dom Moraes’ gloomy portrayal of motherhood; Swathy Prasad’s concern for mother earth; Binod Mishra’s philosophical fervour in his narration of mother; Souradeep Roy’s melancholic perception of motherhood suffering in the hands of fatherhood; P. Nasarudheen’s elegiac tone implying for change in people’s attitude to Mothers—to respect and not ignore them; Monik Pant’s wish—motherhood expecting good motherhood from her daughter; Kamala Das’s dream to live like her mother—all these are dealt with convincingly.

In “Constructing Motherhood: *The Rule of the Master*” Dr. Bennadattee Mc Nary—Zak from the U.S. Has taken *The Rule of the Master* anonymously authored about early medieval Christian monastic rules for men; gives “uncommon attention to motherhood” (p. 105). The work instructs parents and their son to work together. The author writes “motherhood is tied to specific values including honour and love, as well as to the vice of folly...the Church functions as a mother” (p. 111).

Dr. Meetu Bhatia Kapur in her article, “Motherhood in a Shifting Paradigm: Novels of Manju Kapur and Anita Nair at a Glance” defies Tennyson’s “Man for the field and woman for the hearth” (p. 118). Women for ages had been treated as chattels with the denial of all the right” (p. 119). For Meetu, both Manju

Kapur and Anita Nair “refused to adhere to the conformist norms of gender roles rather gave a free hand to their female characters to develop their own personality” (p. 121).

Dr. Fouzia Usmani in her article “Redefining Black Maternity: Rejection of Conventional Motherhood in Toni Morrison’s *Sula*” writes, women in Morrison’s works, “the mothers in particular, are not condemned to perpetual silence or servility of any kind they rather become an independent and autonomous voice in the family after their husband left them” (p. 131).

In “Resistance and Reconstruction of the Idea of Motherhood in the writings of Maya Angelo and Mahasweta Devi” Dr. Kusumika Sarkar has taken five autobiographic of Maya Angelo— (i) *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*, (ii) *Gather Together in My Name* (iii) *Singin’ and Swingin’ and Gettin’ Merry Like Christmas* (iv) *The Heart of a woman* and (v) *All God’s Children Need Traveling Shoes* and Mahasweta Devi’s fiction, *Mother of 1084* to discuss the treatment of Motherhood and pain in these works.

Ms. Rabeya in her, “Journey from Motherhood to Selfhood: Doris Lessing’s *The Summer before the Dark*” article speaks Doris who calls this work ‘an inner space fiction’ dealing with Kate’s two parallel journeys one to her inner self and other around the world. Lessing influenced by Jung and his notion of ‘individuation’ the process by which an individual gains wholeness by acknowledging the repressed desires, “stresses the need to redefine motherhood to break the social constructions around mothering and motherhood” (p. 174).

Dr. Kwasu David. Tembo in his “*Missio Matribus: Motherhood and Mission in Contemporary Science Fiction*” article traces the treatment of motherhood. *Missio Matribus* means ‘mission mothers’. Mission mother is “a female character whose materialism, biological or otherwise, forms an essential part of the narrative of the diegetic world in which she appears” (pp. 176-177).

In “The Caressing Oeuvre of Motherhood: Exploring Bashabi Fraser’s Poetic Cormos” Dr. Saptarshi Mallick recalls what

Tagore proclaimed Shakti, as “the living symbol of the divine energy whose inner shrine is in the subconscious depth of human nature and outer expressions in sweetness of service, simplicity of self-dedication and silent heroism of daily offerings” (p. 199). Nehru and Dr. S. Radhakrishnan have encomiamed the sensitive poet Fraser for his “creative Inspiration and addressing issues” relating to girls, women and mothers as they are the origin of ‘more light’ (p. 213).

Ms. J. Nandini Pradeep in her article, “The Mother Desire in Neo-Mythical Cinematic Retellings” deals with two films *Qissa: The Tale of a Lonely Ghost* and *Chitrangada: The Crowning Wish* “to perspectivize... the mythical mother figure play—acted by the plot and characters in these two films” (p. 217)

Ms. Adiba Faiyaz in “Questioning the Unquestionable: Motherhood in Popular Television Advertisements” writes, “Popular commercials or television advertisements are good source of cultivating a particular mindset of the audience” (p. 238), and concludes that “there is no one single universal idea of motherhood” and “they should be loved and respected because they are humans first and mothers second” (p. 246).

In “A Comparative Exegesis of Motherhood in Modern India through select Films”, Ms. Aparna Ajith and Ms. Anakha Ajith have taken Indian English movie *Mitra: My Friend* by Revathi and the Malayalam film *C/o Saira Banu* directed by Antony Sony to focus on the “commonalities and disparities in depicting the pleasures and pains, problems and prospects, risks and rewards of an utmost solicitous mother” (p. 248).

Stephen Ogheneruro Okpadah from Nigeria in his “A Study of Gender Equality and Feminist Advocacy in Nigeria” discusses Feminist Advocacy and Feminist Discourse in Nigerian Cinema. Feminism is “the female struggle for self expression against the tradition—bound and pristinely conditioned male domination, allegedly deriving source and impetus from supernatural and divine sanction” (p. 267), according to Udentia, author of *Revolutionary Aesthetics & The African Literary Process*.

In the last (17th) article, “The Intimate Resistance to Interrupt the Monologue on Motherhood” Dr. Nazia Hasan believes in Shashi Deshpande’s dictum, “a mother is like God, all loving and all forgiving. She is also as sacred as God, therefore, to hurt her is to commit a sin” (p. 280). Is motherhood a ‘second oldest profession of a woman’ as called by Erma Bombeck? Is ideal motherhood possible? Is it ever attainable? Or is it a creation of man’s imagination internalized by women?

On the whole, Dr. Nazia Hazan’s book (with her Introduction, first and last article plus 15 articles by various academics from all parts of India and abroad) is a finely and timely chiselled statue (book) on Motherhood, enlightening on all aspects, enlarging one’s horizon of knowledge, empowering modern women in every field—deserves all the praise—a book that every one should read and digest and every library to have it in its racks.

Dr. K. Balachandran, Prof. of English (Retd.), (Annamalai University), 64/1, Subramanyan St, Chidambaram–608 001. (TN). Email: prof_k_balachandran@yahoo.co.in

Revisiting Literary Theory and Criticism
Edited by R.N.Rai, M.S. Pandey, Anita Singh, Pencraft International, Delhi – 11052 (2018), P. 273, Rs. 950 (HB)

In the very introduction of the present book *Revisiting Literary Theory and Criticism: Indian and Western perspectives*, R.N. Rai states that in view of several recent publications on the subject people may find his book rather belated or a misplaced adventure. However, ‘the purpose of this anthology is (i) to enter into debate regarding the necessity/ desirability of theory in our literary discourse. Is theory essential for the explication/ interpretation of literary text or not? (ii) examine whether Indian

scholars should blindly initiate the norms of Western theory/theories and apply them to our Indian texts? (iii) assess whether we should confine ourselves to the critical canons of Indian poetics exclusively or we should develop, update and contextualize our own Indian theory in view of the emerging trends in world literature. In the present anthology, these issues have been systematically explored and debated upon from various points of view.

The book is divided into three sections containing five articles each. Section I “Rethinking Literary Theory and Criticism” goes to examine dimensions of literary theory and criticism, theory against itself, prospects of theory and criticism, theorising theory, demise of theory and rethinking literary theory in India. The essays confirm that theory is must for criticism as there has been paradigm shift in literary studies as much as radical changes in human relationship. As such, theorization of literary studies has borrowed terms and concepts from other disciplines like psychoanalysis, history, philosophy, sociology, anthropology and archeology etc.

Regarding the second issue whether Indian critics should blindly imitate the norms of Western theory/theories and apply them to our Indian texts or not, it plainly admits that initially English/Western criticism influenced Indian critics. Later, Russian, French and German theories also inspired, the likes of Roland Barthes, Gramsci, Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault etc. As regards the third issue, C.D. Narasimhaiah categorically states that Indian poetics is sufficient to meet new challenges, there is no need to borrow the models of Western poetics to enrich our Indian poetics. Here again there are scholars like K. Satchidanandan, R.S. Pathak, G.B. Thampi, A.K. Singh etc. who are infavour of formulating a new Indian literary theory by blending classical tradition in Sanskrit, Western critical tradition and contemporary creative and critical traditions in modern Indian languages to explain new forms and movements like Dalit writing, women writing, tribal writing, nativistic writing, ecocentric writing and folk writing.

It is true that most of the contemporary literary theories such as lesbianism, mythical, Marxist, psychological, biographical, cultural, post-colonialism/neocolonialism, new historicism, feminism, ethnic, ecological and inter-textual are context oriented. What is lacking in our Indian theory today is the remarkable resurgence of those theories which have attracted the attention of writers and critics of the world.

In the first section of the book the articles deal with discourse on the demise/ survival/ future prospect of literary theory/ theories. R.N. Rai in his paper “Dimensions of Literary Theory and Criticism: A Retrospect” talks of four categories of western critical discourse:

- (i) Author – Oriented Approach
- (ii) Text Oriented Approach
- (iii) Reader Oriented Approach
- (iv) Context Oriented Approach

In Author Oriented Approach the author was treated as god and the critic as a priest whose function was to decipher the writing of the god. His analysis of the literary critical concept is both enlightening and path- breaking.

Prof Avdhesh Kumar Singh in his paper “Rethinking Literary Theory in India” finds an unprecedented ascendance in the fortunes of literary theory. However, in the ascendance of theory lay the seeds of its fall, as over-indulgence in theory severed its links with literary practices. It brought about fatigue caused by the surfeit of theory. Sanjay Saxena’s article titled “Nation, Fanon and the Politics of Colonialism/ Postcolonialism” analyses *The Wretched of the Earth*. He relied on Marx and psychology. He differed with Gandhi and Tagore as he advanced violence. In “Metaphors of Deconstruction” RaheshBabu Sharma examines Paul de man’s theory of metaphor and language to see the gap between metaphor and signification.

In “Language of Mysticism” Damodar Thakur defines Mysticism as the supra-logical, subra-rational, supra-sensuous

cognition of reality. Mystics try to describe the indescribable using deviant devices like Illocutionary characteristics, Lexical characteristics, Lexicon-grammatical characteristics, semantic characteristics, logical impossibilities etc. With deft observations he has resorted to the nuances and subtleties of the linguistic medium to understand mystic assumptions or reality. A.K. Awasthi in “Indian Poetics: Theorizing the Creative Principle” has presented his view point based on the fundamentals of Jain philosophy and aesthetics, the Indian aesthetical standard as enunciated by Abhinavagupta and elaborated by K. Coomarswamy under the concept of Dance of Shiva prescribes the fundamentals of literary criticism/ evaluation which are in complete harmony with the natural principle known as Triad under the TrikDarshan-prakasa.

M.S. Panday’s paper on “Cultural Minority and Multicultural Commitment: Contextualizing the Immigrant Experience in the Contemporary South Asian Diasporic Fiction” bases his observations mainly on Monica Ali’s *Brick Lane* and Kiran Desai’s the *Inheritance of Loss*. Anita Singh has written on “Feminist Theoretical Models: Questions from the Indian Context”.

On the whole, the book is a new addition of the corpus of Literary Theory and Criticism. It breaks new ground particularly on Indian approaches to literary theory and criticism so far inchoate and evolving. The other articles are as much enlightening and thought-provoking in their own right. The book is a valuable acquisition for researchers and teachers.

Prof. Ram Bhagwan Singh, Former Professor of English, Ranchi University, Ranchi, Jharkhand.