



**Kongunadu**  
College of Engineering & Technology

**KONGUNADU COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING AND TECHNOLOGY**

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**T. Vembu, M.A., M.Phil., B.Ed., (Ph.D.), Editor**  
*English Language, Literature and Culture*

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**Ms. T. Vembu, M.A., M.Phil., B.Ed., (Ph.D.), Editor:** *English Language, Literature & Culture*

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## Greetings from the Chairman



I'm very glad that our Department of English is publishing the selected papers of the **Second National Conference on English Language, Literature & Culture** conducted on 9th February 2018 in **Language in India**, [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com), a reputed online international monthly journal. I would like to express my thanks from the bottom of my heart for the Organizing Committee members who have made great efforts and conducted the Conference successfully. I congratulate all the students, research scholars and faculty members from various colleges for their participation in the Conference.

Wishing you all success.

**Dr. PSK. R. Periyasamy**

**Chairman, Kongunadu Institutions**

## Greetings from the Principal



It is very essential to be proficient in the global language in the modern scenario to achieve success in our pursuits. Language, Literature and Culture are interrelated. Research in language, literature & culture will help us to develop our skills in using English for careers around the world including India. The knowledge will open the path to innovative ideas in the related fields. I'm very glad that the Department of English is publishing the Selected Papers presented in **the Second National Conference on English Language, Literature & Culture** conducted on 9th February 2018 in Language India, a reputed international monthly journal. Participants from various Colleges and Universities presented their research papers and also exchanged their ideas in the conference. I wish to express my hearty congratulations to the Department of English for their hard work. I extend my warm greetings to the Students, Research Scholars and Faculty Members who participated in the Seminar. We hope to continue our efforts to train students, faculty members and research scholars in the effective use of English through such seminars.

**Dr. R. Asokan**

**Principal**

## Message from the Dean/Research & Development Dr. J. Yoga Priya



Kongunadu College of Engineering and Technology (KNCET) is committed to build and sustain itself as an institution where quality is the hallmark in every activity. I am immensely happy that the Department of English is publishing the selected papers from **the Second National Conference on English Language, Literature & Culture** conducted on 9th February 2018 in Language in India [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com). This conference became an effective platform for exchanging innovative research thoughts of Faculty Members, Students and Research Scholars from various Colleges and Universities. We hope to hold such conferences and seminars every year to contribute our best to improve teaching and learning in colleges around the country. I wish to congratulate the faculty members of English department, particularly Ms. T. Vembu, Assistant Professor who organized this conference efficiently.

**Dr. J. Yoga Priya**

**Dean/Research & Development**

## Editor's Note



The Department of English, Kongunadu College of Engineering and Technology conducted the Second National Conference with the theme **ENGLISH LANGUAGE, LITERATURE & CULTURE** on 9th February 2018. Our goal was to enable faculty members and research scholars of colleges in the region to present their research findings and their thoughts on the inter-relationship between language, literature and culture, especially relating to learning and teaching of English as a second/foreign language.

This volume presents selected papers presented in the conference. Papers focus on topics directly relevant for the teaching and learning of English at the collegiate level. Social themes relating to family life, inter-personal relations, patriarchy, place of women in the society, social and political oppression, various aspects of diaspora, etc. are dealt with in these papers.

Through reading literature, we gain knowledge about our own culture and life even as we know other cultures and societal issues around the world. Reading literature enables us to improve and increase our vocabulary, sentence construction and expression of our thoughts - personal, inter-personal and global business. Language learning is greatly facilitated by reading literary works. The papers presented in this volume will be found useful for classroom activities even as these help research scholars do more research on the selected topics.

Addresses of authors of the papers presented in the volume are given at the end of each article. You are most welcome to correspond with the authors using their email addresses. Such communication will be useful for all of us and will be greatly appreciated by the authors themselves. We are glad that the research findings of the

authors of this volume will be freely available for all around the world through Language in India [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com).

My grateful thanks are due to:

The Chairman, the Principal, and the Dean.

My colleagues in the Department of English and Science and Humanities inspired me to work hard by their own examples and I am grateful to them for their guidance:

Mr. K. Balasubramanian, HOD/S&H

Mr. S. Senthil Kumar, HOD/English

Mr. B. Raguraman, AP/English

Ms. S. Seetha, AP/English

Ms. P. Poornima, AP/English

Ms. B. Sangavi, AP/English

Mr. S. Kamalakannan, AP/English

I am blessed to have the total support of our College Administration, and I am thankful to everyone in the College Office for their support throughout the process of arranging and conducting the Second National Conference and also during the process of editing work.

I am glad to inform you all that **Kongunadu College of Engineering and Technology** has planned to hold National Seminars on various aspects of English language teaching and learning every year. Suggestions from authors, readers, and scholars are most welcome. We the Faculty Members of Kongunadu College of Engineering and Technology fully support and follow the vision of the leaders of the College to be socially and culturally relevant even as we impart high quality and relevant education to our students.

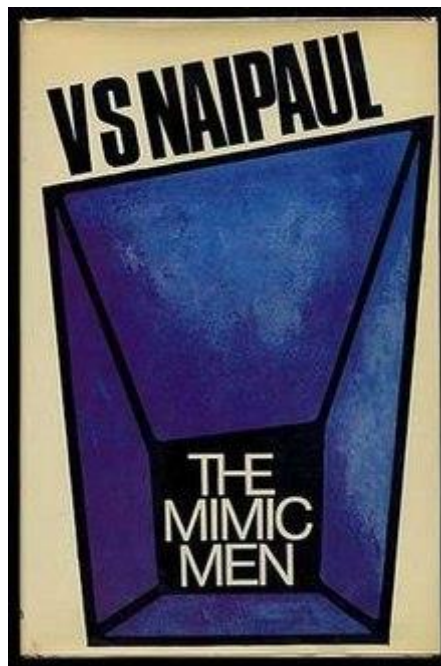
**Ms. T. Vembu, M.A., M.Phil., Ph.D. Candidate**

**Editor, *English Language, Literature and Culture***



**Identity Crisis and Cultural Displacement in V. S. Naipaul's  
*The Mimic Men***

T. Abirami, M.Phil. English and K. Harini, M.Phil. English



**Abstract**

V. S. Naipaul is a Trinidadian writer of Indian descent widely considered one of the greatest and most controversial writers in English language. The crisis in post-colonial communities is regarded to be the most important factor which questions the identity of colonised people. Though imperialism has passed, the destruction made by the colonizers remains as a stain in the minds of the colonized that speaks in volumes. In the works of V. S. Naipaul, he discusses the major themes like alienation of the immigrants, identity crisis, the paradox of freedom and the problems of neo-colonialism. Identity crisis is exhibited as a main theme in V.S. Naipaul's *The Mimic Men*. The protagonist in *The Mimic Men* caught up in the adversities of life in the post-colonial era who is unable to create the identity of his own.

**Keywords:** V. S. Naipaul, *The Mimic Men*, Identity crisis, displacement, ambivalence, rootlessness.

### *The Mimic Men*

Some eminent Third World critics concentrate mainly on Naipaul's development as a creative artist who picks up issues relating to the Third World. His works throw light on the Post-colonial and post- imperial realities that have shaped the contemporary societies and provides important insights relating to them.

Naipaul's novels lead to a better understanding of the problems that are faced by the post- imperial generations. In *The Mimic Men*, it has been observed that, as in the novels studied in the previous chapters, the characters as well as situations in *The Mimic Men* are dealt with by an "ambivalent approach". The larger emphasis, however, has been seen to be laid on Singh's attitude which creates "ambivalence" identity crisis by emphasizing his seesaw relationship to Isabella and London. For instance, in the attic scene, Singh has been observed to vacillate between the "magic" and the "forlornness" of "the city," which is London, the "heart of Empire". Then, in the forward scene, Singh on the one hand criticizes his colonial island for being a "transitional" and "makeshift" society that "lacks order," and on the other hand, he describes London as "the greater disorder" and the "final emptiness."

While Singh finds the natural elements of London, such as the snow and the "light of dusk" gorgeous, he detests London's dullness and lack of colour. Soon after Singh has left Isabella with the intention never to return, he states that London has "gone sour" on him and that he longs for the "certainties" of his island, although this is the place from where he once wanted to escape.

### **Rootlessness**

These early scenes, then, which pass during Singh's stay as a student in London, tell about Singh's disillusionment with London, to where he has come, "fleeing disorder," and "to find the beginning of order." In a second flash-forward, however, as Singh arrives at Isabella, he calls his journey to and from London a "double journey" and a "double failure." This "ambivalent situation" indicates that Singh is nowhere at home, and it is an indirect criticism towards the "coloniser", who can be said to be the original cause of Singh's "rootlessness", identity crisis, because he has "displaced" colonial people like Singh. This argument is

reinforced by an example given by Singh, where, to write his biography, he prefers the dull suburb hotel of London to the pastoral cocoa estate on Isabella. Singh calls his return to Isabella a mistake, but he believes that the cause of his mistake has been the “injury inflicted” on him by London, where he can never feel himself as anything but “disintegrating, pointless, and fluid.”

This is another example that shows to what extent Singh has been affected by the coloniser’s practice of “displacing” people. Leaving Isabella, Singh feels relief. But as he arrives in London Singh feels he is “bleeding.” For the second time he senses the “forlornness” of “the city” on which he has twice “fixed so important a hope.” Twice he has come to the “centre of Empire” to find order, but twice he has been disillusioned.

### **Identity Crisis**

The identity crisis that his characters face is due to the destroying of their past and those who eventually overcome the crisis are the ones who have recovered their past or somehow managed to impose an order on their histories and moved on in life. Naipaul’s attitude to culture has always been progressive. It is the Third- World’s blind mimicry of the West that he cannot stomach. He lashes out at the shortcomings of Third- World societies, which have their roots in their traditional cultures, but are unmindful of them in their blind following of the West. They are thus able to maintain a distinct identity.

### **Born in Foreign Soil**

But, for the generation born in exile, life in the foreign soil proves almost fatal, as they have not been blessed with the insularity of their forefathers, who went there from India. For the new generation, India loses the sense of reality that it had conveyed to their ancestors. The major themes that emerge from a reading of his novels are related to the problems of the colonized people: their sense of Alienation from the landscapes, their identity crisis, the paradox of freedom and the problem of neocolonialism in the ex-colonies. The people who can no longer identify with a cultural heritage lose the assurance and integrity which the locating racial ancestor provides. In addition, the harsh conditions of colonialism have left the West Indian bad conditions under the burden of poverty and ignorance.

### **Culturally and Spiritually Dispossessed**

Because psychological and physical conditions correspond so closely, the unhoused, poverty stricken West Indian is so often culturally and spiritually dispossessed as well. His only alternative is to strive after the culture of his ex-colonial masters even though he is unable to identify with their traditions and values. In *The Mimic men*, however, Kripal Singh is not handicapped by poverty, ignorance, a lack of natural talent or the persecution of a grasping Hindu family. He has gained the material success, public eminence and apparent independence that Ganesh, Harbans and Biswas all longed to have. In addition, because of his university education and his exposure to a more sophisticated society in London, he is better able to recognize and articulate the many ills of his native back ground. but his clearly superior status and acute consciousness do not make him any less vulnerable to the subtle, yet over powering consequences of his psychologically fragmented and confusing past.

In fact, his ability to rationalize his own condition sharpens rather than reduces his total alienation from his environment and his final rejection of an active life.

### **Reaction to the Three Cultures, Indian, Creole and English**

*The Mimic Men*, however, is more than a mere elaboration of Naipaul's' previous West Indian novels: it is a profound re enactment of the growth and nature of the East Indian, west Indian psyche and its reaction to the three cultures, Indian, Creole and English, which influence it. In the process, Kripal Singh, the narrator, confessor and visionary, comments on power, politics, social and racial interactions, sex, education, displacement, isolation and identity crisis as experienced by the ex-colonial. Each topic is used to illuminate a facet of his mind.

### **Conclusion**

To summarise what has been argued above, Singh is disillusioned about both Isabella and London, because he is a member of a colonised people that has been “displaced” identity crisis on a colonial “slave-island,” with a racially and culturally mixed population. In the period before Singh comes to London, he vacillates between his longing to escape from the island, where he feels “displaced” and “rootless”, and the feeling that experience past on the colonial island nevertheless attaches him somehow to it. During Singh’s political career, the “ambivalent attitudes” in Singh and Browne have shown that, while they seem to criticise the “colonised” and the colony, their “ambivalent attitude” actually indicates that the real source of the faults criticised in individuals and the society is to be found with the “coloniser”.

Finally, Singh escapes from his “artificial home” to the “imperial centre” and claims to have found fulfilment there, but his “ambivalent attitude” again shows that these are not real fulfilments, but only excuses used by Singh to find a “sense of attachment” in a certain “location” of the earth. However, even during this seeming compromise, Singh makes his important statement that finally attaches him to his own culture and not to the one of the coloniser.

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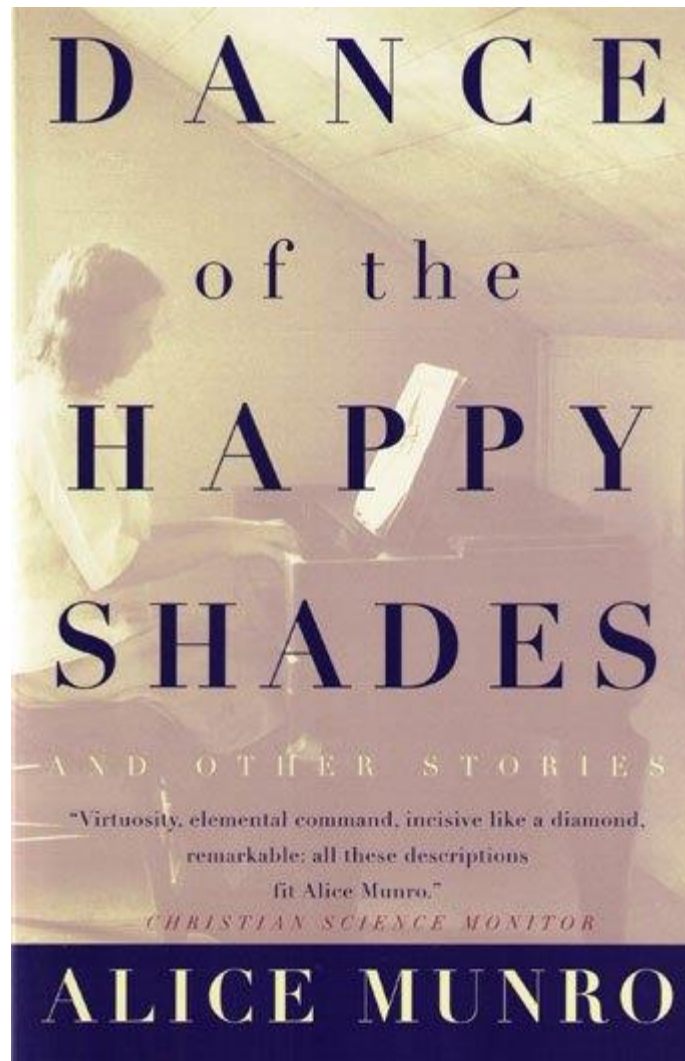
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## Voiceless Suffering of Myra Salya's Life in *Day of The Butterfly*

S. Akila, III B.A. English

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### Abstract

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Ms. T. Vembu, M.A., M.Phil., B.Ed., (Ph.D.), Editor: *English Language, Literature & Culture*

S. Akila, III B.A. English

Voiceless Suffering of Myra Salya's Life in *Day of The Butterfly*

This paper describes and discusses *the isolation* of Myra Salya in the short story by Alice Munro. The paper discusses also the life style of human beings. The oppression and suffering of Myra because of isolation were like a man living in fire and this way of life is lived by the protagonist in this short story. This *isolation* is also made because of her appearance which makes her to stand far from others and also that gives a great way of loneliness in her life. The character faces more suffering through loneliness.

*Isolation* (loneliness) will also show the wisdom and understanding of human relationship. Protagonist was able to face *the isolation* in this story. Isolation, at times can bring liberation. The protagonist finds liberation from the clutches of Isolation through friendship of Helen and she is the narrator of the story.

**Keywords:** Alice Munro, *Day of the Butterfly*, Isolation, human life style, suffering, loneliness, human Relationship.

### **Suffering and Voiceless**

This paper is deals with the work of Alice Munro's *Day of the Butterfly*. She was a Canadian writer. Canadian literature focuses on the culture, psychology, suffering, and loss of identity. This story deals with a girl's life. This paper focuses on the emotion, feeling, suffering the girl experienced in her life. In this research paper the researcher deals with Isolation of Myra Sayla in the short story of *Day of the Butterfly* by Alice Munro. This story reveals that suffering, voiceless condition, and loneliness will change the life.

### **Isolation can also happen because of one's appearance**

This idea forms the basis of this story *Day of the Butterfly*. Myra Sayla was also isolated because of her appearance and the way she behaves in the class. She does not mingle with anyone. Her unfavourable appearance is because of her family situation. She was from very poor family. Her father owned a fruit shop. The way she isolated herself from her classmates showed the great suffering and depression in her heart. She was also afraid of others. Her voice also

became very quiet and later silent. All this shows the impact of isolation that Myra Sayla faced in her life.

Myra also speaks about the isolation she feels

*“They had long smooth oval face, Melancholy and discreet-dark, oily, shining hair and Myra’s was worn in heavy braids coiled on top of head and so that when she looked from a Distance, it was as if she was wearing a turban too big for her” (Munro)*

Through this kind of description of her appearance itself we came to know that she appeared to be a little bit unattractive and she had a kind of smell on her body which made others to stay away from her. This was the main reason why she was isolated in her school. Not only that, she too won’t mingle with anyone. She would always be with her brother and none else. Even when her teacher asked the other students why no one joined with Myra, she got no answer. She says, “Everyday I see her standing in the block porch never playing”. She asks the students to accompany Myra.

The Teacher is the one who understands the real feeling of isolation that Myra is feeling. She sees that Myra is badly treated by the students as we see in these lines:

“What do you wash your hair with Myra, it’s so nice and shiny, Myra” Hose washed it in cod-liver oil. Don’t you,”

(Munro)

### **Social and Physical Isolation – Living the Life of a Butterfly**

And this kind of discrimination makes Myra to feel very sad. Through Myra, we also come to know that not only is she isolated socially, but physically too. Myra has a health problem which also isolated her more. She was affected by a disease called Leukaemia which was pronounced as ‘akemia’ by Gladys Wealey, the class Representative. These are the ways in which Myra was isolated. Because of that, she had lived a life like a ‘butterfly. Myra is called a ‘butterfly’ because, her life too is like a butterfly’s life. It has only a short period of life, but in



that also it has to struggle more to live that life. In the same way, Myra also lived a short period in her life with full of sadness, suffering and isolation. But this story has an open ending.

### Positive End?

This researcher believes that this story can be a positive one. Because this story has an open ending, the word ‘Good-bye’ which was said by Myra to her friends may have two meanings. It may refer not only to her saying goodbye to them. “Say good bye to isolation and isolation will start to isolate from us”. It may also refer to the idea that maybe after she recovered from her health problem she would have lived a happy life. She is saying goodbye to her life of isolation.

“A season of isolation/and loveliness is till the/ Caterpillar gets its wings.”

(Munro)

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[https\\ www.wikipdia.com](https://www.wikipdia.com)

Text Alice Munro

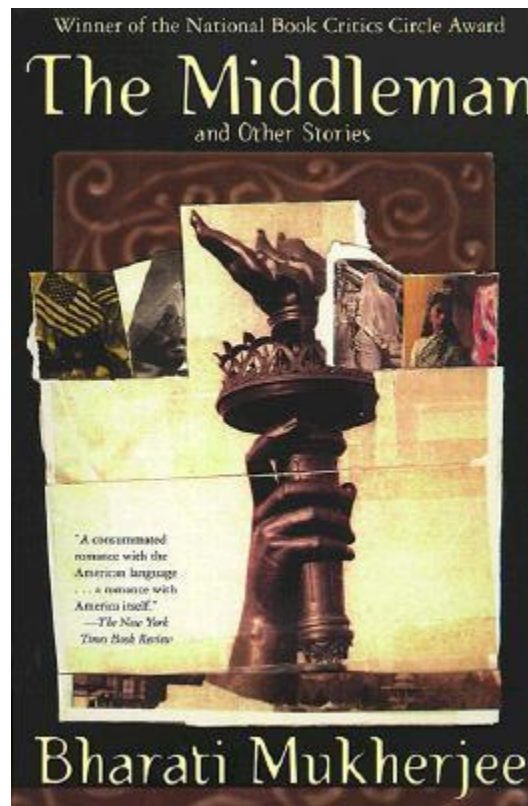
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## Multi-Racialism in Bharathi Mukerjee's *A Wife's Story*

T. Amisha Priya

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### Abstract

*A Wife's Story* is published in Bharati Mukherjee's *The Middleman and Other Stories* (1988). Bharathi Mukerjee's *A Wife's Story* scrutinizes a multiplicity of tribulations that occur in ordinary woman's life. It shows the quandary of bodily and psychologically beleaguered women and ultimately the story ventures to specify the connotation of being a modern woman in order to surmount the obstruction in her life. Panna envisions herself as a new woman at the end of the

story. The story is interwoven with the sense of irony at what immigrants must undergo to effect a cultural transformation.

**Keywords:** Bharathi Mukerjee's *A Wife's Story*, cultural change, phallogocentric.

### **Introduction**

*A Wife's Story* is a popular story of Bharathi Mukherjee. The story deals with the life of a wife - her sense of self as a woman, as spouse and how she is transformed by the culture she inhabits. Mukherjee not only indicates the psyche of an immigrant but also presents how a new culture creates both cultural and sex alienation. In fact, it is a story of an East Indian woman transforming into an American.

### **Panna Transformation**

Panna gradually perceives differences between her old and new cultures that are in some ways freeing and expanding, and, in other ways, jarring and unnerving. For Example, she is able to hug Imre in the middle of the street, an informal, spontaneous show of affection that she could not demonstrate toward her husband in India, where cultural restraints do not allow such personal displays. In India, Panna was not even allowed to call her husband by his first name.

The story focuses on another immigrant who responds in her unique way to the problem of adapting to another culture. Each immigrant undergoes the acculturation process, but it not only is different for each person, but also reflects the relativity of cultural values. In the United States, charity is a model with high ambitions, but in India, she would just be a "flat chested old maid".

### **Tourist Point of View**

Panna shifts back and forth between seeing the united states from the tourist's point of view – her husband's ravenous shopping sprees. She views herself as already alienated and different from her husband and the culture and country he represents. They tour Manhattan and take the ferry to dingy snack bar at the base of a scaffold, and therefore forlorn Statue of Liberty.

Her husband is disappointed by the disparity between American's image and its reality; he thinks New York is no better than Bombay.

### **Cordial Relationship**

Panna understand her husband to certain extent. Just by listening to his voice over the phone she can already figure out how he looks while he is telling her about the bombing at his workplace. She says, "I know how my husband's eyes look this minute, how the eye rim sag and the yellow corneas shine and bulge with pain". She also knows that he will be fine;" Tomorrow he will come out of it. Soon he will be eating again. He will sleep like a baby". This is a kind of ability and understanding you develop with your spouse after living together for some time. Some of the women are unable to know the mood of their spouse just by talking to him on the phone, she can easily "predict" his response and reaction too.

### **Submissive**

Panna also knows that her husband likes her to dress up in traditional Indian costume, so she deliberately changes out of her cotton pants and shirts and puts on a sari when she goes to the airport to meet him. She even puts on a whole set of jewelry; the marriage necklace, gold drop earrings and heavy gold bangles; accessories she does not wear often in Manhattan due to safety reason, as clearly stated in the sentence. "In this borough of vice and greed, who knows when, or whom, desire will overwhelm". Some of the wives know their husband's preference's too. He does not like them wearing long skirts and long- sleeved shirts because he thinks a woman looks old in that kind of attire. He also does not like her wearing high heels because she would be taller than him if she does so.

### **Phallocentric**

Panna husband is traditional and male dominant. She still does not call her first name. He gets jealous whenever other men talk to her. In fact, every action of panna at the tour irritates him. He wants her to go back to Indian with him ignoring the fact that she has not completed her study. He says "I've come to take you back ". I have seen how men watch you". When panna tells him that she cannot go back, he throws the food trays into the garbage demonstrating his

male chauvinistic behaviour. He demands her to be obedient. He remains as a traditional husband, but she has changed much. The new culture has changed her. In fact, she views herself different from her husband as well as the culture and country he represents.

## Conclusion

“A Wife’s Story” touches the hearts of the readers and they can really empathize with Panna and understand how she feels in her relationship with her husband. Panna’s exposure to a new culture transforms her, which changes her feelings toward her husband. She thinks the play insults her culture and also insults her as a woman. She is so offended that she decides to write to Mamet to protest his depiction of East Indians.

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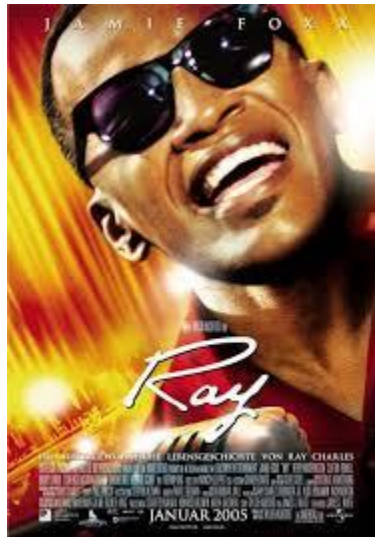
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## **Rays in the Inner Eyes: A Close Analysis of American Film *Ray***

**Anil M.R., M.Phil.**

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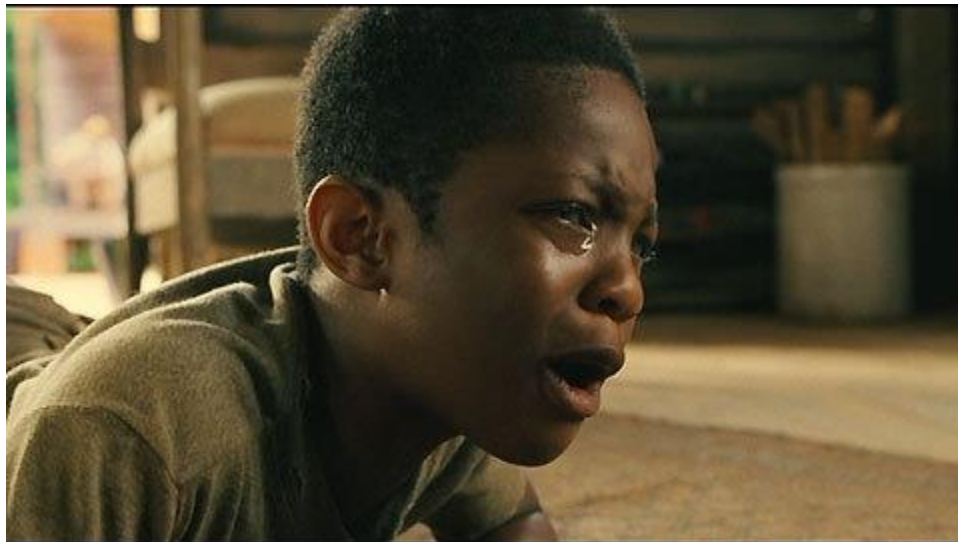
### **Abstract**

Cinematic representation of disability is a new area of research and it can be used effectively, how the people with disability suffer in the society, and the visual media has a major role in building the real status of the disabled persons. The movie "Ray" is an outstanding movie because it provides a detailed description of the legendary singer Ray Charles. The movie stands different because it talks of the life and experience of Ray Charles, who is a singer and black in color and visually impaired. He is a gifted singer and his talents have been exploited by Denise Dowse, the club owner by demanding sexual favors and controlling his money and career. Ray is very courageous to overcome the disadvantages of his disability and racial prejudice treated upon him. Then, due to his fame, he fails to lead a disciplined life and he is addicted to heroin and women. As a black, he has to face a lot of discrimination and he is being excluded in many places, but he is very confident in his talent and believes that talents and career are greater than

any other things in the World. So he ignores every discouragement. He begins to develop vision problems soon afterward the tragic death of his brother. By age seven, he is completely blind, and his mother teaches him to be independent and makes him swear that he will never let the world vest for crippled ones. His mother is very energetic in moulding the personality of Ray in fighting against his inability and the way people takes it. Charles being inspired by his mother, found his calling and his talent behind a piano keyboard. He revolutionized his music with soulful performance and fought segregation in the very clubs that launched him and championed artists' rights within the corporate music business. The film portrays Charles' musical genius as he defeats and overcomes drug addiction while transforming into one of this country's most-beloved performers. Through this work I would like focus on the segregation faced by black disabled and on the way in which Ray Charles overcomes the challenges and struggles, and also the power of art that can transform a person and his identity.

**Keywords:** segregation, discrimination, exclusion, Ray, discouragement, exploitation and challenges.

## Introduction



Courtesy: <http://www.wingclips.com/movie-clips/ray/i-need-help>

Visual representation is very significant since it has been emerged as a vehicle to disclose the hidden and the open realities of the issues and dilemmas related to the people belonging to various strata of the society. The challenges of people are thus focused, and it leads to debate and

discussion in the minds of the people. Undoubtedly, media representation acts in a powerful way so as to draw on the issues of subalterns and socially disadvantaged classes. The voice of the cry of the marginalized always gets silenced by the power structures and the so called system of the society. Films make a possible way to invite the audiences to recognize the representation from their own perspectives. In the film *Ray*, we see the hardships and struggles of a young talented singer, to maintain his identity, though he is blind and a Negro. The idea of disabled black is generalized through the life of Ray Charles. African Americans have the stories of slavery and oppression to tell. They underwent through a painful past that they will always encounters with. To erase the past memories and invent the self was very difficult for them. The Native Americans always established a white supremacy and the African Americans were treated as second class citizens. It is worth noticing the colonial exploitation of black Americans and how the political system has been influenced by the power structures. Terry Eagleton suggests that post colonialism is not only the product of multiculturalism and decolonization. He talks of the historic shift from revolutionary nationalism in the third World, which faltered in the 1970's, to a 'post-revolutionary' condition in which the power of transnational corporations seems unbreakable. (205)

### **Post-colonial Theory**

In order to think of the range and variety of the term 'post colonialism,' one needs to understand it in two contexts. There was a historical experience of decolonization and the Universe had experienced with tremendous intellectual developments in 20<sup>th</sup> century. There was a shift from the study of 'commonwealth Literature' to 'post colonialism.' The term 'post-colonial' must not be perceived in the notion of 'post-independence' or 'after colonialism.' Instead, it begins from the first moment of colonial contact. Post colonialism talks of the effects of colonization on different cultures and societies. The meaning of 'post-colonialism' is discussed in the book entitled *Key Concepts in Postcolonial Studies* as follows:

Post-colonialism / postcolonialism is now used in wide and diverse ways to include the study and analysis of European territorial conquests, the various institutions of European colonialisms, the discursive operations of empire, the subtleties of subject construction in colonial discourse and the resistance of those subjects, and, most importantly perhaps, the



differing response to such incursions and their contemporary colonial legacies in both pre- and post-independence nations and communities. (187)

In fact, the British Empire captured a vast area of earth; including countries in the continents like Africa, Asia and Australia. The colonial powers were motivated by the desire to establish and control markets abroad for western goods and also to secure national resources and labor power of different lands and people at the lowest possible cost. To Elleke Boehmer,

‘Colonialism is the settlement of territory, the exploitation or development of resources, and the attempt to govern the indigenous inhabitants of occupied lands.’ (2)

The concept of ‘Other’ is a key term, which is deeply related to colonial and postcolonial studies. Edward Said says,

“The Orient is not only adjacent to Europe; it is also the place of Europe’s greatest, richest and oldest colonies, the source of its civilizations and languages...and one of its deepest and most recurrent images of the other... (Christopher O’ Reilly 107)

### **Three Into One**

Sam Selvon, a Trinidadian writer, in his 1979 lecture, ‘Three Into One Can’t Go – East India, Trinidadian, West Indian’, he mentions about Sammy, an Indian fisherman, and with him a white servant. Selvon gets angry at Sammy, to possess a white assistant. The life, for young Selvon was established in a different way that his community respects and honors white men as masters and non-westerners as inferiors. Selvon asks, ‘where had it come from? I don’t consciously remember being brainwashed to hold the view either at home or at school.’ (John McLeod 17)

### **Language and Culture in Colonial Discourses**

We witness the meeting of language and culture in colonial discourses. Ngugi Wa Thiong’o expresses, ‘Language carries culture, and culture carries particularly through orature

and literature, the entire body of values by which we come to perceive ourselves and our place in the World...' (Currey 16). Henry Louis Gates Jr. quotes Langston Hughes on signifying,

“And they asked me right a Christmas, If my blackness, would it rub off?” (49)

## **Hierarchy of Races**

The most dangerous belief in the minds of European colonizers was that they encouraged hierarchy of races and made all possible things which would make them civilized and the Africans savage. John McLeod talks of the legacy of the negative sense of blackness,” ... think of how many expressions there are in which ‘black’ is used pejoratively ( as in ‘black market’, ‘black ballad’ or ‘black Magic’).” (78) The substitutions in signifyin(g) seems to be humorous and Lacan calls these vertically suspended associations “ a whole articulation of relevant contexts” by which he intends that all of these association carried by a signifier from other contexts, must be deleted, ignored or censored “for this signifier to be lined up with a signified to produce a specific meaning.” (Henry Louis Gates Jr.58) Soyica Diggs Colbert says that blacks often signified directly and it is clear through the following lyrics;

“we raise the wheat, Dey gib us the corn; we bake the bread, Dey gib us de cruss;  
We sif the meal, Dey gib us de huss; we peal the meat, Dey gib us de skin  
And dat’s de way dey take us in. (74)

## **Film Theory**

Film Theory is a set of scholarly approaches within the academic discipline of cinema studies that questions the essentialism of cinema and provides conceptual frameworks for understanding film’s relationship to reality. Early film theory arose in the silent era and was mostly concerned with defining the crucial elements of the medium. Emphasis was given to how films could be considered as a valid art form. But in the following years proceeding 2<sup>nd</sup> World War, theorist Andre Bazin reacted against this approach and he insists on the film’s power to mechanically reproduce reality. There is a great change happened in the 60’s and 70’s, film theory took up residence in academia importing concepts from established disciplines like

psychoanalysis, gender studies, anthropology, literary theory, semiotics and linguistics.  
(Wikipedia. org.)

## Realities

Films portray realities as it is connected to the painful life of the people. The society gets a clear picture of the realities of the working classes or the people who suffer in many ways. African Americans have the stories of oppression and slavery, they have been suffering from centuries about their identity. In American countries, people consider them as blacks or colonized though they have acquired an identity of their own. They are, now independent to run their own institutions and they can lead a life of self-reliance. Sergei Eisenstein and many other soviet film makers in the 1920's expressed Marxism through films and it was a beginning to see the things from Marxian point of view. Individual protagonists and social realities are given proper attention and there occurs a detailed journey through the social scenario where the events happen or the people being affected in many ways. (Wikipedia.org) Marx believed that the moving forces behind the history are class struggle and the conflict between opposing class interests. Then, a movement called constructivism emerged and its main principle was that, "artists should serve as a new type of engineer capable of using scientific techniques to construct "socially useful art objects- objects that would enhance everyday life."(*Art Into Life*, 169)

The film did not warrant any serious attention in the first half of 20<sup>th</sup> century and the earliest theorists compared this artistic form to the aesthetics of theatre. The official beginning of film theory was marked by the publication of two books and they are namely Vachel Lindsay's *The Art of Moving Picture* (1915) and Hugh Munsterberg's *The Photoplay: A Psychological Study*. Lindsay speaks of spiritual renewal as a part of a utopian vision of the future while Munsterberg gives emphasis on the prime purpose of art as it be autonomous in nature. He further elaborates:

"Film's central aesthetic value is directly opposed to the spirit of imitation. A work of art may and must start something which awakens in us the interests of reality and which contains traits of reality... but changes the World, and is, through this, truly creative..." (Kevin Mac Donald 18)

As we study all these arguments, we come to the conclusion that art is the matter of invention and it is culturally constructed. For the early theorists, studying film was, primarily an aesthetic practice.

### **A Truly Modern Art**

Delluc, a French critic speaks about film as a truly modern art because it is unique in the form of an offspring of both technology and human ideals. (*French Film Theory and Criticism* 94) He further adds in the same work, “Cinema will make us all comprehend the things of this World as well as force us to recognize ourselves.” (139)

A new form of movement came into being in the form of Modernism, with the rise of Surrealism. We should notice Andre Breton, who played a major role played by assembling a group of artists and together they had published a series of works that explored unconventional topics ranging from occultism to madness. Later, Montage theory was developed in Soviet Russia and its aim was to create a new society. It embraced technology for the betterment of all. As we move on to Marx, we see his publication of *Communist Manifesto* with the co-authorship of Frederick Engels. They warned a specter that haunts Europe and it is of radical social change in which working class or proletariat rise up to demolish the existing hierarchy. It is worth noticed that Marx preferred to raise class consciousness by encouraging the proletariat to reclaim the labor that had been alienated from them systematically. He insists on the planned strategy over alienation and it was for maintaining a system of inequality and dehumanizing exploitation. He believes that there are two things in the society is problematic and they are the moving force behind the system. They remain, the class struggle and the conflict between opposing class interests.

Kuleshov gives emphasis on editing. He claims that the essence of cinematography is, undoubtedly the matter of editing. “What is important is not what is shot in the given place.” He further adds, “but how the pieces in a film succeed one another, how they are structures.” (Kevin Mc Donald 29)

Victor Shklovsky, one of the most prominent members of Russian Formalism claims the view, “As life becomes habitual and routine, we are no longer able to see things as they really are. Art provides the devices that are necessary for us to see these things anew.”(Kevin Mac

Donald 31) The notion of *attraction* was later developed by Eisenstein and as device, it meant to produce specific emotional shock in the spectator.

### **Analysis of the Film *Ray***

The film begins with the journey of Young Charles Robnson, the blind son of a sharecropper, to Seattle, Washington to get a job as a pianist and singer. He encounters a racist bus driver at a rest bus stop in northern Florida. The identities of black as a disabled is very vivid through the statements of the bus driver,

“Can I help you, Sir? Yes, Sir. Seattle? Who you riding with?

Boy, I can’t take responsibility for some blind nigger travelling miles alone.”

(*Ray*)

We see Ray was being exploited by Denise Dowse, the club’s owner, demanding sexual favors and controlling his money and career. So Ray leaves the band and he is very bold in taking decision. Marlene and Gossie are running game on him. Ray speaks powerfully against the exploitation he faced,

“You two have been gaming me since I got here... I might be blind, but I ain’t stupid!” (*Ray*)

Ray joins a white country band in 1950 and they make him wear sunglasses to hide his damaged eyes from the audiences. The band was not ready to reveal him as a blind,

“I’m gonna have to put some glasses

before scares somebody half to death.”

Ray belongs to a poor family and he suffers traumatic flashbacks relating to his childhood. Ray is raised by a fiercely independent single mother, Aretha Robinson. Ray finds solace in music. He develops a vision problem soon after the death of George, his brother. Ray feels happy and gets satisfied in the days of alienation and troubles. The power of music strengthens Ray always,

“Anytime you’re feeling lonely

Anytime you’re feeling blue

Anytime you feel down hearted  
That will prove your love for me is true.” (Ray)

His mother teaches him to be courageous and makes him swear that he will never let the World that he is disable, “Always remember your promise to me, Never let nobody or nothing turn you into cripple.” Mother makes him independent even though his condition is worse as a blind with black identity. Leading a normal life in those days by a blind is impossible in those years, but Ray gets overcome all the struggles. People wonders of how he leads a normal life, “but how do you get around so good without a cane or a dog?”

In the system of inequality and exploitation, Ray was concerned about his dealings with people. He let not allow anyone to cheat him. As a musician, he becomes famous and his versatile performances made him unique. We see Ray demands to be paid in single dollar so no one can cheat him. As we go through the film, we discover the way Ray is being treated as a commodity and he is not given the proper attention, but he is bold enough to face each situation. Marlene as a manager tries to control Ray and his personal life. His freedom gets disturbed by her in many ways. Jack Lauderdale meets Ray and have a talk about making a record and Marlene stops him to make a deal with Ray, She asks whether she can help Jack, “Then you need to talk to me ‘cause I’m his manager.”

Ray was slowly introduced to heroin and was being arrested by the police while he was asleep in a hotel room. The police found him possessing heroin and he gets off on a legal technicality because the police had no search warrant. The life was very troublesome for Ray, but he fought it with courage and self-confidence. At last he kept his promises and he never touched heroin again. In 1979, the state of Georgia officially apologizes to Ray and announces “Georgia On My Mind” the official state song. Words of state official were heart touching and encouraging one. He emphasizes Ray’s way of fighting for equality,

“Some of us fought for equality through the political process, but Ray Charles changed American culture by touching people’s hearts.”

The movie ends with Ray, Della, and their three grown sons receiving applause after Ray performs the song before a live audience.

## Conclusion

The film *Ray* is a revolution in the life of African Americans, since it witnesses the fight of a man who is both black and a blind. The film was structured systematically as Kuleshov's notion of editing. Undoubtedly, we can claim that art is the matter of invention and culturally constructed. The life a blind nigger is structured in the sociopolitical condition of Georgia and at last those who banned him, was ready to accept him. There is a conflict between two realities within Ray, one is the conflict over his identity as black and secondly, the fight to regain his fame as a singer. Marx talks of the struggle between different classes. Here, it is the fight within Ray to maintain and establish his identity. The film *Ray* conveys a clear message to America that disabled are the group of vulnerable people which needs proper attention and care. In the case of Ray, he is struggling in two ways, he has to erase the haunted memories of African Americans as a whole, the painful memories of slavery and oppression. Ray is blind and he is frequently being haunted with the memories in the home, the sad demise of his brother, and the struggling of his mother to take care of the family. In short, the film *Ray* depicts the socio, political and economic condition of African Americans and also of the twin disability.

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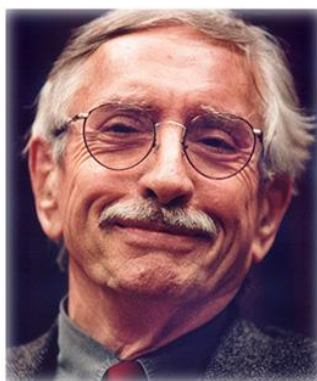
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**Hegemony in the Linguistic Fabric of Edward Albee's  
*A Delicate Balance***

**Anusmitha Sebastian, M.A.**



**Edward Albee (1928-2016)**

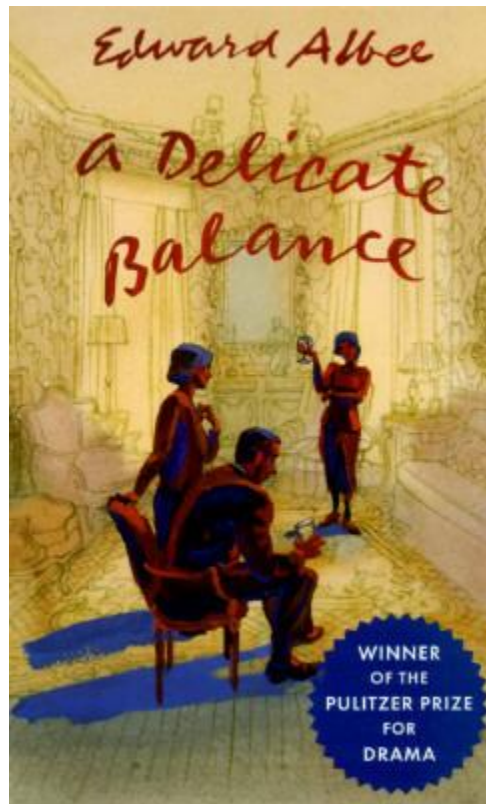
<http://edwardalbeesociety.org/biography/>

**Abstract**

The American School of Absurdism was inaugurated by Edward Albee in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century following his British and European counterparts. Features peculiar to Absurdism, like existential angst, sense of loneliness, experiences of meaninglessness, emptiness, loss of faith in established institutions and breakdown of communication in relationships were explored by Albee in his numerous plays. However, *A Delicate Balance* delves deeper into an area unexplored by other absurdist playwrights, namely hegemony. A set of old friends, the couple Harry and Agnes move into the household of Tobias and Agnes and thence disturb the delicate balance prevailing in a fragile manner in the lives of the latter couple who are already grappling with the death of a young son and the need to handle two women, an acutely alcoholic spinster sister in Claire and a recently returned, much divorced daughter Julia. Power play, domination, hegemony and related colonial traits are brought into force by the visiting couple who arrive as unwelcome guests and leave the hosts both exasperated and relieved on their exit. The impact of their forced visit was much like that of the colonized on the natives and their departure left scars as well as an identity crisis similar to the Post-colonial experience. The

research paper makes a study into Post-colonial dynamics that come into play in a supposedly absurdist play, thereby displacing absurdum with realism. That the descending of a first friendly then oppressive force on a struggling family or country can have irreversible after effects is revealed through the power dynamics conveyed through the verbal interactions and linguistic exchanges between characters. Edward Albee transcends the realm of absurdum in creating a postcolonial discourse in American Drama.

**Keywords:** Edward Albee, *A Delicate Balance*, Postcolonialism, Absurdism, power play, domination, hegemony.



### **Power Mongering at Personal Levels**

Power mongering at personal levels forms a major foundation of Albee's plays. The concept of the colonial mindset which is prevalent in small and large transactions at work within the American soil is not altogether outside the orbit of Albee's creative thinking. This colonial consciousness is extracted from Albee's play *A Delicate Balance*, in this paper.

America as a nation has an interesting relationship with colonization. America, in the new age of globalization, privatization and liberalization has a vital role to play as a policy maker in political, social, economic and cultural issues amounting to a domination that is irksome to smaller democracies, to religious and tribal regimes that retaliate in the form of the war on terror. It is identified that the very dynamics that set American as a global, dominating, self-important superpower vis-à-vis its relationship to other countries in the world coincides with and is at work within the interpersonal spaces of the characters in Albee's plays written for the last fifty years.

### **Absurdism and Colonialism**

Absurdism and Colonialism make strange bedfellows. Research work undertaken on American Drama has hitherto refrained from yoking the former with the latter. However, on attempting to neutralize absurdist features of the plays of Edward Albee it is possible to identify that some characters exercise dominion over the mental landscapes, choices, and life of the victimized other with whom they come in contact and establish control akin to that of a colonial impact. This dominion can further be categorized as manipulative, corrosive and invasive of innocence of the victim.

With the expansion of European colonies across the globe, concepts such as colonial, colonizer and colonized burst into origin in the aftermath of western political control. In the last century, however, specific forms of power dynamics operating within human situations are assumed to come under the purview of 'colonialism' even though it primarily refers to the practice by which a powerful country exercises control over less powerful countries and uses their resources in order to further its own interests, wealth and power. Hence 'postcolonial', 'neocolonial', 'decolonizing' have come to bear relevance.

Representing new notions that are dormant in the power structure current literature has thrown up several strands of colonialism like economic colonialism, cultural colonialism, linguistic colonialism, to represent the different manifestations of power, since exploitation and domination are innate human tendencies.

### **Characters of Albee**

It is interesting to note that if the characters of Albee are pitted against each other in a colonizer versus colonized role, a number of traits described as pertaining to absurd plays easily lend themselves

to post- colonial studies too. For instance, the inability to identify the hidden motive of a predator, the absence of recognizably agenda-driven characters, themes that are not fully explained or seen to their final conclusion, incoherent and manipulative dialogues are aspects related to colonial dynamics. Hence it is possible, by a series of permutations and combinations to identify a pattern of the post- colonial in a kaleidoscope reflecting the absurd. The thematic motif of colonial dynamics that runs through Albee's plays overshadows the dominant absurdist one.

### *A Delicate Balance*

When *A Delicate Balance* opened at New York's Martin Beck Theatre in 1966 the play's similarity to *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf* was felt by reviewers. Superficially both plays are indeed similar built around the same motif of two couples who reflect and clarify each other. The colonial occupation of the lives of one couple by another brings turmoil, unrest and the collapse of an artificially maintained order. The 'colonized' couple suffers anxiety that has roots in fear of sterility and annihilation. The impact of the forced presence of visitors at an unprepared spell in their lives is felt in a helplessly strong way by Tobias and Agnes in *A Delicate Balance* and George and Martha in *Who's Afraid a Virginia Woolf*.

Harry and Edna move in, into the household of Tobias and Agnes in *A Delicate Balance* in an unannounced manner. They assert their presence believing they are similar in nature to Tobias and Agnes but soon realize they are different and move out on specifically recognizing that they would never welcome a reversal of the situation. No colonizer can entertain a reversal of roles. In *A Delicate Balance* the anger over the colonial invasion and the postcolonial sense of relief and angst on the invader's exit is spelt out.

It is noteworthy that the arrival of Harry and Edna has all the repercussions of colonial oppression on Julia who is back to her home, psychologically having collapsed from a series of failed marriages. The victimization of the colonized whose physical and mental space is usurped by a foreign presence is evident in Julia's hysterical protection of the sideboard from being used for a drink by Harry.

Julia. Mother? Father! Help me!!.... They! They want!

Edna. Forget It Julia

Harry . (*A tiny condescending laugh* ) Yes, for God's sake, forget it.

Agnes . Go up to my room, lie down

Edna . (*Calm*) you may lie down in *our* room, if you prefer.

Julia . (a trapped woman, surrounded ) *Your* room! (to Agnes) *Your*  
Room? Mine!... I want ... What is mine!! (78-79)

The OED defines that which is hegemonic as 'the ruling part, the master principle' (346). Hegemony is often used to refer to power which is so dominant that it appears unquestionable, even natural. Harry's and Edna's occupation of the house of Tobias in *A Delicate Balance* is reflective of colonial hegemony.

### **Edna's Realization**

The postcolonial experience is evident in Edna's realization at the end of the play that the presence of the uninvited couple was disastrous to the family of Tobias, and in the unpretended relief exuded by Agnes and Tobias.

Edna . ... It's sad to come to the end of it, isn't it .... So much more of it gone by...than left, and still not know- still not have learned... the boundaries... what we may not do... not ask...for fear of looking in a mirror. We *shouldn't* have come ... It sad to know you've gone through it all, or most of it...dry...and not warm. (118)

Cautions cordiality is maintained in the "postcolonial" phase.

Agnes . ... well, don't be strangers.

Edna . (Laughs) oh, good Lord, how could we be ? Our lives are ... the same... I'm going into town on Thursday, Agnes. Would you like to come? (A longer pause than necessary, Claire and Julia look at Agnes.)

Edna. (Cooler, sad) Oh well ... perhaps another week. (119)

A ‘postcolonial’ assessment done by Agnes after Edna’s and Harry’s exit reveals that two additional members, Juila and Tobias have taken to the new habit of drinking in the early hours. Agnes hopes the colonial remnants have not been picked up permanently. The forced evacuation of the intruder has brought a new calm, hope for new beginning and new perspective in the family. The wonder of daylight that brings order, astonishes Agnes as the new, free day begins ushering in an era of relief to live life as they were accustomed to by, shedding the haunting ominous bearings of the colonizer who made the recent exit leaving scars.

### **Tobias’ Household**

An unapologetic occupation of the rooms in Tobias’ household had begun when Harry and Edna forced themselves into the ‘delicate balance’ maintained in the house. When they take unsolicited control of the happenings, conversation and private lives of the inmates much to the latter’s chagrin, the traces of colonial rule are evident.

Julia. What are they *doing* here? Don’t they have a house anymore...

Agnes. Just... let it be.

Julia. (...*controlled hysteria*) why are they here?

Agnes . they have stayed up in their room all day.

Julia. My room. (50-51)

Later Tobias enters, confused.

Tobias . Have... have Harry and Edna...?

Agnes . No, they have not.

Tobias . (... vaguely) well, I thought may be... (53)

### **Domestic Privacy**

Agnes summarises her feeling upon her domestic privacy being invaded, which is resonant of the experience of the colonized native. She says, “... I knocked at Harry and Edna’s *Julia’s* room... I didn’t have the ...well, I felt such an odd mixture of ... embarrassment and irritation, and...

apprehension, I suppose, and... fatigue... I didn't persevere" ( 61-62). On realizing that Harry and Edna do not have plans to leave the house soon, Tobias is forced to admit with a helpless resignation. "Well, ... they're just...passing through" (72).

The colonial domineering voice is reflected when Edna says, "Harry is helping Agnes and Tobias get our bag upstairs" to which Julia says, 'Don't you mean Agnes and Tobias are helping Harry,'" (75) reminding Edna that she and Harry are the guests and not the inmates. The domination has already begun.

When Edna endeavours to express her strong displeasure at Julia having returned from her third divorce, Julia is upset that family matters are discussed by strangers. She screams in a full quivering rage " *You* are a guest in the house" (76). Edna quietly continues rendering her advice that Julia's decision to return forever is a matter of concern to few people. When Julia shouts in anger that Harry and Edna have no rights in the house, the colonizing couple say they have some rights and responsibilities much like the "white man's burden". The colonial presence of Harry and Edna is looked upon by Tobias as help sought in the name of friendship. Julia disapproves strongly saying, " That is not true! They have not *asked* for anything! ...They have *told!* They have come in here and *ordered!*" (107). Julia identifies the colonial presence. A distraught Tobias remains awake pensive through the night thinking of ways to send the intruder away. The predicament of the colonized in the wake of a colonization cold- war is evident in the play *A Delicate Balance*.

### **Brought a Plague, a Terror, a Disease**

Agnes realizes that they have brought a plague, a terror, a disease with them. "... shall we burn them out, rid ourselves of it all... and wait for the next invasion" (110). 'Invasion' is a very significant word in this context. Tobias's hysterical outburst when Harry says he is finally leaving, is the frustration of a colonized native. It is an articulate rejection of the colonizers presence by the colonized victim, one found in stifled countries that have fought hard for their freedom.

Tobias. Do I want? Do I want you here! ... You come in here... with your  
... wife, and your... terror! And you ask me if I want you here? (115)

In a fit of frenzied anger Tobias proceeds to say

... I like you fine: I find my liking you has limits... but those are my limits! Not yours!... I don't want you here... you've got the right!... Do you know the word? The right!... You bring Your plague! You stay with us!... I don't love you! But by God... you stay!!" (116-117)

## To Conclude

Postcolonialism forms the matrix on which the semiotic structure of Albee's texts are built. That post-war angst is not the foremost feature in absurdist plays is proved by the presence of domination and hegemony in the linguistic fabric if supposedly absurd plays like *A Delicate Balance* that bring Albee down from the *avant garde* pedestal to be a realist as a playwright.

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**Nature Versus Culture:  
Mapping Imperialistic Alternatives in *The  
Martian Chronicles* and *Avatar***

**Aswathy C. N., M.Phil.**

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**Abstract**

The innovative experiments and findings benefit the present world with power of predictions about futurist scenario. The Socio-political movements exist, before and at times, provide an in-depth analysis of the upcoming ages and events and the same has clearly influenced the literary genres mainly speculative science fiction genre. The inevitable role played by speculative science fiction genre over catastrophic situations paved a divergent way of thinking to apocalyptic narration. The drastic changes happening in the world scenario and its consequences on living habitat becomes the prime concern of both apocalyptic and science fiction genres. Along with the protection of natural habitat, the need for re-establishing basic human rights along with culture inculcates a new fervour to the science fiction genre and its related literary theories. The imperialistic exploration over the interrelationship of nature and culture led to the emergence of term ecological or eco imperialism in the discipline of social sciences. The world renowned sci-fi fantasy film *Avatar* thematically discusses about post - apocalyptic era, and the consequences of ecological imperialistic attempt over native land and its people. The socio-political invasion carried out by conquerors reminds all about colonisation, but the factor of disturbing ecology helps the viewer to critically analyse the exploitation in terms of nature and culture. While reading science fiction entitled *The Martian Chronicles* by Ray Bradbury, the readers come across scientific and political invasion of earth citizens over Mars resulting in the total destruction and subsequent transition of Martians to spiritual beings. The present paper is an attempt to reread the effective relation between nature and culture by

exploring eco-imperialistic tendencies in Sci-fi movie *Avatar* and science fiction -*The Martian Chronicles*.

**Keywords:** nature, culture, imperialism, eco imperialism, neo-colonialism, science fiction, sci-fi film, *Avatar*, *The Martian Chronicles*.

## Introduction

The socio-political movements of the present world have a tremendous influence upon every fields including ecology, anthropology and technology. The drastic situations resulted from scientific inventions during the past and present eras provide a new fervour over social and natural theory. Being the integral part of human life, science made its impact upon literature and movies, and thereby leading to the development of science fiction genres. Its prominence on literature and media further explores the aftermath on the backdrop of futurist scenic world offering new opportunities and solutions. Such tendencies and its exploiting possibilities in terms of ecology and technology becomes the chief point of discussion in science fiction entitled *The Martian Chronicles* by Ray Bradbury and sci-fi fantasy film *Avatar*.

## Science Fiction: Literature of Present and Future Era

With the effective portrayal of the upcoming apocalyptic ages, science fiction readily possesses the capability to address the threats and issues side-lined by experts on various fields. The effective impact of ecology and technology over anthropocentric world offer the probability of chaos over survival and sustainability, and the same has reflected on science fiction genres. Such thoughts profusely suggest a contemporary value to science fiction genre and its narrative.

Adam Roberts, on his seminal text *Science Fiction*, writes,

... But it is part of the logic of SF, and not of other forms of fiction, that these changes are made plausible within the structure of the text. This means that the premise of an SF novel requires material, physical, rationalisation rather than a supernatural or arbitrary one. This grounding of SF in the material rather than the

supernatural becomes one of its key features. Sometimes this materialism is rooted in a 'scientific' outlook - science is after all one of the dominant materialist discourse of the present day. (5)

The term 'science' has a startling influence upon the materialist discourse of present world. The more familiar colonial approach resulted in the environmental destruction becomes the main topic that gains significance in *The Martian Chronicles* and *Avatar*. Science fiction *The Martian Chronicles* vividly describes about the colonial settlement and changes made in ecology of Mars through scientific and technological implementations. While as, the sci-fi movie *Avatar* focuses on the colonial expeditions through scientific means at Pandora, resulting on the exploitation of Martian ecology.

### **Eco-Imperialism: Imperial Approach on Environmentalism**

The world severely suffered from depletion and destruction of nature by colonial hands before. While watching the movie *Avatar* we come across many such incidents of nature destruction by colonial humans over Pandora habitat. Similar instances can be sensed in the science fiction *The Martian Chronicles* where the human beings pay no heed to the wellbeing of Martians, instead makes them extinct through diseases and ecological destruction. It is at this situation, the term ecological or eco imperialism gets its significance.

In *Ecological Imperialism: The Biological Expansion of Europ 900-1900*, Alfred Crosby equates the process of colonisation with that of environmental terrorism. According to Crosby, the resulted new diseases and disturbed ecology during colonial endeavours acts as a catalyst for the destruction of native land. A shallower ecological perspective can be felt in Paul Dreissen's usage of the term "eco-imperialism ". Paul Dreissen, in his work *Eco Imperialism, Green Power, Black Death*, discusses about the relation between current developed and developing world in terms of anthropocentrism and environmentalism. While explaining the neo-colonial perspectives and its adverse effect upon the developing world, Dreissen focuses on radical mentality of imperialists, corporate social irresponsibility etc. The survival and sustainability of native beings and ecology becomes the main point of discussion on the social

theory of ecological or eco imperialism, and the similar sense is reflected on the fictional work *The Martian Chronicles* and the sci-fi fantasy *Avatar*.

### **Neo-Colonial Struggle and Ecological Concerns in *The Martian Chronicles***

One of the main pioneers of science fiction, Ray Bradbury made effective alterations upon science literary genre with his provocative and thematic narrations. Though published in 1950's, *The Martian Chronicles* till this day carries its relevance because of man's everlasting expeditions, discoveries and exploitations. The disillusionment resulted from revolutionary scientific and technical innovations seriously affected the modern and postmodern era.

*The Martian Chronicles* effectively portrays the chaotic state of humanity, and their ultimate decision of depending on science for further survival. The fiction begins on the first part of 20th century Earth witnessing the launching of rocket expedition to Mars, and their ultimate success after many futile efforts. Many of Martians lost their lives due to diseases brought by colonial humans. By restructuring Martian land, the settlement of human beings at Mars brings many changes and this becomes the important point of relevance. The terrifying World war and resulted apocalyptic state compelled the newly settled humans in Mars to return back to Earth. The condition of Earth is getting worsened more, and finally one family succeeds in their effort to reach at Mars marking the rebirth of new Martian Civilization.

Alfred Crosby, on *Ecological Imperialism*, discusses about the biological accidents created by European invaders through their invasion over ecology and culture of native land. The population, due to lack of prior contact to European diseases, succumbed to the diseases. Such experiences led the colonials to affirm on the rightness of imperialist actions. Crosby writes, "The South Eastern US was fairly heavily populated, with complex societies, before diseases left the area empty... The unevenness of exchange [between Old World and New World epidemics] operated to the overwhelming advantage of the European invaders and to the crushing disadvantage of the peoples whose ancestral homes were on the losing side of the seams of Pangae" (216).

In *The Martian Chronicles*, the readers come across the ultimate success of fourth rocket expedition. The members of fourth team don't have any idea about the result of earlier expeditions. It is the archaeologist in team that deciphers about the extinct Martians and their culture. Jeff Spender is greatly disturbed with the realisation of true cause behind Martian extinction:

Chicken pox, God, Chicken pox, think of it! A race builds itself for a million years, refines itself, erect cities like those out there, does everything it can to give itself respect and beauty and then it dies ... It has to be chickenpox, a child's disease, a disease that doesn't even kill children on Earth! It's not right and it's not fair... It doesn't fit the architecture; it doesn't fit this entire world!  
(Bradbury 88)

Jeff Spenders is totally devastated with the real truth behind Martian extinction. On his further research, Spenders gets attracted to Martian philosophy and their concern for nature: "They knew how to live with nature and get along with nature" (Bradbury 108). Spender further points out the harmonious co-existence of nature and science in Mars:

... Life was the propagation of more life and the living of as good a life as possible  
... They quit trying too hard to destroy everything, to humble everything. They blended religion and art and science because, at the base, science is no more than an investigation of a miracle we can never explain, and art is an interpretation of that miracle. They never let science crush the aesthetic and the beautiful.  
(Bradbury 109)

The high regard of Spender towards Martians reminds the reader about "the coloniser who refuses"(Memmi 19). Albert Memmi explains in detail in *The Coloniser and The Colonised* about such colonisers who recognise the colonial system as unjust. Sometimes they withdrew themselves from the conditions of privilege. Or else, they remain to fight for change. The action of killing four of his team mates by Spender is justified on his explanation to Captain Wilder:

That'll delay the next trip in a rocket for a good five years. There's no other rocket in existence today, save this one... A good report from you, on the other hand, if you returned, would hasten the whole invasion of Mars. If I'm lucky, I'll live to be sixty years old. Every expedition that land on Mars will be met by me ... I'll kill them off ... Mars will be untouched for the next half-century. After a while, perhaps the Earth people will give up trying. (Bradbury 106-107)

Though Spender gets killed by Captain, he gets reminded of Spender's words: "But one day Earth will be as Mars is today. This will sober us" (Bradbury 90). They laid Spender's coffin in an ancient Martian tomb yard. Though a short-lived character, Spender realized the significance of maintaining the purity of native Mars and tried hard to protect it from further colonial dangers.

On the chapter entitled "Theoff Season", fourth expedition member Sam Parkhill opens a hot dog stand at Cross Road in Mars with the aim of gaining more profit from the fastening migration. Sam even kills two Martian people who came to warn him about impending dangers on Earth. On the ironical way, the Martians provide Sam the land grant to all the territory. "We leave. Prepare the land is yours "(240). Overwhelmed with unexpected achievement and happiness, Sam is not able to realize the reality. His wife Elma showed Sam, "Earth changed in the black sky ... Part of it seemed to come apart in a million pieces as if a gigantic jigsaw has exploded" (Bradbury 242). Elma tells confused Sam, "There will be another batch of customers along in about a million years. Gotta be ready, Yes sir"(Bradbury 243). The character of Sam reminds the reader about the usurping nature of colonizers. By not giving any value to words, actions and above all to the lives of Martians, Sam, out of superiority, tries to destroy them. The unexpected outcome made Sam realize the destruction of nature and culture in Martian and Earthly terms, and this futility compels him to return back to Earth.

In the section "There Will Come Soft Rains," the writer discusses about the automatic technical functioning of daily chores at a vacant home. "This house was an altar with ten thousand attendants, big, small, servicing, attending, in choirs. But the gods had gone away, and

the ritual of the religion continued senselessly, uselessly "(Bradbury220). This description suggests about apocalyptic situation developed as the further consequence of war. Like the earlier extinct Martians, Humans, in this narrative, are endangered due to the exploitation of nature and culture by destructive imperial power authorities.

Nearing to the end section, "The Million Year Picnic" discusses about the resettlement of William Thomas and his family at Mars by completely renouncing earthly life. The elder son Timothy, since his birth, has only experienced the horrors of war, and the new expedition gives a strange feeling to him. His father explains him,

I'm burning a way of life, just like the way of life is being burned cleaned on Earth right now... Life on Earth never settled down to doing anything very good. Science ran too far ahead of us too quickly, and the people got lost in the mechanical wilderness ... Wars got bigger and bigger and finally killed Earth. That's what the silent radio means. That's what we ran away from. (Bradbury 302)

William Thomas succeeded in his effort to save his family from dangers World war. When his son Michael demanded to see a Martian, he realizes the necessity to embrace Mars as part of their life:

"There they are," said Dad; and he shifted Michael on his shoulder and pointed straight down... The Martians were there -in the canal - reflected in the water. Timothy and Michael and Robert and Mom and Dad. The Martians stared back at them for a long, long silent time from the rippling water. (Bradbury 304-305)

The realization of being the part of Mars civilization marks a new beginning on the lives of human settlers. William Thomas makes his children realize the follies of imperial power authorities and their misuse of science and technology on Earth habitat. The need for protecting the ecology of Mars for further survival and sustainability becomes the ultimate aim for new Martian humans.

### **Imperialistic Impact over Ecology in *Avatar***

Hollywood epic science fiction film *Avatar* got released worldwide in the year 2009. Sci-fi movie *Avatar* thematically discusses about the apocalyptic situation in Earth, and Environmental destruction resulted from colonialism. The renowned director James Cameron, on the backdrop of post-climate change Earth scenario, points out the emerging futurist planetary wars between Earthlings and Pandorians for the sake of energy sources.

James Cameron, in his interview to *The Telegraph*, tells: " ... the West can learn from Indigenous peoples is how to live an environmentally conscious life: ' a life that's in balance with the natural cycles of life on Earth'" (web). Through this interview, director points out the necessity of protecting ecology by exhibiting resistance against environmental destruction. *Avatar* indirectly discusses the struggle for survival and sustainability that makes human beings to depend on other energy sources for their living. But, in this process, they deliberately forget the ethics of reconsidering nativist feelings and existence of ecology. The necessity of protecting ecology along with the theological cultural pattern of natives made the sci-fi movie *Avatar* a serious subject for scrutiny.

The protagonist of the movie, paraplegic former marine Jake Sully, gets the unexpected opportunity to be the part of Earth scientific mission investigating Pandora, due to the sudden demise of his identical twin brother. The movie revolves around the new "Avatar" of Jake and his association with Na'vi community. The Pandora inhabitants are closely associated to their environment, and the same has started to influence Jake's thoughts. Finally. Jake and Na'vi community succeed in their effort to save their motherland from the clutches of Earthly Colonisers and their Unobtainium extraction mission.

Sci-fi movie *Avatar* puts forward many issues related to the environment including deforestation, exploitation of nature, ecosophy, deep ecological sense etc on the backdrop of neo-colonial movements. As Edward W Said mentioned in *Orientalism*, it's better to attack the orient before they invade occident is the misconception followed in Eco-Imperial movement over Pandora. The features of familiarising geography to the colonials provide the apt eco-terrific effect to this colonial movement.



When Jake and others reaches the new habitat Pandora, Colonel Quartich explains to all:

Out beyond that fence every living thing that crawls, flies or squats in the mud wants to kill you and eat your eyes for jujubees ...

... We have an indigenous population of humanoids here called the Na'vi. They're fond of arrows dipped in a neurotoxin which can stop your heart in one minute. We operate... We live ... at a constant threat condition yellow.

(*Avatar* 00:01:06-00:01:10).

The initial familiarisation of Oriental Pandora geography to Earth colonials makes them alert to their new surroundings. The fear of impending danger, even from ecology of Pandora, accelerates the process of neo-colonial efforts to distort Pandora for rich mineral Unobtainium extraction. Similar situation can be seen when Jake in Avatar form tries to stop bulldozer:

Jake: Hey! Hey! Stop! Stop.

Operator: I got one of the natives blocking my blade here.

Supervisor (to Selfridge): What do we do?

... He'll move. These people have to learn that we don't stop. (*Avatar* 01:33:01-01:33:20)

It is the concern of Neytiri for her ecology that brings Jake to the frame point. She gets horrified when she watches bulldozers crushing their sacred forest. Being a Pandora native, it becomes impossible for her to act against technological exploitation over Nature at such horrified state. The mentality of Selfridge is like a colonial who is interested to grab more profit by not paying any heed to nativist feelings.

When the Na'vi community starts to react against the attack of Earth neo-colonials, they become more alert. The only concern for the authorities is their profit. As Colonel Quartich earlier mentioned to Jake, "This is my war here" (*Avatar* 00:24:01). The same thirst for war can be seen in Colonel Quartich when he urges his team mates to fight against Na'vi community:

“People, you are fighting for survival.

There's an aboriginal horde out there massing for an attack...

Then they'll be overrunning our perimeter here. We can't wait. Our only security lies in pre-emptive attack. We will fight terror with terror. (*Avatar* 02:00:03-02:00:10).

Though Jake is in form of Na'vi avatar, he clearly understands the neo-colonial and eco-terror activities of Earthlings over Pandora. He shares his deep ecological concerns with Na'vi community:

Jake: If Grace is there with you... look in her memories. She can show you the world we come from. There's no green there. They killed their mother, and they're gonna do the same thing here ... More sky people are gonna come.  
(*Avatar* 02:08:58-02:09:00)

Through the above statement, Jake clearly hints at the apocalyptic changes on his own planet Earth due to environmental destruction by neo-colonials. It is this injustice that provokes Jake to fight for the environmental rights of Pandora and its civilization. The movie ends with optimistic note as the colonials are returning back to Earth, and Jake gets transformed to be a complete Na'vi and thereby becoming part of Pandora forever.

## Conclusion

The science fictional work *The Martian Chronicles* and sci-fi movie *Avatar* shares the common thematic pattern of apocalypse and invasion over the other planet. In *The Martian Chronicles*, Ray Bradbury gives a detailed description on man's expedition over Mars, destruction of natives, world war and re-birth of new Martian humans. Whereas sci-fi movie *Avatar* describes the neo-colonial Earth expedition over Pandora for grabbing valuable mineral Unobtainium by destroying the ecology, native land destruction questioning survival, and natives regaining their Pandora at the end. Though in both the fictional plots, imperial humans craving for profit by destroying ecology of native land gets no desired result marking their attempts as futile. It is the imperial mentality and its relation to environmental destruction that makes topic of ecological or eco imperialism more significant in present times. Several instances

of such ecological and imperial influence over human lives can be witnessed throughout the sci-fi movie *Avatar* and fiction *The Martian Chronicles*.

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## **Presence of Mind and Communication Skills of Dr. C. N. Annadurai**

**Dr. D. Nagarathinam and Prof. L. Lakshmanan**

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### **Abstract**

Presence of mind implies the presence of the thinking faculties in time of difficult or dangerous situations, which enable a man to think clearly and act promptly. It is usually found naturally for good leaders of men, being one of the qualities which make them fit for leadership. The man who has developed his powers of thought by education or by reading many books, and keeps his body strong and able, is more likely to act in difficult situation with wisdom and promptitude than one whose mind and body are enfeebled by indulgence. This paper attempts to draw the Dr. C N Annadurai's presence of mind as well as his communication skills.

**Keywords: Dravidian leader, C.N. Annadurai, Chief Minister, Presence of Mind, Oratory Skills, Rajya Sabha, Tamil Nadu Assembly, Yale University.**

## Introduction

“Presence of mind” means ability to react quickly and keep cool in an emergency of any kind. It is not the opposite, of absent-mindedness, but of “losing one’s head”<sup>(1)</sup>. The words mind and head in these phrases mean reason; and so one who has presence of mind in danger is one who has such control over his nerves that his reason is not upset, but still directs his actions.

Presence of mind would be helpful in many situations, taking an advantage that nobody else would think of. which might even save your life one day<sup>(2)</sup>. For example, a chef is making some Indian sweets from fresh milk, boiling gallons of fresh milk only to realize later some of the milk was spoiled which ended up spoiling all of the milk<sup>(2)</sup>. Normally it would have to be thrown away resulting in a loss of money, but the chef makes sure to reduce the loss of his boss and instead make some cottage cheese out of it which makes even costlier sweets. This is the Chef’s presence of mind in cooking.

In other words, the Presence of mind is, to some extent, a gift; that is, some people have it naturally<sup>(1)</sup>. Such people are very fortunate; for their presence of mind in a difficult situation or dangerous situation may save them from taking a false step which might mean ruin to them or others. But all are not so fortunate.

### Annadurai’s Early Life:

Annadurai hailed from a middle-class family and he was a very good orator and writer both in Tamil and English. After completing his post-graduation in Economics and Politics, Annadurai started his career as a School Teacher<sup>(3)</sup>.

Afterwards, Annadurai joined the “Dravidar Kazhagam” / D.K. of Thanthai Periyar E. V. Ramasamy and became an atheist<sup>(3)</sup>. After some years, he left the teaching profession and took writing stage-dramas as his full-time profession. And he started writing drama-scripts and acted in them. Out of about 60 of his stage plays, many of them were later converted into successful Tamil Movies.

Annadurai had difference of opinions with E V R Periyar in policy matters of the party and in the personal life activities of his leader. So, Annadurai came out of the D.K. party and started his own party Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam / D.M.K. He surpassed all the D.K and D.M.K leaders in his oratory skills and in organizing millions of Tamils around the world into a dedicated community. For the last 2000 years of recorded history there was no other leader like Annadurai among Tamils.<sup>(12)</sup>

Thereafter Annadurai switched over from atheism and declared his attitude regarding the religions and faith in God as “Ondre Kulam-Oruvane Devan”/ “**One Community- One God**”<sup>(3)</sup>. According to Annadurai, all the communities are equal and one and all religions and gods are all one. Anna's contributions to Tamil as film, script, story, and dialogue writer are substantial. Anna, in order to popularise his ideals, utilised these media very effectively. His first drama "Chandrodayam" was thematic. He formed a troupe in Kanchi in his "Dravidanadu " office and gave roles to his comrades C. V. Rajagopal, K. Subramaniam and Ezhathu Adigal. He took the leading role of Dorairaj himself. His "Nallathambi" and "Velaikkari" were fine film hits. "Velaikkari" and “One night" with K. R. Ramasami in the lead were staged in Thanjavur for many months. Anna's dialogues were so superb, telling, magnetic and effective that Kalki Krishnamoorthy compared him to Bernard Shaw and Ibsen.

M. G. Ramachandran, the famous Tamil actor known as “Makkal Thilagam -MGR” joined Annadurai’s D.M.K. Being an actor himself, Annadurai believed that the cinema actors can and will become popular and become even the Chief Ministers of States. Annadurai will ever be remembered as a statesman and a scholar, a litterateur and a social reformer, a mass leader and a friend of the poor.

### **Mesmerizing Speech of Annadurai**

C. N. Annadurai, popularly known as “**Perarignar Anna**” meaning Great Wise-Elder Brother became the first “Non-Congress”/Dravidian Party Chief Minister of Tamilnadu after 20 years of Independence of India, until then the Indian National Congress had been the ruling party in the State of Madras/Tamilnadu. Annadurai was an original thinker, editor of magazines, orator, book

lover and a good administrator. Anna's contributions to oratory and journalism are outstanding. People used to purchase tickets for his special meetings, travel hundreds of miles, walk 10 to 12 miles, to hear him. Anna usually came very late. Normally he spoke for 40, 45 minutes. But from first to last, he held the people spell bound, moving them to heights of feeling, producing peals of laughter, mesmerizing them with his matchless eloquence. It is very moving, even now, to hear Anna's voice, in tapes. Easily he is the best orator Tamil Nadu has ever produced. He took Tamil to the masses and enthroned it in Fort St. George.

### **Madras Presidency was Renamed as Tamil Nadu**

When the Constitution of India declared Hindi as the official language in 1965, Anna revolted to ensure that English would be the official language of India. In this revolt Anna was under arrest for inducing the agitation and it was this one action that led to DMK's first landslide victory in 1967 and Anna becoming the Chief Minister of erstwhile Madras Presidency which he changed into 'Tamil Nadu'- The land of Tamils. His crowning act was the naming of the then Madras State as " Tamil Nadu ".

### **Annadurai was Called as South India's George Bernard Shaw**

Annadurai was a prolific writer and speaker both in English and Tamil – dramatist comparable with George Bernard Shaw – a fine conversationalist like Samuel Johnson. As a writer, he has produced about 50 short novels, more than 100 short stories and two dozen dramas. All his books were sold like hot cakes in the market. His “epistles” to “Thambi” in “Dravida Nadu” created history and people in thousands waited in the newspaper stalls for the arrival of his weekly. Such was the fancy he could create. Those epistles have been published in 20 volumes and they are relevant even today. His captivating captions, subtle satires, similes, metaphors, allegories – most of them at least – are green in the memories of thousands of his followers, even now. Such was the impact of his writings. Millions of people, particularly the youngsters, were attracted by the wonderful eloquence of Dr. Annadurai. Statistical evidence shows that Dr. Annadurai stood first among the Indian leaders in attracting the largest audience. He was not only well versed in Tamil **speeches** but equally proficient and well versed in **English**. His speeches were

very attractive, interesting, inspiring and, above all, thought-provoking. That is the reason he was also called as “**South India’s George Bernard Shaw**<sup>(8)</sup>” by the people of Tamil Nadu.

### **Self-Respect Movement**

C. N. Annadurai's era was marked by media options that combined journalism and literature on the one hand and theatre and cinema on the other for wider reach. Radio was obviously not available. Launching of newspapers or literary magazines for propagating their thoughts was a viable option although their commercial success is debatable. Media as vehicles of political communication were institutionalized and a holistic view of the history of Indian media would then allow us to see how in the present scenario political consolidation is also invariably linked to direct ownership of print and television channels.

Language was an important issue during Anna's time. Some might argue it remains crucial even today. It is important to note that Anna himself had an open mind on the question, asking only for a home-grown solution over a period of time. He wanted all 'regional languages' to have the status of national languages. This is yet to become a reality. Anna took to writing for small vernaculars before being drawn into politics. Anna was extremely popular with people of Tamil Nadu as he started the 'Self-respect' movement, which was started to restore the pride and culture, which he claimed was overshadowed by the Hindi speaking Aryans.

People followed him as he was an acclaimed orator, well versed in Tamil and English literature, and as a stage actor. Which is why till date, filmdom seems to be the most natural route to political fiefdom in Tamil Nadu. Annadurai's popularity before entry into politics was mainly due to his active protests against Hindi-imposition as an official language in 1928, whipped regional passion of the Tamil speaking people that they would be treated as second-class citizens, as Hindi was language of Aryans or the North Indians. Congressman Rajaji suggested the use of Hindi as a compulsory language in schools in 1938 & Annadurai, along with other Tamil leaders opposed. When the 'Madras State' withdrew this idea, the victory of the Tamil bolstered Anna's political journey & later on reaped huge political dividends.

### **Public Speaker**



Annadurai was a powerful orator of his time and he produced a number of speeches with allusion, diction, alliteration. Anna's contributions to oratory and journalism are outstanding. People used to purchase tickets for his special meetings, travel hundreds of miles, walk 10 to 12 miles, to hear him. Anna usually came very late. Normally he spoke for 40, 45 minutes. But from first to last, he held the people spell bound, moving them to heights of feeling, producing peals of laughter, mesmerizing them with his matchless eloquence. It is very moving, even now, to hear Anna's voice, in tapes. Easily he is the best orator Tamil Nadu has produced. He took Tamil to the masses and enthroned it in Fort St. George. His crowning act was the naming of the then Madras State as " Tamil Nadu ". When Annadurai was too late for a election meeting, and people were waiting for long, he gave this speech in the poetic form. This is explained in an example by an episode as follows:

Mathaama Chittirai,  
Maniyo Patharai,  
Ungalai Thazhuvuvatho nithirai,  
Marakkamal emakku iduvir Muthirai.

### **Chubb Fellowship at Yale University<sup>(7,9)</sup>:**

C. N. Annadurai was the prominent Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu State of India , who was known for his proficiency in languages - particularly English and Tamil. Once he proceeded on a world tour as an invitee of the Yale University's Chubb Fellowship Programme and was also a guest of the State Department in the USA in April-May 1968. There he was requested to speak to the students. During an interactive session held with students, guys were allowed to ask some puzzle like questions that tests one's English proficiency. One of the guys in that hall stood up and asked him to say a hundred words in English which don't contain the letters A, B, C or D.

Annadurai immediately started to tell the words one by one: One, two, three, four ... up to ninety-nine! Everyone present in the hall were surprised and waiting for his 100th word. If he said

'hundred' ... he would have failed but after 'ninety nine' .... he said 'STOP'. The hall was filled with a minute of huge applause.

The second question that was asked to him and his response is even more famous. Let me see if anyone can answer it right. The question was: Construct a sentence with the word "because" repeating thrice .... (one after the other and not in different part of the sentence).

The instantaneous response from Dr. C. N. Annadurai was: **No sentence ends in because, because, because is a conjunction word.**

The crowd again applauded in claps. Similarly, he said about a person who bored him like "A saw I saw was such a saw I ever saw". He was awarded the Chubb Fellowship at Yale University being the first non-American to receive this honour. In the same year 1968, he was awarded an honorary doctorate from Annamalai University.

### **Union is Anion**

During his days in Dravida Kazhagam, Annadurai had supported Periyar's call for an independent Dravida Nadu. The claim for such an independent state stayed alive in the initial days of DMK. During Hindi agitation some students raised their voice for bifurcation of India and separate 'Dravida nadu'. In a short period during the year 1967 Anna assumed as the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu he was invited to the Pachaiyappa College as the "Chief guest" for a function arranged by the student union to deliver a speech on 'union'. A press reporter wanted to corner Annadurai and questioned him "What is Union?" (The reporter thought Annadurai could not give proper answer for his question.)

Anna in his own style replied 'Union is Anion' with a rhyming word.

All the people kept mum after his quick reply. 'Union' is "Anion."

### **Magnanimity** <sup>(11)</sup>

Annadurai had magnanimity and never accused the opponents and degraded them. To prove that we can recollect one episode took place in Yale University while Annadurai was

addressing a press-meet. One media person asked him, what was the reason for the Congress party's defeat after a long period of ruling the country.

Annadurai replied that "Familiarity" breeds contempt. i.e. the people like a change when one party's rule continued for a long time. They wanted a change, that is all. His reply shows here that he doesn't accuse the opponents. It shows his magnanimity and his politeness in the political career.

### **A Sense of Humor in Tamil Nadu Assembly <sup>(10)</sup>**

C.N Annadurai had a sense of humor while he was on the chair of the chief minister of Tamil Nadu. Once one opposite party legislative leader Vinayagam made a complaint, "I have donated a Tiger's female cub to Zoological Park of Vandalur. Cine actor M G Ramachandran donated a tiger's male cub. The zoo caretakers pay more attention to the male cub and not equal care is paid to the female cub that I have donated". Annadurai immediately replied brothers-in-law of cub can only solve this issue. It is not fair part for me, to intervene in this dispute. The whole assembly audience of the floor burst in – to laugh.

### **A Brilliant Answer <sup>(11)</sup>**

When there was a debate, an opposition member Vinayagam sarcastically commented on Annadurai, remarking on his ailment and went to the extent of saying "Your days are counted" to which Annadurai immediately retorted "But my steps are measured". That is the wit of Anna.

### **Respect for Opponents**

Annadurai praised the opponents. This is also one of the appreciable behaviours of Annadurai. Once a reporter asked him "What was the reason for the defeat of Mr. K. Kamaraj the popular C.M. of Tamil Nadu in the election?"

Annadurai replied that "It was quite an unfortunate thing"; this happens in the politics. We have to wait to find out such a selfless leader without any faults for at least one thousand years."

### **Captivating Oratory Power in English**

The communication skill of Anna captivates the audience, even some great orators. Here we can find it in this episode. When Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru was the Prime Minister of India, Anna and his party vehemently opposed Hindi as the official language. This agitation angered Nehru. He was angry with Anna's movements. In the Parliament, once as an elected Rajya Sabha member Anna made a speech for the first time. As the time limit was over his speech, the speaker pointed out the time, he signaled to Anna to conclude the speech. But Nehru intervened and requested the Chairman of the House to allow more time for this captivating speech without any grudge or prejudicial view against Anna. His communication skills captivated not only the audience but also great leaders like Nehru <sup>(8)</sup>. When silence was restored he began his address.

## Conclusion

The presence of mind, sense of humor, authoritativeness, confidence, magnanimity, and communication skills are qualities noticed in many great leaders. Communication is the art of transmitting information, ideas and attitudes from one person to another. Most people judge another person on the basis of his / her presence of mind and language skills and form an opinion based on their perception. Clear communication is the most important key to a leader's success.

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## **Integrating Soft Skills with English Language Learning**

**Joseph Edward Felix, M.A., (Ph.D.) and Dr. K Selvam, Ph.D.**

=====  
**Abstract**

21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills include learners to be Creators, Collaborators, Communicators and Critical Thinkers. It is important to be aware that 21<sup>st</sup> Century learners are digital natives and aspire to be (if not already) world-class learners. In India, education at most levels has become important in order to be employable. The fact that most young graduates are not job-ready despite possessing degrees is worrisome and stressful for both the job seekers and the employers. This trend is disturbing and needs addressing on a war footing. For years, educators have been talking about English Language Learning and training in Soft Skills being like two peas in a pod. Although they belong to the same skin yet they are two separate identities which have almost similar features and tastes. Honing English Language Skills and Soft Skills is becoming increasingly important in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. This is because young graduates are technically sound but their soft skills are next to negligible. Most of them do not know how to conduct themselves in a group, how to communicate effectively or how to lead a team to reach a target. This paper intends to look at learners understanding of Soft Skills. It also further probes what these learners consider as important Soft Skills.

**Keywords:** Soft Skills, English, Learning, Graduates, 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills

### **Introduction**

Globalization and Industrialization have blended into several work fields. This is not an unhealthy mix up and intervention. It just validates the fact that times are changing and that we need to equip ourselves with the times. We, twenty-first century netizens now, are in a situation

where those who are ‘fit’ enough can make their lives sail smoothly. The word ‘fit’ does not refer to physical health alone. It also implies fitness in intellect, emotional stability, social graces, being able to adapt to situations, being able to register, process and exhibit favorable behavior etcetera. These are some of the traits of a twenty-first century being. The four basic twenty-first century skills include Collaboration and Teamwork, Creativity and Imagination, Critical Thinking and Problem Solving. On close examination, very little difference is found between Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and the Soft Skills required by the work force of today. Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is based on the following principles:

- *It focuses more on using forms than studying about them.* Employers, these days, want their young employees to use English meaningfully in different contexts. It means that students should be trained to apply knowledge in practical situations.
- *It teaches grammar implicitly rather than explicitly.* Employers want new employees to speak and write in contexts meaningfully.
- *It aims at motivating the learners to write in their own style.* Employers want newly recruited employees to be original in thought and expression.

### **Need for the Study**

It is quite evident in the sphere of education in India that the twenty-first century graduate learner is not sufficiently equipped with skills that can make one a potential asset to the employer. Despite having, enviable and admirable score cards, thorough technical or hard skills, the young graduate finds it extremely difficult to cope with stress levels that the work at hand requires. Besides, people skills, leadership traits, lateral thinking and creativity are just a few to name that are severely amiss. In the newspaper, The Business Line, in its 19 January 2018 edition had a headline that read, ‘80% of engineers in India unemployable: report.’ The report indicated a significant skill gap. It reported that the fifth edition of National Employability Report 2015-16 conducted by job skills matching platform Aspiring Minds had found that over 80 percent of engineers in India remain unemployable. This further indicated a significant skill gap.

*India Today* in its 13 June 2016 edition had an article titled, “Only 7 per cent engineering graduates employable: What's wrong with India's engineers?” The article under the subtitle reading

‘major problems with engineering education in India’ lists ten points. Among them, the ninth and tenth points are related to our concern. The ninth point is, ‘lack of proper English Skills.’ This further reads on to inform that 73.63 percent of candidates lacked in communication skills. The candidates also were found to possess a mere 57.96 percent of analytical and quantitative skills. These were some of the reasons for their unemployment. Even the IT sector requires employers who are fluent and well versed in English, as within around two years of experience on the job, they would have to communicate with international customers. Thus, if the quality of engineering graduates do not improve, IT sector hiring will also go down.’ The tenth point is, ‘disregard of essential soft skills.’ This part of the report began by reporting that ‘Soft skills have become very important in the present job industry, but they are routinely ignored in educational institutes.’

Therefore, the academia needs to become alert to the siren call of the times in education. It is evident that graduates have problems negotiating with the work place. In order to make this transition smooth and with the minimum bumps possible; we need to intelligently educate and offer a plethora of collective knowledge, rich experience and make learners aware of at least the basic soft skills so that they have an edge and are easily absorbable by the work force. This calls out for a paradigm shift in the education process itself. Curriculum and Syllabi have to cater to the need of the job market. In the same report in the Business Line, Varun Aggarwal, CTO, Aspiring Minds, said, “Engineering has become the de facto graduate degree for a large chunk of students today. However, along with improving the education standards, it is quintessential that we evolve our undergraduate programmes to make them more job-centric.” This implies further that is an immediate necessity for young graduates to show a variety of Soft Skills in the work place. This pressing, immediate requirement must be address by educators in institutions of Higher Education.

## Literature Review

In the article, “Teaching Soft Skills to Engineering Students: A Case Study of BITS, Pilani”, (2017), Sushila Shekhawat and Geetha Bakilapadavu report that, “Engineering education in India largely focus on imparting knowledge in the respective technical areas.’ It is without doubt important but “apart from technical expertise, they have to work with people from varied backgrounds.” It is essentially because of this people skills are very much required. Also, no man



is an island and therefore imbibing people skills will only get one more acceptance and will assist to get along with many more people. To be able to persuade convincingly, to possess a positive attitude to team mates and to the work at hand just go on to polish career advancement further.

In their article, 'The Role of Pedagogical Intervention in Improving the Oral Proficiency of Engineering students,' Mekala S states, "in the globalised context, the need for spoken proficiency in English has become a determinant factor (2017). They state that, "the role of English is very crucial, and it is needed for mobility and social and economic advancement (Mekala S, 2017, p 7)

Venkatesan Iyengar R (2017) in his article, "People Matter: Networking and Career Development" says that there was a time when hard skills alone were sufficient to secure a job or even a promotion. But today soft skills help propel career growth at a rapid pace.

Chayan Jain in the article, "What does your body say about you," (2016) states "everyone must know what others actually mean when they say something and what their body silently conveys to other people at different time." Speaking in public is often a daunting task to many. However, one may be trained in an essential skill. It also is an essential trait of a leader.

Revathi Turaga in her article, "On Managing Emotions" (2016) writes that managing one's emotions and ensuring that one's responses are balanced is vital in today's organizational context." Many more companies are focusing on the emotional quotient of the candidate." She also quotes Maddy Malhotra who said "Running a marathon with a backpack is tough and may hinder you from winning the race. Do not let the baggage from your past heavy with fear, guilt, and anger-slow you down.

George Livingston in his article, "The Role of Story in Enhancing Critical Thinking and Group Discussion Skills", writes "critical thinking is expected in work settings". According to Knutson (2012), "critical thinking is important for engineers because it aids in preparation, investigation and making presentations. It saves time while making quality decisions." He also

writes that in work settings, the skill of discussing in groups is much sort. It (teaches critical thinking through inductive method rather than deductive method.”

Some of the basic Soft Skills required to be employable are shown in the diagram below.



Soft skills are a collective ability for excellence. Writing about Soft Skills in her article, ‘Need and Importance of Soft skills in Students,’ Rani (2010) says that, ‘Soft skills are learned behaviours which require training and focused application. Soft skills will enable students with a strong conceptual and practical framework to build, develop and manage teams. They play an important role in the development of the students’ overall personality, thereby enhancing their career prospects.’ With this as a focus it becomes important for institutions of Higher Education to form graduates who are well equipped to fulfil market requirements and demands as the market does not focus on academic achievement and credentials alone. West (1998) says that, ‘A university education should lay the foundations for a lifelong commitment by graduates to learning and professional development.’ This further implies that graduates, year after year, seem to be lacking what the market requires in order to facilitate professional practice. Employers seek a diverse range of skills and attributes in newly hired graduates in order to maintain a competitive advantage. Birrell (2006) states that many countries are facing a skills shortage. The students

cannot be blamed for this lack as they depend on Institutions to groom them completely. Of course institutions of Higher Education in the 21st century are not supposed to become training institutes or placement agencies but must be spaces for intellectual enhancement and places which foster, nurture and nourish minds to think, ideate and to contribute new knowledge to the already existing body of knowledge. Having stated this, it does not mean that students should not be groomed to meet the challenges of a career. In this situation, when students tend to give their core subjects more importance it becomes a challenge for the English teacher to make them realize the subtle nuances required to make them ready to meet the world. Thus, the English teacher must equip the learners with sufficient Soft Skills in a very subtle way and make the students realize the importance of soft skills

### **Objective of the Study**

The intention to conduct the survey was the following:

01. To learn if learners know what Soft Skills were
02. To learn if learners know if they possessed any Soft Skills
03. To learn if learners could identify for themselves what were the most important Soft Skills
04. To learn if learners knew what Soft Skills were required of them to get a job
05. To learn what Soft Skills the learners wanted to be trained in

### **Methodology**

A questionnaire was designed with five open-ended questions. It was distributed among seventy-one (N = 71). The study was conducted in Bengaluru. All the students belonged to the same class and were between the ages of 17 – 19 years. They were all first-year degree students reading for a bachelor's degree in Communicative English, Psychology and English Literature. Most of these students were not first-generation graduates. Most of them come from economically sound backgrounds. Most of them also come from English Medium Schools. They are comfortable in using the English language. After the questionnaire was administered to them, the data was then analyzed and put into percentages.

## Data Analysis

### Statement 1

The first statement in the questionnaire was to find out if the learners knew what Soft Skills are. This was an important question to ask because when students were randomly asked what they thought was Soft Skill; the reactions were surprising. Individually many of them immediately said that they did not know what Soft Skills were. However, when they saw the questionnaire, they would have got some idea of what was being asked.

On analysis it was evident that:

70% of the learners seemed to have some idea of what Soft Skills were. It must also be noted that many students had varied interpretations for the same question since the questionnaire was open ended.

20 % of the learners were unsure of what Soft Skills were.

10% of the learners clearly stated that they did not know what Soft Skills were.

### Statement 2

The second statement was a probing question, which intended to find out if the learners knew if they possessed any Soft Skills.

On analysis it was evident that:

75% of the learners stated that they possessed Soft Skills.

15% of the learners stated that they did not know that they possessed any Soft Skills.

10% of the learners stated that they were unsure if they possessed any Soft Skills.

On analysis this shows that many learners, although belonging to a cosmopolitan city, were not very sure of the Soft Skills that they possessed. This is despite the fact that they had spent at least 4 months in the institution and had mixed fairly well on campus.

### **Statement 3**

The third statement required the students to list the Soft Skills according to what they thought were important soft skills. This is how they listed the Soft Skills:

1. Listening Skills	23.94%
2. Speaking Skills	09.85%
3. Inter personal Skills	09.85%
4. Leadership Skills	09.85%
5. Presentation Skills	01.40%
6. Conflict management	00.00%
7. Time management	04.22%
8. Stress management	11.26%
9. Writing skills	00.00%
10. Persuasion Skills	00.00%
11. Negotiation Skills	00.00%
12. Public speaking	00.00%
13. Decision making	09.85%
14. Etiquette	19.71%

On analysis, it was surprisingly evident that the learners thought that Listening Skills (23.94%) was the most important Soft Skills. Learners, therefore, believe that there should be more stress paid to honing listening skills. There must be more training on listening.

The second important skill they thought was important was Etiquette (19.71%). This implied that learners are fully aware that how they appear before people matter and that they need to be trained in it. They know that public appearances matter.

The third important Soft Skill stressed upon was Stress management (11.26%).

Time Management Skills (04.22%) and Presentation Skills (01.40%) were also considered important by a few learners.

It was again surprising to note that Interpersonal Skills, Decision Making Skills, Speaking Skills, Leadership Skills had the same percentage of students (00.00%) placing them accordingly.

#### **Statement 4**

The fourth question was to seek information about how aware the learners are about the Soft Skills that they possessed. It also proved to find out if they possessed the Soft Skills required to get a job.

37% of the learners stated that they possessed Soft Skills and that they were job ready.

39% of the learners stated that they did not have the required Soft Skills and were not ready for a job.

24% of the learners stated that they were unsure if they possessed the required Soft Skills and therefore unsure if they were ready to take on a job.

#### **Statement 5**

The fifth statement wanted to know what Soft Skills the learners would like training in. The top four Soft Skills that the learners would like to get training in are:

01. Time Management
02. Stress Management
03. Public Speaking
04. Decision Making

This finding was in stark contrast to statement 3. But nonetheless it becomes evident from the responses received that the four Soft Skills mentioned above needed special attention and inclusion in the syllabus.

#### **Scope of Study**

The scope of this paper was limited to only one class of learners. It may be used for more number of students doing various courses and then the difference may be analyzed. The

questionnaire could be more specific and more information could be sort so that curriculum and syllabi may be infused with these important Soft Skills.

## Conclusion

The researcher, therefore, by analysing the data has found that even though the students at the undergraduate degree level think that they know what Soft Skills are, they also think that there is plenty of room for improvement. The few that do not know what Soft Skills are, can begin honing their skills while studying. Some learners feel that listening is a Soft Skill that needs to be developed in the classroom and that it is an essential skill. This paves the way for the teacher to intervene and help the students hone their skills better. Soft Skills are necessary and Undergraduate students will be better equipped and more confident to meet the challenges of the world when they step in to the work place.

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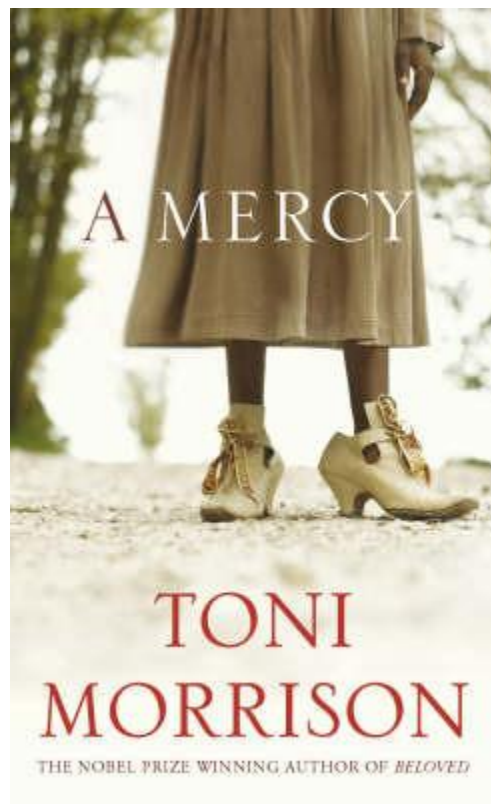
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## Perpetuation, Mediation and Annihilation of Oppressions in the Matriarchal and Patriarchal Spaces of Toni Morrison's *A Mercy*

R. Gladys Lydia, M.Phil.  
Dr. A. Sheeba

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### Abstract

In *A Mercy*, Toni Morrison grapples with the many-sided and impressively influential gothic “haunted” house from little girl Florens’s point of view. Her recurring and touching appearances in the novel are not only individual but they are also indicative of the cultural, political and historical expositions in the Atlantic colonies of the late seventeenth century

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Perpetuation, Mediation and Annihilation of Oppressions in the Matriarchal and Patriarchal Spaces of Toni Morrison's  
*A Mercy*

Maryland, Virginia and New York. Morrison investigates the negated subalterns like the individual and familial selves and goes even further from her regular sympathy for the “peripheral existence” of the black people into the consequences of deracination, disruption and “ontological instability” of the native Americans, multiethnic and multiracial slaves and the indentured servants in a territory dominated by the newly established class of people belonging to the “New lands”, America, May 1690, in the novel *A Mercy*. Morrison’s motive is to give a hint on how simple acts of mercy shown by people with power could comfort and provide solace to women under subordination. And hence could act as the source of annihilation against the oppressions of slavery, religion and patriarchy. Alice Walker’s theory of womanism and Kimberle Crenshaw’s intersectionality provides ways to fight the interconnecting oppressions. These theories help in identifying a woman’s forbearing capabilities amidst all odds and also helps to understand the intersections of racism, classism and sexism as well as their effects on people both individually and collectively. Hence, not only does Morrison portray the unexplainable atrocities of American history through *A Mercy*, but she also directs methods for its reconstruction, like women’s liberation and struggle for self-definition and self-expression.

**Keywords:** Negated subalterns, multiethnic slaves, religion, patriarchy, womanism, intersectionality

### **Novels of Morrison**

The novel *A Mercy* is quite similar to many of Morrison’s other novels like *Song of Solomon*, *Paradise*, *Jazz* and *Love*, where the novels throw light on many women characters in their household. The readers are again exposed to the consequences of a slave mother’s sacrifice in *A Mercy* just the way *Beloved* highlight’s the plight of a slave mother Sethe who had to kill her own baby girl just to save her from the evils of slavery. In comparison with *Love*, *A Mercy* is also another work which showcases the outcome of the protagonist Florens’s very young experience of desertion and loss of her family. But it is a bit different in this novel because unlike Cosey in *Love* who intentionally abandons Heed and Christine, minhamae the mother of Florensin *A Mercy* hands over her daughter to the slave owner, Jacob Vaark only as an expression

of true love as she does not want Florensto be sexually abused just the way she gets abused by her slave owner D'Ortega and his wife.

### ***A Mercy***

Morrison's ninth novel, *A Mercy* exposes the lives of a group of people who were bought and combined to stay in a common house with the process of a commercial deal. The household also includes an Anglo-Dutch farmer and his English wife, a Portuguese Catholic plantation owner, indentured servants and a freedman named Blacksmith. During the initial stages of the characters' lives as they live together, the characters live in a peaceful coexistence and are equally dependent of each other for their survival as they strive to make a life out of the uninhabited place they live in. But it is after all the mutual coexistence that greed accompanied by gender, class and race hierarchies pollute the minds, lives and their environment. Basically, greed is symbolically the reason for the farmer Jacob Vaark's death and stands responsible even for the critical turbulence the women who depend upon Vaark face after his death. As Morrison follows the trend of using multiple narrative perspectives in most of her novels, she applies the same technique in this novel as well where the meanings of the narrative can be derived from the interconnections among the different opinions put forth by the characters in the novel. With the intersection of the many different voices and their stories, Morrison investigates the meaning of independence and captivity, religion and power, matriarchal and patriarchal space and the evils of racism, classism and sexism and its effects upon the characters in the novel. As Valerie Smith says, "Like most of Morrison's novels, *A Mercy* is told from multiple narrative perspectives; the meanings of the narrative emerge out of the interconnections among the different points of view." (Smith 118) And thereby, in doing so the narrative style of the novel *A Mercy* dissents the ideas and hierarchies that are the causes for Vaark's death and destruction of his family and house. The work's narrative structure intimidates Florens's, Lina's, Mistress's and Sorrow's identity and security as women and female slaves.

### **Theories of Womanism and Intersectionality**

Alice Walker's theory of Womanism and Kimberle Crenshaw's Intersectionality helps in identifying a woman's forbearing capabilities amidst all odds as well as the different

interconnecting systems of oppressions that afflict the lives of the women slaves in the novel. In spite of the fact that Florens is the protagonist of the novel, the stories of the many other women in the novel is representative of the cultural, political and historical phase of the 1690's Maryland, Virginia and New York. The girl Messalina, shortly called Lina is the first girl hired by Jacob Vaark to work on his estate. She is a young Native woman deserted by her family at the early years of her life when the plague took the lives of most of her family members. Vaark buys Lina from the Presbyterians who tried to make her "religious" with the hope that she would be able to help him run his farm when he initially had no one to help him. After Lina, Vaark buys a wife named Rebekka from her family who lived in London for he believed that he found her to be "an unchurched woman of childbearing age, obedient but not groveling, literate but not proud, independent but nurturing" (M 30). In exchange for all that Rebekka does to manage Vaark's household, Vaark decides to compensate Rebekka's parents for any of her personal needs. Thirdly, the farmer accepts a girl of unknown racial background, literally known and called as Sorrow from a sawyer who had to give Vaark some money. Symbolic of her name, Sorrow is a depressed girl who communicates with her alter ego, Twin, as she does not know of any other way through which she could erase the deep wound of a trauma she had to face as she lived with a captain known to be her father. Having met with a shipwreck she later survived that phase only because a sawyer out of his mercy saved her and brought her into his home. Even here Sorrow has no security and is abandoned by the sawyer's family. The sawyer's wife throws Sorrow out of her house when she gets to know that the Sawyer's sons abuse her sexually. The other servants at Jacob Vaark's household are Willard and Scully, the two white men who work for Jacob, these two men were also deserted by their family and therefore subjected to serve. The novel begins right before Jacob comes to meet D' Ortega for some commercial deal and it is at D' Ortega's place where Vaark meets Florens.

### **First Person Point of View in *A Mercy***

The novel *A Mercy* consist of eleven sections that are intermingled with Floren's first person point of view and the voices of Lina, Jacob, Rebekka, Sorrow, minhamae, Willard and Scully. The novel is narrated in the first person's point of view and follows the present tense. Florens's section explains the significant events that the novel highlights and it goes on further

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to narrate the story of servitude and her journey to find her lover, the blacksmith. The rest of the sections are narrated in a third-person's point of view and seems quite indirect in its expression. At times the tense used in these sections are in past tense and they focus on the characters' past stories, expose Florens's lifeaccount, as a whole the other sections bring out the fact that all the details of the characters' lives are somehow interconnected and hence their narrative accounts unite them into a society. Therefore, Florens's and the perspectives of others such as Jacob, Rebekka, Lina, minhamae, Sorrow, Willard and Scully expose not only their individual life stories but they give an exposure to the cultural, political and historical conditions in the Atlantic colonies of the late seventeenth century.

### **Matriarchal and Patriarchal Spaces**

The perpetuation, mediation and annihilation of the oppressions in the matriarchal and patriarchal spaces of Morrison's *A Mercy* is one of the most pertinent theme that has to be understood. This is so because the exploitations in the matriarchal and patriarchal spaces are different from each other and require different lessons to be learnt in order for the annihilation of the atrocities. Religion and patriarchy dominate both the matriarchal and patriarchal spaces. In the matriarchal space religion and patriarchy dominates the multiethnic women slaves who work at Jacob's household. Again religion and patriarchy is the most natural means of weapon used to exercise power in the patriarchal space as well. D'Ortega and Jacob Vaark's house and the other unnamed men in the novel who use religion as a tool to overrule the lives of women occupy the patriarchal space.

### **Religion and Power**

Power in the form of religion has been used by the Presbyterians to "civilize" Lina and this domination affects Lina in such a way:

That she decided to fortify herself by piecing together scraps of what her mother had taught her before dying in agony. Relying on memory and her own resources, she cobbled together neglected rites, merged Europe medicine with native, scripture with lore, and recalled or invented the hidden meaning of things. Found, in other words, a way to be in the world. (M 46)

Being an orphan, whose family had died during an epidemic disease, Lina was totally desolate and hopeless without family. Having realized this she decided to work for the Presbyterians and hence “let herself be purified by these worthies”. For the Presbyterians taught her things like “to eat corn mush with one’s fingers was perverse” (M 46). In spite of the Godly and religious teachings that the Presbyterians impart to Lina, she is abandoned even by Presbyterians who refuse to keep Lina with them. Lina at this point loses her sense of individuality and her sense of belonging towards herself. It is at this time that Lina’s mother plays the role of the wise matriarchal mother who influences her daughter’s state of mind. Lina uses the teachings of her mother which she receives right before she died in pain due to the small pox which attacked her family. Walker’s *In Search of our Mother’s Gardens: Womanist Prose*, and the theory of Womanism that it employs is applicable in the novel when Lina learns to remember and put together the little lessons of life that could help her “fortify” herself during the time when she experiences loneliness that haunts her as a ghost.

### **Lessons of Life, Memory, Re-memory**

With the help of memory, rememory and the resources around her Lina finds on her own ways to exist. Lina mended all the disregarded religious customs and found her own manner of handling life’s situations. The lessons of life that Lina learns from her mother, shows the womanist qualities that Lina’s mother exhibited in trying to teach and pass on to Lina to act as a woman and not as a girl during the battles of life. Lina turns out to be creative as she uses memory “and her own resources” and also uses those things that are usually neglected and not given much importance. And with the neglected things and the new things that she learns from white people’s civilization Lina uses it all to find the mystery of certain things which are confusing. And thereby in doing so she discovers the tactics to exist in an unfair world. Lina had to find such ways to inhale and exhale her life’s plight because: “There was no comfort or place for her in the village; Sir was there and not there” (M 46). Lina had to associate herself with the pious Presbyterians only so that she could find some solace and company with them. Here, Morrison is quite cynical about religion and its manipulation, she also criticizes the effects it causes to the people who follow it. This can be seen in the lines “Solitude would have crushed

her had she not fallen into hermit skills and become one more thing that moved in the natural world” (M 46).

### **Florens, the Protagonist**

In the early part of the novel, the readers are introduced to Florens, the protagonist of the novel. The protagonist a sixteen year old girl, writes her life stories on the walls, ceiling and floor of the room at the mansion of her late master. This mansion is the home she is not permitted to enter. The manner Florens expresses herself is like a “project” since she gives details of her own harsh attitude towards Malaik, a young child who belonged to the blacksmith, the former lover of Florens. It is obvious in the later part of the novel that as Florens inscribes the events that caused her to break the child’s shoulder, she in a way appropriates her individual right to express her identity and thoughts as a womanist would do. Alice Walker opines her view regarding a womanist:

Usually referring to outrageous, audacious, courageous or willful behavior.  
Wanting to know more and in greater depth than is considered “good” for one.  
Interested in grown-up doings. Acting grown up. Being grown up.  
Interchangeable with another black folk expression: “You trying to be grown.”  
Responsible. In charge. Serious. (Walker 10)

Just as a womanist would dare to dive into any circumstance no matter how hard the situation is even so Florens musters up her courage to inscribe on the walls and floors of the house that is forbidden for her to enter. She is able to express herself even when restrictions are enforced on her. Hence, as Walker says in her fourth definition of her womanist theory that a womanist “loves struggle” likewise Florens is audacious enough to be expressive of her thoughts and actions even when she is legally enslaved. The significance of literacy is stressed through Florens’s ability to read. The slaves were forbidden to learn to read or write and in spite of this restriction Florens manages to master the skills of reading and writing and these skills in return help her define the significance and the meaning of her existence. In being able to assert the meaning of her existence Florens learns the art of survival by using her abilities to understand many other mysterious situations around her.

## Womanist Tenets

Walker's first womanist tenet highlights the womanist who wants to learn and acquire knowledge. "Wanting to know more and in greater depth than is considered "good" for one. Interested in grown-up doings. Acting grown up. Being grown up" (Walker 11). This same thirst for knowledge that is more than required for a young woman like Florens can be compared to the womanist qualities Walker insists the African-American women to inculcate in their everyday lives. In *A Mercy*, Florens is able to understand and interpret the supernatural signs like the dreams she dreams of her mother Minhamae and her little son. Florens also knows to explain weird signs such as the shape of a dog's profile in the steam coming from a kettle and Florens's interpretation of this sign is that the dog's profile warn her of any possible danger. Florens's ability to interpret the wilderness and the natural environment could be observed in the following lines:

Remember? How when they move their pelts sway as though there is nothing underneath? Their smell belying their beauty, their eyes knowing us from when we are beasts also. You telling me that is why it is fatal to look them in the eye. They will approach, run to us to love and play which we misread and give back fear and anger. (M 34)

## Psychically Free

This audacity exposes the fact that Florens is "psychically free". And above all, because a womanist "loves herself" she strives hard to find some means to communicate herself to the society in order to be accepted and understood by the community around her. Though Florens is an orphan separated by her mother at an early age and adopted by Jacob Vaark to work for the whites as a slave, she is still mentally strong and outrageous in her approach therefore proving that she was "acting womanish" and like a woman who is "Responsible. In charge. Serious."

The other form of exploitation that Florens faces is the domination exerted by her mother Minhamae as she takes her right as a mother to submit her little girl in the hands of the slave owner Jacob Vaark. And this act comes from the matriarchal space. Morrison has observed that even women who possess natural tendencies to nurture, love and care for each other as human

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beings could go to the extent of giving up their own children especially their daughters in the hands of the slave masters who were more merciful than to the other abusive white masters. This act of abandonment can be considered as the matriarch's power over her family and children. It was totally the woman's responsibility to be in charge of her children. The man did not have any responsibilities and did not bother to take care of his family or his children no matter how small or big his family was. It was in such times that the women took their right to claim their matriarchal space. The act of abandonment by the slave mother minhamae is evident in the following lines, "Senhor is not paying the whole amount he owes to Sir. Sir saying he will take instead the woman and the girl, not the baby boy and the debt is gone. A minhamae begs no. Her baby boy is still at her breast. Take the girl, she says, my daughter, she says. Me. Me. Sir agrees and changes the balance due" (M 8). This particular moment when Florens is given away and separated from her mother causes traumatic effects in Florens's mind that she is unable to forget the act of abandonment by her own mother. It is this loss at the early stage of her childhood that creates passion for blacksmith's affection, whom she considers to be her first lover. Also, it is this domination as exercised by minhamae that triggers Florens to act violently towards Malaik. This passage from the novel *A Mercy* also portrays how the female slaves identify their vulnerability as women when they lose their security, identity and freedom by the male patriarchal slavery and religion. The above quote from the novel, where minhamae offers her daughter to subordination under white patriarchy helps to figure out Lina and Florens's adeptness to grasp the codes of supremacy under which they are forced to live. The word "Me" which is repeated twice in the quote stresses that Florens is skeptic about the fact that her mother herself would disown her. This crucial act remain as the prime reason for who Florens becomes later on in her adult life. There is a rational motive behind the use of present tense in the narrative technique used by Morrison. It is so because all the characters's "pasts remain the present". Even among the many differences in the ethnicity, race and gender, the lives of the slave women and the indentured servants are specially interconnected with each other. And it is because of this interconnection that Lina and Florens are able to sympathize and empathize with each other's identities and drawbacks as slaves. Kimberle Crenshaw's theory of intersectionality can be very much applicable in understanding the lives of Florens, Lina and minhamae.

## Perpetuating Oppression

The different manners through which oppressions are perpetuated, mediated and annihilated in the patriarchal space is by the domination exercised by religion and patriarchy over the multiethnic women slaves in *A Mercy*. The Reverend Father teaches Florens to read and write with the help of the Nicene Creed and many other holy books and in doing so he aids Florens to achieve her individuality and creative freedom. As a matter of fact, the Reverend does not realize that he has taught Florens to suit herself to the situations around her that were crippling her sense of selfhood and independence. This act as committed by Reverend gets him involved with the practice of supremacy over Florens. The protagonist fails to attain comfort and peace in religion because even when the Reverend tries to pacify and encourage Florens with promises that assure her an eternal life, he is not able to keep her safe from D'Ortega's.

## Religious Domination

Undeniably, this act of religious domination can be witnessed all through the novel. The so called religious people and communities demonstrate themselves to be people and places that display racist perceptions, brutality and ones that prolong subjugation. Another reason why religion has so much influence over the multiethnic women slaves is because all the people in religious positions were mostly men, and therefore patriarchy claims its power over the women who are supposed to be subservient to them. The Presbyterians who were with Lina for some time force their doubtful ways of 'civilization' on Lina and she in return gets persuaded by them of the feeling that she is guilty of committing many sins. Another character in the novel, Rebekka, the mistress of Jacob Vaark finds no comfort from the Anabaptists when she loses her children. When mistress is saved by blacksmith from smallpox she gets associated with the Anabaptists. But it's only after Rebekka gets closer to the community of Anabaptists that she stops being compassionate towards the black and native women who serve her through thick and thin.

## Mercy and Oppression

Annihilation of such oppressions could be practiced when people are more merciful towards the least fortunate ones who do not possess any kind of dominion over others. *A Mercy*

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exposes Morrison's motive on how small acts of mercy shown by people with power can provide confidence and comfort to hopeless women who struggle to find atleast one human being who would be kind to them. One such desolate woman in the novel is minhamae. When Jacob Vaark comes to visit the D'Ortega, minhamae analyses Vaark's disdain for the lavish life the D'Otraga's live. And on observing this she comes to terms with the fact that Jacobs Vaark will be the only slave owner who could keep Florens safe from any form of abuse and thereby could help her attain her sense of freedom. Even if her identity as a mother could be diminished due to her act of abandonment minhamae chooses to use the opportunity to save her little girl. And the reason she gives for the hopes she has in Jacob is because as she explains, "I saw the tall man see you as a human child, not pieces of eight" (M 166). And the most intelligent act minhamae commits is that she does not consider God to be the life saver of Florens at that point but that it is another human being just like her who chose to be merciful towards a little black vulnerable girl.

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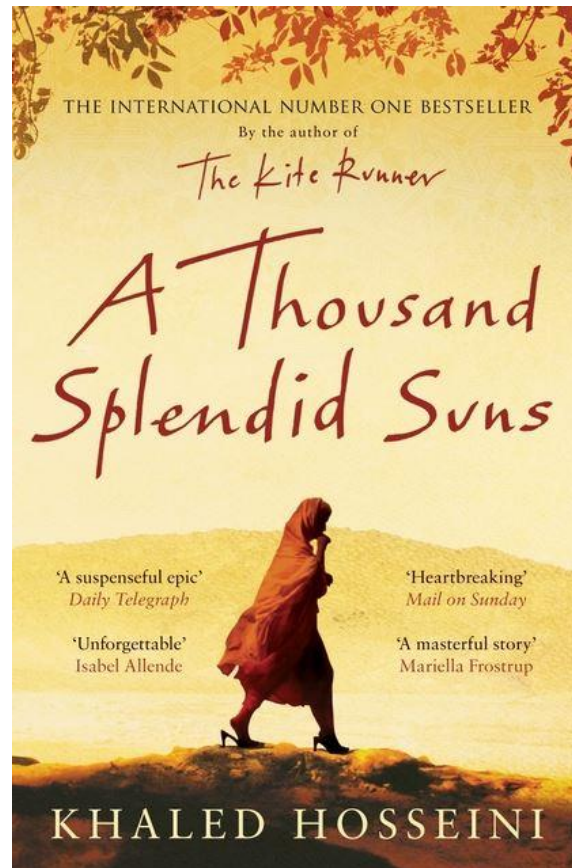
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## Masculinity: A Gamut in *A Thousand Splendid Suns* by Khaled Hosseini

G. Iynisha  
Dr. K. Shanthi

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### Abstract

Khaled Hosseini is a renowned Afghan American writer; his writings have brought the Afghan society to the spot light. One of his important works is *A Thousand Splendid Suns* which deals with the Afghan society from the pre-Soviet era to the present times. Though the novel

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predominantly focuses on the two main female characters, there are quite a number of male characters. This paper intends to analyze the variety of masculinity, and the struggle to maintain the pride akin to the societal expectation, based on the male characters in the novel *A Thousand Splendid Suns*, a war narrative.

**Key words:** Khaled Hosseini, *A Thousand Splendid Suns*, masculinity, across biological difference, Afghan society, war narrative.

### ***Masculinity***

The word *masculinity* refers to the gender of an individual rather than their biological orientation, it refers to the characteristics of an individual, and the individual can be a male or female. The society that Khaled Hosseini portrays in his novel is a patriarchal society. Though there happens to be a general idea that patriarchal society is male dominated, unequal society. The inequality and domination mushrooms in the society mainly because of the misconception of the gender identity by the individual.

### **Khaled Hosseini**



**Khaled Hosseini**

Courtesy: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Khaled\\_Hosseini](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Khaled_Hosseini)

Khaled Hosseini is an Afghan-American writer, his writing has sowed seed for Afghan writing in English. His works has opened a window, presenting to the global view, the Afghan society as such. His works focuses on a span of eras, beginning with the pre-Soviet era and to the hope for a better future. His writings reflect the nostalgia, then the present traumatic war

situations, displacements and a hope for the serenity and a better future (which are empirical in his novels).

Though the author currently lives in America, he visits Afghanistan quite often. He has been named as US Goodwill envoy to the United Nations Refugee Agency, through which he reaches out to uplift the war-stricken Afghan society. The novel *A Thousand Splendid Suns* is an outcome of one such visits, where he had seen women accompanied by their children, on the streets, struggling to survive, as their men had become victims of war either dead or alive. This novel portrays the struggle of two such women named ‘Mariam’ and ‘Laila’.

### **Focus of This Paper**

This paper intends to comprehend the gamut of masculinity in the war stricken Afghan society based on the novel *A Thousand Splendid Suns*, surpassing the biological difference. Though the novel focuses on the female characters the author has also portrayed a spectrum of male characters, who have acquired a varied perception of masculinity. This varied perception unfolds through their ways of living their life, surviving in the war-ravaged Afghan society. Apart from the male characters, the prominent female characters in the novel too display their masculinities which has also been analyzed.

### **Gender Behaviour**

Masculinity according to Ian Buchanan is that, “In particular it has overturned the idea of biological determinism which holds that gender behavior is a function of physiology . . . and shown very clearly that masculinity is culturally defined” (311). Masculinity study is an offset of the feminism and cultural studies. Though in the early stages it included only men and their stress to confront to the social expectation, now, the idea has broadened blurring the boundaries.

There are certain theorists like Judith Halberstam who discuss about the blurring of the boundaries assigned as masculine and feminine, and the diminishing of the binaries as heterogeneity in based on both biological orientation and gender is becoming prominent. She has also written a work entitled *Female Masculinity*. So, the study of Masculinity has now broadened not only including men but also women and other heterogeneous gender. There are several facets



in masculinity and this paper discusses four facets. One is hegemonic masculinity, caring masculinity, masculinity reconstructed, and female masculinity.

“The concept of hegemonic masculinity can be seen as a cultural norm that continuously connects men to power and economic achievements. . . . but also brings disadvantages and costs men” (eige.europa.eu). One of the prominent male character who can be classed under hegemonic masculinity is Rasheed. He has been portrayed as an embodiment of the hegemonic masculinity, who tries to retain his ‘nang’ which means ‘pride’ by trying hard to keep up to the Afghan societal cultural masculine standard (‘real man’ expectancy).

### **Male Heir and Hegemonic Masculinity**

According to Rasheed power was to have a male heir for which he marries thrice and only in the third marriage his expectation is completely fulfilled as Zalmai is born. Next idea is that to him if a wife was unable to satisfy his desire of a male heir he only tormented them. When it comes to Mariam he torments her as she is unable to bear him any child, and when his third wife Laila gives birth to a baby girl he torments her too.

Even when Rasheed loses his possessions to war, he still maintains his pride, though he is in a position, where he is unable to uphold his family financially, he sees to it that his action shouldn’t bring him down. At one point, he decides to send his daughter to an orphanage. Even then he makes his wives do the work, instead of him doing it.

The root of the hegemonic masculinity can be traced in Rasheed’s life in the way he brings up his son. He keeps encouraging his son Zalmai, when he talks back to his mother, thus sowing the seeds of dominance from his childhood. This in a way reveals how Rasheed must have been brought up in his childhood and how his perception of masculinity has been sculpted. As mentioned earlier, hegemonic masculinity only leads to the disadvantages and loss in both Rasheed’s and his son’s life, it leads to the death of Rasheed and for Zalmai, the loss of his identity, his father.

“The concept of caring masculinity is the opposite of hegemonic masculinity. It is based on men taking care-giving roles instead of provider roles” (eige.europa.eu). One of the important minor character who is an embodiment for caring masculinity is Hakim. Hakim is the father of the

protagonist Laila. His character is in total contrast to that of Rasheed that, Rasheed himself classifies Hakim as “soft men” (Hosseini 69).

### **Exceptions to the Rule**

Though the culture thrived with the ideals of patriarchy, yet there were men like Hakim whose perception towards masculinity akin to his culture differed. He respected his wife and daughter very much that he considered their opinion and many a times adhered to it. Even during the crucial times of war, when all the neighbors were vacating the country, he chose to risk his family’s life because his wife didn’t want to leave the place.

When it came to the life of his daughter, he always believed that education could bring a change. Thus, he sent Laila to school even when bombs were being dropped in their places and when the schools were closed he chose to teach his daughter by himself. Though there were several restrictions to move from one place to another during war, still he chooses to take Laila and Tariq to visit the historical monuments, risking life.

### **Hegemonic Masculinity and Caring Masculinity**

Next is the idea of masculinity reconstructed, though it is similar to caring masculinity there is quiet a difference. This is a balance between the hegemonic masculinity and caring masculinity wherein the idea of masculinity is altered in a positive way. Two of the characters that can be classed under this category is Zaman and Tariq.

Zaman is the character who runs a secret school in the Taliban ruled society in which education was not allowed and severe punishments were given to all those who trespassed the rules. Still Zaman had the courage to do the right thing amidst all the oppositions, by perceiving and maintaining the identity of Afghan culture-based masculinity. He also possessed a broader perception that the girl child should as well be educated.

Tariq is Laila’s husband, growing up in the shadow of Hakim, Tariq had also developed a broader perception of society, in a way that, he respects women, especially Laila. Knowing that she is married to Rasheed, he readily accepts her as his wife and as Rasheed dies, he makes it a point to be there for the children too. Even towards the end, once the war is over, he makes it a

point to take his family back to their native and altogether they involve in the uplifting of their society.

### **Widening and Blurring Boundaries**

This reconstruction of masculinity gives way to either widening of the boundaries or the blurring as there arises heterogeneity in gender and one such offshoot is female masculinity. In this novel female masculinity is revealed in two main characters one is Nana and the other is Mariam.

Being doubly dominated by both Jalil and his wives, Nana strives to survive singly, not wanting either to be dependent or a burden to anyone, so she chooses to survive away from the society. Lifestyle of Nana reflects the female masculinity, as she lives all by herself on the hilltop until Mariam is born and she also gives birth to Mariam all alone without the assistance. Apart from this Nana's way of abusing Jalil's sons and her encouragement of Mariam when she imitates her, mirrors the way Rasheed grows his son Zalmai.

### **Female Masculinity**

Mariam is an epitome of female masculinity this can be distinctly traced from the time Aziza is born and Laila becomes her companion. The companionship of Mariam and Laila strengthens their survival in the patriarchal war ravaged society. Though they are not allowed to go outside their house without being accompanied by a male companion, they daringly attempt to escape the clutches of Rasheed though in the end it becomes futile. They also stride to meet Aziza at the orphanage, amidst the consequence that they will be whipped on the street if they were unaccompanied by male (and Rasheed fails to accompany them almost all the time).

Apart from this Mariam's decision to save Laila sacrificing herself reveals the female masculinity. When Mariam hits Rasheed with a shovel in order to save Laila, she makes it a point to face him directly and hit him. This and also her popularity in jail and her final submission to be beheaded exposes the female masculinity in Mariam.

### **To Conclude**

Therefore, masculinity is not a single identity but varies based on culture, era, and perceptions. So, it is never singular but always a plural identity, a gamut. The idea of masculinity has developed from hegemonic and caring to the reconstruction and later to the blurring of the binaries and the boundaries. Hosseini novel reveals a spectrum of masculinity based on the Afghan culture and society.

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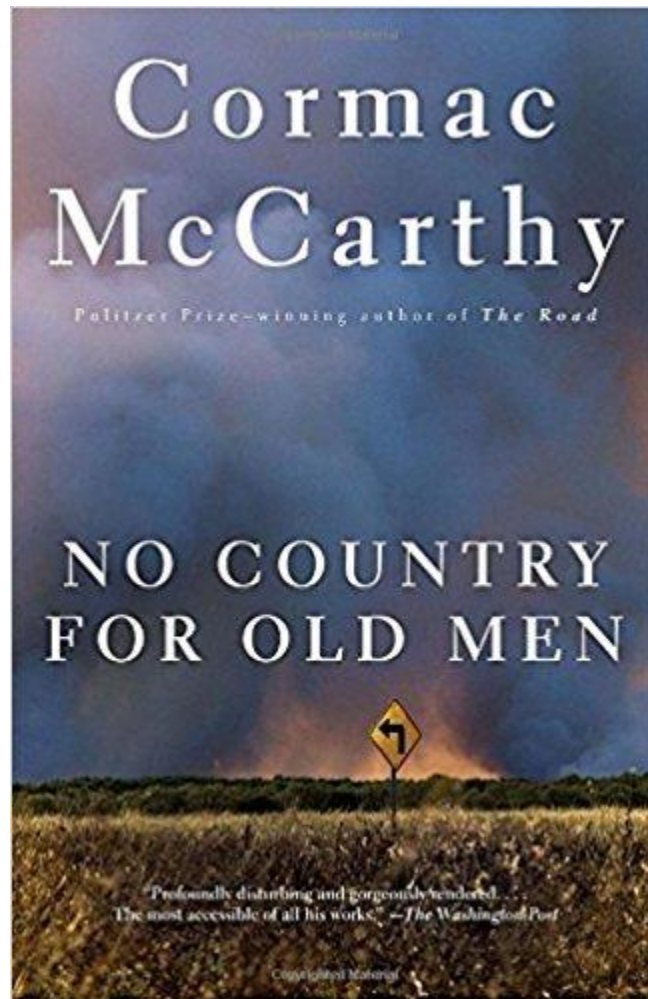
G. Iynisha and Dr. K. Shanthi

Masculinity: A Gamut in *A Thousand Splendid Suns* by Khaled Hosseini

**Deontology and Consequentialism in Cormac McCarthy's  
*No Country for Old Men***

**A. Joshua Sundar Raja, Ph.D. Research Scholar  
Dr. K. Kaviarasu**

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**Social Issues and Literature**

Literature is one of the oldest art forms in writing which is considered to have artistic or intellectual value. The exact definition of literature varies from one reader or critic to the another but most of them agree that it is any kind of writing with some degree of merit and language that serves as a gateway to the literary world. Literature can never be looked at

excluding Sociology, Psychology and Philosophy. There are so many modern Philosophies which emerged in Literature such as Deontology.

### **Deontology and Consequentialism**

Deontology is the normative ethical position that judges the morality of an action based on set of rules or doctrines. This ethical philosophy very similar to Consequentialism. Consequentialism is the class of normative ethical theories holding that the consequences of one's conduct are the ultimate basis for any judgment about the rightness or wrongness of that conduct. This paper tries to imply the concept of Deontology and Consequentialism in Cormac McCarthy's *No Country for Old Men*.

Llewellyn is a character in this novel who stolen the money. As per the theory of Consequentialism he faced his own death. According to Deontology, he did something which was against the rules. Being a Vietnam War Vet, he should be very helpful to others as well as to his families. Instead he became a burden to his family because of his materialistic attitude. This is how this paper explains how Deontology and Consequentialism plays a vital and simultaneous role in this novel.

### **Cormac McCarthy**

Cormac McCarthy is an American novelist, playwright, and screenwriter who has written ten novels, spanning the Southern Gothic, Western, and post-apocalyptic genres. McCarthy's fifth novel, *Blood Meridian* was on *Time* magazine's 2005 list of the 100 best English-language books published since 1923. For *All the Pretty Horses*, he won both the U.S. National Book Award and National Book Critics Circle Award. His 2005 novel *No Country for Old Men* was adapted as a 2007 film of the same name, which won four Academy Awards, including Best Picture. *All the Pretty Horses*, *The Road*, and *Child of God* have also been adapted as motion pictures.

### **Llewellyn Mossis**

Llewellyn Mossis the protagonist of *No Country for Old Men* a young guy went for hunting one day and found a drug deal went wrong in the middle of the desert. In the midst of dead bodies, he found a briefcase with two million dollars. Llewellyn found one wounded drug runner still alive. The man asks for water, but he had no water to give. Llewellyn took

the money home to his wife, Carla Jean, but he returns to the scene of the crime later that night with a jug of water.

“She followed him down the hallway to the kitchen pulling on her robe. He took an empty gallo n jug from under the sink and stood filling it at the tap” (McCarthy 22).

His compassion turns out to be a mistake. Drug runners killed thirsty man and roaming in the area.

“When he got back to the truck he left the trace and steered by the moon. He crossed under a volcanic headland at the upper end of the valley and turned south again” (McCarthy 23).

They shoot at Llewelyn. “The shotgun was gone” (McCarthy 24). He abandoned his truck and ran away. They easily identified him from his vehicle, so he told his wife to stay with her mother.

Here's what's goin on, Carla Jean. You need to get your stuff packed and be ready to roll out of here come daylight. Whatever you leave you aint goin to see it again so if you want it don't leave it. There's a bus leave south of here at seven fifteen in the mornin. I want you to go to Odessa and wait there till I can call you (McCarthy 38).

### **Criminal Anton Chigurh**

Meanwhile, a criminal named Anton Chigurh was arrested. He killed the deputy officer and escaped. Chigurh worked for one set of drug runners. He determined to finish off Llewelyn and get back the money at any cost. Chigurh tracked the Llewelyn's stayed motels and a few shootouts occurred. At a certain point, both were wounded. Llewelyn limped across the border to a hospital in Mexico and hid the money in a riverbank along the way. Chigurh treated himself in the motel.

In Mexico Llewelyn was visited by a Wells who had been hired to retrieve the money. He was not a maniac like Chigurh. He was ready to leave Llewelyn to live. Llewelyn retrieved the money and called Wells but unfortunately Chigurh answered the phone call.

He hung up the phone and dialed the mobile number that Wells had given him. It answered on the second ring but it wasn't Wells. I think I got the wrong number, he said.

You don't have the wrong number. You need to come see me.

Who is this?

You know who it is (McCarthy 148).

### **Carla Jean**

Chigurh threatens Llewelyn that he would kill Carla Jean if he refused to give money. Llewelyn gets out from Hospital. When he stopped at a motel, he was killed in a shootout. It was not by Chigurh. It was done by unnamed drug runners. After the slaughter Chigurh found the money in the air duct in Llewelyn's room. Chigurh killed Carla Jean also. After murdering Carla Jean, he met with a car accident.

Old Sheriff Bell never once interacted with Llewelyn or Chigurh but he feels guilty because he can't stop all the horrible evil that happened around him. Sadly, he was pretty useless. The book ends with the laments of Bell.

Being a Vietnam War Veteran, the thing which he did is wrong. When he found the Drug money he has to hand the money to the Sheriff.

### **Judging the Morality of an Action**

Deontology is the normative ethical position that judges the morality of an action based on set of rules or doctrines. According to Deontology it was wrong. But the thing is he met the consequence in the end of the novel, he was killed. This what the Consequentialism says, one's conduct are the ultimate basis for any judgment about the rightness or wrongness of that conduct.

Like deontological theories, consequentialist theories are criteria of rightness. They are not decision procedures. They do not tell us always to strive to make outcomes as good as possible. Indeed, many consequentialists believe that there are good reasons why we should not strive to make outcomes as good as possible (Lippert-Rasmussen 18).

Old Sheriff Bell strives to prevent the murder, but he couldn't. This is not his mistake instead this was consequence of Llewelyn. Llewelyn strives to make the outcome good as much as possible but there is no good reason and good way. Deontology and



Consequentialism are criteria of rightness. “One form of deontological ethics involves the so-called Doctrine of Double Effect . . . the DDE is the thesis that there is normally a stronger reason against an act if that act has a bad state of affairs” (Hooker 35). The bad state affair in Llewelyn life is extreme materialistic attitude which makes him to take the illegal money and faced his own consequence.

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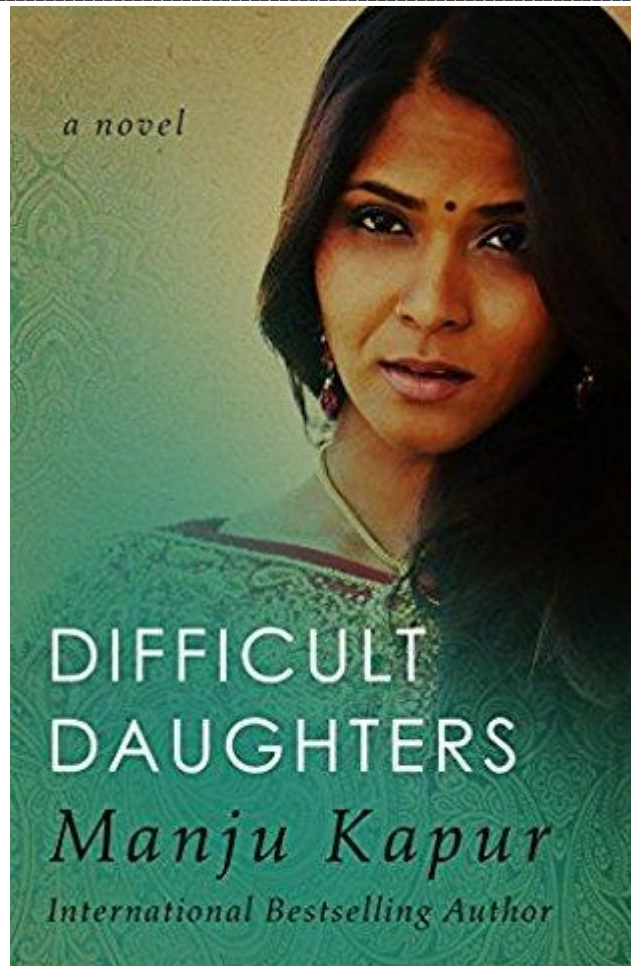
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Women Beyond Traditions: Manju Kapur's *Difficult Daughters*

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**Abstract**

Women all over have suffered the brunt of patriarchal control. Right from birth, a woman is thrust with social images, rewards and punishments that are carefully designed to ensure that she does not develop any quality associated with the other half of humanity. Although *Difficult Daughters* is not overtly a feminist text but nevertheless brings forth the issue of gender

discrimination and the struggle of the suffering Indian women under the oppressive mechanism of a closed society. They struggle to maintain their dignity and ultimately retrieve the autonomy of their selfhood. The narrative fabric of *Difficult Daughters* set around the time of partition is the story of a woman whose battle for independence engulfs her, leaving a contour of partition and pain on her outwardly calm face. Manju Kapur's *Difficult Daughters* makes an absorbing reading and pushes the reader to break through the silence of suffering Virmati, who is seen struggling with her desires for education and illicit love in the face of hardship that threaten to destroy her inner self. The aim of this paper is to make a study of the novel where a woman bound in tradition seeks to satiate her unsuppressed desires and is ultimately devoured by pain and isolation.

**Keywords:** Manju Kapur, *Difficult Daughters*, Patriarchal, Gender Discrimination, Independence, Education,

### **Characters in *Difficult Daughters***

The search for control over one's destiny, surely the key theme of *Difficult Daughters*, refers to the Independence aspired to and obtained by a nation (despite its cruel division by a fateful Partition), but also to the independence yearned after (and finally not obtained) by a woman and member of that same nation (or of one of its rival communities).

### **Virmati**

Virmati, the heroine, seeks human condemned to failure, thanks to the incomprehension she receives from both her own family and that of the man she marries - but also thanks to her own mistakes, for no-one obliged her to marry who became her husband, and she was free not to make the choice she did.

### **Ida**

Ida, the narrator seems distanced from her mother Virmati in time and space and yet Virmati remains a vibrating presence all through Ida's life. Although not physically present, Virmati hovers close to Ida's surface of consciousness and is often a cause of inner turbulence. The void in Ida's life at her mother's funeral becomes more pronounced and unbearable. Apparently

Virmati's presence has failed to provide Ida with a sense of fulfillment and security during her life and thus Ida made every effort to stay clear of the image that she had of her mother. Nevertheless, the unconscious affiliation with the absent mother propels her to excavate the other unknown view of her mother and she sets out on her journey. Her restlessness had led her to a relentless quest which is initially a mental search: "To be totally innocent... would be to be utterly unknown, particularly to one's self." The concept of a 'good' and 'bad' mother is a worldwide phenomenon and acquires an added significance in the Indian strengthens her.

In Ida's case, she reminisces that she "could not remember a time, it had been right between us" (Pg. No.2) which naturally left her rebelling and struggling along with an in-built infirmity just as a cripple without crutches. Ida may not have been consciously aware of this deficiency for the simple reason that the image she carried of Virmati was of a woman who was "silent, brisk and bad-tempered." (2)

Ida, determined to unveil her mother's past, experiences the "excitement of discovery" (258) which finally culminates in establishing a strong bond between the narrator and the mother with "each word a brick in a mansion" (259). Having accomplished this task, she seeks to be liberated and pleads earnestly to her dead mother. "Do not haunt me anymore". (259) The anxiety thereby bringing an end to the traumatic transition period. The "escape routes" (258) she had been looking for all her life came in the form of the book. The melancholy and despair caused by the knowledge "I was nothing, parents must have looked at each other significantly, doomed love in their eyes." (49) Ida recalls her father mentioning her mother's fiancé but never his wife: "Virmati plus fiancé, the Professor plus wife. An invisible quadrangle in a classroom." (49)

### **Cultural Conditioning**

The cultural conditioning had initially prohibited Virmati from getting involved with the Professor. She was already engaged. At the same time her in-built response to a person's need from a very tender age broke down her reserves when the professor cried out his need for her: "Eldest and a girl, she was finally tuned to neediness, it called her blood and bones."(50) confusion bred, "her soul revolved and her suffering increased."(50) The professor continued to

pressurize her to do away with her finance and Virmati torn between duty and love along with a strong desire for education continued to be agonized. The dryness of the canal engineer's letter, in comparison to the warmth of the professor's letter gave her strength to seek permission to study further for she claimed that she was not really ready for "initiation into womanhood, intimacy, procreation"(60) and her mother wondered as to how her sensible dutiful daughter had "changed so much in just a generation."(55) The incessant talk of her marriage in the house and the knowing full well that "she could not depend upon the professor to sort out any domestic situation"(63) she decided to go to Tarsikka, to her Bade baoji, Lala Diwan Chand and drown herself in the canal. "The brave thoughts of renunciation" (79) over, she mutely faced her mother's anger "but her silence though was locked in the godown and her younger sister married to Inderjit. Ultimately one does bow down towards one's fate or karma and so did Virmati in her newly acquired situation. May be what is happening to me now is part of it, and there is no use protesting."(85) Paro, her five year old sister, is the sustaining force for Virmati in the family. Although the "enforced stillness" (84) helps her to build her self-control yet she burns with anger and humiliation for the little relevance given to her life.

To elevate the society "above the practical and the convenient" (86) was impossible for the realization has yet to dawn that "what is society made up of, but individuals." (90) Education for Kasturi (Virmati's mother) was just a means of denying that incipient little thing in "my belly, he sowed the seeds of our breakup." (144) Virmati was able to revive the courage that she possessed in doing away her unwanted pregnancy by herself in absence of Harish.

### **Swarna Lata**

Swarna Lata was the sturdy pillar in that hour of need. She achieved independence by paying a heavy price along with the realization that now she could endure any pain for none could be greater than the one her body underwent "through knives and abortion." (161) The body was scarred by the Professor to deprive her of "another choice" (163) ever in her life.

Her B.T. had made her "anxious to broaden her horizons" (167) and she took up Principalship at Nahan. But the Professor was not to allow her peace. His visit there cost her job. She

decides to go Shantiniketan. Every mile strengthened her. She perceived that “there was a life of dedication and service ahead of her, and in that she would forge her identity.”(182) Fate had it otherwise. Now it was Harish to face the dilemma and agony of being torn between his family duty and illicit craving for Virmati. No escape, so he married her, breaking the last thin tie with her own family: “this separation is ordained from birth.” (187) In face of all hostility at her in-laws, she moved with a determination on the path her destiny had carved out for her.”(196) She wonders whether “this isolation would continue till the end of her life.”(199) Virmati, in trying to establish “the domain if her kingdom” (213) beside her husband, felt strangely “isolated from women” (211) since her marriage, she had learned to look at space in a new way to define it and mark it, to think of what was hers and what wasn’t in ways that would have been unthinkable in the fluid areas of her maternal home. She felt contrite. (210)

She found ways to “be content”(213) in various new adapted ways alien to her earlier for she was not willing “to feel hurt”(215) and forged an oblivious state of mind to inquiries that she was not equipped to face: “Identities, loyalties, futures and nations were becoming a matter of choice rather than tradition.”(217) The innate passivity that she developed after marriage drove her once again to Lahore to do M.A. In Philosophy. Probably once again education was a means to revitalize her: “May be this relations that will allow her to be herself and to exercise the degree of control over her life which, as an educated woman, she knows she deserves. Born in Amritsar in the Punjab in 1940, the daughter of a father of progressive ideas and a traditionalist mother (Kasturi, obliged to give birth to no less than 11 children), she aspires to a freer life than that offered her by those around her. This aspiration is husbandless, childless. I felt myself hovering like a pencil notation on the margins of society” (258) appear to be dispelled having sunk into her mother’s past without Virmati’s hindering presence. Ida, groping for the ‘self’ lost in an attempt to be a model daughter under pressure from her parents, tried to “bridge the contradictions in her life by marrying a man who was also an academic” (258) to end up in a “disastrous marriage”.

Ida, determined to unravel the truth about her mother, goes to Amritsar, a place associated with her mother and feels quite lost without her. Virmati, the eldest of eleven children, didn’t work. Despite the encumbrance of the household activities and her brothers and sisters, she found time to

study. The first in family to be a F.A., B.A., B.T. and finally M.A. In the process of endowing responsibilities, she acquired the feeling that she was “indispensable.” (6)

Virmati watches her weak, ailing mother harassed by childbirth and yet tolerant. The unmarried Shakuntala, her first cousin, appear to be Virmati’s ideal and Virmati soon realized that answers to her unhappiness lay outside the house: “To education, freedom and the bright lights of Lahore Colleges.” (15)

### **Family Disputes**

The family disputes led to arrangement of separate establishments by Lala Diwan Chand and “what he thought was a final solution, however, turned out to be the beginning of a long chain of partitions.” (25) Professor Harish Chandra at Arya Sabha College came to be her aunt’s tenant and later seized the young heart of Virmati despite his married status. As fate would have it, Virmati’s marriage had to be postponed due to the death of the canal engineer’s father and thus Virmati entered the college, the seventh girl among four hundred boys. Her open myopic stare at the Professor was misinterpreted but the “dead was done” (43) prior to the realization.

The rawness and restlessness in Ida persists and she further digs and goes to the fateful college where her father was the principal. While walking, she “felt the past hovering, cliché- like, over that run down building, beckoning me into its orbit.”(46) She went to the particular classroom where he taught and the realization dawned that her “history had started here, in this classroom. Here it was that my destruction” (91) of the family. The indecisive state of living finds an alternative in continuing her studies in Lahore to do B.T. after learning that the Professor’s wife is pregnant. His justifications appear futile and weak “and in this moment of weakness it seemed I could not in all conscience ignore the claims of those around me.” (97) The “autonomy and freedom” (125) the place provided helped her to overcome the pain and the illusion of love. The sisterly bond established between the unmarried cousin Shakuntala and Virmati, placed in a more or less same situation afforded solace despite the concept of the traditional family: “A woman without her own home and family is a woman without moorings.” (102)

## **Virmati's Recovery**

The Professor's persistence and his friend Syed Hussain's help and encouragement finally enabled the professor to get Virmati around. He dinned it into her: "Co-wives are part of our social traditions.... I don't live with her in any meaningful way." (112) Virmati too justified herself in the illicit relationship by consoling herself that there was "no point in foolishing denying it on basis of an outmoded morality." (114) Nonetheless the trouble had been created by "letting others do your thinking." (121) Her individual-self told her that she ought to be doing something like Swarna Lata, her room-mate whom she admired so much rather than being involved in a "useless love and a doubtful marriage." (122) It was a self-revelation that she could not express but cherish nonetheless. Pining for a life beyond, she acknowledges her limitation that "these larger spaces were not for her." (133) Torn between her passion and what she would really want to do; the guilt of all those wrongs come to her mind with the blunt observation that the ecstatic begging of illicit relationship had no future plan of marriage. Despair was all that was hers and the thought that it would be far better to be like Swarna "involved in other people, and waiting for no man." (138)

She decided that finally her studies would be "her passport to independence" (140) but fate had it otherwise; she was pregnant. In unraveling Virmati's with my \*Ida's+ knowledge." (144) Ida identifies this situation to a similar disaster of her licensed married life. This symbolic identification is fortifying. It was also probably one of the reasons that had been the root cause of the termination of Ida's marriage: "was really what she had fought for all along, space to be." (253)

## **Virmati's Sojourn in Three Stages**

Virmati's sojourn is in three stages; the first when she deserts her family, religious and political authorities who appear as captors. The freedom and unlimited possibilities drive her to the powerful figure of her seducer. She thus awakens in a world of experience to achieve wholeness and autonomy. The realization dawns there after that the seducer too is a captor. She then makes the final journey back home to be united with the family and discovers that it's the mother with whom she wishes to be rejoined. This rescue figure helps her to free herself, from the myth of female inferiority and in identifying a valuable female tradition. The rejection too enables her to



discover the strength within herself got from self-determination. She thus appears to be in tune with herself, her desires and careful not to succumb that valuable self to any external pressure.

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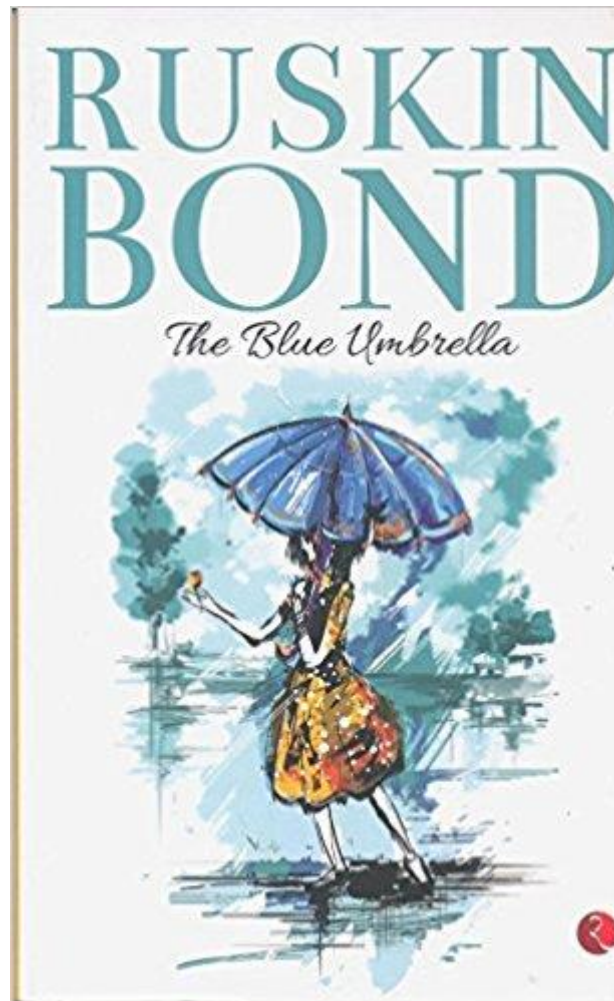
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A Study on the Flora of Garhwal in Ruskin Bond's  
*The Blue Umbrella*

Dr. K. Kaviarasu

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### Ruskin Bond's Works

Ruskin Bond's works have inspired several writers over the decades. His novel *The Flight of Pigeons* has been adapted into the acclaimed Merchant Ivory film *Juno*. The *Room on the Roof* has entered has been taken for T.V. series in BBC. His short stories have been incorporated in the school curriculum all over India. *The Night Train at Deoli*, *Time*

*Stops at Shamli, Our Trees Still Grow in Dehra* are published for school children. *The Blue Umbrella*, published in 1972, became more popular and was made into a film.

### ***The Blue Umbrella***

Bond narrates the pine forest of the Himalayan region throughout this story. These pine forests are the largest in the Indo-Pacific areas. It covers areas of India and also other countries like Bhutan, Nepal and Pakistan. In India, the Himalayan subtropical pine forests stretch across the low hills of the Great Himalayan range. He shows the intimacy of Binya and cows with the pine trees. The Himalayan pine forests are not ideal abodes for species. However, as per the record of some of the experts, these Himalayan forests provide habitation to multitudes of endemic bird species that came to this region from the nearby eco regions.

Several mammals are found in the forests. Nearly one hundred and twenty species are found here. Due to deficiency in under woods and crops, the herbivores do not find the eco region of Himalayan subtropical forests suitable for living. The Himalayan pine forests have faced several threats from the modern society. Overgrazing, cultivation, exploitation for fuel woods have brought degradation of this eco region.

### **Oak Trees**

Ruskin Bond refers the Oak trees often in this story. Oak trees are seen the temperature areas of the Himalayas. The main use of the timber is as fuel and the leaves are a good fodder and hence they are ruthlessly lopped for this purpose. Oak trees are prone to fungal diseases that may induce rotting of the inner part of plant. Besides fungi insects often attack oaks and induce removal of the leaves. 78 species of oaks are listed as endangered because of the habitat destruction, over exploitation, diseases and introduction of invasive species.

Oaks have spirally arranged leaves, with margins in many species. Some have serrated leaves or entire leaves with smooth margins. In hill stations of India, besides fuel wood and timber, the local people use oak wood for making agricultural implements. The leaves are used as fodder during lean period. Oak bark is also rich in tannin, and is used by tanners for tanning leather.

Many species of oaks are under threat of extinction in the world, largely due to land use, changes in the housing, livestock grazing and unsustainable harvesting. There is a continuing threat to these forests from exploitation for timber, fuel wood and charcoal. In the Himalayan region of India, oak forests are being invaded by pine forests due to the increase in temperature.

### **To Reverse Negative Course**

Civilization has made man change his ways and it takes negative course. Man will learn to attune himself to Nature. He will be lifted and he will gradually come to see how community throughout the great ocean of life outweighs apparent dissimilarity. In the midst of discord he will realize the great harmony. The outlook is endless, for the goal is at infinity. The realization can come not in the life time of any one man, but through the efforts of successive generations.

According to Sir Jagadish Chandra Bose, excessive specialization in the West has led to the danger of losing of the fundamental fact that there can be but one truth, one science which includes all the branches of knowledge. India through her habit of mind is peculiarly fitted to realize the idea of unity, and to see in the phenomenal world an orderly universe.

### **Remarkable Similarity Between the Life of Plants and Animals**

After hundred and fifty different lines of investigation Jagadish Chandra Bose discovered a remarkable similarity between the life of plants and animals. The secret of plant life was thus for the first time revealed by the autographs of the plant itself. This evidence of the plant's own script removed the long-standing error which divided the vegetable world into sensitive and insensitive. The remarkable performance of the Praying Palm Tree of Faridpore, which bows, as if to prostrate itself, every evening, is only one of the latest instances which show that the supposed insensibility of plants and still more of rigid trees is to be ascribed to wrong theory and defective observation.

Jagadish Chandra Bose, a keen observer of plants, in his essay, *The Voice of Life*, elucidates that the plants adopt themselves to the changes of environment and grow depend upon the variations of the soil. Bose has carried out many investigations and says,

My investigations show that all plants, even the trees, are fully alive to changes of environment; they respond visibly to all stimuli, Even to the slight

fluctuations of light caused by a drifting cloud . . . . The growth of plants and its variations under different treatments, is instantly recorded. Authorities expect this method of investigation will advance practical agriculture.

(Chandra Bose)

### ***My Father's Trees in Dehra***

Bond describes many trees in his short story “My Father’s Trees in Dehra”. He says, I have to walk only a furlong to reach my grandfather’s house. The road is lined with eucalyptus, jacaranda and laburnum trees. In the compounds there are small groves of mangoes and papayas. The poinsettia thrusts its scarlet leaves over garden walls. Potted palms are popular with Indian housewives. On the other side of the road there is an orchard of lichi trees. This is not the season for fruit, and there is no one looking after the garden. (36-45)

The very sensitive and eco-friendly short story, “My Father’s Trees in Dehra”, recounts the author’s visit to Dehra after many years. The climate of Dehra was moist and the landscape was green with a wide variety of trees. His father loved trees and planted many, and was happy among them. Bond recalls a childhood incident when a tendril from a creeping vine moved away from him and after about twenty minutes touched his father’s feet, as they sat together on the veranda steps.

His father not only planted trees in his own garden, but also in the woods around Dehra. He remembers going “armed with cuttings and saplings”, into the jungle, “planting flowering shrubs between the sal and sheesham trees.” His father has said if people keep cutting trees, instead of planting them, there’ll soon be no forests left at all, and the world will be just one vast desert.

The young Bond spends an entire day, planting trees on a small rocky island, and his father tells him that the trees used to move and they will move again. His father passes away, and it is after many years that Bond revisits the land of his childhood. Going across the dry river bed, he tries to locate the island, and his eye is caught “by the spectacular red plumes of the coral blossom”, and he sees that koels and parrots live there, and a number of other shrubs, grasses and plants have grown up under the trees he and his father had planted. The

author feels that the trees “know” him, and they “whisper”, and “beckon” him near to them. He says, “They have multiplied. They are moving. In this small forgotten corner of the world, my father’s dreams are coming true, and the trees are moving again” (36-45).

### **Ultimate Environmentalist**

Bond is the ultimate environmentalist, growing up so in Dehra, with a father and grandfather who are close to nature and want to protect both plant and animal life. Planting trees are necessary, and it is the moral duty of man to nurture this love of trees and impart it to their children. This is going beyond one’s own garden, and beautifying the world at large, and creating shelter for birds, butterflies and animals, is the largesse that Bond gives out to the world.

### **Garhwal and Garhwalis**

Ruskin Bond portrays Garhwal in the entire story very beautifully. Garhwalis the land of many forests. This region was made up of many small forts which were ruled by chieftains. The region consists almost entirely of rugged mountain ranges running in all directions and separated by narrow valleys, which in some cases become deep gorges or ravines. The only level portion of the district was a narrow strip of waterless forest between the southern slopes of the hills and the fertile plains of Rohilkhand.

He refers to a peepul tree that grows beside a temple. It is the only tree in the street. It juts out from the temple wall growing straight and tall, dwarfing the two-storey houses. One of its roots, breaking through the ground, has curled up to provide a smooth, well-worn seat. He enjoys the cool breeze beneath the peepul. Even when there is no breeze, the slender heart-shaped leaves revolve prettily, creating their own currents of air. No wonder the sages of old found it a good tree to be beneath. No wonder they called it sacred.

### **Cherry Trees**

Ruskin Bond in his narration in *The Blue Umbrella* refers the cherry tree in a few instances. He describes a cherry tree that grows crookedly out of the rocks and hangs across the chasm. Binya climbs the tree as agile as mountain goat. Cherries are delicious and colourful. They are packed with antioxidants and offer many health benefits including help with insomnia, joint pain and belly fat. Cherries are good source of melatonin, which help us

regulate our sleep cycles. Researchers found that rats who were fed whole tart cherry powder, in a high fat diet, did not gain as much weight or body fat as rats who did not eat tart cherry powder.

The Alzheimer’s Association includes cherries as one of the memory boosting foods because they are rich in antioxidants. Tart cherries provide cardiovascular benefits. The anthocyanins, which are pigments giving tart cherries its red colour, may activate PPAR which regulates genes involved in fat and glucose metabolism. This reduces the risk of high cholesterol, blood pressure and diabetes, according research from the University of Michigan Health System. Cherries have the highest antioxidant level of any fruit. Antioxidants help the body fight the free radicals that make us look old. Drinking one glass of tart cherry juice daily slows down the aging process, according to the scientists from the Michigan State University.

Eating cherries lowers the risk of gout attacks by 35 percent. It is found in a study with 633 gout patients, done by Yuqing Zhang, professor of medicine and public health at Boston University. Cherries are very high in potassium which helps regulate heart and blood pressure and reduces the risk of hypertension. Cherries help reduce bad cholesterol levels. The pain and discomfort of swollen joints were reduced when tart cherry juice was consumed twice a day for three weeks in a study of twenty women ages 40 to 70 with inflammatory osteoarthritis.

Knowing all these medicinal benefits of cherries, Bond frequently refers the cherry in his literary works. In his “Love Lyrics for Binya Devi” describes,

I know you’ll come  
When the cherries are ripe;  
But it is still November  
And I must wait  
.....  
You’ll come to stain your lips  
With cherry juice, and climb my tree;  
Bright goddess in dark green temple,  
Thrusting your tongue at me. (254)

## **Bilberries**

Ruskin Bond narrates bilberries that are seen in the Himalayas. The fruits of bilberries are juicy and sour. It has a long medicinal history in Europe. It has been used to treat anything from kidney stones to Typhoid fever. During World War 2 British pilots noted that Bilberry jam before a flight dramatically improved night vision. Modern research now supports these claims.

Bilberry contains which are potent antioxidants that strengthen blood vessels and capillary walls, improve red blood cells, stabilize collagen tissues such as ligaments and cartilage and has cholesterol lowering effects. In the past, dried bilberries have been used to treat diarrhea because it acts as an astringent to gastro intestinal tract. Tea brewed from dried bilberry fruits has also been used to soothe a sore throat or sore mouth tissue.

In folk medicine, bilberry leaf has been used to treat a number of conditions including diabetes. Limited evidence from a few animal studies shows that it may have a decreasing effect on blood sugar. Recent research showed that bilberry extract has promising anti activity, both preventive and curative. It also has shown anti-cancer properties in animal experiments. When administered to diabetes patients, bilberry, normalized capillary collagen thickness and blood sugar levels in humans and animals. It is clear that Ruskin Bond likes to develop awareness of the importance of the plants and herbs among the young readers.

## **Need to Save the Plants**

Bond reiterates the need to save the plants which are the potential for man's health. These plants are the source of vitamins, proteins and give energy to lead a healthy life. He inspires the children to plant these living treasures in their surroundings. He pleads the children to save the planet by planting more plants. The readers are tempted to preserve the cherries and bilberries for the future generation.

## **Children and Flowers**

Ruskin Bond rejoices the children with the depiction of flowers such as giant lilies. The giant Himalayan lily is truly a king amongst flowering bulbs. In fact, it is the largest in height. It was first discovered by western explorer in Nepal and introduced into commercial production in Britain in the 1850s. In their natural habitat these magnificent plants can grow



up to an incredible four meters tall and carry as many as 20 large, white, sweetly fragrant flowers. These flowers are produced on a single stem that emerges from each bulb. Sadly, the bulb dies after flowering but it would have produced a number of new offsets which carry on the genetic line.

The giant water lily adapts to the environment by growing thorns on the bottom of the leaves to protect itself from fishes and other predators that might want to eat it. Another adaptation is the rim around the edges of the leaves. These rims help protect the leaf from birds and insects that might want to eat to leaves. The third adaptation of this giant water lily is that the flower only lives for three days, it traps the beetles that come to pollinate the flower inside its core and then releases all its pollen on these beetles. This enlarges the percentage of pollen that gets transported to other flowers for pollination.

There are two sides to the giant water lily's effect on the ecosystem. The negative part being that no other plant species can live under the giant water lily due to its size. The water lily's leaves are massive in size and they cover most of the surface of the water. This means that no sunlight can reach the rest of the water. Therefore, no algae can grow, and with no food source, animals that feed on algae cannot exist. On the other hand, these lilies are very helpful to some species, for example, the Lily Trotler. The Lily Trotlers walk on the leaves and obtain their food source from the water lily. It is not mentioned anywhere that the giant water lily is an endangered species. Therefore, it is most likely that it is a common species. These giant water lilies were also brought from their natural habitats to laboratories where researchers are trying to discover more about this particular species and are trying to hybridize these lilies to make different cultivars of the flower.

Ruskin Bond narrates the giant lilies with the beautiful background and he compares them with the leopards. As an admirer of lilies, he says, "The rains set in, and the sun only made brief appearances. The hills turned a lush green. Ferns sprang up on walls and tree trunks. Giant lilies reared up like leopards from the tall grass. A white mist coiled and uncoiled as it floated up from the valley. It was a beautiful season except for the leeches" (TBU 33).

## Description of Seasons

Bond refers the winter season as cruel at the beginning, but later he calls it as a kind month. He adds life to the season as the season gives life to the living beings on the earth. Seasons change and make changes in the world, brown into green and green into brown, dry land into wet land and wet land into dry land. He quotes on winter, “The cold, cruel winter wasn’t far off, but somehow October seems longer than other months, because it is kind month; the grass is warm and gentle and pine-scented” (TBU 46)

Ruskin Bond’s love for nature is so overflowing that he considers himself as a devotee of trees, leaves, fruits and flowers. He believes that these natural gifts are directly linked with the God who creates everything in the earth. One has to read “In the Garden of My Dreams” to realize Bond’s reverence for and his relationship with nature. He describes,

A sun-lover, I like plenty of yellow on the hillsides and in gardens-sunflowers, Californian poppies, winter jasmine, St. John’s Wort, buttercups, wild strawberries, mustard in bloom. . . But if you live in a hot place, You might prefer cooling blues and soft purples-forget-me-nots, bluebells, cornflowers, lavender. (188-190)

### **Nature as a Friend**

It is worthwhile to refer Rabindranath Tagore, a great lover of nature. According to Tagore, Nature is friend, Philosopher and guide. He prefers the company of Nature to share his thoughts and emotion. The festival of plantation is a regular feature in Santiniketan. In *Gitanjali* he writes,

The same stream of life  
That runs through my veins night and day  
Runs through the world and dances in rhythmic measures.  
It is the same life that shoots in joy  
Through the dust of the earth in numberless blades of grass  
And breaks into tumultuous waves of leaves and flowers.  
It is the same life that is rocked in the  
Ocean-cradle of birth and of death, in ebb and in flow.  
I feel my limbs are made glorious by  
The touch of this world of life.  
And my pride is from the life-throb of ages

Dancing in my blood this moment. (Tagore)

Ruskin Bond joins with Tagore as he portrays and praises nature as worthy as the later. Tagore has never compromised in depicting nature in his writings. He transforms the aesthetic value to the readers from his mind through his songs. The above song depicts how he is interrelated with nature in mind and body. In the same way, Bond portrays the natural elements in all his writings.

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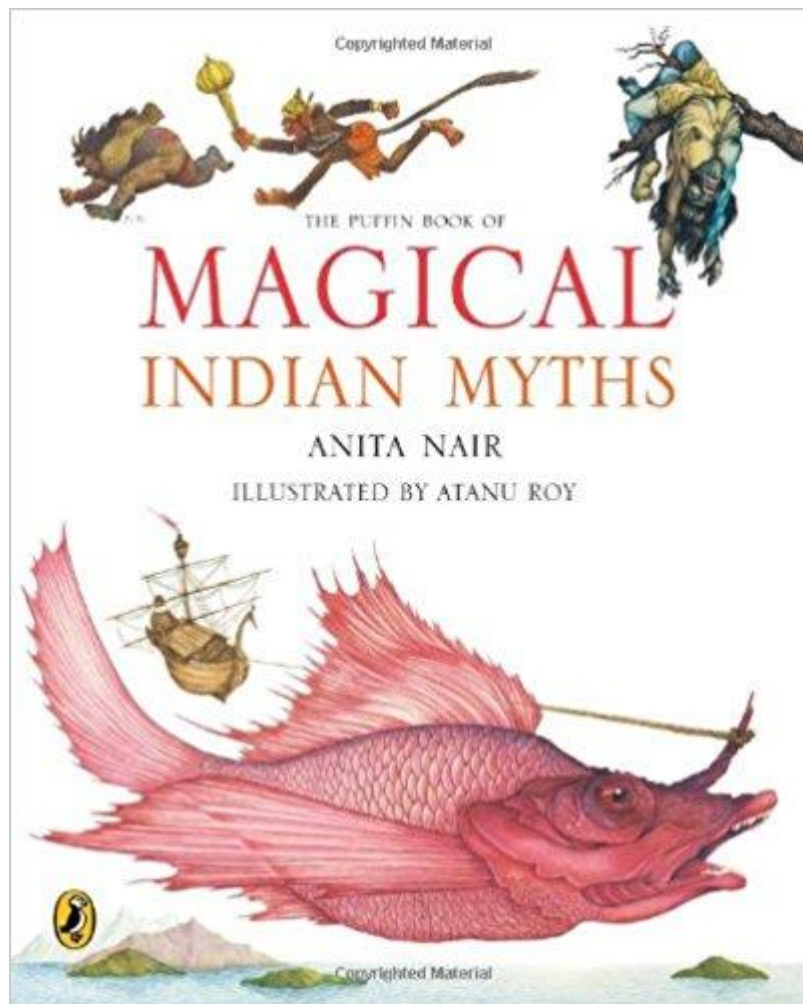
An Ecological Insight into Anita Nair's  
*The Churning of the Cosmic Ocean*

R. Madhiyaran, Ph.D. Research Scholar

Dr. K. Kaviarasu

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**“The Churning of the Cosmic Ocean”**

This paper deals with “The Churning of the Cosmic Ocean”, a mythological story in her collection *Magical Indian Myths*. It is about the second incarnation of Lord Vishnu – The

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Kurma. After a great flood, rarest things in this universe have stored under the deep ocean. Everything is washed away. So the gods decide to retrieve them, especially the rare things like *amirta*, the nectar of life for immortality, and other rare things. But it is not possible for gods alone to do that work, so they have asked Asuras to help them for their search and asuras also accept to help.

As per the suggestion of Brahma, they ask the great snake Vasuki to be the rope and the mountain Mandara to be churned with the notion of Lord Varuna, the god of night and ocean. But Varuna is not able to bear the mountain, so Lord Vishnu, with his personal motif of finding his consort Lakshmi from deep sea and land, accept to help. That time Lord Vishnu is accepted to change himself to be a tortoise to bear the mountain Mandara on its upper hard shells. Asuras in one side and Gods in other side start to pull Vasuki - the so-called rope.

At first, they have found Kamadhenu, the cow of plenty, Airavata the white elephant, Uchchaih-sravas, a magical horse, Sura – the goddess of wine, Parijata tree, Rambha and other nymphs, and Moon. But everyone who has involved in this work gets tired. Especially few persons are died for the poison of Vasuki and for tiredness.

At last Goddess Lakshmi rose from the ocean with a lotus in her hand. “Along with her, the ocean yielded the much-prized water of life. Wearing white robes, the god of medicines, Dhanwantri appeared, bearing the jar of Amrita in his palm” (15). But there are few disputes between Asuras and Gods. But Lord Vishnu in the disguise of Mohini, changes the mind of all asuras for accepting the priority of giving amrita to Gods at first. But Raghu, the asura disguises like a god and get the mighty amrita.

At the same time this malpractice is showed by Moon and Sun, to Lord Vishnu. So, Lord Vishnu cuts the head of Raahu. But he has already tasted the liquor of immortality, so Rahu, becomes Rahu and Kedhu and they always try to swallow Moon and Sun for vengeance. but they can arrest sun and moon occasionally by swallowing. Both sun and moon have the power to come out of their attack.

## Eco Criticism

Derek Gladwin at his page in *Oxford Bibliographies* informs “Ecocriticism is a broad way for literary and cultural scholars to investigate the global ecological crisis through the intersection of literature, culture, and the physical environment”. This story has few ecological crisis, named, cosmic ocean, vasuki the snake, tortoise- the Kurma, mountain Mandara, Kamadhenu, the cow, Parijata tree, and Amrita.

## Cosmic Ocean and Human Civilization

This story happened at cosmic ocean, after the great flood has washed and swiped the entire universe. Ocean and its water are the main reason for the birth of new beings. Early beings are come out of water from fish to reptile, and to mammals. This world is covered with seventy percentage of water. All civilizations are born at the shores of these oceans and other water places. This natural element water has all sorts of vitamins and energetic proteins in it. That is the reason for the birth of many water beings and related beings. *National Geographic website* informs the human activities in its page as:

Human activities impact nearly all parts of the ocean. Lost and discarded nets continue to lethally snare fish, seabirds, and marine mammals as they drift. Ships spill oil and garbage and transport critters to alien habitats unprepared for their arrival. Mangrove forests are cleared for homes and industry. More than half of the U.S. population lives in coastal areas, spilling garbage and sewage into the ocean. Fertilizer runoff from farms turns vast swaths of the ocean into dead zones, including a New Jersey-size area in the Gulf of Mexico. The greenhouse gas carbon dioxide is turning ocean waters acidic, and an influx of freshwater from melting glaciers threatens to alter the weather-driving currents. (<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/environment/habitats/ocean/>)

## Pollution of Water

So, water resources are polluted by the activities of the developed and developing countries for doing business. Human activities are the main reasons for the pollution and oceans

have been started to get evolution. Nature never destroys other things unnaturally or artificially. It is the works of human beings to ruin nature's characters to get change.

### **The Fish**

The fish is diagnosed to be the first being in the world and when the fish gets evolution, it is either water and land living beings like tortoise and other beings. This story of second avatar is also reminded the evolution in this universe. It becomes a holder of Mountain Mandara for the churning. When the readers read about this tortoise, it is assumed to be a role model of the military troop in Roman period. It cannot swim but it can survive or float in the water. It is one of the best example creature in this universe with shell. But now-a-days they are smuggled by the frauds, the human beings for money.

### **Parijata**

**Parijata**, *Nyctanthes arbor-tristis*, is believed to be evolved from this churning of ocean. This flower is an official flower of the state West Bengal in India. This flower is used for the remedial medicine of fever and arthritis in Siddha. It's a rare flower in this world. It is in Asian countries only.

### **Kamadhenu**

Kamadhenu the cow has come out of ocean. This cow becomes to be the property of the sage. But in this world, maximum of population is drinking the milk of the cow. Especially in India as it is in Hindu myth, it is portrayed as a holy being. Indians pray cows. The habitual worship of cow, is because it has antibiotic elements in its. And the Mountain Mandara is now in Africa. They are volcanic range. But there is no connection with this mythological mount,

### **Herbals**

Usually mountains have herbals in its vast area. In this story also the herbals juice takes a part to heal the wounds of either Gods and Asuras, at the time of pulling the rope-Vasuki. Mountains are the place where all saints and deities are located.

## Vasuki the Snake

Vasuki the snake is a mythical one. But here the main thing is, it is standing for the moral. Other myths are portraying snake as a cruel and satanic one. But here this great snake is projected to be a good and serving one for the favour of goodness. At last Amirta the elixir, ocean drink for immortality.

## Great Combination

Kamadhenu - cow, Uchchaih-sravas - horse, Parijata tree, Sura the goddess of wine, Rambha and other nymphs for happiness, Lotus, Dhanvadhri the God of Medicine, and elixir the Amrita are invented while churning the cosmic ocean. From this story one can understand the simple ecological concept of preserving ocean. In India, people have the habit of calling ocean as mother sea, because ocean is one of the five elements (water) and this ocean is a source for fishermen, this ocean has all sort of antibiotics in its herbal plants. Those beings are come out of churning is a simple symbol of the characteristic sketch of the ocean, which has all sort of source for living beings. If everyone in this universe know this secrecy and start to avoid such polluting the ocean, even now-a-days also human beings will get some worthy things from the ocean now-a-days the ratio of taking pearls from the deep sea is getting low also due to this pollution. So from this story one can understand the main motif of preserving ocean and other beings is clarified.

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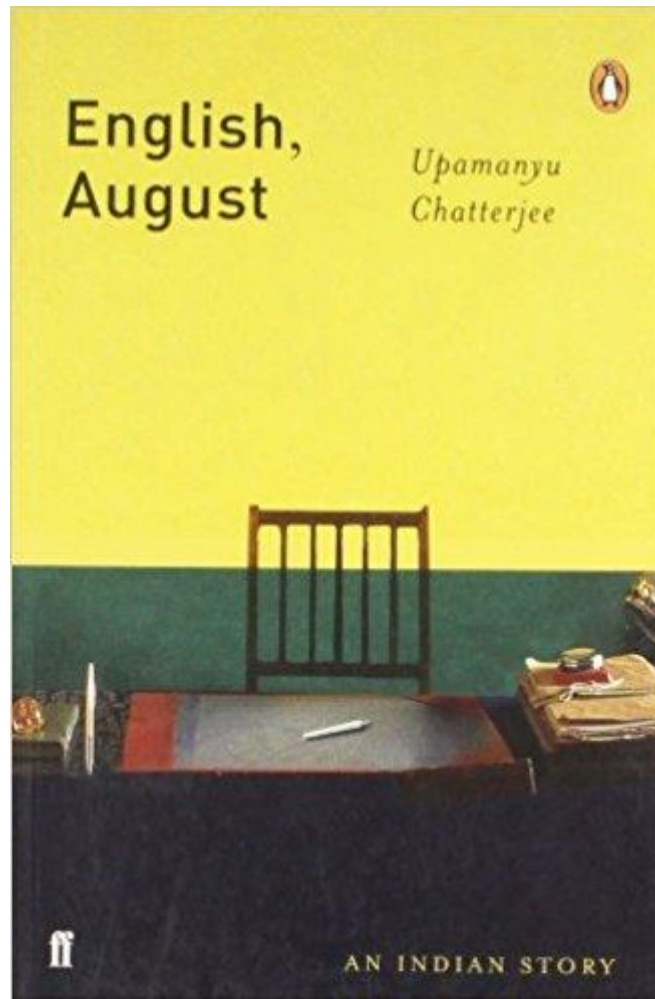
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Portrayal of Social Evils in Upamanyu Chatterjee's  
*English August: An Indian Story*

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**Abstract**

The present paper is an attempt to explore social evils in Upamanyu Chatterjee's *English August: An Indian Story*. It is important to study the social and political milieu because the society is facing many problems and challenges. Upamanyu Chatterjee is one of the major Indian writers who focuses on the social and political circumstances of

contemporary India. His novels are written in a humorous style and satire on Indian Administrative Service. His prominent themes are the urban and rural life, corrupt bureaucracy, and sexual relationships. His novels are concerned with the contemporary Indian problems-social, economic, political and cultural. He has written five novels: *English August: An Indian Story* (1988), *The Last Burden* (1993), *Mammaries of Welfare State* (2004), *Weight Loss* (2006) and *Way to Go* (2010). He also has written short stories which include: “*The Assassination of Indira Gandhi*” and “*Watching Them*”.

Upamanyu’s best-seller novel *English August: An Indian Story* is published in 1988. The realistic picture of contemporary India is clearly portrayed in this novel. He talks about social issues which affects the lives of people especially in rural areas. They have no water and transport facilities. He attacks Indian politics and Indian Administration Service where corruption is deeply rooted. His novels depict social, political, economic and sexual aspects of contemporary India. He presents modern India where drugs corrupt youths.

**Keywords:** Upamanyu’s *English August: An Indian Story*, Social Issues, Corruption, Urban and Rural Life

### **Indo-Anglian Literature**

The early decades of the 19th century marked the beginning of Indian writing in English. V. K. Gokak, in his book, *English in India: Its Present and Future*, interprets the term ‘Indo-Anglican Literature’ as comprising ‘the work of Indian writers in English’ and ‘Indo-English literature’ as consisting of ‘translations by Indians from Indian literature into English’(161). M. K. Naik in his book, *A History of Indian English Literature* says,

Indian English Literature may be defined as literature written originally in English by authors Indian by birth, ancestry or nationality. It is clear that neither ‘Anglo-Indian Literature’, nor literal translations by others (as distinguished from creative translations by the authors themselves) can legitimately form part of this literature. (2)

Indian English Fiction gets attention after India attained independence in 1947. Thousands of novels have been written on a variety of themes. The novels of Bhabani Bhattacharya, G.V. Desani, and R. K. Narayan are written on Indian experience. The 1950s

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Portrayal of Social Evils in Upamanyu Chatterjee’s *English August: An Indian Story*

witnesses a rapid growth of Indian English Fiction when nearly three dozen novels are published. Kamala Markandaya depicts the social scenes in her novels. She explores the themes of poverty, hunger, morality, and life of low class people. Her novel *Some Inner Fury* deals with the theme of struggle for independence.

### **Upamanyu Chatterjee**

Upamanyu Chatterjee is born in Bihar in 1959. He is educated at St. Xavier's School and St. Stephen's College, in Delhi. After completing his university education, he has appeared for I.A.S. Examination and in the first attempt he has passed the examination in 1983. His professional career not only marked the beginning of his literary career, but also was the source from which he created his wonderful characters. In 1990, Chatterjee lived as Writer in Residence at the University in Kent, U.K. In 1998, he is appointed as the Director in the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India.

### **Focus on Social and Political Circumstances**

Upamanyu Chatterjee is one of the major Indian writers who focus on the social and political circumstances of contemporary India. The representation of Indian social milieu makes him as a prominent writer among Indian writers. His novels are written in a humorous style. His prominent themes are the urban and rural life, corrupt bureaucracy, and sexual relationships. His novels are concerned with the contemporary Indian problems-social, economic, political and cultural. He has written five novels: *English August: An Indian Story* (1988), *The Last Burden* (1993), *Mammaries of Welfare State* (2004), *Weight Loss* (2006) and *Way to Go* (2010). He also has written short stories which include: "*The Assassination of Indira Gandhi*" and "*Watching Them*".

### **On Administrative Services in India**

Chatterjee's best-seller novel *English August: An Indian Story* is published in 1988. The novel comments on the administrative services of India-the corruption in educational field, government office and inability to the eradication of poverty and social evils. He many focuses on the corruption in Indian Administrative Service and explore how people are suffering without proper water and transport facilities in rural areas like Madna and Jompanna.

### **Affairs of a Small Town – Agastya the Protagonist**

Chatterjee clearly portrays a picture of contemporary India in this novel. The novel is set in Madna, a small town in West Bengal. Agastya, the protagonist of the novel, joins the Indian Administrative Service and goes to Madna for training. He is not interested in administrative service, but he is compelled to join in the service. Later Agastya realises that the life in Madna makes him to understand the day-to-day problems of rural people. It is a new experience for the modern youth. There are many people come to collector office with a complaint. Chatterjee draws the clear picture of collector office, where crowd of people standing to meet the collector and some people arguing with the officer who has to give answers to their questions. “The Collectorate was a one-storey stone building. Its corridors had benches and more people” (*English, August: An Indian Story* 12). Agastya has to learn many things from Srivastav, who has been in Madna for many years. As a modern youth from urban area to rural, it took time for Agastya to understand the problems and struggles of rural people. The training gives him a good experience about the rural life.

The Visitors came all day. Agastya could eventually categorize them. Indeed, that was all he could do, since the conversations were beyond him. The petitioners always stood... the variety of complaints, from the little that Agastya grasped through instinct, gestures... Labourers on daily wages at some road site complained that the contractor paid them irregularly... Srivastav ought to be confident because he had been dealing with such matters for years. (*English, August: An Indian Story* 18)

### **Scarcity of Water – Tribal Society**

The people face the problems of scarcity of water. Children have to go the well to fetch water. The studies of the children get spoiled due to the problems in Jompanna. Agastya makes arrangement of drinking water for them immediately. He sends the junior engineer, Chaudhary back to Jompanna to bring water tank for them. Chatterjee is quite critical about the contribution of the government in the development of the tribal people. Agastya does not know the problems of the rural area because he is born and brought up in urban areas like Delhi and Calcutta. Agastya later finds that the politicians and civil servants are responsible for the terrible conditions of villagers. He clearly tells Bajaj about the real situations of Jompanna.

Half the population of the block of Jompanna is tribal, try and help them as much as you can... there is no caste war or anything like that in the area. It's simpler, just economics and politics. The tribals there have been ignored for decades, primarily because most of them stayed in those inaccessible hill forests. The money that was pushed into Jompanna was directed by the politicians to benefit the non-tribal population of the plains, you know, primary schools, dispensaries, roads, wells, bank loans-in return the same politicians were voted back to power in the local political body, the Block Panchayat. (*English, August: An Indian Story* 240)

### **Rampant Corruption**

Chatterjee talks about corruption which is one of the major social evils. It affects the growth and development of the country. The government and its employees are corrupted. It is everywhere, especially in government office. Mrs. Srivastav does not complete her studies but she obtains degree by bribing the officer and becomes lecturer. She is not able to answer the question in an interview, still she has been selected. The Engineers like Shankar is ready to pay any amount as bribe to the minister to get transfer. Kumar tells Agastya,

In government, you'll realize this over the years, Sen, there is nothing such as absolute honesty, there are only degrees of dishonesty. All officers are more or less dishonest-some are like our engineers they get away with lakhs, some are like me, who won't say no when someone gives them a video for the weekend, others are subtler, they won't pay for the daily trunk call to Hyderabad to talk to their wives and children. Only degree of dishonesty. (*English, August: An Indian Story* 138)

Chatterjee presents the dark image of woman in his novels. For modern man like Agastya all women are just objects of sex. He has no respect for woman. Agastya likes to see at Mrs. Srivastav thighs, observes her back bra beneath a yellow or pink blows. Chatterjee says that most of the women in postmodern age lose their virginity before marriage. Agastya's girlfriend, Neera, loses her virginity in Calcutta.

He talks about the Christian missionaries who attempt to convert tribals to Christianity. They help these poor to get hospitals built in the most remote corners of India.

Socially and economically constructive work of the missionaries also focus on enabling the tribals to adopt Christianity. The sick and illiterate people turn to Christianity.

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? (*English, August: An Indian Story* 245)

Chatterjee has pointed out various social evils in this novel. He has given his view of the picture of contemporary rural India. His novel is more in the form of lecturing to an audience, with less focus on episodes, characters and emotions, etc. As a literary writer, Chatterjee concerns about the society and writes to create social awareness in the society in his own way. He mainly focused on the rural areas like Madna and Jompanna where tribal people are living. Some deeper understanding could have helped him to make his novel more attractive to his readers.

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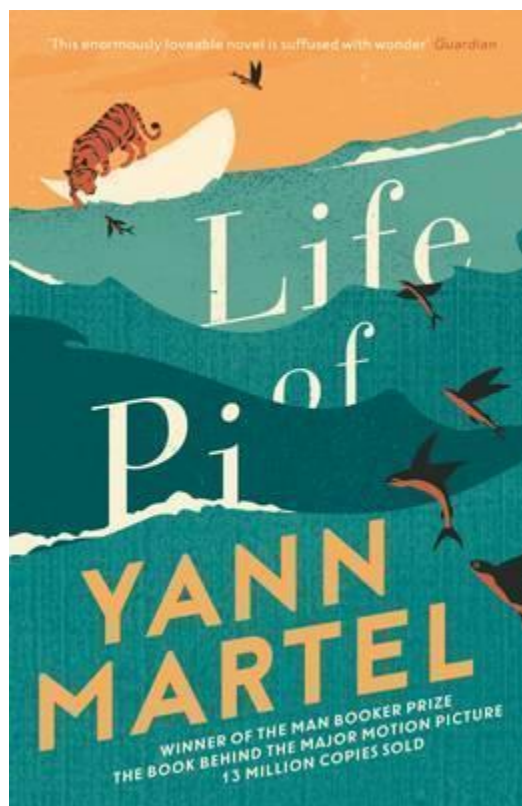
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## The Theme of Isolation in Yann Martel's *Life Of Pi*

S. Rachel Amali, III B.A. English Literature

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### Abstract

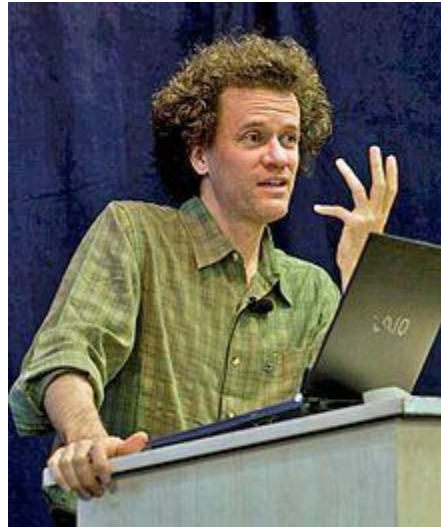
The novel *Life of Pi* is a Canadian fantasy adventure novel, written by Yann Martel. He was exposed to many different cultures as a child, something that would show in his works, later in life. The novel *Life of Pi* won him the “Man Booker” prize in 2002. The novel *Life of Pi* is all about an Indian boy Pi and his survival at sea with only a tiger as his companion on a life boat. The paper deals with



how Pi survives at sea for 277 days with Richard Parker, the tiger at sea and the many struggles he went through.

**Keywords:** Survival, Struggle, Yann Martel, Life of Pi, Canadian Literature

### **Yann Martel**



Yann Martel

Courtesy: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yann\\_Martel](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yann_Martel)

Yann Martel was born in 1963 in Spain to Canadian parents who were part of the diplomatic corps. As a result of parents' work, he was exposed to many different cultures as a child, something that would show in his work later in life. Martel's family eventually returned to Canada, and he attended high school and college there. He majored in Philosophy but was not sure what his path in life would be. He tried various jobs, including landscaping and working in restaurants. Eventually, Martel decided to devote himself to a writing career. Martel traveled the world, visiting countries like India and France, to gain inspiration for his writing. Yann Martel wrote several books, including a book of short stories and a feminist novel, both of which were commercial flops. So, he decided to travel the world to experience life and gain inspiration. After traveling in India in 1999, and reading Moacyr Scilar's *Max and the Cats*, Martel was inspired to write his most famous novel, *Life of Pi*, a novel about an Indian boy, Pi, and his survival at sea with a tiger on a lifeboat. The novel won him the Man Booker Prize in 2002. Yann

Martel's *Life of Pi* is a story within a story. The "frame" of the novel involves the incredible story that is told by the narrator (Pi), to the Author while living in India.

### **A Survivor of Ship Wreck**

Yann Martel's *Life of Pi* is the story of a young man who survives a harrowing shipwreck and months in a lifeboat with a large Bengal tiger named Richard Parker. The beginning of the novel covers Pi's childhood and youth. His family owns and runs a zoo in their hometown in India, and his father is emphatic about being aware of the wildness and true nature of animals, namely that they are not meant to be treated like or thought of as people. Early in Pi's life, his father realizes that his son's naiveté about the tiger in their care may put Pi in danger. To illustrate how true and real the threat is, he forces the children to watch the tiger kill and eat a goat. When Pi is a teenager, his family decides to sell the animals and immigrate to Canada on a cargo ship named Tsimtsum. A terrible storm occurs during the voyage, and when Pi was excited to see the storm, goes onto the ship's deck, he is was forced to enter into a lifeboat by the crew. The next morning, he finds himself in the company of a badly injured zebra, a hyena, and an orangutan named Orange Juice. Hiding out of sight, under the canvas of the lifeboat, is the tiger Richard Parker. The hyena wounds and eats the zebra, then goes after Orange Juice. The orangutan puts up a good fight, but the hyena ultimately kills her. Richard Parker finally makes himself known by killing and eating the hyena. Now only Pi and Richard Parker starts to survive on the lifeboat.

### **Pi and Richard Parker**

Pi and Richard Parker survived together, for 277 days. Following the deaths of the other animals, Pi identifies the stocks available in the lifeboat and uses what he finds. He identifies thirst as his greatest danger: Drinking water is his—and Richard Parker's—greatest need. And was able to survive himself temporarily on the lifeboat's supplies. He also slowly transfers from a devoted vegetarian to a hunter and a carnivore. He at first thinks that the lifeboat's food supplies contain animal fats, but he eventually begins killing, murdering, and eating sea turtles and fish without any thought. Pi also challenges the reality of trying to share the lifeboat with Richard Parker. All of Pi's efforts, then, become focused on finding a way not just for himself to eat, drink, and sleep, but also for Richard Parker. In his first step toward this goal, Pi uses the lifeboat's oars and lifejackets to construct a mass that he chains to the lifeboat and begins to inhabit, putting him out of the immediate reach of Richard Parker, who remains on the lifeboat. Pi keeps a paper as a way to mark the days and weeks. He follows a careful daily

schedule to maintain his stability, humanity, and self-respect. And he also writes down what has happened to him on a small piece of paper that he seals in a bottle and casts into the water. Pi thinks of a plan to train Richard Parker, both for his own protection from the tiger and to mark the territory. He maps out a training method in a list of steps, all of which he centers on using Richard Parker's own seasickness and an orange whistle which he finds in the lifeboat. Over time, the tiger begins to associate just the sound of the whistle with his seasickness, allowing Pi to maintain his own territory. They both become occupants of the lifeboat, with Pi maintaining his territory. Upset at not being rescued, Pi is somewhat comforted by Richard Parker's apparent indifference and expresses great love for the tiger, realizing that they are all each other has.

### **Managing the Fear of the Tiger and Other Odds**

Pi cannot give in completely to his fear of the tiger; doing so would cause him to panic and either dive into the shark-infested water or lose his concentration and become open to the tiger. One way that Pi manages with his fear of the tiger is through language. Another way that Pi manages with his situation is by constantly making lists. He makes a list of supplies in the lifeboat, a list of possible plans to conquer Richard Parker, a list of steps for train Richard Parker, and a daily schedule list. Making lists is also a means by which Pi can retain his humanity and self-respect—and not give in to acting like a wild animal. His constant focus is on the difference between Richard Parker and himself. He recognizes that his two potential downfalls will be forgetting that he is a person and acting only on nature and fear, and forgetting that Richard Parker is an animal and allowing affection, the projection of human traits, and innocence to compromise his ability to protect himself.

Pi also uses writing to manage with his situation. He writes the facts of his journey in a diary and also writes the specifics of his situation, his name, and who to contact about his nightmare on a small piece of paper that he places in a bottle and trowes into the water. Pi's awareness that he needs to ignore his fear for the sake of his own self-protection features heavily in this novel. He says that fear is uncivilized and has no morality, and he cements his decision to no longer allow fear to affect how he relates to his current situation. He rejects fear and dismiss it, in part by personifying it and deciding that he wants nothing to do with such a "person."

## Credit for the Tiger and Richard Parker

After choosing Richard Parker as his companion instead of fear, Pi goes on to credit the tiger with relieving his anxiety. Pi can identify, analyze, train, and control Richard Parker, all of which he can't do with fear or his own base natures. His concentrated effort on training, feeding, providing for, avoiding, and working with Richard Parker is the main reason Pi remains watchful and focused, which is what eventually saves his life. This irony—focusing on a Bengal tiger in order to save oneself—is one of the novel's countless natural contradictions. Once he has become an active hunter, a supplier of water and comfort, and the main force controlling Richard Parker's actions and life, Pi sees himself, truly, as the god of the boat and Richard Parker's divinity. He pronounces Richard Parker his partner in an imaginary circus performance, his complete dependent, and a being separate from but knotted with his own fate—all of which make Pi the overseer and commander of the tiger's existence.

## Pi, Tiger and the Fish

The two become truly united in a moment of pain and experience. Pi realizes this and declares his incredible and undying love for the animal. Pi's forced break from his lifelong vegetarianism is a major contradiction of his identity. His belief that taking another's life is wrong is the foundation of his life's philosophy. It is naturally tested when he has to not only feed himself, but also satisfy Richard Parker's hunger—and thereby keep himself alive. The change occurs when a flying fish literally delivers itself to Pi. Although Pi realizes he must end the fish's life, he wrestles with the decision, describing his unwillingness, empathy, disgust, sorrow, and the eventual automatic-twisting act of killing it. At the end of this section, he confirms that a person can get used to anything. He makes good on this declaration: After killing the fish, he no longer fights with or appears troubled by killing animals. His hunting and killing continue throughout the journey, and he remarks only on the volume, the variety, the methods, and other practical matters, such as when he tries to sooth his feet with the blood of several meerkats that he kills on the carnivorous island. Although Pi becomes very casual about his killing, he occasionally changes between pride and dislike as he becomes a talented and skilled hunter. At one point he even kills a turtle and drinks its blood, becoming literally blood-thirsty.

## Color Orange

In *Life of Pi*, the color orange symbolizes hope and survival. Just before the scene in which the Tsimtsum sinks, the narrator describes visiting the adult Pi at his home in Canada and meeting his family. Richard Parker, who helps Pi to survive during his 277 days at sea. As the Tsimtsum sinks, Chinese crewmen give Pi a lifejacket with an orange whistle; on the boat, he finds an orange lifebuoy. The whistle, and tiger all help Pi survive, just as Orange Juice the orangutan provides a measure of emotional support that helps the boy maintain hope in the face of horrific tragedy.

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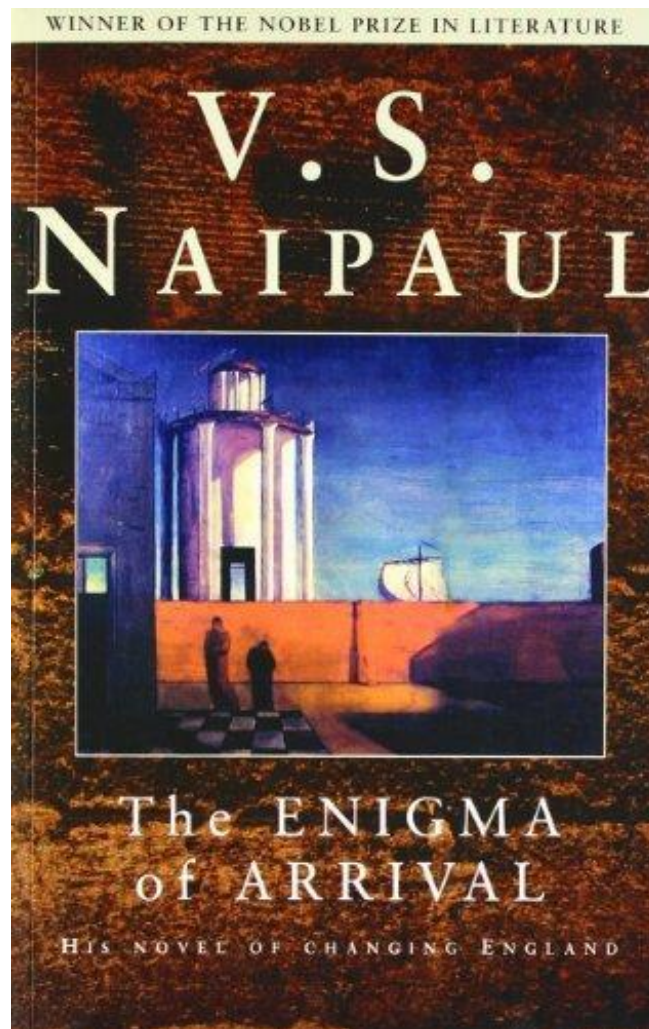
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Search for Self:  
Recovery of Wholeness and Integrity in  
V. S. Naipaul's *The Enigma Of Arrival*

K. P. Reema Kareem, M.A.

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Search for Self: Recovery of Wholeness and Integrity in V. S. Naipaul's *The Enigma Of Arrival*

## Abstract

As the term "wholeness" refers to the state of forming a complete and harmonious whole, a special definition appears when it comes to the area of Diaspora. Here the need for wholeness describes the need of wholeness and harmony in mind, body, and spirit. This is evident in almost all diasporic literature all over the world. 'A search for home' through the experience gathered from a land and life away from his/her homeland. The diasporic writers always live in the living memory of homeland, thus in a cultural dilemma. While they write they feel the healing process and thus reach a mental and spiritual wholeness. Diaspora itself can be explicated as the journey through one's self to attain this wholeness of mind, body, and spirit.

Throughout the novel, *The Enigma of Arrival*, V.S. Naipaul (the title borrowed from a Giorgio de Chirico painting) draws a clear picture of his cultural identity crisis and recovery of wholeness and integrity attained by a journey throughout England. The story describes the mystery of many things, such as death and rebirth, gaining of wisdom and calm insight through complex narrative. Highly autobiographical in nature, the work deals with the enigma in recovering himself through a journey which appears as a metaphor of his own life. Thus the intent here is to look upon the reformation of narrator's consciousness which brought about by the act of migration; and thereby analyzing his unending "enigma" in attaining "the spiritual wholeness" through arrival and departure.

**Keywords:** V. S. Naipaul, *The Enigma of Arrival* Diaspora, identity, self, wholeness

## Quest for Identity Revelation

Identity of human beings living in the modern world is defined through the role one play in the socio-political contextual experiences which places on them. Thus, one will be known as a doctor, a teacher, an engineer, a writer, a politician, and so on. But any of these descriptions will not help one to find who are they and what their self is. Quest for identity revelation or self-knowledge is innate in every human being; hence it is an archetypal and universal motif in the literature of all ages and genres all over the world. An individual's quest of identity and sense of

self is neither completely conscious nor unconscious, it ends up with attaining a personal view of life and world which could make existence meaningful and give a sense of belonging to man.

There came one and knocked at the door of beloved.

And a voice asked: "Who is there?"

He answered: "It is I".

"Go hence!" returned the voice; "There is no room for me and thee".

The door was shut. Then came the lover second time and knocked, again the voice asked: "Who is there?"

He answered: "It is Thou".

"Enter" said the voice, "For I am within." (Mawlānā Jalāl ad-Dīn Rūmī (d. 1273))

### **Looking-Glass Self**

Famous Sociologist C. H. Cooley proposed the idea of 'looking-glass self', which points out that we acquire our sense of 'self' by seeing our 'self' reflected in other people's attitude and behavior towards us and by imagining what they think of us. For acquiring the 'self' other people serve as a kind of mirror or glass. It is like seeing our self in the mirror which is partly our own creation. Only through people's words and actions we come to see our own self. Cooley states it as "self and society is twin born" (Calhoun, et.al. 120).

G.H. Mead, an American philosopher, sociologist and psychologist, thought in a different way. He says that only certain people could influence our perception of self only during certain period of life, and the way others influence us changes across the life span. And like in Piaget's *Egocentrism* Mead also described three stages of this perception in one's growth from childhood to adolescence: Preparatory stage, Play stage and Game stage. In which preparatory stage is mere imitation, while play stage is a kind of pretend play and role taking, and in game stage things are totally different, he referred it to as related to generalized other or society as whole and through multiple roles. By the time one reaches game stage they starts to understand that other people must also have opinions about them.

### **Identity – a Psycho-social Concept**



Identity is an intrinsically psycho-social concept implying the recognition of one's existence or at least a trait of it which relates him with his group, his class, his race, his profession, his religion or his country. Although it has multitudinous temporal and spatial connotations, identity is defined generally as "who or what somebody is". The term is derived from the French word 'identité', which has its etymological roots in the Latin noun 'identitas'; meaning "sameness". Expressing one's creativity, quest for spiritual enlightenment, pursuit of knowledge, and the desire to give or positively transform society is self-actualization. "Self-actualization" is a psychological term introduced by the German neurologist and psychiatrist theorist Kurt Goldstein for the motive to realize one's full potential.

### **V. S. Naipaul and Identity**

Vidiadhar Surajprasad Naipaul, commonly known as V. S. Naipaul, a Trinidadian writer, is a descendant of indentured laborers shipped from India and he always tells stories which show the readers' selves and reality they live in. The turmoil of decolonization forced so many people over the whole world to re-examine their identity and wear identities which fit their geographical location. The problem of self and identity has been a conundrum for every exiled community—be it forced exile or immigration—in the sociological perspective. The post imperial era always points out the problem regarding social and cultural identity crisis among the decolonized communities. Diasporic writers always search for their lost identity; they are caught in the clutches of uprooted origin. The cultural dislocation resulted by the geographical displacement can be found in almost every work of these genre. Naipaul, being one of the victims of dislocation and rootlessness both geographical and cultural, formed his self through his voyages. On his travels he was exploring the real meaning of culture and history. V.S. Naipaul once said of himself as "I am the writer from nowhere". In fact, he is of Indian origin and born at Caribbean Islands and formed himself at the British. He is a produce of British Empire, the cultural dislocation starting from his ancestral origin left him a feeling of exile where ever he goes. Like a gypsy he wanders the world finding himself a place to fit in or rather to heal his feeling of dislocation.

### **Life-style of Gypsies**

Gypsies tend to be always in search of spiritual wholeness of themselves which is the real home of a human soul. They are called very differently in Indian language, “Khanabadosh”, in which *khana* means “home” and *badosh* means “on your shoulder”. It is very beautiful to think that one’s home is always on his shoulders, wherever he goes he takes his home there, otherwise wherever he go he is at home. Khanabadoshes are real seekers; they are in search of self. And they have a sudden revelation of this self and find the whole existence is their home.

### ***Enigma of the Arrival***

In his novel, *Enigma of the Arrival*, V.S. Naipaul, is himself a seeker; kahanabadosh, in search of his self, which is his real home. For many years he thought of writing a book inspired by a surrealist painting of the same name which he found in the cottage and learned more about the early paintings of an Italian painter Giorgio de Chirico from ‘The Little Library of Art’. He caught attention on the painting named *The Enigma of Arrival*, which is indirectly and poetically referred to something from his own life experiences. Naipaul describes the scene in the picture as, “the scene is of desolation and mystery; it speaks of the mystery of arrival. It spoke to me of that, as it had spoken to Apollinaire.”(p.106) (Apollinaire was the poet who gave names to the paintings of Giorgio.) Having the idea of writing (as a free ride of the imagination) long time in his mind, he carries out journeys to India, South America and Africa. Throughout the book he describes about his arrivals and departures at many places and his enigmatic mental journey of becoming a writer. His major problem of writing a book with this painting in mind was to “set up fictional scaffolding”. For this to happen he travelled, grew out of what he was, and modified his idea and finally this novel was born. He describes about it in the same book as: “Every exploration, every book, added to my knowledge, qualified my earlier idea of myself and the world” (p.168). Being a diasporic writer, he always felt a certain detachment and alienation in all the places he travelled and always he spoke about this deep despair about the country of his origin and its remnants of colonialism. He migrated from one place to another with an instable mind.

### **Finely Woven Chapters**

Though this book, *'The Enigma of Arrival'* is finely woven in five chapters such as, Jack's Garden, The Journey, Ivy, Rooks and the Ceremony of the Farewell; the whole novel is a story of separation of the author from his home land and from himself and recovery of the missing home and self through a series of journeys. The journey carried out here is not only a voyage from the British Colony of Trinidad to the ancient countryside of England, but it is peregrination from one state of mind to another in search of his identity and self. It is pictured as a singular journey of the writer for the invention of himself and trying to find his place in the world. The story revolves around a period of nearly thirty-five years beginning with the narrator's first journey from his home in Trinidad in 1950 at the age of eighteen to take up a scholarship at Oxford University, with a preconceived idea and decision to become a writer.

### **A Boy, Traveling to be a Writer**

Without recognizing it, he never accumulates his experiences to his writing during his stay at the cottage "Jack's Garden" in Wiltshire. The novel indulges us mainly to Waldenshaw, an English countryside in Wiltshire, where the narrator, V.S. Naipaul himself, lives for ten years at a cottage near Stonehenge. "A boy, traveling to be a writer", coming from Trinidad Naipaul is rather unwary and unaware of his life and experiences in totally new surroundings. This novel is virtually a slice of auto biography as he stated, "The story had become more personal; my journey, the writer's journey". Although the novel is labeled "A Novel in Five Sections", this narrative is drawn directly from his own life and work.

### **A Series of Journeys - Arrivals and Departures**

His life in this novel has been a series of journeys- arrivals and departures- trying to find his place and his way in the world. In the second chapter of this novel which is labeled as 'The Journey', Naipaul recollects the experience of traveling to New York as he takes out his pencil for writing he says: "When you licked the pencil the color became bright; dry, the color was dull. I had bought the pad and the pencil because I was traveling to become a writer, and I had to start." (106). Naipaul's travel was a mission to capture each and every subtle experience which lead him to recover himself as a writer, which he was troubling to find out at that time. Journey

is always a recurring motif in literature from Bible to the medieval Christian mystics. The adventurous journey carried out by the hero and returning home triumphant occurs in almost all mythologies around the world. Naipaul stated himself about writing this book as “about the writer and the land.” Through writing Naipaul arrived at revelation of himself and the world, which he had brought through his journeys, which is metaphor of his own life.

### **Finding His Place**

Living for about twenty years in England unable to satisfy his urge to be a writer he gets mentally exhausted and had nightmares in which he feels that his head seems to be exploding to death which had been brought on by intellectual fatigue. Naipaul melancholically lays loneliness, vulnerability and even anxieties of life, which is the testament of a man, who has impassively willed himself to endure disappointment, alienation, change and grief. They are great assets for a writer for his writing but burden for a human being. With this state of depressed mind, he moves to Wiltshire and lives in a cottage in Waldenshaw. He lives there in ‘Jack’s Garden’ which he describes as ‘a garden full of life and subtleness’ for about ten years. In the second chapter, ‘*The Journey*’ he reflects his experiences, thoughts and change of the perception on people, places and nature when he first set foot in England. Living there he had a cultural change, hence experienced a rebirth. During his returned stay in the same cottage which he stayed before, at his adulthood he finds peace by absorbing the contours of the landscape and learned to appreciate the changes brought to it by the changing seasons. Since he considered it as a rebirth all those perception was new to him, like a child learning a second language. Through his everyday walks which can be described as a spiritual pilgrimage, he slowly transforms his “raw nerves” and puts them its right place with right ideas and anew life grows within him.

### **Ivy**

Throughout the narrative he does a ‘looking-glass self’. This is explained further in the third chapter ‘*Ivy*’, through the description of the experiences with the landlord, Jack and the gardener Pitton, and hopefully relates all these scenes to the understanding that how culture creates each man to what he is today and how important a true home can lead to someone's well

being; moreover he analyses his own life, by throwing back the memories of the days of failure in his life as a human being and writer. After a long period of his wandering the split between him as a man and writer is healed. Later he explained about this as “The writer, the observer that is scrupulously myself. The minute other people are in the picture, that is where the fictive element comes in.”

### **Catalysts for the Recovery of His Self**

V. S. Naipaul uses the characters in the novel like his neighbors in Waldenshaw, a village near Salisbury in the southern English county of Wiltshire, as catalysts for the recovery of his self. He peels back secured shield of memory, sparing himself nothing, revealing the mistakes and lacuna of own life as a writer and as a human himself. Naipaul demonstrates this in small dramatic incidents like the death of a cottager Jack (Jack even remains as a strong presence of eternity throughout the novel even after his death.), the firing of an estate's gardener Pitton, death and Hindu religious cremation ceremonies of his sister and description of another writer in the novel Alan. This discursive and melancholically ruminative book narrates series of soul-healing events through the writer's extra ordinary memories. V. S. Naipaul brilliantly pictures intensively nuanced observations of the natural surrounding where he lives and his own interior landscape; he demonstrates how experience from the outer world is transmogrified after much uncertainty and pang into a beautiful work of literature.

### **Suppressed Selves Buried Within**

Everybody has a variety of suppressed selves buried within. The lived-in experiences and surroundings it rooted in force them to reassess their identity. They find their identity exiled in a displaced geographical area. Quest for wholeness and urge for integration to the alien culture put them in between. The internal dilemma of the displaced individuals acted as a base for Diasporic literature. VS Naipaul's Indian ancestry and Caribbean upbringing gave him a mixed cultural base. But he spent major part of his youth in Britain, trying to be an Englishman in full. Further it displaced him and his feeling of in between which grew stronger. The novel portrays the author's journey, to become a writer, metaphorically to establish the search for wholeness in identity. The

attempts to integrate to the host culture and depart from base culture prove futile. The novel forms the life of the author or the life of the author form the novel. They are inseparable.

“There is no ‘real’ me—a tiny homunculus hidden beneath layers of frozen feelings.... It is not an isolated ‘object,’ a ghost locked in a machine or a mere consciousness located within the body... You are inextricably enmeshed in the web of meanings shaped by the psycho-culture that you helped to form and that, in turn, helps to form you.” (Daniel Yankelovich, in *New Rules: Searching for Self-fulfillment in a World Turned Upside Down*)

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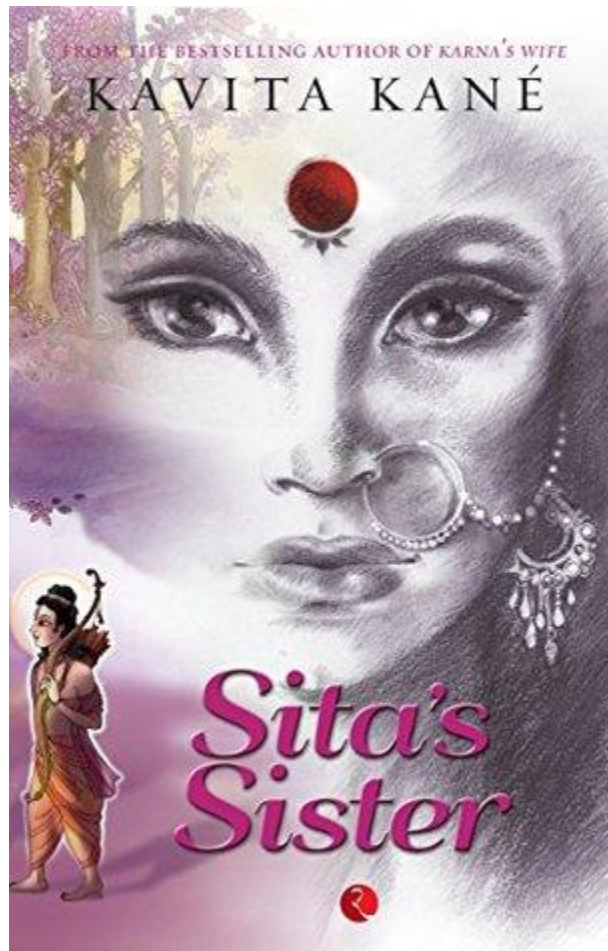
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Marking a Muffled Murmur in Mythology:  
A Feministic Approach to Kané's *Sita's Sister*

Dr. S. Rema Devi

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**Abstract**

As per the Hindu mythology, the intention of God creating a woman is to support a man and to procreate. She has to be a facilitator of his progeny. Other than the lead roles of continuing his lineage and supporting him in his obligatory duties, the power bestowed in a woman does not sound significant. These ideas face conflicts when the divine roles of Goddesses

are analysed in these myths. However, the women are bestowed with secondary roles where men take the lead roles. The Ramayana is one of the two great epics of India. Sita is the central female character of the Ramayana. People worship Sita, who is supposed to be the daughter of Mother Earth and this may be the reason that she is portrayed as a silent sufferer. Nevertheless, there are other silent sufferers too, who had been muted under the web of love. *Sita's Sister* by Kavita Kane voices such a noteworthy character Urmila, Sita's sister and wife of Lakshmana. The present paper traces put the elements of feminism in the voice of the voiceless Urmila.

**Key Words:** Kavita Kane, *Sita's Sister*, Mythology-fiction, Feminism, Urmila.

### **Patriarchal Notions**

As per the Hindu mythology, the intention of God creating a woman is to support a man and to procreate. She has to be a facilitator of his progeny. Other than the lead roles of continuing his lineage and supporting him in his obligatory duties, the power bestowed in a woman does not sound significant. These ideas face conflicts when the divine roles of Goddesses are analysed in these myths. However, the women are bestowed with secondary roles where men take the lead roles.

In the system of patriarchy, a woman has been pictured as an embodiment of submissiveness. She has to bear the burdens of obligations of her husband. A woman has to play multifaceted roles of a daughter, a sister, a wife, a daughter-in-law, a mother and the like. She has to succumb to the orders of all the members of the family. As the sources from the web advocates, "It's interesting to look at what Indian mythology holds as signs of strength and morality in women. These are women who always listen to what they're told, never protest and they're only recourse to expressing anger is renunciation of everything, even asceticism." (<https://www.dailyo.in/politics/indian-mythology-rape-women-patriarchy/story/1/17120.html>)

The position of women has always been controversial. A range of position is visible in the Indian mythology. The range is from a dumb muted wife to the position of a goddess. "The various myths too represent these women as per these doctrines of the earlier days. Sure, there



have been hundreds of retellings and reinterpretations through the centuries in which our female protagonists have been recast in new moulds. But these stories have remained confined to their niche, and their reach has been limited in terms of popularity as a frame of reference.”

(<https://scroll.in/article/828515/indian-mythology-is-a-new-medium-of-choice-for-feminist-narratives-and-its-working>).



**Kavita Kané**

Courtesy: <https://www.hydlitfest.org/interview-with-kavita-kane/>

### **Portrayal of Women in Mythology**

The epics and myths portray women as subordinate because they are written by men of the patriarchal society. Moreover, the men enjoyed the pleasure of subjugating women and the reason of subservience did not allow chances of exposure of women to the written scriptures. Hence, the women were denied chances of voicing their grievances, even if things were emphasized in the wrong way. The Ramayana is one of the two great epics of India. Sita is the central female character of the Ramayana. People worship Sita, who is supposed to be the

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daughter of Mother Earth and this may be the reason that she is portrayed as a silent sufferer. Nevertheless, there are other silent sufferers too, who had been muted under the web of love. Many authors, at present, have turned towards mythology-fiction. The words from the web are evident to this fact. “Many writers of modern mythological fiction are taking up feminist cudgels, often turning familiar tropes on their head. With easy choices in digital and self-publishing, there are more new voices than ever before.”(<https://scroll.in/article/828515/indian-mythology-is-a-new-medium-of-choice-for-feminist-narratives-and-its-working>).

### ***Sita’s Sister***

*Sita’s Sister* by Kavita Kane voices such a noteworthy character Urmila, Sita’s sister and wife of Lakshmana. “Neither feminism nor mythology is a modern construct. Strong, feminist characters have long been the hallmark of Indian mythology.” (<https://scroll.in/article/828515/indian-mythology-is-a-new-medium-of-choice-for-feminist-narratives-and-its-working>). Kavita Kane is in the limelight, discussing the unnoticed characters in Indian mythology. Her area of interest being mythology-fiction, she throws light upon the characters which people have failed to notice, or which people have given a biased dimension. Her other famous books are *The Karna's Wife: The Outcast's Queen*, *Sita's Sister*, *Menaka's Choice* and *Lanka's Princess*. In the select novel, Kane retells the epic Ramayana in a new dimension as how Urmila, the sister of Sita and wife of Lakshmana, sees it. To be precise, a princess who is supposed to be bashful, speaks out her mind when she crosses situations in which she ought to voice her feelings. This paper attempts to highlight the feministic approach that Kane has bestowed Urmila with, with respect to the traces of feminism in the voice of the voiceless Urmila.

### **The Nature of Urmila**

Urmila is Sita’s sister and the biological daughter to King Janaka, the foster father of Sita. Urmila is given in marriage to Lakshmana, Rama’s brother. She is left unnoticed in mythology except for the term *Urmila Nidhra* which refers to the fourteen-year long sleep of her in order to fulfill her husband’s vow to guard Rama and Sita day and night during their fourteen-year exile in the forest of Dandaka. Moreover, in killing of Meghnath, the son of the demon king Ravana of Lanka, Urmila’s name gets mentioned. The story states that Meghnath could be killed by only a

man who has not slept for fourteen years and since Urmila shares her husband's sleep, evidently Lakshmana kills Meghnath. Hence, it is clear that Urmila is given a passive role in the epic as the prime role Sita eclipses her sister Urmila. As the sources from the web state,

Here Urmila is portrayed as a delicately beautiful, spirited young princess who knows her mind and has no qualms in voicing it too. She is not the one who wants to live in illusion or any make-believe world. She comes across as an individual who acknowledges and accepts her situations gracefully - whether it is of being a second fiddle to the adopted elder sister Sita or submitting to the fact that her husband would remain committed to his brotherly duties over and above her. But this does not push her down rather she reciprocates the favour by being a source of strength for her loved ones. (<http://literarysojourn.blogspot.in/2015/01/book-review-sitas-sister.html>)

Though feminism is portrayed as a principle of equality between men and women, it throws light on how a woman pays attention to her 'self' and her own likes and dislikes. A woman always yearns to be in a domain where her thoughts are reciprocated. In the era of Ramayana, though women are supposed to be silent, especially in the presence of men, Urmila is outspoken and bold enough to express her thoughts and feelings. The first hint of the feminist trait in Urmila comes out when the demon king Ravan roars in anger in Sita's Swayamvar that he wished to marry Urmila as he failed to string the Rudra bow and marry Sita. On hearing the vicious words of Ravan, Urmila, who is supposed to be a dumb listener, stares back at him with hatred and anger. Kane writes, "She looked squarely up at him, her eyes sparkling with unsuppressed fury and loathing." (23)

Urmila does not remain bashful when she feels that she has to save the life of Lakshman from the furious Parashuram who is about to fling his axe on the former for having advocated his brother's action of breaking the Rudra bow. At this juncture, Urmila goes to the rishi, with an intention to soften his anger. She speaks soft words of praise and bends before him for his blessings. However, her action of intervening the scene is considered as one which is for the sake of the man for whom she nurses a secret love and is not expected of a woman. The author gives a

clear picture of the scene in her words, “Her heart beating wildly, Urmila knew she was ready to face the full fury of the rishi – anything to save Lakshman from the bloody fight from which he would never escape alive.” (27)

Urmila is portrayed as a girl who has the potential to hide her inner conflicts with a strained smile. Though she is good at masking feelings, the importance for her ‘self’ pops out when necessity arises. The palace is filled with talks of the nuptial knot of the four princes of Ayodhya with the four princesses of Mithila. It is at this juncture, Urmila discloses her feelings regarding her marriage. She is not sure if Lakshman would give his consent to marry her. Nevertheless, Urmila is eager to be given in marriage to Lakshman, which shows that her purpose is to live a life of her choice rather than to exist or survive. In Kane’s words, the feel of Urmila when she thinks of Lakshman’s hot look is, “It was like a wave: drowning and drenching her in its passionate whirl and leaving her bereft in anticipation as it ebbed. She was still unsure about him.” (32)

Urmila is a girl of individuality. She does not want to be hurt by others. She always wants to love and to be loved, which reveals a sense of belonging. This attitude of her comes out when she overhears a conversation between Ram and Lakshman, in which the latter discloses to his brother that he is not interested to marry. A woman with a feminine attitude will never want to be neglected. Hence the negligence of Lakshmana hurts her. To rewrite Kane’s words,

He didn’t want to marry her – the rejection stung. And his repudiated words kept ringing feverishly, searing her mind, her soul, her very being. She felt discarded, thrown away in distaste and contempt... Through her brimming tears, she could not see what was hurting her most – his rejection, her lost love, her shattered trust, her anguish or the humiliation... And the fact that she couldn’t have him and, bitterly still, that he did not want her, burned her with a mortification more consuming than the licking flames of disillusionment. (45)

When her pride is questioned, Urmila is hurt. Lakshman meets her before marriage to tell that she would always remain a princess, if she marries him and can never be a queen. Moreover, he informs her that his love and respect for his brother Ram may deviate him from the responsibilities of a husband. She tells him that her pride is hurt and is so outspoken to him that Kane writes, “But you do have a choice – either break off the wedding and leave me to my fate or marry me, your loyalty to your brother notwithstanding. I accept you as my husband, do you?” (50)

Urmila’s outburst is highlighted when she receives a news that Kaikeyi, one of the three queens of King Dhasarath, is not satisfied with Sita as Ram’s bride and that she has a plan to get Ram remarried, Urmila cannot withstand the suffering that is to befall her sister. She wants her sister to voice her grievances when plans were knit for Ram’s remarriage. She furiously hauls words at her sister. “How dare they do this to you”, started Urmila furiously. “You shall not take it silently anymore, Sita!” (Kane 72) She ushers Sita to protest and is full of scornful resentment. Kane gives life to Urmila’s feelings saying, “Do they seriously take us to be such tame girls who will scurry to obey?”... “Haven’t they realized yet that we are the daughters of Janak and Sunaina, who have been taught to uphold their pride and be courageous?” (73)

### **Marriage Psyche in Patriarchy**

The marriage psyche expected of a couple is that they are supposed to imitate the culture of Ardha Narishwar – Prakriti and Purush. The male half is incomplete without the female half. Nevertheless, Ram is blessed to be with his wife, even when in exile. However, Urmila’s silent wails go muffled when Lakshman wants to leave her in the palace. She feels dejected and neglected when the two persons whom she loved the most – Lakshman and Sita – make up their minds to leave for the forest. Kane describes her pain saying,

Urmila’s first instinctive reaction had been a flood of hurt for being rejected by both her husband and sister, followed by a deep and bitter anger. They had not considered her at all, each intent on getting what they wanted. She felt betrayed, left out and let down. (103)

However, Urmila is a girl with a strong nature so as to convert her grief into an attitude. When Lakshman bids her farewell, she pleads to him to be taken with him to the forest. She is clever enough to realize that her pleas fall on deaf ears. So, she takes the courage to blame her husband for his inefficiency in taking his bride with him, unlike his brother Ram. She spits words of pain at him telling, “I knew you would refuse me, again” ... “That is what your love is – hurtful and rejecting. You don’t love at all, Lakshman, you cannot love!” (Kane 107) Though tormented and tortured with the grief of separation, she wants to make it lighter on the part of her husband and praises herself showing the silk clothes and gems she I adorned with saying, “I am a princess, born in leisure and luxury. Would you expect me to spurn this to chase you in your misguided, wild adventure with your brother eating berries, walking barefoot and cooking meals for the two of you?” (107) Though a sharp stab of sorrow pierces her heart, she does not want her husband to feel guilty of his action of unfulfilling her wish and so she establishes a mental balance. This is revealed when she says to herself at the sight of her husband leaving for the forest. Kane echoes Urmila’s words. “You can hate for all I just said. I hope I have made it easier for you now, she thought bleakly, made it easier for us, to hate rather than to love each other for the next fourteen years of separation.” (108)

Urmila’s plead to be taken along with her husband to the forest is not a sign of subservience. She needs to be the wife with the sense of obligation in order to experience the sense of belonging that she loves much. The patriarchal society has designed a frame for women. The frame designed by the men are narrow for the women folk because she has to confine herself in the small frame, paying attention not only to her husband, but also the members of his family. This patriarchal notion is not an exception for Lakshman because he wants his wife to remain at the palace, to take care of his aged parents and to look into the stately affairs till the arrival of Bharatha, the younger brother of Ram. Evidences trace back the roots of these obligations and commitments to the earlier days of Hindu mythology. Parva cites a passage from *The Mahabharata*, which demonstrates a conversation between Lord Shiva and his wife Goddess Parvati, on the duties of a wife. The words are:

A woman's duties include physical and emotional nourishment, reverence and fulfillment of her husband and her children. Their happiness is her

happiness, she observes the same vows as those that are observed by her husband, her duty is to be cheerful even when her husband or her children are angry, be there for them in adversity or sickness, is regarded as truly righteous in her conduct. Beyond her husband and family, her duty is to be cheerful of heart and humble with friends and relatives, do the best she can for friends and guests. Her family life and her home is her heaven, tells goddess Parvati to Shiva. (667-72)

Hence, Urmila too is expected to be a victim to these confined commitments. Nevertheless, she sticks to her duties and helps in reuniting the family. Her role in the reunion of the family is pivotal. A bashful bride and succumbing daughter-in-law is not supposed to raise her voice against the elders of the household. On such occasions, a woman earns the ire of the entire family. She takes to questioning Kaikeyi, for having sent Ram, Sita and Lakshman in an exile for fourteen years. She scorns the elderly queen for her mean action. However, she is able to handle all adverse situations in a smooth manner. When Bharath and his troupe, along with the three mothers, visit Ram and Lakshman in the forest, the latter tells Urmila of her strength. He is in praises for his courageous wife, who has been instrumental in managing situations with ease, during his absence. Urmila, in the eyes of Lakshman too, has been shown as a girl with an individuality. Lakshman says, “How you stood brave through the tragedies – strong, stable and dependable like a fierce lioness protecting her family. Playing the roles of the dutiful daughter, shrewd administrator, wise peacemaker simultaneously...” (Kane 158)

The passionate outburst of Urmila is in the hut of Ram and Lakshman when Ram declines his offer as the king and advocates the rule of Bharath. Ram wants to fulfill his last promise to his father. Hence, he tells Bharath to rule Ayodhya, to which the dutiful brother disagrees. Later, Bharath comes to a conclusion that he would rule the kingdom as a deputy of Ram, by placing Ram’s sandals on the throne as a token. Ram gives his consent to this after a long thought. When Ram utters a positive reply, Urmila is shattered because the ray of hope in her vanishes. Kane writes, “There was a murmur of approval and the matter seemed to have been

finally settled. That murmur was like a scream for Urmila, the brief remark arousing her wrath.”  
(161)

If Ram had accepted Bharath’s invitation and had changed his mind, she would lead a happy life with Lakshman. In spite of the place and the gathering of the Gurus and other elders, Urmila speaks her mind out. As per the script in *Manusmriti*, “Pitaa Rakshati Kaumaree, Bharata Rakshati Yauvaneer; Putroo Rakshati Vardhakyeer, Na Stri Swatantryam Arhati (IX, 3). These lines show that a woman is to be under the control of a man always – she is obliged to be under the control of her father in her childhood, of her husband in her youth and of her son in her old age. It is at this juncture of Ram’s words, Urmila asks the elder Guru of Dharma. She asks:

Today, in this room, we have talked about all sorts of dharma – of the father and the sons, of the king and the princes, of the Brahmin and the Kshatriya, even of the wife for her husband. But is there no dharma of the husband for his wife? No dharma of the son for his mother? Is it always about the father, sons and brothers? (Kane 161).

Though Urmila receives jibes from the Guru commenting on the liberty women take in her father’s kingdom, she is concerned about her life which she would lose living with Lakshman if he does not return to the kingdom. The patriarchy abuses a woman when she thinks of her wellbeing, branding it to be selfishness. A woman is always expected to be selfless and has oblige to the words of her husband, irrespective of her likes and dislikes. An ordinary woman, who accepts subservience, would be taken aback by such a critical comment of Guru Kashyap. Nevertheless, Urmila’s voice regains its space when she demands an answer for her question from the Guru saying:

I am not doubting the great minds, Gurudev; I, as the daughter-in-law of the famous Raghu dynasty of the Ikshvaaku race – and not merely as the daughter of King Janak – ask a very simple question. What is the dharma of the man for his wife, the dharma of a man for his mother? Please give me an answer. (Kane 162)

Questions arise when the success of her outburst is analysed. However, she does not remain dumb and is strong enough to voice her feelings and demands. As the concepts from the



web proclaim, Hinduism considers the connection, interdependence, and complementary nature of these two concepts – Prakriti and Purusha, female and male – as the basis of all existence, which is a starting point of the position of women in Hindu traditions. Ancient and medieval era Hindu texts, and epics, discuss a woman's position and role in society over a spectrum, such as one who is a self-sufficient, marriage-eschewing powerful Goddess, to one who is subordinate and whose identity is defined by men rather than her, and to one who sees herself as a human being and spiritual person while being neither feminine nor masculine. It is on this ground, Kane highlights the character of Urmila with a feministic shade. Web source states, “The Ramayana takes scant notice of her, and when it does, consigns her to what is essentially a 14-year long coma. But Kané imagined her as a living, breathing heroine who holds the fort when everything is crumbling and everyone important has left.” (<https://scroll.in/article/828515/indian-mythology-is-a-new-medium-of-choice-for-feminist-narratives-and-its-working>)

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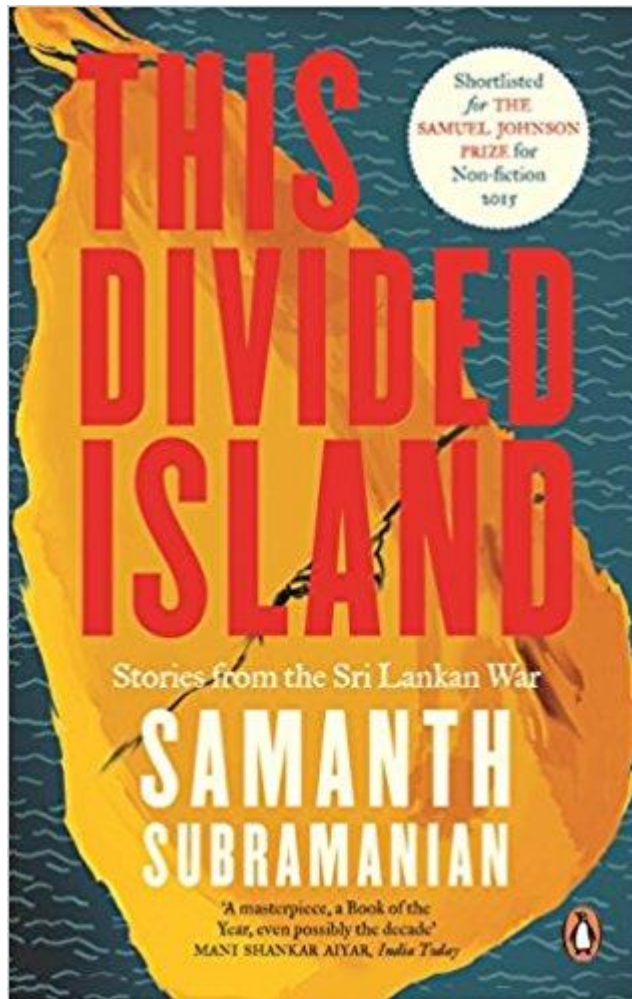
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## A Critical Overview of Select Eezham War Testimonials

R. Samuel Gnanaraj, Research Scholar



### Abstract

The convention of Eezham war writings mainly comprises of narrative techniques, sequential pattern and testimonials. On the whole war writings bring a catalyst of omission and possession because victims on the one hand and assailant on the other establishes their

experiences in their writings. War is a historical incident, whereas literature is of both facts as well as narrative in style. This article brings out the importance of the testimonials in certainty and the objectivity of it. It is a genre where first person narration will be involved in the text. In other words the writer speaks on behalf of the whole community. This paper establishes a critical appreciation of war testimonials with a specific idea about Eezham war. It impacts the writer to share the testimonials of victims about their unusual confrontation. Finally, this article will explore the characteristics of war testimonials and its revelation.

**Keywords:** *Eezham, War, Testimonio, Narration, Victims.*

### **War as an Intended Event**

War is an intended event by extending the terrible and harmful trial in the society. Primarily war happenings mainly occur due to objectionable ideologies, identity basis and communal atrocities. War has no ending; every war which happened earlier in this globe has looted many people's lives. Significantly during the war time many unintended souls and their histories were hidden intentionally. In other words, histories were buried by the dominant group members.

### **War within Independent Sri Lanka – Majoritarian Rule**

After the independence of Sri Lanka, the great tragedy begins to enact. In the late 1950's a great nationalism among the Sinhalese instigated the enforcement between Sinhalese and Tamils. The socio- political force by the Sinhalese government started pervading the whole nation. Especially the Tamils in the north and east part of Sri Lanka became the prey for the Sinhalese. Later the government started to evacuate the Tamils from the country by passing the bill on 'Sinhala Only Act'. This makes the country into the devastated state. Sinhala, the majoritarians started depriving the minority Tamils. This act makes the Tamils to be unknown citizens. The war history took place more than two decades where many number of human souls lost their life. This civil war happened for four times from the year 1993 till 2009 the war desperately seeks the land for the blood. During this time period human rights violations predominantly happened that leads to questioning the sovereignty of the state.

## Genocide

In Eezham War IV genocide reached at its worst form. Sri Lankan government planned strategically, and they demolished half of the Tamil population. The war between Sri Lankan Army and Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eezham had a frequent clash for their natural rights which was denied by the Sri Lankan government.

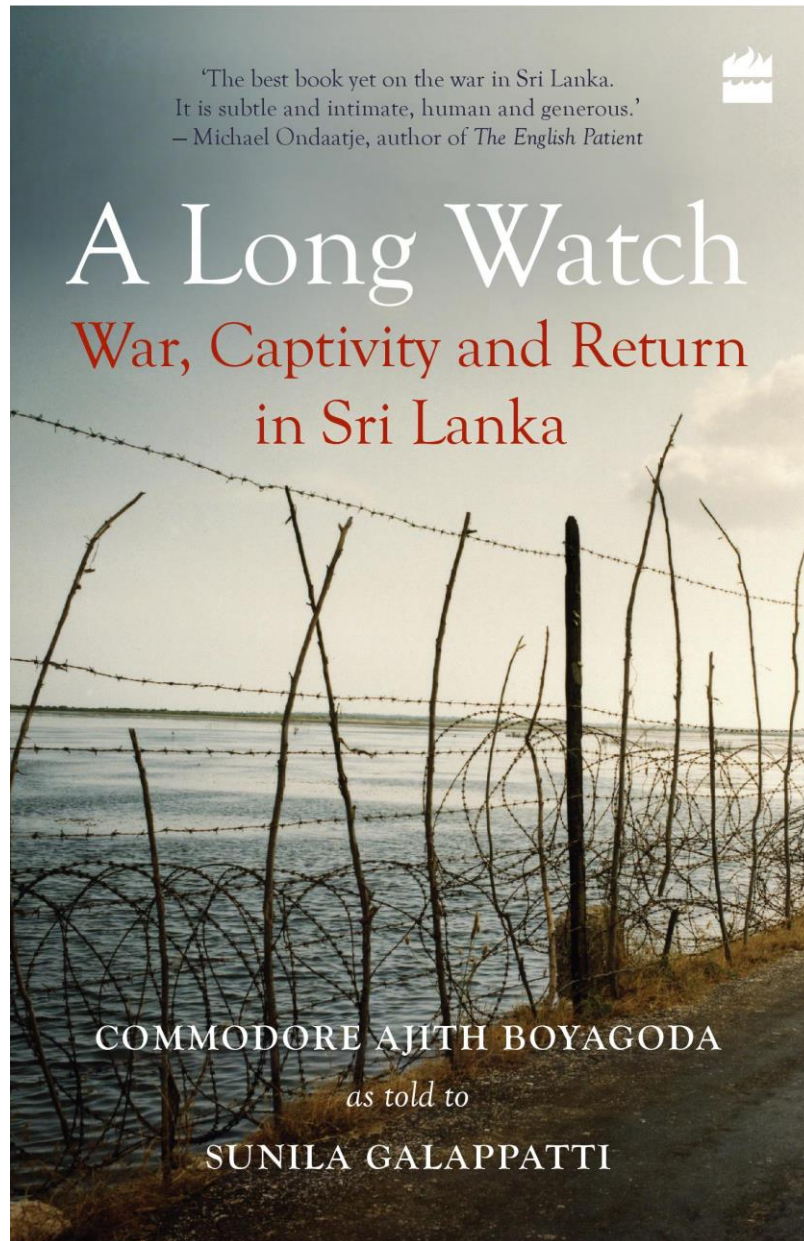
The war causes the division among the people which effects in enmity. The mass killing of Tamil civilians ended as a huge massacre that shows the failure of the entire state. The war causes heavy displacement, refugee camps, murders, rapes and so on. Pragmatically this affects their routine life and they were fully wrapped by fear, stress and anxiety. The main cause is to destroy the Tamil community from their state. For instance, Library of Jaffna in the year 1981 a gang of Sinhalese set on fire, many Tamils histories and documentaries turned to ashes. The deliberate attack makes the whole world to denounce the immorality caused by the mob. The extreme violence leads to cultural destruction,

If the Delegation were asked which act of destruction had the greatest impact on the people of Jaffna, the answer would be the savage attack on this monument to the learning and culture and the desire for learning and culture of the people of Jaffna . . . There is no doubt that the destruction of the Library will leave bitter memories behind for many years. (Sri Lanka 26)

## Testimonio, a New Narrative Genre

Testimonio is a new narrative genre in the 1960's. In general it makes the narrator speaks for the others. John Beverley in *Testimonio: On the Politics of Truth*, clearly advocate the themes as "Each individual testimonio evokes an absent polyphony of other voices, other possible lives and experiences" (34).

## Select Literature



Samanth Subramanian's *This Divided Island* and Sunila Galappatti's *A Long Watch*, the two post-war testimonials bring out their own personal encounters they faced during the eezham war. These two books are taken for this article. It is mainly subjected a critical account of the two texts. Subramanian an Indian Journalist who visited the Sri Lankan nation and collected the real encounters the people faced and brought out an autobiographical book called *This Divided Island*. Galappatti in her biography *A Long Watch War, Captivity and Return in Sri Lanka*, she shared the experiences of Commodore Ajith Boyagoda a Sri Lankan Navy man. By having these

two texts this article brings forth the importance of knowing the nearness and the objectivity in the Eezham war. Primarily the selected testimonials discuss the objectivity of the casualties happened in the Sri Lanka island. The vending of the human souls for burying by bombing, firing and killing the nameless peoples became the important role of the Sri Lankan Army (SLA). This displeased both the writers which is deliberately seen the description of the happened events. Both the texts are mainly corresponding to each other in the subject matter. Subramanian in his book *This Divided Island* he recorded that, “Cars were stopped on the road and, if they were found to contain Tamils, burned without hesitation. Property was looted” (32). The real situation makes the whole world to look this as a strange condition. “. . . In all that shelling, they were trying to wipe out the next generation of Tamils. There’s a racist tendency, even now, that is characteristic of a majority community” (60). The utmost incident faced by the Tamils is to escape from the tyrannical situation. “SOMEWHERE IN A book, I had seen a photograph that haunted me, and when I arrived in Sri Lanka, I dug around online and discovered it again. It dates from July 1983, and it shows a reed-thin Tamil man, stripped naked by a mob, sitting on a stone plinth at a bus stop in a Colombo suburb, his head held in his hands and his body whipcord-tight with despair. It is late night” (Subramanian 32). The description of the incident evokes the human kind and brings forth the disappointment nature towards the community.

### **Self-narrating**

The importance of self-narrating this war incident makes much invasion about the human condition. The whole world shook by knowing this situation, but nothing comes out of it. Galappatti in her book *A Long Watch* she shared commodes saying, “I remember it as a period of terror. It hung in the air. People couldn’t take the coffins of their dead for burial. People could not switch the lights on in their homes” (39). She clearly expresses the panic situation that prevails over the whole nation. “In August 1977, I had been at home on embarkation leave when race riots broke out. Tamil people were being attacked and killed by Sinhala mobs” (25). The personal reference in the testimonials has more authority over the situation. The drastic fear makes the Tamils as a being inflicted citizens. Here both the war testimonials bring out the importance of recording the historical incidents as the history does. Through these testimonials it

is clear that the oppressors oppressed and refused the rights of every individual is clearly recorded in every single incident happened in the war.

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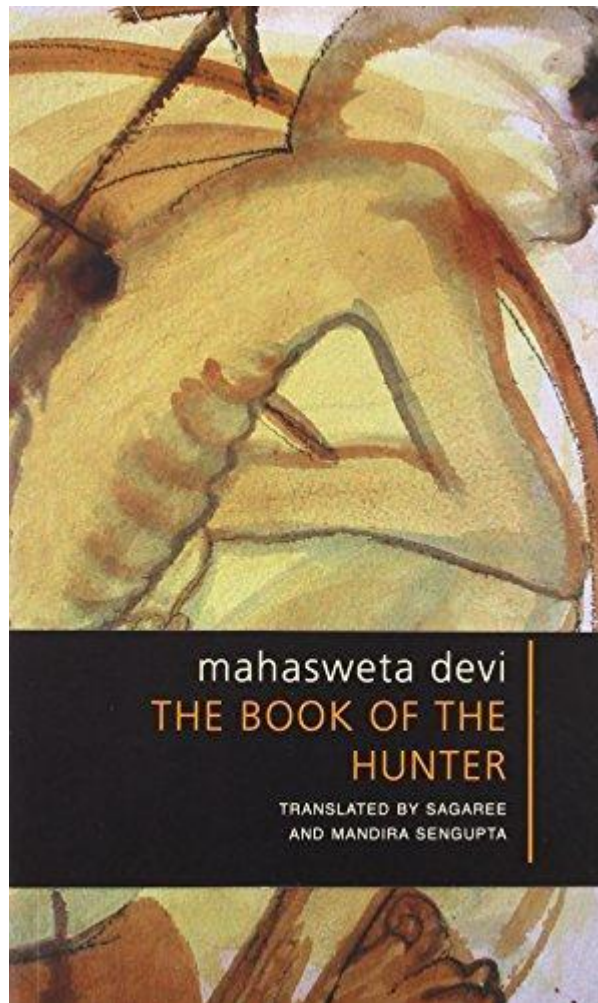
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## Socio-cultural Identity of Shabars in the Novel *The Book of the Hunter*

B. Sangavi, S. Seetha & S. Senthilkumar

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### Abstract

Mahasweta Devi is a Bengali novelist, playwright, short-story writer, journalist and social-activist. Her works are filled with the lives of the downtrodden, the oppressed, the

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Socio-cultural Identity of Shabars in the Novel *The Book of the Hunter*

marginalized and the most neglected. She documents that the life of the tribal. With the pen in her hand becoming a sword, she wages a persistent battle to provide them justice. This research paper aims to study the life of Shabar tribes as depicted in her novel, *The Book of the Hunter* (2002). This research also tries to highlight the importance of preserving the forest, its resources and the culture of the tribal. This research presents how their culture is affected by the mainstream. It stresses the importance of preserving the oral traditions, folklore, myths of the tribals. It tries to change the negative attitude towards the subaltern and be ready for the revolt.

### **Socio-cultural Identity of Shabars in the novel *The Book of the Hunter***

Mahasweta Devi's *The Book of the Hunter* was first published in Bengali as *Byadhkhandain* 1994. It was translated into English and was later published in 2002. It tells the story of Shabar tribes (also known as 'Sabar' or 'Saora') whose population is predominantly found in Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha and West Bengal. This novel is the one in which fact and fiction, legend and history, folklore, myth, oral history coalesce to create a remarkable dramatic whole. This research presents how Mahasweta Devi has tried to describe their socio-cultural Identity, the clash of cultures, the differences between the majority and the minority, the ignorance and lack of understanding of the mainstream in the issues concerning the subaltern 'Shabar' tribes.

### **Chapters of the Novel and Their Focus**

The novel is divided into nine chapters of unequal size. An account of the domestic life of Mukundaram is given in the first chapter. Madhab Ojha, Mukunda's great grandfather, was brought by Birdigar Datta to Daminya to maintain the cycle of daily worship for the gods in the temple, in the Datta's family home and in the village as well. Mukundaram, a Brahmin by caste and the great grandson of Madhab Ojha has been living as a disciple of Gopinath Nandi, the Talukdar in Daminya. He was given land to cultivate along with cattle and other provisions and facilities. However, times changed and a new ruler of the land Mamud Sharif who was a tyrant came to power.

### **Mukunda**

Mukunda begins to feel inconvenient and sensing the danger pays a visit to his uncle Ganesh who has deep knowledge about the affairs of the state and life. He counsels Mukunda to leave Daminya and go to Ararha. Mukunda feels very sad to leave his birth place, particularly where his dear mother Daibaki had planted several trees, cultivated him and had made him a scholar. Daibaki had passed away by then. Mukunda, with his wife Jagadishwari, his son Shibu and daughter Shiuli sets off to a new land. There was a huge jungle called Chandir Bon beyond the town of Ararha.

At the edge of this jungle, there lived a tribe of hunters or Akhetiyas belonging to the Shabar clan. However, Mukunda becomes inquisitive to know about the history of the tribals and meets Tejota, the mother of young Kalya Shabar. Tejota is prominently respected by the Shabars for she possesses great wisdom that has been passed on to her by her own father Danko Shabar who has retreated into the forest to safeguard a mythical and mysterious temple of Abhayachandi, the forest goddess.

### **Abhayachandi**

Tejota narrates the story. She says that in the ancient times, Abhayachandi, the forest goddess gave ‘Abhaya’ (or) ‘reassurance’ to all the tribals that she will safeguard all of them including the trees and animals. There was a king of the town who wanted to construct a temple for Abhaya but he was unaware of how the idol should be. A young Brahmin promised him that he will get the image of Abhaya and went into the forest. He met the Shabar priest and lied to him that he has been disliked and hence needed shelter. He guiled Kapila, the priest’s daughter and entered into the forest. He stole the idol and ran away. Abhayachandi gets flared up and curses him that his family would perish and it really perished as it was said. The goddess also cursed the Shabars for foolishly trusting a Brahman and saying that they would be scattered in all directions and they should never touch the feet of a Brahman or befriend them thereafter.

### **Kalya Shabar**

Kalya Shabar, the son of Tejota is married to his childhood playmate and the daughter of his mother’s friend Phuli. Their affection knows no bounds. Kalya, in particular is so possessive

about Phuli that he does not like her even to speak to Jagadishwari, Mukunda's wife for two reasons – one is that they are town-dwellers and their culture is different and the other is that she is a Brahmin and according to the legend, Abhayachandi, the forest goddess had cursed them for trusting a Brahmin. So, Kalya wants Phuli to abstain herself from interacting with them. He even mercilessly beats her at times. This rage of Kalya perturbs Tejota who wants to pass on her wisdom to him but is doubtful whether he is matured enough to carry it on. Tejota pleads her son to restrain himself,

Kalya! Kalya! Why won't you learn lessons from the forest even now? Do the tigers and deer thrash their females mercilessly like you do to yours? Look at the kingdom of animals and birds! When a tiger is hungry, it kills a deer; an elephant eats leaves and twigs from the bamboo and banyan tree, but there is no needless killing, violence or destruction. Meanwhile, you beat Phuli, get angry whenever you see town folk-you burn like a hot fire! You have hopes of getting knowledge. I want to give it to you. I do, but now I am afraid and I have doubts. (100-101)

Kalya is so proud of his own tribal customs and heritage that he does not like his wife Phuli to be so subservient to go from house to house of the elites and sell. He feels it is below their decency and decorum. Phuli, in a conversation with her friend Sana says, "He dislikes my doing so and says, it's one thing for you to sell meat and skin in the market because that's what we tribals do. But I won't let you go selling door to door in town." (Devi, 86) This thought-process of preserving human dignity, individuality and reverence for the status of Shabartribals is reflected at another instance when Kalya tells his mother Tejota the reason why he doesn't like Phuli to be in proximity with Mukunda's wife or any other upper caste/class people, "They give her handouts, as if she were a beggar, Ma! Rice, coconuts, bananas and all kinds of other things! Nowadays Shabars do see other folks too. The time is gone when we were the only people! Their houses are nice, they talk well and have good hearts. Phuli sees how they are and judges me by their standards." (121)

This may appear to be as inferiority complex on the part of Kalya but at a deeper level, it is a lamentation and despair at the insecurity encroaching on the Shabar community. It is not just

the matter of accepting the basic needs, provisions and help of the elites. It is not just materialistic subservience but it is also emotional, social and cultural. In a way, it is eclipsing their identity. Kalya cannot digest the idea of comparison or relative merit with those of the elites. The Shabars have their own code of conduct, their own paradigms; their own values which they feel should not be put to test or made to come into clash with those of the elites.

voice of the Shabar community

### **Voice of the Shabar Community**

The views of Kalya are actually the voice of the Shabar community. His words reflect the apprehension and the very many fears of the Shabars as they are under perpetual threat from the geographical, material, conceptual and cultural invasion of the mainstream/elites which may lead to the erosion of their own. The thoughts of Tejota justify this,

...the town and its people would spread out, and the dwellers at the edge would set their eyes on the other's houses, yards, ways of living and customs. The younger generation would be influenced. Sana's family had learned to save. This year their roof was not made of leaves, but of hay. It was quite an event to see Shabars suddenly smoothing mud over their house walls and painting pictures on them! Their ways were quite different from the other Shabars. Sana's husband did not thrash her, and Sana had oil in her hair and rice in store. There was no stopping the times from changing! A Shabar understood that the more others encroached, the more his existence would be threatened. (121-122)

Thus, in the world of Shabars, everything is similar to the nature that they see around them.

### **Animal World**

The laws that govern the animal world, the forest and those laws explored by Abhayachandi are to be followed. Any attempt to go away from them is likely to doom them. The town-dwellers have a different idea about the Shabars. Kalar-ma, the house-maid of Mukunda makes an insight, "They're a wild race, and do they know anything? Never mind about them! Whatever comes out of the jungle, they'll eat it scalded or roasted. They won't work on any schedule, they won't farm, and they'll retort, why plough when there's a forest?" (76) However, it is also to be noted that the Shabars are not lazy and irresponsible. DankoShabar, the headman of the community before seeing that Kalya is married to Phuli says:

Kalya is my grandson, the eldest son of my only daughter. So now I'm going to make a rule that only five deer skins may be taken. And one or two wild boars – no one will ever give more than that. You've got a daughter's wedding and she's under Abhaya's protection-what's the point of inviting Ma's curse by killing too many deer, tigers or boars? (77-78)

### **Close Bond with Nature**

In general, the tribals have always enjoyed a close bond with nature. The tribals share a deep intimacy with their forest habitats. Similarly, the Shabars also maintained a close affinity with forest. Their life is inseparable from the forest is a blessed one. They are guarded by their deity, Abhyachandi, who also provides to all their needs. The Shabars believe that their Goddess blesses them with fearlessness. Talking about the greatness of their deity, Kalya, the hunter tells the Brahmin, “And to everyone and everything! The Forest, the animals, the birds, and the Shabars – she gives them all courage and keeps them under her wing...” (44). Abhaya is their reference to the forest in which they live. They consider the forest itself to be their mother. The Shabars are devoted to the forest. They are fully aware of the fact that “A Shabar is where the jungle is”. (86)

### **Diverse Tribal Identity**

In this novel, Mukunda's discussion with Kalya gives him the insights into their diverse tribal identity, and he learns their immense cultural heritage through their verbal experience of myth and legend pass on to him by Tejota. He personally observes the dreadful conditions and humiliation encountered by the Shabars with the dominant groups in the village society, and the tragic impact of the loss of their traditional forest lands and their cultural traditions.

### **Tragic End**

In *The Book of the Hunter*, Kalya's emotional endeavor to recover his racial and cultural identity and pride through a re-enactment of the ancestral myth of the hunt ends in tragedy. As their old traditions and ways of life undergo the inevitable changes, they are forced to rewrite and re-enact their own traditions. Here, Mahasweta Devi explores the cultural values of the shabars and how they manage with the slow destruction of their way of life, as more and more forest land

gets cleared to make way for settlements. She uses the lives of two couples, the Brahman mukundaram and his wife, and the young Shabars, Phuli and Kalya, to capture the contrasting socio-cultural norms of the rural society of the time. Thus, Mahasweta Devi, through this novel wants to create awareness among the mainstream that their ambitiousness to encroach and influence the forests and influence the lives of the tribals. There has resulted in chaos and conflicts. She intends to say that the lives, beliefs and traditions of Shabars should be respected and it is as well the duty of the mainstream to protect the forests and way of life over there. It is not just physical but also spiritual.

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## The Theme of Alienation and Identity Crises in Kiran Desai's *The Inheritance of Loss*

S. Nusrath Sulthana, M.A., B.Ed., M.Phil. Candidate

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Kiran Desai

Courtesy: <http://www.bennington.edu/bennington-network/outsized-impact/kiran-desai>

### Abstract

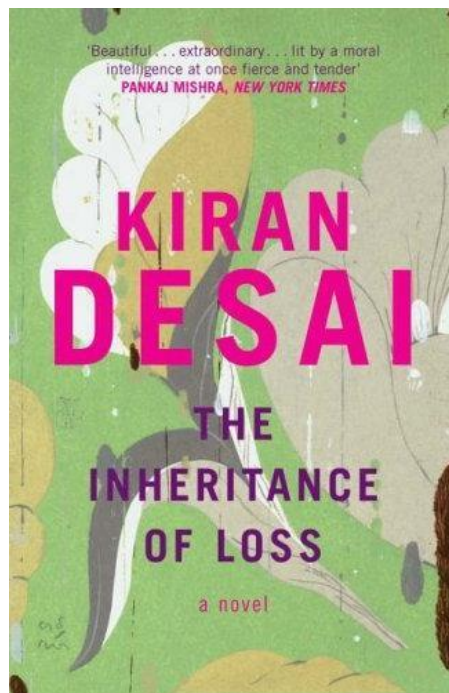
Kiran Desai, the winner of the prestigious Man Booker prize, 2006, for her second novel *The Inheritance of Loss*. *The Inheritance of Loss* can be viewed as a Diasporic novel. The various themes which are intertwined in the novel are identity crises, alienation, multi-culturalism, isolation and loss of identity. The story is centred on two main characters, Biju and Sai. Biju is an illegal immigrant living in

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the United States. He is the son of a cook working for Sai's grandfather. Sai is a young girl living in mountainous Kalimpong with her maternal grandfather Jemubhai Patel, the cook and a female dog Mutt. Desai switches the narration between both points of view in the novel set in 1986 in the backdrop of the Gorkhaland Movement. The present paper analyzes the identity becomes the core issues in any exploration of diaspora, especially diasporic identity that is composed of various factors and sub-factors.

**Keyword:** Diaspora, Alienation, Identity crises, multi-culturalism, immigrant, and loss of culture.



## Introduction

Kiran Desai's second novel is about the rigid class systems that exist in India and abroad among Indians, and the struggles that the people face within these classes after colonialism. The novel presents us with a three-way narrative split, relating the stories of the sixteen-year-old Sai, her bitter grandfather and Biju, their cook's son, who tries to make his way as an illegal migrant worker in New York.

## Different but Same!

This narrative provides us with an interesting vantage point from which to view two very different sides of the same issue, as Biju's negotiation of his identity as an illegal immigrant in a foreign city is contrasted with the more complex situation of Sai and her grandfather who find themselves as

strangers in their homeland due to their education, language and wealth. On two opposite ends of the globe, in two vastly discrepant modernities, these characters are at odds with their surroundings and effectually in similar positions of marginality and strangeness.

### **Sufferings of Illegal Immigrant**

In New York, Biju finds himself cast in a strange world, a world where sympathy, fellow feeling and peaceful co-existence does not seem to exist. He spends his time changing jobs, enduring deplorable conditions and trying to dodge the immigration authorities of the United States. As he is an illegal immigrant, he is forced to work for very low wages and experience extreme servitude to his employers. At one point of time, fed up with the meanness of his various employers, he makes a pathetic appeal to his current employer, Harish - Harry to sponsor him for a Green Card,

Without us living like pigs, said Biju, what business do  
You have? This is how you make your money, paying us  
Nothing because of you know we can't do anything,  
Making us work day and night because we are illegal.  
Why don't you sponsor us for our green cards? (188).

### **A Profound Chasm**

Even though Biju is desperate for a green card, at the core of his heart, he is crying for India and its soothing familiarity. America has created a profound chasm in him. When Biju makes telephone calls to his father in India, his imagination vividly recreates the atmosphere of Kalimpong where his father resides. He can, “feel the pulse of the forest, smell the humid air , the green-black lushness; he could imagine all its different textures, the plumage of banana, the stark spear of the cactus, the delicate gestures of ferns...” (230).

### **Difficulties Faced by Immigrant**

Sai is main female character in this novel. She is studied in a convent school where English was the medium of teaching and consequently she learnt English and English Culture. After coming to live with her father, she meets Gyan, the Nepali tutor. Their different attitudes towards the western culture threaten their relationship. Sai eats with a fork and Gyan uses his hands as he is not

aware of the western ways of eating. Later when he has a dinner with the judge, his discomfiture with the fork and knife is shown again. But, interestingly, when he dines at the judge's house later on, he feels embarrassed for the way he uses the fork and the knife. He suffers from an inferiority complex but later on he refuses to adopt the western culture and retreats to his own culture.

### **A Sense of Recognition**

Gyan joins 'Gorkha National Liberation Front', he admits to "the compelling pull of history and found his pulse leaping to something that felt entirely authentic" (160), and recovers a sense of recognition by mocking at the judge's mimicry of the western lifestyle but such attempts are nothing than illusions as Ashcroft maintains "within the syncretic reality of a post-colonial society it is difficult to return to an idealized pure pre-colonial cultural condition" (Ashcroft 108). The fact that today the whole world is toward a 'Global Village' makes cross-cultural exchanges and influences inevitable. Grown up in a convent school, is influenced by western culture and impressed by her grandfather's use of better English than other people but the idea that the Indian culture is inferior is intolerable to her.

### **Conclusion**

Kiran Desai successfully describes the Alienation and the encounter of east and the west with the help of two characters. Both, the Judge and Biju have been immigrated to west in the hope of their better life. The Judge after a career in the Indian Civil Services that followed his education in Cambridge in the 1930s settles in Kalimpong. His own feeling of hatred for his skin colour, family, community and traditions makes him an insignificant character. Another is Biju, the cook's son, struggles as an illegal immigrant in America, and the only character in the book who is unwanted in the country he lives in. In the whole journey for success, this exploited, poor, homeless character struggles for his identity which makes him able to save himself from being an inconsequential character. Thus, the feeling of being marginalized compels them to come back to India. Kiran Desai weaves a story full of juxtaposition that is both heart breaking and full of hope.

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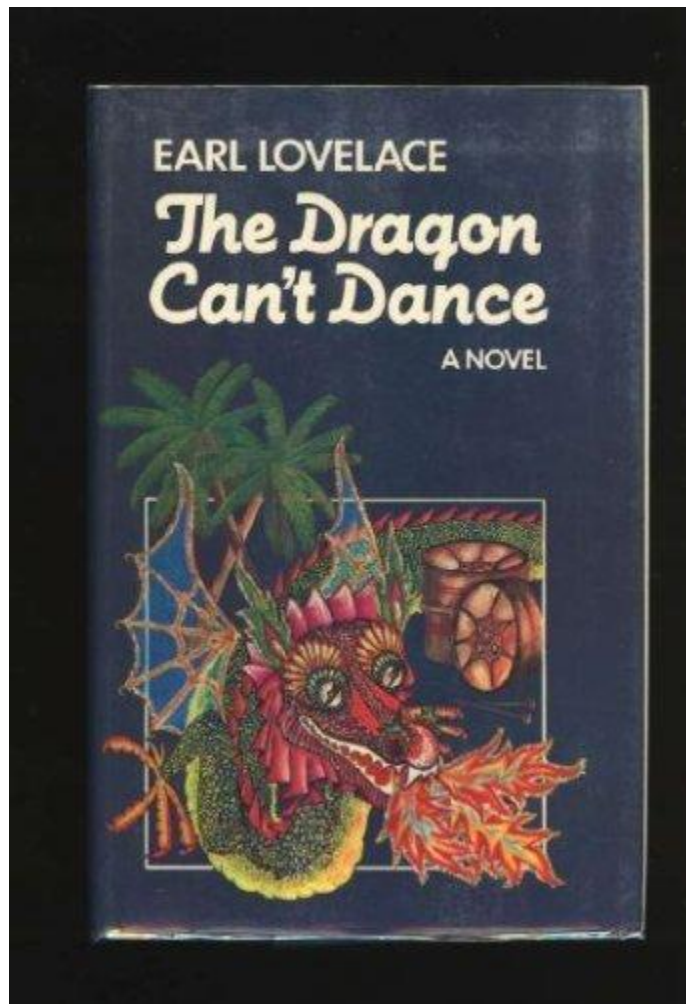
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Search for Identity in Earl Lovelace's  
*The Dragon Can't Dance*

R. Udhayanila

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**Abstract**

The present study mainly concerns particularly about the search of identity and the struggles faced by the protagonist Aldrick Prospect in search of his self-identity by dressing

himself as a dragon. The story focuses on the struggles of a particular society on the basis of Carnival. The suppression of minorities in the Trinidadian society were shown clearly in the by the major communities. Also, it deals with the cultural identity among the Indian settlers in the Cavalry Hills and also the preponderance of the costume solemnity celebrated in the particular place.

**Key Words:** Earl Lovelace, *The Dragon Can't Dance*, Cavalry Hill, Self- Identity, Dragon, Carnival.

### **Post-colonial Theory**

Post-colonial theory is about the imbalance of power created by colonization. When we think of post-colonial theory, we must think about 20<sup>th</sup> century and colonization in the Indian subcontinent, northern and central Africa, and South Asia. Post-Colonial Theory focuses on literature developed by these new nations (e.g., *Things Fall Apart* by Chinua Achebe and *Midnight Children* by Salman Rushdie.)

It also focuses on European responses to colonialism (e.g., *A Passage to India* by E.M. Foster and *Heart of Darkness* by Joseph Conrad). Another type of writing using post-colonial theory is the creative works on immigrant groups that moved to or migrated to a new nation. Post-colonialism emphasizes the importance of the cultural, economic, political and military dominance of the past.

### **Earl Lovelace and *The Dragon Can't Dance***

Earl Lovelace, a West Indian novelist, usually analyzes the changes happening in the society. Also, he talks about the problems between the rural and urban society. *The Dragon Can't Dance* (1976) is a novel by Lovelace which deals with the clash between the higher and lower class people in the slum of Port of Spain. It is the novel that revolves around the major character Aldrick Prospect, a young man who struggled to create his dragon for the upcoming Carnival festival.



**Earl Lovelace**

Courtesy: <http://metro.co.uk/2011/01/12/earl-lovelace-uncertainty-has-made-religion-become-more-extreme-626080/>

Camera Press/Laif

### **Dance as a Dragon**

The novel focuses on the struggles of an individual to dance himself as a dragon in the Carnival festival. Even the relation between the high-class people society with the people like Aldrick is directly based on the racial divisions and colonial legacies. The readers could understand the mental struggle of the main character Aldrick, who is longing for his personhood. The search is of a piece with two events, both of which are full of symbolic resonances: the abortive rebellion some of the residents stage, and the annual rite of Carnival.

*The Dragon Can't Dance* is considered to be the fundamental factors in the creative and historical worlds as a novel of Post Colonialism and racial divergence. The novel deals with the past events happened in the different regions in Trinidad society. The usage of irony in the novel adds strength to the novel. Lovelace used subjective form to describe the racially discriminated society. He recovers the importance for self-search in order to show the ugliness of the society, how the poor individuals are dumped under the name of culture.



In this novel, Lovelace analyzes a new intuition on Caribbean literature by relating the festival of carnival in radical, ethnic and political issues. Carnival plays an important role in Trinidadian culture. This novel employs the importance of this carnival and how it is affecting a self both physically and mentally. The struggle faced by the character Aldrick is shown directly without any deviation. There are many examples quoted by Lovelace to make the readers to understand the exact situation in the culture.

### **Cleothilda**

It is through the character of Miss. Cleothilda, who considered herself as the ‘Queen of Band’, a proud mulatto widow owner of a parlor. She used to respect the people of Cavalry hills only when the festival comes. The opening chapter itself recounts the yearly Calvary Hill community preparations for the Carnival. The Afro-Trinidadian government of the fictional Cavalry Hill neighbourhood, colloquially called “The Yard”, negotiates, regulates, and publicizes social positions through costumes and clothing.

### **Celebrating Self-imprisonment**

*The Dragon Can't Dance* too celebrates the self-imprisonment within the masks of suffering. What is remarkable about his novel is that Earl Lovelace is not writing about a particular group alone but is concerned with a very human problem such as the selfhood of an individual in society. He emphasizes the fact that a person living in a heterogeneous, multiracial society in the Caribbean cannot afford to be obsessed with Africanness or Indianness alone as it is only one aspect of his complete personality.

### **Vision of a Transformed Society**

It is to Pariag that Lovelace imparts the vision of a transformed society in which the fusion of the music of steel band, sitar and flute is an epiphanic expression of cultural pluralism, the antithesis of cultural extinction. All the characters in the novel stand for some value in life. They are not there simply as deprived people, but they are striving to discover the self in them. Aldrick’s central question in the novel is “Is he going to continue to play the role of dragon?” and Pariag’s central question is that he should relate himself to the crowd.

## What Is a Man?

In the novel almost all the characters are liberated towards the end. Aldrick's is liberated in the sense he realizes it is not enough playing the role of dragon; Sylvia is liberated in the sense she rejects Guy and returns to Aldrick; Pariag that he should relate to his country, to the largest society in which he lives even though his uncle offers him a lucrative job. Earl Lovelace in this novel is simultaneously engaged in examining the quality of heroes and our wisdom in choosing them.

The most important question in the novel is "what is a man?" (DCD102) assumes philosophical dimension in the novel. The search for the meaning of life has been a perennial one that has haunted philosophers, poets, novelists since innumerable centuries. Earl Lovelace peruses such a meaning in a very simple and lucid manner. The concern of selfhood plays a vital role in every writing of Lovelace. It is only through the protagonist Lovelace succeeds in portraying the struggle for selfhood in his words.

Aldrick's dragon role is given positive value for his usefulness. Furthermore, Aldrick playing the dragon becomes obsolete as he falls into a trance of Carnival, which mimics authority. His liberation is an act of defiance that shows the resistance against cultural effacement and obliteration. This is an attempt to restore a culture against the powerful influence of colonialism. Lovelace's description of the dragon inevitably carries centuries of complex historical proceedings of Carnival, which are rooted in stories of post war Caribbean. "Dance! If the words mourn the death of a neighbour, the music insists that your dance; if it tells the troubles of a brother, the music says dance" (DCD 5-6).

## Significant of Dragon

The dragon symbolizes forgotten values for Carnival for instance the fight for emancipation and freedom from slavery. Aldrick constructs a powerful masculine identity in his dragon mask, which is an instance of 'overlapping territories'. Here histories form different nations intertwine and run over one another that resulted from the intrusion of empire. Aldrick's act of sewing together every thread and scales of his grandfather is an adventure of his journey of

his survival as his work in a flood of memories. Through the artifice of the mask of Lovelace overlaps and intertwines the culture of Africa to the Caribbean.

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## **Revived Reverence: A Reading of Reminiscence in Amish Tripathi's *Shiva Trilogy***

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### **Abstract**

Women are educated, they work, speak for themselves, planning their life, hanging out with men but to every action they fight, most of them fail to do what they want; they rely on their family. Especially in India, women accept and adapt to this situation since birth. If the literature turns its back to the history for these predicaments of women, most importantly in India, the people's ambiguous attitude towards the mythological stories, folk tales, and legends is to be blamed. The social structure and life style of Indians are based on the religion scriptures they believe in. People in India generally refer *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana* to construct their lives. And, it is common to everyone's knowledge that some women in those texts are depicted largely as cruel, envious, dim-witted, subservient and beautiful which are the causes of destruction. Unlike the other interpreters, Amish Tripathi, as the grandson of a Sanskrit scholar and Pandit in Benaras, revered women mythological characters in his *Shiva Trilogy*. He materializes power and fire from his women characters comparing to male counterparts. The elements of 'phantabula' (portmanteau of fantasy and myth) were well-employed; Amish has retold myth in his imaginative ways, but the essence of spirituality has not lost throughout the series.

**Keywords:** Amish Tripathi, *Shiva Trilogy*, Indian society, depiction of women characters and 'phantabula'

### **Women in Science**

The founder of psychoanalysis, Sigmund Freud is an Austrian Neurologist; in his view the woman should soften a man surely not weaken him. According to Freud in scientific way, the right side of human brain goes for emotional decisions and the left side for rational thinking. Both brains are connected by corpus callosum which balances right and left side brain to have conclusive decision. Women have heavy corpus callosum compared to men, so they tend to

think both rationally and emotionally whereas men have either emotional thoughts or rational thoughts. So, it is expected of women to take neutral decisions in certain issues, intervene in the decisions made by men.

To certain extent, Freud's concept is acceptable but in action, mostly the intervention of women is disregarded. Or else, men would go for misinterpretations of Freud's words like Coventry Patmore.

### **Phantom of the Society**

The poet Patmore published his poem "The Angel in the House" in 1854; revised it in 1862 which was not that famous until Virginia Woolf dissected it in feminist view. In "Professions for Women", Virginia Woolf described the Angel presented by Patmore as,

She was intensely sympathetic. She was immensely charming. She was utterly unselfish. She excelled in the difficult arts of family life. She sacrificed herself daily. If there was chicken, she took the leg; if there was a draught she sat in it--in short, she was so constituted that she never had a mind or a wish of her own, but, preferred to sympathize always with the minds and wishes of others. Above all--I need not say it---she was pure. (Woolf 2)

These are not the expectations of women in nineteenth or twentieth century society alone; even today, there are views that how good those days women were?; having such 'pure' woman are gifted, what is wrong with these feminist type women; seeing and talking critically.

Women are educated, they work, they speak for themselves, planning their life, hanging out with men but to every action they fight, most of them fail to do what they want; they rely on their family. Especially in India, women accept and adapt to this situation since birth.

### ***Shiva Trilogy***

Amish Tripathi's first series *Shiva Trilogy* is well-liked even by non-literature readers. His debut book *The Immortals of Meluha* was published in 2010 and acclaimed positive reviews all over India. People waited for the sequel *The Secret of Nagas* till 2011 and the last book of the series, *The Oath of Vayuputhras* was published in 2013. The series focused Shiva, a common man who stole the hearts of all India to consider him as worthy of being Mahadev, the God of Gods.

In his series, Amish mentioned the *Laws of Manu* often, another most important Hindu scripture. People tend to accept and recall Manu's patriarchal words, for example:

Men must make their women dependent day and night and keep under their own control those who are attached to sensory objects. Her father guards her in childhood, her husband guards her in youth, and her sons guard her in old age. A woman is not fit for independence. A father who does not give her away at the proper time should be blamed, and a husband who does not have sex with her at the proper time should be blamed; and the son who does not guard his mother when her husband is dead should be blamed. (42)

But the same scripture which verbalizes the importance of revering women is accustomed to be ignored by the law makers. It is said in the *Laws of Manu*,

Fathers, brothers, husbands, and brothers-in-law who wish for great good fortune should revere these women and adorn them. The deities delight in places where women are revered, but where women are not revered all rites are fruitless. Where the women of the family are miserable, the family is soon destroyed, but it always thrives where the women are not miserable. Homes that are cursed by women of the family who have not been treated with due reverence are completely destroyed, as if struck down by witchcraft. Therefore, men who wish to prosper should always revere these women with ornaments, clothes, and food at celebrations and festivals. (43)

Unlike the other interpreters, Amish, as the grandson of Sanskrit scholar and Pandit in Benaras, revered women mythological characters in his *Shiva Trilogy*. He materializes power and fire from his women characters comparing to male counterparts of those women. He retold myth in his imaginative ways, but the essence of spirituality has not lost throughout the series. In settings as well as characterization, Amish brought in the natural aspects of Hindu mythology.

## Phantabula

The elements of 'phantabula' (portmanteau of fantasy and myth) are well-employed by Amish in his *Shiva Trilogy*. The characters were taken from Hindu sacred texts; unlike the

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Revived Reverence: A Reading of Reminiscence in Amish Tripathi's *Shiva Trilogy*

twisted mythologies of women being submissive, weak, and meek, Amish revered the women characters for what they are in their roles. Not only had the major character Sati, every woman in the series was noted for their physical, psychological, behavioral, and intelligent skills. They were respected for their skills and actions, and their sex was not highlighted anywhere. And the jibes in some places of the series were used to mock at the people who qualify men when they generously consider women as equal; people forget that women are not willingly in desperate need of approval from men for how they are. Our social structure drove them to the state of fighting for basic rights in the beginning and now equal status as well as respect.

### **Mythology of Lord Shiva**

Not everyone in India knows the details of Hindu sacred texts; very few people of the 21<sup>st</sup> century read *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana*. About Lord Shiva, people have imprecise idea about his family details and esoteric sports (*Thiruvilayadal*). As in Myth, Shiva is known as destroyer of evil. His wife Parvati or Uma is the Goddess of fertility, love, and devotion. Parvati is the mother of Ganesh and Karthick; Ganesh is not the biological son of Shiva. Hindus worship Ardhanarishvara which implies the half man-woman, the androgynous form; the right side of the body is Lord Shiva and left is meant for Goddess Parvati. In *Puranas*, there are too many versions of stories to this unique form. People call Parvati as Shakti because of her divine strength and power; the name Kali is also attributed to her which represents her righteous anger and its results. The stories about Goddess Kali as well have importance in *Puranas*; on the whole when the Goddess is in Parvati's form, she calms the angered God Shiva whereas when she is in Kali's form, and it is the role of God Shiva calm Goddess Kali.

Shiva abodes in Kailash and he wears Snake as necklace; there are many stories about that but the most likable and logical, scientific one is that the energy body has 7 chakras. Among 7, the vishuddhi chakra is positioned in the throat and the chakra has strong association with snakes because the snakes are sensitive to certain energies. The vishuddhi chakra is noted for stopping poison and the snake carries poison. And the symbol of Ganga in his matted hair iconography also has stories.

The skillful scholar Amish had intertwined all the mythological details, history, and geography of India to frame *Shiva Trilogy*. The first book *The Immortals of Meluha* set with

the historical fact of India that Meluha is the pure, near perfect society which indicates Indus valley civilization.

## **Vigorous Women Characters**

### **Ayurvati**

The first notable woman character introduced by Amish in the novel is Ayurvati, the best doctor in the land. The name of the doctor character is derived from an ancient Indian form of medicine, Ayurved. Dhanvantri is believed to be the God of Ayurved. It is natural for Amish to create a Brahmin male doctor, Dhanvanth but the author chooses to introduce Ayurvati, a Brahmin woman doctor who is best. Throughout the series Ayurvati accompanies Shiva and his entourage even in war field. She is a great doctor but humble with the people who treat her worthy. She is the one who first identifies Shiva as Neelkanth. She is intelligent in her profession; she is no warrior, but she respects Kshatriyas and treats even the enemy clan without grudges.

When Ayurvati treats Ganesh, she is not bothered of his deformity and she is brought up to consider Nagas as evil but as a doctor, she serves as a giver of life. She points out her unhappiness with him because he is the killer of Brahaspathi, the scientist. She says, “It’s sad you don’t have his untainted heart ... I admired Brahaspathi. He was not just a good man, but a fount of knowledge. The world suffered when he died before his time” (SN 305). The scene ends with the words, “She yanked his bandage open. Hard enough to make it sting, but soft enough to not cause any serious damage” (SN 306). She never hesitates to express her opinion and she does what she believes in; the moment she argues with Parvateshwar is the best example,

Ayurvati shook her head in irritation, but her voice was unfailingly polite. ‘Parvateshwar, you are making a mistake. You are pitting yourself against your living God. You are defending the Somras, which even you believe has turned evil. And you are doing all this to serve some “purpose”. Does the purpose defending Meluha justify all the mistakes that you know you are making?’ (OV 126)

### **Sati**

Sati, one of the major characters is the daughter of Daksha and Veerini, the wife of Shiva, the sister of Kali and the mother of Ganesh and Karthick. These are all her societal



identities. For her, she is more than these; she is a dignified, loyal, loving, law-abiding warrior. She stands for justice, speaks for her righteousness, she sees herself as a kshatriya not as a princess. Every other character admires her actions not mere beauty. Brahaspati says to Shiva, “She is not just a good woman. She is one of the finest I have ever met. She is beautiful, honest, straight-forward, brave and intelligent ...” (IM 204). At first Shiva is clueless to get her love, she is not a simple woman but something more, and a Vasudev pandit explains this to Shiva, “She gets many things from the people who love her. What she doesn’t get is what she craves for the most-respect” (IM 217).

To save a woman in distress, Sati fights a pack of wild dogs when she is just sixteen. After giving birth to her second child, she goes into the village Ichchawar to fight a liger and its pack of lions. She strongly believes that the strong should protect weak. And, when a situation forces her to choose either her husband or her son; she attempts to reason it out with Shiva. She loves Shiva dearly but not giving in for his anger; she decides what she must do and ready to face the consequences. She gives importance for justice than love and so she stands against her father.

Though Sati as commander has saved most of her cavalry from Meluhans’ trick attack; with her scarred face she thinks of her betterment. The novelist Amish strongly suggests through her temperament, that the characteristics of masculine are not meant only for men. The epitome of all these structure of her personality is her last battle with the Egyptians. Even in her last breath she volunteers for the duel of Aten and though her limbs are mutilated and with the heavy loss of blood, she fights as a skillful warrior to save as many men as possible. The leader of the assassins, Swuth finds her as a most challenging opponent and to his disbelief, he considers her as his final kill which is the point the author reveres a woman for what she is capable of. Sati is not an individual representation of goddess but her character proves that the women are not ‘some stupid baby-producing machines’ as Swuth commented of her.

## **Kali**

Her sister Kali’s anger is legendary, and it is cited in a few situations and also her affection for her step-son Ganesh is expounded. Her righteous actions to protect her land as queen and Brangas as human are praiseworthy traits. Along with Kali, there is Suparna, the

representative of the people of Garuda and another fearsome warrior who leads Nagas into the war.

### **Anandmayi**

The character sketch of Anandmayi is admirable and she is the best representation of Chandravanshi way of life. In the beginning she seems to be arrogant and break all the conventions reserved for women in the society. She is an eye-opener who upholds one of the core concepts of the series, “Contradictions are a part of nature” (IM 381). Her abundant love for Parvateshwar and her constant attempts to get his love are all charming. She shows that the women are capable of doing extraordinary things for the life they decided to have.

### **Veerini**

Veerini, the queen of Meluha behaves too much like a submissive wife of Daksha from the beginning and in the end as queen’s dignity she fulfills her role and face death spiritually. She expresses her remorse to Kali as “It is not a wife’s duty to support her husband in his misdeeds. In fact, a good wife corrects her husband when he is wrong, even if she has to ram it down its throat” (OV 514). Outwardly her role looks cowardly, but the inaction takes too much courage and she fights hard and long to be a queen, wife, and mother.

### **Minor Women Characters**

Sati’s friend Krittika, Parashuram’s mother Renuka, and Brahaspati’s ladylove Tara have little but significant roles in the novel. Krittika’s compassion, Renuka’s doggedness and Tara’s devotion and resolution are adding color to the series. Another minor woman character Kanakhala is the Prime Minister of Meluha. She is an active, devoted, and trustworthy woman. In her last minutes of life, she chooses dharma over her loyalty. She does what is right and commits suicide which is also an act of courage in her part because she rightly believes, “Dharma protects those who protect it” (OV 436).

### **A Man of Letters**

The survey of the series validates that the author Amish draws on more of his creativity on characters. In his interview in ‘The Hindu’, Amish answers the question related to the issues he directs in his book as, “Our society is at war with women... I make my women characters very strong”. The reconstruction on the image of Lord Shiva and his family in the minds of

Hindus is quite challenging; Amish's determination to fulfill his learning in appropriate way is radiating in every aspect of the series.

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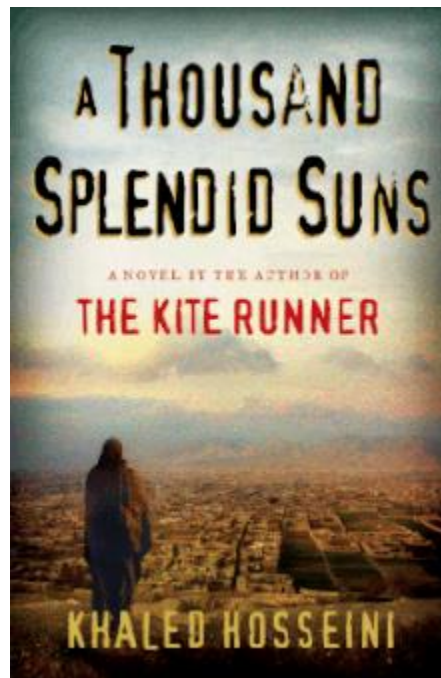
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Revived Reverence: A Reading of Reminiscence in Amish Tripathi's *Shiva Trilogy*

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## Picturizing the Characters of Afghan Men in Khaled Hosseini's *A Thousand Splendid Suns*

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### Abstract

This paper deals with picturizing the characters of Afghan men in the Post-Colonial novel *A Thousand Splendid Sun* by Khaled Hosseini. It focuses on how the men characters plays vital role in Mariam and Laila's life. It implies the both darker and lighter side of men character. This paper portrays Jalil, Rasheed's brutality and Hakim, Tariq's respect toward women. This novel deals with Feminism and Women's Right. This paper focuses on the importance of

characterization of the attitudes of males towards women and it also mainly focuses on male character and their effects on women in every situation.

**Keywords:** Khaled Hosseini's *A Thousand Splendid Suns*, Diaspora, Post-Colonial, Betrayal, Dominance, Equal Rights, Love, Care and Acceptance.

### ***A Thousand Splendid Suns* and Khaled Hosseini**

*A Thousand Splendid Suns* is a post-colonial novel written by Khaled Hosseini. He is an Afghan born American novelist and his notable works are *The Kite Runner* (2007), *A Thousand Splendid Suns* (2007) and *And The Mountains Echoed* (2013). The novel *A Thousand Splendid Suns* depicts the vivid imagery of Afghanistan. He deeply portrays the women society and their means. The tribulation of people and survival is the deep core of the novel.

### **Two Sides of Men**

Hosseini brings out the current story of Afghanistan. He depicts two sides of men. Jalil and Rasheed's brutality and Tariq and Hakim's care and love for women. The author brings out the visible controversies of male characters.

In the same society, men reflected domination, support and care for women. The characterization of Jalil and Rasheed in the novel represents the traditional hood and both are considered as typical men of Afghan-Society.

### **Jalil**

Jalil the wealthiest man who owned many properties. He had three wives and nine children. The main protagonist of the novel is Mariam, who is Jalil's illegitimate child and her mother Nana, who was abused and cheated by Jalil. All the faults of Jalil were poured on Nana, who carries the burden of the family. Mariam trusted her father that he loves her truly but once again he cheats his daughter. When Nana died, Mariam was taken to Jalil's home. His wives forced Mariam to marry Rasheed. At that time Jalil remained silent and dumb. If he had a little concern about her, he would have saved her life. "In a thin, thread bare voice, "Goddamn it. Mariam, don't this to me". (Hossieni 49) this quote state that Jalil is disloyal to his daughter. He

does not love her truly. In the beginning of the novel, Jalil brings many gifts for Mariam. But all his love and gifts were only temporary. Jalil does not allow her to get educated.

When Mariam went to Jalil's home and had an acquaintance with his daughter Nilofar, Mariam thinks that Nilofar's toys and gifts were costlier than gift of her. Finally, she realizes the betrayal of Jalil.

Once again, Mariam's life is influenced by her husband Rasheed, who initially treats her in a good way, but later, because of her continuous miscarriages, he starts to treat her brutally.

### **Cruel Violence of Rasheed**

This novel depicts the cruel violence of Rasheed. His violence on Mariam was in both a physical and emotional way. Rasheed compares his two women's background and teases Mariam in front of Liala, who is married to Rasheed later in novel. "A blessing, really, we are city people you and I, but she is *dehati*. A village girl. Not even a village girl. No. She grew up in a *kolba* made of mud *outside* the village. Her father put her there. Have you told her, Mariam, have you told her that you are a *harami*?" (Hosseini 216)

Rasheed also abuses her in a physical way.

Hosseini says:

Through the mouthful of grit and pebbles, Mariam mumbled a plea. Tears were leaking out of the corners of her eyes. "CHEW!" he bellowed. A gust of his smoky breath shammed against her face. Mariam chewed. Something in the back of her mouth cracked. "GOOD," Rasheed said. His cheeks were quivering. "Now you know what your rice tastes like. Now you know what you've given me in this marriage. Bad food, and nothing else." Then he was gone, leaving Mariam to spit out pebbles, blood and the fragments of two broken molars. (Hosseini 102)

The above lines reflect how hard Mariam's life was to survive because of her father and her husband's violence and dominance. Because of that her entire life is filled with pity and fear.

### **Laila for Modern Afghan Society**

The other main protagonist in the novel is Laila, who stands for the modern Afghan Society. She loves her childhood friend Tariq and her life moves in normal sounding. Meanwhile she faces two changes in her life, when Tariq fled to Pakistan and another, her parents dies in a bomb blast. Laila is also injured severely, but she was rescued by Rasheed. He betrays Laila and marries her by framing a story that Tariq has died and in an emotional way he uses Laila to fulfill own desire to get a boy child. Later when Laila and Mariam tried to elope from Rasheed, they get caught by police men and brought back to their home. Rasheed treats them cruelly and violently.

### **Males's Behaviour Towards Females**

The following quote reveals the behavior of the male in the Afghan Society towards women. "You try this again and I will find you. I swear on the Prophet's name that I will find you. And, when I do, there isn't a court in this godforsaken country that will hold me accountable for what I will do. To Mariam first, then to her, and you last. I'll make you watch. You understand me? *I'll make you watch.*" (Hosseini 265), this quote portrays the death threat and intimidation that men use on women. So, that woman can remain under the men's control.

Hence, the character of Jalil and Rasheed reflect the darker side of the Afghan Society.

On the other hand, Hakim and Tariq are termed as modern men of Afghan Society. They give respect and care for women. Hakim stands for a revolutionary father of Laila, who provides education in the society, where women are uneducated.

Laila is longing for the love and care from her mother, but she did not show her this love, and because she always thinks about her sons who sacrificed their lives in the battle. She fails to show her love for Laila. On behalf of Fariba, Hakim takes great care and shows love for Laila. Hakim protects, teaches, cares and guides her daughter Laila.

Hosseini says:

Marriage can wait, education cannot. You're a very, very bright girl. Truly, you are. You can be anything you want, Laila. I know this about you. And I also know that when this war is over, Afghanistan is going to need you as much as its men, maybe even



more. Because a society has no chance of success if its women are uneducated, Laila. No chance. (Hosseini 114)

Hakim brings up Laila as an intelligent girl. Her character is portrayed as a quite bold young girl. Laila's another gift of life is her beloved Tariq. They were childhood friends and later they fall in love with each other. Tariq understands her even during hardships that occurred in Laila's Life.

When Rasheed is murdered, Tariq accepts Laila to come along with him to begin a new life and treats Rasheed's son Zalmai as his own son. While Laila wanted to go back to Mariam's place Herat, Tariq respects her feelings and accepts Laila's decision to make a journey to Kabul.

Henceforth, Hakim and Tariq represents the softer side of the society. Due to which, the society did not accept them and treated them well. Therefore the Afghan society termed them as a typical woman.

Thus, Jalil and Rasheed's character reflects dominance, brutality and betrayal of women and whereas Hakim and Tariq's character reflects as love, care, acceptance and respect for women's feeling in the novel *A Thousand Splendid Suns*.

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## Teaching and Learning of English as a Foreign Language

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### Abstract

The main objective of this paper is to describe the teaching and learning methods of English as a foreign or second language. Teaching of English as a foreign language not only take place in India but also in other English-speaking countries for those who are immigrated to foreign countries for work or any other reasons. There are many teaching and learning techniques involved to make English language as a simple one. Teaching techniques such as Communicative language teaching, Situational language teaching, Task based language teaching. Learning techniques like Community language learning, Cooperative language learning, Total physical response, Audio lingual method, etc., The acronym for teaching of English as foreign language (TEFL) is Teaching English as a Second language (TESL). English language is a non-native language and it can be understood only with the help of some activities such as Drill activities, conducting puzzles, quiz, etc., Language teachers should give some practice to students through interaction to one another and correcting errors and grammatical mistakes which will be easier to the students to capture the techniques of English language.

**Keywords:** Teaching English as a Foreign Language, Teaching methods, Language learning, Language techniques, Interactive method.

### English as an International language:

English is considered an International language because it is spoken in all parts of the globe. It is used as a medium of communication among the nations of the world. It is an official language in England, the USA, Australia, Canada and many nations of Africa. It is an associate official language in India. Though in some countries like Japan and Russia, their respective languages are the media of communication and instruction and though one who speaks only English will find himself at a loss in

European nations other than England, English still retains its importance throughout the world. Thus, English is considered an international language.

The reasons are:

- a) It is used in international communication
- b) It is the language of commerce and trade
- c) It is the medium of expression in science and technology
- d) It is the official state language of many nations

### **The Place of English in India**

English is the most widely distributed of all the languages of the world. It is spoken by more than 300 million people. This language had its beginnings 1500 years ago. The language spoken between 45 A.D. and 1100 A.D. is called Old English, and that spoken between 1100 and 1500 is called Middle English. Modern English dates from 1500 to the present.

English was introduced in India by the British. It was the only official language of communication in the British Empire. Macaulay's Minutes and Wood's Dispatch recommended the use of English as medium of instruction in schools. But soon a majority of schools at the secondary level opted for the vernacular medium. However, they retained English as one of the subjects. The medium of instruction continued to be English and even today it is the language of instruction in colleges and universities throughout the country. English is considered a second language in India. It is no more a foreign language. The major factors for the growing importance of English in India are the development of science and technology, communication, global trade and the Internet.

### **English as a Foreign Language**

Teaching English as a Foreign Language, or TEFL, as it is most commonly referred, involves teaching English as a foreign language in countries where English is not the primary language. It is important to understand that TEFL is different from TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages), in that TEFL educators teach English abroad, while English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers educate non-native English Language Learners located within the U.S. However, TEFL educators may find that the acronym TESOL are often used abroad to describe TEFL. Teaching English as a foreign language involves being able to convey the English Language in an articulate and interesting manner. TEFL educators encourage students to improve their English skills through listening, speaking, reading, and writing. TEFL is often facilitated through the use of course

books, audio-visual aids, and technology- based materials. In addition to formal instruction, informal exercises such as role-play and language games are often used. Typical activities for TEFL teachers include:

- Planning, preparing and delivering lessons
- Providing feedback on oral and written work
- Administering examinations and other assessments
- Creating and writing materials

### **ELT, ESL, EFL**

The methods of teaching English depend on several factors. The most important of all is the purpose for which English is used in a country. If English is used for limited purposes such as international travel, international trade and commerce, higher education in a country, it is a foreign language in that country (EFL). If, on the other hand, English is used for more purposes than these, in the fields such as international banking, media, government administration and personal communication among the people in a country, it is a second language in that country (ESL). In other words if English is used for a few purposes and by a few people in a country, it is an EFL country, for example, Yemen, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Japan, China; if it is used by more people and for more purposes in a country, it is an ESL country, for example, India, Pakistan, Singapore, Nigeria. The methods of English Language Teaching (ELT) differ from in ESL countries and EFL countries, because the purposes of teaching English in these two situations are different. So, being an Indian we considered English language as our Second language in our schools and colleges.

### **Variety of Approaches in Teaching and Learning English Language**

In English language teaching, there are three traditional approaches, four communicative approaches and three innovative approaches to language teaching. Traditional language teaching involves Grammar Translation method, Direct Method, Audio-lingual Method. Communicative language teaching involves Communicative Approach, Total Physical Response, Natural Approach and Competency-Based Approach. Finally, Innovative language teaching involves Silent Way, Community Language Learning and Suggestopedia.

*Grammar Translation Method* was popularized by the Scholars like Karl Plotz, Meidinger, Ahn and Ollendorf in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The main feature of this method is Grammar rules are important

for learning a language and so they are taught directly in the English classes. When we translate the methods and techniques of Grammar into our nearby native language then it will be easy for the learners to understand the uses of Grammar.

*The Direct Method* is a non-translation method. It has oral teaching as an important component. At the first stage, auditory and vocal skills are taught. In the second stage further practice in listening and speaking is given. And in the final stage, since the pupils would have acquired the fair mastery of the language skills, literature is introduced.

*Audio-lingual method* had its origin in the USA. This was also known as Army Method, which was used in the USA very successfully to teach soldiers foreign languages within a short time on a programme called the Army Specialized Training Programme and so there was a great demand for English teaching personnel. The main feature of this method is the spoken as well as written forms of English are important; so all the four skills – listening, speaking, reading, and writing- are paid attention to, though the oral skills have priority over the others.

The *Communicative Approaches* have come into practice in the 1960s. The basic principle of this approach is language is a means of communication, meaning is more important than structures. Learning a language means understanding and using it when the need arises. Learning is not habit forming but it involves the learner's mind. So, the learner using the language is involved in mind-engaging activities. There should be a kind of interaction in the classroom between the teachers and the learners.

*Total Physical Response* is a language teaching method built around the coordination of speech and action. It attempts to teach language through physical activity. The natural approach shares with TPR an emphasis on exposing the learner to hearing and understanding the language before requiring the learner to speak.

*The natural approach* was proposed by *Krashen* and *Terrell* whose main features are the Comprehension precedes production, i.e. learners should be given opportunities in the class to listen before they are asked to speak as only through listening they can develop their speaking skills. If the listening skills for the students have been developed then the speaking skills are developed consecutively. So classroom activities should be understandable to the learners.

*Competency Based Approach* focuses on acquiring life coping skills while developing the language to perform these skills. This approach is based on theories of adult learning which state that for effective learning to take place, adults need to know that the lessons they are studying will improve their lives. The approach has been developed and applied in the United States to help immigrants and refugees learn English and life skills at the same time. It is also used in vocational training.

In the *Silent way* learners are actively responsible for their own learning. Learning a language is not seen as a process of habit formation, as is advocated by the audio-lingual method, but rather a process whereby the learner discovers the rules of the target language and then applies those rules to understand and use the language. In other words, learning is more effective if learners discover the rules for themselves, rather than just remembering and repeating what is to be learned. A basic premise of the Silent Way is that the teacher should talk as little as possible and should encourage the learner to speak as much as possible. Mistakes are considered as part of the process of discovering the rules, and the teacher should not interfere in this process.

*Community language learning* has the main aim to involve the learner's whole personality. Affective and intellectual well-being are given equal weight. Being sensitive to the learner's fears, the teacher can turn the negative energy of those fears into positive energy and enthusiasm for learning. The relationships between the teacher and learner and between the learner's themselves, take on great importance. It is in the hands of the teachers in shaping the future of the students.

*Suggestopedia* was founded by *Georgi Lozanov*, believes that language learning can be made more efficient if the psychological barriers to learning are lowered. He believes that learners raise these barriers and limit themselves because of a fear of failure. In order to make better use of learner's capabilities, Lozanov has developed a process of "desuggestion", which he has applied to language learning. This process is designed to promote a relaxed frame of mind and to convert learner's fears into positive energy and enthusiasm for language learning.

In this way, foreign language learners should have their own involvement in learning the second or foreign language. The most important thing to keep in mind is every learner should be aware of their own environment while learning the foreign language as the environment should be stress-free.

Only then the learner could easily acquire their target language. The above methods are very much useful for both the teachers and the learners to acquire their foreign language.

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