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Literary Criticism in India

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I was pleasantly surprised when early on a winter morning in December, 2012, Dr. Binod Mishra, Editor-in-Chief of the IJES telephoned me to inform that I had been appointed the president of the next All India English Teachers Conference and wished to know if I accepted the appointment. I gladly and gratefully accepted the offer and promised to attend the conference to deliver my Presidential Address. I must confess that I feel greatly honoured by this gesture from the office-bearers of the AESI and thank them all for appointing me the president in absentia.

I have chosen to speak on “Literary Criticism in India” as I believe that the study of literature is incomplete without a proper understanding of literary theory and criticism. In the absence of this knowledge our response to literature will be subjective, not critical. A lot of water has flowed under the bridge since Plato and Aristotle, our early critics of literature who evolved their theories out of the existing literature with the help of the philosophical training that they had. But the situation today is very different. Literature has undergone significant mutations and literary theory and criticism has become much more complex. We need to be familiar with both to be able to respond as mature readers.

Some General observations

At the very outset I must dispel any ill-founded impression regarding the status of the critic vis-a-vis the creative writer. For some reason we have formed the opinion that the latter is primary while the former is secondary and, by the same logic, that the latter is more important than the former. This notion flies in the face of

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the empirical evidence that we have. Look at the history of English literature with which we are all familiar. How many critics have we had in comparison with the large number of creative writers? The fact of the matter is that creative writers are legion but literary critics are few and far between. To be precise, between Sir Philip Sidney during the Renaissance and Matthew Arnold in the Victorians age we have only six critics worth their salt. How to account for this? Do writers find critical writing less tempting than creative writing? Or, is it because critical faculty is rarer than creative faculty? In my considered opinion, what we call critical acumen is rarer than creative imagination. This explains why against so many writers we have so few critics.

As we enter the twentieth century, we notice a distinct change in the domain of criticism. While till the end of the nineteenth century we have individual critics we now notice the emergence of critical trends consisting of groups of critics such as Russian Formalism and Anglo-American New Criticism. However, the creative writers far outnumber the critics. In criticism we have only two major figures in English, namely T.S. Eliot and I.A. Richards. But the situation changes in the second half of the twentieth century which is rightly called the “Age of Criticism”. Creative writers recede in the background and in the forefront are major literary critics. Literary criticism now goes not only interdisciplinary but also international. Critical movements like structuralism, deconstruction and reader-responism are instances in point.

The upsurge of criticism late in the 20th and early in the 21st centuries does not mean that it has become easy to be a critic. Far from it, on the contrary, criticism has become much more complex and critical task much more difficult. Imagine a critic like Roland Bathes, Jacque Derrida or Edward Said with his redoubtable scholarship covering several disciplines. Litterateurs have changed their attitude to critics and criticism; in other words, they have come to realize their importance and the role that they can play in shaping the intellectual life of the people. Literary criticism has ceased to be purely literary and extended its frontiers to culture and society.

If in the first half of the 20th century we have literary giants not only in England but also on the continent, in the second half we notice great critics taking centre stage. Where are the creative equivalents of Barthes, Derrida and Said? In his essay on “The End of English” Terry Eagleton writes: “they had the *Cantos*, we have Jonathan Culler”. Eagleton intends that in the second half of the 20th century, theory replaced high modernism which gave birth to several distinguished writers including Ezra Pound who was a major influence on the modernists. Criticism is now viewed as an independent discipline, not as subservient to literature and the borderline between literature and criticism as between literature and the other disciplines in the humanities and social sciences has been obliterated. Barthes examines the historian Michelet’s works as literary constructs and Derrida does not distinguish between Ferdinand de Saussure’s *Course in General Linguistics* and Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet*. Whether or not we agree with this approach to literature is a different matter altogether, but this does explain the upsurge of criticism and theory in the latter half of the twenties century.

A word about the distinction between scholarship and criticism will not be out of place here. In my opinion a critic’s job is much more demanding and challenging than a scholar’s. I am not suggesting that the scholar and the critic have their exclusive concerns but only that their central concerns are different. A brief citation from Eliot’s “The Frontiers of Criticism” will shed significant light on the distinction between scholarship and criticism:

We must not confuse knowledge—factual information—about a poet’s period, the condition of the society in which he lived, the ideas current in his time implicit in his writing, the state of the language in his period—with understanding his poetry. Such knowledge, as I have said, may be a necessary preparation for understanding the poetry; furthermore, it has a value of its own, as history, but for the appreciation of the poetry, it can only lead us to the door, we must find our way in.

As a very perceptive critic, Eliot knows the distinction between factual information and literary criticism and what we get in scholarship is primarily the former. This information is relevant in the appreciation of poetry provided we know its limits. What matters in literary criticism is what we experience when inside the text. Eliot himself cites some works of scholarship like Herbert Read's and F.W. Bateson's books on Wordsworth and John Livingston Lowes's book on Coleridge, *The Road to Xanadu* and concludes that these books give us factual information which sheds light on the poets' life and mind but do not help us understand and appreciate their poetry.

The scholar does not bother to look at the whole of literature and examine the shared and the individual features of particular genres, as Aristotle does in his *Poetics* and Coleridge in his *Biographia Literaria*, or identify those features which mark literature off from non-literature. What the scholar leaves out are the concerns of the critic who sets forth a theory of literature and individual genres which help us understand literary texts. Aristotle gave us a theory of drama and Coleridge a theory of poetry that examined all the aspects of their respective genres—the different components that went into their making, their place vis-a-vis other genres, their function etc. What Aristotle says about drama can be applied to dramas in any language in the world and the same is true of Coleridge's concept of poetry. Literary theory cuts through national and linguistic boundaries.

The critic's job is more difficult not only than a scholar's but than a creative writer's. The writer, be it poet, dramatist or novelist reacts to circumambient reality, internalizes it and gives his own account of it. The critic, on the other hand, responds to literary constructs of external reality which is much more complex than the reality which is the writer's concern. To use Sir Philip Sidney's famous distinction between nature and art, the writer responds to the brazen world of nature, while the critic responds to the golden world of art. The critic is like the poet in Keats's "Ode on a Grecian

Urn" which does not tell us about the external world but that world in artistic form. It is this difference which accounts for the preposition "On" rather than "To" in the title of the poem. The poem is like an essay on a work of art.

The kind of equipment that a critic needs is difficult to acquire. He needs to be familiar with both the hinterland and the heartland of literature. He must have a working knowledge of all the major disciplines in the humanities and social sciences as well as major ideas in pure sciences as they impact literature. He must be familiar with world classics and have a very good grounding in literary criticism. But this equipment is not enough unless he has that rare quality called critical acumen which is as important as creative imagination in a writer.

Since my subject is literary criticism, I must perforce address, in brief for lack of space and time, the post-modernist belief in the death of both literature and criticism. It is argued that since literature is replaced by *écriture* (Jacques Derrida) and the author by the reader (Roland Barthes) criticism has become redundant. Moreover, the postmodernist believes that the text does not communicate any determinate meaning which can be explained by the critic with a sense of authority. I have already defended the presence of the author in the text in a full-length essay. And I am about to complete my book on *The Identity of Literature: A Reply to Jacques Derrida* which seeks to restore a distinct identity to literature. If the author and literature are not dead, how can criticism die? And the meaning of the text is not as indeterminate as Derrida postulates since the text also imposes its own restrictions on the extent to which individual responses can vary. I can mention in passing that the German Philosopher, Jürgen Habermas has re-established the distinction between philosophy and literature and thereby salvaged the identity of both disciplines

Criticism in the Indian Context

I must now leave general observations on criticism and turn to criticism in the Indian context. The critical scene in

the country, especially in Indian English is terribly complex. We have, on the one hand, Western criticism which is fast changing with critical movements emerging one after the other in quick succession. Once these movements reach the shores of India, students of literature in English as well as Indian language are only too eager to grab them and apply them to literature. On the other hand, Sanskrit poetics has made significant inroads into Indian English literary studies so much so that in some quarters Sanskrit criticism is reckoned the only critical source of ideas for students of literature in English. I see problems at both ends.

When it comes to Western criticism it is unfortunate that it is blindly accepted in this country. I remember the critical scene in 1964 when I did my Master's in English. This was the time of the hegemony of the New Criticism. Books and articles on the New Criticism were pouring out not only in English but also Indian languages. Nobody subjected this movement to critical examination and evaluation before accepting it. The New Criticism was fashionable in the West and therefore it was accepted, just as the latest fashion emanating from Paris or London finds an easy acceptance in this country. The more sensible Chicago School of Criticism pioneered by R.S. Crane was not even heard of. It was in the course of my work on the doctoral thesis in the mid-1960s that I learnt about the Chicago Critics and felt that their critical postulates were more sensible than those of the New Critics. As we know, the New Critics go back to Coleridge. I could envisage an alternative critical tradition going from the Chicago Critics to Aristotle.

I published an essay on the Chicago Critics in *The Literary Criterion* in 1967, which was translated into Kannada and Hindi. Within a year senior academics like Professors S. Nagarajan and P.S. Sastri wrote on them. A national seminar on the New and Chicago Critics was held at Banaras Hindu University in March, 1968. Soon an interest in the Chicago Critics was generated and doctoral theses on them were submitted at prestigious universities

like Delhi, Madras, Osmania, Patna and Kurushetra. But this interest in them was a passing phase. They impressed us not with their intrinsic worth but only because they represented the latest trend in Anglo-American criticism. As soon as newer critical trends appeared on the Western horizon, they as well as the New Critics were jettisoned for pastures new.

The new movements which emerged in the West in the 1960s and early 1970's and soon displaced both the New Criticism and the Chicago School were reader response-criticism and deconstruction. Both movements ran counter to the New Criticism, the former in focusing on the reader and the latter in denying any distinction between literature and non-literature.

The reader-response criticism was not taken seriously in this country, as it was not very fashionable in the West. There were individual critics who formed the movement, but their impact did not percolate down to the common reader. Deconstruction took not only India but the whole world by storm. It was assimilated by movements as varied as postcolonialism, new feminism, new Marxism, new historicism, etc. Deconstruction received critical attention like no other critical movement did including the New Criticism. I brought out a deconstruction special of my *Journal of Literary Criticism* in 1984 when deconstruction was hardly known in this country. It was in this issue that I published my first essay on deconstruction. But with the passage of time deconstruction became known not only in English but also Indian languages. Once again, a critical movement was embraced because it was fashionable in the West. My essay on deconstruction was read with interest and translated into Hindi but my reservation about it at the end of the essay was completely ignored. Some deconstructive postulates were frequently cited without realizing their full implications and ramifications. This blind adulation of deconstruction was similar to the reception of the New Criticism. I found the antidote to deconstruction in Russian Formalism whose full significance is not yet realized.

When postcolonial theory which had its origins in Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978) arrived here in the mid 1980's, we once again unquestioningly accepted it and used it as a tool to reject the West which Said never intended. He is against both nativism and Occidentalism, as he knows that these extreme positions will further widen the already existing hiatus between the East and the West, whereas he wants them to come to terms with each other so that the world becomes a better place to live in. Said is for reconciliation, not conflict. But Said is misconstrued in India as well as the Middle East: he is taken as a spokesperson of the third world or, for the Muslims, of the Middle East and the West is rejected in the name of post-colonial theory. Using Said as the springboard, efforts have been made to establish the superiority of literature and culture of the East over their Western counterparts so much so that in a university in Western U.P., as reported in the press, Shakespeare was knocked out of syllabus and in a prestigious central university in the north a compulsory paper on Western Classical literature was dropped and a paper on Indian literature in English translation was introduced. What is the relevance of this paper to English (Honours) course? If English literature is so fraught with dangers because it was through this literature that colonial culture which brainwashed the Indian mind was introduced, then why teach English literature at all? If language is culture as Edward Sapir and Benjamin Lee Whorf said long ago, English language as such embodies Western culture and to be sincere we shall have to discard English language altogether and switch over to Indian languages. Are we mentally prepared for this? Indian sensibility is a matter of values, not language. And therefore, we should not be so wary of English language and literature.

Another strand in Indian English criticism comes from Sanskrit poetics. There is a striking parallelism between our response to Western criticism and our response to Sanskrit poetics: we accept both without any questioning or reservation. Like a pendulum we swing between the two

extremes of Western criticism and Sanskrit criticism whereas what we ought to do is to critically examine the two and drawing on these sources seek to evolve our own theories.

Criticism and Culture

I have come to realize through my long critical trajectory that criticism and culture must go hand in hand and that in both domains we must build up the same attitude. I referred above to the Chicago Critics and the interest they generated in Indian scholars at one stage. What impressed me most was their critical pluralism. In course of time I came to realize that their pluralism which was confined to literature could be extended to culture.

Every student of literature must concern himself with both aesthetic and cultural dimensions of his discipline. He needs to understand the nature of aesthetic pleasure that he gets out of literature and the way it is correlated to culture. Pluralism is inherent in the very nature of aesthetic experience. Here, I cannot resist citing a brief extract from my own essay on "poetry and Belief" published in 1987:

Pluralism should extend from literary enjoyment to critical appreciation and from critical appreciation to culture. ...What poetry can teach us through the pluralism embodied in its beliefs is to understand sympathetically warring cultural values and realize that the values not our own can also be mature, sincere, and tenable. Poetry can extend the frontiers of our sympathy and thereby make us better human beings.

This posture of tolerance on cultural differences is more important than the dubious mental adjustment which, according to I.A. Richards, poetry brings about. If we can enjoy in the domain of poetry beliefs which are not our own, we can also appreciate in life cultural certitudes which are different from our own. Both in and outside poetry the criterion is that beliefs and certitudes must be mature.

Moving from literature to literary criticism I set out three binaries which can be fruitfully employed in both literary

and cultural studies:

Monism	-	Pluralism
Dismissal	-	Dissent
Generalization	-	Discrimination

These are the terms that I have used frequently in my critical writings but I wish to demonstrate here how they can be effective analytical tools in the twin domains of criticism and culture.

Monism versus Pluralism

In the realm of criticism these terms were first used by the Chicago Critics who charged the New Critics with critical monism and in opposition to it set forth their critical pluralism. R.S. Crane launched a broadside at Cleanth Brooks in his essay on "Cleanth Brooks; or the Bankruptcy of Critical Monism" and Elder Olson, another member of the Chicago School, levelled the same charge against William Empson in "William Empson, Contemporary Criticism, and poetic Diction". Both complained that the New Critics reduced all considerations of literature to the consideration of language and all considerations of language to their favourite critical terms like paradox, ambiguity, tension, gesture, etc. Generic differences were ignored and a drama like Shakespeare's *Macbeth* or *King Lear* was studied like poem.

If the New Critics turned to Coleridge for their critical tools, the Chicago Critics returned to Aristotle. Coleridge's influence percolated down to the New Critics through Richards who wrote a full-length book on his theory of imagination. Coleridge's interest in language appealed to both Richards and the New Critics. In Aristotle, the Chicago Critics found something different from what Coleridge could offer. And we know, in Aristotle's *Poetics* diction on which the New Critics set so much weight is placed last of all the intrinsic components of tragedy. The four constituents of tragedy, namely action, character, thought, diction are

arranged in a hierarchical order, which means that the first, i.e. action or plot is the most important and the last i.e. diction is the least important element. What the Chicago Critics have done is to extend what Aristotle says apropos of drama to other forms of literature such as fiction and poetry and come to the conclusion that whereas language may be important in poetry, especially lyrical poetry, in other genres other components take precedence other over language, for example, plot in the novel. Even in the case of a lyric, a Chicago Critic first tries to identify its central idea or what Aristotle calls thought and in relation to it examines its structure and imagery. Also, unlike the New Critics, the Chicago Critics do not foist on the writer or his text their preconceived critical ideas but seek to ascertain what a writer's intention is in a particular work. This approach to literature does full justice to authors.

This distinction between monism and pluralism has significant bearings in the domain of culture. The monist judges all people by his own personal standards expecting others to be his replicas in every conceivable respect. A single profession, a single approach to life, a single life style, a single political system, a single religion is lauded and the rest are despised and rejected. He does not realize that diversity is the law of nature. Just as our faces do not resemble, our voices are not the same, similarly our approaches to life will not be the same. How can anyone expect others to go in for his profession, or adopt his objective in life? If we learn to respect differences, we can live a much better, a much happier life and get on well with a lot more people. I, for one, feel that there is nothing wrong with any profession provided the person does it sincerely without sacrificing humanity. Every profession has its concomitants for which we have to be mentally prepared. If a person chooses to go in for the academic profession to which we all belong, he cannot desire to live the life of a businessman making pots of money. But he has his advantages: a businessman cannot enjoy the status and the reputation of an academic despite all the money that he has. One basic factor that everyone

should remember is that others have not made his choice and the advantages and disadvantages of each choice will be different. This pluralistic approach to life will bring happiness to all.

Here I must sound a caveat. It absolute monism can be dictatorial, absolute pluralism can be anarchic in criticism as well as culture. If, for instance, a writer says that he wants to write a bad poem and he succeeds in writing one, we have no option but to dismiss it, even though he has succeeded in attaining his objective. Similarly, if a person says that he intends to become a pickpocket and he succeeds in becoming one, we'll dismiss his approach to life even though his objective has been attained. Pluralism gives individual liberty which will be meaningful only if it is not allowed to go beyond reasonable limits. We need individual freedom but we also need a set of common norms which will hold this freedom in check. A modicum of monism will make pluralism work in criticism as well as culture.

Dismissal versus Dissent

To explain the difference between dismissal and dissent I take an example from my own experience. At a Central University in the north of India I had to speak on Edward Said alongwith a Professor from a prestigious university. The learned professor was dismissive of Said From the very beginning. He questioned Said's use of the word "Orient" which did not include India.

Referring to Said's edition of Kipling's *Kim*, he questioned Said's knowledge of geography and pointed out some egregious errors in the annotations regarding the geography of the north of India: he did not know, for example, where exactly cities like Allahabad and Kanpur were situated and the distances between them. In my presidential comments I politely rebutted his arguments. I pointed out that in the very "Introduction" of *Orientalism* Said had said that his focus was on the "Islamic Orient" where he was born and brought up. Secondly, even if the geographical errors highlighted by the Professor were

admitted, could they justify Said's dismissal? Not, in my opinion. Said's chief achievement which remains unaffected by these errors lies in marginalizing formalistic criticism which had a long hegemony from Russian Formalism to deconstruction.

I am far from suggesting that Said's criticism has no flaw. Said, like any other critic or thinker, has his share of weak points and we can legitimately point them out without indulging in nit-picking. We can certainly dissent from him on specific points but we cannot dismiss him. I have myself differed with Said on certain points just as I have with T.S. Eliot, but I have been a great admirer of both and learnt quite a few things from them.

What is true of criticism is also true of life. No one in this world is perfect and, therefore, the very expectation of perfection is wrong. People are a mixture of strength and weakness and, therefore, while criticizing them for their weakness, which is fully justified, we should not overlook their strength. We need to see whether weakness or strength is the predominant character of a person. Once again, I take an example from my personal experience. I always had a formal relationship with the Vice- Chancellors of my university, as that suited my temperament. With my attitude of neither to please nor to offend, neither to flatter nor to condemn, I got on well with most Vice-Chancellors. But towards the end of my academic career came one whose temperament was a problem for me, although he had tremendous faith in me and, to be fair to him, was a very competent administrator. There were others who had sharp differences with him more often than not for purely personal reasons. I noticed that they condemned him outright and even levelled false charges against him. This was unfair. You cannot dismiss a person who is so competent in his job but, of course, you have every right to differ with him and blame him for what you reckon his fault.

I have found this distinction between dissent and dismissal exceedingly useful in criticism as well as culture. I know umpteen examples where dissent, not dismissal was

needed but by taking recourse to dismissal people did great injustice to others not realizing that the same criterion could be applied to them.

Generalization versus Discrimination

This binary, though not essentially different from the two which we have discussed above, differs from them in focus. Generalization as such is not a problem, as we need to generalize in order to make sense of the world around us, but sweeping generalization does pose a problem in both criticism and culture. We form a general opinion about a writer or person on the basis of his predominant qualities while taking into consideration all aspects of his but in a sweeping generalization we take only some aspects which suit us. I'll take one example with which we are all familiar, the distinction between romanticism and classicism so often made and discussed by scholar and critics.

We make sweeping generalizations about romanticism and classicism by viewing that as exclusive, but a little close examination will reveal to us that the properties that we identify as romantic are not altogether absent from classicism and vice versa. As it is not possible to discuss them all in detail here, I'll touch on only one point. It is generally believed that romantic poetry is personal whereas classical poetry is impersonal. But a close scrutiny of Dryden's *Absalom and Achitophel* and Pope's *The Dunciad* will tell us that the personal element is not altogether absent from Neo-classical Poetry. In both poems, which are landmark achievements of the Neo-classical Age, the poet gives vent to his personal experience, personal vendetta, to be more precise. Dryden's partisan attitude towards contemporary politics is blatantly obvious. In the conflict on the issue of the succession to the throne, Dryden was on the side of King Charles II and in the poem he goes the whole hog to defend him. Similarly in *The Dunciad* Pope intentionally selects Theobald as the protagonist with whom he had personal differences and replaces him

with Colley Cibber in *The New Dunciad* whose appointment as Poet Laureate he had resented. Dryden's satire is directed at the King's opponents, particularly the Earl of Shaftesbury and Pope's at Theobald who had hurt his feelings by pointing out flaws in his edition of Shakespeare as well as Colley Cibber whom he disliked for personal reasons.

If the personal is not absent from Neo-classical poetry, the impersonal is not absent from Romantic poetry. Social concerns, which we generally associate with English Neo-classical poetry, is present in Romantic poetry as well. Wordsworth's glorification of the rustics and their language is the outcome of his response to the Industrial Revolution which led to the exodus of people from the countryside to big cities like London and Manchester where they worked as factory workers and were exploited and dehumanized. Wordsworth wanted these people to stay back in the village where life was much better than in cities. No less a person than T.S. Eliot comments after citing Wordsworth's letter to Charles James Fox: "it is Wordsworth's social interests that inspires his own novelty of form in verse and backs up his explicit remarks on poetic diction and it is really this social interest which (consciously or not) the fuss was all about." It is evident from the foregoing arguments that romanticism and classicism are not exclusive concepts as they overlap. But all the same, they are useful in literary discussions so long as we remember that they point to the predominant, not exclusive qualities. What is true of the romanticism—classicism binary also holds for the other binaries that we use in literary discussions such as romanticism—modernism and modernism—postmodernism.

Another example of sweeping generalization in criticism is Eliot's dismissal of all poetry between the seventeenth and twentieth centuries, as it suffers from the dissociation of sensibility. This generalization does gross injustice to several poets and poems in the three major periods of English literature, Neo-Classical, Romantic and Victorian, which have given us some of the finest poets and poems.

Sweeping generalization is one of the chief maladies, the bane of contemporary culture. We make sweeping generalizations about race, community, caste, nation, religion, gender etc. I have come to realize that no race, community, caste, nation, religion, or gender is altogether bad or good, as in each you come across people of both categories. I have heard Muslims make sweeping generalizations about Hindus and vice-versa. I have heard Westerners make sweeping generalizations about the East and easterners make similar generalizations about the West. I have heard men make sweeping generalizations about women and vice-versa. We know that these generalizations are at best only partial truths, as in each category mentioned here we find examples which defy these generalizations. It is this generalization that Edward Said inveighs against in the following extract from the closing paragraph of his *Culture and Imperialism*:

No one today is purely *one* thing. Labels like Indian, or woman, or Muslim, or American are no more than starting-points, which if followed into actual experience for only a moment are quickly left behind. Imperialism consolidated the mixture of cultures and identities on a global scale. But its worst and most paradoxical gift was to allow people to believe that they were only, mainly, exclusively, white or black, or Western, or Oriental....It is more rewarding—and more difficult—to think concretely and sympathetically, contrapuntally, about others than only about “us”.

In this short citation Edward Said identifies the nature of contemporary culture, the problem plaguing it and the possible solution. As there are no exclusive categories, we must learn to sympathise and unite with those to whom we have been gratuitously opposed. There is no justification for hegemony now in any domain whether it is East-West, or man-woman, or Hindu-Muslim, or black-white or any other relationship. We fight because we make sweeping generalizations, build up false myths which are quite remote from the ground reality and believe in oneupmanship.

Sweeping generalization ought to be replaced by critical

discrimination. We all generalize about periods of English literature in order to identify shared features of an age. But having done this we must not overlook differences between the writers in the same age which characterize their individuality. Let us take, for example, the Romantic Age. As we all know, a shared feature of the age is the love of nature, but we must not forget that different poets respond to nature differently. If Wordsworth is a “worshipper of nature” which to him is “a breath of God”, Keats enjoys nature for its own sake. Again, if Coleridge looks upon nature as nothing but an extension of his inner self, “in our life alone doth nature live”, Shelley’s nature veils transcendental reality which he wants to grasp. Byron differs from all the Romantics in his love of the wild, the tempestuous aspect of nature. We need to look at the wood as well as the trees: we need to identify both the shared and the individual features of writers in an age. In a sweeping generalization we tend to overlook the differences.

The critical discrimination extended to culture will help us understand the world and the people in the right perspective. Take any profession and we’ll find that at one level people belonging to a profession fall in the same category but at another level there is a world of difference between one person and another in the same profession. Take, for example, our own profession where discrimination plays a special role, since we not only earn our livelihood by teaching in the class for a stipulated number of periods but also do lots of other things such as publishing books and research papers besides supervising research, attending seminars and conferences, lecturing in other Universities and, in some cases, editing a journal which we do of our own accord and which distinguish one professor from another. In other professions if the post and salary are the same, the status is the same but not so in our profession where an Assistant or Associate Professor can enjoy better reputation than a full professor. What is true of our profession holds, albeit not to the same degree, for other professions as well including business and industry. We know better than others

that money cannot be the ultimate criterion or else we shall not remember with so much reverence the great industrialist G.D. Birla, a close associate and financier of Gandhi, who is better known as a philanthropist than as an industrialist. I am fully convinced that prosperity and humanity can go together.

From the foregoing discussion it is obvious that all men in a particular profession can not be judged by the same standards, but at the time each person cannot be judged by his own standards. This is why I say that we need the prop of monism to make pluralism meaningful: it is a kind of alloy that is needed to shape gold into jewellery. Just as in literary criticism focus on the text is a monistic prop so in life humanity, not money will act as the prop. In the absence of these monistic props both criticism and culture will go off the track.

Sanskrit Poetics and Western Criticism

The pluralism that has been discussed at some length will provide us with fresh perspectives on the relative estimate of Sanskrit Poetics and Western Criticism, the twin sources which Indian literary critics in English draw on. Sanskrit poetics was introduced into English studies in India by Professor C.D. Narasimhaiah as the base of his Indian response sometime in the late sixties when he brought out his edited volume, *Indian response to American Literature*. This idea of a distinct Indian response to literature in English was picked up by other scholars in the country such as M.K. Naik in *Indian Response to Poetry in English*. From Indian response we moved to Indian criticism in English. On the eve of the international conference of the Association of Common Literature and Language Studies (ACLALS) held in New Delhi in January, 1977 I published an essay on Indian criticism in English in *The Sunday Statesman* for 2 January, 1977. The original title of the essay was changed by the Editor to "Indo-Aglian Literature: A critical Muddle." I discussed at some length B. Rajan who was considered then the finest Indian scholar in English as well as C.D.

Narasimhaiah who had made significant contributions to English studies in India touching in passing on other scholars like M.K. Naik and Meenakshi Mukherjee. My Chief complaint against Indian criticism in English was that it lacked theoretical base. Rajan's main critical idea which I gathered from his critical works was the organic unity of a writer's oeuvre. This was traced by me to Eliot's theory of impersonality, though without all the ramifications of his theory. C.D. Narasimhaiah's "Indian response" was more a nationalistic than a critical issue and I have had problems with it, as I believe that both literature and literary criticism, though rooted in a particular nation, transcend national boundaries. Sri Aurobindo was an exception. I was so impressed by his criticism that I not only praised him in my article but also wrote out a full-length paper on "Sri Aurobindo and T.S. Eliot as Critics" for presentation at the Conference.

We must analyse critically before accepting anything in Indian or Western criticism. What is lacking in our country is critical analysis which alone can lead to correct evaluation and in the absence of critical analysis and correct evaluation we tend to make sweeping generalizations. I heard an otherwise sensible participant assert at a seminar that Sri Aurobindo was the greatest modern thinker in the world and another very respected participant dismiss Aristotle's catharsis as nothing but "mental masturbation." We need to be a little more objective in our observations and comments. We must compare Sri Aurobindo with other modern thinkers before making such a sweeping remark. Similarly, we need to examine other interpretations of Aristotle's catharsis prior to dismissing it in such strong language.

Indian literary criticism in English must be taken out of its insularity. Why is it that only criticism premised on Sanskrit poetics is called Indian? English is now one of the Indian languages and, therefore, we call literature in it "Indian English Literature" which implies that it exists collaterally with literatures in Indian languages. But the critical scene in other languages is very different from what

we discern in Indian English. Speaking for Hindi which is my first language, literary criticism in it in the second half of the 20th and the early years of the 21st centuries has been dominated by the two leading Marxist critics, namely Ram Bilas Sharma and Namwar Singh and the finest critic in Hindi who wrote in the first half of the twentieth century, Ram Chandra Shukla was equally open to both Western criticism and Sanskrit poetics and did not accept blindly anything in either of the two traditions. I suppose the situation in the other Indian languages is pretty much the same.

I have pleaded in the past for the inclusion of Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak and Homi Bhabha in any anthology of Indian English criticism. They may have used Western theories and ignored Sanskrit criticism, but their focus is on India. If Spivak has applied deconstruction to Mahasweta Devi's celebrated story "Draupadi", many a critic in Indian languages has done the same thing.

I must confess that I feel rather unhappy when I think of the role and place of theory in English Studies in India and several questions come to my mind. Why it is that we have a slavish attitude towards both Western Criticism and Sanskrit poetics? Why is it that we do not do enough questioning and critical evaluation before accepting a theory? Why is it that we meekly accepted the New Criticism and deconstruction only because they were in vogue in the West? Why is that we hesitate in pointing to any flaws in Sanskrit poetics? Rather late in the day I turned to Sanskrit critical texts, particularly Bharata's *Natyasastra* and Anandavardhana's *Dhvanyaloka* which I read with an unbiased mind. *Dhvanyaloka* is often viewed as the apogee of Sanskrit criticism, the culmination of the thinking that began with Bharata. It is said that by combining Bharata's *rasa* with his own *dhvani* he set forth a unique theory of *rasa-dhvani*. When I read the two texts, one a theory of drama and the other a theory of poetry I felt that whereas the former was a monumental achievement dealing with drama in all its aspects, the latter was not such an original

and outstanding work as it was made out to be. I can say with confidence that no other work dealing with drama comes anywhere near *Natyasastra* including Aristotle's *Poetics* but *Dhvanyaloka*, despite the merits that it has, cannot be accorded the same place as Bharata's masterpiece.

I had heard so much about Anandavardhana and his *Dhvanyaloka* that I thought his *dhvani* theory would help me distinguish between literature and non-literature, and thus help me in my crusade against Derrida who denies any distinction between the two, but I was disappointed, as the examples of Anandavardha's *dhvani* are not absent from non-literature. I was happy to find support to my argument in V.K. Chari's excellent book, *Sanskrit Criticism* where he writes:

All meaning is in fact contextual. So what point is gained by assigning it to a special verbal activity called suggestion?

And, again,...the *dhvani* theory leads to another embarrassment. Since all suggested meaning is contextual meaning, it should follow that all contextual meaning is suggested meaning. But, at this rate, the protagonists of *dhvani* will have to admit that implications of the most prosaic and trivial sort, such as those in the Vedic sentences and the much labored "a village on the Ganges", are also instances of poetic suggestion.

If the argument is that there are two kinds of *dhvani*—one emotive and the other cognitive—the distinction has to be made with examples. One wonders what would be the basis of such a distinction? The example of *dhvani* that Anandavardhan gives where the priest is prevented by the lover from "rambling freely" in the forest by telling him that the dog of which he was so sacred has been eaten by the lion does not point to any exclusive property of poetry, as one can find similar examples outside literature.

In English we have the term "implicature" introduced by H.P. Grice, the speech act theorist for the implied meaning beyond the literal. It has been explained by M.L. Pratt, the author of *Towards a Speech Act Theory of Literary Discourse*

in the following words:

What a speaker implicates on a given occasion is distinguishable from what he says, that is, from the literal and conventional meaning of the words he uses....

And, again,

It ought to be clear that this reconstruction by implicature is not peculiar to fictive utterances or to literature, as many reader-oriented critics seem to think.

Suggestion highlighted in Anandavardhana's *Dhvanyaloka* in the name of *rasa-dhvani* is not different from implicature. A fine example of implicature is the statement, "The frame is nice" to imply "I do not like the picture in it". Compare this with Anandavardhana's pronouncement:

That kind of poetry, wherein the (conventional) meaning renders itself secondary or the (conventional) word renders its meaning secondary and suggests the (intended or) implied meaning is designated by the learned as DHAVANI or 'Suggestive Poetry'.

The examples of implicature as well as *dhvani* can be found in ordinary discourse and as such it cannot be established as an exclusive property of literature.

My reservation about suggestion as formulated by Anandavardhana is not at all a dismissal of the great theoretician. There is no denying that *Dhvanyaloka* is shot through with flashes of brilliant insight. Moreover, suggestion is an exceedingly important literary property. But how can *dhvani* as defined by Anandavardhana in *Dhvanyaloka* be the defining feature of literature?

What I am driving at is that when we feel any reservation about Sanskrit critics or criticism, we should say so as Chari does and not try to gloss it over. Krishna Rayan who has done very substantial work in the realm of comparative poetics cannot tolerate a single limitation of Sanskrit poetics. When S.K. Dey points out that Sanskrit poetics is basically formalistic and as such cannot move

beyond the text to the writer's imagination and personality Rayan rejects it out of hand and takes the weakness for strength and asserts that "what De regards as the chief failing of Sanskrit poetics is in fact its chief strength." We are currently in the age of interdisciplinary criticism which is not in consonance with Sanskrit poetics. Instead of rejecting it in deference to Sanskrit poetics we should welcome it as supplementing it.

The Future of Indian Criticism in English

The future of Indian literary criticism in English is immense provided it eschews any kind of insularity. It can bridge the gap between Western and Indian Criticism, on the one hand, and between criticisms in various Indian language, on the other. We have not yet realized the big advantage that we have because of our linguistic situation. The great majority of English teachers in our country are bilingual. Whether or not they have done any writing, critical or creative, in their first languages, they have some idea of the literatures in them. Literatures in these languages are sometimes translated into English as well as other Indian languages, but their literary criticism is ignored. There are only two areas with which most of us are familiar, Sanskrit poetics and Western criticism. Why this short shrift to criticism in Indian languages which have given us some of the finest critics? One obvious explanation for this ignorance is that literary criticism in Indian languages is not available in English or the mother tongue of the English teacher. Here is a problem that we need to address. Before winding up my *Journal of Literary Criticism* I did toy with the idea of bringing out a special number on modern Indian criticism which would have covered major Indian languages as well as English or what we call Indian English but somehow it did not materialize. This is where Sahitya Akademi can help by providing in English translation major critical texts in Indian languages. Indian criticism in English will become the more vital and relevant by drawing on as many as three sources—Western criticism, Sanskrit criticism and criticism in Indian language. We ought to build up a healthy critical

attitude which believes in inclusion and assimilation, not exclusion and rejection. In Indian English criticism today I notice a divide between Western criticism and Sanskrit poetics and a kind of blind adulation of both by the followers. This must go.

I must add that I do not want Indian criticism in English to be eclectic but assimilative. It should not become just a repository of various critical approaches, methods and tools but build up new theories through their assimilation. I have intentionally used the plural “theories”, as I want to see not one theory premised on Sanskrit poetics or Western criticism but a multiplicity of theories as we find in Indian as well as European languages.

Indian criticism in English has not yet come of age. It lags far behind not only Western criticism/ but also criticism in Indian languages and calls for a concerted and combined effort for its development. Cutting through linguistic boundaries Indian English Criticism can shape into a rich pan-Indian critical tradition.

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Into the Heart of Darkness: Mahesh Dattani's *Thirty Days in September*

*Mukesh Ranjan Verma

Mahesh Dattani has always raised important socio-cultural issues of contemporary India in his plays, whether it is the tyranny of the patriarchal system (*Where There's a Will*) or gender discrimination (*Tara and Dance Like a Man*) or homosexuality/ lesbianism (*On a Muggy Night in Mumbai* and *Do the Needful*) or communal conflict (*Final Solutions*) or marginalization of certain sections of the Indian society (*Seven Steps around the Fire*). He has been frank and unequivocal in his treatment of those subjects that have been and still are a taboo in our society. One such issue has been the sexual abuse of children. Of late NGOs and social awareness groups have focused on these subjects. They are trying to create awareness about a pervasive but covered up issue which has forced many a children to live a guilt-ridden, disturbed life. Dattani's *Thirty Days in September* deals with this very important issue of our society. Lillete Dubey, the first director of this play, writes:

To do plays moored in a living social context provides a fulfilment of its own. And to do these which deal with subjects that simmer dangerously below the surface of our consciousness, even if the seeing of them discomforts us, is surely one of the aims of theatre. Peter Brooks once said that if a play did not provoke and disturb the audience, it wasn't worth doing. I don't think there could be a better way to put it. (4)

She has called this play “A dark piece, albeit powerful and immensely moving.” (4)

Thirty Days in September, first performed in 2001, was

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commissioned by RAHI, a support group for women survivors of incest. Though the play was written with a specific objective of creating awareness against a social evil, it does not lose its integrity as a piece of dramatic art. In fact, it is powerful and moving because it is brilliant drama. In its tightly-woven plot, effective stage management, dramatic use of time sequences, complex portrayal of characters and disturbingly suggestive dialogues, the play matches not only the best of Dattani but also the best in Indian drama. It engages our interest from the first scene and does not allow our attention to slacken as it goes on. It keeps us completely absorbed as it reaches the climax and leaves us emotionally shaken by the time it ends. The final effect of the play on us is cathartic. The play moves us deeply because the subject of the play touches the dark recesses of our mind and makes us aware of the evil inside and around us. The dramatist has built up his plot in such a way that each scene adds up to a complex design where the dramatist has kept the final blow carefully concealed and when it comes, it not only shakes us but also seeks a reorientation of our entire response towards characters and events.

The opening scene of the play introduces us to its central character, Mala, and shows her in two time sequences, underlining the change that has taken place in her between September 2001 and February 2004. The setting is a counsellor's chamber. The stage direction for 2004 says – "This Mala is more at peace with herself. She has taken a journey and has arrived somewhere psychologically." This journey is expressed through two dialogues of Mala, recorded by the counsellor at two sessions. The first one shows the changed Mala:

MALA. Mala Khatri. February 2004...(*Listening to the counsellor*) Why not?...I do not hesitate to use my real name now. Let people know. There's nothing to hide. Not for me. After all, it is he who must hide. He should change his name, not me. It is he who must avoid being recognized. In people's homes, at parties, hopefully even on the streets. He should look the other way when someone spots him anywhere on this planet. And I can make that happen. I

have the power to do that now. If I use my real name...(*Sighing, thinking about it almost as if it were a pleasant memory*) I wish he were here now, so I could see his face when I tell him I have nothing to hide. Because I know it wasn't my fault...Now. I know now. (8)

The repetition of the word 'now' several times in this speech underlines the change between 'now' and 'then'. The dramatist takes us to 'then' in the very next speech where a taped voice of Mala is heard. This takes us to Mala's first session of counselling which had taken place on 30th September 2001. The date, 30th September, itself is dramatically significant as we come to know later in the play. The mental and physical condition of Mala in 2001 is rooted in her childhood experience which left a scar on her psyche. But the dramatist keeps this fact away from us till quite late in the play. When it comes, it hits us with full force. We are first shown Mala as she was a little more than two years ago:

MALA. I –I don't know how to begin...Today is the 30th of September...2001, and my name is...I don't think I want to say my name...I am sorry. I hope that is okay with you...I am unsure about this...and a lot of other things. But this...This is the first time you see that I...(*After a long pause, where we do hear her breathing*) I know it is all my fault really...It must be. I must have asked for it...Somehow, I just seem to be made for it. May be I was born that way, may be...This is what I am meant for. It's not anybody's fault except my own. Sometimes I wish that my mother...(*It gets difficult for her*) I am sorry but...I can only tell you more if you turn this thing off. (9)

The implication of the full speech does not become clear to us at this stage. The meaning of statements like 'I must have asked for it', 'I just seem to be made for it', and 'May be I was born that way' as well as her reference to her mother becomes clear only when we are given an insight into Mala's mind. However, what strikes us immediately is the fact that while earlier Mala considered herself responsible for whatever happened to her, now she knows that she is not responsible for it.

Like a detective story, the play puts us into the middle of a situation where one clue leads to another but does not unravel the knot till the end. Here is Mala who is behaving in a strange manner, there is her mother who is a weak-willed, powerless and frightened person, and in their life or rather in the life of Mala comes Deepak who is attracted towards her and wants to marry her. He is baffled as Mala no longer wants to have any relationship with him and he cannot find her reason for that. He comes to meet Mala's mother, Shanta to find out why after having an affair for a month, Mala has decided to terminate their relationship whereas, as he says to Shanta, he never gave her the feeling that he was only interested in a casual affair. Shanta is at first unwilling to let him come in, but when she knows that he is the son of a former family friend and further that he intends to marry Mala, she changes her response immediately. What she says in her eagerness to assure Deepak about Mala gives us an insight into her character, though at the level of the plot it presents another knot for Deepak to unravel:

SHANTA (*hastily*) No don't say that! She is a very nice girl at heart. Sometimes she gets angry with me but...It is always my fault...I- I forget things. I am the one to blame. But she is a very nice girl at heart. If she settles down, she will be all right.

DEEPAK. What do you mean by 'all right'? Do you feel there is something wrong?

SHANTA. No, no. What am I saying? I mean that everything will be all right.

DEEPAK. There is something you are not telling me.

SHANTA. It is my fault only. I will feel easy once she settles down. (15)

Shanta's statement that it is her fault reminds us of Mala's statement in the beginning of the play that it is all her fault. We get the impression that everything is not right with Mala, and for whatever is wrong both Mala and her mother consider themselves responsible.

Mala's second taped speech at the counsellor's also underlines that something is terribly 'wrong' with her.

MALA. I don't know why. I just don't understand... Please don't ask me why I do it. It's just a game...not a game. No...its...I know it's wrong. What I am doing is terribly wrong! But it means a lot to me. I like it. That is why I am a bad person. I have no character...I suppose it's these Western values, I wish I were more traditional then I wouldn't behave like this...no, no, that's stupid, I know that's very easy to put the blame elsewhere. (18)

Mala, however, is unable to understand why she acts as she does. Dattani does not reveal the factor behind Mala's condition all at once. He provides us information in bits and once the pieces fall in place the picture emerges. The first impression that we get is that Mala is sexually abnormal, perhaps a nymphomaniac. She is aware, as she admits to the counsellor, that 'it means a lot to her' and that she likes it, but she also knows that it is 'terribly wrong'. The dramatist shows her at a party where she is 'dressed provocatively but not flashy or revealing'. She is irresistibly drawn towards a man who has come to the party with his fiancée and, while dancing with him, brazenly asks him to take her to his room. In a later scene when she is sitting with Deepak in a restaurant, she complains to him that a man sitting a few tables away is staring at her breasts but when Deepak picks up a fight with him, she says that the man was really not staring at her and she had made that up. To Deepak's query whether she said that to avoid quarrel, she says, "No. He wasn't staring at me...I wanted him to...You want to know what I feel most?...If he had looked at me, I would have felt – I would have felt truly alive." (31)

It is in the scene where Mala accuses her mother of not standing by her when her uncle, Vinay, abused her sexually when she was a child that we have an idea of her painful past. But even here the situation becomes blurred when Shanta gives a different version: "Not when you were seven but when you were thirteen. Please don't misunderstand me, Mala. I remember, seeing you with my brother during

the summer holidays. You were pushing on him in the bed room.” (27) What she remembers vividly and has ever been disturbed about is the fact that Mala was enjoying sex. She, however, does not understand when Mala says, “That is part of the pain, Ma. The pleasure is part of the pain.” (29) The traumatic experience of sex that she had undergone when only seven years old had ruined forever her normal response to sex. What her mother saw her doing at the age of thirteen was the perversion that incestuous encounter had brought into her. Deepak has realised that she needs expert help to overcome her problem. So he asks her to see a psychiatrist. But her ultimate freedom from her dark past is possible only when she confronts her past squarely. This she does towards the end of the play as Deepak, following a hunch, forces a situation on the characters involved in it – Mala, Shanta and Vinay. He asks Mala if Vinay has something to do with her condition, but she denies it and rather puts the blame on her mother. This leaves Deepak facing a blank wall. However, he pursues his hunch and while they are all sitting in a restaurant he confronts Vinay with the question. A shameless Vinay denies everything – “If you mean that I have something to do with her depression, you are wrong. Ask her. I have only given her love and attention, right from the start. I treat her like I would treat my own daughter.” (48) Deepak, however, is not fooled by this glib remark – “She isn’t being treated for depression alone...It would be interesting to know what happened to her when she was a child. What kind of attention did you give her?” (48) Vinay, knowing it well that neither Mala nor Shanta will acknowledge this shameful fact, asks Deepak to ask Shanta about it. Even though Mala urges her mother to speak, she remains silent at first and later says, “You are wrong. There is nothing like that. He is my brother and I know him.” (49)

What allows child sexual abuse to continue unabated is the fact that in most of the cases it is committed by someone close to the family, and people, especially women, keep silent about it out of shame and fear of infamy. Dattani brings out

this fact very forcefully in the play. Though Mala bares her past, her mother advises her to ‘forget’ it. She also cautions her not to mention it to Deepak as this will ruin her prospect of marriage. She believes that Mala’s marriage will whitewash her past. It is this mentality that has brought Deepak to a dead end in his search for a remedy for Mala’s condition. Situation, however, changes drastically when Vinay proudly presents the papers of the purchase of the house in which Mala and Shanta live as his gift to his only sister. An infuriated Mala bursts out – “He bought your silence. So that you can never tell anyone what he did to your daughter.” (52) Once the truth comes out in the open, the skeletons of the past tumble out:

MALA (to Shanta). Where were you when he locked the door to your bedroom while I was napping in there? Where were you during those fifteen minutes when he was destroying my soul? Fifteen minutes every day of my summer holidays, add them up. Fifteen minutes multiplied by thirty or thirty one or whatever. That’s how long or how little it took for you to send me to hell for the rest of my life! Surely you must have known Ma. (53)

More than her uncle, Mala blames her mother for her plight. She failed to respond to the pain of her daughter, even though she must have known what was happening to her. Instead of protecting her, she merely remained silent. It is at this juncture that Dattani gives his final blow. Shanta admits that she had remained silent all along, but this silence went back not only to Mala’s childhood but also to her own. She herself had been subjected to sexual assault when merely a child, and at the hands of the same person – Vinay, her brother. After years of suffocating silence, she shows her mutilated psyche:

SHANTA (defeated) Yes. Yes! I only remained silent. I am to blame. That is why God is punishing me today. I remained silent not because I wanted to, but I didn’t know how to speak. I – I cannot speak. I cannot say anything. My tongue was cut off...My tongue was cut off years ago...(To Deepak.) Please save her. I did not save her. I did not know how to

save her. How could I save her when I could not save myself?...(*To Mala*) You say I did not help you? I could not help you. Same as you could not help me. Did you ever see the pain in my eyes? No. Nobody saw anything. Nobody said anything. Not my brothers, not my parents. Only (*pointing to the Man*) he spoke. Only he said, only he saw and he did. (54-55)

Shanta was only six years old when her brother, Vinay, who was thirteen then assaulted her sexually. For ten years she was subjected to sexual abuse. This crippled her mentally for the whole of her life. Her weak and submissive response to the paper wallah in the beginning of the play now begins to make sense to us. Dattani, as Dubey mentions, had interviewed more than a dozen survivors of child sexual abuse to know what impact this abuse leaves on the psyche of the victim. His insight into the issue gives the play the force of authenticity – “...every survivor and psychologist who has seen the play is amazed by its veracity!” (Dubey 3)

Two most pronounced impacts that child sexual abuse may leave on the girl victim, as evinced in the play, is that she may either turn a nymphomaniac or a sexually frigid woman. These two extreme results are shown in the characters of Mala and Shanta. Mala cannot control her sexual urge and she indulges in sex with whoever happens to attract her. Vinay had subjected her to forced sex during her month-long summer vacations. This has conditioned her sexual behaviour in two ways. She likes her affairs to last for a month and then terminates them. This is what happens in her relationship with Deepak. Secondly, she prefers men who are much older than her. At a counselling session she confesses:

It has to end in a month's time. In fact I like it best when I can time it so it lasts for thirty days. I even mark it on my calendar. After that I have to - move on, you know what I mean...Well it means that it is no longer satisfying to me, and I do not mean the physical part of it, although that is usually the main attraction for me...not that I actually enjoy it when they are doing it to me...sometimes I do, with the

right kind of people...the right kind of people are, let me see...usually older men though not necessarily so, Deepak my fiancé, is only a few years older to me...I think I like it – I do not know how to put it...When they - sort of – you know - use me. (18)

On Shanta, the act of sexual violence left a different impact. She shrank into herself and sought relief in her worship of Lord Krishna. But the worst part was that she became incapable of loving a man and enjoying sex in a healthy manner. This ruined her married life. Mala, recalling their past, says to her mother:

The only reason you shared my room was because you didn't want to sleep with him. All night long I had to listen to your mumbling saying you didn't want him near you. You didn't want him touching you. You even moved that horrible picture of your god into my room saying he will protect us...I remember daddy's last word to me. You know what he said. He said to me 'I married a frozen woman'. (36)

If Shanta was deserted by her husband, the reason for this was rooted in the sexual abuse she was subjected to in her childhood. She, unlike Mala, was unable to overcome the distortion in her personality because no Deepak came in her life to lend a helping hand. She did not know how to heal the wound in her psyche and so she took refuge in her worship of Sri Krishna.

The message that RAHI wanted to give through this play, and which the play succeeds in creating so effectively and artistically, is that if a woman does fall a victim to child sexual abuse which creates a problem for her in her healthy response to life later on, it is not something she should be ashamed of, as the fault does not lie with her but with the man who did this to her. It is he who should be ashamed of his sexual perversion. The woman need not run away from herself, as Shanta does. Nor should she blame herself for what she is, as Mala does. Once the woman gets rid of this guilt she can face life smilingly. Dattani makes her heroine say after she has freed herself from her complexes:

MALA. I can smile again. I can be a little girl, again. Not again, but for the first time. At thirty plus I am the little girl I never was. I want to see movies, taste ice cream. Really taste it, feel the high from the sugar. Tell the difference between flavours. I hear sounds I never cared to hear before – birds, temple bells...My senses are working again. I can touch this chair and feel the chair touch me. My whole body can feel! And for the first time I enjoyed sex. Truly enjoyed it for tactile pleasure. Not as a craving for some kind of approval. I came alive and experienced what it means to be really loved. And for once I could look at Deepak in the eyes and say 'I love you' to him and believe it when he says the same to me. (33-34)

Mala has also realised the pain of her mother. The play ends with her dialogue to her mother, which she apparently does not listen, in which she seeks her forgiveness for not helping her and merely blaming her for her own troubles.

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Voices of the Voiceless: Subaltern Writings in English

**Amar Nath Dwivedi*

At the very outset, I must state that this paper is going to discuss in some detail the writings in English of those authors who have raised their voices for the voiceless, for the suppressed and oppressed classes, for the lower sections of society. In other words, the paper will concentrate on "recovering the histories and perspectives of marginalized people – be they women, non-whites, non-Europeans, the lower classes and oppressed castes..."¹ These people have suffered immensely in the days of colonialism and even postcolonialism, and in the Indian context they comprise the scheduled castes and the scheduled tribes, the lower classes like *dalits*, sweepers and scavengers, *chandals*, and women. We will examine here how writers have responded or reacted to the living conditions of these people in their creative works.

Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, in her insightful essay, "Can the Subaltern Speak?" (1985) powerfully raises the issue of the 'subaltern' or oppressed subject. She defines the 'subaltern' as "a person without lines of social mobility."² She suggests that it is impossible to recover the voice of the 'subaltern' in a stultifying society. In the initial stage of her essay, Spivak is concerned with Marx's concept of class struggle between the haves and the have-nots, between the power-wielding class and the working class. She mentions that Marx's concept of a class is "artificial and economic", and the economic agency or *interest* is impersonal because it is "systemic and heterogeneous".³ She dwells on Marx's possibly to point out that he does not consider women as a class demanding social justice. Further, Spivak speaks of a radical critic like Foucault who believes that oppressed subjects can speak for themselves, as he can't visualize the repressive power of colonialism and its intersection with the

paralyzing hold of patriarchy in the social context. Spivak talks of Foucault's locating "one case of epistemic violence ...in the redefinition of madness at the end of the European eighteenth century" ⁴ in the light of what Napoleon Bonaparte had done. While talking of the epistemic violence, Spivak takes up the colonial debate on widow immolation in India to illustrate her viewpoint. The woman whose husband was no more was forced to burn on her husband's pyre willy-nilly and considering *sati* as an evil social practice Raja Ram Mohan Roy fought against it. Spivak maintains that "the ideological construction of gender keeps the male dominant" and that "the subaltern has no history and cannot speak, the subaltern as female is even more deeply in shadow." ⁵ The history of female repression can be read in a sentence like "White men are saving brown women from brown men." This possessive colonial attitude of Afro-Americans towards the blacks gets transformed into imposed, so-called self-willed immolation for widows in India. Tyrannical repression holds the centre-stage in any consideration of the 'subaltern' question.

Benita Parry, a well-known postcolonial critic, points out that Spivak's argument about "doubly-oppressed native women" serves to "constrain the development of an anti-imperialist critique". ⁶ This kind of critique has also been advocated by Edward Said in his *Orientalism* (1978) and Homi K. Bhabha in his *The Location of Culture* (1990). Parry suggests that Spivak's insistence on the voiceless of the non-elite or subaltern woman is not judiciously conceived. She says, "It will be argued that the lacunae in Spivak's learned **discussions** issue from a theory assigning an absolute power to the hegemonic discourse in constituting and disarticulating the native."⁷ Very clearly, the theory referred to here is related to Spivak's attempts at "theorizing the silence of the doubly-oppressed subaltern woman", and her theorem on imperialism's epistemic violence "extends to positing the native, male and female, as a historically-muted subject."⁸ Even within the confines of this discourse, a scholar like Lata Mani *does* find evidence of woman's voice, and

Mani's dissent is well noted by Spivak.⁹ Another scholar, Chandra Talpade Mohanty, who is presently based in Ithaca, New York, seems to side with Lata Mani when she argues that discourses of representation, as formulated by Western feminist writers on 'Third World Woman', should not be confused with material realities, and that it is possible to locate traces of woman's voice there where she comes out as a healer, an ascetic, a singer of sacred songs, an artisan and artist. Mohanty pleads for feminist solidarity through anti-capitalist struggles.¹⁰

The above-noted critics and their valued opinions clearly bring out their divergent attitudes towards womankind. Hereafter we will consider the treatment of womankind by some well-known female creative writers like Nayantara Sahgal, Shashi Deshpande, Githa Hariharan, Arundhati Roy, and Manju Kapur in Indian English writing. Some others like Kamala Markandaya and Kamala Das among Indian writers, Bharati Mukherjee among diasporic writers, and Toni Morrison among Afro-American writers may be briefly examined here to ascertain their views on this vital issue. For one thing, male writers are left out of this consideration in order to present only the first-hand experiences of womankind.

Kamala Markandaya and Nayantara Sahgal, the two novelists of the older generation, and Kamala Das, an eminent poet of yester years, have diversely dealt with women and their grappling issues. Markandaya, for whom I have vigorously pleaded that she should be raised to the position of "the Big Three" ¹¹ and made one of "the Four Wheels" of the Indian English Fiction ¹², sharply focuses on female characters struggling hard for their survival; for example, Rukmani in *Nectar in a Sieve* (1954). Other women characters in Markandaya's novels, such as Mira in *Some Inner Fury* (1955), Sarojini in *A Silence of Desire* (1960), Caroline in *Possession* (1963), Vasantha in *The Nowhere Man* (1972), and the two contrasted sisters, Lalitha and Saroja, in *Two Virgins* (1973), are also seen struggling in their lives for other reasons – for love passion, for being

childless, for possessive instincts, for cultural divide and racial hatred, for attraction toward the glimmers of the city or repulsion from it. What I intend to suggest here is that the female characters of Markandaya are sometimes muted (like Rukmini and Sarojini) and sometimes vocal (the remaining ones mentioned above).

From the feminist point of view, Nayantara Sahgal is a significant name to recall. Her novels beginning with *Prison and Chocolate Cake* (1954), through *The Day in Shadow* (1971), to *Rich Like Us* (1983), and *Mistaken Identity* (1988), are largely concerned with some raging socio-political issues as well as with 'the Woman Question'. As regards 'the Woman Question', we can take up the example of *The Day in Shadow* wherein the theme of the woman as – as a victim surfaces in the story of Simrit, who is married to Som, a domineering husband indeed. Simrit does not have the freedom to choose even in domestic matters, such as 'chair covers and curtains'. It is ultimately Som's wishes and choices that prevail, and this creates a smothering effect upon her. When Som decides to have no more children, she feels the stranglehold of their sexual and martial relationship because it is a one-sided decision. Now she feels complete marginalization from Som's world and slowly yet steadily drifts towards another man Raj for her emotional fulfilment. But the boyfriend later marries another woman, leaving Simrit to her grudge and grouse and eventually sinking into silence. As an educated woman and a professional writer, she now develops greater involvement with nature, not with men and their manners. The great feminist thinker, Simone de Beauvoir, thinks that "nature represents what woman herself represents for man, herself and her negation, a kingdom and a place of exile; the whole in the guise of the other."¹³ sexual exploitation and survival, adultery and extra-marital relationship are witnessed in Sahgal's other novels – for example, Kusum in *A Time to be Happy* (1958), Rashmi in *This Time of Morning* (1965), Saroj in *Storm in Chandigarh* (1969), etc.

Kamala Das is generally known as the poet of love and sex. Although some scholars have tried to trace purity in

her love by putting her in the Mirabai – Lord Krishna tradition, they are not correct in doing so. Poem after poem she speaks of "a hunger / to take in with greed, like a forest-fire that / Consumes..." ("Forest Fire", *Summer in Calcutta*, 1965, p. 51), "the womb's blinded hunger, the muted whisper / at the core" ("Captive", *The Descendants*, p. 17), "That was the only kind of love, / This hacking at each other's parts / Like convicts hacking, breaking clods / At noon." ("Convicts", *The Descendants*, p. 26), and "Cowering / Beneath your monstrous ego I ate the magic loaf and / Became a dwarf. I lost my will and reason..." ("The Old Playhouse", *The Old Playhouse & Other Poems*, 1973, p.1). Kamala Das in her life was a dispirited wife and repeatedly complained against her husband. In one of her articles, she writes: "My husband was immersed in his office-work, and after work there was the dinner, followed by sex. Where was there any time left for him to see the sea or the dark buffaloes of the slopes?"¹⁴

To get rid of this situation of boredom, despair and strangulation, Mrs. Das seeks solace in another man's arms. A clear-cut hint at this fact is to be had in her poem "The Looking Glass", wherein she says:

Getting a man to love you is easy
Only be honest about your wants as
Woman. Stand nude before the glass with him
So that he sees himself the stronger one
And believes it so, and you so much more
Softer, younger, lovelier....

And again:

Gift him all,
Give him what makes you woman, the scent of
Long hair, the musk of sweat between the breasts,
The warm shock of menstrual blood, and all your
Endless female hungers.

(*The Descendants*, p.25).

If such passages bring out the painful cry of a helpless woman, they also hint at the emotional cravings and the freedom to enjoy their fulfilment at the legitimate or

illegitimate source. Kamala Das, in such passages, becomes the champion of woman's cause, like Preeta Bhargava pleading for female freedom in sexual relations in the 1913 Literary Fest held at Jaipur recently.

Perhaps no one has better expressed the silence or speechlessness of womankind than Shashi Deshpande in her novels. Saru or Sarita, the protagonist of *The Dark Holds No Terrors* (1980), becomes a doctor of fame and a better earning member of the family, and this breeds a sense of inferiority in her husband of meager means who turns a sadist in his nocturnal meetings with her. So, in her utter helplessness, she goes away to her Baba who advises her to be with Manu, her husband. Where is the solution to her personal problems? A similar situation obtains in *That Long Silence* (1988), where Jaya and Mohan develop an estranged relationship, so much so that they are not even on talking terms. At last, it is Jaya who decides to break the ice of silence. Thus, Deshpande treads the middle path as a feminist (if she is one at all), not the aggressive path of the Western feminists. This is what prompts Mukta Atrey and Viney Kirpal to remark in their perceptive study on Shashi Deshpande as follows: "So what makes Indian women 'feminists' different is the fact that they raise their voice against social injustice and oppression of woman rather than ask for her freedom from the institution of marriage and family."¹⁵

Another woman writer of repute is Githa Hariharan who has also tackled 'the Woman Question' with intelligence and understanding. Her two novels – *The Thousand Faces of Night* (1992) and *When Dreams Travel* (1999) – bring out some memorable women characters. Devi, an America-educated girl, in the first novel returns to India and accepts an arranged marriage on the insistence of her mother Sita, a self-respecting lady of sacrificing nature, but Devi is not happy with her husband who stays at home for only ten days in a month and then goes out, to Bangalore, to serve a multinational toothpaste company. Her barrenness increases her tension and irritation. In a huff, she leaves for Delhi to

join her romantic lover Gopal, a singer by profession. Getting disillusioned with him, she returns to her mother, not to her husband. Hariharan's second novel, *When Dreams Travel*, depicts two powerful women characters, Shahrzad and Duniyazad, who make use of their talent and also body to tame a repressible king called Shahryar. Of the two women, Duniyazad becomes a liberated woman by establishing physical relations with her elder sister's husband.

Arundhati Roy also portrays such a woman in an arresting manner in her novel, *The God of Small Things* (1997), and this woman called Ammukutty is a divorcee with two children. She belongs to an upper stratum of Syrian Christians and dreams of a youngman named Velutha of a lower class. She is a great daydreamer¹⁶ and crosses all bounds of societal norms when she starts meeting the youngman in a haunted house across the river Meenachal. Baby Kochamma lodges a report with the police that Velutha, a parvan (an untouchable), has forced himself upon Ammu, and on the basis of this report Velutha is arrested, beaten with boots and batons, and thrown into the lock-up where he dies in midnight. The incident gives great shock to Ammu who also breathes her last subsequently. At that time, she is simply "thirty-one. Not old, not young, but a viable-dietable age" (*The God of Small Things*, p. 161). Thus the tyrannical traditional society has taken away the lives of two loving souls. Ammu is, no doubt, a liberated woman or 'feminist' asserting her rights over her body, as Simone de Beauvoir would put it,¹⁷ but the eventual outcome is tragic and disastrous.

If Arundhati Roy is the novelist of the twentieth century, Manju Kapur is one of the twenty-first century. Manju Kapur, a faculty at Miranda College in Delhi, has published five novels¹⁸ to this day, and in her novels she has largely dwelt on women's exploitation and sufferings. Virmati in her first novel *Difficult Daughters* (1998), for instance, enters into a love marriage with a Professor of Amritsar, who refuses to leave his first wife. Consequently, she ends up being marginalized by her own family and

despised by her husband's. Her story is told by her only daughter Ida against the background of the Independence movement of the 1940s and the subsequent trauma of Partition. Virmati wilts under the hostile gaze of Ganga, her husband's first wife, with whom she has to live. She loses all sense of identity. The repeated clandestine visits of the fatal Professor cause the loss of her employers' confidence in her at Nahan (H. P.) and she loses her employment there. Thus Virmati's tale is a tale of sufferings, exploitation and repression. Even the fate of Astha and Peepli Trivedi in *A Married Woman* (2003), Sona and Nisha in *Home* (2006), Nina in *Immigrant* (2008), and Shagun and Ishita in *Custody* (2011) does not hold a bright prospect for them. Out of sheer desperation, some of these women even resort to lesbianism.

No one has better represented the diasporic situation of an Indian immigrant, especially a woman, than perhaps Bharati Mukherjee (born 1940), now a naturalized American citizen (since 1988). In her novels like *Wife* (1975) and *Jasmine* (1989), she focuses on the experience of a woman who is forced to face her marginalization within her own culture and also within a foreign culture, both of which are impinged in patriarchal ideology. The quest for identity is the primary concern of her female protagonists who are inescapably caught in the flux of tradition and modernity. Dimple Dasgupta, for example, in Mukherjee's novel *Wife* accepts an arranged marriage with Amit Basu, an engineer who is due to immigrate to Canada and the U. S. A. in the near future. On the objections of her mother-in-law, Mrs. Basu, Dimple's name is changed to Nandini, and this change is an impingement upon her individuality. Soon she becomes pregnant, but she does not like her pregnancy and induces miscarriage by skipping rope until her legs are numb. Reaching America, she expects a changed life, may be an employment as a librarian, may be a freedom from cramping marital status. She meets Ina Mullick, a liberated housewife who is "more American than Americans",¹⁹ and who dazzles her with her air of sophistication, her command of English,

and her 'Women Lib' advice to "crack the whip".²⁰ Dimple, being confined to home and hearth, starts watching T. V. shows too frequently, and this fact distances her from Amit. T. V. programmes are least demanding, whereas Amit is ever demanding and commanding. She drifts much and more towards freedom-loving Milt Glasser, and in a fit of depression and frustration she murders Amit. Commenting on Dimple, Brinda Bose writes thus: "Dimple has become a prisoner of the ghetto and being an educated and thinking woman she is unable to accept the contradictions of this existence; hence her descent into depression, madness and murder."²¹ Her mad action reminds us of Maya's pushing Gautama down the terrace in Anita Desai's *Cry, the Peacock* (1963).

Among the Afro-American writers, Toni Morrison stands out as a representative voice of the blacks. In her novels she highlights the predicament and hardships of black women in a graphic way. If *The Bluest Eye* (1970) is a recordation of the defiling of a black girl, named Pecola, by her own father Chally Breedlove in the presence of her helpless mother Pauline, *Sula* (1973) narrates the bonds of love between two girl-friends, Sula and Nel, and their subsequent estrangement after Sula establishes sexual relationship with Nel's husband. Sula is regarded as the very embodiment of evil who passively watches her mother burn to death. The cruelty of mother-figure comes out vividly in Morrison's fifth novel, *Beloved* (1987), which earned her the 1988 Pulitzer Prize for fiction. The mother, Sethe Suggs, kills her infant daughter rather than allowing her to grow and get enslaved. Her other novels – *Jazz* (1992), *Paradise* (1999), *Love* (2003), and *A Mercy* (2008) – also portray the various shades of mothering and motherhood. For example, *A Mercy*, her latest novel, brings to light the horrors of the system of slavery where a helpless slave mother offers her pre-teen daughter Florens to a buyer called Jacob Vaark, an Anglo-Dutch trader, hoping that she will find a better home. The serious thought that Morrison gives to the concerns of mothers shackled in slavery recalls to our minds, by way of contrast,

Buchi Emecheta, a well-known woman writer of Nigeria who exults in delineating the blisses of motherhood in her novel, *The Joys of Motherhood* (New York : George Braziller, 1979).

After having dwelt so long on the different facets of womanhood, now we turn our attention to the treatment of the lower classes of people by writers like Munshi Premchand in *Godan* (1957 English ed.), Mulk Raj Anand in *Untouchable* (1935), and Arundhati Roy in *The God of Small Things* (1997). *Godan* is a story of stark realism and portrays the tragedy and pathos in the dark lives of Hori Ram and his wife Dhania. They are a poor couple, hardworking and honest, and have desired all along to have a cow of their own and feed their son Gobar with plenty of milk. Exploited by the Zamindar, Hori has to work hard in the fields and return home late in the evening. But till the very end, he could not manage a cow. Hori catches the loo while working in the fields, and sinks quickly. His wife has no money to buy a cow and offer her in charity to Datadin, the village brahmin. Dhania's last words are quotable here: "Maharaj, there's neither a cow nor a calf nor any money in the house. This is all the money [twenty annas] I have; this is all I can give. Take this in place of cow."²² Saying so, she collapses on the ground. The backbone-breaking poverty of the peasants of India under the feudal system is marvelously revealed in *Godan*, which remains "unparalleled and unsurpassed in the whole fiction of India."²³

Mulk Raj Anand's *Untouchable*, as the title clearly indicates, is directly based on the miserable conditions of the sweepers and scavengers doing rounds and cleaning latrines. The central character, Bakha, is a youngman of fourteen who experiences alienation and segregation in the Hindu society. He is a sensitive youngman who wants changes in life. The novelist records the events happening in a day of his life. Initially, he is an admirer of the Whiteman and puts on dresses like a Sahib, as he is angry with the hypocrisy and pretensions of the Hindus. He is humiliated by a caste Hindu on the pretext of touching him inadvertently; the crowd also boos and jeers him. His sister, Sohini, is insulted

by the temple-priest, Pt. Kali Nath, but his timely arrival saves her honour. Sohini is a beautiful girl whose problems arise from her caste as well as her sex. Her attractive figure awakens jealousy in Gulabo, the washerwoman. Later in the day, Bakha carries a wounded child home, but the child's mother, instead of commending him, finds fault with him for having polluted her child. Thereafter, Bakha attends a meeting addressed by Gandhiji and is filled with a sense of self-respect when Gandhi remarks that the untouchables (*harijans*) are 'cleaners of Hindu society'. Thus, Bakha's evolution from a blind imitation of the colonizers to a realization of the need for self-assertion signifies "a shift from dependence to autonomy and the release of the subaltern from the position of liminality."²⁴ Like Bakha in *Untouchable*, we have Munoo (a poor lad being exploited by Mrs. Mainwaring) in *Coolie* (1936) and Bikhu (the son of Laxmi, an untouchable woman) in *The Road* (1961) are described as "inscriptions of the colonized subaltern in the discourse of fiction ..."²⁵

A consideration of the subaltern studies will be possibly incomplete without a reference to *The God of Small Things* (1997). In this novel, as noted earlier, Arundhati Roy exposes the miserable conditions of the paravans (untouchables) through the ages. The owners of the Ayeman house, Pappachi and Mammachi, would not allow the paravans into their house: "They were not allowed to touch anything that Touchables touched. Caste Hindus and Caste Christians."²⁶ They were not allowed to walk on public roads, not allowed to cover their upper bodies, not allowed to carry umbrellas. These social restrictions were faithfully followed by Kelan (Velutha's grandfather) and his son, but they were flagrantly flouted by Velutha. And the result was his tragic, untimely death in the police custody, leaving behind "no footprints in sand, no ripples in water, no image in mirrors."²⁷

Finally, I have tried to highlight, in the foregoing pages, miserable conditions of the subaltern as discovered in the creative works of a few outstanding writers. The subaltern includes women, untouchables, and people of lower castes

and classes. Their voices might have remained muted and marginalized in earlier times, but now they have become conscious of their rights and privileges and are raising their resonant voices in every sphere of human activity – social, political, religious and literary. They have now definitely moved from Erasure to Assertion.²⁸

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As a material realist, Mohanty records: "Clearly there is the ubiquitous global teenage girl factory worker, the domestic worker, and the sex worker. There is also the migrant/immigrant service worker, the refugee, the victim of war crimes, the woman-of-colour prisoner who happens to be a mother and drug user, the consumer-housewife, and so on. There is also the mother-of-the nation / religious bearer of traditional culture and morality." (pp. 486-87).
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De(i)fyng the Author in Text: An (A)political Subversion of Humanistic Discourse

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Every author cultivates the remote and mysterious areas of his sensibility, truth, realism, self-discipline, private and public emotions, intellectual experience, authenticity and profundity of thought both in the ideological and philosophical context of his text. In ideological definition and for pedagogic purpose text has its autonomous status. A literary text expresses some truths that correspond to life and reality. In it the author makes a philosophical enterprise on contemporary reality that further generates 'interpretative communities' in its intertextuality. But with the (un)conscious application of different theories, possessed literary sensibility and assigned 'linguistic competence' the reader often resorts to Eliotian 'wit', Richardian 'irony', Leavisian 'maturity' to interpret a text comprehending and enjoying its 'literariness'. Any view on the text does not come from nature or God, but it is arbitrary and man-made, and every analysis or critique of it is made on individual reader's assumption of its system and value. Every text has its signifying system beyond its structural system and it is 'automatized' with the approximation of reader's habitual cerebral notion either by destroying or naturalizing the reality in it.

The author structures a text with the 'personal registration of activities in life'. Although this is his private act, the text performs with some subjective consonance on 'historical studies', 'linguistic studies', 'moral studies', and studies in the technique of art'. The intention of the author

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to write a text is purely private but he makes it public in the investment of his intention through 'sincerity', 'authenticity', 'responsibility' and 'genuineness' by creating emotive and psychic effects on the readers. Author's text always remains as the Jesus in literary history but for the readers it becomes the Christ of faith for generating feelings, emotions, understanding and motivation in relation with the universe, humanity and social environment. The potency of the text invites its 'propositional' and 'illocutionary' acts.

The author both as an organic intellectual (who is identified with oppressed class or works on behalf of them) and traditional intellectual (who tries to fulfil the scientific, literary, philosophical and religious aspirations of people) invents innumerable ideas, thoughts, feelings and stories in his novel, drama, poem, essay and philosophical treatise. Every time he intends, imitates, remixes and fabricates the truth that unites a text 'not in its origin but in its destination'. A literary text has its linguistic label that arbitrarily fixes the context, code and contact. It conveys a bundle of passions and impressions monopolizing communication, determining function, and practical activities in verbal use. But author's intention, prescribed purpose and meaning in the text vary from readers to readers, place to place, and time to time. The readers, critics and interpreters receive it often differentiating from author's intended investment of meaning. They place their reasons to argue and scheme the privileges to extract it beyond author's investment of ideas, impressions, 'linguistic formulations' and 'system of signs'. The interpretation of author's intention is a continuous process in reader's response at innumerable centres of culture where author's self becomes meaningless and his linguistic formations become 'a ready-formed dictionary'. The author does not know that the structure of his text will earn so many analyses in the socio-cultural realities of life. The understanding of Roland Barthes' few outstanding essays, "Authors and Writers" (1960), "Criticism as Language" (1963), "Science Versus Literature" (1967) and "The Death of the Author" (1968) presents the author as an institution,

source of knowledge, the controller of text's meaning, and chief object of critical interest.

Roland Barthes' essay "The Death of the Author" presents the author as an institution is dead, his civil status and biographical persona has disappeared from the text. It adds that writing is the destruction of every voice and of every point of origin. It appears that Barthes is visibly convinced about the death of the author in print world but the author has an auto-telic entity and he never dies in the interpretational strategy of his text. In other words, author's intention reworks and investment of larger meanings start with the death of the author. Critics believe that as long as there is a text, there is an author. It seems that the very declaration, the death of the author, recoils the future authors in horrors. It will be a scholarly barbarity and intellectual nuisance to say so because it reveals the termination of author's bodily existence when his intention easily varies in the text; and the readers, listeners and viewers receive or interpret it time and again. The author leaves the text as a fruit bearing tree and it is readers' responsibility to enrich and embellish the unity of the text that lies not in its origin but in its destination. The author can neither die nor can the critic define his death but the author lives and reigns in reader's interpretational skill, monopolization of communication, determining of function. The readers as,

Critics postulate a 'profound relationship' between the author they are dealing with and his works, and then have the absurdity to ignore any such relationship between themselves and what they are writing The critic is not occupied in discovering 'hidden things in an author's work, but in fitting together in one piece of furniture the language of his day and that of the author. Literature is susceptible of infinite reinterpretation because it conveys no message but a 'system of signs' (Balmires 360-61).

The reader in his interpretational strategy and philosophy decodes author's encoded meaning in the text in his milieu and moment. In his linguistic free play, the reader not only crucifies the author but also cumulatively adds his

viewpoints with new vigour and vision. But in his hypothetical death the author ever rises like a Phoenix from the hermeneutic forensics of the text.

The 'text' is an endless chain of signifiers (sound viewers) with no fixed meaning rather than a 'work' which involves methodical authorial construction, inherent form of unity, determinable and determinate meaning. A text for its verbal structure is contested or conceptualised in a preferred discourse under historical circumstances or in definite social and cultural milieu. The close reading of a text is playful for its un-decidability to the wordplay. Since a text's context cannot be free from contrast, conflict, ambiguity and contesting notions it creates un-decidability and this further creates conflicting readings. The interpretation of a text is controlled by language and culture in the systems of signification. The deconstructionists argue that meanings are possibly generated by the text for the reader and it is the reader who decides among them. This undecidability debunks the whole notion of reading as a decision making process by the readers. In undecidability the reader is either forced to choose the notion of the author or decides/ recognises some intrinsic feature of the text.

Barthes' declaration 'The death of the Author' deals with the question – who speaks and who writes? Barthes replaces the author by a 'scriptor' who is not a bundle of passions and impressions but the owner of an immense dictionary. The author conceives the text but the 'scriptor' uses the language as an instrument of communication and a vehicle of thought. While the author aims at focusing on 'a galaxy of signifiers' to encourage the reader to be a producer of his own meaning, the latter makes realistic interpretation to insist on specific meaning. The 'scriptor' has no anterior existence as he is born simultaneously with the text. Differentiating from 'scriptor', Barthes analyses the author in capitalist ideology (meaning is controlled by private owners):

The Author, when believed in, is always conceived of as the past of his own book: book and author stand

automatically on a single line divided into a *before* and an *after*. The Author is thought to *nourish* the book, which is to say that he exists before it, thinks, suffers, lives for it, is in the same relation of antecedence to his work as a father to his child. In complete contrast, the modern scriptor is born simultaneously with the text, is in no way equipped with a being preceding or exceeding the writing, is not the subject with the book as predicate, there is no other time than that of the enunciation and every text is eternally written here and now (Rice and Waugh 187).

The reader makes an insightful journey into the text by breaking the autonomous status of its potential structure and units in various human realities for the understanding of meaning. Since every reading of the text is a recognizing moment of practicing deconstruction, the reader crosses the boundary between the given text and the larger text which is inseparable from the real world. A text is always open to being seen in the light of new contexts each time it is read. Every reading of the text affects its existing meaning and postulates several meanings. Although this is not possible in academic texts and journals, the ideological assumption of the text possibly provides new aesthetics in an indirect and contrapuntal way.

Structure is the centre of the text that holds all the units in place and proper role to each other. When the centre keeps the structure moving in interpretational skill of the critic Derrida calls this motion 'play'. But the centre limits the 'play' making it stable and rigid as if the structure will not collapse in its critiquing tornado or hurricane. Structure is a system that operates language between fixity and constant shifting of meaning. Since no meaning is fixed and stable in the shifting of signifiers and signifieds, the centre never remains absolute. Derrida also knows that it is impossible for the 'sign' (the linguistic material connected with physical 'like sound' and intellectual 'like ideas' consonance) to 'play' outside the centre as the centre is not just 'truth' but becomes a system in ambiguity and multiplicity. The 'sign' consists of 'concept' and 'sound image' which is not same as the physical sound (what the mouth

makes and ears hear) but it generates a psychological imprint that forms an impression. The linguistic sign establishes a union between the signifier (the sound image of the spoken word that exists in author's time and measured intelligibly in readers' time) and the signified (that views the subject or meaning expressed in the 'sign'). Since the bond between the 'signifier' and the 'signified' is arbitrary, the two go together and make the meaning even possible in ambiguity and multiplicity. The signifying system of 'sign' establishes *syntagmatic* (words in order with phonic sound) and *paradigmatic* (a set of different forms of words) relationship between the signifier and the signified. This kind of logic in structuralism is a science that helps to comprehend the basic units or elements of structure of the text to understand the humankind.

Structuralism that deals with linguistic science helps to understand the truth, logic, variable and reconciling contradictions in the text at the structure replaces the author in criticism. It is in explicit opposition to 'mimetic criticism' (that views literature primarily an imitation of reality), 'expressive criticism' (that views literature which primarily expresses the feelings and temperament, or creative imagination of its author) and any form of the view that literature is a mode of communication between the author and reader. Prominent structuralist critics Roland Barthes, Gerard Genette, Julia Kristeva and Tzvetan Todorov are of the view that a literary work is the product of linguistic system. They use this technique of linguistic theory to objects and activities other than language itself. Swiss linguist and structuralist critic Ferdinand de Saussure, the founder of modern structural linguistics views that language is a system of 'signs', has a 'signifier' (a sound image) and 'signified' (the concept or meaning). Since 'signs' have 'functional structures', the 'signifiers' and 'signifieds' are governed by a single complex set of relations.

Language is Barthes' idea of interpretation from beginning to end, but in Saussure's interpretation 'sign' is always a matter of historical and cultural convention. The

'signifier' and 'signified' are dependent upon differential relations within a system which is 'diacritical' not 'referential'. In his *Elements of Semiology* (1964) and *System de la Mode* (1967) Barthes views that verbal utterance and articulation in conversation presupposes a system that analyses the general principles to explain or interpret individual works. The process of author's familiarization with the context defamiliarizes the text when the reader understands its environment, language and literariness for his own. For this in his book *Image- Music - Text* (1977) Barthes views that the author is dead only in premises. Dismissing the author he says that the author has a consequential death but not a conceptual one.

Poststructuralism mostly relies on the French theorists like Jacques Derrida, Jacque Lacan, Michel Foucault and Roland Barthes. While Derrida relies on structure, sign and play; Lacan, the psychoanalytic critic deconstructs a text by positing human unconsciousness which is structured like language and argues that subject is in fact a product of social order. Foucault embraces Marxism and continues to study culture in a text in terms of power relations believing that power is not simply repressive but a tool of conspiracy of one against another in the interwoven and often contradictory forces. For Barthes "The text is a tissue of quotations drawn from the innumerable centres of culture" (Rice and Waugh 188) and the author only indicates precisely the truth of writing. Poststructuralist critics vehemently attack the Structuralist criticism of 1960s that defines all elements of human culture, including literature, may be understood as parts of 'a system of signs'. While Saussure employs semiotic theory (the general science of signs), and posits the possibility of approaching and analysing a text systematically and scientifically; poststructuralists view that the world itself is a text and self as the subject as well as the user of language speaks through us and demonstrates all signifieds (the viewed objects). The poststructuralists not only reject the structuralist claim to scientific analysis but also argue more importantly that no meaning is definitely determined since

all systems of signification endlessly 'defer' meaning through a chain of signifiers. For poststructuralists, no meaning for a text is final and stable, reconsiderations and substitutions are drawn through a variety of denotations and connotations. Since 'nothing can lift us out of language' and the textual world is not different from the real world of individual's social and political life the reader heavily relies on text's structure, sign and play in the discourse analysis.

The idea of the text is the representation of reality and the reader analyses it in his interpretational 'literary competence'. Since no text is confined to a single and homogeneous meaning, the poststructuralists make it a 'writerly text' (that invests multiple meanings) rejecting the structuralists' claim for 'readerly text' (that provides a fixed meaning). Poststructuralist approach to a text continues in many of the most prominent contemporary perspectives—ranging from reader-response criticism to the new historicism. In deconstructionist argument, process of signification, and contradiction the contemporary critics search for real meaning in its distorted, disguised and repressed psychological or ideological reasons.

Deconstruction is a philosophical activity and critique of humanist thought essential to expose and explain 'logocentrism' (trust in language as the vehicle of truth), the 'word' with its implication of rationality and wisdom in general and cosmic intellectual principle in particular. The 'word' is both a 'sign' and source of standard meaning, a source of sufficient discourse, and carries rationality and wisdom. Deconstruction provides specific arguments generating new readings of a text by enlivening its debate about critical principles. It is a set of popular ideas and strategy of reading philosophical systems of a textual work in tautological exercise. It is the first version of poststructuralism, and continuation of structuralism that subsumes under structuralism. It analyses the warring forces of signification and helps to know what happens to the structure that provides a continuum between infinite play and eternal stability in the preferred or desired systems of

fluidity and indeterminacy.

Although text constructs its own system of 'truth' and 'meaning', deconstruction "analyses the specificity of a text's critical difference from itself" (Johnson 210). French philosopher Jacques Derrida and historian Michel Foucault believe that language is the key to our understanding of ourselves and the world but their view is different from the structuralist view. Language is the heart of the differences between structuralism and poststructuralism. In structuralism language transfers a wide range of human activities because of its arbitrariness and 'difference' and 'deference' (for later time) of meaning. But for Derrida "language never offers us direct contact with reality ... a window on the world. On the contrary, it always inserts itself between us and would – like a smudgy screen or a distorting lens" (Berten 126).

The final analysis of the text is undecidable. The text has no closure in its analysis and no final meaning can be drawn for ever. Unfolding the layers of its meaning the interpreter operates his deconstructionist reading of the text under scrutiny and a series of binary oppositions, juxtapositions, tensions and inversions. While deconstruction is Derrida's 'coinage', a practice and strategy of analyzing and dismantling the text in order to reveal the parts of the text, for its consistencies and contradictions for J.H Miller "Deconstruction is not dismantling of the structure of a text but a demonstration that it has already dismantled itself" (341). A text is always a starting point not an end point of analysis because it becomes a discourse and "the meaning of a text is always unfolding just ahead of the interpreter, unrolling in front of him or her like a never-ending carpet whose final edge never reveals itself" (Hawthorn 30). For structuralists 'word' as 'sign' provides a standard meaning for discourse and that becomes speech in unmediated expression and in relation to writing.

Literature is susceptible of infinite reinterpretations because it conveys a message through the "system of signs" (Blamires 361). The critic is not only occupied in discovering

hidden things in the text but also fits together the language of his day and that of the author. Saussure views that language is a system of arbitrarily allotted 'signs' which operate only in relation to each other in the total system with the distinction between *langue* (the basic rules and conventions of a given language) and *parole* (specific uses and utterances of language in practical use). If Barthes' "The Death of the Author" reveals that writing is the destruction of every voice, of every point of origin; science of language in 'sign' provides an exhaustive analysis speaking about the workings of 'object' language and allows the 'sign' to speak about the world. Structuralism as a science potentially means to master and explain the world of 'signs' through exhaustive detailing and analyzing of the systems. Structuralism gives paramount emphasis on the interpretation of 'signs'. Since 'signs' have arbitrariness of carrying 'literariness' and structure is based on language for its social purpose and objective values "Saussure strips language of its sociality at the point where it matters most: the point of linguistic production, the actual speaking, writing, listening and reading of concrete social individuals" (Eagleton 98).

Deconstruction involves the close reading of text to demonstrate its irreconcilably contradictory meanings. The process of "Deconstructing a text involves showing that it – like DNA with its double helix – can and does have intertwined yet opposite discourses, multiple and conflicting strands of narrative, threads of meaning that cross and contradict one another" (Murfin and Ray 91). Derrida does not seek to reverse these oppositions because it would mean falling into the trap of erasing the boundary between binary oppositions. When language is a system of sounds used for the communication of meaning it establishes arbitrarily the connection between sound and meaning. In other words:

Deconstruction is not synonymous with destruction... The deconstruction of a text does not proceed by random doubt or arbitrary subversion, but by the careful teasing out of warring forces of signification within the text itself. If anything is destroyed in a deconstructive reading it is not

the text, but the claim to unequivocal domination of one mode of signifying over another (Johnson 5).

Therefore, deconstruction of a text has always a continual flickering, spilling and defusing of meaning of text's structure and critical approach. Like the process of language, the text has a difference not in concept but 'deference' in thought. Deconstructionists believe that the pleasure of deconstruction arises from dismantling repressive ideas and the text means nothing in so far as it means whatever the playful reader wants it to mean.

Deconstruction of the text is an academic game, critical account, and a relentless dissolving of ideological boundaries, doctrinal beliefs, and a twist to old ideology in the power-game of orthodox academic competition. The role of the author in the text is to a large extent determined by historical circumstances as "the work of art is the product of a negotiation between a creator or class or creators, equipped with a complex, communally shared repertoire of conventions, and the institutions and practices of society" (Greenblatt 1989:12). Since nature of criticism is contaminated by culture and norms of language, "Deconstructionists love to reactivate older meanings and to resurrect dead metaphors in order to destabilize a text" (Bertens 126). In the process of textual interpretation "deconstruction tries to show how such oppositions, in order to hold themselves in place, are sometimes betrayed into inverting or collapsing themselves, or need to banish to the text's margins certain niggling details can be made to return and plague them" (Eagleton 115). Understanding the text is just a reader's demolition job and the reader always 'needs perpetually fresh stimulus' from a text and takes it as a kind of capitalist production. The reader gets emotionally absorbed in a text to improvise new meanings with social realism and significance in spontaneity.

In traditional criticism a literary work is sometimes reduced to little more than a window on the author's psyche. If the text is just a 'copy' and that contains the essence, spirit and soul of the author, structuralist criticism is a copy of this

copy. The materiality of text is detailed as linguistic process that carries the danger of being abolished. Structuralists tend to treat the text divorcing it from historical and social context. But Barthes presents structuralist theory as a formal method of reading and structuralism as a world-view raises epistemological and ontological question about the condition of textuality. The author narrates directly on reality but his voice loses its origin with the beginning of his writing. By performing the function of writing the author enters into his own death. While the reader thinks that the author remains powerful by consolidating his position in the text the deconstructionists believe that by writing the text the author maintains his long silence allowing only the discourse to continue. Author's language knows a 'subject' not a 'person' and his language holds together the subject speaking further the voice of the author without exhaust.

A text is made of multiple writings drawn from many cultures. It has multiple relations of dialogue, parody and contestation. The author in his linguistic performance, human condition and invested human subjects describes the world. He is not the authority of his text because the reader deconstructs its structure and subject position in his interpretation. For the structuralists, an ideal reader understands a text exhaustively and intelligibly by defamiliarising its human subjects in a kind of mirror reflection. In the text nothing is divinely assured in its interpretation, subjectivity and objective analysis of signifying units. Deconstruction of the text provides a kind of aid scheme for intellectual promise, academic enterprise, and exhaustive interpretation. With an objective investigation into the language, codes, genres and conventions in a literary text the reader not only feels competent but also gains the neutral technical wisdom, through the 'constative' and 'performative' functions of language. Since language is not a monolithic system and has ideological contention it enjoys a relative autonomy in a definite social relationship. J.L. Austin, the English philosopher of speech act theory admits that language is

performative but statements of facts are constative in performance and propositions.

The author is omniscient in his text. But the text is neither a line of words nor in it the Author-God reigns for its multidimensional space. In particular social condition, human consciousness, and ideological contention "Language was not to be seen either as 'expression', 'reflection' or abstract system, but rather as a material means of production, whereby the material body of the sign was transformed through a process of social conflict and dialogue into meaning" (Eagleton 102). The removal of the author is not merely a historical fact or an account of writing; it utterly transforms the modern text at all its levels where the author is absent. Barthes writes:

Having buried the Author, the modern scribe can thus no longer believe, as according to the pathetic view of his predecessors, that this hand is too slow for his thought or passion and that consequently, making a law of necessity, he must emphasize this delay and indefinitely, 'polish' his form (Rice and Waugh 187-88).

Barthes believes that once a text is explained, it means that the author is discovered beneath the canvas of the script and the reign of the author is realized at every point and every level of hypostases: society, history, psyche and liberty. In other words, to give writing its future "the birth of the reader must be at the cost of the death of the Author" (ibid 189).

The text is a structure in which language speaks, not the author; language 'performs' and not the author. The reader involves in positing the perceived meaning ceaselessly to evaporate the authorial voice in a systematic exemption of his planned meaning. The words of the text release a single theological meaning or message of the Author-God but the reader in his teleological activity refuses the Author-God and places the text in his own hypostases. In his work of art the author remains apparently a psychological character.

The unity of a text lies not in its origin but in its

destination. Every author dreams of a good society in favour of the readers through his text. Perceiving the death of the author in critical hypothesis the critic enjoys his liberty but somewhere from the invisible region of the context of the text the author rises after enjoying the critiquing *sanjeevani* (life giving elixir) of the critic. The critic only undermines the author in his linguistic and cultural approach, and discovers his intended and invested purpose for the greater understanding of the text. If the 'sign', 'signifier' and 'signified' in author's language, culture and time remain constant, literature will not mirror life and society, and it will remain like an inscribed pillar post in history. Since connotations and denotations of language and culture change in different hypostases the message of the Author-God transcends into the contemporary reality of the reader. Thus, demolishing the author for embellishing the text's meaning and placing it in new context will be like crossing the *Lakshman Rekha* and frontiers of criticism in intellectual exploration. While in traditional discourse the text immortalizes its author, the deconstructionist find authors depth in his writing the text but the rationalist think it the subversion of humanistic view. Stating the death of the Author-God may sound Nietzschean but the critic in his deconstructive effort unknowingly delves deep into the structural layers of the text and discovers his divine emergence in its set context.

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Theory and Its Discontents: A Classroom Perspective

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In footnote number 21 of his article entitled “Transgressing the Boundaries: Towards a Transformative Hermeneutics of Quantum Gravity” Alan Sokal hazards on a note that reads like the fervour and warmth of a biographical revelation:

Permit me in this regard a personal recollection: Fifteen years ago, when I was a graduate student, my research in relativistic quantum field theory led me to an approach which I called “de[con]structive quantum field theory” Of course, at that time I was completely ignorant of Jacques Derrida’s work on deconstruction in philosophy and literary theory. In retrospect, however, there is a striking affinity: my work can be read as an exploration of how the orthodox discourse ... on scalar quantum field theory in four-dimensional space-time ... can be seen to assert its own unreliability and thereby to undermine its own affirmations.

This unflinching claim to interdisciplinary syncretism and revisionism is of a piece with Sokal’s attempt at showing up the vacuity of the postmodern academic culture, now famous as the Sokal Hoax.

Alan Sokal, a professor of Physics at New York University, submitted this article to a leading postmodern cultural studies journal, published by Duke University, called *Social Text*. It was printed in the Spring/Summer 1996 issue of the journal. The article calls for debunking grand narratives in Quantum Physics and privileging fluidity and discrete, localized discourses, which would have a ready resonance with the progressive political aspirations of

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postmodernism. On the day the article was published, Sokal announced in another publication, *Lingua Franca*, that the article was a hoax. He described his paper as a pastiche of left-wing jargon, pretentious quotations, fashionable references, and outright waffle, which was structured around observations made by humanities academics on Mathematics and Physics. The journal tried to save its back by retorting that the paper’s status as parody or pastiche was qualification enough for its inclusion within the fold of postmodern interest. But it could not allay the complaints that postmodern theoretical trends constitute a facile exercise in unintelligibility, lacking intellectual probity and sponsoring a socially sterile elitism. My paper will deal with the cognate field of literary theory, or “high theory,” or simply “Theory” with a capital “T” as known to students of English literature, which may be seen as a subset or exemplar of postmodern theory and which is similarly culpable of the excesses attacked by Sokal. Whereas Sokal’s approach to postmodernism in general is dismissive, we shall argue in favour of Theory’s continuing relevance to critical practice and to the classroom of literary studies. My paper will call for an informed and sceptical approach towards Theory, rather than debunking it altogether for its manifest drawbacks.

When Sokal summarized in retrospect his grievances against postmodernism in the 2008 book, *Beyond the Hoax: Science, Philosophy and Culture*, he in fact failed to register that his corrective arguments had by then been generally accepted in the intellectual world (Matthews). Likewise, a reassessment of Theory and its utility is all the more necessary given the increasing suspicion or disaffection evident towards it in some sections of the academe. As Eagleton observes, “If theory means a reasonably systematic reflection on our guiding assumptions, it remains as indispensable as ever. But we are living now in the aftermath of what one might call high theory, in an age which, having grown rich on the insights of thinkers like Althusser, Barthes and Derrida, have also in some ways moved beyond them” (2). Schad provides a more concrete timeline for the career

of theory, “if it can be said (speaking very roughly) to have begun in Paris in the late 1960s, and peaked in Yale in the 1970s and 1980s, then it has been busy declining in a university ‘near you’ in the second half of the nineties” (Preface, ix-x). The demise or aftermath or afterlife of theory came to be treated in several books from the nineties, including Thomas Docherty’s *After Theory: Post Modernism / Post Marxism* (1990), Wendell Harris’s *Beyond Poststructuralism* (1996), Martin McQuillan’s *Post-Theory* (1999), and Valentine Cunningham’s *Reading After Theory* (2001), Terry Eagleton’s *After Theory* (2003), and an edited volume by Michael Payne and John Schad, *Life After Theory* (2003). The stance of these books differ greatly, from welcoming the superannuation or downright extinction of theory, to lamenting it as a victim of harsh treatment, to a qualified acceptance of its continued importance – but they agree that a total and unquestioning belief in Theory is no longer warranted.

In such a scenario, what shape should the teaching of Theory take in the undergraduate and postgraduate classes in India? My paper assumes as a primary premise that the English literary studies in India uses heavily the Theory developed in the Western academe and tries to emulate its trends, although my paper does not rule out the possibility of creatively interrogating Theory in India or evolving alternative non-Western models. It has to be conceded on a pragmatic level that state-of-the-art engagements with Theory are confined to the arena of research, and latest dealings with Theory are not usually reflected in the undergraduate or even postgraduate syllabi. What is more, most undergraduate departments of English in India do not have the privilege of formulating and implementing their own syllabi. Theory, in the form of a regimented and received wisdom, comprises one of the optional sections in the national and state level eligibility tests for research fellowship and lectureship in India. As such, any major reworking of Theory, or the approach to it, would be against the professional prospects of the students. It is therefore clear that whatever

reformulation of Theory we conceive of has to work within the given pedagogic system without trying to dismantle it or even overtly defying it. In such a scheme the responsibility of the classroom teacher increases manifold, for she has to reorientate the received modules of Theory through her sensitive and informed inputs.

The classroom teacher should emphasize the benefits of Theory in addition to describing and explaining its tenets. According to Eagleton, Theory “creates a seamless continuity between the intellect and everyday life” (3), and in a significant advance over liberal humanism establishes popular culture as a fit subject of enquiry (3). Moreover, Theory seeks to favour the discourse of the marginalized and underprivileged. As Eagleton states, the greatest success of Theory is to factor in the hitherto neglected sectors of gender, sexuality, and post-coloniality (6). At the same time, the teacher may also helpfully discuss in the class the latest approaches to Theory which are unlikely to be reflected on the syllabi. For example, the teacher may discuss that the present intellectual climate in the West is in favour of empirical research rather than sweeping claims and unsupported envisioning by Theorists (Barry 191). Added to this, fuzzy poeticism is no longer considered a sign of theoretical innovation and clarity of expression is demanded of even the leading thinkers such as Agamben and Žižek. Moreover, the teacher may also explain that the watchwords today are “singularity,” “specificity,” and “particularity” (Barry 194), and the recent Theory-informed criticism does not try to introduce grand narratives through the backdoor as post-structuralism and postmodernism did. As Cunningham remarks, Theorists “while setting their faces, usually, against Grand Narratives and Keys to all Mythologies, as delusive and imperialist, and all that, have managed to erect the Grandest Narrative of all – Theory – the greatest intellectual colonizer of all time” (18-19). As a corrective measure, the Western academe now prefers to narrow down the purview of enquiry either thematically or chronologically. For example, narratology would now be

privileged over structuralism, and the overarching generalizations of “power” and “culture” would be jettisoned in favour of material and intellectual evidence about early modern Italy or Victorian England. Besides, the energy that would be expended on totalizing abstractions like “Western Metaphysics” and “Language” in the 1970s and ’80s is now devoted to study of the ecology, the body, the uncanny (Barry 191), or even digital humanities and neurohumanities.

The excesses associated with Theory can be summarized under two heads: first, the tendency to impute to it the status of a trans-historical and trans-cultural super-text that can furnish a one-size-fits-all solution to all hermeneutic challenges; second, its involuted and self-mystifying gaze and/or expression which occludes the origin and purpose of Theory. To combat the first of these drawbacks, it is the duty of the teacher to stress that a piece of Theory is just another text although it looks beyond itself and camouflages its status as mere text. The teacher should explain that Theory is an especially overweening text in that it claims to operate on a plane higher than all the texts it refers to, it claims itself as containing the genetic map of the texts it deals with and conveniently explain them away. Theory, thus, pretends to be a master-text or super-text, although its success is hardly above question. The teacher should explain in the classroom that Theory *qua* text is bound to the historico-cultural forces governing the production and reception of any text (or commodity, for that matter).

The teacher may also use some historical information about Theory in order to dispel the awe and mystique that surrounds it (especially for young undergraduates and postgraduates). It may be helpful in this regard to relate a particular part of Theory to the socio-political climate of its inception and ascendancy. As for example, the ascendancy of Theory itself has been linked to the momentary prominence of the Left in European politics. Besides, the Yale School has been seen as influenced by the Holocaust. And according to John Schad, “de Man’s double life [as a Nazi sympathizer in Belgium and arch-intellectual in the

USA] blasts open not just the continuum of history but the continuum of theory” (Epilogue, 175). Schad goes on to assert,

If life is, necessarily, after-life; if all living is a form of ‘living-on’, in particular living-on after war, then theory is very much a form of life. Not only do Bloom, Hartman and Derrida belong to a generation of Jews that was ravaged by the Holocaust but when Lacan’s wife declared herself Jewish he went personally to the Gestapo to retrieve her dossier, thereby almost certainly saving her life. There is also Althusser who never forgot the experience of being a prisoner of war, and Foucault who invokes the ‘sight[s] we had known during the German occupation’. (Epilogue, 176)

The teacher may also refer to Michèle Lamont’s unsparingly meticulous article where she shows that Derrida strategically targeted a larger non-academic audience in France where his texts had greater currency in the Philosophy departments, but he and his associates targeted the literary studies in the US as a hub of deconstruction. One might also add in a lighter vein that Derrida’s mother had named him Jackie because the name sounded American, and if he had not renamed himself Jacques, he probably would not have acquired tremendous prestige as a cultural capital in France as well as in the USA (Chaudhuri). The use of such anecdotes, which are energized with strategic levity and not just irreverence, may enliven the classroom atmosphere and help students combat the fright of Theory.

In addition to this, the teacher, especially at the postgraduate level, may discuss (literary) Theory’s lack of definition and inherent contradictions. The term “theory” indicates a disciplinary space devoted to abstractions which is autonomous and autotelic, the best example of which is to be found in the disciplines of Philosophy and Pure Mathematics. But the accompanying adjectival “literary” almost inevitably presupposes pragmatic justification through literary hermeneutics. Paul de Man observes in his landmark essay “The Resistance to Theory” that in the context of literary studies “theory” would imply “the rooting of literary

exegesis and of critical evaluation in a system of some conceptual generality" (5). He further comments that the necessary pragmatic moment weakens it as philosophical discourse, but furnishes an adventurous element of subversiveness and unpredictability that renders it "something of a wild card in the serious game of theoretical disciplines" (8). Taking a cue from De Man, the teacher should point out these irresolvable contradictions as an exhilarating and liberatory possibility of reading, rather than a constricting one. Besides, the teacher should also point out that Theory does not represent an inviolable law or a prescription, but is primarily a device for interpretation (and hence necessarily provisional and utility-based).

As regards the second most important objection to Theory, namely the problem of obscurity, the teacher should explain in the classroom clearly the difference between the intricacy of content and that of expression. In this way the students can be alerted to the pseudo-scholarly indulgence in jargon and pretentious name-dropping that often goes in the name of serious academic study. The teacher should lead by example and steer clear of such obfuscating tendencies. The greatest challenge of the teacher is to make Theory accessible to the students without simplifying the essence out of it, and also to make the classes gripping.

The students should be instructed to express their observations as cogently and lucidly as possible without philosophizing and unnecessarily mystifying their outlook. The teacher should inculcate these qualities in the students through classroom lectures, and also by patiently going through their written answers and making detailed notes on them. The teacher has to exercise additional discretion to ensure that the student has understood Theory, and also that she is able to express clearly and in her own words what she has grasped. The student should be advised about the pernicious effects of resorting to bazaar notebooks and mugging up summations of Theory without properly coming to terms with it.

For undergraduate courses in English, students in India

usually do not read Theory but are introduced to criticism through the study of literary terms and deal with the evolution of genres like the tragedy and the novel. It is only at the postgraduate level that the students are officially exposed to the various schools of criticism and have a substantial view of Theory. At the postgraduate level, there can also be elective papers on a body of critical practice. For example, at Jadavpur University we have optional courses named "Feminisms" and "Queer Studies." There can be also a separate paper on a specific Theorist, like the one on Foucault at our university. Some PG departments have also instituted courses on the comparative study of Indian philosophy and aesthetics vis-à-vis Western Theory. However, it is always important to stress the continuity between the UG and PG syllabi and give the students the impression that Theory does not mark a fundamental and spectacular break from or advance over the critical devices, technical terms, and historical knowhow they have received at the UG level. Added to this, Theory itself may be placed under a rubric like "the history of ideas" that will facilitate recognition of its heuristic and evolutionary nature.

Students should not be led to surmise that they can find in Theory a sure shot formula for all critical needs, or that Theory can give them a shortcut across the vast body of texts identified as literature. A comparative and sceptical view of Theory is needed in order to make the students aware of its historicity and textuality, and prevent them from indiscriminately cramming up copybook simplifications of it. Above all, it is necessary to develop in the students the capacity to think with originality and creativity rather than making them passive recipients of Theory. The teacher should pose brain-teasers and call for lively classroom interactions, so that criticism is presented as an inviting challenge rather than an unsavoury task. Perhaps, the most important benefit of reading Theory is that its rigours lead to the development of stamina, patience and intellectual focus in the student. It is the task of the teacher to ensure that a balanced and all-round knowledge of Theory does not make them totally

dismissive about it. The teachers should not also deprive the students of the rigorous training that can be derived from the reading of Theory. Likewise, the teacher must also ensure that fascination with Theory does not impair the students' originality, commonsense or openness of mind.

The critics mentioned before who comment on the passing of Theory also tend to agree that the aftermath of Theory is not one of prelapsarian and uncritical innocence in this always-already Fallen world, and that critical practice post Theory can only benefit by taking Theory into account. The task of the teacher becomes all the more crucial in this site of ambiguity because he has to lead the students towards striking a fine and healthy balance between a strenuous mastering of Theory on the one hand and a comparative and creative engagement with it on the other. Many of the proposals made by my paper may appear to be far-fetched and idealistic, given the facts that most of our students have inadequate hold over the English language itself and they often lack intellectual motivation because of economic stress. Besides, teachers have to labour under several handicaps of technical, bureaucratic, and logistical nature which may interfere with a total dedication to such a demanding subject as Theory. However, this paper deliberately adopts an optimistic note, and seeks to chalk out some of the enabling possibilities for a more successful classroom encounter with Theory. Besides, it can be a thrilling experience to realize the connection between life and Theory, and stress it fruitfully in the classroom setting.

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Multiculturalism: A Global Perspective

* *S.D Palwekar*

Talking about culture may be the easiest and yet the most difficult thing. It is normally safe to generalize culture as the way of people's life within a certain community, as the patterns and styles of that community dealing with their surroundings and with each other, their attitude and aptitude in their dealings with time-space relationship. However, more serious and deep interactions among the insiders and between the insiders and outsiders of a culture and its members will pose consequent challenges to the common-sense generalization of that particular culture and its people.

Usually, an outsider observes the culture more easily with an acute eye for something new and different from his own practice of life. An insider usually remains unaware of his /her own practice by following the natural "cultured" pattern. Normally, the observation of a culture and community group foreign to the outsider as an acute observer usually awakens the observant outsider to a better awareness and pondering of his own way of life. In other words, the distance that the observer holds from the culture being observed helps him to gain a better understanding of his own community and culture. Yet more conscious and subconscious acculturation and enculturation may cause one to evolve from being a conscious, conscientious and acute observer into a conscientious or even an unconscious practitioner of that culture. The distance that one keeps from the culture plays a crucial role in one's interpretation of and identification with the culture. Ideally, being a practitioner and observer at the same time is the best position to be held. It requires one to remain simultaneously an insider and outsider for the sake of better understanding of that culture

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and its people. The process of assimilation or acculturation (enculturation) goes on in the process of conscientious merging with subconscious mechanism working for identity adjustment, i.e. a conscious along with subconscious and unconscious management for the sense of belonging. This process is normally filled with self-reflection on one's own culture and conflicts of two cultures and different cultural identities within one person.

Such conflicts of cultural identities are common among immigrants struggling to be a part of the culture which they have moved into while treasuring their own ethnic culture. The WASP culture in the USA used to (in a sense still remains the case today) function as the typical model or framework up to which new immigrants struggled to measure themselves. They worked hard in order to be recognized as part of the culture so that they would feel like belonging there. Those who were rejected and left outside suffered a loss of identity in the culture where they stayed with no sense of belonging. The Invisible Man (in Ralph Ellison) struggled for the recognition of his existence (identity) while being ignored and manipulated by different groups of people he ran into. He was rejected as a Zero rather than as somebody. He was involved in the cultures where he did not belong. His persistent questions "who am I" and "why am I here" were simply drowned by the culture and its people where he stayed without belonging together. When we come to such familiar terms as African Americans, Native Americans and Asian Americans, it is easy for us to take them as a demonstration of different cultural groups to reclaim their identities with their uniqueness.

When Huntington claims that "culture matters," he is well aware how culture and identity mutually shape each other so that the more frequent confrontations of people/groups are usually rooted in the conflicts of their culture, from which the people identify themselves and with which they are identified. It is particularly worth more serious reappraisal for multicultural interactions today, while not despising Huntington's claim of clashes of civilizations altogether.

In current China, Christianity gains greater popularity with new converts and more remaining open to the Christian belief and its practice. However, the similar attack on Christianity that was launched over a hundred years ago with “Boxers” violent patriotism still makes a ring here and now: with one being converted to Christianity, there comes a loss of one Chinese. Identification of the Christian belief with the change of cultural identity serves a seemingly reasonable explanation that Chinese are not supposed to be converted to Western Monsters. The claim for protecting the Chinese cultural identity stimulates very strong force for rejecting Christianity as something alien to the culture of China or as the footprint of western imperial cultural invasion. Preserving and protecting the identity of Chinese national culture is taken the same as preserving its people’s identity. This position almost provides a supporting motivation for despising and rejecting Christianity.

Culture is powerful enough to frame the identity of those who seek their sense of belongings within. But in this era of cultural diversity and globalization, identity assumption of an individual or a group cannot be confined to, but needs to transcend the particular culture(s). Diversity within unity is better to be interpreted as diversity along with unity. The key point in sustaining the dynamics of a culture and the identity of members of the particular culture lies in the members’ participation in the culture and fulfilling their role and responsibilities. It is more important for people in this globalized era to assume identity with a dimension of transcendence. The dimension of transcendence means the openness to broader culture(s) for extended sense of belongings. Americans, Chinese, Japanese and Africans as part of their culture groups need to keep moving closer to a stronger sense of belonging together by assuming the identity as global citizens.

Cultural pluralism is the characteristic feature of any human civilization. However, approach and response to cultural diversity has changed in course of time as a result of the conflicts between majority and minority cultures.

Culture does matter to individual, as it governs his/her day to day life and his /her interactions with other cultural communities they confront with. And natural tendency is that every individual seeks to preserve essential features of their culture. It is very common that some of the essential features of culture come in conflict with the beliefs and practices of dominant culture. So cultural pluralism is the site of conflict and entails unequal power relations, i.e. domination and subjugation. Bhikhu Parekh argues that cultures do not coexist peacefully. They compete, come into conflict, and struggle for domination and mastery. Since they are rarely equal numerically or in their political and economic power, moral and political status, and so on, the dominant culture has built- in advantages and tends over time to overwhelm the rest (2006:97). Hence unequal relations between dominant and subordinate communities call for negotiations and reconciliation through unequal treatment (affirmative measures) to the minority communities to ensure cultural security and identity.

Personal identity is about something that is unique to a person and that makes that person an individual within the social. Person’s identity is determined by their bodily features as well as their mental attributes. And the mental attributes such as desires and beliefs are very crucial in identity formation. Golffman argues that we present certain signs that identify us as an individual in the past and the present and that will continue to do so in the future, in other words, the signs that set us apart from others are our individual identity, so this is not about our inner essence, about how we feel, we are and exist in the world. Rather, it’s about a complex and continuous profiling of who we are in relation to society that makes us as an individual (Clark 2011: 513). The language and vocabulary of persons also play very important role in identity formation, as it is through language that they identify themselves with beliefs and desires. Bhargav claims that persons identify with their particular language and with members of their linguistic communities. That is why; one identifies oneself, as one is

identified by others, by being located in a common world of meanings, as a culture. Habermas argues that along with religious convictions and practices, linguistic and cultural traditions are also relevant for the formation and maintenance of one's own personal identity. The individuation of natural person occurs through socialization, and individuals socialized in this manner can form and stabilize their identity only within a network of relationship of reciprocal recognition and respect (2006:204).

It is to be noted that not all beliefs and desires are equally important for the individual. Some beliefs and desires die out in course of time. Hence only those desires and beliefs matter to them which they find relevant. Beliefs and desires are not only individual matter, but they are shared with others, hence they are social, and beliefs and desires of a person emerge through his interaction with others, his identity is largely a matter of social construction. The identity of an individual is fluid, i.e. it changes over time. Bhargav believes that beliefs and desires exist as mental representation, and also they exist directly in action. He holds that some beliefs and desires are embedded not exclusively in the behaviour of one individual but rather in an interlocking behavioural system of several individuals at once, thus it becomes part of social practice. Since many identity-constituting beliefs and desires exist directly embedded in social practices, they are irreducibly collective. And community can be defined as a network of such practices in which identity-constituting beliefs and purposes are embedded. Hence identity of a person is directly embedded in particular communities. Cultural identity is then reinforced when we define ourselves in relation to a cultural *Other*. We tend to see ways of life 'us' and 'them' which begets domination, subjugation and exclusion.

Michel Carrithers argues that humans are animals with history. They are inventive and profoundly social animals, living in and through their relations with each other and acting and reacting upon each other to make new relations and new forms of life (2010:32-33). As we have said that

beliefs and cultural practices undergo change over time, it means that practices and beliefs which one holds dear are negotiable in the process of acculturation. And there is no point in sticking to them if they hamper the well-being of the fellow citizens. Today, it is increasingly essential to understand the relationship between individual and the communities. John Steinbeck, the great Nobel Prize winning American writer developed a concept of group-man relationship which calls for transcending one's interest for overall betterment of our shared society. Individuals are inseparable from larger context of community, hence there has to be negotiation between individual's rights and responsibilities. This is true to the relationship between minority and majority communities. Constructive and reasonable sacrifice is expected not only of minority cultural communities, but also dominant majority community in the interest of all. Uniform culture generates different identities and anxiety about maintaining such difference. Bhargav argues that cultural differentiation and division, is the result of a process of cultural homogenization (2011: 33). Uniformity is unnecessary and incompatible with the cultural rights of the groups. Any attempt at homogenization leads to curtailment and sabotage of fundamental rights of the underprivileged and dominated communities. Hence, in recent decades not only the western countries, but also some eastern ones like India adopted the principles of multiculturalism.

All the societies since the time immemorial are multicultural. However, in pre-modern societies, minority communities generally accepted their subordinate status and remained confined to the social and even the geographical spaces assigned to them by the dominant communities. The discourse of multiculturalism is recent one. It is triggered by large scale migration due to number of reasons – British imperialism, social and political unrest in home country, commerce, persecution, war, poverty, and globalization are few among others. The facts and experiences of migration are global phenomenon today. Modern societies are

increasingly confronted with minority groups demanding recognition of their identity and accommodation of their cultural differences. Thus, it is a struggle for recognition of identity related differences. Multiculturalism, then, is about cultural diversity or culturally embedded difference. It is a movement for preservation of ethnic identity and accommodation of cultural differences. The term is predominantly used as regard to America, Canada, Australia and the United Kingdom. All these countries have adopted multicultural policy to address the issues related to immigrant minority communities. Underlying this policy is the ideal that dignity or honour—a fundamental value in a democracy – is closely bound up with the collective dignity of person's ethnic or cultural community (qtd. in Simon Bekker et al 2003:120). Multiculturalism is a powerful tool today to deal with cultural diversity despite its shortcomings. The term multicultural refers to the fact of cultural diversity and multiculturalism refers to a normative response to that fact (Parekh 2006: 06).

The USA in the beginning accepted the model of 'melting pot' to address the immigrant minorities. The model of assimilation of disparate cultural communities was based upon the principal of, liberty, equality and fraternity which did not permit intolerance towards anybody. However, this model of melting pot had in-built fallouts, as it required all the distinct communities to assimilate into single dominant/national culture. Hence there was a shift in attitude towards multiculturalism since the 1960s due to failure of melting pot concept so that racial and ethnic group could maintain the most essential and relevant traits and cultural attributes. This shift towards the concept of 'American Mosaic' celebrates the unique cultural heritage of racial and ethnic groups. Scholars, activists, and political leaders believe that this would counter the educational underachievement and low self-esteem, and build a political and ideological basis in their struggle against white racism.

Australia, too, in the post-War period adopted 'melting pot' policy for addressing migrants in the country. The

government used the term 'Assimilation' which underscores the idea that migrant should become part of Australian way of life and be treated in the same way as other Australians. Under the Nationality and Citizenship Act 1948, migrants could apply for citizenship, once they had lived in Australia for five years and could speak English. Becoming a citizen was the formal step of affirming membership of the Australian political community and endorsing the Australian way of life. It meant an allegiance to all that Australia stood for and allowed the privilege of becoming an active participant in, and potentially contributing to, politics and civic involvement (Brian Galligan 2003:03). Despite citizenship and positive discrimination, the ethnic communities felt isolated and discriminated, and through gradual process over the time, the Australian government, under the prime ministership of Malcom Frazer embraced multiculturalism as an official policy in 1975 with an emphasis on cultural maintenance for ethnic groups.

This was also broadly the case in Canada. It was the first country in the world to adopt multiculturalism as an official policy in 1971. By doing so Canada affirmed the value and dignity of all Canadian citizens irrespective of their racial or ethnic origin. Canadian official policy of multiculturalism ensures that all citizens can keep their identities, can take pride in their ancestry, and have a sense of belonging. Canadian experience has shown that multiculturalism encourages racial and ethnic harmony and cross-cultural understanding. However, Canada is the first and foremost bi-cultural nation—French and English. Canada had its French population left over from the conquering of Quebec by the British. And there are two views as to the rights of French Canadians. Some French speaking Canadian intellectuals in Quebec think that their problems as to their rights can be solved by federal system of politics, while others believe that only Quebec separate from the rest of Canada would guarantee the rights of French Canadians.

Of the UK's 60 million population 10.4 per cent are migrants which include Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi,

Black Caribbean, and Black African. Their refusal to integrate themselves into national culture gave birth to debate on multiculturalism and the government adopted modest multicultural policy in the beginning at the local level and in 1997, the New Labour government adopted it at national level. The official policy made ethnic communities feel that they belong to Britain. However, after 2001, the government has adopted a policy of assimilation in place of multiculturalism. The top brass in the government feel that multiculturalism has failed in Britain, as they feel that multiculturalism allows anybody to come and live their lives in their own way, and that leads to extremism. They cite London bombings in 2005 as an example of Islamist Extremism. British Prime Minister David Cameron, at international conference (2011) in Munich said that long standing policy of multiculturalism was an outright failure and he rested the blame squarely on Islamist Extremism. He called for strong national identity to prevent people from turning to extremism.

Out of 80 million populations in Germany, 13.1 per cent are immigrants, and Turks form the bulk of it. They also like other ethnic minorities strongly refused to assimilate at the cost of their cultural identity. The demand for maintaining ethnic identity and cultural rights placed multiculturalism on the national agenda. No doubt German government considers the immigrants a part of Germany and feel that they do belong to it, but they insist the ethnic groups to assimilate into national culture by learning German language and abiding by the laws of the land. German Chancellor, Angela Merkel recently expressed concern over growing disintegrating tendencies amongst the ethnic communities and said that immigrants should integrate and adopt German culture and values, and this has led to debate within Germany as to multiculturalism.

Since the 1970s, France has continued being a country of mass immigration. In 2008 the French National Institute of statistics (INSEE) estimated that 11.8 million foreign born immigrants constituting 10.7 per cent of total population.

The French polity is based on a notion of equality and not differences. It expects immigrants to assimilate into national culture to enjoy the rights available for the rest. So the French preferred the concept of 'melting pot' rather than 'salad bowl.' The French polity recognizes only the citizens and has no space for the concept of minority. Citizens can be minority on this or that count with its connotation of an organized, exclusive or more or less permanent status. So in this sense France is not a multicultural society. However, president Mitterand's period in office marked a significant change in self- understanding. He insisted that 'unity' should not be confused with 'uniformity' and 'autonomism with separatism. He argued that minority peoples and cultures should be given 'the right to their difference' and to maintain their 'specificity' (Parekh 2006:373). Again there seems to be a shift as to maintaining differences when in nationally televised debate, then French president Sarkozy declared failure of multiculturalism, and added that such a concept fostered extremism. What he said is worth quoting:

France should be a place with a national community - not a place where different cultural communities just coexist. Our Muslim compatriots must be able to practice their religion, as any citizen can. But we in France do not want people to pray in an ostentatious way in the street. If you come to France, you accept to melt into a single community, which is the national community. And if you do not want to accept that, you cannot be welcome in France (YouTube 2013).

India is a multicultural country since the time immemorial. It is divided along language, religion, caste, social identity and ethnicity lines. Today it has more than 1650 mother tongues belonging to five different language families, viz. Austro-Asiatic, Dravidian, Indo-European, Semito-Hermitic and Tibeto-Burman. Indian Constitution has recognized 22 languages as official languages. India has developed three language formula which ensures judicious place to each language. The policy is intended to encourage the citizens to use their mother tongue in certain

levels and domain through some gradual process. The policy is accommodative and ever evolving, through mutual adjustment, consensus, and judicial processes. Eight major religious communities in the world reside in India, viz., Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Buddhist, Sikhs, Parsis, Jains, and Jews. Hindus account for over 80 per cent of population. Hence all religious communities other than Hindus are considered minority. Indian Constitution guarantees equal rights and opportunities to all these minorities. Secular character of Indian Constitution ensures them freedom of expression and beliefs according to their religious tenets. Articles 15 and 16 of the Constitution prohibit the State from making any discrimination on the grounds only of religion, caste, race, sex, descent and place of birth. Caste is unique to India. There are innumerable castes and tribes of which the most marginalized, disadvantaged are designated as Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. Article 17 of the Constitution categorically states that untouchability is abolished and its practice in any form is forbidden. Special provisions have been made to safeguard the interest of these most neglected communities. The State is committed to uplift Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes through affirmative actions (positive discrimination). The States are reorganized on linguistic lines. They have been awarded autonomy in many matters. Thus, State so organized can retain their unique identities, and can develop along their own lines. In order to overcome regional imbalance they special status has been endowed upon them and certain provisions have been made to uplift them up to the level of developed States. Thus, Indian Constitution is an ideal multiculturalist document which successfully deals with diversity of all sorts. However, the matter of the fact is that Indian Government finds it hard to implement the spirit of multiculturalism enshrined in Indian Constitution.

Rights of individual and ethnic/minority/religious communities are secure only in democracy, and it cannot successfully operate without some degree of unity amongst citizens. Taylor argues that: "Democracy cannot function

without a degree of cohesion among individuals. Democracy needs a common identity; for people to be sovereign, a new self-understanding among individuals as collective agents who are more than a mere disparate set of individuals must come into existence, unless this happens little reason exists for people to accept the decision of the majority" (qtd. in Simon Bekker & Anne Leide 23). Habermas states that multiculturalism that does not misunderstand itself does not constitute a one-way street to cultural self-assertion by groups with their own collective identities. The coexistence of different life forms as equals must not be allowed to prompt segmentation. Instead, it requires the integration of all citizens—within the framework of shared political culture. Citizens are equally empowered to develop what is for them their cultural identity and might appear to others as cultural idiosyncrasies, but only under the condition that all of them (across boundaries) understand themselves to be citizens of one and the same political community. From this point of view, the very same normative base of the constitution that justifies cultural rights and entitlements likewise limits a kind of aggressive self-assertion that leads to fragmenting the larger community (205). Habermas advocates the shared political culture for integration of the country and harmonious relationship between cultural communities. He means to say that community interest has to be sacrificed to a little extent to build a strong national culture which is in the interest of both minority and majority cultural communities. Homi K. Bhabha is rather skeptical about building national culture. He looks upon cultural diversity as a sight of conflict:

In my writing, I've been arguing against the multiculturalist notion that you can put together harmoniously any number of cultures in a pretty mosaic. You cannot just solder together different cultural tradition to produce some brave new cultural identity. The current phase of economic and social history makes you aware of cultural difference not at the celebratory level of diversity but always at the point of conflict or crisis (qtd. in Huddart 2007: 124).

What Bhabha said may be right to certain extent, but cultural diversity is a reality, and we need to address the issues cropping up out of this fact. Any question has an answer, or question does not remain question. We believe that Multiculturalism is a need today to resolve the problems arising out of coexistence of many cultural communities. All the modern societies are multicultural to varying degree. However, the problems related to culture, identity, and difference growing more and more complex, and we cannot afford to leave it unresolved. We believe that Indian tradition of tolerance and mutual respect based upon reason from ancient time to present one would help us to solve identity, culture and rights related issues. We would like to refer to Buddha's 'middle path' which is nothing but negotiation at all levels. Unless and until conflicting elements are reconciled, there can be no peaceful coexistence. And it is in the interest of all the coexisting communities to dispense with practices, customs, and beliefs which jeopardize communal harmony. We need to remember that all the cultural practices are social construct, and may be relevant at particular times, but those which do not pass the test of time should be done away with. Humanity is at the centre and culture is meant for the well being of all, and well being of human beings can be sought in an atmosphere of brotherhood. This is what Buddha said. Therefore all need to foster fellow feeling for each other. Unless we curb our freedom, we would not be able to enjoy greater freedom. Samrat Ashok in First century B.C held reason supreme to deal with religious conflict. He argued "a person must not do reverence to his own sect or disparage the beliefs of another without reason (qtd. in Sen 2005:18). He went on to argue: "Depreciation should be for specific reasons only, because the sects of other people all deserve reverence for one reason or another" (Ibid). He supplemented this general moral and political principle by a dialectical argument based on enlightened self-interest: "For he who does reverence to his own sect while disparaging the sect of others wholly from attachment to his own sect, in reality inflicts, by such conduct, severest injury on his own sect (Ibid).

Amartya Sen has pointed out principle of religious tolerance and respect in Akbar's policy. He claims that Akbar laid the formal foundation of a secular legal structure and of religious neutrality of the state, which included the duty to ensure that "no man should be interfered with on account of religion, and anyone is to be allowed to go over to a religion that pleases him" (Ibid). It is not just tolerance, but respect for other cultural communities is the cornerstone of Indian multiculturalism.

Gandhi said that there is no harm in maintaining multiple identities. One can be Hindu, Muslim, Christian, Buddhist etc., but at the same time he/she is Indian, and one should be able to prioritize his/her ethnic/religious and national identity as the circumstances demand. However, one's national identity has to be supreme in crisis. Though Gandhi was deeply religious person he separated religion and politics, and said that: "Religion is a personal affair of each individual and must not be mixed up with politics or national affairs" (qtd. in Bipin Chandra 2008:33). Social and political scientist and architect of Indian Constitution, Ambedkar said: "I am Indian first and Indian last." It means that in normal circumstances there is no harm in prioritizing one's ethnic/religious identity over national one, but in emergency and crisis one must transcend personal and cultural identity. So we find negotiation as the core of all human existence, and today, in post-Independence India constitutional secularism and judiciously guaranteed multiculturalism stemmed from this whole great tradition from Buddha to Gandhi, Ambedkar, Nehru and Tagore. Indians today have democratic multiculturalism that recognizes the importance of cultural identity, the need to maintain cultural difference and is committed to bringing these differences to political domain. Since these differences frequently turn into conflicts, it is also committed to their resolution through dialogue, discussion and negotiation (Bhargav 2011:48). The fact is that respect and tolerance towards others begins where discriminations ends.

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Warring Against War: Reassessing Joseph Heller's *Catch-22*

*Pradipta Sengupta

“War and oppression in the early years of this century appeared to us like stinking slums in a city that was otherwise beautiful and good to live in...”

—John Dos Passos¹

When Joseph Heller's *Catch-22* was published in 1961, it sent waves of consternation among reviewers and critics. Critics and reviewers alike were baffled as to the exact nature of the book which, while belonging to the broad category of 'war novels', dismantles, subverts and disturbs the reader's expectations induced by a traditional war novel. Significantly, Heller himself was a bombardier, and gives vivid accounts of his experiences of the same during May to December 1944 at Corsica island in *Now and Then: From Coney Island to Here*. Critics suggest that many of these autobiographical experiences are distilled into *Catch 22*. My humble submission in this paper is to examine how Heller exploits the paraphernalia of a war novel, and yet how he is significantly different from it. Paradoxically, my further claim in this paper is to substantiate that *Catch22* is at once a war novel and *not* a 'war novel' in the traditional sense of the term. It therefore becomes absolutely necessary for us to address the aesthetics of what we call a 'war novel'. Rightly has James Nagel argued: "The importance of genre classification for a study of the novel is, of course, a matter of attempting to come to it on its own terms without imposing irrelevant standards and obscuring fundamental themes."²

In his wonderful study on Joseph Heller, Robert Merrill² argues that "a war novel is a fiction in which an

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understanding of the military background is indispensable and in which a crucial aspect of the war is explained" (11). Seen from this angle, Merrill argues, that Harry Brown's *A Walk in the Sun* (1944) and James Jones's *The Thin Red Line* (1962) are "exemplary" war novels. Tracing the characteristics of the Second World War novels, Joseph Waldmeir³ describes such a novel as "one in which the war " on land or sea or in the air, in any branch of the services, in any theatre of operations or on the home front " plays an integral, motivational, decisive role". According to Peter Aichinger⁴, a war novel is "any long work of prose fiction in which the lives and actions of the characters are principally affected by warfare or the military establishment". Heller's *Catch-22* largely dovetails into Aichinger's prescription, though it does contain other elements, as well. And it is not necessary that any work of art should necessarily fit into the straitjacket of a definite definition. As Robert Merrill puts it:

But *Catch-22* is a very different kind of book. The military context is far more crucial in the earlier novels...Heller makes occasional use of realistic devices, but ultimately his former intentions are well outside the realistic tradition (12).

Frederick Karl⁵, however, makes a distinction between "the novel about the war and the novel about combat in the war" (94). He goes on to argue that the war novel "is not solely a subgenre of novel, but is, in this respect as much part of fictional representation as the novel of manners in James, Fitzgerald, or Wharton, the novel of social disaster in Steinbeck or Dos Passos, the novel of class or caste in Dreiser, the novel of individual dislocation in Wolfe, Norris, or even Hemingway. What the war provided was a huge arena for all the social and political energies of the novelists" (94).

Heller's detractors pointed out the seeming formlessness and lack of coherence in the book. *The New Yorker's* Whitney Balliett⁶, for example, preserved a scathing criticism for Heller, and argued that *Catch-22* "is not really a book. It

doesn't even seem to have been written; instead it gives the impression of having been shouted onto paper". Disappointed by the "repetitive and monotonous" pattern of the book, Richard Stern⁷ raised serious doubts as to whether the book should at all be called a novel or not. Despite his apparent admiration, Orville Prescott⁸ maintained that *Catch-22* "is not ...a good novel by conventional standards". Describing *Catch-22* as "one of the most bitterly funny works in the language", Robert Brustein⁹ charged its formlessness saying that the book was "as formless as any picaresque epic". But I think while Brustein condemns the book for its lack of a coherent form, it would be preposterous to find any epic dimension in the book which lacks the scope and grandeur of any book resembling an epic.

While admitting the so-called 'confused' style of the book, Doug Gaukroger argues: "It is only fitting that a novel which deals with an apparently absurd and confused world should be written in an apparently absurd and confused style."¹⁰

Charles B. Harris¹⁰ would like to read the novel as an absurdist novel suited to fix its onslaughts against the "modern bureaucratic powers" in terms three technical devices: the use of burlesque, the use of language and the structure (38).

Set apparently during the second phase of World War II, Heller's *Catch-22* veers around the ruthless aerial missions of Captain Yossarian and his friends around Pianosa near Italian Coast. But ironically, Yossarian, Snowden, Hungry Joe, Natley, Clevinger, McWatt, Dobbs, Dunbar, among others, are absolutely ignorant of the facts as to why they are fighting or who they are fighting against. The number of missions they are supposed to fly before their release for home is being raised intermittently by their ambitious colonels and officers on the basis of a self-rationalizing law which they call "Catch 22". Heller has shown us how the bureaucratic machinery comprising such money-hankering and power-hankering officers as Colonel Cathcart, Lieutenant Colonel Korn, Major Danby, Lieutenant Scheisskopf, Captain Black, General Dreedle, General Peckham, Colonel

Moodus, etc. cash upon war at the cost of the lives these innocent soldiers. While the engaging comic spirit of the novel subverts the very concept of a traditional war novel, and makes the readers laugh with the comic episodes of the novel, Heller himself chose to laugh at the absurdity of the war bureaucrats by resorting to his use of 'black humor' in the novel. Sanford Pinkser¹¹ has rightly pointed out that in *Catch-22* "Heller chose to concentrate on the issues of survival rather than on initiation and to see the military bureaucracy and its absurd logic" symbolized by 'Catch 22' as greater threats than Nazi gunfire. In this sense *Catch-22* is as much a parody of the war novel as it is a war novel per se; in other respects it is a war novel only by the accidents of time and place, of plot outline and superficial circumstance. For *Catch-22* tells readers more, much more, about the unexamined, overly organized life in corporate America than it does about World War II".

While a traditional war novel is indisputably serious, grim and gruesome, Heller makes an awful disarray of it in *Catch-22*, and delights in an absurdist comicality and frivolity to make a spoof of warfare. It is this engaging light-heartedness of the book that makes it, as it were, an antiwar novel. That Heller was trying to parody the very notion of warfare is evinced in the very title "Catch 22" which speaks of an absurd, erratic and circular reasoning to justify the perpetuation of wars. For no fault of their own, Captain Yossarian and his co-bombardiers are engaged in flying their missions for the Air Force squadron. Nescient of the cause and justification of their aerial missions, they experience the first inkling of their nightmarish ineluctable existence induced by the strange law of "Catch 22" which stipulates that in order to be released from these missions one must prove one's insanity. But the moment someone claims himself to be insane and crazy, it betrays the fact of his feigning insanity as an excuse of his release. Consequently, instead of being released, he is sent on further missions that are continually being raised by the ambitious colonels who vie with each other for fame and promotion. Captain Yossarian,

the protagonist of the novel, tries his best to prove himself insane but to be rejected on the ground that his insanity is a lame excuse for being released from his aerial missions. But refusing to throw in the sponge, he tries to substantiate his insanity by going to the extent of appearing completely naked before General Dreedle to receive his medal. While it induces risibility in the situation, so much to the shocking consternation of everyone present, it also subverts the gravity and grandeur attached to any traditional war novel. While Heller¹², on his own admission, reveals his surprise about the readers' responses to his novel, he also argues that he resorted to such comic episodes but for their ironic effect:

...it surprised me that things in *Catch-22* turned out to be very

funny. I thought that I was being humorous, but I didn't know

I would make people laugh...I began using that ability consciously

"not to turn *Catch-22* into a comic one, but for contrast, for ironic

effect (*Conversations* 110).

Any perceptive reader cannot but recognize how under the ostensible veneer of comicality lurks the ghouliness and precariousness induced by war, or what David H. Richter¹³ so cogently calls "the grotesque horror that underlies their absurd comedy"((141).

Charles J. Nolan, Jr¹⁴ in his reading of *Catch-22* has tried to situate it in the same paradigm as the novels of Ernest Hemingway. But I suppose that he has lost sight of the exact point of comparison, inasmuch as Hemingway's war novels are also significant for their historical import. In Heller history becomes subservient to his criticism of power-structures associated with warfare. In other words, whereas Hemingway was interested to critique war by examining its political history in terms of its international perspective, Heller offered us a brilliant critique of war by examining

war from within, i.e., by registering his satire against the machinery of warfare itself, a machinery or system that has given birth to power-hankering and acquisitive bureaucrats who perpetrate and perpetuate wars around the globe. The historical setting in his book becomes a pretext for his bitter pills of satire directed against these bureaucrats presented under the sugarcoating of an apparent comedy. Heller himself had misgivings as to the historical setting of the novel. In an interview with Sam Merrill¹⁵, Heller admits:

As I've said, *Catch-22* wasn't really about World War Two. It was

really about American society during the Cold War, during the Korean

War, and about the possibility of a Vietnam (68).

This view is attested by critics like Frederick Killey and Walter McDonald¹⁶ who, in their edition of the *Casebook* series of *Catch-22*, have expressed their strong reservations about the novel being called a war novel. Despite the fact that the book is set in the backdrop of the Second World War, as we go through the book, we become increasingly aware of its verisimilitude to 1950s rather than to 1940s. This deliberate anachronistic device was deployed by Heller himself who admits it in the same interview with Sam Merrill:

I deliberately seeded the book with anachronisms like loyalty oaths,

helicopters, IBM machines and agricultural subsidies to create the

feeling of American society from the McCarthy period on(61).

Further, unlike a traditional war novel, the problems and perils come to Yossarian and his co-bombardiers, not so much from their enemies as from their superiors. Thus, paradoxically, the real threat is posed to them not from some external force, but very much from within, induced by the illogical rule of 'Catch-22' imposed by the unconscionably ambitious officers, colonels and lieutenants. The novel also

draws out attention to the fact that inimicality imposed by internal forces can be more formidable than that posed by one's enemy. Being an inalienable part of this insidious machinery, Yossarian and his friends find it impossible to extricate them from the irrevocable and inescapable tangle of the law termed 'Catch-22'. Similarly the clear polarization between one force and its actual enemy, between the internal and the external, is blurred in the novel. In his interview with Seth Kupferberg and Greg Lawless (1974), Heller¹⁷ has pointed out about this saying "Yossarian's own superiors and their superiors are no different from the enemy. All right, *Catch-22* is about a person being destroyed by the war, about people in danger not from enemy forces, but from their own superiors from within the organizations of which they are a part"(120).

In no traditional war novel do we find the idea of craziness so exhaustively explored as in Heller's *Catch-22*. In fact the novel veers around the idea of craziness, and bristles with the word "crazy" recurring throughout the novel in its nuanced ramifications and implications. Sanford Pinsker¹⁸ has not failed to notice the same when he argues:

Indeed, "crazy" is one of the novel's "charged words", symptomatic of a world nearly divided into the one character (Yossarian) whose sanity renders him suspect and the others whose versions of craziness are regarded as sane(18).

Alfred Kazin¹⁹ in his observation on the novel has virtually expatiated on the same:

The theme of *Catch-22* in particular is the total craziness of war, the craziness of all those who submit to it, and the and the struggle to survive by the one man, Yossarian, who knows the difference between his sanity and the insanity of the system.(83)

Suffice it to say, in case of Yossarian it is a feigned craziness, a calculative and schematic subterfuge or what might be called "reason in madness". General Dreedle,

General Peckham and the other officers are crazy about their promotions, while Milo Minderbinder who is associated with an international black-market syndicate, is crazy about amassing more money from warfare. Dennis Paoli²⁰ in his pithy analysis of the book precisely pinpoints the targets of Heller's attacks:

The book is, indeed, a scathing satire of man's(mostly male)inhuman will to power and wealth, the shallow, circular, self-rationalizing thinking that inhumanity demands, and the complicity with the systems and institutions that thinking produces, but the novel uses its World War-II setting as a metaphor for the modern free enterprise business model that values only profit and getting its way and replicates itself in government and art though means of reductive, manipulated,ultimately meaningless representation(505).

Almost in a similar vein, Frederick Karl goes on to point out the commercialization of war in the novel by the crass materialistic war-bureaucrats who make and mar laws and reasons to their advantage. As Karl has succinctly and wonderfully summarized it:

The military for Heller serves the function of any large, impersonal organization...Cathcart sets production quotas; the Chaplain, until he rebels, offers faith in whatever the boss decides; Milo assures the stockholders that profits will be maximized; the generals, Dreedle and Peckham skim off the benefits in the form of perks; Korn vies with Cathcart, each jockeying for power and promotion to general(311).

Thus it is a vicious circle where everyone plays his own card. We are but reminded of Shaw's *Arms and the Man* which similarly dwells on the commercialization of war. Further, the paradoxically funny comment of the 107 years-old man to Nately pricks the bubble of a traditional war novel

which largely exploits the rhetoric of warfare:

The real trick lies in *losing* wars, in knowing which wars can be *lost*. Italy has been losing wars for centuries, and just see how splendidly we've done nonetheless. France wins wars and is in a continual state of crisis. Germany loses and prospers. Look at our own recent history. Italy won a war in Ethiopia and promptly stumbled into serious trouble. *Victory gave us such insane delusions of grandeur* that we helped start a world war we hadn't a chance of winning. But now that we are losing again, everything has taken a turn for the better, and we will certainly come out on top again if we succeed in being defeated(312). (Emphasis added)

Any perceptive reader may find a sparkle of Shavian wit directed to lambaste the warmongers in this comment. A brilliant parody of war, it subverts the equation of all the power-structures associated with war. Broadly speaking, Heller, like many other war-novelists, strikes the antithetical note of the Horatian shibboleth, "*Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori*".

Catch 22 is strikingly different from most of the famous war novels produced in America. It is neither like Norman Mailer's naturalistic criticism of liberal-leftist ideology examined in *The Naked and the Dead*, nor is it an experimental science fiction on war as Kurt Vonnegut's *Slaughterhouse V*. Heller's novel is markedly different from all such classic war novels produced in America. Thus it is unlike a novel on American Civil War as Margaret Mitchell's classic *Gone With the Wind*, or a novel capturing the crippling disenchanting effects of American Civil War on an individual soldier (Henry Fleming) in Stephen Crane's *The Red Badge of Courage*, or unlike a novel realistically delineating the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in Hawaii as in James Jones's *From Here to Eternity*, or different from

a vitriolic satire on Vietnam war as in Norman Mailer's *Why Are We in Vietnam?* or unlike an analysis of the Civil War as a protest against slavery, as in the Afro-American novelist William Wells Brown's *Clotel*; or, *The Colored Heroine*. Hemingway was interested not only in the political scenario of war, but more particularly, on the adverse effects engendered by war on human relationships. Hemingway was preoccupied with exploring the grim reality as to how war tells heavily on human relations in such novels as *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, *A Farewell to Arms*, and *The Sun Also Rises*. A postmodern war novelist as Thomas Pynchon in *Gravity's Rainbow* exploits the technological discoveries used in war to dwell on his recurrent theme of paranoia induced by war. Unlike his American counterparts dwelling on war, Heller, however, consciously shuns the psychological exploration of the tortured human psyche crippled through the traumatic experience of war. Rather than offering the crippling effects of war on individuals, Heller was interested in substantiating the absurdity of warfare wrought by the whims and vagaries of some power-hankering bureaucrats. In *Catch-22* Heller sardonically lays bare how law and logic have been used, abused and misused by crafty bureaucrats, how war codes have been subverted, how codes of morality and values have been awfully distorted and how absurdity becomes the ruling decorum for the warmongers. As Frederick Karl summarizes it:

All values are overturned, all hopes and dreams made valueless; sanity itself becomes a meaningless term(313).

That Heller was more interested in directing us towards these naked realities than in the historical and physical import of war itself, is wonderfully attested by his own admission in his interview²¹ with Seth Kuferberg and Greg Lawless:

...it(*Catch-22*) grew with the whole morality of deception practiced by the executive in dealing with the American people and other nations, which often involve lying and distortion.

But what I have to say about the military in *Catch-22*: I don't

recall it being characteristic of the military of World War II. It was just a perversion of all codes of honor that are being taught at Annapolis, or in American military justice. Misuse of the FBI, the CIA, misuse of the courts, the attorney-general's office, and so forth(*Conversations* 119).

What Heller tries to pinpoint here is neither the political interest of any nation, nor the cause of patriotism, but the self-interest of every individual: each in his own way is trying to make his own profit out of the conditions created by war. Like any other lucrative business, these bureaucrats who 'run' war have turned it into another burgeoning business. War has been used as a context to put forward his underlying subtext: to register his invectives against the bureaucratic machinery in general and the war-bureaucrats in particular. Nothing would be more appropriate than to conclude with the admission of Heller²² himself: "I wasn't interested in the war in *Catch 22*. I was interested in the personal relationships in bureaucratic authority."

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Alice Munro's 'Boys and Girls': A Critical Reading

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Alice Ann Munro, the recipient of Nobel Prize for literature in 2013, is a celebrated short-story writer from Canada who has explored human complexities in her short stories in quite an uncomplicated prose style. Modern age Chekov as she is known for her striking similarity with him, Munro has completely revolutionized the architecture of short stories especially in its tendency to move forward and backward in time. Her stories are mostly set in Huron County, Ontario, her birth place. The description of this region which provides the locale for many of her short stories is the special feature of her fiction. The story 'Boys and Girls' which has been chosen here for critical reading, delicately handles the dilemma of a girl, coming of age and coming to terms with her family and the small town she grows up in.

The story has been narrated by a young girl who details the time in her life when she leaves childhood and its freedom behind and realizes that to be a "girl" is to be, eventually, a woman. The child begins to understand that being socially typed entails a host of serious implications. Thus becoming a "girl" on the way to womanhood is a time fraught with difficulties for the young protagonist because she senses that women are considered the social inferiors of men. Initially, she tries to prevent this from occurring by resisting her parents' and grandparents' attempts to train her in the likes, habits, behaviour, and work of women. This resistance, however, proves to be useless. The girl ends the story clearly socially positioned as a girl, something which she apprehends with some trepidation. The story is, thus, a sort of feminist

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parable, where a girl bucks against a future that will prevent her from doing, socially, whatever she might please.

There are altogether five characters in the story. Henry Bailey is a farmhand and is like a part of the narrator's family, sharing meals and his life with them. He is mainly a source of entertainment for the children, probably since he does not appear as an authority figure, as the children's parents clearly do. Thus, they can enjoy his teasing of them a great deal, and he, for his part, seems to enjoy thrilling them with his more spectacular accomplishments (like spitting very well). The next is the father of the narrator. Like the mother, the father figure in the story seems a likeable, decent and hardworking man. He humors his children, finding ways to praise them that pleases them a great deal. Like his wife, he seems to view a future in which his daughter will eventually leave off helping him to become, exclusively, a help to the mother.

The most important character, the female narrator describes the period in her life when her carefree childhood ended, and she began to feel as if she must conform to various expectations. The traditional socialization undergone by middle-class girls at this time was something she resisted, as she perceived that the roles and choices allotted to women were less attractive and various than those allotted to men. However, regardless of this resistance, she describes how she gradually capitulated to accept this socialization. The narrator is like the lively, frisky horse Flora in the story, a living thing with energy and will that is finally entrapped and used by forces greater than herself.

Laird, the narrator's younger brother is a seemingly sweet little boy whose helplessness is, at first, contrasted to the narrator's greater ability to be of help to her mother and father in the house and on the fox farm. However, as the story progresses, this image of babyishness falls away as it becomes clear that Laird will be the one to take the narrator's place at their father's side, a position the young narrator hoped would always belong to her. By the end of the story Laird has been taken into the company of men, and his sister,

the narrator, has been relegated to the ranks of being "only a girl." The narrator's mother seems to be an exemplary woman, one who fulfills the duties of a homemaker with energy and verve. She looks forward to the day when her daughter will be older and so able to relieve more of her labor's burden. She seems to enjoy the company of her daughter; the narrator tells us that she talks freely about her past and things in general when they are working together.

With these characters the writer has worked up the theme of the story which is the coming-of-age. Most societies have either cultural narratives or cultural rituals that bespeak the end of childhood and the entry into adulthood. The way that this shift in a boy or girl's life is depicted will tell a great deal about the values of a particular culture. If the tale is about a boy who goes on his first hunting expedition, then the reader surmises that bravery is paramount to what makes a boy, a man in that society. What, then, marks the transition from girlhood to young womanhood? It is this problem that Munro takes on in "Boys and Girls."

Interestingly, Munro first depicts the young girl narrator defining herself like a boy seemingly would do. She thinks up stories at night in which she is a hero who is brave and saves other people from peril. "These stories were about myself, when I had grown a little older; they took place in the world that was recognizably mine, yet one that presented opportunities for courage, boldness and self-sacrifice, as mine never did."¹

However, when this girl begins to think of herself as a gendered person, she no longer thinks in terms of heroic qualities that will have some larger social effect, but instead begins to focus on her person itself (her relative beauty or plainness). Will she be "pretty," she wonders?

The subplot concerning the two horses bought to be used for fodder is an instance of foreshadowing, a literary device, Munro uses here in this story. Although any reader

will understand that the success of the fox farm depends upon the sacrifice of these two animals, Munro's attention to Flora's attempt to run away nevertheless provokes feelings of pity for the animal whose life will end while it is in its prime. The inevitability and unpleasantness of this animal's fate foreshadows the fate of the girl protagonist. No matter how hard she tries to resist her future, she is destined to lose to forces greater than herself.

This story may also be termed a rite-of-passage story, for it tells of a significant event that helps one girl to recognize and accept the womanhood that is her future. The 11-year-old narrator lives on her family's fox farm. For years she has helped out her father, but that winter she realizes that her mother is expecting her to become more of a "girl"—working in the house, for instance, instead of in the fox pens. The narrator resists such efforts at transformation. However, when her father intends to kill a mare in order to feed the foxes, with no forethought, the girl frees the panicked horse. The girl is not surprised to later learn that her father has recaptured and killed the mare. What does surprise her, however, is that he is not angry with her transgression; after all, as he says, "She's only a girl." And perhaps also surprising to the girl is her own reaction to his statement: "I didn't protest that, even in my heart. Maybe it was true."²

Clearly, the narrator has given thought to the differing roles of men and women and has chosen to identify herself with the male sphere. She sees the inside of the house as her mother's territory—territory she does not care to inhabit. Outside the house is the real world, the world of foxes and commerce and vibrancy. Even her bedroom, part of the inside house, is not a sanctuary but instead an "unfinished" space she shares with her brother. And this space remains "undifferentiated," implying the same state in the children—that they have not yet accepted the irrespective labels of "girl" or "boy." The children are so alike they even share the same fear: "inside, the room where we slept," instead of outside, with its chilling winter. At the beginning of the story, it is the outside world in which the girl participates. She has

a summer job of giving the foxes water with "the real watering can, her father's," while Laird only carries a "little cream and green gardening can, filled too full and knocking against his legs and slopping water on his canvas shoes." The girl's subtle boast emphasizes her belief that she has access to the male tools and thus the male identity. The girl compares working side-by-side with her father to working in the house with her mother. Her father remains silent, while her mother often would tell her stories. The girl, however, gets a "feeling of pride' working with her father that she lacks with her mother. Clearly, housework and "women's work" do not have the same value as the male, outside work. She feels her role on the farm is assured—her father even refers to her when speaking to a feed salesman as "my new hired man," which makes her "red in the face with pleasure."

The girl has no expectations that her daily life will change. By this point she has fully embraced the male identity. However, one day, she sees her mother by the barn. This itself is the first sign that something is amiss, for "[I]t was an odd thing to see my mother down at the barn. She did not often come out of the house unless it was to do something—hang out the wash or dig potatoes in the garden."³The girl overhears part of her mother's words—"and then I can use her more in the house, It's not like I had a girl in the family at all."⁴

Despite this conversation, the narrator does not expect anything to change. As she puts it, "who could imagine Laird doing my work...It showed how little my mother knew about the way things really were." Her statement shows that not only does she believe her help to be indispensable to her father, but that, because of her male work, she believes herself to be superior to her mother—more knowledgeable and more useful. Her acknowledgment that "I did not expect my father to pay any attention" to her mother's words further shows that she has placed herself on an equal level with her father; as the only family representatives of the male identity, they share the secrets of the farm; her mother, trapped in the house and in her female body, remains

ignorant. Despite her protestations, at this point the girl enters into a new stage, one in which she is no longer able to securely latch on to her chosen identity. For throughout the winter she hears “a great deal more on the theme” and admits, “I no longer felt safe. It seemed that in the minds of the people around me there was a steady undercurrent of thought, not to be deflected, on this one subject. The word girl had formerly seemed to me innocent and unburdened like the word child; now it appeared that it was no such thing. A girl was not as I had supposed, simply what I was; it was what I had to become. It was a definition, always touched with emphasis, with reproach and disappointment. Also it was a joke on me”

That winter other challenges to the girl’s right to occupy the male sphere are launched. With her grandmother’s visit, the narrator learns lessons about how girls are expected to come under societal control: girls don’t slam doors, girls keep their knees together when they sit down, and the worst of all, in response to a question, “That’s none of girls’ business.”

Ultimately, a transformation starts building up before her fateful encounter with Flora. When earlier the horse Mack was killed, her legs were a “little shaky,” but she felt “all right” after going to the movies that afternoon. But in the case of the mare, Flora, the girl has already identified herself to some extent with her, a high-strung horse, for the girl, like Flora and even the foxes, experiences confinement. Clearly, the structure and description of the farm itself reinforce such ideas of entrapment. The foxes, which the girl recognizes as beautiful but hostile, live in a “world my father had made for them.” She describes the fox pens as “spaces in which bodies are confined and controlled,” the dark, hot kitchen that “imprisons” the mother and threatens the narrator; the fields that surround the farm and the gates that restrict traffic are an “enlarged version of the pen”; even the town itself is an “inescapable enclosure.”

When Flora is brought out of the barn to be killed, the girl states, “It was exciting to see her running, whinnying, going up on her hind legs, prancing and threatening like a

horse in a Western movie, an unbroken ranch horse, though she was just an old driver, an old sorrel mare.”⁶

The horse brings to life the narrator’s fantasies, of the female striking against imposed societal expectations and becoming a creature strong in its own right. Flora breaks away into a meadow where the gate has been left open. The girl’s father shouts to her to shut the gate. It is at this moment that the girl breaks irrevocably from her self-imposed male-identified position. Her desire to free the female horse is stronger than her desire to please her father. She knows however, that the horse will be recaptured, and that freedom is only an illusion. For the first time in her life, she disobeys her father.

“Instead of shutting the gate,” she recounts, “I opened it as wide as I could. I did not make any decision to do this, it was just what I did.” While the girl returns to the house—“inside”—her younger brother becomes a man; he remains “outside” and goes along with the men to track down and catch Flora. This is the point at which the narrator admits to the changes that she has been undergoing; she opens her heart up to the truth. She has become a “girl.”

Thus, “Boys and Girls” is a narrative which highlights the almost invisible societal forces which shape children. By the end of the story, the sister and brother have firmly stepped into the roles that society has extended to them. This story also introduces two themes, the burden of femininity and the women’s need to break free that appear again and again in Munro’s writing.

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All the subsequent quotations have been taken from the same story.

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Glimpses of Bengal in Rabindranath Tagore's Stories

* *Ajay B. Kukade*

The year 1913 was a landmark year for Indian literary scene when Rabindranath Tagore, the first Asian person, was awarded Noble Prize for literature. He was a man of true genius who wrote with utmost passion and with the child-like zeal. It is nearly impossible to talk about this great artist in a few words, or a paper. Tagore was truly a multi-layered personality which is evident through his works as a novelist, poet, musician, short-story writer, painter, dramatist, activist, philosopher, musician, social reformer, a great academician, and above all a hard-core patriot! His works not only have enchanted the Bengalis but made the whole world dance to his tunes.

Indian short story in English has a century long history which dates way back to 1898 when Kamala Sathianadan's *Stories from Indian Christian Life* was published. Since then it has attained maturity in many different ways. The writers seem to be settled and explore the themes in more matured manner than ever. The result of which is that Indian works are being given due credit and importance. Experimentation has always been a highlight of Indian literature. Bengali and Marathi literature, in particular, have shown tremendous growth and have enchanted readers for ages. Tagore clearly scores an advantage over other writers as he wrote in both Bengali and English and translated himself the stories into English from Bengali. That has helped him to keep the soul of the stories intact. Moreover, his understanding of Bengali life has helped him immensely in producing powerful literary works. Having travelled worldwide gave him a chance to

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have a close look at the cultures of many countries and to compare it with Indian culture and also made stronger his belief in ancient Indian values and culture.

Tagore's short stories are probably the most neglected of all his literary works. But if one goes through them thoroughly, it becomes crystal clear that his stories too are powerful and they belong to the league of its own! Tagore's short story world is full of the portrayal of the protagonists chosen from cross-sections of society. His stories take us into the boundless joys of a child's world, the sorrows and pathos of women, and the problems of working men. He has dealt with an array of themes and depicted the characters with utmost care. India, being a multi-lingual, multi-cultural country scores more as it has advantages of its own. India— colonized and postcolonial has shown tremendous maturity in its character. Though being ruled for more than a century and a half, India has maintained its essential cultural values throughout. The period in which Tagore wrote is considered as the Golden era of Indian literature as it witnessed the works of stalwarts like Mulk Raj Anand, Raja Rao, R.K. Narayan, and Munshi Premchand. Works of these writers did establish India firmly on the world literary map.

Tagore's stories are presented in a no-nonsense attitude and focus upon the struggles of ordinary people. He gives full panoramic view of the then Bengal and its people and culture in most charismatic way. It is an accepted fact that no one else could have given the identity to Bengal the way Tagore has done that. The stories *The Kabuliwallah*, *The Babus of Nayanjore*, *The Postmaster*, and *Subha* have the protagonists chosen from almost all walks of Bengali life. These stories are the case studies having the background both- rural and urban, and discuss the problems of the protagonists in most delicate manner.

Tagore's stories start abruptly and revolve round a trivial and ordinary looking theme. But as the story progresses, one is given a chance to have an encounter with the most critical human problems. His stories take us into the world of unending problems of men and women, who

struggle to meet both ends. Actually, his understanding of rural Bengali life comes from his own spending many years in calm and placid rural Bengal himself. Humayun Kabir writes:

Many were surprised that the Maharshi should select his youngest son, already known as a Poet and dreamer, to be in charge of the family properties. Tagore soon proved that his father had acted wisely in making a poet the manager of an estate. What is of interest to us is that made Tagore live for years in the village of Bengal. Much of this time he spent on a boat among the sandbanks of the Padma, and thus came into intimate contact with nature and man in rural Bengal. (Kabir 10)

Tagore gave no place to bi-furcation of ideals and culture in his life. A sense of *the unity of life* was his greatest strength. He gave importance to both- the poor and the rich- and gave way to their sufferings and problems. For Tagore, short story was a strong medium through which he discussed the human predicament effectively.

Tagore was a sensitive person for whom women held high esteem. He had keen observation of Bengali culture and as a tribute to women and their contribution to the society, he wrote most of his stories with women protagonists as the central characters. *The Postmaster* and *Subha* are the two stories dealing with women's problems and present the hardships and struggles of two young Bengali girls Ratan and Subha respectively. It also gives us a glimpse of the then Bengali life. In K.V. Dominic's words, "Tagore was a practitioner of psychological and social realism" (19). Through his stories Tagore also highlights the nature-man relationship. This human-nature relationship is another hallmark of his stories. *The Postmaster* is a classic example of Tagore's talent as a writer. The story is of a village girl brought up in the lap of nature. The simplicity and directness in her character are because of her being with nature all the time. This power-packed story deals with the bond between a postmaster and an orphan village girl. In fact, the bond is only a 'one-sided traffic'. Ratan's life changes drastically the moment this

postmaster enters her life, soon after joining his services in village Ulapur. Slowly but steadily the girl realizes what brotherly love means. She starts taking care of the postmaster, her Dada, who in the end deserts her.

The story is full of grey shades and the setting is gloomy. The story evokes pathos, as in the end we feel for the girl who again will have to lead a 'lonely' life which would be more difficult than ever for her! The complexities of relationship are the central feature of Tagore's stories. Sheer need of company forces the postmaster to be friend with Ratan, an orphan girl. Slowly both of them grow dependent on each other. Even he yearns for a loving mate on a rainy afternoon:

Oh, if only some kindred soul could hold near my heart! This was exactly, he went on to think, what the bird was trying to say, and it was the same feeling which the murmuring leaves were striving to express. (165)

After the thought flashes into his mind, he comes back to the world of reality and then calls Ratan to just console himself and to turn his thoughts to a different subject and says, "I was thinking of teaching you to read; and the rest of the afternoon he taught her the alphabet" (166). Their relationship grows naturally and at the end both of them are found tormented. When she asks him, "Dada, will you take me home with you?" (168), the postmaster laughs at this and says, "What an idea?" (168). This sharp reply shakes the girl throughout. For the whole night the postmaster's reply haunts her and makes her aware of the fact that she is an orphan girl! The girl faces the hour of truth when the postmaster informs Ratan that he will ask his successor to look after her. She retaliates by saying, "No, no you need not tell anybody anything at all about me; I don't want to stay on here". For her he was the one who cares for her, but when the postmaster, who was not hard-hearted, tries to give her some money she says, "Oh, Dada, I pray you, don't give me anything, don't in any way trouble about me" (170). She feels humiliated at the hands of a man whom she loved and trusted much, as her love for her Dada was

unconditional. Then her figure running about the post-office, hoping to see her Dada coming back, evokes sudden sympathy for the girl and also evokes anger over the harsh realities we have to face in life. Tagore's sympathy goes with the simple, troubled, and lonely girl whom the postmaster leaves behind without caring. The narration of the postmaster leaving the village in a boat lets us connect immediately with Ratan, who, undoubtedly, would find solace amidst the nature only!

Tagore's stories appear to be simple and having an uninteresting plot, but still have a charm to carry with. He was a true humanist who craved for the equality and justice for all including children and women. The child in a family is often being treated as an inferior. He has used this theme in his story *Subha*. In this story he gives way to the life and troubles of dumb girl. The dumb girl Subhasini, the youngest daughter of Banikantha, leads a silent life. This silent sufferer finds solace amidst nature and befriends with two cows-Sarbashi and Panguli. Her own mother is ignorant to her and the belief that she is a curse to her father makes her more restless. She shares her feelings with the cows who for her are the best friends:

Whenever she heard any words that hurt her, she would come to these dumb friends out of due time. It was as though they guessed her anguish of spirit from her quiet look of sadness. Coming close to her, they would rub their horns softly against her arms, and in dumb, puzzled fashion try to comfort her. (151)

It's a kind of slap on the face of whole human race where only the spoken words hold importance and a dumb one, though more capable than a normal human, has to lead a lonely and tortured life. In both the stories a vital role is played by emotions. Ratan and Subha both are the victims of destiny and they feel handicapped and left at the mercy of the other human beings. Their loneliness is the cause of concern for the writer.

Tagore has developed both these stories in rural setting. His shades of being a painter and musician are clearly visible

in these stories wherein he invests word-music and exhibits a canvas full of various colours. *The Postmaster* has a rural setting of a remote village Ulapur and its green slimy pond, and rainy season. It instantly creates picture of the same in the minds of readers. In such a setting the story of two ordinary folks develops. Subha's house is on the bank of a river and she would go and sit there quietly for hours. There is a certain flow of a river throughout the story. In Mohinder Kaur's words:

In story after story Tagore shows the different facets of life in Bengal and of life as such which peeps through the chinks of eternity. They are woven round their joys and sorrows of men, women and children enacting different roles in the mysterious drama of life. (Kaur 47)

On the other hand, in the stories *The Cabuliwallah* and *The Babus of Nayanjore* the setting is urban. Both the stories show the protagonists as the residents of Calcutta. *The Babus of Nayanjore* is a story of a man who lives in the dreamy world of his past glory. We are forced to pity Kailash Babu, the protagonist, once we are being made aware of his glorious past:

.....They were noted for their princely extravagance. They would tear off the rough border of their Dacca muslin, because it rubbed against their skin. They could spend many thousands of rupees over the wedding of a kitten. On a certain grand occasion it is alleged that in order to turn night into day they lighted numberless lamps and showered silver threads from the sky to imitate sunlight. (175)

In fact, Kailash Babu had seen more than a man could see in his lifetime. He has had his share of glory. The flood had washed away all his splendors with it and to manage things he had to move to Calcutta. In Calcutta, he has to manage in a small house with only survivor along with him, his grand-daughter, Kusum. His efforts to cling to his past glory are very amusing, but at the same time are touching too. With the help of his servant Ganesh, he tries to impress his neighbours by telling them the lies in form of stories of his past. His true friends too show sympathy by accepting

all his lies whole-heartedly. It is a story of a man who shifts from rural to urban area, having left no choice. Kailash Babu has no option but to hold fast to his past greatness, which makes him forget the bitter truth of his present poverty. His young educated neighbour tries to push him in tight corner, as is the ways of youth, and make fun of him. But his cruel joke hurts Kusum, the tender granddaughter of Kailash Babu. His heart fills with remorse and he, in all humility, comes to Kailash Babu with an offer to marry Kusum. The old man feels more joyous and he breaks out, "I am a poor man and could have never expected such great good fortune" (194). This was the first and the last time when Kaiash Babu had ever confessed his poverty, which amazes the young man.

The story throws light on the pathetic conditions of the past glories of the landlords who used to live a very aristocratic and lavish life. But time changes and the extravagant life shifts to mere poverty, but the pride remains the same. This clash between the two persons from altogether different background is interesting. The actions of the young neighbour may anger us, but it was normal behaviour for the young man. Speaking about this Kabir says, "Men differ in appearance and build, they have different customs and traditions and even their emotional reactions differ because of differing backgrounds" (Kabir 40).

The Kabuliwallah is arguably the best mythical story of Tagore, which shows him at the height of his imaginative powers. It is a fine example of his artistic vision. The story is a milestone in his career as a short story writer, which works on many different levels. In this story, Tagore weaves together several relationships that break the barriers of caste, creed and religion, in the background of Calcutta lanes. There are two different relationships explored in the story. One is the bond between two person with a huge age difference- Mini and Kabuliwallah, and the other is the bond between the narrator and the Kabuliwallah formed purely on the bases on one common factor of fatherhood. The character of Kabuliwallah seems true to life. It evokes sudden

sympathy for a man far away from his homeland, working hard to earn his livelihood for his family. It is a myth created by Tagore, which then acquires the stature of a legend. Myth has the power to hold societies together more strongly than languages. It provides insight into the mysteries of life, and to understand its intricacies we need to experience and appreciate it on its own. Rabindranath Tagore is probably the best myth user from Indian English literary field. According to K.R. Srinivasa Iyengar, "The myth-making power could be seen in *TheKabuliwallah*. In this story the character is seized by inward vision and presented with total understanding and love" (72).

The story has a mix of both happy and sad moments set beautifully in the streets of Calcutta. A peddler working hard, leading a lonely life in a huge city away from his motherland and his family, meets Mini for the first time and instantly they become friends. The man finds a suitable substitute to his own child and Mini finds a suitable companion who would listen to her constant chatter patiently which for her was missing till then. For her, he becomes an embodiment of affection and fearlessness. Mini's mother having concern for her daughter tries to oppose this strange relationship, but the narrator neglects that:

I tried to laugh her fear gently away; she would turn round seriously, and ask me solemn questions: Were children never kidnapped? Was it not true that there was slavery in Kabul? Was it so very absurd that this big man should be able to carry off a tiny child? (268).

Despite this, the friendship grows. Tagore has taken due care in creating Kabuliwallah's and Mini's characters. Jaydeep Sarangi in K.V. Dominic's book *Pathos in the Short Stories of Rabindranath Tagore* comments:

Kabuliwallah is a study of the mind of Mini, a five-year-old Bengali girl who forms friendship with a middle-aged Afgan peddler Rahman. It also hints at the social hierarchy which persisted in Bengal during Tagore's time. (Dominic ix)

The Kabuliwallah's joyous face after meeting Mini, his

interactions with her, his grave face when he had to go to prison, everything seems to be familiar to us. How a father feels desperate to meet his child becomes obvious when after releasing from prison the Kabuliwallah straightway goes to the narrator's home to meet Mini. The narrator tries to avoid him as that was the day of Mini's marriage and he thought of Rahman, the Kabuliwallah meeting his daughter as a bad omen. But then the father in the narrator realizes the vows of another father after taking a look at a dirty piece of paper bearing the impression of a little hand, "Tears came to my eyes. I forgot that he was a poor Kabuli fruit-seller, while I was—. But no, what was I more than he? He also was a father." (275) The father in the narrator realizes that with the passage of time he can never experience the happy childhood of his daughter, which forces him to not only let the Kabuliwallah meet Mini, but to give him a currency-note! The story from happy trance moves into the never ending world of pathos where one father, the Kabuliwallah is suffering from the separation from his daughter and the other, the narrator was going to enter that state of mind. Tagore sums up the story in most touching words:

Having made this present, I had to curtail some of the festivities. I could not have the electric lights I had intended, nor the military band, and the ladies of the house were despondent about it. But to me the wedding feast was all the brighter for the thought that in a distant land a long-lost father had met again his only child. (277)

The poet in Tagore never left him alone in other literary genres he explored. Even in his short stories, the traces of Tagore- the poet pop up many a times. In K.R. Srinivasa Iyengar's words, "With Tagore's short stories the poetic flash is the main thing; it is the poet that sees the truth of things, the story-teller merely snapping the scene at the required angle" (73-74). This reaction by Iyengar proves to be more apt when we go through lines from *TheKabuliwallah*:

The morning was bright. After the rains, there was a sense of ablution in the air, and the sun-rays looked like pure gold. So bright were they that they gave a beautiful radiance

even to the sordid brick walls of our Calcutta lanes. Since early dawn to-day the wedding-pipes had been sounding, and at each beat my own heart throbbled. The wail of the tune, Bhairavi, seemed to intensify my pain at the approaching separation...(272)

No other writer, at least in India, could have made use of the poetic talent in short stories tooto such an extent. His mastery over all forms of art is deeply rooted in his constant communion with nature and with people. Humayun Kabir's remark over this quality of the great man speaks volume. He says, "Rabindranath Tagore loved man with all the fervour of his imagination and feeling and held that there is nothing in creation higher than the spirit of man" (29). This fellow-feeling of Tagore makes him a true genius India has ever produced.

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V S Naipaul: An Author with Contentious Intellect

* Ajay K Chaubey

“...Naipaul has become Sir V S Naipaul, an extremely famous and, it must be said, very talented writer whose novels and non-fiction (mostly travel books) have established his reputation as one of the truly celebrated, justly well-known figures in world literature today.”

(Edward Said)

Vidiadhar Surajprasad Naipaul is one of the finest authors of the twentieth century and now of the twenty first. His scholarship on history, culture, civilisation and ethnicity—a journalistic approach to unearth the past—has been appreciated even by his critics. He has been successful not merely by being a good author but also by producing a diatribe against “third world countries”—Trinidad, a place of his birth and India, a place of his ancestors— both of which he has often described as ‘half-baked societies’ that have led him to be the butt of controversies. Shobhaa De remarks on his controversies, “Naipaul has fed off controversy all his life. He is an ‘agent provocateur’ and a brilliant one at that.”¹ Naipaul’s erudition, his faculty of criticism and brush with controversy are *outré*. His willingness to vilify, all that he encounters, has not won him many friends, but the simplistic and near-universal assertions of a consistent heart-felt racism and Orientalist misogyny seldom undergo close scrutiny. Most of criticism of his work is trivial, hopelessly oblivious to the complexity of his tortured negotiations with his own post-coloniality. Naipaul’s permanent alienation is expressed through a series of surprisingly different and amazingly defective narrators

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who are placed in an astonishingly similar succession of “chronotopes”.

What makes V S Naipaul unique is his distinctive way of situating the post-colonial subject matter. He dexterously negotiates the text and context, matter and manner in his fictional and non-fictional corpus of writings. His dichotomy of the ‘East and West’, dialectics of India and Indian subcontinents, Africa, Trinidad and the USA present the ‘national allegory’ of the countries he has visited at regular intervals. His literary corpus is a matter of serious debate and discussion in academia.

For multiple reasons, V S Naipaul is a novelist and non-fiction writer whose works have been under scanner for long. Critics have been vocal both against him and for him. His association with India is still a red-herring question. To enquire of his belonging to the country is equivalent to unravel the enigma from the womb of the terrain since he himself is not sure enough about his identity as Patrick French remarks, “he was aware that his identity had been compromised by external events” (French 213). This is an impervious truth. There is conviction about his diatribe against India that let him stand in the queue of anti-Indians not pro-Indians. This always lands him in hullabaloo that is his much-loved legion since the publication of his first travelogue on India, *An Area of Darkness* (1964). Yet, one cannot simply ignore his major contribution to Literature—fiction as well as non-fiction—written in English. Neither can one deny the fact that Naipaul’s vulnerability actually lies in overwhelming popularity.

One finds, on the said grounds, that his novels present “a postcolonial dilemma for us” (Bhattacharya 245). His corpus of fiction manoeuvres his autobiographical information that recounts his historical, socio-cultural and political affairs. He amalgamates biography and history in his writings to make his subject matter tangible and substantial. Fawzia Mustafa may appropriately be quoted here, “...Naipaul’s use of biographical information in his writing constructs an over determined relation between

notions of the Author and the multiple usages of what is called the colonial subject” (Mustafa 13). The same blend has made him a world fame author who leaves no stone unturned to juxtapose eulogy and elegy of the world that gives him countless prizes.

V S Naipaul, born in 1932 and lived in Trinidad till 1950, is the only author in the world who has mapped the trajectory of the post-colonial world and has beautifully painted the literary canvas in multiple hues that reflect his ambivalent relationship with the world he lives in. His maiden travelogue, *The Middle Passage* (1962), the upshot of his revisit to Trinidad, his birthplace, was written on a fund from the Government of Trinidad. In this modern travel narrative, he has “created a deft and remarkably prescient portrait of Trinidad and four adjacent Caribbean societies—*British Guiana, Suriname, Martinique, and Jamaica.*”² Both his fictions and non-fictions usually deal with the individuals trying to preserve their wholeness in terms of individuality while they are “functioning as cogs in the wheels of a social structure” (White 1). His revisit to Trinidad was prolific on the creative front but he is a man divorced from his Caribbean roots: the purist made nauseous by filth and flesh, or the racist who has “forgotten” his own family’s sojourn in the cane fields of the New World.

Naipaul’s roots lie in the routes of the world. After Trinidad, he looked toward the East to come to terms with the land of his ancestors. His visits to India resulted in the publication of *An Area of Darkness* (1964) that created a hullabaloo in the media and academia. His sojourn provided him with a splendid opportunity to learn about Indian classics that presented him untold tales of Indian legacy that he often received from his “Gold Teeth Nanee”. The “new discovery” of India was a contortion for natives as it was called “an area of ‘defecation.’”³ The non-fictions of Naipaul are a touchstone for what is happening in every ex-colony of postcolonial world.

Naipaul did not discontinue writing about India even after *An Area of Darkness*. His thirst for Indian subcontinent

was and to date remains unquenchable. After the same, Naipaul published two subsequent travelogues on India—*India: A Wounded Civilization* (1977) and *India: A Million Mutinies Now* (1990). The former portrays Naipaul’s dialogue on postcolonial civilization and records “India at the time of Indira Gandhi’s State of Emergency” (Nixon 13) while the latter describes his perspectives on contemporary and multicultural politics and in many ways “(the) most ambiguous work” (Ibid). His travelogues—from *The Middle Passage* (1962) to *The Masque of Africa: Glimpses in African Belief* (2010)—investigate Naipaul’s ‘self’, map the trail of history, narrate the politics of society but “...totally ignore a massive infusion of critical scholarship...” (Said 53). Thus, one can say that V. S. Naipaul has identified the strange emotional and sophisticated contortions that bind together culturally, in an ambiguously globalized world—as he investigates not only Trinidad, Africa and India but also the countries like USA in *A Turn in the South* (1989) which describes his racialized thinking in the context of the southern part of America.

Naipaul is an author whose works are often subject matter of many disputes among the critics of contemporary literary landscape. This controversial writer has divided the critics into binaries—some praise him as one of the most gifted authors of these days; the others blame him for “racial arrogance” (White 2). He is known as an author, who is either loved and admired or renounced. After all, there is one thing that most of the critics concur on and it is the fact that Naipaul is the master of observation and depiction, who always provides his reader with very sophisticated descriptions. He belongs to the lineage of authors whose works are primarily focused on the post-colonial countries, their present situation and the impact of colonialism on identity of individuals. His Indian genesis, Trinidadian nativity and British citizenship allow him to see India and Indian people from a considerably different perspective. He is an “insider” as well as “outsider” to India (Rai 16). Through his Indian ancestry he can see the country from a very

intimate point of view, this kind of double perspective makes it more difficult for him to understand his own feelings and reactions in some of the situations that he has to face in India, especially when he realizes his own strangeness. Sometimes he himself seems surprised by the revelation of his merits or demerits that he was not aware of. For him, the cognition of India is simultaneously the discovery of himself. His Trinidadian childhood, Indian origin and the residency in London make his position in the world highly indeterminate. He fully identifies with none of these countries. He rather sees himself as a blend of the three cultures. He feels absolutely alienated and unable to identify with any of these societies. The innermost notion of his books is “the struggle against the effects of displacement” (Nightingale 6). He intentionally observes what he has expected and ignores what he does not want to see.

His writing is the fusion of creeds, cultures and continents in him, with his expatriate career, his being able to practice an art in and of totally dissimilar worlds, all give him peculiar contemporary quality. In this context, Dagmar Barnouw remarks: “A British-educated West Indian, Naipaul has tried to understand and document the difficulties of other cultures through his difficulties at understanding his own multi-ethnic background” (1). Critics of international repute, even today, present the foray of criticism on V S Naipaul in a diverse way. His multi-ethnic background, his faculty of mind, his “sophisticated literary strategies” (Ibid, ix) and creative mission has still been unexplored. The paper, therefore, differently explores Naipaul’s intellectual world which vie the crusading zeal for the first Nobel Laureate in Literature of the twenty first century.

Naipaul’s Major Fiction—Issues and Perspectives:

Naipaul’s literary expedition embarked on with Caribbean fiction—*The Mystic Masseur* (1957), *The Suffrages of Elvira* (1958) and *A House for Mr Biswas* (1961)—which displays how the second and third generation

of Indian expatriates in Trinidad survive by negotiating with the ‘peculiarities’ of the Caribbean region. They, moreover, address the issues of memory, history and identity as they veneer in Naipaul’s fictions on the region. Naipaul unfolds that Indians in Trinidad after one generation or two of the traumatic exodus affirm the alien and continue to live confirming to the Caribbean heterogeneities. The land they once left remains for them a land of curiosity and imagination, not the land to return.

Naipaul’s several visits to India have displayed his longing for belonging to the country though he finds it “difficult”. But his quest for ‘home’ has been subverted by his Eurocentric visions and visualisations. His aspiration for ‘home’ has already been fictionally narrated by him in his *magnum opus*, *A House for Mr. Biswas*, the best literary project and fiction with Caribbean setting, he has ever produced. The novel not only discusses Naipaul’s concupiscence for ‘home’ but also recapitulates his fissured identity in this post-colonial globe. It gives a pen-portrait of one’s endeavour for ‘home’ in urban space where a person, ultimately, realizes that it is not his ‘home’ which he craved for but it’s merely a ‘house’. It has been widely read, critically anthologised and most debated novel in academia. This novel is an attempt to connect Naipaul’s autobiographical feelings of ‘home’ to the Caribbean island particularly Trinidad through his character Mohun Biswas. It is argued that Naipaul’s postcolonial novels expose the formation of imperialist myths of places, challenge them and deconstruct them. The quest continues but not for ‘home’ only it also looks for ‘identity’ and ‘liberation.’ The liberation from other’s home is conquest, on one hand, but on the other one feels physically ‘unhoused’ and psychosomatically ‘defeated’.

In a Free State, Naipaul’s 1971 Booker Prize winning novel, presents the themes of cultural incommensurability and the broken symmetry of colonial relationships from the traveller’s point of view. The plight of the uprooted former colonial becomes a metaphor for modern restlessness here, and homelessness and exile are seen as a contemporary state

of mind afflicting all in this novel. While his *Guerrillas* (1975), a significant work of 70's, closely peruse multiple themes, issues and polemics of desires of his protagonists in the 'neo-colonial' world. The matrix of the novel was woven against the backdrop of race, ethnicity, sexual violence and neo-colonialism, racial tension and political disorder which are indissoluble constituents of 'post colonialism'. The materialistic society portrayed in *Guerrillas* is a bankrupt one, devoid of the right vision and competence to tackle the enormous doom hanging around it.' Pradhan further emphasises Naipaul's point that 'borrowed' ideas have 'no viability and strength to take the country forward to the path of progresses.

A Bend in the River (1979) vividly describes the disorder in the wake of imperialism and the problems of embryonic but underdeveloped Third World people caught between old tribal ways and the new technology of dangerous arms and tinsel consumer materialism in a small town in 'New Africa' through the eyes of a Muslim migrant, Salim, who journeys to the interior of Africa in search of a new life, is uprooted from there and undertakes another journey to an indefinite future. *The Enigma of Arrival* (1987), a partly autobiographical novel by Naipaul, describes the narrator's exodus from Trinidad to England. The quixotic quest for an ideal homeland, however, eludes the travelling narrator as he feels constantly out of place even after arriving in the England of his fantasies where he finds a decaying empire that does little to satisfy his sense of homelessness.

Naipaul's 21st century contribution to literature was his two major novels which were written on the request of his Pakistani wife, Nadira. His two novels—*Half-a-Life* (2001) and its sequel *Magic Seeds* (2004)—have occupied a momentous place in literary monarchy. On one hand, the former presents the dialectics of homelessness, fissured identity, and cartography and topography which are futile concepts in a world that is not our own. It also deals with the position of the third world women. It is more in the form of two biographies—the first tells about Willie's father's life

compressed within first thirty pages, and the second is that of Willie's own. Or one can say that these two 'half lives' comprise this complete novel. On the other hand, the latter begins from isolated life style of Willie Chandran, gripped with pessimism and misogynist negative attitude. To him, "It is wrong to have ideal view of the world. That's where the mischief starts. That's where everything starts unraveling" (Naipaul 2004:280). In these two novels, Naipaul disparaged the Western world for ethical blankness and lack of people's fidelity.

Naipaul's Select Travel Narratives: Notion of the Nation/s:

Naipaul's travel narratives on Trinidad, India, Islamic nations and Africa have put him in the cauldron of callous criticism. His notion of Third World countries has won him many laurels in the Western academia but it has also brought scathing remarks from the staunch Orientalist/s. Edward Said accused him in his essay titled "The Intellectual in the Post-colonial World" in these words, "He (Naipaul) is a Third Worlder denouncing his own people, not because they are victims of imperialism, but because they seem to have an innate flaw, which is that they are not white." Naipaul's critique of the Third world commenced with the publication of *The Middle Passage* (1962) which mapped the Trinidadian socio-political, cultural and Diasporic issues. "He attributes", writes Timothy F. Weiss on the same travelogue, "the political "squalor" of Trinidad in the 1950s to the "picaroon" nature of the colony and to the public confusion that was brought about by the sudden granting of universal adult suffrage in 1946..." (30). It was written on travel grant by the Govt. of Trinidad.

After *The Middle Passage*, his Indian Trilogy captures the "national allegory" of the post-colonial India of 60s, 70s and 80s in his *An Area of Darkness, India: A Wounded Civilization* and *India: A Million Mutinies Now* published in 1962, 1977 and 1989 respectively. Naipaul's exposition of ambivalent discourse of India is perceived from his

marginalized perspectives as he himself is not yet out of his 'girmitiya' self. Vijay Mishra is contextually quoted here: "India, declares Naipaul in *An Area of Darkness*, was the country from which his grandfather had come to Trinidad. Because it was never really described...it had no reality as such. His own grandfather as well as other indentured labourers of his childhood had ceased to carry the marks of indenture and were now ensconced in Trinidad" (Mishra 121). There is another book, after Indian Trilogy, *The Overcrowded Barracoon* (1972) which carries Naipaulian *eidos* about India. It "reflects on the incongruities of Naipaul's cultural and literary identity" (Weiss 82). He has overtly and covertly contributed to the account of politics of Indian civilization through multiple ancient and modern classics and has left loads of issues to be debated in the future course of time.

After Trinidad and India, Islam and Islamic nations have been much loved legion for Naipaul. In the 80s, he visited four non-Arabic nations—Iran, Pakistan, Malaysia and Indonesia. His first one being *Among the Believers: An Islamic Journey* (1982) is based on his seven-month journey across the Asian continent. Here, he explores the life, the culture, and the current ferment inside four nations of Islam: Iran, where the hysteria and rage of revolution continues; Pakistan, tragically underdeveloped thirty-two years after its founding as a homeland for the Muslims of India; Malaysia, governed by Muslims but economically dominated by the Chinese who constitute half of its population; Indonesia, confused about both its Muslim and its national roots, confused by the rule of four regimes in less than forty years. In this travelogue Naipaul depicts an Islamic world at odds with the modern world, fuelled only by an implacable determination to believe. After having a close perusal of the book, we notice the use of some of the tenets of travel theory in it. Here, Naipaul, being a tourist or traveller visits Tehran pushing a car with effort to make a trip. A fine blending of colonialism and multiculturalism is to be found in his travel through Malaysia.

The next travelogue, *Beyond Belief: Islamic Excursions Among the Converted Peoples*, is a sequel to the previous one. Actually, Naipaul has produced these travel narratives in the sharp contrast to his Hindu political and parochial views as it is more apparent through Naipaulian perspective when he says that, "there has probably been no imperialism like that of Islam and the Arabs" (331). Hence, Imraan Coovadia is more relevantly quoted on Naipaul, "...in his career Naipaul's view changes, becoming far more protective of political Hinduism and far more critical of Islam's impact on the subcontinent" (2009:95). After the visit to the Indian subcontinent, Naipaul moved towards Africa as it allured through his close readings of Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*.

"Africa, I got you!," says Naipaul in his banquet speech after receiving the Nobel Prize in 2001 and the dialogue continued till recently, "Africans need to be kicked, that's the only thing they understand."⁴ His cognitive intelligence has relentlessly delivered the colonizers' perspective regarding Third World nations. After Islamic nations, Africa has attracted Naipaul for its cultural amalgamation, its history and civilization and of course his visit to the same resulted in the publication of *The Masque of Africa: Glimpses of African Belief* (2010), his latest creative feat. He encompassed four countries—Uganda, Nigeria, Ghana and the Republic of South Africa for his narrative. The travelogue is an architectural devise of history, culture and civilization with Chaucerian tale, art of characterization and a record of cultural crisis from the middle ages (Dark Age) of irrationality to the modern and post-modern age of illumination and of critical thinking.

Thus, Naipaul's controversial comments on the Islam, Islamic nation-states, ethnic perceptions on Africa, ambivalent relationship with India and blinkered remarks on female authors put him in absolute squall of criticism worldwide. But his virtuosity on prose writings, his narratives on history and civilization, his craftsmanship and facts in his fiction make him an inimitable author in the world.

Notes:

1. <<http://www.mid-day.com/news/2011/jun/040611-V-S-Naipaul-psychiatrist-controversy-Jane-Austen.htm>> Accessed on June 3, 2013.
2. <<http://www.fantasticfiction.co.uk/n/v-s-naipaul/middle-passage.htm>> Accessed on June 3, 2013. Emphasis mine.
3. <<http://yabaluri.org/TRIVENI/CDWEB/anareaofdefecationoct65.htm>> Accessed on June 4, 2013.
4. <<http://flavorwire.com/319649/a-collection-of-the-worst-things-v-s-naipaul-has-ever-said/>> Accessed on November 29, 2013.

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Image of Women in the Novels of Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni and Anjana Appachana

*N. Neeraja

The novels of women writers consist of the latest burning issues related with women as well as those issues that exist in the society since long. The majority of novels depict the psychological sufferings and frustrations of women. Feminine perspectives typically celebrate virtues traditionally perceived as feminine and experiences that are peculiar to woman, such as pregnancy, labour, child birth and nursing. Women novelists hailing from totally different cultural contexts take up the interior journey of human being as a mother, sister and wife. Diasporic writers encounter new epistemologies and new ways of living. Indo-American writers Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni and Anjana Appachana have voiced their feelings about the women's role in their novels.

The most prolific South Asia American women writer is Chitra Bannerjee Divakaruni, who came to America from Calcutta 30 years ago and has stayed ever since. Her first collection of short stories, *Arranged Marriage*, won an American Book Award in 1996. The dominant theme of her stories and novels is bond between women and the breaking down of all barriers—Indian and non-Indian, men and women, young and old. She has published four volumes of poetry, edits two magazines and founded MAITRI, a help hotline for South Asian women. She teaches creative writing in the San Francisco area.

In *The Vine of Desire*, Divakaruni takes up the story of

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Anju and Sudha where she left them at the end of her novel *Sister of my Heart*. The devastating events in both of their lives bring them together: Anju in America has had a miscarriage, and Sudha has walked out of her in-laws' and husband's house; she has refused to give in to their command of having an abortion when the foetus was declared to be a girl. Hurt and saddened by the events of their lives, they reach out to one another for comfort and affection when Sudha arrives in California. Complications arise when Anju's husband's Sunil discovers he is deeply attracted to Sudha, whom he met on the night of his marriage to Anju. After a somewhat long section of tantalizing anticipation, the evitable physical encounter between Sunil and Sudha occurs, carrying the fleeting suggestion that a new familial group might be established between Sunil, Sudha and her daughter Dayita. The aftermath of this passionate encounter is the destruction of Sunil and Anju's marriage, a rift between the cousins, and the departure of Sunil to a life as a single man in another city. At one point Sudha reflects, "So many violence done to me. My mother-in-law wanting to cut from it whatever she considered unseemly...Sunil plunging into the center of my body, corrosive with need". Sudha realizes that even though she can choose to wear either a sari or blue jeans and a T-shirt in her new world, she'll only ever feel a sense of belonging when she returns to India.

Anju must learn to cope with the loss of her unborn child, buffer herself against a husband's emotional rejection, and overcome a deep sense of betrayal by Sudha – a process that proves painful for Anju, whose sense of value as a woman is tied up with her success as a wife and mother. From an escape from the brutalities of gender oppression in India, we are once given an alternative vision of the possibility of an unconventional and fulfilling life in India, for Sudha. Bidding adieu to the marriage plot, Divakaruni made fashions two alternative destinies for the cousins who had been brought up to believe in the primacy of marriage in their lives as women.

In *Queen of Dreams*, the novelist not only foregrounds

the immigrant experience but wonderfully unleashes the conscious and unconscious bonds between mother and daughter. The *Queen of Dreams* explores the unusual relationship between an Indian-born mother, a dream-teller, who refuses to talk about her past and her American-born daughter, Rakhi, a single mother, painter, and coffee shop owner, who is desperate to learn about her ethnic heritage. As Rakhi attempts to divine her identity, knowing little of India but drawn inexorably into a sometimes painful history she is only just discovering, her life is shaken by new horrors. In the wake of September 11, she and her friends must deal with dark new complexities about their acculturation. Haunted by nightmares beyond her imagination, she nevertheless, finds unexpected blessings: the possibility of new love and understanding for her family. Divakaruni has grappled with contemporary issues and a variety of themes – motherhood, broken marriage individuation, class, conflicts, woman as wife, mother, sister and lastly, yet significantly women as human being, not just a sex object.

Divakaruni deals with the issues of racism, feminism, interracial relationships, economic disparity, abortion and divorce. She shows widows who prefer to stay in America rather than go back to India to “serve their in-laws and become doves with cut off wings”. In *Queen of Dreams*, the focus is on relationships mostly between a mother, Mrs. Gupta and her daughter Rakhi. While *Vine of Desire* was rooted in the physical world, *Queen of Dreams* flows into the world of dreams, as Mrs. Gupta has an ability to decipher them, be it her own or others. Her novels outline the lives of women engaged in a quest for values. This is evident in novels such as *Sister of my Heart*, *Vine of Desire*, *The Mistress of Spices* and *Queen of Dreams*. The problems confronted by women are brought to the fore through multicolored experiences of women characters and the registering of their consciousness. Anju and Sudha of *Sister of my Heart* and *Vine of Desire*, Rakhi and Mrs. Gupta of *Queen of Dreams* are all fractured selves at the beginning of the novel. They come to terms with their self or persona in their own specific ways. Moreover,

situations and events keep adding novel dimensions to the knowledge of life and the shaping of notions since the societal constructs impose rigid standards and restraints on its people.

Another writer, Anjana Appachana came to America in 1984 to pursue an M.F.A. in creative writing. She received the O. Henry Festival Prize and a creative writing fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts in the United States. All eight short stories in her first work, *Incantations and Other Stories* (1991), are set in New Delhi and are sometimes unflinchingly brutal and sometimes humorous portraits of modern life there. Behind them all is the hypocrisy of traditional ways, whether it relates to business, bureaucracy or marriage, sometimes with tragic consequences, as in the title story. Her debut novel, *Listening Now* (1998), is also entirely based in India.

Appachana gives a realistic account of the lives of middle class women in an Indian city, and their painful negotiations between personal aspirations and societal expectations. She also vividly presents a searing picture of the exploitation the daughter-in-law suffers in a traditional Indian family, with a carping mother-in-law. Men exist only at the periphery of the novel. Some common themes run through most of the novels the discrimination against the daughter, the silence of women, and the lack of communication between the sexes, etc. An in-depth treatment of these themes are done in Appachana's first novel, *Listening Now*. The book is an entirely credible recreation of Indian life, we feel that we are personally acquainted with the women we read about, we can almost identify them, or identify with them. Indian culture transcends regional variation in discriminating against the daughter, whether it is Delhi (the central character Padma's friends), Lucknow (Karan's wife Prema), or Bangalore (Padma's elder sister Shanta) the son invariably gets first preference in all things, whether it is food, pocket money or education. There is a very strong feminist critique at work, both in the positive and celebratory presentation of women, and in the implied contrast between the generation – between Padma and her peers on the other hand, and

Mallika and her friends on the other, in terms of the younger girl's ability to break out of roles, their refusal to compromise, their hopes and aspirations. The themes of women's oppression, suffering, shame and silence run ubiquitously through *Listening Now*.

Rampant acts of sexual assaults casually and callously inflicted on them by men (a father's boss, a brother's friend or a stranger on the street) are often disclosed by the women. Mallika mentions how she and her friends assaulted by two men passing by on a scooter who hit her in the chest, while "grabbling Mahima's thigh" and Prabha's breasts before roaring off, "loud and triumphant". Madhu reveals a particularly frightening incident when she, Padma and Anu are enjoying a rare outing without their families where they are assaulted by a large group of men who surround and violently grope them, "the hands at Madhu's breasts squeezed and pinched, between her thighs the fingers probed and prodded," (89). Miraculously, the assault does not end in rape, and the three women manage to pick themselves up while "a few yards away four policemen with lathis stood grinning, and beyond them everyone stared. She covered her torn blouse with her palla." (89).

Anjana Appachana intimately portrays relationships between and within families and friends and shows how women build strong friendship and live for themselves, despite disappointment in marriage and the limitations of career. Anjana Appachana's protagonist and other women characters define themselves through the act of living a life of their own.

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Breaking the Silence: A Study in Kamala Das's *The Old Playhouse and Other Poems*.

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Kamala Das's volume *The Old Playhouse and Other Poems* (1973) has been regarded as a manifesto of her poetic creed which attracted the attention of the readers from several points of view. The poet is completely in a defensive mood to outgrow her earlier notions and to teach a lesson to those people who think her to be merely a passive and submissive woman interrogating the sexual assaults. However, she comes out openly and boldly with clear indications of her own ideological position as a feminist. The poems included in this volume focus on multiple themes but reveal the unusual sensitivity and commitment of the author to the feminist cause. She blends incisive insight with personal emotions to analyse the socio-cultural institutions and norms. Her inner impulses and sexual preferences camouflaged in ironic images and some of her most powerful and evocative verses are found in this collection. The new poems like "The Old Playhouse", "The Stone Age", "The Prisoner", "The Swamp" and "Gino" deal with the idea of gender exploitation as they reflect the poet's obsession to expose the patriarchal canons.

Against Male Authority:

The title piece "The Old Playhouse" is a typical poem which ensures that the conventional notions of society are subverted and critiqued. It reveals that she has evolved a rebellious stance against the traditional Hindu persuasion where woman always remains under the surveillance of the men-folk at various stages of life. She attacks mercilessly the system of patriarchy which has made woman merely a

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puppet in the hands of men. She points out the circumstances in which a woman is treated merely as a tamed bird and is not allowed having her way freely. Her resentment against the male chauvinism is betrayed in the husband's temperament of possessiveness:

You planned to tame a swallow, to hold her
In the long summer of your love so that she would forget
Not the raw seasons alone, and the homes left behind, but
Also her nature, the urge to fly, and the endless
Pathways of the sky (1).

The natural repulsion for the husband makes her suspicious not only of everything he speaks or does but also of any traditional wisdom imparted to her by anybody calling upon her to behave and act accordingly. Commenting on these lines, Vrinda Nabar perceptively remarks: "It protests against the constraint of married life: the fever of domesticity, the routine of lust, artificial comfort and male domination which Kamala Das asserts that she has known and found abominable in her life (Nabar 117).

The most remarkable feature of Kamala Das's personality is that she aggressively defends her position against the accepted norms of the society when called upon to do so by offering forceful arguments. For instance in another poem "The Swamp", she addresses her husband with the sense of prejudice against him. Since being male, he is the strongest person with pelf and power and dominates her whenever he so pleases. She narrates her husband's mentality with the following vituperations:

... he is the richest, the strongest, the deadliest. I lit one thousand and one lamps at our snakeshrine praying for a male such as he said power and money two and two make not four but twenty two he is simple politics and a little bit of love each day he did not read books or walk on marine drive or swim I am the puppet on his string (53).

In the above lines, the poet particularly ridicules girls who pray for getting suitable mates but in return get a man who always tends to overwhelm them with his power and authority.

Kamala Das has developed in her personality a kind of confidence to defy the male coded conventions. Her retaliation against the male authority which subjects the woman under his servitude is portrayed in an ironical manner:

You called me wife,
I was taught to break saccharine into your tea and
To offer at the right moment the vitamins. Cowering
Beneath your monstrous ego I ate the magic loaf and
Became a dwarf. I lost my will and reason, to all your
Questions I mumbled incoherent replies (1).

Here the poet seriously questions the very concept of 'wife' as conceived by the orthodox patriarchal society to subjugate woman at every stage of life. In this context a critic aptly remarks, "the lover's monstrous ego transforms the woman into a grotesque creature, a 'dwarf'. Her personality is unnaturally diminished. She becomes incoherent and subservient" (Nabar 65). She also criticizes the one-sided outlook of the male-dominated society which considers woman a commodity to satisfy the physical urges:

You were pleased
With my body's response, its weather, its usual shallow
Convulsions. You dribbled spittle into my mouth, you poured
Yourself into every nook and cranny, you embalmed
My poor lust with your bitter-sweet juices (1).

She is discreetly careful about the position of woman who faces conflict and restlessness attached to a male as life partner. "She speaks for women" observes de Souza, "certainly, but also for anyone who has known pain, inadequacy, despair. she is capable of handling varied effects: the brooding intensity of 'The Old Playhouse' which brings together all her major concerns, the search for love, the power politics of relationships"(De Souza 9).

In the poem "The Stone Age" also she unleashes her strong sentiments against the age-old tradition of the woman being placed under the thumb of the husband. She criticizes the male dominance in the society where the husband of the

woman persona as "old fat spider" weaves "webs of bewilderment" around her and erects the stony wall of domesticity and comfort changing her into 'a bird of stone'. Her sense of defiance has been asserted in getting freedom from the cocoon of domesticity:

Fond husband, ancient settler in the mind,
Old fat spider, weaving webs of bewilderment,
Be kind, You turn me into a bird of stone, a granite
Dove, you build around me a shabby drawing room,
And stroke my pitted face absentmindedly while
you read. With loud talk you bruise my pre-morning sleep.
You stick a finger into my dreaming eye (51)

Exposing Male Sexuality:

In her autobiography, Kamala Das talks about her instant dislike for Mr. Das because "He was thin walking with a stoop and had bad teeth" (81). Her impression about her husband was further worsened when she came to know him as veteran "in the rowdy ways of sex which he had practised with the maids who worked for his family" (90). In view of this it becomes obvious that the poet does not like his ugly appearance and his crude ways of making love merely for physical satisfaction. It is why in "The Old Playhouse", she denounces the lusty nature of the husband and aspires for freedom. She exposes his rude behaviour explicitly in a satirical tone:

...The strong man's technique
Is always the same. He serves his love in lethal doses,
For love is Narcissus at the water's edge, haunted
By its lonely face, and, yet it must seek at last.
An end, a pure, total freedom, it must will the mirrors.
To shatter and the kind night to erase the water (1-2).

Her anguish against husband has been further exemplified in the poem, "Gino" where she compares the sexual relationship of man and woman with a serpent's bite and condemns sensuality with a sense of defeat:

You will perish from his kiss, he said, as one must
Surely die, when bitten by a krait who fills

The bloodstream with its accursed essence (13).

These lines are “touchingly autobiographical” (Kohli 117) as the poet mentions the alien lover who wanted to marry her but could not succeed in dislodging “the inherited / Memory of a touch”. Therefore, a conflict arises between them and the alien lover’s kiss is like the sting of a krait who planted on his beloved’s mouth the treacherous kiss of betrayal.

Kamala Das as a poet of love and sex ponders over different manifestations of love and makes a hectic search for it in her poetry. Some of the images which dominate her poetry include that of the ‘human body’, a gift of God in the form of male and female. While the male body is a source of corruption and exploitation, the female body is a storehouse of beauty and chastity misused at the highest level. The poem “The Stone Age” communicates overtly the image of saturation in sexual act apart from her sense of bitterness in relationship. The poet indulges in exploring the male behaviour and in utter helplessness, cries out:

Ask me everybody, ask me
 What he sees in me, ask me why he is called a lion,
 A libertine, ask me the flavour of his
 Mouth, ask me why his hand sways like a hooded snake
 Before it clasps my pubis. Ask me why like
 A great tree, felled, he slumps against my breasts
 And sleeps (51).

The poet aggressively objects to the behaviour of the husband because she does not relish the ‘flavour of his mouth’ and the way he clasps her pubis. It is conveyed by the image of ‘a hooded snake’, a traditional image of male genital. Whether she likes him or not, he thrusts himself upon her in a mood of frenzied passion like a “great tree, felled”. Naturally as a lustful man, he prefers vulgar sexuality and hence slumps against her breasts to sleep in warmth “as lazy animal hungers of the flesh” (Daruwalla 143). Through the arresting images Kamala Das has made it amply obvious that he is largely a man of lust and cruelty, having no regard for her own feelings.

Breaking up of the Institution of Marriage:

In *The Old Playhouse and Other Poems*, the idea of protest is quite pronounced since it is driven by an air of confidence that she openly flouts such a well-established social norm as the institution of marriage which is treated as religious sacrament in the Hindu society. Her accusation against her husband begins from the very first meeting after marriage. She finds him repulsive and is aghast at the prospects of her future with him. Her intense suffering is obviously reflected in the following speech:

My life had been planned and its course charted by my parents and relatives. I was to be the victim of a young man’s carnal hunger and perhaps, out of our union would, there would be born a few children. I would be a middle-class housewife, and walk along the vegetable shop carrying a string bag and wearing faded chappals on my feet. I would beat my thin children when they asked for expensive toys and make them scream out for mercy. I would wash my husband’s cheap underwear and hang it out to dry in the balcony like some kind of a national flag, with wifely pride (*My Story* 85).

The poet embarks upon a career of free love but also underlines the fact that she adjusted her sexual cravings in accordance with the demand of time on a particular occasion. She, as a woman of her own choice, decides to go in for extra-marital relationship in a calculated way putting the blame on her husband. She believes that as in the poem “The Prisoner”, a convict wanting to escape from the prison studies its geography to convey out a break in the same way after marriage, she reads the trappings of her husband’s body particularly his weaknesses to free her from the marital bonds. Her psyche has been eloquently expressed with a sense of distrust to find out the path of freedom from the married life in the following excerpt:

As the convict studies
 His prison’s geography
 I study the trappings
 Of your body, dear love,

For I must someday find
An escape from its snare (29).

These lines demonstrate how the poet engages herself to find out an escape from the marital bond equating herself with a convict confined in a prison. Commenting on these lines Kohli rightly remarks, "it suggests the trappings of lust from which she must free herself to know true love and soul's cry against its mortal dress" (113).

Similarly in the poem "The Stone Age", she laments that "life is short and love is shorter still." This connotes that the poet feels a sense of urgency in the matter of love, so much so that instead of waiting for amends in the old love, she prefers a change looking for a new one. This sense of immediacy is perceptible in her hasty resolve to seek love outside the legal orbit of marriage and to be unfaithful to her husband declaring that her marriage had flopped. It is in this state of mind that immediately after marriage she started concocting excuses to walk out of the bonds of marriage practically. She depicts a situation when she rushes to her lover immediately after the departure of her husband:

When you leave, I drive my blue battered car
Along the bluer sea. I run up the forty
Noisy steps to knock at another's door.
Through peepholes, the neighbours watch,
They watch me come
And go like rain.... (51).

It is obvious that when she speaks of love outside marriage, she does not necessarily propagate the institution of adultery or infidelity but seems to be merely searching for a true relationship which gives both genuine love and security.

The foregoing analysis reveals that in comparison with her earlier volumes of poems, Kamala Das is a mature woman, who has developed a sense of confidence to open out her naked emotions and "impresses by being very much herself in her poems" (Parthasarathy 22). It is her personal reflection which renders a new dimension to her poetry by

making her self-conscious to acquire power and position in the modern Indian male oriented society.

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Rape Narratives in Shashi Deshpande's *The Binding Vine* and Fay Weldon's *Praxis*

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The pain in my soul, my heart, my mind, is not assuaged, as are my bodily aches and pains, by recognition and attention. I am surrounded, at too frequent intervals, by babel of people, mostly women, either embarrassingly servile or self-consciously unimpressed.

(*Praxis*250)

Rape is the most sensitive, controversial and traumatic experience for a woman. It brings up anxiousness, repulsion and wrath and due to which women are very uncertain about the subject of rape. It is an act where a male powerfully possesses the body of a woman and the consequences of action is burdened on the life of that particular woman as long as she survives. Rape draws its meaning and its destructive symbolic effect from the crushed female sexual subjectivity as well as from female agency recognizing it as a “wound of femininity” (Toit 66).

Rape as a subject has always been neglected and faced a lack of sensitivity in terms of law and on the ground of humanity. It has been ignored since the beginning of the history of male oppression on female. Krafft-Ebing, the pioneer in the study of sexual-disorder, has discussed very little about rape. In his book *Psychopathia Sexualis*, Krafft-Ebing communicated his readers that “most rapists were degenerate, imbecilic men”. It is quite surprising to know that from Sigmund Freud to Alfred Adler, from Jung to Marx

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and Engles—— all have strangely adopted silence about rape. Bebel in his book *Woman Under Socialism* puts an acceptable Marxist analysis of rape where he says that the tribal fights for land, cattle and labour power first leads to the rape of women and ultimately subjugates the seized men. Resultantly, women who are raped become the slaves and an object of pleasure and simultaneously their men become slaves for the conquerors. So the entity of woman and her existence was considered in terms of material and property bringing her to the level of ‘Object’.

Susan Brownmiller in her best-selling book *Against Our Will: Men, Women and Rape*, presents the baser mindset of the society where a writer, especially a woman, if writes about rape then it is often believed that she either might have a firsthand experience of rape or has certain dark and hidden secret. Susan Brownmiller in her book *Against Our Will: Men, Women and Rape* says,

A woman who chooses to write about rape probably has a dark personal reason, a lurid secret, a history of real or imagined abuse, a trauma back there somewhere, a fixation, a Bad Experience that has permanently warped her or instilled in her the compulsion to Tell the World. (Brownmiller, 7)

Nazife Bashar in an article “Rape in England between 1500 and 1700” highlights the fact that during the medieval period women were considered just “male property” unlike movable goods and so rape of woman was seen as a “crime against property” and not against a human being. In the case of Helen, the Sabine women and particularly about Lucrece, we find that rape in all these occasions has been “troped” or metaphorized, rationalized, politicized- in short, transformed into an occasion for the conflict between men and for the privileging of male honor” (Baines 70). Rape is the politics of body, sexuality and power and despite this fact it has become “academia’s undertheorized and apparently untheorizable issue” (Mardorossian, 743). Irrespective of the existence and prominence of rape since the beginning of *suppression politics*, and the emergence of

women's rights movement, the voice against rape is either meek or is ignored for the sake of "more ambivalent expressions of male domination such as pornography and sexual harassment" (Mardorossian, 743). Taking Foucauldian model of power into account, rape depicts woman as powerless and is subordinated to the will of men/patriarchy. Rape is the "male fantasy of totalizing phallic power, highly reassuring to patriarchy" (Baines, 89). Louise du Toit in his book *A Philosophical Investigation of Rape: The Making and Unmaking of the Feminine Self* (2009) says that "...men rape women because men are men and women are women" (Toit, 3) and Susan Brownmiller's statement "Man's structural capacity to rape and woman's corresponding structural vulnerability" (Brownmiller, 13) highlight women's suppressive and tyrannous status in front of men.

The postmodern feminist theory is subservient in challenging the prototypes of the "women's experiences" as the source of "explanation rather than as what requires analysis often entrenches the very categories (man/woman, sex/gender, etc.)" (Mardorossian 745). Although the postmodern feminist writers have written lengthily about dissertates of victimization; however their interrogations come to end when they start examining the social meanings that are categorized under "rape". The damage of rape to women in a patriarchal society is an injury that obtains its particular perniciousness from a wounded (feminine) subjectivity that is symbolically construed as the antithesis to full personhood.

During rape, the victim combats with the rapist to safeguard/protect her femininity and after rape she combats psychologically as well as socially. As the Aristotelian and Galenic tradition have presented woman as the imperfect and defective one, resulting in positioning woman as the "other" one in the society; rape makes a woman *other's other* in the society. A raped woman is considered as "even more monstrous because she was dishonoured, socially stigmatized, literally and metaphorically disfigured" (Aronson 530). So, Catharine MacKinnon says that "rape is

indigenous, not exceptional, to women's social condition" (MacKinnon qtd. in Helliwell 790) because since the beginning of the society woman has lived under the threat of sexual abuse as "sexuality is central to women's definition and forced sex is central to sexuality" (Ibid 790).

As the issue of rape suffers from the lack of proper concern, Fay Weldon and Shashi Deshpande have tried to present this sensitive issue in their respective novels to portray the need of theorizing rape on humanitarian ground. Fay Weldon in her novel *Praxis* (1978) and Shashi Deshpande in *The Binding Vine* (1993) have dealt with this sensitive, dark and politicized issue of rape and marital rape. They highlighted the fact that rape always gets or draws its meaning from the "domain of sexual politics and sexual relations, and racial politics" (Toit 3). Both the writers have tried to break the silence on the issue of rape- "a silence which was intended to protect the honour of the males in the family" (Sunalini 73).

Rape in Shashi Deshpande's *The Binding Vine*:

Sharon Marcus in her article "Fighting Bodies, Fighting Words: A Theory and Politics of Rape Politics" (1992) says that the societal structure has created the myth that man is the powerful being and a woman lacks power and is "a defective man" and hence she needs to be under man's surveillance. This results in the occurrence of rape that can be said as "a process of sexist gendering which we can attempt to disrupt" (Marcus qtd. in Hengehold 196). This is very true in Indian context where a girl is taught about a man's superiority and her inferiority since childhood. She is told to live within the vine of patriarchy as there is no escape and no existence outside and beyond it. Consequently, Indian woman is caught in the vines of tradition and culture where she is gendered and finally "becomes a woman" (Beauvoir 256).

Shashi Deshpande's *The Binding Vine* is a heart rendering rape narrative of Kalpana and Mira. Kalpana belongs to the lower class section of Indian society and is a

victim of rape done by her own uncle whereas Mira, the dead mother-in-law of Urmila, is a victim of rape within the institution of marriage. The novel presents the saga of suppression of the three generations of women (Mira, Urmila and Shakutai, and Kalpana) that renders depression and oppression in a patriarchal society. Urmila's grief stricken and vulnerable situation makes her to come closer to Shakuntala, aka Shakutai, and her mother-in-law's poems that reveals the horror of a married lady who becomes the victim of marital rape. Deshpande "underlines the pain of a woman who is the victim of the legalized rape and is destined to die in pain" (Sunalini 72).

For a woman, her chastity is the most essential part of her womanhood. Since childhood this gets into her unconscious that her body belongs to her husband only and hence "We all of us grow up with an idea of ourselves, an image rather, and spend the rest of our lives trying to live up to it...(TBV, 7)". Neither Mira nor Kalpana or Urmi are the exceptional ones. But they all had willingly surrendered their body or rather their womanhood. Unfortunately, their desires become their own traps and lead to a dark, uncertain and painful destiny.

Urmila has just lost her one year daughter, Anu, and is under emotional set back. Despite the family members-Inni, mother of Urmila, Vanaa, Amrut- effort to bring Urmi out of her grieving state to a normal life, she feels that her "exit is barred...can't go back...trapped in the present. There is no escape." (TBV 13). She feels that if she tries to come out of mourning, then it would be a betrayal to Anu. S. Indira comments on this attitude of Urmila:

Instead of fighting her pain and sorrow she holds, on to it as she believes that to let go of that pain, to let it become a thing of the past would be a betrayal and would make her lose Anu completely. Like a masochist, she clings to her pain and allows her memories of Anu, every small incident to flood her with longing and a great sense of loss. (Indira 22).

Her grief makes her highly sensitive towards the

suffering and despair of others. This sensitivity of her makes her sympathetic towards Shakutai whom she met at hospital where Vanaa works. Shakutai's daughter is admitted into that hospital and is in coma because she has been brutally raped. The social construction of binary of power/powerless has established the notion of man's superiority in every aspect and represented female as the inferior one. The dominant patriarchal culture sees or perceives rape as woman's problem and woman as the cause for it. Urmila's closeness with Shakutai, her sister, Sulu, and Shakutai's daughter Sandhya brings forth the fact in which the "traditional culture is operative in the sexual disparities between men and women of the lower class" (Sree, 93).

Kate Millet in her book *Sexual Politics* (1970) argues that rape is generally the result of male sadism and hatred of women. With Kalpana it is quite true. As the investigation proceeds, it becomes clear that Kalpana has been raped by her own uncle Prabhakar, Sulu's husband. Sulu's childless married life and Kalpana's attitude of being free have provoked Prabhakar to show his power over Sulu's life and Kalpana's body. The inability of Sulu to produce an heir for patriarchy has developed indifference in Prabhakar towards her. Sulu's unproductive body makes Prabhakar to develop incestuousness for Kalpana. He tries to possess her body many a time when Kalpana stayed with them. Kalpana's objection to Prabhakar's assaults infuriates him and he becomes more adamant to possess Kalpana as his wife. Sulu has even put forth the proposal of marriage to Shakutai but Kalpana does not affirm this proposal as she loves someone else and wanted to marry that boy irrespective of her mother's disapproval. The news of Kalpana's marriage ignites lust in Prabhakar and he rapes her. The whole incidence shows a game of possession for body. Kalpana's body is an object of pleasure and her womb's usability leads to a combat between Prabhakar and the boy whom Kalpana chooses. Kalpana's rape is the result of sadism developed in Prabhakar and his hatred for Sulu's unproductive womb and hence, "Rape thus derives its devastating meaning from this

symbolic order, which in a sense pre-empt the act of rape in that it systematically and symbolically erases or problematises women's sexual subjectivity" (Toit, 5).

Rape dichotomizes woman from her "sex-specific fragility of (their) selfhood" (Toit, 5) and "female embodiment (sexuality) and female subjecthood (selfhood)" (Ibid, 6) by placing them in a destructive opposition that leads to the otherness within the whole system of society. In Indian society the rape victim is always regarded as the provocateur and remains at the wrong side. Shakutai when came to know about Kalpana's rape, she begged to Urmi and the doctor not to report this to police as the news will bring a shame to the family and she will not get any groom either for her raped daughter or for her second daughter: 'No, no, no. tell him Tai, it's not true, don't tell anyone, I'll never be able to hold up my head again, who'll marry the girls, we're decent people. Doctor,' she turns to him, 'don't tell the police.' (TBV 58).

Shakutai holds Kalpana responsible for her own condition. She knows it well that society will not let Kalpana lead a normal life if she survives. Shakutai has been deserted by her husband and has suffered the pangs of society that holds her responsible for her husband's desertion. But Kalpana never wanted to repeat the history where woman is meant to be dominated. She wanted to give an expression to her desires and this is the reason that she never listened to Shakutai who warned her to remain "decently" (TBV, 147) and to behave like a woman ought to behave. But Kalpana went her own way, "her head in the air, caring for nobody" (Ibid). Kalpana never agreed to her mother's lesson that "...women must know fear" (Ibid, 148) and hence "she was stubborn, she was self-willed, she dressed up, she painted her lips and nails" (Ibid).

Marriage is regarded as promised security for a woman in Indian society. So, Shakutai is more concerned about her daughters' marriage than her elder daughter's dying condition. She wanted to remain as a part of the society by adhering to its norms and regulations. Although she admires

Kalpana's distinctiveness from her and other women of the *chawl*, but at the same time she was afraid of the known future of every woman. Since childhood, the Indian woman, grows up with the idea that a woman is conditioned to remain dependent on men physically, mentally and emotionally. She is taught to control her desire and sexuality and is appreciated if she remains under man's surveillance. This conditioning mars the growth of a female and invariably constitutes silence in the woman-woman relationship. The silence between Shakutai and Kalpana (mother-daughter complex) led to the silence towards the womanly desires and sexuality. Due to this silence woman suffers ignorance not only about her rights to her body but also becomes helpless when it comes to advocating for her sexuality. The silence in the relationship of Shakutai and Kalpana leads to the rape of Kalpana and the same silence between Mira and Mira's mother leads to the marital rape of Mira.

Marital Rape in *The Binding Vine*:

Shashi Deshpande has touched an "untheorised" issue of rape within the institution of marriage. Although marital rape is the most common and repulsive kind of masochism present in Indian society, it is curtailed behind the institution of marriage as the social practices and legal codes in India mutually impose the denial of women's sexual agency and bodily integrity. Such societal set-up has made marriage a medium to control not only the lives of women but it ultimately controls the desires, sexuality, and reproductive power of women; resulting in the complete alienation from her own body and the feminine 'self'. This institution is a source through which the patriarchal society procreates and carries on the legacy.

Promilla Kapur, a renowned sociologist, in her book *Love, Marriage and Sex* says that every woman aspires for "a natural companionship, respect, material comforts, satisfaction of emotional and physical needs" (Kapur qtd. in Kaur, 30) in marriage. However, this is not true in case of Mira, Urmila's mother-in-law, who is dead now. Mira was

an intelligent and educated girl who aspired to become a poet. This quality made her father to be proud of her; but Mira's marriage to a man who was "obsessed with her" (TBV, 47) has not only marred her creativity but also led to the development of hatred towards her body. Mira got married when she was only eighteen. Her beauty made her husband to get attracted towards her. He creates plot to possess Mira's body and hence in accordance with the institution of marriage, he became the owner of the body of Mira. But Mira had never accepted her husband as the owner of her body and has only given him "the facts, nothing more, never (her) feelings" (TBV 67).

Mira's poems reflect the magnitude of forceful sexual activity as the integrated part of marriage. Marriage is a medium that doubles the power of ownership of a man on a woman in every respect. Every woman is taught of total submission to her husband as an important lesson; a *mantra* for happy married life. This embodied submission further leads to "an existential condition in which the body is the subjective source or intersubjective ground of experience" (Thapan 3). Mira's mother also told her the same while Mira was getting married,

Don't tread paths barred to you
obey, never utter a 'no';
submit and your life will be
a paradise, she said and blessed me. (TBV, 83)

Marriage is regarded as the vehicle of being in the world. Mira's situation is the situation of every woman who is the victim of the institution of marriage and suffers mutely till the last breath. As Adrienne Rich says that it is not only the rape of a body but it is the rape of the mind as well. Mira suffered every day and night. The "love" of her husband is only limited to the body he possessed through marriage and for Mira the word "love" becomes the hateful thing that she has to suffer every "*dark- clouded, engulfing night*" (TBV, 66) and she writes,

...he holds me close, he begins to babble. And so it begins.

'Please,' he says, 'please, I love you.' And over and over again until he has done, 'I love you.' Love! How I hate the word. If this is love it is terrible thing...What is it he wants from me? I look at myself in the mirror and wonder, what is there in me? Why does it have to be me? Why can't he leave me alone? (TBV, 67)

Mira is altogether a different being. She never finds any similarity with the other women of the family. The other women of the family are just "looking-glass self" (Thapan, 13) image to Mira as her presence in the family is both "a physical location as much as a social construction" (Ibid). For Mira, things those are different were quiet normal for other women. Due to these, women of the family used to call Mira "*mad*" (TBV, 101). She neither wanted to live like the other women of the family nor wanted to be the mirror image of her mother. She was not able to find the reason of their submission to patriarchy and the way woman's body is used to fulfill the patriarchal need. She does not want to be the part of "*this Maya-world*" (TBV, 98). Mira's physical and spiritual loneliness make her to seclude herself from rest of the women of the family and resultantly she is called "*mad*" and hence she writes about her rejection,

They called me mad
they, who cocooned themselves
in bristly blankets
and thought themselves warm
when I spoke of my soul
that boiled and seethed.(TBV, 99-100)

The cultural upbringing shapes the male minds to behave in dominating fashion with women. The family fostering, societal discipline/ set-up, religious sagas and political animosity, all result in the construction that embody men and women into being — men as aggressive and women as submissive. Mira is shackled in the institution of marriage as well as within her body. After her marriage Mira's name is changed to Nirmala and she finds herself stranger to herself- "*Who is this? None but I, / my name hence, bestowed upon me*" (TBV, 101). She asserts that she is Mira and not

Nirmala as “*Do you build the new without razing the old?*” (Ibid). Mira never wanted to “*make myself in your image/ was never the goal I sought*” (Ibid, 124).

Rape in *Praxis*:

Fay Weldon’s *Praxis* (1978), that appeared two decades before *The Binding Vine*, also deals with rape and the struggle of the protagonist, Praxis. Praxis, whose name means “turning point, culmination, action; orgasm; some said the Goddess herself” (*Praxis* 12), is a retrospective story that starts with the settings of 1920s. Since her childhood Praxis has seen her mother Lucy being abused, beaten-up and is raped by her husband Ben Duveen (Lucy has never got legally married with Ben). Ben’s hatred for Christianity makes him to doom Lucy’s life “to eternal damnation, for the sake of what she had believed would be heaven on earth, and had turned out to be hell, here and now?” (*Praxis* 11). It is her body that is appreciated by Ben. Her body is the combat field to show the abhorrence of the Jew for Christianity and “his forcible entry into her body, despite her physical protestations and struggle, became the vehicle of his victorious conquest over her being, the ultimate test of his superior strength, the triumph of his manhood.” (Brownmiller 14).

The act of rape becomes the medium to show an opposition in the name of gender, race, ethnicity, culture as well as sexuality. Hence, one can say that rape is not only a male prerogative but also is a basic weapon of force against woman. Praxis witnessed her mother’s helplessness as a victim of marital rape in the childhood when she finds her father’s masculinity overpowers her mother’s femininity wrapped in physical and verbal assault, “Frigid bitch.” He seizes her hair, pulls back her head. He is strong: she is helpless: if he wishes to rape her, he could, he would. It is in the air.” (*Praxis* 13). As a child Praxis was not able to understand the exact suffering of her mother. Ben left Lucy as he found Ruth “the dark little waitress at the golf club” (Praxis 14) more suitable one than Lucy. The raped and

traumatized conditions of Lucy lead to the development of confusion and a threat in Praxis regarding the body of a woman. So when she attains her puberty and bleeds for the first time, she starts hating the process and finds a striking resemblance with her mother’s destiny as a victim of rape and a victim of being a woman.

The scenario of man’s oppression on the female body continues when Praxis attains maturity. Lucy’s madness leads her to live in an asylum leaving Praxis and her elder sister Hypatia alone. Praxis’s closeness with Miss Leonard reveals the horror of being raped during the war time. The psychological backdrop of men at war gives a vent to show their more chivalrous nature and superiority, they prove it to the women residing in that particular place. Miss Leonard is a victim of the war. Rape at the war zone “reveals the male psyche in its boldest form, without the veneer of “chivalry” or civilization.” (Brownmiller 33). Miss Leonard has been raped firstly by father and son duo at the same time and they gave money to her for her forcefully enjoyed service during the time of crisis. Miss Leonard’s dream of being loved by a man gets shattered and her innocent love is being changed to whoredom. She wanted to be “taken seriously, loved and appreciated” (Ibid 69) instead of that she faced the cruel animal desire/ instinct of man. Leonard was again raped by a drunken G.I. After such traumatized incidents she finds her body very “dirty...couldn’t even talk about it” (*Praxis* 71) and a property of unethical testosterone. Praxis finds that the body of a woman is not more than a chunk of flesh where male can feast over ethically and unethically and is an “evidence of (its) violent excess” (Brownmiller 32). Praxis realizes the ideology of rape and the entrapment of woman that “To lose one’s virginity is not...an insignificant event. It is tremendous, momentous, and sets the pattern for one’s entire sexual life to come” (*Praxis* 37).

Praxis also becomes victim of rape. She was raped by Phillip in her drunken state. For Phillip and Willie, Praxis was just a body to feast on for the gratification of

testosterone's desire. But the incident of rape creates a kind of sexual desire in Praxis that she has never ever realised before. She wants to spend her life with Phillip as she took Phillip's action as a symbol of love for a female body. But, for Phillip it was just a matter of fun. Willie's interest in Praxis makes her to indulge into a strange relationship with Willie. She took him to her home and did all her assignments without thinking or caring for her own future. But Willie uses Praxis for his own selfish needs. HurtPraxis ultimately gets engaged into prostitution for money.

Praxis's life takes a turn when she finds herself in a hateful state and all alone, left by Willie, Hypatia and others. But the courage of survival enables Praxis to move on in her life without thinking about her past. She got married to Ivor and had two kids- Robert and Claire and led a healthy and respected life until her past intervened into her present married life. Her marriage broke up and ultimately she joined the feminist group. Her attitude towards life of unburdening the woman life without a liability in the form of child provokes her to kill Mary's abnormal baby and this earns her two-year prison term. She says:

"it is perfectly possible that my life to date is indicative of a damaged personality: but most of us are emotionally damaged in some degree or another. We do the best we can with what we have." (Praxis 247).

Conclusion

The two novels show a remarkable feature that the time span between them is of twenty years and the discussion made in the present paper adds another span of two decades. The output of the discussion makes it evident that the condition and status of woman still remain the same after forty years as the word rape is "implicitly tied to so many often conflicting expectations about human nature, desire, and justice- expectations that differ between and within communities and generations..." (Hengehold 189). The trauma of rape not only disrupts the physical integrity of woman body but it leads to the destabilization of the

relationship between "reality and fantasy that the body's physical boundaries ordinarily mediate" (Ibid 196). Rape victims of both the novels suffer the crucifixion of the feminine sensibility and the feminine 'self'. Kalpana gets justice when her case is hiked by the media personnel. But the novel ends leaving its readers to ponder over the after-life of Kalpana who is the part of the traditional and conservative Indian lower class society whereas in the case of Praxis, a victim of rape, has to bear the tag of "a whore" during the formative and crucial period of her life. In both the cases it is the woman who is sacrificed and tossed up by the patriarchy leaving her to remain trapped in a triply oppressed state.

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Discourse Analysis towards Creative Fulfilment in the Interpretation of Texts

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The world of Literary theory and Criticism has offered us many a pattern that it has become quite difficult to define Discourse Analysis as part of Critical interpretation or as a research methodology in order to set our priority for making choices towards meaning, or meaning making process. Scaling with hermeneutics and other discourses in language sciences, Discourses Analysis opens new vistas for creative methods, rather than providing a particular method, as one of the several ways of approaching and thinking about a problem/ an issue/ studying a text or any sense making system. In this reference, estimating Discourse Analysis as qualitative or a quantitative research method would be delimiting its nature and scope rather it is a manner of questioning the basic assumptions of quantitative and qualitative research methods. Discourse Analysis is one of the research methods that analyses all possible answer(s), and even the tangible answer to research problem. It may or may not believe in establishing 'the meaning of the text', but it enables access to the ontological and epistemological assumptions behind a project, a statement, a method of research, a text or a system of classification probably responsible for their very existence ,and any sense making system automatically becomes its byproduct. In other words, Discourse Analysis enables to activate research acumen that reveals the hidden motivations behind a text or behind the choice of a particular method of research in the interpretation of that text or behind the intentions of the author who creates meaning out of a given text. It is nothing but a deconstructive reading and interpretation of a problem or

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text. As soon as the term deconstructive reading is applied to any discourse prevalent in the society, its analysis can be said to be an analysis of all that discourses that come into play, or regulate in making structure of that particular discourse or for the purpose any text(s)/ problem(s)/issue (s) or any matter or any statement or argument, and are finally shaped or formatted in certain kind of structure. This shape or the structure is accordingly read and analyzed to create the meaning therein. This analysis and establishing of meaning involves many a postmodern theories that conceive of every interpretation of reality, and, therefore, of reality itself as a text. Since every text, in the broader sense of the term, is conditioned and inscribes itself within a given discourse, therefore, the term Discourse Analysis.

Discourse Analysis is, thus, an analysis of more than one discourse that condition and become responsible for the emergence of a particular discourse related to a specific problem, or establishes any particular meaning of the text. It enables us to understand the conditions behind a specific problem, or an issue in question towards making of that particular “text”, and makes us realize the relevance of that problem, or the composition of that “text” and its value, in making meaning that lies in its assumptions; the very assumptions that enable the existence of that problem or “text”. These assumptions are then explicit, and Discourse Analysis allows us to view the “problem”, “a statement”, an argument” or “any sense making system” or “text” not only from a higher stance but in more broader and interdisciplinary way to gain a comprehensive view of them in entirety, and ourselves in relation to them. Discourse Analysis is meant to provide a radical awareness of the hidden motivations in others and ourselves that are involved in politicizing the affairs of a particular “problem”, “a statement”, an argument” or “any sense making system” or for that matter its representation in the form of a “text”, and, therefore, enables us to solve concrete problems or make sense out of the text - not by providing unequivocal answers, but by widening our horizons to ask ontological and

epistemological questions before prioritizing any methodology of research to establish our conclusion. Perceived as the product of the postmodern period, Discourse Analysis is more than critical thinking about and analysis of situations/texts in a creative manner, and it is not bound by any philosophy, method, theory or a discipline as such and never exists in isolation. Discourse Analysis, in a sense, is an analysis of Literary theory which itself is a cover term for a set of ideas, concepts, emotions, issues and concerns, that has been shaped into different language, equations and literary phenomenon widening the scope of human understanding about the existing knowledge store within the strategies that are used in the production, presentation and representation of literature based on intellectual and shared assumptions of the humankind. It even questions these production, presentation, and representation of literatures that are based on intellectual and shared assumptions of the humankind. This kind of analysis transcends the geographical and cultural boundaries in interpreting the text and its structure.

Discourse Analysis has opened a varied scope in bridging the gap between the imagination or virtual thinking and realistic usages explaining the cause of production of literature. It shapes and unfolds the very existence of literary theory that the writer and reader employ in deriving meaning out of the text and honing the critical acumen of the scholars, be of any discipline, and provide an understanding for appreciating the rich knowledge resource stored in the literature concerned. Discourse analysis deals in the background knowledge, the context, and the process of mental filtering about human understanding of the things that surround and condition the very existence of that text or that problem. It provides scholars a platform where they analyze the context in relation to its form and manner of portrayal, thereby providing a further scope of research and methodology for the purpose of interpreting the literature/ text/issue in concern and its study in a multidimensional way. With the evolution of liberal subjects and social sciences in humanities, discourse analysis has employed literary

theory in a bigger than biggest way to develop research strategies and approaches as a tool and method in collecting data and with drawing meaning out of any text or problem in concern .

Discourse analysis is more than the information and exchange of ideas that are underlined in making of a text. In the light of the socio-psychological trajectories of human being, discourse analysis has seen a varied scope and unlimited power of competent human brain in deliberating and delivering upon various discourses available to a narrator .The mini narratives have suddenly gained importance, and the meta- narratives have become a practice for the representation of politics which has indulged the human intellectual power in its entirety. While analyzing any discourse it may be possible that the writer or the scholar first poses the question, and then analyses the cause behind its existence .This cause and effect relationship has created varied methods and strategies for the analysis and interpretation of literary studies or for that purpose any text in an interdisciplinary way. The moment the literary theory becomes interdisciplinary; it opens or reveals undermining factors that structuralize the language and literary phenomenon in meaning making process in literary studies. This kind of critical thinking under the ambit of discourse analysis has provided a scope for the bigger participation from the readers' side, and accordingly justifying the existence of the author or the writer. These differences of opinion between the author and the reader have again made rich camps in literature to flourish for the cause of human understanding. Its reason is simple; while other periods or philosophies are generally characterized by a belief-system or meaningful interpretation of the text in the sense of a bigger ambit across the world, discourse analysis, while employing postmodern theories, does not provide any particular view of the world or any one single view or established meaning in a text. It is implied here; there is no one true view or interpretation of the world, or any sense making world-affair/ system /pedagogy or method of research.

Discourse Analysis like postmodern theories, offers numerous readings aiming at “deconstructing” concepts, belief-systems, or generally held social values, meaning, and assumptions. For instance, some of the most commonly used theories are those of Jacques Derrida (who coined the term “deconstruction”), Michel Foucault, Julia Kristeva, Jean-Francois Lyotard, and Fredric Jameson – to name a few thinkers, that are neither comprehensive nor reflect upon comprehensive value judgment while analyzing any discourse or discourses relating to a text or problem or the issue in concern. Critical thinking, however, is older than postmodern thought, as the following quote by John Dewey illustrates. Dewey defines the nature of reflective thought as “active, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it and the further conclusion to which it tends” (Dewey, 9). When critically evaluating a research project or text, one should, therefore, not limit oneself to any one of these postmodern theories or critical visions or succumb to one particular discourse.

Since the purpose of Discourse Analysis is not to provide any definite answer or answers of problem, or a single meaning out of a text, keeping in mind that Language has no meaning, it has potential to make meaning, it argues for or against a specific research method, meaning-making system or a statement, or value. Therefore, there will be no concrete result but a radical awareness to the qualities and shortcomings of each of the methodology evolved or pedagogy developed in the meaning making process out of the text towards the inception of an informed debate. This debate will never be settled, it allows for the correction of bias and the inclusion of minorities/other/mini-narratives/unrecognized discourses within this debate and its analysis. And therefore we may give importance to Stanley Fish's reader i.e., common reader and not the literary reader that becomes important in the interpretation of the text reminding all of us of his famous essay, “ Is There A Text In the Class” because “Deconstruction” says ‘ there is nothing

outside the text.’

Application in the Class: Towards practicing discourse analysis, the following exercise may be given an attempt. It will revise the knowledge of the established theories that strengthen the meaning making process as a potent teaching and research pedagogy for understanding a “text” or for the purpose of creative fulfillment. It develops a productive pedagogy for the understanding and interpretation of a “text” based on the available knowledge/concepts/establishments/critical theories:

Classroom Exercise

Sl. No.	Text/ Thought	Name of the author(s)	Core Content/ concept(s)
1.	The Intentional Fallacy	W.K. Wimsatt and Monroe Beardsley	The design or intention of the author is neither available nor desirable as criteria for judging the success of a work of literary art. The text is the only source of meaning, and any details of the author’s desires or life are purely extraneous.(their analysis can be applied equally well to any type of art)
2.	‘The Death of the Author’	Roland Barthes	The method of reading and criticism that relies on aspects of the author’s identity. The experiences and biases of the author serve as a definitive “explanation” of the text. For Barthes, this method of reading may be apparently tidy and convenient but is actually sloppy and flawed.
3.	Saussurean Structuralist theory	Ferdinand de Saussure	The binary opposition is the means by which the units of language have value or meaning; each unit is defined in reciprocal determination with another term, as in binary code. In structuralism, a binary opposition is seen as a fundamental organizer of human philosophy, culture, and language.

4.	<i>The Interpretation of Dreams</i>	Sigmund Freud	Theory of the unconscious with respect to dream interpretation i.e., attempts by the unconscious to resolve a conflict of some sort, whether something recent or something from the recesses of the past. The information in the unconscious is in an unruly and often disturbing form, a “censor” in the preconscious will not allow it to pass unaltered into the conscious
5.	‘There is nothing outside the text’ (Of Grammatology)	Jacques Derrida	“There is no such a thing as out-of-the-text”, in other words, the context is an integral part of the text.
6.	<i>Facing the Extreme</i>	Tzvetan Todorov	In the fantastic uncanny, the event that occurs is actually an illusion of some sort. The “laws of reality” remain intact and also provide a rational explanation for the fantastic event. Todorov gives examples of dreams, drugs, illusions of the senses, madness, etc. as things that could explain a fantastic/ supernatural event. In the fantastic marvelous, the supernatural event that occurs has actually taken place and, therefore the “laws of reality” have to be changed to explain the event. Only if the implied reader cannot opt for one or the other possibility is the text purely fantastic.
7.	Class conflict	Karl Marx	Class conflict plays a pivotal role in the history of class-based hierarchical systems such as capitalism and feudalism.
8.	<i>The Power of Forms in the English Renaissance</i>	Stephen Greenblatt	Mutual permeability of the literary and the historical i.e., comprehensive understanding of literature by considering it in historical context while treating history itself as historically contingent on the present in which it is constructed

9.	Negative capability	John Keats	Capacity of human being to transcend and revise the contexts. The term has been used by poets and philosophers to describe the ability of the individual to perceive, think, and operate beyond any presupposition of a predetermined capacity of the human being. It further captures the rejection of the constraints of any context, and the ability to experience phenomenon free from epistemological bounds, as well as to assert one's own will and individuality upon their activity.
10.	Objective Co-relativity	Washington Allston/ T S Eliot	"The artistic 'inevitability' lies in this complete adequacy of the external to the emotion..." (According to Formalist critics, this action of creating an emotion through external factors and evidence linked together and thus forming an objective correlative should produce an author's detachment from the depicted character and unite the emotion of the literary work).
11.	"Can The Subaltern Speak?"	Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak	?
12.	Which Theory?	Wolfgang Iser	Considered to be the founder of the Constance School of reception aesthetics. Reader-response theory shares many goals and insights with hermeneutics; both aim to describe the reader's contact with text and the author. Iser describes the process of first reading, the subsequent development of the text into a 'whole', and how the dialogue between the reader and text takes place.
13.	<i>The Anxiety of Influence</i>	Harold Bloom	?
14.	?	Elaine Showalter	Feminism is here to stay.

15.	<i>The Politics of Postmodernism</i> ?	The classic text remains one of the clearest and most incisive introductions to postmodernism. Perhaps more importantly, it is a compelling discussion of why postmodernism matters. Working through the issue of representation in art forms from fiction to photography.
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After the above exercise the texts shall be offered for interpretation.

Interpretation of Texts: For a creative fulfilment, three select Canadian poems have been taken into account. The poems are; debbi waters' "And She Lives On", P. K. Page's "Single Traveller" and F.R. Scott's "The Canadian Authors Meet"

(i) debbi waters, "And She Lives On" : The analysis of debbi waters' "And She Lives On" may take a reader towards the existence of its very structure (structural analysis) "And" a connecting link between two sentences—primary and secondary demonstrates link between the construction /structure of the society consisting of males and females, therefore, "And" is important and therefore, Waters chose to write it with capital "A" (Francis Fukoyama "The End of History"). So there lies a big difference in "A" and "a". The five lettered "males" or "man" lies in the structure of "females" or "woman" (man has taken his birth from the womb of a woman. Therefore, she is big, and therefore "A" in "And She Lives on". Similarly "he" survives inside "she", so "S" She and the poet, therefore, says and this is how she is surviving—she is not a link but very strong bone structuralizing the entire humankind...however there can be many more ways to understand interpret and justify the title of the poem "And She Lives on".

The following hints may be given in the interpretation of this text:

Apocalyptic opening/a postmodern feature—> attention towards margins in the text, context, connotations of post-

war reality—>second world war never happened (a postmodern dilemma)—>hyper reality(Frederick Jameson)—>choice for the innocent communication —> comparison and contrast, an important literary device that may be compared with irony—>demolishing meta-narrative —>celebration of mini narratives(*The God of Small Things*) —>hope of creating a space for herself(instead of women “WOMENS”) —>Virginia Woolf’s *A Room of One’s Own*—>it is a dream not to come to its truth (Freud’s *Interpretation of Dreams*) —>alert consciousness, radical face ,awareness towards girls’ education(third phase of feminism) —>male phallic symbols—>participation in the World War through pen—>third world consciousness...

(ii) P. K. Page’s “Single Traveller”: The entire text shows a postmodern dilemma. The following guidelines may help in meaning making:

Love as a shapeless ideology, a companion, may be a spiritual strength, may be her male counterpart ,her husband, her yet to exist identity—>deserted place ,region or area—>decaying values—>hope for changing the human condition by someone or hope for bringing change in the life of the poet by some “one” to repose faith in - *Waiting for Godot*—>a muse/a call /a strength/return to nature for the recognition of Canadian poetry or establishing her own identity —>faces with different values—>debate upon good and evil—>messed up ,fabricated ,confused—>chases and chaos /disillusionment of true love, morality ,ethics and values...

Therefore, the reader is important and contributes to the meaning making process .Similarly six to seven possible observations in order to interpret F.R. Scott’s “The Canadian Authors Meet” *prima facie* come into the play:

1. Puppets i.e. poets, literatures from a wide/large part of the country, self motivated in the broader sense of Longinus’ sublimity/under a big picture of the Prince of Wales.

One Miss Crotchet-whose writings have still no

recognition behaves her best to suit the guise of a poetess —>to make her sail /sale through narrow pathway—>her area of select study—>her choices had been very difficult which she did find after a lot of struggle in order to occupy a space in “that literary map”-ruminations and reflections on Feminism.

2. She has finally got her group from that “common meet” —>she puts on herself typical Victorian sophisticated manners ,and also reminds Pope’s Belinda) —>dubious face —>greeting others whom she even does not know by name —>may be her sixties—>very late-to come up with her gushing and pent up feelings for writing poetry
3. Post 1899 famous writings ,poems and intellectual thoughts are specifically chosen topics for discussion in this meet—>Canadian writings by then seems to be established with Scott being a distinguished name—>it is a time of celebration of the nationalistic concerns of Canadian intellectuals in the 20’s and early 30’s.
4. Refreshment served in this meet has a new taste of Canadian Romanticism with a “new poetry” —>folded and mixed in the cake, served to the nation and its readers—>northern evolutionary views of the Canadian poems.
5. They are about to come up with a new volume of poetry /journal. Therefore, they need to make up for a successful meet—>choose different nationalistic fervor /topics—>it is now time to decide for Scott –to be Canada’s poet laureate(Scott was awarded Molson Prize for outstanding Quebec poetry ,and many more prestigious awards for his outstanding contribution to arts ,humanities and social sciences.
6. But “before that” a break for tea is required —>for the politics of representation modified as Representation of Politics (Linda Hutcheon) —>a political strategy for informal discussion regarding the making of the poet laureate/grapevine communication—> politicized desire for innocent communication.

7. "Can" is highlighted in Canada i.e. Canada can do! Its poet and poetry will be recognized/Scott will be recognised—>Celebrating the Landscape of Canada—>the land yet to give birth to many new springs(poets)to paint its maple leaf sharply to become a pensive with which next time plans will be written for its new poetry.

Thus, Discourse Analysis can be applied to any subject, situation or text. With the competent human brain it has inherently gone into the behavioural stands that we take informing reading and interpreting all that has become a routine affair and integral part of our life. As Derrida says, "there is nothing outside the text", a higher awareness of the surroundings in relation to ourselves, and others play a very important role in the interpretation of the text .For this purpose priorities for research and pedagogy can be put up as a big question mark towards the acceptance of meaning in it. This may have lead to multidimensional approach towards meaning making process of the text but one thing is sure and that is, of course ,a creative fulfilment.

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Need To Evolve Recent and Relevant English Language Teaching

* T Narayana

English is one of the six official languages of the UNO. It is also the link language of commonwealth countries. In the words of F.G. French, "By accidents of history and by the rapid spread of industrial development, Science, Technology, International trade, and by something like and explosion in the speed and ease of travel and by all the factors which have broken down frontiers and forced nations into closer interdependence, English has become a world language. It is the means of international communication; there is no other'. There are many methods for teaching English over the years which provided some kind of 'stepping Stone' towards an approach or theory which has ultimately aided the progression of teaching methods as a whole.

There is no single 'best' way of teaching English as each method has some advantages and disadvantages. The successful language Teacher will not limit himself to one method only, excluding all others. A method which is appropriate with one class on one occasion will not necessarily suit the same class at another time. According to W.F. Mackey, "A method determines what and how much is taught (selection), the order in which it is taught (gradation), how the meaning and form are conveyed (presentation) and what is done to make the use of the language unconscious (Repetition)

Europe and Asia have had a long tradition of teaching and learning foreign language. Memorization of vocabulary and translation of sentences often formed the major part of such learning processes in the past. Ancient Languages such

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as Sanskrit and Pali were mastered in Asia through the process of memorization of Texts and Vocabulary lists. Two scholars during the progress of Reformation stood out as distinguished contributions for the change of Language teaching methods; Erasmus and Comenius.

Erasmus, a contemporary of Martin Luther, in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, argued that speaking the foreign language should begin early in one's attempt in learning it. Good and understandable oral communication, he said, was the important thing to master. Next in importance was reading, and then, writing came at last. He wanted that we learn the language through exposure to interesting and practical conversations and stories accompanied by visuals such as picture.

Martin Luther was opposed to excessive drill on rules for producing sentences. Instead of memorizing rules for the production of sentences, he asked for the actual production of sentences themselves as appropriate practice to learn a language. The thoughts of Comenius on methods of teaching languages had influenced generations of European teachers. He wanted a graded presentation of sentence structures. He insisted that grammar should be taught through an inductive approach, by giving many examples of the same sentence type, so that the students would understand and master the structures.

There are many different methods that have been used for L2 acquisition throughout history. Each method of L2 has its supporters and its critics, mainly because each method is derived from different perspectives of L2L. However, some methods have received wide recognition due to the historical roles they have played in the views encompassed in this subject.

Language Teaching Methods

Grammar Translation (Indirect) Method

This method was sought to reform the older literary method, and became popular in the 1800s. It was mostly

comprised translating sentences back and forth between the L1 and the prospective L2. Grammar translation required learners to master the grammar and to memorize extensive vocabulary lists, and had little to do with the principles of speaking or listening. Little or no attention to pronunciation is required. The underlying justification for such a method rested upon the belief that what should be taught was not the language itself but the faculty of logical thought and provided valuable mental discipline, equal to the classics.

Advantages

The learner would acquire the skill of translating in writing from MT to FL and vice-versa. The spoken form of FL played very little part in the learning process: from the data or a set of rules presented, learner had to create sentences in the FL through transfer techniques.

Disadvantages

Even if learning a language by the Grammar-Translation method trained the mind in logical thought, there is little evidence to suggest that this faculty is transferable to other walks of life beyond the language classroom. This method gives pupils the wrong idea of what language is and of the relationship between languages. It is deplorable to assure that language is only acquired through translation skills, and this at the expense of oral skills (imagine the disaster in comprehensive schools with mixed-ability classes)

Direct Method

Direct Method is also known as Reform/Natural Method/Phonetical Method/Anti-grammatical Method. Adult L2 learners can learn a second language in essentially the same manner as a child. This method is based on the idea that people can learn a L2 easier if it were taught without any use of the L1. This way is supposed to simulate the way in which a child learns a L1 because, when a child acquires a L1, he or she has no prior language to refer back to. In this method, the learner was to communicate in the L2/FL in

realistic conditions. One criticism of this method is that it is not easy to achieve in the classroom, which is obviously not realistic situation. Instead of explicit grammar instruction, the major emphasis is on communicating. This method was indeed an extension of the Natural Method, with greater emphasis on and sophistication of knowledge of linguistics.

Disadvantages

Major fallacy of Direct Method was belief that second language should be learned in way which first language was acquired – by total immersion technique. Is first language learning process really applicable to second foreign language learning at later stage? Effectiveness of verbalizing skills depends on maturation level of the learner/on type of environment on intelligence. This method rejects use of the printed word - but this objection is illogical since second language learner has already mastered his reading skills.

The Natural Method

Since children learn naturally to speak before they read. Proponents of the method tended to avoid the use of books in class. Like the child in his home, the student was to be immersed in language and allowed to formulate his own generalizations. It consists of a series of monologues by the teacher, interspersed with exchange of question and answer between instructor and pupil – all in the foreign language.

The Phonetic Method

This method emphasized “oral expression as the basis of instruction, stressing pronunciation, avoiding grammatical rule giving, and seeking to impart a practical mastery of language forms for use in-country”. The teacher reads a passage aloud, explaining unfamiliar words. After discussing questions on the passage, students paraphrase the story aloud and next come written answers to questions, phonetic work on new words, and ultimately recitation. Gestures, pictures, and interesting contexts were to be used in making applications of familiar material. This method demanded

“heavy requirements for linguistic expertise on the part of the teachers.”

Audio-Lingual/Visual Method

The method was developed in the 1950s, based on behaviorist psychology with the idea that language is habit forming process. Mid 1960s – three new technological aids came into general use in the classroom-language laboratory, portable tape-recorder and film-strip projector. All these were greeted with euphoria in all modern language departments. Extensive use of tapes and equipment was revolutionary for language teachers. The focus is mainly on oral discussion and very little on grammar rules. This method provides very little room for creativity in comparison to what most language learners would hope to get out of FLL.

This method in some sense represents a return to the direct method, as its main goal is to develop native – like speaking ability in its learners. It is an extension as well as a Refinement of the Direct Method. Audiolingualism had its theoretical roots in the Direct Method.” The Audio-lingual method used exhaustively the linguistic structures identified in the descriptive analysis of the target language. Basic method of teaching is repetition, speech is standardized and pupils turn into parrots that can reproduce many things but never create anything new or spontaneous. Pupils became better and better at pattern practice but were unable to use the patterns fluently in natural speech situations.

But Audio-Lingual/Visual approach did mark start of the technological age in language teaching and it did introduce important new elements Emphasized need for visual presentation and possibility of eliciting language from visual cues. It placed far more weight on use of foreign language in classroom by both teacher and pupil, and the language used was of far greater practicality.

Communicative Approach

This method is based on the idea that the goal of

learning a L2 is to gain communicative competency. It is thought that learners need to have knowledge of the rules of use in order to generate language appropriately for certain situations, and to have strategies to communicate effectively. This approach focuses on the use of language in everyday situations, or the functional aspects of language, and less on the formal structures. This approach argues that “merely knowing how to produce a grammatically correct sentence is not enough. A communicatively competent person must also know how to produce an appropriate, natural, and socially acceptable utterance in all contexts of communication. However, critics believe that there needs to be some sort of “bridge” between the two in order for effective language learning.

Total Physical Response Approach

It takes into consideration the silent period deemed necessary for some L2 learners. During the first phase of total physical response, students are not required to speak. Instead, they concentrate on obeying simple commands in the second language. The objective of this approach is to connect physical activity with meaningful language use as a way of instilling concepts”.

Immersion Programmes

The goal of language immersion is to provide learners with an environment in which they have to learn the L2 in order to do well. Instruction is usually begun in the second language and eventually incorporates the native language. The main objective of any immersion program is that all students acquire a high level of proficiency in oral, listening, and literacy skills. Fundamental to an immersion program is the belief that normal children have the inherent capacity to learn a second language without jeopardizing their native language expertise. Total immersion involves the instruction of all subjects in the second language, including physical education and extracurricular activities. Partial immersion involves instruction in the second language for half the school

day and in the native language for the other half”.

Immersion programs have been greatly used in several missionary training programs, and in field studies done in north-eastern India, and the Andaman and Nichobar islands by the students of linguistics.

Eclectic Method

Many teachers use a mixture of both Indirect and Direct Methods. Grammar Method is easy for the teacher, but too intellectual an approach for the average pupil:

- May kill off his enthusiasm for language learning
- Gives little chance to master spoken language which would be of greater use to him
- Pupil cannot gain true insight into grammatical rule unless he has previously mastered the spoken aspect

Some teachers therefore try to veer away from pure Indirect Method, hoping to reduce the intellectual content of their lessons and to give pupils some opportunity of speaking contacts required for pupil to begin to ‘think’ in the language, so that any ‘eclectic’ method lying between the two poles will afford even fewer contacts. It is also true that a second language learner needs to have some knowledge of the grammatical blocks of language to help speed up the development of his oral proficiency

Dilemma

Too much veering towards Indirect Method:

- Increase the intellectual content of lessons (condemning those pupils whose IQ isn’t sufficiently high)
- Decrease the number of active oral contacts the pupils require

Too much veering towards the Direct Method:

- Denies the pupil the help which a knowledge of comparative grammar can give him in his

development towards oral proficiency

- Still means the teacher is unable to provide for the pupil the required number of oral contacts (thus leading to incomplete/inaccurate responses)

Any eclectic method teacher therefore falls between two stools. Either way he faces obstacles which make teaching/learning both difficult/unpleasant. What is needed, therefore, is a completely different method, which lies outside the range of Indirect/Direct Methods, which takes into account data obtained from investigations into second language learning, which uses old/new teaching/learning activities in such a way as to enable the learner to learn a language more quickly and with less effort, which gives pupil the opportunity to reach a level whereby he can ‘think’ in that language.

The Need for an Eclectic Approach

At present, teachers of English around the world prefer some form of communicative teaching and learning, rather than the Audio-Lingual method and its derivatives. The successful L2 teacher is not necessarily biased in favor of one method or another. She/he should be first of all competent in and comfortable with the methods she wants to use. She tends to select different teaching strategies from different methods, and blends them to suit the needs of her materials and students. It is important that the students are given ample opportunities to practice English in the class as well as outside the classroom. A diligent teacher continually learns new techniques from her peers and needs to know the new directions in teaching of English to speakers of other languages which are debated in the journals and demonstrated in new textbooks. Her own English speech, pronunciation, and writing should be as close to the “standard” as possible, or native-like, if she is not a native speaker of English.

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Karnad's *Wedding Album*: An Explorations of Female Psyche

*Alka Rani Purwar

The present world is a strange one with varied choices present all around, especially because of the advancement of information technology, gender studies and the feministic movement. Individuals are trapped in a continuous cycle of creating, destroying and recreating the existing moral code of conduct of the world which represent the individual's identity or self itself. So far as the modern woman is concerned, now it is possible for her to reconstruct her identity and sexuality, refusing age-old beliefs, practices or responsibilities. She discusses her experiences of exploitation or suppression freely and flawlessly. The most important thing for her is the urge to be accepted as an individual, a person in her own right and a strong wish to enjoy the equal status as man has always enjoyed. And for creating this 'new woman', undoubtedly, the post-modern Indian English women writers have not only paved the way but also made magnificent strides in a remarkably short period.

The play *Wedding Album* (2009) by Girish Karnad explores the traditional Indian Wedding in a globalized, technologically advanced India. In this play, we come face to face a new Girish Karnad who is light-hearted, at times frivolous but appealing all the way. The play persuades us to confront our realities as we move forward into newer times and generations. So far as its various themes are concerned, they all confront us, with our own confused, dissatisfied and disguised self in this hi-tech age. As far as women are concerned, technology has elevated their status but it has also contributed to the stresses and strains in the man-

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woman relations in the domestic institutions. The present paper is an attempt to bring forth Karnad's delineation of female psychology and their emotional dilemma.

The central characters of the play portray the modern middle class family: an expatriate daughter living in Australia with her family, a son who is a media professional, a younger daughter who is willing to marry a 'suitable' boy from the US whom she has never met, a doting mother, an ageing father and a loyal but ailing cook. The story revolves around an urban, educated but modern South Indian Brahmin family planning the marriage of their second daughter. The plot of the play moves forward solely on the presumption that things will work out well in the end. Apparently, it seems a familiar picture- a joyful event of marriage where members of the clan come together to celebrate and reaffirm their loyalties, but behind the smiling picture there lies long suppressed suspicions, jealousies and aggression.

Girish Karnad improvises his dramatic technique by introducing a new visual tool- that of technology, and its newfound uses in traditional situations. The play begins with a video bio-data replacing the written bio-data that Vidula has to present to the prospective match in a traditional arranged marriage. She is 'extremely self-conscious and ill-at-ease' while being shot in a video by her media professional brother Rohit to show it to her fiancé, a NRI groom- a man whom she has yet to meet in person: "I am Vidula. Vidula Nadkarni. I am twenty-two. Twenty-two and a half, actually. I have done my BA in Geography. Passed my exams last year. I am not doing anything at the moment" (5). In her resentment and nervousness, Vidula goes on telling the real truths while being videographed. She believes in "let him know the whole truth" and confesses innocently, "You can see I am no good at this sort of thing. How did people get introduced before video cameras were invented?" (7) Though an ancient issue, but having an impressive first meeting is the pressing urgency in any relationship, and it is particularly more important in seeking a matrimonial allegiance. The old mentality, of sharing only the glorious shades of the

personality, has been replaced by the desire to tell the 'whole truth'; yet the issue is equally grave and serious even today. Perplexed Vidula is a typical prototype of any girl of our society.

The striking point of this play is that it taps those grey areas of human motives which we often do not spell out even to ourselves. The shy, hesitating and homely Vidula of first scene turns out to be an anonymous Cyber-sex girl in scene six, with a changed name of Kuchla...the Jezebel. She frequently visits café to pass hours talking openly with Ananga the Bodyless for a kind of entertainment. With Ananga, she undergoes a sexual course, through chatting. She has never seen or met the male love-maker on the other side. She reciprocates the texts with the remarks and instructions of her male counterpart. She even opposes two youths, of her own community, boldly on being caught red-handed in the Café and being objected to do so. In a high voice, she asks them to leave her alone in the café's cabin and "to work here without being disturbed because she has paid for it". Even stricken with a new thought, she counter-attacks those boys by calling them 'rapists' who "pulled away my dupatta...tried to molest me...They tore my clothes." (71) According to P. D. Nimsarkar, Karnad discusses "women's sexuality and adultery with such honesty, treating them as 'normal human response' and not as something sinful." (Nimsarkar 20). Afterwards the same advanced girl agrees to marry a guy from US who has come back to search in India the girl with "our rich traditions", who can take marriage "as a mission" (82) carrying within "the essence of Hindu Spirituality. Woman as Mother, Wife, Daughter. Womanhood as the most sacred Ideal." (81)

Even Pratibha Khan, boss of Rohit, objects on this age-old approach to marriage after seeing this video-shoot. She appreciates the honest attitude of Vidula but refuses to accept it as a plot to be worked out for a television serial taking into consideration about the young generations' mentality. Pratibha is quite pragmatic in her approach to man-woman relationship that's why she strongly objects to Rohit's

definition of a 'nice girl'- a girl who "had no boyfriends, no affairs;" she retorts: "Ah! That's your definition of a 'nice girl' then?" (9) Finally, finds Radhabai, the maid's story more interesting for her tele-serial. Pratibha is bold, confident and an expert in the field of direction who knows well the plus and minus points of this field. She does not hesitate in interrogating Rohit about his break-up with Isabel before his marriage and even favours the lady in this matter saying: "She seemed to think you had broken it off. When Tapasya's father financed your trip to Germany..." (60) She further raises doubts on his intentions behind inviting her past beloved for dinner to his home in his wife's absence. In the end, like a true 'new woman', she concludes the discussion by disclosing about her personal life that she is a self-made woman and indirectly suggests him to develop a fresh insight for women in general:

Rohit, I am forty. I am from Orissa. I came to Bangalore for reasons of my own and built up my business. Three years ago, I married a man ten years my senior. A muslim. I married him when the anti-Muslim riots were at their worst. Because he offered me affection and security. There's nothing I don't know about harassment. (61)

The institution of Indian marriage and various ceremonies are interestingly and humorously described in the play through the discussion among all the family members specially mother's persistent way of choosing the gifts for the relatives just to take the revenge of their mal-hospitality. Once wished for her own emancipation from the family responsibility, she afterwards appeared to be a caring, sincere and dedicated mother who became a model of sacrifice. Mr. Nadkarni's following statements throw proper light on her active role in the making of the whole family:

...if we have been such a loving family, the credit must go to your mother. You don't know what she has been through for the sake of the family...she never asked for anything for herself. Lived on two saris- wearing one while the other one dried on the line. And yet we never acknowledged her sacrifices, her skill at management....(91)

Though she thinks that as a mother, she had not been successful as Hema proved to be just a housewife though gifted with "intelligence and good looks" (90) still is hopeful for Vidula so encourages her saying, "You are capable of anything if you will only make up your mind" (90), further advises her not to "throw away your talents in just bearing children." (90) Like a true aspiring woman, she feels sorry for not having such facilities available during her time. In her sheer frustration, she frankly accepts their failure as her fault and cries out: "God gave me such lovely children. But I could give them no guidance. We did nothing for you." (90) Sangeeta G. Avachar in the essay "Exploring Girish Karnad's *Wedding Album* as a Blend of Anxieties and Resentments Deep Rooted in Indian Marriage Institution" says, "To peep into mother's mental and emotional make up, one needs to have a deep insight into her psychological realism." (*Lapis Lazuli*, 6)

The play also throws light on the mother-daughter relationship which sometimes is full of jealousy, ill-will and prejudice as happens between mother and Hema. Most of the times they are cross to each other in the play so arguing to justify themselves. Hema presumes that she is being mistreated since her childhood. But Mother takes her abnormal remarks as a natural part of her fractured mentality, she says:

She is always like that! It's the same story, every year. For the first few days after her arrival, she is normal. Happy. Laughing. Then I don't know what goes wrong. One waits all year long, pining to see the daughter's face. But within four days, her mood changes, and after that, one word is too little, two are too many. (14)

Karnad has been quite successful in depicting the psyche of his female characters when he presents Hema's innermost feelings of anger and frustration thinking of the partiality done with her in her marriage. She could neither forget nor forgive them for this misbehaviour; therefore she refers to it, often in her conversation. At the same time, she responds strangely to teenage neighbour, Vivan, two years

younger to her son, who has a huge crush on her. This thirteen year old boy does not hesitate to hand over the passionate and pornographic letters authoritatively to Hema, who in her utter bewilderment starts relishing them. Imitating some cheap Romance, he utters the following sensuous and exotic dialogues to a lady of his mother's age like, "Darling, you don't know how I desire to crush you in my arms..." (19), and "The moment I saw you the other day, I fell desperately in love. I want to die kissing you. I want to die with my hand inside your blouse..." (45) In reaction to such vulgar words, Hema slaps Vivan murmuring "dirty stuff" but "not too hard" and "then recoils scared by her own violence." (45) Vivan feels exhilarated even in her beating so demands, "Hit me. The touch of your hand fills me with ecstasy. I'm crazy about you." (45) About Karnad's skillful mastery in depicting the inner recesses of female psyche, Sangeeta's remark will be quite suitable:

The play represents the marriage theme which is considered a gamble by Indian families. His woman is contemporary, new woman in search of identity in the society which secures freedom to female sex on a par with male counterpart. The present play also throws new light on the psyche and behaviour of these new women. The mother, Hema, Vidula, Pratibha and even Radhabai are new women in the true sense of the term. Their lives are full of anxieties and resentments while facing the mental, psychological and emotional hardships of life. (*Lapis*, 2)

So, Karnad's woman in this play is the contemporary 'new woman' who is in search of a new identity and authority, full of satisfaction and achievement. Appropriating her concepts of morality, she is comfortable with her freedom to flaunt her desires of sex, without any moral grudge, almost at par with her male counterparts. The play also throws new light on the psyche and behaviour of modern woman, amid the recent changes of technology. The virtual world of internet and different social networking sites have made the 'forbidden stuff' easily available and accessible, for men and women alike. The recent developments have also helped them to reach out to the 'friends' in disguised forms and identities,

which hardly affect their world of reality. The mother, Hema, Vidula, Pratibha and even Radhabai are new women in the true sense of the term. Their lives are full of anxieties and resentments while facing the mental, psychological and emotional hardships of life; they seem living at ease with the complexes and the complicating ideologies. Karnad has been quite successful in depicting their internal trauma in the play.

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Problems of Cross-Cultural Translation and the Translator's Role

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Roman Jakobson divides translation activity into three categories: intralingual, interlingual and intersemiotic. Intralingual translation is an interpretation of verbal signs by means of other signs in the same language. Interlingual translation is translation proper in which an interpretation of verbal signs takes place by means of some other language. Intersemiotic translation is known as 'transmutation' in which an interpretation of verbal signs takes place by means of signs of non-verbal sign systems. For example, intersemiotic translation is from verbal art into music, dance, cinema or painting. Here we are concerned with interlingual translation. It involves transference of a text in Source Language (SL) into Target Language (TL). It is not just finding a synonym or an equivalent of a word used in the Source Language (SL) in the Target Language (TL).

Translating is a challenging task and the translator faces many problems while carrying over a text from one language into another language. First, the translator has to decide whether the translation should be 'free' or 'literal', faithful or beautiful, exact or natural translation. 'Literal' translation is word for word translation. In 'Free' translation, the translator does not follow the form and content of the Source Text closely. For instance, while transferring a law book or a science book or a book of information, the translator should transfer from one language into another literally. On the contrary, if the translator transfers a book of literature from one language to another literally, it would be misleading and confusing. The traditional dichotomy between 'literal' and 'free' translation has been replaced by different modern

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theories like Roman Jakobson's (1959) semiotic approach to translation in which the translator has to recode the ST (Source Text) message first and then he has to transfer it into an equivalent message for the TC (Target Culture) involving two 'equivalent messages' in two different language, Eugene Nida's (1964), 'formal equivalence' versus 'dynamic equivalence', Cartford's (1965) 'formal correspondence' versus 'textual equivalence', Peter Newmark's (1977) 'semantics' versus 'communicative' translation, Itamar Even-Zohar and Gideon Toury's (1970s) emphasis on actual translation in the target culture. In 1980s Susan Bassnett's *Translation Studies* focuses on unique problems of cross-cultural communication in translation. No longer is translation regarded as linguistic phenomena, but as cultural phenomena. In the eighties, Jose Lambert and Clem Robyns viewed translation as an 'intracultural activity' rather than an 'interlinguistic' process (Gentzler 186). In 1990s Mary Snell-Hornby presented translation as an interaction between two cultures. Susan Bassnett and Andre Lefevere argued that translation study was taking ahistoric 'Cultural Turn' as it moved into the nineties (ibid.185). In other words, at present translation is not linguistic, but a cultural transference.

The translator faces both linguistic and cultural problems while translating from one language into another. Here I take examples of translating from Odia into English.

Linguistic problems

Structurally English and Odia and other Indian languages are different. English is a SVO (subject, verb, and object) language but Odia is SOV (subject, object, and verb) language. Moreover the use of progressive tense form in English and Odia poses another challenge to the translator. For example, '*Mu sabu dekhuchi*' (I am seeing everything), '*Mu sabu sunuchi*' (I am hearing everything) are ungrammatical in English, if these are translated literally. The Odia users of English are confused by tense and aspect, 'I have met him last week' is not grammatically

correct in English; but it is grammatically perfect in Odia if translated literally. The order of sentences and phrases has sometimes to be changed for emphasis. So some nuances are lost in translation.

The translator should be competent both in the Source Language (SL) and the Target Language (TL). He should understand and interpret the ST correctly. The translator commits many mistakes if he does not understand the ST correctly. The translator should always take help of dictionaries in order to avoid mistakes in comprehending the layers of meaning of a particular word. He has to choose the exact meaning of the word in the context.

As it is impossible to find two words exactly having the same meaning in one culture and language, similarly it is difficult to find exactly equivalent words in two different languages. There is interface between the language and culture of a place. Language grows out of the culture of a particular place. There cannot be situational, emotional, social or psychological correspondence between two cultures and hence no equivalent word can be found in two languages. The translator has to find out the closest equivalent word of the SL in the TL.

Problems of cultural transference

(i) Kinship words

Cultural transference is a challenge to the translator. These words have different meanings in different languages and cultures. The translator faces greatest challenge while transferring kinship words from one language to another. And the problem multiplies if there is great gap between the cultures of two languages like that of Odia and English. For instance, in English there are a few kinship words like uncle, aunt to express relationships. But in Odia there are many kinship words like '*maushi*' '*khudi*', '*mausha*', '*mamu*', '*dada*', '*badabapa*', '*badama*'. The Odia words '*samudi*' which means son-in-law's or daughter-in-law's father and '*samuduni*' which means son-in-law's or daughter-in-law's

mother have no equivalent word in English culture and language. So the translator should translate the kinship words such a manner that the meaning does not become ambiguous in the TL. For instance, he should translate '*maushi*' as '*mother's sister*'. Sometimes the translator has to retain culture-specific kinship words like '*nana*', '*nani*', '*bhaina*' which is caste-based system of address in Odia culture in order to impart cultural flavour to the translation.

Besides, the kinship word '*dada*' in Odia culture means '*father's brother*' in eastern and northern Odisha; but, in western Odisha '*dada*' means '*brother*'. So the translator should have the knowledge of the nature of word 'in order to reconstruct that which is or might be behind the words (Schulte 2).

As Rainer Schulte has rightly pointed out '*...translation is not the translation of words, even though the final product of our translations appears in the form of words and sentences. Words in themselves are very fragile entities. Each one of us develops different connotations in our encounter with every word*' (2). So the translator should '*acquire a sense for the magnetic field of words, their semantic fields both in the present as well as in the past*' (2).

The meaning of a word is constantly changed or modified in course of time on account of social or cultural changes. Idioms and proverbs are also modified in course of time. So, the translator should be alert about the changing meaning of words or idioms. For example, in Odia the idiomatic express, '*Tankara bahi sahitadedhasura bhaibohu samparka*' should be translated in the modern context. Earlier in Odia culture a '*bhaibohu*' that is, '*younger brother's wife*' did not see the face of her '*dedhasura*' i. e., '*her husband's elder brother*'. They maintained distance from one another. But in the modern age '*dedhasura*' '*bhaibohu*' do not maintain distance. So the above mentioned sentence should be translated like this to make the meaning clear: '*He was a stranger to studies*'.

ii) Culture- Specific words

Culture-specific words like '*abhiman*' have different connotations in different situations. '*Abhiman*' means feeling of hurt towards a loved one from whom one expects love, affection and personal concern because of close and intimate, often familial relationship. Sometimes '*abhiman*' also refers to pride or arrogance. The translator has to decide the exact implication of '*abhiman*' in the context. Similarly other culture-specific words in Odia like '*habishya*', '*ekadashi*', '*patibrata*' are difficult to translate and should be retained in Target Text (TT).

Besides, Odia words '*vidhata*', '*karama*', '*kapala*', '*daiba*', '*bhagya*', '*adrutha*', '*niyati*' are similar in meaning with subtle differences. '*Vidhata*' is the broadest concept in this series, meaning all powerful creator who decrees everything. English words 'providence', 'fate', 'luck', 'destiny' are equivalents of the aforesaid Odia words. The translator has to select the most appropriate word depending on their relevance in the context. For instance, in Kuntala Kumari Sabat's fiction *Kalibohu*, there is a sentence '*Lakshmira kapala phatila*' (ch.1). It is translated as, 'But fate dealt a harsh blow to Lakshmi'. Again, Kuntala writes, '*Mo janama vidhata lekhithila brahmana kulare*'. It is translated as 'Providence decreed my birth in a Brahmin family'. Here '*vidhata*' is the broadest term signifying omnipotent creator. So '*vidhata*' is translated as 'providence'.

iii) Idioms and proverbs

Translating idioms and proverbs is the most challenging work of the translator of fiction. In this matter he has to follow Eugene Nida. According to Nida, 'The correspondence involving semantically exocentric expressions, i.e., idioms and figures of speech, are best classified in terms of types of necessary adaptation, e.g., metaphors to metaphors, metaphors to similes, metaphors to nonmetaphors, and nonmetaphors to metaphors'(219). In other words, while translating idioms and proverbs sometimes the translator has to give English equivalent of the SL. For example, in Odia, there is a saying, '*Jananijanmabhumischa*

swargadapi gariyashi' which is translated as 'Mother and the motherland are greater than heaven' to make the meaning explicit. The translator has to give the equivalent idiom or proverb available in TL. Sometimes an idiom may not only be meaningless, but also may convey quite the wrong meaning when carried over into another language. In such cases a simile may be substituted for the original metaphor (Nida, 171). The translator has to follow this method wherever it is possible to do so. For example, the Odia sentence, '*chheli godaredhana mala hele balada loda huanta? Tame naka na thile guha khaanta*', should be carried over with the help of simile to make the meaning clear: 'You are incapable of taking decisions as goats can't do the work of treading on stalks of paddy, which is the job of bullocks. You have no sense of dignity. If you had no nose to smell, you would have eaten excreta.' Finally, where the literal meaning is completely different from the idiomatic meaning in the Target Language, the translator has to translate according to the sense of the idiom. In Odia there is a saying, '*Au karnare taila pradanapurbaka sayanarabyabastha bhala dishila nanhi*'. A literal translation of this would be, 'No longer did it seem a good idea to sleep, putting oil into their ears.' This translation does not convey the real meaning. So the translator should translate this according to its sense like this: 'No longer did it seem a good idea to sit idle, as if they had not a care in the world.'

iv) Words for technology, food items etc.

Because of great differences in the technologies of different nations, the corresponding terms for this area of human experience vary greatly. Besides, with a large range of vocabulary for technology, words used for weights and measures, produce the most acute problems for the translator. Currencies pose special difficulties because of great differences in their purchasing power. Terms associated with a particular culture also create problems, 'not only because the basic systems are often so different, but also because the extensions of meaning appropriate to one system

rarely work in another' (Ibid. 216). So the translator has to retain the names of months like *Baishak*, *Jeyestha*, *Ashada*, food items like *chudaghasa*, *podopitha*, *kakara*, *santula*, currencies like *anna*, measuring units like *bati*, *bharana*. English words cakes, pastries etc. are no substitutes for Indian sweets.

v) Colloquial expressions

Colloquial expressions like '*chheeh*' in Odia which sometimes implies disapproval, sometimes dislike is a challenge to the translator as these expressions cannot be carried over to another language. The translator has to retain such words. Even the translator has to drop certain colloquial expressions which carry no meaning in the TL. For example, in Odia there is a popular saying, '*Aleicha, mate dekhi kain paleicha*'. Literally it means, 'My friend, why are you running away on seeing me', which is said to a friend jovially. While rendered into English it only confuses the English reader. So it should be better dropped.

vi) Slangs, onomatopoeic, humorous expressions etc.

Similarly, slangs, onomatopoeic expressions, nasalized expressions, humorous expressions, ironical expressions pose challenge to the translator. While rendered into another language, these expressions naturally lose something. Words expressing communal overtones pose great problem to the translator. While translating the translator needs to retain these words in order to impart cultural flavour to the translation and to make the meaning clear. For instance, Odia word '*dhoti*' refers to a Hindu whereas '*lungi*' refers to a Muslim.

The above-mentioned linguistic and cultural problems are common to translators of novels, poetry and dramas. However, the translator of fiction faces the problem of selecting the unit of translation. He has to decide whether a sentence or a paragraph should be the unit of translation. A paragraph should be the unit of translation and the translator should consider the text as a whole.

Translating poetry

The translator faces more difficult problems while translating poetry. Translation of poetry involves not only rendering of similes, metaphors, irony, paradox etc. figures of speech like prose or fiction but also rendering of rhyme, rhythm and metre. Earlier poetry was written in metre and rhyme but most of the modern poetry is written in free verse. It is easier to transfer poems written in free verse than rhyming rhythmic poems into another language. The translator should 'feel' the pulse of the poem and transfer it to another language. That means the translator should possess poetic sensibility to feel and understand the poem. He should not 'rewrite' or 'produce an interpretation' of a poem.

Robert Frost said, 'Poetry is that which is lost in translation'. But poetry is not entirely lost in translation. Something of it is lost which also happens in case of translation of prose or fiction. However the loss is more in translation of poetry. A good translation of poetry is transcreation. In this context it would be relevant to quote views of Jayanta Mohapatra, a renowned bi-lingual Odia poet and translator who writes both in Odia and English:

Any poem will not move fluently into translation, my experience reveals the many hazards and difficulties encountered in the process. ...For example, it is almost impossible to translate poets like Upendra Bhanja or Gangadhar Meher. In Oriya literature the problem is of language, basically—and this fact is especially noticeable with these earlier poets, poets who used language with such powers of magic and devotion that resulted in instilling in readers' minds a divine and perhaps mystic presence. Neither Upendra Bhanja nor Gangadhar Meher used free verse, and their Poems literally sag with the weight of ornamentation and alliterative sounds....To me, a good translation into English seems almost impossible. For the verse resembles a many-petalled flower, each petal having its own word-significance, its individual auditory echoes. To render gems

like these into English would be futile exercise....(27-28).

Similarly, it is very difficult to translate the poetry of Shakespeare, Spenser, Milton, John Donne, T.S. Eliot etc. into Indian languages.

Translating drama

The translator faces different types of challenges while translating dramatic texts. It is difficult to transfer dialogues in dialects of one language into another language. Besides, cultural content of dramatic texts pose serious challenges to the translator. Further, a drama is completely comprehended only in its performance and dramatic techniques are changed and modified with time. For instance, how can the translator do justice to a Shakespearean drama or Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* while rendering into Indian languages?

Conclusion

The world is fast approaching towards a globalised village. In this context, translation activity has a vital role to play in bridging the gap and bringing the people and nations closer. Besides, in a multilingual and multicultural country like India, translation plays an important role as a 'link' between various regional languages and cultures. The translator faces both linguistic and cultural problems while negotiating between two divergent cultures and languages. The translator plays a vital role as a mediator in this multilingual and multicultural globalised world. The translation should be readable while retaining cultural specificity of the ST. The translated text should be acceptable to the target language reader. The translator should strike a balance between maintaining close fidelity to the ST and complete freedom from it. If the translator frees himself completely from the ST, the Translated Text no longer remains a translation but becomes something else. As Walter Benjamin states in *The Task of the Translator* (1923), a translation participates in the 'afterlife' (Überleben) of the foreign text, which means the original undergoes 'a transformation and a renewal' in its afterlife (17). In other

words, a text survives in future through translation. The translator makes literary texts survive in future. He should translate what he likes and should not succumb to any imposition; because he would not be able to translate properly what he does not like. Finally, the translator would overcome the hurdles with efforts and sincerity. The proliferation of translations is ample proof that its popularity is growing.

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Lu And Badali: Nature Poetry of Rajasthan

*Basavaraj Naikar

Dr. I.K.Sharma's English translation of Chandra Singh Badali's Rajasthani poetry entitled *Lu and Badali* is a significant contribution and valuable addition to the realm of Indian Literature in English Translation. This is especially so in the conspicuous and tragic absence of Rajasthani literature in English translation. Any mention of Rajasthan evokes in our mind an image of a vast desert with interminable sand-dunes dotted with the caravan of camels in the glare of hot sun. But this common image and impression will be removed from our mind when we go through the delightful poetry of Chandra Singh Badali (1912-1992).

Born at Birkali, a hamlet in the erstwhile princely State of Bikaner in 1912, Chandra Singh was educated in the native State, as he was not allowed by the education Minister of the State to go to study at the Banaras Hindu University of Varanasi. Although initially he was deeply interested in politics, the quirks of his fate weaned him away from politics to Nature thereby making him the Wordsworth of Rajasthan. When he was in the full swing of literary practice, he produced two important works *Badali* (1941) and *Lu* (1951), which earned him instant fame and recognition. The first book *Badali* won him the prestigious Ratnakar Puraskar of the Kashi Nagri Pracharini Sabha and also the Baldevdas Medal. Both the books earned great accolades from well-known critics. For example, Suniti Kumar Chatterjee says about *Lu*, "Now comes his second book of poetry with an

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awful and formidable message of Lu, a specialty of Marudesh. Lu and clouds are complementary as if they were Shiva and Shakti, the symbol of life and death..." (p.xiii). Both the books depict two important seasons of Nature common to Rajasthan and happen to be apparently contradictory, but essentially complementary. It is a phenomenon that shows the geographical fact as well as the philosophical truth. Because of our intellectual habit (due to our knowledge of English Literature) we tend to compare any poet with a love for Nature to Wordsworth. But Wordsworth had only a partial acquaintance with Nature, which was only European and not global including the tropical regions. His limitation is rightly noticed and pointed out by Aldous Huxley, who had a broader, global vision. He writes that, "it's pity that he (Wordsworth) never travelled beyond the boundaries of Europe. A voyage through the tropical world would have cured him of his too easy and comfortable pantheism" (p.xviii). Obviously there is a great difference between the observation of blatantly green land and beautiful landscape and that of arid and desert-like land and the latter is certainly more difficult and challenging than the former.

The season of hot wind (*Lu*) and that of rainy cloud (*Badali*) are part of the yearly cycle of seasons in Rajasthan as anywhere else. The latter follows the former in accordance with the law of Nature. These two seasons have been personified as human characters for poetic articulation by Chandra Singh. As I. K. Sharma, the translator of the poems rightly opines, "Their importance lies...chiefly in giving us two un-ageing characters, each one heavenly and human at the same time" (xviii). There are quite a few poets in India who have written abundantly on Nature, like Kalidasa, Kuvempu and Bendre. Shelley's Ode to the West wind immediately comes to our mind when we read about *Lu*. Shakespeare also refers in some of his plays to the southerly wind which was quite destructive and associated with contagious diseases.

The poet begins the poem with a welcome note to the

hot wind popularly called *Lu*. The one hundred and four stanzas go on describing the negative effect of the hot wind on the landscape of Rajasthan. The poet requests the hot wind to spare the tender, newborn leaves and vines from his scorching influence. Then he recounts how buds, flowers, and blooms have been undone by the hot wind and consequently have lost their secret wines and wild scents. He points out the heartless and destructive nature of the hot wind by referring to a variety of natural things like wild flowers and mango tree, which lose their luster and wilt down. The poet highlights the remorseless and indiscriminate burning of the beauty of the land and snapping of the thread of life. The effect of the hot wind is simply infernal, as is shown in the following stanza:

Red-hot is the sky above,
The earth a steaming pan,
All around it is the same ire:
Life is trapped in a pit of fire (No.19).

The hot wind plays a variety of destructive roles like singeing, sucking and burning all that is pleasing and lush. The trees like *Sangaria* and *Kair* and the animals like deer lose their colour and shapes. It is a common practice for people in Rajasthan to keep *tagras* or improvised water-containers in the desert where a stray deer may come to drink water. But the hot wind sucks all the water in the container and consequently the stray deer get their horns stuck in the empty manger and begin to die:

Their horns are sunk in empty *tagras*,
Their hooves look to the sky.
Lu has robbed them of their life,
They know: they are doomed to die (No.35).

This is the tragic effect of the hot wind on the poor animals suffering from intolerable thirst. The poet, therefore, requests the hot wind to show motherly affection to the fawns and spare their lives. The poet offers more details of the tragic effect of the hot wind. He says that the cows, buffaloes and even camels suffer from thirst and lie faint, listless and dead. The hot wind has dried up the milk in the udders of the

buffaloes. It enters even the well-shut cattle-shed and sucks away the water of pools, ponds and lakes. The hot wind adds to the other geographical evils of Rajasthan:

The little water we have is saline,
Our land is not fertile,
Our dwellings are broken, stark,
Fling us not, o Lu, in fiery doom (No.59).

The poet goes on to depict the geographical horrors further. He points out that the cattle go thirsty; that the sunken ponds grieve in silence and their buds charts of cracks; that the hot wind sprays the sand on rocks like a foe that inflicts wound first and then sprinkles salt over its. The poet shows how the maidens go to far-off places with their pitchers for collecting water but return home with very little water which they have to use as stingily as ghee. He points out three types of water in Rajasthan – sweet for human beings, saline for body-wash and brine for cattle. The hot wind is such a sadist that it even comes in the way of lovers meeting; and that it doesn't allow the traveler to roam about freely. Even the sand-dunes alert the traveler not to go ahead and fall dead, but to remain alive at home. The moonbeams playing among the virgin dunes of sand are roasted by the hot wind during the day time. The hot wind thus gets busy in its dance of destruction thereby converting the land of Rajasthan into a veritable hell on the earth. But, like all things in life, the destruction by the hot wind has come to an end at last. The hot wind itself will create a cloud in the sky and compensate for its destruction by the rejuvenating rain. This hope following the despair is articulated beautifully as follows:

Why do you lose cheer, o Lu,
Since clouds are seen in the sky?
What you have burnt will now sprout,
What sprout will swell in fruit (No.98).

Thus the hot wind paves the way for the rainy season, which is welcomed warmly by the people of Rajasthan.

The second part of the Collection namely *Badali*,

consisting of one hundred thirty stanzas depicts the subsequent life of the people, who have been waiting for the rejuvenating rainy season. Hence the poet welcomes the rainy clouds:

May you bring us rains, Badali!
Ashad has already arrived.
Fields, bushes, shrubs all dry –
Each one starving for life (P.27.).

The people want to dance together and roam over virgin dunes and amid low-lying fields. The poet requests the Badali not to waste her life among hills and gorges, but to come down to play amid the sand-dunes that pine to embrace her. The poet personifies the cloudlets and attributes human feelings and emotions to her. He describes her dressing habit and her intention to please her lover, the sun:

Badali happily dons her royal robes,
Now changes, now goes for a new one,
She does so again and again, yet unsure,
Which one will suit the lover's taste? (No.18)

The poet requests the cloudlet not to roam about (as taught by her co-wife) but to give the tidings of her sweetheart and give a happy time to Murdhara. When the clouds gather in huge columns they look like the giant Himalaya and “merry peacocks then weave a dance/On terraces, lost in a trance” (No.37). Likewise the birds like *papihada*, *titodi* and peacocks begin to sing their sweet songs. The flash of lightning in the dark clouds looks beautiful “as of a thin line of gold/had run on a touchstone” (No.48). The poet compares the lightning to a happy married woman:

Lighting! You, a happy married woman,
Are ever with the clouds,
But, tease not the women
Whose lovers are not by (No.50).

After a lot of waiting, people are happy to welcome the month of Sawan, when the sky is filled with the roar of thunder and human hearts are filled with joy. The young

girls tie the strong rope to the nearby trees and begin to play the game of swing and feel the ecstatic joy. The *Teejaniyas* sing *Raga Malhar* and invite the downpour of water. Once the raincloud falls down from the blue, it falls in the net of her lover, like a maid from a well. Continuous rain fills the drains, tanks, pools, ponds and makes the houses leak:

Houses leak profusely
So are the eyes of women,
Lighting fluctuates across the sky,
So are hearts of men (No.65).
The summer rain hits hard
Rapes the plastered walls,
As though a painter had filled a canvas
Deftly with vibrant forms (No.72).

The rain of Sawan brings joy and awakes the feeling of love in the hearts of men and women. Maidens sing *moomal* songs, infants in the cradles leap up in delight; green parrots flit about in the trees; toads and frogs croak; and children play for joy and see the rainbow in the sky; the clouds in the sky look like a train of royal swans or elephants; like a train of Sedan-chairs. Clouds seem to play with and tantalize one another.

After this joyous period, the people of Rajasthan are troubled again by the Westerly wind, but are again regaled by the north wind. There seems to be a golden city amid the clouds greeting the sunrays. The poet requests the *Badali* not to send hail stones and ruin the crops, but to go back home and come again in summer to save them from heat.

On the whole, *Lu and Badali* belongs to the genre of Nature poetry. Kalidasa was one of the earliest Nature poets of India, who wrote in Sanskrit. In Karnataka, Bendre and Kuvempu have written excellent Nature poetry. Chandra Singh Badali seems to have continued the great tradition of Nature poetry in Rajasthani language. Nature in its terrific aspect (Hot Wind) and benevolent aspect (Cloudlet) assumes enormous importance for the people of Rajasthan, which is known for its desert-like landscape, where day-to-day life

becomes a challenge to the people born there. Chandra Singh shows the cyclicity of seasons by depicting two contradictory aspects of Nature by personifying them poetically.

Dr. I. K. Sharma (1932—) himself a well-known Indian English poet with a substantial body of poetry to his credit, has offered a memorable rebirth to Chandra Singh by translating his *Lu and Badali* from Rajasthani into English thereby releasing a local text into the global market and enriching the world literature in English translation. It has been an ideal combination in an Indian English poet translating an Indian (Rajasthani in this case) poet and making him available to the researcher and the connoisseur of poetry. One poet paying homage to another poet through the service of translation is a great ideal for others to follow. I. K. Sharma's English is characterized by lucidity of style, musicality and excellent readability. The reader never feels that he is reading a translation. Even those, (like me) who do not know Rajasthani, can enjoy the poetic beauty, which creates the geographical atmosphere of Rajasthan. Dr. I.K. Sharma follows the technique of domestication to a great extent and that of foreignization to a limited extent (*a la* Lawrence Venuti). He employs the four-lined stanza form and writes in a sweet and lucid style thereby attracting the attention of the sensitive reader. The short stanzas of four lines each are easy to read, grasp and remember. Dr. Sharma uses the Standard English language, which is marked by ease, felicity and melodious fluency, which is understood by all the English-speaking readers. He has been quite successful in his employment of the technique of domestication here. Yet he has used the technique of foreignization also quite sparingly to create the local colour of Rajasthan by using the Rajasthani words like *Lu, Badali, chaitra, Baisakh, Swan, peenju, sangarika, kair, tagra, Khedja, charas, Akha Teej, Murdhar, jalkag, kanaiya, kalayan, papihada, titodi, teejaniya, moomal, gagas, mamolya, saraluk, sankchud* and *moongiya* etc. Such words create the specificity of Rajasthani geography and culture, which are not known to the speakers of English language

and hence remain foreign to them. Dr. Sharma used the technique of foreignization in his translation deliberately and patriotically to induct the local Rajasthani culture into the international culture of English letters and to impregnate the global culture with the local culture thereby enriching it with the gems of exotic beauty. Kudos to Dr. I.K.Sharma! May his tribe increase!

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Reversal of the Paradigm : Indian Poetics and Western Texts

**Ajeet Singh*

Since the foundation of English education in the middle of the last century, Indian intellectual life has been guided and dominated by Western thought. The institutions of education, the disciplines taught, methods and goals of education, systems of ideas and research- - all have been shaped in the Western image. This dominance led to an isolation of native learning. This phase lasted into the forties. After 1947, as a fall out of the official ideal of 'modernization', conscious borrowing and adoption of Western theories to a nearly complete exclusion of native scholarship was encouraged. The entire Indian scholastic heritage came to be described as 'traditional' in opposition to 'modern' and therefore, understood as retrogressive and an obstruction in the path of progress and development.

For a long time there were debates and arguments about the inclusion of Indian literary texts into the canon of English literature and consequently, one can see the gradual shift in the nomenclatures from English literature to Commonwealth literature to Postcolonial literature or New literatures in English. Each of these categories is the product of a certain worldview. For the last fifty or sixty years or so, scholars have been debating on the nature of the canon of English literature in India. And they have successfully created a paradigm shift in it from British canonical texts to Indian English texts or so on. At present some of the University Departments offer courses on Indian texts in English. But in spite of this shift, the critical discourse largely remains Western that controls the worldview of Indian mind.

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The inclusion of Indian literary texts in English literature curricula only does not contain the real shift that the present day scholars advocating.

For me, it is not enough to 'Indianize' the content of English literature. The theoretical/critical discourse has to be shifted from 'Western' to 'Indian' in order to complete the task of liberating the Indian 'mind' from the shackles of Western systems of thoughts. This paper is designed to explore the possibilities of applying Indian theoretical frameworks on Western literary texts. The paper looks into the universal applicability of Indian theories in spite of its cultural specificity. The need for 'Indianness' of critical practices, of 'nativising' the critical discourse has been voiced/ talked about after independence. Prof. C.D. Narasimhaiah has been talking about this since 1965 when he had organized a national seminar on "Literary Criticism: European and Indian Tradition". Not that there has been no change in the scene. After the initial exposition of Indian poetics such as those by Hiriyana, Krishana, Chaitanya, since the late eighties Indian professors of English have publically discussed different Indian theories. Prof. M.S. Kushwaha's "Indian Poetics and Western Thought" (1988) is a landmark in this trend. Secondly, some of these professors produced tracts/articles outlining the application models based on different Indian schools. Some departments of English initiated research in Indian English literature using the Indian models. Even the one department where (Centre of Linguistics and English, JNU, New Delhi) teaching and research applying Indian frameworks to Western texts and objects has been consciously adopted as research agenda since 1990. Following it, now, some universities (Even the University, BPSMV, where I am teaching) adopt Indian poetics as a part of the English syllabus.

But these are sporadic changes as there has been neither policy changes at the national disciplinary level nor 'mind change', so to say - not even a formal discussion at the national level about 'appropriate theory'. Indian theoretical texts continue to be marginalized in the university syllabi

and most of the effort outlined above has been either in the form of an argument in defence of or an exposition of parts and portions of classical Indian poetics. There is not yet much application research is there. And it is need of the hour to validate the classical frameworks by establishing their adequacy. As this has not happened on the desired scale, the Indian theoretical frameworks have not been evaluated in terms of contemporary literatures. However, these efforts and this movement have evoked definite critical opposition about the applicability of Indian poetics to English texts.

Literary theory has greater antiquity in India. Possibly, it begins with Yaska's *Nirukta*, a ninth century B.C. text of interpretation. Next, Panini's *Astadhyayi* refers to literature as the fourth category of discourse in a five-fold classification. Formally, Bharata's *Natyasastra* is, of course, the source text for literary theory. In fact, *Natyasastra* is a text of semiotics as it deals with how meaning is variously coded and communicated. And after that, a long tradition of thinkers and texts follows – Bhamaha, Vamana, Dandin, Rudrata, Anandavardhana, Mahimabhatta, Kuntaka, Bhoja, Abhinavagupta, Viswanatha and Pt. Jagannatha – and spans almost two thousand years. Besides the primary texts by the thinkers enumerated above, there are *samgraha* texts, that put together and elucidates the major theories – Mammata's *Kavyaprakasa* - and at least one theoretical survey of issues in literary theory – Rajasekhara's *Kavyamimamsa*.

Indian literary theories as expounded by a long line of thinkers are also essentially linguistic and constitutive and address themselves to a number of questions that have been debated in Western tradition as well. These theories address the issues like (1) the definition of literature (2) the concept of 'poet' (3) sources of creativity (4) the creative process (5) literary meaning (6) status and role of the reader (7) literature as a discourse of knowledge. The rise and formation of this discipline of poetics in India has been alluded to in different texts and has been explicitly recorded in the familiar legendary mode by Rajasekhara in his *Kavyamimamsa*. As

Prof. Kapil Kapoor writes, "The discipline passed through well-marked stages of first enunciation, elaboration, systematization, composition of a meta-text and subsequent specialization and break-up into contending theories". (K.Kapoor, 6)

It is possible to classify the literary theories in Indian poetics on the basis of what aspect of literary composition is central to them. Accordingly, we have theory of:

1. Language (*alamkara* and *vakrokti*)
2. Style and compositional value, (*guna/dosa, riti, aucitya*)
3. Verbal symbolism, (*dhvani*)
4. Aesthetic experience (*rasa*)
5. Narrative (*mahavakya*)
6. Discourse analysis (*yuktis*)
7. Comprehensive analysis

On the basis of this classification, we may have different schools of Indian poetics - *Rasa* School, *Dhavni* School, *Alamkara* School, *Riti* School etc., depending on the aspect of literature which they consider as its essence. We have noted that Indian literary theories carry out a sustained analysis of how meaning is constituted in language, of forms and devices, of how beauty is assumed to consist in the craft or rhetoric of composition etc. which is similarly happens in western literary theory.

It is the wide ranging inquiry of Indian literary theory/theories and the pertinence of its debates and ideas for contemporary theory that provided the rational for the paradigm shift in the theoretical framework that the paper is designed to discuss. It is observed that the ideas of Indian thinkers make complete and pertinent sense to students of modern literary theory, literatures and languages and in fact enhanced and enriched their understanding and appreciation of the issues involved. Now at the beginning of twenty first century, it is necessary to caution Indian scholars

against exclusive application of Western theoretical models on Indian texts. Ignoring the very visible, personal, social and cultural consequences of this, one can easily see how this almost willing subservience has been intellectually unfortunate in more than one way. In view of the above statements, following are the reasons for adopting/applying or 'Indianizing' the critical discourse:

1. The relationship between India and Western scholars cannot be restricted to a one-way receiver-donor relationship generating a certain subordination of mind which is evident in the almost mechanical adoption and application of changing theoretical models.
2. The image of Indian scholar as an uncritical receiver may be changed. The Indian intellectual/scholar can be provided access to the alternative ground from where he/she can actively evaluate Western systems.
3. University research/thinking can transcend its limits by applying Indian literary theories to English texts. Otherwise, this theory-data relationship is attested by thousands of theses lying in the university departments.
4. The advantage of a true and proper encounter between Indian systems and Western systems in literature can be recognized.
5. The categories (*rasa*, *alamkara* etc.) of Indian poetics are essentially aesthetic expounding the experiential knowledge of literary discourse. Literature in India has never been considered as a socio-political/cultural document. It has been treated as a special kind of discourse that refers to 'experiential' knowledge rather than 'referential' whereas in West literature it is considered as a socio-political document and all its categories primarily do not explain its aesthetic nature rather reflect text as a representation of historical or cultural conditions.

6. The categories like *rasa*, *bhava*, *vakrokti*, *alamkara*, *riti*, *aucitya* etc. of Indian poetics are constitutive by nature explaining how meaning in a literary text can be constituted. Hence these have the ability to explain the meaning of a text without considering its cultural specifications.
7. Moreover, the existing curricula of English courses, however, radical it may be, cannot meet out the political, social and cultural demands of the country until the theoretical discourse is changed.
8. Historically, Western tradition of theoretical texts and thinkers is full of gaps and ruptures which are not filled by proper academic debates and discussions. On the other hand, Indian poetics is a continuous and cumulative tradition of texts and thinkers exhibiting its potential as a discipline of study and inquiry.

In view of the aforementioned arguments and reasons in favour of this paradigm shift, we may form certain opinions in this regard. We can observe that certain university departments are conducting teaching and research applying Indian theoretical models. Gradually but slowly, some changes in the field are appearing despite scholars facing opposition from inside. Teachers and scholars who advocate radically about the change in English curriculum must give their attention to this question also, because a paradigm shift in the theoretical framework may validate their conviction of change. Furthermore, such kind of shift provides the scholars an alternative framework through which they can observe objectively, from a distance, the 'so called' infallibility, incomprehensibility and all-inclusiveness of Western theoretical framework. The purpose here is not to challenge the applicability of the Western systems of thoughts rather it may supplement our understanding of the same.

The shift may also help us as teachers of English in today's world, in realizing our role as a cultural mediator.

Because in a rapidly changing globalized world, the role of an English teacher is not only to promote one culture and subjugate another but also to provide a platform of numerous possibilities where different cultures criss-cross to achieve a harmonious co-existence.

Moreover, such close encounters apart from enriching the understanding of the systems involved would also help track the intellectual communion between India and Europe. Such links are interesting. For example, the establishment of Sanskrit chairs in almost all the major universities of Europe in the last decades of nineteenth century created a deep European interest in the classical Indian thought.

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English Vinglish in a Globalized World : Count their Aspirations before you Teach

*Arun Kumar Poonia &
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Introduction: English in a Globalized World

“It is everywhere. Some 380 million people speak it as their first language and perhaps two-thirds as many again as their second. A billion are learning it, about a third of the world’s population are in some sense exposed to it and by 2050, it is predicted, half the world will be more or less proficient in it. It is the language of globalisation—of international business, politics and diplomacy. It is the language of computers and the Internet. Truly, the tongue spoken back in the 1300s only by the ‘low people’ of England, as Robert of Gloucester put it at the time, has come a long way. It is now the global language.”

—“The Triumph of English- A World Empire by Other Means” (2001)

The end of 19th century paved the way for English language to become a global phenomenon. Especially, after the Second World War, the USA emerged as economic, cultural and military super power. Robertson (1992) defines globalization as, “compression of the world, and the intensification of consciousness of the world as a whole.” Globalization is also defined by Giddens (1990) as, “the intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa.” This elevated English to the status of a global language. In the

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trend of globalization, the most important language being used among countries, institutions and individuals all over the world is the English language (Punthumasen, 2007). Currently, English is second most widely used language after Chinese Mandarin, most importantly it is the official language of many countries. In most places, it is 'a 'contact language' between persons who share neither a common native tongue nor a common (national) culture, and for whom English is the chosen foreign language of communication' (Firth 1996). English has also become the most valuable language for scientific studies that ushered in a new era of technological advancements. Most of us cannot afford without English in the present scenario, according to people if they refuse contact with English, they may be left behind in the race towards modernization. English is chosen as the means of communication among people from different first language backgrounds, across linguistic boundaries, the preferred term is 'English as a lingua franca' (Seidlhofer 2001).

As Short et al (2001) explain, "Being competitive in global markets requires that one speak English." The 1990s are generally considered as the age of globalization. Globalization is an outcome of rapid technological progress and advanced communication, which enabled interactions among people across cultures. The modern means of transportation had already reduced the travelling time considerably. But, the spread of communication technology made it possible for people separated in time and space to interact even face-to-face, virtually via computers using internet. One key aspect of all this was the supremacy or dominance of English as the means of communication world over. The major factor in globalization was the spread and dominance of English language as pointed out by Crystal (1997), "You hear it on television, spoken by politicians from all over the world. Wherever you travel, you see English signs and advertisements. Whenever you enter a hotel or restaurant in a foreign city, they will understand English, and there will be an English menu." All this reflects upon the importance of English language in this global village. English

has become a ladder to success almost everywhere. Anyone, who wants to be 'successful', ought to have a good knowledge of English language. Knowledge of English ensures an advantage even before a person prepares himself for competing with others. The importance of any language lies in the fact that it gives access to certain institutions that lead to accumulation of cultural capital, and English language definitely showers one with the riches of this type. A second major reason for the popularity of English among those seeking upward mobility is the language's association with all things "modern." Most likely, thanks to American pop culture, English has been ascribed an aura of "hipness," defining an international, glamorous elite culture and an apt accessory for Zygmunt Bauman's high-status "tourist" class. This growing importance of English language has seemingly created a great rift between those who know English and those who don't know it. In the process, as talked earlier though in Indian context only, a new oppressed section is emerging in English dominated parts of the world that might become the neo-outcastes or the linguistic subalterns.

English Vinglish: A Case Study for English Language Learning and Teaching

The impact of media on us is growing tremendously. The newspapers, magazines, television programs, movies, advertisements, etc. shapes our day to day behaviour. The authors talk about the lessons to be learnt by English language teachers, from the movie *English Vinglish*. If taken properly, the lessons learnt, will help enrich the teaching-learning experience a great deal, both for teacher and the students. The question that came to the mind of authors was that, if we are influenced by movies and the characters in our personal life, why not we, the teachers of English, change our professional approach under the positive influence of the same medium? The use of movies as a pedagogical tool is no new concept, but the only thing for this study is, the flip: the English language teacher is the

learner in the process! The idea is to bring out the ‘lessons’ embedded in the movie, and to incorporate some of them, which are appropriate and viable, in our teaching practice. Secondly, to make the English language teachers reflect on their own strategies and approaches, towards their learners i.e. the subjects. The implementations must depend upon the needs of the individual instructor, or the students, rather than just for the sake of it. Moreover, the word ‘teacher’ is not restricted to define someone in school or college system only, but anyone having knowledge and expertise in English and imparting it to those who need it, as in this case, the adult learners. The movie *English Vinglish* lends us an excellent and atypical prospect, to have a glance at teaching and learning of English through the lens of popular cinema. It is a unique movie in a sense that, it is of so much interest for English language learners and teachers alike. The movie depicts the plight and fight of those ‘students’, who are not good at English, and also showcases the important role played by English language in the globalized world. English is the second language, the “global language” (Crystal, 1997), the “language of international and intercultural communication” (Hardin, 1979). Though, the ‘students’ and the ‘teacher’ of the movie are not the traditional ones. But, just because of this limitation, we can’t let go the benefits offered to us by it. As usual, the movies and characters usually come from the real world, but are painted a bit away from reality. But can we deny the fact that motivation, encouragement, flexibility, etc. are very much essential for a better teaching-learning output? Or else, can we turn blind towards the individual learner’s background or problems? Similarly, can we ignore the heavy stakes that are placed on the knowledge of English in the present times? Essentially, this movie acts as a jolt for those English language teachers, who are good at their subject, but ignore their *subjects*. On the other hand, the learners get a lesson, of not yielding to the circumstances. The movie promises the English language learner, an elevated level of respect from his/her fellow beings, as well as, a push to his/her dreams and aspirations of a better life. The real value of these lessons

lies in the way they are delivered: in a subtle manner, through entertainment and fun.

The Plot Unfolds

The present paper rests on the trials and tests of the protagonist of the movie *English Vinglish*. Shashi is an Indian homemaker, confident, having her own small business of making ‘ladoos’. All is well, but English! She reads Hindi newspaper, although English newspaper is also subscribed. The ‘*jhazz moment*’ comes when during a dining table conversation, she is embarrassed by her school going daughter for not able to utter the word ‘jazz.’ Even her husband doesn’t miss the chance to laugh at her, for her poor English. Shashi is seen uttering the word ‘jazz’ several times. Interestingly, she also corrects her servant on some instances for wrong pronunciation of English words, but hers is a positive way of improving. The parent-teacher meeting in her daughter’s school is a big dressing-down for Shashi, even before she goes to school. The plight of protagonist is quite reflected in the kind of treatment that is meted out to her by her daughter during and after the PTM in the school, just because she is handicapped by English. So such was the life of Shashi, when suddenly she has to fly to the USA for a wedding ceremony at her sister’s house. With all her English problems intact, she lands in the US. She is amazed at her sister’s progress and knowledge of English, although both of them in their teens have attended the Hindi medium government school in their village. Her sister credits it to the motivation of her late husband. During her outings in the city, Shashi felt humiliated while unable to deal with the English speaking lady in a coffee shop. She notices an advertisement for a 4-week spoken English program offered by a coaching institute in New York. In next few days she overcomes her fears and joins the spoken English program without informing anyone. Mr. David, the English teacher asks all students to introduce themselves one by one and to tell why they want to learn English. The small class consists of students of different nationalities, united by their aspiration to learn English language. After the completion

of the course, the students were to clear an exam in order to get the certification. But, the date of exam clashes with the wedding day, so Shashi was unable to go for it. Shashi was busy with some work on the wedding day, to her surprise, her classmates and David Sir arrives at the marriage function. In the end when Shashi has to make a speech, her husband stands up apologetically to tell the guests about the poor English of his wife. Shashi asks him to stop and starts speaking in English, giving her blessing to the newlywed couple. Shashi's husband and kids are taken aback and they feel remorseful about their behavior. And, finally she gets what she craved for, not the mere knowledge of English language, but the 'respect'.

Thus, the movie *English Vinglish* highlights the role of English language that has grown tremendously in present times. The knowledge of English is a must for people to win the respect of family members even, let alone career advancements. The social status attached with English language is quite aptly showcased in this movie. The story revolves around the protagonist, Shashi, who is not good at English. The movie depicts the instances of insult and embarrassment to her due to poor English. Her plight can be put forward by picking the instances throughout the movie, where she suffers:

At home: By her daughter and husband
 At School: By her daughter
 At embassy, airport and during flight
 In the USA: At airport and in a café.

It looks to her that, her redemption is only in learning English language. She joins a Spoken English class in New York and takes on the challenge of learning it.

Learning English: The Movie Way

The movie *English Vinglish* offers a lot of insights for English language teachers and learners in an interesting manner.

The Movie Motivation

One important aspect of study, about the movie is the role of Mr. David as the English teacher, the one who motivates his students and make them learn the language in an open, liberal environment. Mr. David encourages his students to open up and tell about themselves and their purpose behind learning English. Thus, he is quite keen to know about his subjects. He motivates and encourages them. He gives an Indian home-maker who is born to make 'ladoos' only, a great boost and tremendous encouragement by calling her an 'entrepreneur'. The use of repetition, no use of native language in class, jumbled up sentences, etc. are the kind of activities adopted by Mr. David in his teaching. His liberal views about examination make all students feel comfortable, instead of the fear of failure. He goes to the extent of evaluating his student, Shashi, in a totally informal setting i.e. a speech in a wedding function, and on the basis of her performance, awards the certificate as well.

Thus, the main theme of the movie is the role of motivation in general, while dealing particularly with English language learning. Motivation "energizes" human behavior and "gives it direction" says Dornyei (1998). According to Forman (2005), "Motivation is the process through which individuals are driven to increase their action or performance either by internal (intrinsic) or external (extrinsic) factors." The term motivation in a second language learning context is seen according to Gardner (1990) as "referring to the extent to which the individual works or strives to learn the language because of a desire to do so and the satisfaction experienced in this activity." Learners' motivation has been widely accepted as a key factor which influences the rate and success of second/foreign language learning (Ellis, 1994). So thinking on these terms the 'motivated' learner can be defined as one, who is willing or even eager to invest energies, time and effort in learning activities and to progress in the desired direction. Gardner & Lambert (1959) highlight two different types of motivation:

1) **Instrumental motivation:** It is the desire of learning a language in order to some practical goals, such as getting a job, clearing an examination, etc.

2) **Integrative motivation:** It is the desire to acquire a new language for the purpose of communicating with people from other cultures who speak that language; there is a keen desire in the learner to identify closely with the group of the target language.

Gardner & Lambert (1972) showed that success in a foreign/second language is likely to be lower if the underlying motivational orientation is instrumental rather than integrative. A meta-analysis of motivation studies has pointed to motivation as the key to success in learning a foreign or second language (Gardner 1985; Masgoret & Gardner 2003). Thus, the distinction between the two types of motivation is quite helpful for English language teachers, as these two types can be considered as 'intrinsic' motivation that is the urge on the part of learner to engage in the learning activity for its own sake, and the 'extrinsic' motivation that is derived from external incentives like job, promotion, qualification, etc.

An empirical survey of motivational strategies in language classrooms in Hungary resulted in Ten Commandments for motivating language learners (Dornyei and Csizer 1998):

- Teachers should set a personal behavior example
- Make sure that the class atmosphere is relaxed and pleasant
- Present tasks properly to the learners
- Have good teacher-student relationships
- Work on increasing learners' self confidence
- Ensure that language classes are interesting to the students
- Promote as much as possible learners' autonomy

- Personalize the learning process
- Increase learners' goals and
- Make sure that learners are familiar with the target language culture.

In the movie, the protagonist Shashi is self-motivated (Integrative Motivation) as she wishes to learn English for getting the respect of others. Her aim is to learn English so that she can communicate well with her kids and husband and in the process getting the intense self-pleasure of being considered equal. The other students of the class are coming to learn English language in order to get jobs, promotions, etc., so those are basically having external motivation (Instrumental Motivation). For the sake of our study, we can categorize the main characters of the movie in two different categories, depending upon their role in motivating or de-motivating the protagonist, Shashi:

Motivators: David Sir, Classmates, Shashi's Sister and Niece

De-Motivators: Her husband and daughter.

The first half of the movie is replete with instances where her husband and daughter (the de-motivators) keep on humiliating her for her poor English. It's her own will (self-motivation) to learn English, is reflected in her efforts to pronounce words correctly, trying to read English newspaper, etc. The second half of the movie shows the miracles of motivation as Shashi is now surrounded by people, who keep on motivating her, although she is away in a foreign land: the US. Her sister and niece at home, while David Sir and her classmates in the institute play a very constructive role in her English learning drive. This boosts her confidence and motivation further and the outcome is her fantastic outpour on the wedding day. The role of the English teacher, Mr. David needs a special mention here. Various studies conducted on the role of a teacher in motivating or de-motivating students in classroom suggest that both teachers and students have said that the teacher is the main focal point in the classroom for motivation or de-motivation (Noels

et al. 1999). The enthusiasm and vigour showed by him towards his subjects sets up the tone of the learning process. Teachers, concluded Tomlinson & Masuhara (2004), set the classroom climate by promoting positive attitudes and the self-esteem of students and the emotional involvement of all parties in a shared endeavor. Mr. David's approach to the class was very constructive as he asks each one of them to introduce himself and their purpose of learning English. The way he motivated a 'ladoo maker' by telling her about her worth and calling her an entrepreneur worked wonders for the personality of Shashi. The use of jumbled up sentence by David Sir included sentence like: "I will not leave New York without learning English", which acts as motivational mantra for the students.

Preparedness of the Teacher & Learner: Relevance of Adult Learning Theories

There is a popular belief that children as L2 learners are 'superior' to adults (Scovel 2000), that is, the younger the learner, the quicker the learning process and the better the outcomes. Nevertheless, a closer examination of the ways in which age combines with other variables reveals a more complex picture, with both favourable and unfavourable age-related differences being associated with early- and late-starting L2 learners (Johnstone, 2002). Many researchers have argued that more mature learners are usually capable of making faster initial progress in acquiring the grammatical and lexical components of an L2 due to their higher level of cognitive development and greater analytical abilities. Three major theories in the field of adult learning are — Andragogy, self-directed learning, and transformational learning. Malcolm Knowles (1980) popularized the concept of andragogy ("the art and science of helping adults learn"), contrasting it with pedagogy ("the art and science of teaching children"). Knowles (1984) suggests that adult educators should:

- Set a cooperative climate for learning in the classroom;

- Assess the learner's specific needs and interests;
- Develop learning objectives based on the learner's needs, interests, and skill levels;
- Design sequential activities to achieve the objectives;
- Work collaboratively with the learner to select methods, materials, and resources for instruction; and
- Evaluate the quality of the learning experience and make adjustments, as needed, while assessing needs for further learning.
- Is motivated to learn by internal, rather than external, factors.

The most essential and crucial thing for a student or a teacher is his/her readiness to accept the challenges and to conquer them. The movie shows the will power of the protagonist Shashi, who despite repeated insults insulates herself, only to be more determined to learn English. Her dedication is reflected in her eagerness to learn from her 'jhazz' mistake, or her picking up the English newspaper. She joins an institute all at her own and continues her classes. Her efforts at learning through movies, newspapers, English programs show her strong will power. She readily asks questions in class room, similarly, she is not hesitant in picking up new words i.e. judgmental. Similarly, all the students were very much ready to speak out what they felt and why they wanted to learn English language. On the other hand, Mr. David is ready to credit the students for their smallest of accomplishments and goes out of the way to help his students to achieve their goals.

Evaluation & Examination

Examinations and tests are the techniques for evaluation of the teaching-learning process. It evaluates a student to find out how much he has learned. It also helps in assessing the materials, course content and the teaching style of the teacher. The movie is very precise in depicting the evaluation process. The main purpose of the students was to

speak good English in the stipulated program duration. So in consideration with the final outcome of teaching, Mr. David decides to go for an oral exam for i.e. a five minute speech, which will aptly find out whether the teaching-learning process served its purpose or not. It proves that for a better evaluation exams must be in accordance with the teaching goals. Similarly, his words about exams are highly motivational: “*Exam is not a matter of life and death. It’s about the joy of telling yourself that you have done it*”. The goal of languageteaching is to get students to become “legitimate *producers* of language withinsocial groups both inside and outside the classroom” (Hall and Beggs 1992), exactly what the teacher in the movie planned and achieved finally. He goes a step further and considers and evaluates Shashi’s speech in a real life situation, which is in fact the ultimate goal. The barriers and boundaries of the classrooms can be crossed in a rarest of rare circumstance, to keep the spirit of teaching alive and joyful. The true teaching-learning outcome is only possible, when rules and methods aid in the process, rather than acting as a *band –aid* for repair only.

Conclusion

The urge for learning new things comes mainly from two sources: Motivation within or some external need. The necessity for learning English in today’s world is driven mainly by the market demand because of the dominant role played by it globally. Although English is now being taught from the very beginning in most of the schools across India, but that was not the case a few decades earlier. As a result of that, a lot many missed the ‘train’ of English Learning and as such find themselves on the wrong side of the fence now in the era of globalization, where English has got the ‘lingua franca’ status. These people generally in their 30s and 40s find it difficult not only to communicate, but also, in tackling the technological tools like computers and Internet that mostly require the knowledge of English. Secondly, the value and prestige of English has grown tremendously in Indian society, thus relegating those further, who don’t have a good command over English language. They are even

thought of as second rate citizens and thus constitute, what can be termed as a kind of “*linguistic subalterns*”: the powerless. The present paper also talks about those people, who are far beyond their college years (formal education, adults), either in a job or in family life. These people suffer because of their particular linguistic handicap i.e. poor knowledge of English language, at their workplace or even at home from the hands of English speaking generation. The only way to fill in this growing chasm is to teach them ‘*the languageEnglish*’. Motivating students is seen by teachers as one of the most serious sources of difficulty (Dornyei 2003) in the classroom. Students’ motivation depends on a variety of factors, among them how they perceive their own achievement (Masgoret and Gardner 2003). In this scenario, the role of an English language teacher gains prominence beyond the formal walls of school and college education, in order to cater to the needy ‘adults’ learners. The present paper throws a refreshing new light upon the teaching-learning process involved in English language especially to the adult learners. The light hearted way in which the message has been delivered is to be taken up enthusiastically by the language learner, as well as, the English language teachers. The key lessons from the movie for English language teachers, as well as for the learners, can be summed up as follows:

- Importance of English in the globalized world can’t be ignored.
- A huge chasm exists between those who know English and those who don’t.
- A teacher must know his/her *subjects* well enough.
- Motivation is miraculous.
- Examinations are not to be feared.

The present paper is just limited to the theoretical observations based on the movie. But, the researchers can further take up the situation of English language teaching in India beyond the formal walls of school and college, to

take up a quantitative study. Even the various state governments are also offering free spoken English courses to those who wish to learn it. The number of spoken English classes for adult learners, the methodology used, the material, evaluation, success rate (for e.g. help in getting a job) and the reasons for enrolling can be studied to ascertain the need for it in Indian society.

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The Inevitability of Wordsworth's Eco-Critical Perspective in Contemporary World.

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When one peeps into the horizon of literature especially in poetry written in any language across the globe, one comes to know that Nature has been one of the mostly treated themes. As S.N. Pande says; "The poets, artists and thinkers have been bringing forth the close kinship between Nature and Man from times immemorial. Human life is inconceivable without the wide existence of nature. It is not just the aesthetic and artistic aspect of life which breathes the abundance of the beautiful earth" (Arun and Saraswat, 2009:17). Innovative, critical, creative, destructive, healing and soothing dimensions of the nature are brought out by different poets. It has been pointed out that "Man and Nature, Mind and External world are geared together and in unison complete the motive principal of the universe. They act and react with each other. In poetry, the process actually receives its final consummations" (Read, 1949 :126-127).

Wordsworth, Coleridge, Byron, Keats and Shelley in British literature and Ralph Emerson, Henry Thoreau, Walt Whitman, Robert Frost and Emily Dickinson in American literature talk about nature. Besides, many others have significantly reflected nature in various colors, forms and roles through their works in all over the world. So far as William Wordsworth is concerned, Nature is one of the most affectionate and intimate subjects that he dealt with. He has been acclaimed as a high priest who worshipped nature in every form. He has not only overvalued Nature but has

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also conserved nature as a Goddess in the kingdom of his poetry. It has been observed that “Wordsworth had passion for Nature fixed in his blood” (De Quincey, 1950).

The ecological and environmental problems are being encountered globally due to the exploitative nature of Capitalism, the damaging effects of scientific and technological advancement and Industrialization. The ecological menace, today, is the concern of one and all and literature too cannot remain unaffected by it. This concern for ecology has given rise to a new school of literary criticism, Ecocriticism. William Rueckert may have been the first person to use the term ‘Ecocriticism’. In 1978, Rueckert published an essay titled ‘*Ecocriticism*’, his purpose was to focus on “the application of ecology and ecological concepts to the study of literature” (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ecocriticism>). The term, however, gained currency after the establishment of Association for the Study of Literature and Environment (ASLE) in 1992 along with the Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment (ISLE) in 1993.

Moreover, Ecocriticism was officially heralded by the publication of two seminal works, both published in the mid-1990s: ‘*The Ecocriticism Reader*’ edited by Cheryll Glotfelty and Harold Fromm, and ‘*The Environmental Imagination*’, by Lawrence Buell. Its practitioners explore human attitudes towards the environment as expressed in nature writing. It is a broad genre that is known by different names like Green Cultural Studies, Ecopoetics and Environmental Literary Criticism. In general, it examines the relations between writer, texts and the world where the world incorporates the entire ecosphere.

Cheryll Glotfelty defines ecocriticism as “the study of the relationship between literature and the environment” (Barry, 2010:239). Ecocriticism is broadly committed to making the category of nature as central to the humanities as class; race and gender are at present. Specifically, it addresses the representation of nature in literary texts, and raises questions about relationship between the human world and the non-human world. It is also a theoretical approach

to the interrelational web of natural, cultural and supernatural phenomena. Most ecological work shares a common motivation, that is, the awareness as Glotfelty observes that “we have reached the age of environmental limits, a time when the consequences of human actions are damaging the planet’s life supporting systems. We are there. Either we change our ways or we face global catastrophe, destroying much beauty and extermination countless species in our headlong race to apocalypse”(Glotfelty,1996:VIII). This awareness brings in us a desire to contribute to environmental restoration, not only as a hobby but as representative of literature.

This paper is an attempt to study the relevance of Wordsworth’s eco-critical perspective in the contemporary world with reference to the poem ‘The world is too much with us’. It also endeavors to study the inevitability of Wordsworth’s views in the light of impending environmental degradation. ‘The World is too much with us’ is one of Wordsworth’s finest sonnets. In this sonnet, he has articulated serious thoughts in simple and direct words. It is a philosophical poem which expresses the poet’s disgust with the materialism of the age. Wordsworth believes that man can achieve true happiness only by loving nature. He feels that human life and life in nature are basically one. At the very outset of the poem, Wordsworth says that the world is too much with us. We persistently think about this world and the materialistic things. We think only of earning and spending money, of possessing more and more things of comfort. In this materialistic age, man thinks of winning prestige and position in society. But because of this he wastes his natural powers, abilities and capacities that the Almighty has given us. He does not exercise it in proper way to achieve happiness. We are not affected by nature. We do not feel a kinship with the different objects of nature. As a result of this we have lost our hearts to materialism.

The world is too much with us; late and soon,
Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers,
Little we see Nature that is ours;

We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon!
(Wordsworth, *The World is too much with us*: 1-4)

These lines demonstrate Wordsworth's hatred against growing materialism of his age. According to him, man was made to appreciate the beauty of nature.

Truly speaking, Wordsworth protests against the materialism of modern times. He regrets on this materialistic tendency of the modern man. We have no leisure time to enjoy the beauties of nature. We also do not have those tender feelings which help us in appreciating nature. For example, the sight of the sea in moonlight is a beautiful sight. The winds over the sea usually blow at all hours. But at this time the winds are calm and quiet. They are as calm as sleeping flowers. But such a beautiful scene as this fails to move our hearts. We get no joy from nature. We always keep ourselves busy in artificial and luxurious life. Here, Wordsworth laments on the Modern man's loss of vision of appreciating Nature. He does not have kinship with nature.

This sea that bares her bosom to the moon;
The winds that will be howling at all hours,
And are up-gathered now like sleeping flowers;
For this, for everything, we are out of tune.

(Lines 5-9)

Wordsworth acknowledged the power of nature in Romantic age. It was the period when French Revolution brought anarchy and frustration among the masses. He sought to take solace in the company of nature. He was profoundly influenced by Rousseau who appealed to the contemporary society by giving a clarion call 'Return to nature'. Wordsworth is against the greed for money. He does not want to be a hard hearted money earner. He is in love with nature. He would therefore like to be a pagan, one who believes that there are god and goddess in almost all the objects of nature, of the ancient times rather than a modern materialist. The pagan loved nature and worshipped her gods. Having become a pagan, the poet will stand on the shore of the moonlit sea. He will not feel lonely at all because he will see beautiful things. He would be able to see Proteus,

the sea-god in Greek mythology rising from the sea. He would be able to imagine Triton, another Sea-god, blowing his shell to soothe the restless waves of the sea.

Great god! I'd rather be
A pagan suckled in a creed outworn;
So might I standing on this pleasant lea,
Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea;
Hear old Triton blow his wreathed horn.
Nor heed nor see what things they be;
But from these create he can
Forms more real than living man,
Nurslings of immortality!

(Lines 10-15)

These lines evince Wordsworth's regret over the present condition of the world which eschewed the philosophy of pagan. People are moving towards materialism and forgetting that they possess the same soul as Nature. The healing powers of nature are ignored by them. The poet wishes to be a pagan and enjoy natural beauty.

The contemporary world is not different from the one which the Wordsworth saw in his time. Man's own avaricious exploitation of nature is accountable for the environmental degradation. Nature has all that is wanted to sustain and foster man but she does not have the plentitude to cater to his greed. In his materialism for more and more wealth, economic progress and luxurious life, he over exploits her, disfigures her, mutilates her, pollutes her and degrades her. We read the news of a shocking earthquake in different parts of the world. We hear of a terrifying Tsunami that struck Indonesia and parts of India a few years back and in recent times in Japan. All these are perceptible signs of ecological imbalance. The contemporary world is fast changing in which the situation is gloomy in the sense that the air we breathe is polluted, the water we drink is contaminated and the food we eat is artificially made tasty but not good for our health. There is forthcoming danger waiting to hit the human beings and the consequences will be unthinkable.

Wordsworth realized the inevitability of peaceful nature

for the wellbeing of mankind. The philosophy propounded by Wordsworth in the 18th century is valid to the contemporary globalized world, more fittingly. We have to understand the fact that if we harm Nature, Nature will destroy us and if we guard Nature, Nature will protect us.

Hence, it is imperative to say that it is a period of ecological turn. Nature is not a commodity to be exploited. Daniel Goleman, the psychologist, famous for his theory of 'Emotional Intelligence' postulates in his book entitled 'Ecological intelligence' that man should protect nature. Wordsworth gives us the same message in the late 18th century. It has been pointed out that "Ecological intelligence allows us to comprehend systems in all their complexity, as well as the interplay between the natural and man-made worlds. But that understanding demands a vast store of knowledge, one so huge that no single brain can store it all. Each one of us needs the help of others to navigate the complexities of intelligence. We need to collaborate. A collective, distributed intelligence spread awareness, whether among friends or family, within a company, or through an entire culture." ([http://www.amazon.com/Ecological-intelligence-knowing-impacts everythink/dp/03855](http://www.amazon.com/Ecological-intelligence-knowing-impacts-everythink/dp/03855)).

In conclusion, it may be stated that there is an urgent need to save the Mother Earth and maintain the environment clean and green for the betterment of humanity. It is indispensable for our inner and outer solace. If the man of contemporary globalized world follows the doctrine of paganism taught by William Wordsworth in reality, the very existence of the man will be retained peacefully in the company of nature again. Therefore, it is not only need but the product of time to implement Wordsworth's views to overcome impending environmental degradation.

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English Language Education: Changing Paradigm in Curriculum

**Saryug Yadav*

Introduction

English is taught in India very extensively as a compulsory second language or a second language in all schools and most colleges. The status of the language and the emphasis on its teaching varies from region to region. In some areas it is accorded the status of official language and its teaching begins in the first year of school. In some others it is accorded the status of a second language. In spite of the variations in the status accorded to English, the fact remains that all students completing their school education have had at least five years of English teaching.

The curriculum for English as a second language attempts to translate the established principles and guidelines into a working curriculum that espouses modern theories of second language acquisition and recent trends in English as a second language. The curriculum provides a solid structure for our students, and includes activities for students to practice English skills and acquire the language in various cognitive ways. However, there is a need to have more joyful activities that allow students to practice activities independently and in groups. The curriculum also needs to focus on problem solving, project work and interdisciplinary work.

India is the largest country in the world speaking English having a tradition of more than two hundred years. It is a very common feeling among teachers, parents,

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educators, experts as well as students that English learning is not happening in our schools and colleges and the teaching of English is replete with apathy, disinterest, loss of motivation and intellectual resistance. It would not be out of place to state that the overall scenario of English language learning is hazy and unsatisfactory for the majority of the students who are underprivileged class. Misguided education policy, criminally inadequate funding, botched up execution of even half-decent plans and ideas, moral-intellectual-financial- pedagogic corruption in the system, dishonesty in assessment of the real situation –all of these have conspired together to compound the effects of this deterioration (Sudhakar Marathe, 2000). The worst victims are underprivileged who in every way now do not even have competent and conscientious teachers to teach them English. For well-placed families, there is no problem because they contrive to find alternatives to this useless system –they can send their children to expensive schools, buy books for them, proliferate the media to which children have access, arrange private tuition, allow children to carry on into higher education, feed and clothe them generously, leave them alone, and so on. Who then continues to fall into the hands of increasing grossly ill-qualified teachers and even more grossly underprivileged schools and colleges? For a vast population of underprivileged children, the only resource available is the kind of teachers who can be called nothing other than unmakers of English. This ever-increasing number of teachers with ever-decreasing control over the English language, teaches an ever-increasing number and demographic range of learners under increasingly difficult circumstances.

The overall thrust is towards teaching language for functional purposes. We are not interested in providing information about language. We want them to learn how to use the language. We are not teaching facts about the language. Our students are learning the language to carry out specific communicative functions (like making inquiries, responding to invitations, requesting, agreeing, and

disagreeing and so on. The significance of the spoken form of a language like English can hardly be overemphasized. It has now become far more important than it used to be earlier. Thanks to speedy means of transport and communication, the distance in today's world has shrunk and various nations are coming closer to each other. In this age of radio, television and other telecommunication devices of mass media, no nation can afford to neglect the spoken form of a language like English.

Objectives

In accordance with the guidelines set by the NCF 2005 which stresses the role of English as a second language education in developing the students emotionally, socially, intellectually and nationally in addition to its role in developing cultural openness and cultural exchange, the following general objectives for teaching English in Bihar may be recommended:

- Enabling students to communicate effectively in different situations and settings with native and non-native speakers alike using authentic, appropriate, and correct linguistic forms.
- Enabling students to communicate effectively in subject matter areas in general, and mathematics, social sciences and sciences in particular.
- Equipping students with the requisite linguistic skills for pursuing higher education in their fields of specialization.
- Developing students' critical thinking skills (analytical, synthetic and critical).
- Developing intercultural understanding and appreciation.
- Promoting students' positive attitudes toward the target language and culture.
- Enhancing students' abilities to work with others.

Principles underlying the Curriculum

The following principles are held to be true and self-evident:

1. **LANGUAGE LEARNING IS LEARNING TO COMMUNICATE.** Language is used by its speakers to express themselves, to interact with others, to gain information (academic and otherwise), and to learn about the world around them.

2. **LANGUAGE VARIES.** Speakers of a language are aware of the need to vary language use according to the context of communicative interaction, i.e. language varies with variation in topic, participants, setting, purpose, and medium (verbal or written). Moreover, language varies according to academic domains (content areas) and tasks.

3. **LEARNING A NEW LANGUAGE IS BECOMING FAMILIAR WITH A NEW CULTURE.** Learners of a new language become aware of new values, norms, thought patterns, and beliefs. As a result of this cultural exposure and of the ensuing analysis of similarities and differences with native culture, learners develop understanding of, respect for, and appreciation of diversity of cultural backgrounds.

4. **LANGUAGE LEARNING IS MOST EFFECTIVE WHEN IT TAKES PLACE THROUGH MEANINGFUL, INTERACTIVE TASKS.** Language learners will thus learn most when they are engaged in meaningful, purposeful activities of social and cognitive nature in the context of the classroom (content-based instruction) and outside it (social settings).

5. **LANGUAGE SKILLS ARE INTERDEPENDENT.** Listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills are not thought of by language users as independent skills; they are rather perceived as interdependent where one skill often activates the other skills as well as the paralinguistic skills for the achievement of effective communication.

Features of the Curriculum

Guided by the above basic principles, the curriculum

for English as a second language attempts to develop the use of English for three major purposes: social interaction, academic achievement, and cultural enrichment. We believe that the most effective way to achieve these purposes is through the adoption of a thematic, integrated, content-based approach to teaching and learning. The curriculum embodying this approach is going to be spiral in nature. The same concepts and skills will be taught at various times across the grades, but with increasing levels of complexity and sophistication as we move up.

The following features characterize the proposed curriculum and set it apart from, and hopefully above, the current curriculum and other ESL curricula adopted in similar teaching/learning contexts:

1. Students following this curriculum will learn content-related information while acquiring English language skills in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The emphasis on teaching English for academic purposes entails the development of thinking skills. It is for this reason that the new curriculum, in addition to promoting the development of traditional skills, has also emphasized the development of thinking skills.

2. The curriculum attempts to develop both BICS and CALP proficiency in English. More specifically, it stresses both fluency and accuracy, in that order. Learning traditional grammar will thus be delayed till the fourth grade, i.e. after the students have developed basic communicative competence in the language. Accuracy would, hopefully, develop naturally as a result of exposure to proper models of English.

3. The curriculum has set realistic, achievable objectives that the average teacher/material writer can relate to. Furthermore, these objectives have been illustrated with samples of clear, measurable performance tasks that can be easily implemented in the classroom.

4. Language will be presented to students in its proper cultural context. Though language learning will start with

regional/local specific as well as universal themes, the particular characteristics of the culture of English-speaking people may be introduced gradually and where appropriate. The purpose of this is to develop cross-cultural openness, tolerance, and understanding. It is for this purpose that the proposed curriculum highlights second language literature at all grade levels and includes a special section on cultural awareness skills.

5. The curriculum highlights the role of group work in the development of communicative language skills. It thus stresses the need for the creation of an interactive classroom environment. Many of the objectives and performance tasks included in the curriculum call for pair and group work in line with the cooperative learning model of classroom interaction.

6. Finally, the curriculum emphasizes the development of the proper study skills which will help students develop into independent learners.

In summary, the curriculum moves from a system of language education based on rote learning, linguistic correctness, and cramming of information to a system that promotes autonomous learning, thinking skills, and communicative competence.

Practical Implications

Proper implementation of the new curriculum requires the co-operation of all those involved in the teaching/learning process because it requires radical changes in knowledge, attitude, methodology, instructional materials, and classroom management. The following suggestions are believed to allow for smoother implementation of the proposed curriculum:

1. Close cooperation between ESL and subject matter teachers becomes a necessity. The content area teacher will help make the content more comprehensible, and the language teacher will help language become a facilitator rather than an obstacle to comprehension.

2. A comprehensive staff development program is needed for both ESL and content teachers. The program should include familiarization with theoretical models and methodological orientations as well as practice-teaching activities.

3. ESL teachers should develop at least a layman's knowledge of content area materials. In turn, content area teachers need to improve their communicative skills in English and serve as good models of English language speakers.

Having laid down the basis of the curriculum and identified its features and implications for the practitioner, we hope that it turns out to be as effective in practice as we envisage it to be.

Nonetheless, it would not be out of place to critically have a relook of the existing documents like NCF 2005 and position paper on teaching of English. Some observations may be presented as follows:

- Given the diversity of the country, there is a major deficit of subject expertise and, therefore, neither fragmented remedial measures nor broad brush approach to usher change in teaching of English language in particular and Indian languages in general may not necessarily improve the situation. The focus should be to revamp transactional strategies coupled with global input of knowledge and innovation for organizing future teacher training programme.
- The document stands on its own merit and there is no disputable facts emerged so far; however, somehow the transaction of document in its letter and spirit leaves much to be desired. It has been observed by most of the teachers that the approaches and methods propounded in this document pertaining to teaching and learning of languages (L1/L2) are not being implemented by the teachers working in those rural schools for age-old

constraints including pressure to complete the course for the examination-centric purpose, lack of adequate infrastructural facilities, large chunk of non-trained teachers, large classes and lack of proper students teachers ratio.

- Ideally speaking, the document appears to be very useful but when it comes to the transactional level, things are in inadequate shape and it is difficult to fix accountability for this poor show culminating into unsatisfactory poor performance of underprivileged students who are the worst sufferers. For the privileged students studying in English medium public schools, language learning is not a problem as they have adequate exposure of listening and speaking besides rich infrastructural facilities including language lab /ICT along with committed and considerably competent teachers.
- Language is taught in most of the rural schools through textbooks/guides in the traditional manner emphasizing rote memorization, primarily for passing the examination rather than improving their basic language skills. The teachers' autonomy leaves much to be desired. Content transaction in actual classroom situation thus remains traditional despite the best intention and ability; teachers are not able to practice the latest approaches and methods advocated by the present document.
- The NCF 2005 talks of language learning across the curriculum and subjects, but the fact remains that language learning is confined in language classroom only in most of the schools with the sole accountability of language teachers and the teachers of other subjects confine in content transaction and hardly pay attention to the linguistic proficiency of the students. Language teaching is not aptly done through recent approaches and methods i.e. communicative /constructivist/ audio-lingual / direct methods. Grammar translation method still

dominates in majority of rural schools which seriously affects the learner's ability for verbal and written expressions.

- It has been observed that the judicious use of mother tongue in teaching L2 is very useful in initial stage in rural areas; however, it requires tremendous patience on the part of teachers and In the present scenario teachers in the school have left with no option but to complete the syllabus within the specific timeframe at the behest of the education authority. Since there are many parallel activities the school needs to perform in a calendar year with the result the purpose of learning language gets defeated. It is felt by the group that proper harmony is necessary between micro and macro levels in organisational management.
- Since this position paper advises for the possibilities of improvement in teaching and learning processes of all the languages taught in schools, the variability of attainment occurs due to the following factors: (i) Mother tongue /nearest language of the students are different in the same class in the cities and even in a rural areas home language of the affluent class of family and the downtrodden class of family in a form of different dialects. Hence, school is the only forum where the standardized language is interacted. (ii) English is taught as L1 or L2 in almost every school but the majority of students having other languages as their mother tongue / nearest language. So, the accessibility to this language in school is through teachers and peer group, cinema, TV and Newspapers. So, learning by associating this language in family and vicinity is a distant dream. Despite this irony even the semi-literate uses a lot of English words in his/her expression. Use of ICT could be most potent tool for underprivileged students to develop the specific skills (i.e. LSRW;) as they are often deprived of the

opportunities for enhancement of such skills.

- ICT promises various learning opportunities in creating virtual learning situations in the cyber world. The students are encouraged to watch English movies, songs, skit, debate, etc. ensuring promotion of language comprehension along with effective development of communication skills. It has been observed that quite a few students get attached to print and non-print media. Finally, this augments the language competency and proficiency.
- There is an overriding preference among students for instrumental/utilitarian use of language at the cost of literary and linguistic proficiency. As a result the essence of language teaching is lost. It has been decimated to a subsidiary subject. English has become a means of learning other subjects instead of primary subject of learning like science, mathematics and social science.
- The recent trend in society is on developing the child's communicative ability for English language though desirable; however, the real passion for learning language for literary and aesthetic sensibility is not attained. Therefore, in the classroom students often have a phobia towards poetry in general and English literature in particular. It defeats the very purpose of inclusion of variety of texts to achieve the holistic goal of language teaching.

The present India's polity is struggling hard for sizeable space amongst the developed nations and, therefore, it is the need of the hour not to overstretch the old clichés, rather we should look for out of box solution for PAN –India fulfilment of promises.

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Limitations of Language Teaching in Technical Institutions

* Rajesh Kumar Lidiya

Proficiency in English is the key to open the doors of success in the present global scenario. But unfortunately the situation is quite grim in the technical institutions, particularly in Rajasthan. Technically oriented students cannot make themselves saleable until and unless they master the language for the purpose of meeting their day-to-day demands of dealing with their superiors, co-workers, conversing telephonically with their clients or otherwise, delivering presentations in seminars and conferences, writing e-mails, letters, reports-business or technical, and planning their projects in hard copy with precision of language and subject matter. Technocrats with good communication skills in English have a cutting-edge over those who may be academically very bright, but are incompetent to get their work done because of language problem, especially in a country like India having varied languages and cultures, which hinders their progress in work and conveying the correct message. English language learning is, therefore, a challenge and a pre-requisite to those who want to master it and also those who teach it. The first-generation-learners of the language feel the need of a magic-wand which can help them to learn the intricacies of the baffling and intriguing rules of the language. Hence, when it comes to teaching English as a language in technical institutions, it becomes a Herculean task.

The limitation the teacher faces while dealing with students in technical institutions can be broadly categorized into two types of situations: one is the classroom and the

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other is the Digitalized Language Lab. In the classroom situation, the biggest hindrance ironically is the fluency of the teachers itself, the standard content of the syllabus and to top it all, the phobia of the first-generation-learners of English Language. The teachers fluent in English are complimented as the counterpart of the Britishers, totally inefficient and worthless, and incapable of driving home the nuances, literary aspects and connotations of the language in the easiest way, while teaching literature. The teachers' position becomes pathetic and they are forced to adopt the bilingual method of teaching students, as they come from different states with varied mother-tongues, dialects, accents and pronunciations. Here, the teachers' efficiency of catering to the peculiarities of each student is put to test, and bringing them on a common platform and bridging-up their differences is a challenge. Bilingual method comes as a saviour, but the essence of the language is lost somewhere in the process of understanding the subject. Coming to the syllabus, though very good, it fails to evoke interest of the students. Being trapped in a result-oriented pattern of learning, they are always gripped with the fear of clearing the compulsory paper without any back, and if they manage to scrape through the subject in the exams, it is nothing but a boon and a blessing. The moment English language is taught as a subject, and not merely a language to be learnt additionally, to hone-up their communication skills and develop an all-round personality, the objective behind learning and mastering the language is lost somewhere in the rat-race of the result-oriented pattern, where marks outweigh against actual knowledge gained. Eventually, the focus of the teacher is to complete the syllabus on time and that of the students is to get wonderful results, without having actually learnt anything. Though the students are willing and enthusiastic to learn the language seriously, the pressure of other mainstream technical subjects, meeting the deadlines of sessionals and practicals, washes it away. Time falls short in the semester and by the time they get acclimatized to the environment of the technical institution, the University exams are on their head. Hence, having no

choice and English being their least priority in their list of subjects, they end up learning by rote. Indirectly, there is financial pressure also working upon them, because of which they want to anyhow scrape through their papers in one attempt itself, as many of them have taken loans to study and want to complete their Engineering within four years so that they can support their families. So, the whole focus is to clear the paper without any back, rather than gain command over it by making extra efforts. The teachers are left with no option but are under tremendous pressure to give away best results after evaluating their half-answered copies, which is further nightmarish.

In the second kind of situation, that is, teaching in the Digitalized Language Lab, the problems are all the more technical and chaotic due to lack of technologically savvy teachers and students, mismatches between what has been studied in theory in the classroom and what is actually needed in the lab, few opportunities to practice and review what has been already learnt due to lack of infrastructure and mass absenteeism because of indulgence in various other activities of the college. In such prevailing circumstances, the teachers are forced to wind-up the further shortened semester, by marking them for their attendance and performances, complying with the demands of the Management in private engineering colleges.

Though a revolution has been brought about in the classrooms by relying upon technology, which has its own advantages and disadvantages, but the fact remains that the computers cannot replace the older methods of teaching and learning. The advantage is that learning has become easier and speedier for all kinds of learners at the click of a mouse and a sea of knowledge is available to the students. The Digitalized Language Labs provide a lot of visually-aided learning material besides following the LSRW pattern i.e. Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing, in the form of various exercises, whereby the alertness and awareness of the students is put to test. The computers mark the students on the spot and help them in self-analysis and give

them an opportunity to improvise upon the language, practically in the lab. It requires a revision of what has already been done in the theory class. Vocabulary and grammar are integrated systematically and basic knowledge of phonetics helps improve their speech with correct pronunciation of the English language. The teacher can control and cater to the whole class with the help of the Hi-Class software, and at the same time take control over students' computer, if required. They can observe, broadcast, record or give an online test sitting at a place. Communication is made easier and effortless through intercom, group-talk in a focussed manner and remote message, without disturbing the classroom activities. Thus, the students can prepare themselves to take up online tests for entry into foreign Universities. The Language Lab is full of fun and learning.

But at the same time, the Digitalized Language Lab also has some drawbacks. It has resulted in shifting of focus from actual communication skills and interactive abilities between students and teachers and among their classmates. Individual learning is emphasized and socialization is retarded. Computer Assisted Language Learning enables the learner to look beyond the conventional mode of learning and encourages self-learning (Rao & Thilakha, 2010, 224). Besides, for the students who are not technically savvy and also belong to the lower economic strata of society, attending such labs are merely a ritualistic activity confined to a day in a week, instead of a regular classroom interaction, which is disadvantageous. Again phobia of not being able to operate the computers or to comprehend the instructions of the teachers, or lack of proper infrastructural facilities according to the ratio of students, hampers learning. Technology can enhance traditional methods of learning but cannot replace the human touch. Ultimately, the quality of the class will depend solely on the quality of the teacher and not the presence of technology. Absenteeism further aggravates the problem in the labs as there are students who want their degrees without putting in any efforts, and show-up only

during the end of the semester, which is all the more problematic. This is because in the limited span of time the student is expected to complete assignments and perform with just a single demonstration of the various software available to teach language. Everything then seems farcical.

Lastly, lack of proficiency in handling hardware and software by the teachers themselves obstructs learning in the labs. Training in technology is a critical ingredient in the effective use of technology in classrooms (Mouza, 2003, 274). Lack of on-the-spot trouble-shooters, that is, the technical support, during the ongoing lab work, is quite irritating, and frustrating to the already overloaded teachers, who are not able to deliver what they want to according to their pre-planned schedule. Teachers who are supported are less likely to feel threatened and develop more positive attitudes toward technology (Diem, 2000, 495). All said and done lack of additional incentives and appreciation by the technical institutions investing more on technology than on the teachers further worsens-up the situation making the teachers lethargic towards making any extra effort apart from the usual traditional methods adopted by others, who are not technically sound.

To conclude, there is an urgent need to have more classes, practically involving students to interact with peers, visualize through various aids, organize, analyze, reproduce and develop a flair in using English language. Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing pattern should be strictly followed rather than merely forcing them to learn by rote the various rules of grammar and reproducing them in the worst possible expressive language, which is a kind of torture to the teachers. Self-motivation and awareness of the current global scenario should be inculcated as the first step to get initiated into language learning, without which they remain clueless, regarding what to express. Literary activities like Debate, Extempore, Group-Discussions, situational Dialogue- Writing and speaking, Role-plays and characterization should be held every week to boost their confidence, bringing their creativity to the fore and make

them speak before a selected audience, wherein the focus should be on speaking correct English compulsorily with an accent deciphered and not misconstrued by others. Technical jargons related to their profession should be taught to the students. Language learning can be made entertaining and creativity can be put to test, keeping at bay all the pressures of the technical institution. It should be obviously a two way process, with teachers facilitating the students to open-up. Teachers should motivate students for participative learning (Kannan, 2009, 4).

The whole proposition can be summed up by the fact that it is the quality and passion of the teacher, despite all limitations, to make the students learn and acquire knowledge which they hate to hunt. The teacher should not ever give-up thinking that the whole exercise is futile and going deep down the abyss. It is responsibility of the teacher to create an awareness of the need to learn English language for their better employability and make them feel-home with the subject erasing away all kinds of pressure at that juncture. They have to be constantly on the watch- out regarding their performance and motivate them to do their work sincerely and with full concentration.

Finally, it should be well understood that the availability of a good technology facility itself does not automatically impact positively on teacher's teaching performance. It is their ability to integrate it well in their teaching which influences the outcome (Marwan7).

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Hamid Dalwai: A Central Voice from the Margin

*Shiv Kumar Yadav

“The only way to deal with an unfree world is to become so absolutely free that your very existence is an act of rebellion.”
—Albert Camus

While thinking of Hamid Dalwai, two names come to my mind, and they are Kabir from our tradition and Camus from the West. The real rebels! The rebels are those “whistle blowers” who ring the bell continuously to wake up those fellow persons who slumber in their grandfathers’ tents without realizing the on-going and awaiting changes. Disturbing the sleep is an act of rebellion. Rarely rebels are heard during their lives and times; but the truth always triumphs. Like Kabir and Camus, Hamid Umar Dalwai is also from the marginalized space in terms of geography, geneology as well as language and learning. He was born in a Marathi-speaking Muslim family in the Ratnagiri district of Konkan (Mirjoli village near Chiplun). R.C. Guha, who has included his name in the catalogue of Makers of Modern India, introduces him as follows:

Our last maker of modern India was, like his fellow Maharashtrian Tarabai Shinde, little known in his life time and has been largely forgotten since. Like Tarabai again, the details of his personal biography are obscure. The parallels continue – for what we do know of life and work is largely owed to the devoted labours of editor and translator.¹

Hamid Dalwai was born in 1932 on the same Konkan coast where Gokhale and Tilak first saw the light of day. There the similarities end; whereas the other two were middle class Brahmins. Dalwai was born in a working class Muslim

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household. We know nothing of his formal education. He does not appear to have attended college. In his early teens he joined a nationalist youth organization the Rashtra Seva Dal, the only Muslim in his village to do so.” (2)

When Dalwai joined Rashtra Seva Dal, he faced hostile reaction from parents and other Muslims. He was cautioned “One should not leave one’s own fold. Muslims should stay among Muslims :”³ But he defied and this was his, perhaps, first step to think straight and out of box too. He also joined politics and that too very early. First joined Congress Socialist Party of Jay Prakash Narayan, then Socialist Party, then Praja Socialist Party, then Socialist Party (Lohia one) – Samyukta Socialist. He was not happy with any Parties as they failed to take up a clear hard line on Muslim Communalism. He confessed to Dilip Chitre in his interview that “They are all equally reluctant to undertake the task of real social transformation which is the crux of the problem.”⁴ On 22nd March 1970, he also established an organization Muslim Satya Shodhak Mandal (Muslim Truth Seeking Society) in Pune to ensure social reform in Muslim society by creating more and more secular space in life and living of the Muslims of India. Later, he formed ‘Muslim Secular Society’ and organized many public meetings, gatherings, conventions, conferences to campaign for better social practices. He worked as journalist and also devoted some time to write a novel “Indhan” (Fuel) and ‘Lat’ (Wave), a collection of short stories. But he is more famous for his thought provoking essays published in the book entitled *Muslim Politics in Secular India* (1970) (translated by Dilip Chitre in English). His other works in Marathi are – *Islam che Bhartiya Chitra* (Islam’s Indian Story) and *Rashtriya Ekamata aani Bhartiya Musalman* (National Unity and Indian Muslim) in Marathi.

More than an essayist and writer, he was a social reformer, thinker and activist. He was so convinced and clear at his level of understanding as to the Muslim history, history of the world and India as well as the nature, role and importance of religion in the life of human beings, that made

him, perhaps, a strong believer of the truth – “There are no nations, but only persons”⁵, which actually changed him into a passionate activist. We ‘must recognize the fact’, writes A.C. Benson, ‘that most people’s convictions are not the result of reason, but mass of associations, traditions, things half understood, phrases, examples, loyalties, whims.’⁶ Unlike the most people, Hamid’s convictions are based on scientific and rational facts deriving from multiple interpretations of studies. That’s why one feels Baconian brilliance in his thoughts and expression which helps one to get agreed with him within no time. A.P. Shah, the president of Indian Secular Forum, writes in his foreword to Hamid’s book *Muslim Politics in Secular India*, “I shall not try to summarize Mr. Dalwai’s views in this foreword, for the simple reason that I am in almost total agreement with him.”⁷

Hamid Dalwai’s organization and activism did focus on the following areas:

- The enhancement of the rights of Muslim women;
- Abolition by law and in custom, the practice of triple talaq and polygamy, as well as purdah (burka);
- Advocating uniform (common) civil code for all Indian citizens.,
- Campaign to erase communal markers and distinctions in public life (e.g.removing of beard);
- Promoting people to have education in state language rather than in mother tongue, Urdu;
- Making adoption an acceptable practice in the Muslim community.

Even today we don’t imagine having a procession of Muslim women to place their demands to the government as regards their welfare and justice. Hamid Dalwai did organize first ever morchha of Muslim women in Bombay (now Mumbai) during the early seventies to the Chief Minister, demanding the modernization of Muslim Personal Law. Similar show repeated in Pune which was more successful than the first one. Despite being quite aware of the difficulties in his movement against the social oppression, orthodoxy, injustice and deformities, he dealt with all odds and opposition with

tremendous equanimity and worked towards social reform without getting discouraged at the slow rate of success. His early death at the age of 44 (like Albert Camus, 46) in 1977, due to kidney failure caused a huge loss to Indian society as the present political and social scenario of our country is more gloomy and hopeless. None like Hamid is in our sight who can give impetus to the cause of social reform and social debate to ensure more secular and humanistic India for the generation of the day.

After having a brief biographical sketch, it is, now, important to deliberate upon core concern of the paper: why Hamid Dalwai should be listened and discussed?

Most of his writings and activism actually revolve around his dream to integrate the Muslims of India into the fabric of our secular nationalism. To fulfil his dream, first, he wanted to change the attitude of Indian Muslims towards democracy and modernism so that some enlightened liberal intellectual leadership from amongst Indian Muslim can be developed. All his analyses related to history of Islam and Muslim, as well as communal ideology and politics were intended to understand the problem in its entirety.

If we look back, communalism as an ideology and as politics has been the same, more or less, from 1857 to 1947 and till the day. Earlier our social divisions were being exploited by the British to their advantage till the Independence .Thereafter the same is in being done by the pseudo- secularists and the communalists. The true secular and liberal humanists are not only out of the politics but lack the enthusiasm and energy of the religiously secular Hamid Dalwai. Both the Muslims and the Hindus liberal, secular modernist thinkers are in minuscule minority and also not united. As a result of this, *Mazhab ki Siyasi Dukandari* (political trade in religion), in the words of K.M. Ashraf⁸, has been going on without any hindrance. The political system treats the symptoms of communalism without addressing the root causes. Bipin Chandra, the great modern historian, who wrote two books on modern Indian history –

'India's Struggle for Independence' and 'India After Independence' – and devoted four chapters covering 44 pages on communalism in India, writes: “ Great care has to be exercised in making a social analysis of communalism, which should be based on serious empirical and the theoretical research.”⁹

But one would be taken aback to find that he did not notice the scintillating analysis of the Muslim and the Hindu communalism done by Hamid Dalwai which is rooted in the socio-political as well as religious matrices. This also indicates that the truths at the margin do not take the central space if they are not pushed with the help of mass movement. Perhaps that was the reason Hamid Dalwai became an activist rather than a litterateur. In order to be heard at the central level, it was necessary, in Dalwai's opinion, to change or reform the Muslim society like Bengal renaissance of 19th century did in the Hindu society.

Now coming to his forthright opinions on Hindu- Muslim relationships, which are quite different from the ones which were discussed during the period of India's struggle for independence i.e. the purely political, always viewed in the context of power-sharing arrangement and the British role of the parable monkey between the two cats with a piece of bread. The book *Muslim Politics in Secular India* has twelve chapters, which are as follows:

1. Historical Background – Burden of History
2. Reading the Mind of Indian Muslims
3. Muslims : The So called Nationalists and the Communalists
4. The Communal Malady: A Diagnosis.
5. Strange Bed fellows: Communists Intimacy with Communalists.
6. The Chief Obstacle in the Way of Muslim Integration.
7. Muslim opposition to Secular Integration: Nature,

Causes and Remedies.

8. Humanistic Modernism, the only Solution.
9. Indian Muslims at the Crossroads.
10. Failure of a Mission?
11. The Meaning of Bangladesh.
12. The Angry young Secularist

The last one is actually an interview given by Hamid Dalwai to Dilip Chitre, which can be summary capsule of his thoughts and vision as to problems and prospects of Muslims' integration into India at all levels- social, psychological, political and economic ones.

All the eleven above mentioned essays were written in different periods with different angles in different contexts but later published in the form of a book. Hence, one can find a lot of repetitions but in a different way. But what is remarkable is that at his level of ideas and ideologies, he is never inconsistent and contradictory which shows that Hamid was a man of settled convictions. All his thoughts and historical facts are so clear and transparent that demands no further explanations. In other words, all his propositions and postulates are quite self-explanatory in nature. In order to present his thoughts before you; I have divided them into two parts, the first, Problems; the second one, Suggestions.

Problems:

“..... Indian Muslim intelligentsia has never really been critically introspective. It has not sought to relate its problems to its own attitudes. It has not developed self-searching, self-critical attitude.” (MOMAP. 492,)

“When Sir Syed Ahmad Khan urged Muslims to accept modern western education the Ulema of Deoband came out with the fatwa that Sir Syed was a kafir. (MOMAP-493,)

“..... When it was possible for a national consciousness to emerge, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan himself succumbed to the

egoistic conception that Muslims were the conquerors of India. . Sir Syed was the father of separatist Muslim nationalism, and not Jinnah as it is erroneously supposed. Jinnah is only a later version of Sir Syed.” (MOMAP-494,)

“The foundation of Muslim nationalism is the postulate that Hindu and Muslim societies are autonomous and parallel social structures.”(MOMAP.494,)

“In sum, Muslims cannot reconcile themselves with the nationalism of any country where they are in a minority.” (MPSIP-35,)

“It appears that all so-called secular parties in India are agreed upon keeping Indian Muslims in their medieval state.” (MPSIP-47,)

“Muslims believe Islam to be the latest and therefore the most perfect religion. They regard Mohammad as the last and the final prophet. Therefore they believe that there cannot be any new religion after the advent of Islam.” (MPSIP-44,)

“ The Muslim mind is still under the spell of medieval faith.” (MPSIP.45,)

“Independence, according to Muslims is synonymous with all power being concentrated in the hands of the Muslim community. It is in this sense that they regard Pakistani Muslims as free and Indian Muslims as still in bondage.”(MPSIP.45,)

“It is true that Gandhi and Nehru failed to keep the country undivided through secular integration. But this failure is not theirs alone. It is the collective failure of all of us. The stark reality is that Hindu society does not have the strength and capacity to accept this challenge. This painful reality was recognized by Gandhi, Nehru and Patel. Those Hindu communalists who abuse Gandhi and Nehru most vehemently do not recognize this reality and this is even more painful.”(MPSIP.44,)

“It was a conflict between the secular nationalism of

Gandhi and Nehru and the religious nationalism of Indian Muslims.” (MPSIP.44,)

“Every communal riot has helped the growth of Muslim communalist forces.” (MPSIP.52,)

“The P.M. wants to eradicate communalism from the land, but she is indulging in self-deception if she feels that she can curb Hindu communalist forces by conniving at Muslim separatism.”(MPSIP.54,)

“Appeasement of Muslim obscurantism forces would only jeopardize the future of our secular nationalism.”(MPSIP.54,)

“Islamic personal law runs contrary to the modern notions of human rights.”(MPSIP.66,)

“But I must frankly state that there is a kind of Hindu who is always terrified when he thinks of Muslims. This is no doubt a shameful state of affairs. At every critical moment this particular type of Hindu pretends to be more of a Muslim than a Muslim himself, and thwarts the attempts of those who are trying to make the average Muslim less of a fanatic.”(MPSIP.62,)

“It must be remembered that the obscurantism of one community helps to strength the obscurantism of other communities.”(MPSIP.72,)

They (Muslims) suffer from delusions of grandeur and also from a persecution mania”(MPSIP.67,)

“Muslims continue to regard themselves as an autonomous society within the nation.” (MPSIP.79,)

Suggestions:

“A Nationalist Muslim is one who regards nationalism as an advocacy of national interests based on contemporary concepts of fundamental ethical values embodying humanism and secular justice.” (MPSI,40)

“Hindu communalists should not continue to make the tragic blunder of mistaking every Muslim for a communalist.

It is true that today it is difficult to find a thoroughly secular Muslim in India. But if we want secular-minded Muslims in the near future, we must encourage and support those Muslims who are already stepping in that direction".(MPSI,25)

"The idea of a common Indian nationality requires that Muslim society be integrated in the fabric of a secular Indian society. The only way in which this can be achieved is by first creating a small class of modern, liberal and secular Muslims. This is previously what people like me are attempting to do." (MPSI, 24)

"The problem of national integration cannot be solved by appeasing Muslim separatism. It can be solved only be consciously fostering liberal modern trends among the Muslims. The policy of appeasement adopted by the so-called secular parties is really hindering this transformation." (MPSI, 54)

"As modern men, we do not rely on religion for deriving our concept of social conscience. Our social conscience is inherent in the democratic system of government we have accepted. The democratic ethic is liberal and is therefore heterodox. It is thus necessary for a democracy to be secular, that is, totally dissociated from religion, to be a democracy at all." (MPSI, 65)

"If Muslims are to be integrated in the fabric of a secular and integrated Indian society, a necessary precondition is to have a class of Muslim liberal who could continuously assail communalist dogmas and tendencies. Such Muslim liberals, along with Hindu liberals and others, would comprise a class of modern Indian liberals."(MPSI, 66)

"An intellectual minority helps to shape the rest of society on proper lines. The progress of a society is measured by the existence and size of its intellectual minority."(MPSI, 62)

"People had a right to express their opinions — even if they were wrong opinions and even if they were opinions

about the prophet."(MPSI, 61)

"Hindus can accept the challenge of Muslim politics in India only by developing dynamism and a balance of mind. But to develop such dynamism Hindu orthodoxy itself has to be liquidated. The caste system has to be eliminated. The Hindu must embrace modernism. They must create a society based on fundamental human values and the concept of true social equality. Unfortunately the Hindu mind lacks the balance."(MPSI, 71)

"If Hindu obscurantism is attacked and eliminated, it would also be a strong blow to Muslim obscurantism."(P.73, MPSI, 73)

"We have to support Muslim modernism in India. We have to insist on a common personal law for all citizens of India."(MPSI,74)

"All marriages in India must be registered under a common civil code."(P.74MPSI)"

"Religion conversion should not be allowed, except when the intending convert is adult and the conversion takes place before a magistrate."(MPSI, 74)

"Children born of inter-religious marriages should be free to practice any religion but only after they reach legal adulthood."(MPSI, 74)

"If either a dargah or a temple obstructs the passage of traffic on a thoroughfare, it ought to be removed."(MPSI, 74)

"Government should have control over the income of all religious property. The income should be spent on education and public welfare alone."(MPSI, 75)

"It shouldn't be obligatory to mention religion and caste."(MPSI, 75)

"Family planning should be made compulsory for all." (MPSI,75)

Many such types of small measures of high importance

have been mentioned by Hamid Dalwai. After having gone through his deliberations and dissection of different deformities of Muslim and Hindu communalism and politics, as well as his suggestions to eradicate them from the public and political space, one can't doubt his integrity, sincerity and effort as to the promotion of secular nationalism and modern humanism, that too within constitutional framework, in Indian society. One can question his passion and aggression in his promotion of his thoughts and actions, but the way the political governance after Independence has been and is being done, it is quite imperative to quicken the value enshrined in our socio-political document, the Constitution of India, as Hamid did not try to promote which can be declared anti-constitutional in any way.

Another deduction from his deliberations can be derived as to communal ideology and politics, commonly referred to as communalism, is in the words of Rahul Bhattacharya, that "Identity is a political idea as well"¹⁰ Entire communal politics revolves around the politics of identity, which is a plural concept in the eyes of Amartya Sen, "Identity is, thus, a quintessentially plural concept, with varying relevance of different identities in distinct contexts. And most importantly, we have choice over what significance to attach to our different identities."¹¹

If Rahul Bhattacharya and Amartya Sen are logical as they seem to be in their posits, then Hamid Dalwai is also politically and sociologically correct. Muslims of India like other parts of the world are consuming a lot of time to reconcile with the fact that modern state of the world actually has been heading towards single identity and that is of human beings, though slowly but surely.

Dalwai died in May 1977 and after that many things happened like banning of a book by Salman Rushdie, altering the judgment of Supreme Court in Shahbano case, Babri Masjid demolition, Godhra carnage. I wish he were here to opine himself in open and frank manner. Isn't it a truth that economically and scientifically India is growing but socially we still stand there where we were in 1947. None of

the thoughts of anyone can be closed as the final and ultimate truth, but to go through them with an open mind can help humanity at large. Dalwai was quite aware of the fact that he might be misunderstood by his fellow countrymen and that's why he wrote: "It is obvious why the Muslim reaction to my views should be as adverse as it is. It is also understandable why the Hindus who believe that my articles and speeches are aimed at confusing them."¹²

We are free to take our stand but Dalwai was not confused when he chose to go on unsafe path to create modern secular and democratic consciousness among Indian Muslims.

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Conceptual Modifications in Teaching of English Language and Literature (TELL)

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Introduction

British Imperialism and the fundamental simplicity of vocabulary and grammar have contributed to the phenomenal growth of English language, and thought provoking ideas of English writers presented with poetic sensibilities have enriched English literature. Innumerable creative minds today make use of English language as an efficient tool for effective communication. A great proportion of world population these days can understand, speak and write in this popular language. English was introduced in colonial countries like India by British rulers for the purpose of imperial administration. Observed closely, one can understand that English is loved by many people in these countries. While commenting on the essential changes taking place in the use of English language and how it has been transforming into different varieties, a scholar in English studies said:

English is spoken everywhere, and everybody owns it because they need it. It no longer belongs to the land of its

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birth alone: it commands as many accents as there are nations; and it has as many varieties as there are English speaking communities and professional groups (Soundararaj 2012).

If industrial revolution has generated economic growth, the English language revolution has created a decent social order. The disheartening thing is that English is learned through ineffective methods of teaching and taught by the less skilled or undertrained teachers. Furthermore, many financially unsound academic institutions are not able to provide necessary infrastructure for teaching this important language with the right audio-visual support. Apparently, nowadays, English language is either spoken in inaccurate pronunciation or written in incorrect syntax. On the other hand the essence of English literature is not understood properly by the budding learners. All such conditions demand the application of simpler methods of English learning and teaching. Moreover, the present globalization trend demands the use of correct English with which the dream of a global village can be materialised totally.

Evolutionary changes and emerging trends in English Language Learning and Teaching (ELLT)

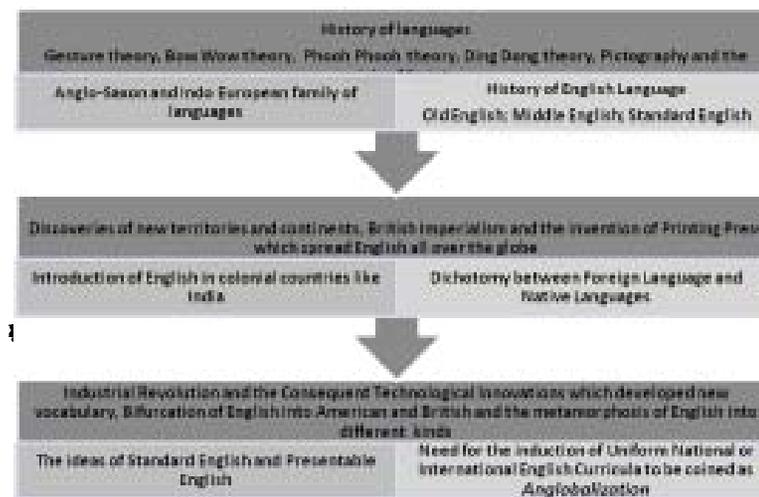
Before embarking on the voyage of English studies, it is essential for both students and teachers to know the historicity of English as a popular language. The historical landmarks in European history such as the Romans' domination over the Britons, the Germanic invasions on England, the consequent victory of Anglo Saxons, the impact of Indo-European family of languages have contributed to the evolution of English language. Similarly, various socio-political conditions became responsible for the origin and development of English literature. The other important factors such as the spread of Christianity, the Church as a cultural force, Anglo Saxon literature, the Norman Conquest, Renaissance, French Revolution, Romantic tradition, Industrial Revolution, the British Imperialism and the two World Wars have also contributed for the growth and

expansion of English language. Having identified the ever changing nature of English language F T Wood opined:

Secondly we must realise that language is (and always has been) evolutionary, not static. Change is constantly going on. If we look at a passage from Chaucer (who was writing towards the end of the fourteenth century) and compare it with the English that is spoken and written today, it is obvious that the language has altered considerably in the intervening five hundred years or more; and if we go even further back to the early Anglo-Saxon period, we find even greater difference (Wood 1969).

Though an “Iron Curtain” separated East from the West, English has pierced through the great barrier with its mighty power of thought and action. The great discoveries made by Christopher Columbus, Vasco da Gama, Ferdinand Magellan and Captain James Cook have also played their significant role in the spread of this global language. One can find significant changes in both vocabulary and syntax between old English and Middle English which finally emerged as Standard English. The invention of printing press was responsible for the standardization of English and the invention of computer is responsible for the growth of new dimensions in English. It is interesting to note that the glorious academic English used by the scholars in Oxford and Cambridge universities has been metamorphosed into different classification such as Business English, Functional English, Spoken English, and Soft Skills etc. Figure 1 shows the origin and growth of English language.

Figure 1: Evolutionary changes in English



Conventional methods of ELLT

English language in our day is being learnt through different procedures but internationally acceptable procedural strategies or process designs are not accessible to the student community. For instance, lack of uniform or centralized English teaching curricula is the main reason for spreading inaccurate and imperfect English to Indian Students. One can understand that the federal system of Indian Administration facilitates formation of governments at different levels namely regional, provincial and central. Each government missionary makes its own policies for Education, Industry, and Agriculture etc. With regard to English, multiple methods of learning and teaching strategies hamper the understanding of the true picture of this powerful language. Everyone is aware that somewhere something is going wrong in the formulation English teaching policies.

In some cases, irrelevant topics of English Language and Literature are prescribed for the students who do not actually make benefit of it. The study of phonetics is

introduced suddenly at a wrong time in their education. The teachers who do not have knowledge of phonetics are asked to teach pronunciation at the undergraduate and post-graduate levels. From the students' point of view, it becomes a hard task for them to learn English accent at advanced stages of their studies for the reason that they have to unlearn the wrongly taught pronunciation they learned in the early stages of their education. Besides all this, the study of Shakespearean dramas is introduced to the students of Bio-chemistry and Commerce whose thoughts are oriented around their respective fields of studies only.

It is disheartening to note that this popular language is not properly learnt and perfectly taught for the obvious reasons that academic institutions have been using traditional methods of TELL. A uniform method or design of learning of English is not made available in a single comprehensive book. It can further be noticed that numerous books are available for teaching vocabulary and grammar and varied methods are adapted by the teachers to teach English in their individual styles. This infuses confusion in getting a panoramic picture of word power, syntax, speaking skills and writing skills. The fundamental activities like LSRW skills are given emphasis with improper infrastructural facilities. An average learner of English does not know where to start the learning of vocabulary and how to begin the study of grammar. More alarming situation is that Phonetics which is the most essential part of English learning is not included in the curricula of many educational systems. Hence English is used in numerous accents and dialects. The MTI (the magnetic pull of mother tongue) becomes an obstacle in the process of speaking with correct pronunciation.

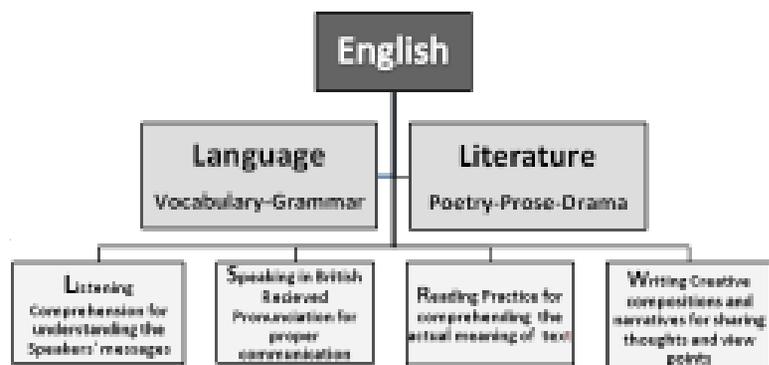
Students are forced to learn similar exercises in vocabulary such as synonyms and antonyms at almost all levels of their education. Likewise articles, prepositions, paragraph writing, letter writing, and comprehension are taught at all levels which normally become monotonous and uninteresting. Everybody studies vocabulary and grammar without knowing the fundamental meanings and definitions

of such terminology. The heterogeneous natures of society from which the English teachers emerge also make it difficult in understanding the essence of this language. Yet another disturbing element is that English students at the post-graduation level in many universities are taught the aspects of literature only. But when they enter the teaching profession they are asked to teach the details of LSRW skills, pronunciation and soft skills. All these conditions make it so confusing and make it difficult for better learning and effective teaching.

Contemporary Socio-Economic conditions: Need for Paradigm Shift in English studies

Language is a science and literature is an art. Language is a means of verbal medium for expressing or communicating ideas, feelings, experiences and realizations (Sharma 2005). A dedicated grammarian is interested in expressing an idea with perfect syntax where as an imaginative poet or writer likes to convey thought provoking ideas thorough symbolic expressions and metaphorical meanings with various denotations and connotations. A student of language using the structural aspects of sentence namely subject and predicate may say "Mumbai Port is helping us in many ways" but a creative writer in literature using his/her poetic sensibilities and magical rhyming words may say "Mumbai port is our support".

The essence of fruits can be had in different forms and flavours. In a similar fashion, the glory of language and literature can be learnt or taught in different styles without disturbing the central theme to suit the needs of present day learners. When it is believed that there is a need for paradigm shift in ELLT methods, the fundamental elements of language need not necessarily be changed but the manner in which we comprehend and teach can be done in varied approaches. Figure 2 depicts the main aspects of English studies and makes it convenient for quick understanding of major functions of language.

Figure 2: Classification of English

English terms are proliferating with additional knowledge being discovered in Science and Humanities. Learning activity done through simplified language tools can make the revival of thought more meaningful and less unintelligible. The new employment conditions and job markets demand the use of soft skills in business organizations and public administration. All such conditions compel the paradigm shift in English learning methods and teaching practices.

Experimental Designs and Innovative Techniques of ELLT

The natural phenomena of falling apple brought out the significant law of universal gravity in science and fascinatingly enough the same apple becomes the first word in learning English vocabulary. The uniform route map of enriching English vocabulary is not made available to the students in many educational institutions. Hence, an average learner is puzzled in understanding various functions of words namely spelling, pronunciation, specific category in parts of speech and different shades of meanings conveyed through it. The learning or teaching of vocabulary can be done in different phases such as:-

- a) Understanding the significance of words
- b) Illustrations to understand the value of word power
- c) Different techniques for memorising words and meanings.
- d) Certain facts about vocabulary
- e) Classification of vocabulary
- f) Making phrases by combining the words
- g) Teaching literature to budding creative minds

Significance of English words:

Words do possess some magical powers. Like sparks of wisdom they illumine the ignorant minds. Words give knowledge and knowledge is believed to be power. So, logically speaking people with rich vocabulary obviously become so powerful to comprehend the world or to manage the masses in organizations. Again one can say that words can govern human thought and action. One cannot imagine the life of humans without using these words in their social relationships and administrative systems. Words can motivate and inspire human minds and can also make and unmake things. People come across many words in their life time which help them to comprehend the world around them. Every single word contains piece of information or knowledge.

Illustrations for knowing the purpose of words:

As part of an illustration, students can be taught small little tales for understanding the significance of words. A sample story for this purpose narrates an adventurous voyage in sea in which a ship wreck causes the loss of many lives. The sole survivor reaches an island of pearls, diamonds, sapphires, jades, rubies and emeralds and he would become so greedy to collect as many stones as he can and all those diamonds give him the light of joy and scintillating happiness. The diamonds like words with their bright meanings can illuminate the ignorant minds with their light of wisdom.

Sometimes thoughtful sayings can also be used to explain the significance of words such as *Know the Word; Know the World; Many words have worlds in themselves; Some words emit the halo of magical powers* etc.

Different memory techniques for gaining rich vocabulary:

English words are expected to be learnt by heart. Half-hearted study of words does not help to register the meanings and other functions of words in human memory. They can be remembered through various memory techniques. The following illustrations may be useful for enriching one's English lexicon. Human mind is a lazy organ to receive and record new sets of words but if those minds are persuaded to register the new words with memory techniques they will never go out until the last breath of a person. All that is required is Anglo-mania or true love towards words and meaning. O Henry's saying "when one loves one's Art no service seems too hard" is an apt reference to understand the utter simplicity of word power development.

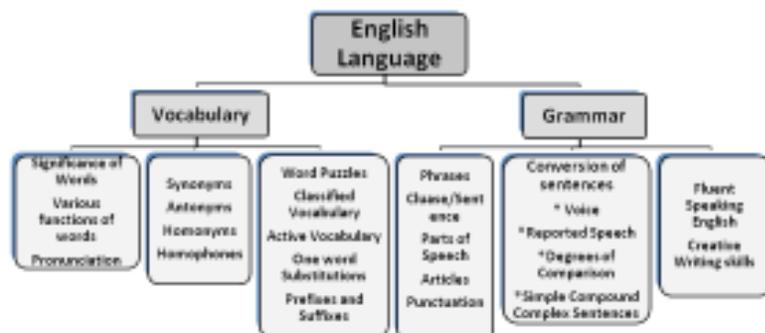
- One can find the meaning of many terms in the words themselves such as:
 - Grasshopper (a creature that hops on the blades of the grass)
 - Biology (Bio means life, logy means study → Study of life)
 - Bureaucracy (Bureau means writing table, Cracy means rule → rule by public officials)
- Attaching a password or making word associations can also help in good remembrance of English words. For example the word *lectern* which means a wooden table for delivering lectures may be linked with the already known word 'Lecture' and it helps to surface the required word from the unfathomable depth of human mind and create an everlasting memory.

Certain facts about vocabulary:

Until senior secondary class, language learning is a forced activity to many students. And in the later stages the self-motivated students with high career aspirations get the true essence of English language but rest of the people gain the superficial and insufficient language skills only. According to lexicography sources, nearly 600000 words are incorporated in various English dictionaries. An average speaker in London has approximately 5000 words of word power. In reality, word power of 2000-3000 is sufficient enough for daily conversations but when ones become ambitious to increase their number one can speak fluently with dense confidence. It is said that Sir Winston Churchill had 60000 words of vocabulary with which he ruled his people and also conquered the dictatorial tendencies of axis powers during the period of Second World War. Making use of rich vocabulary, a person today can know himself/herself, his/her fellow beings and his/her natural and social environs.

Making phrases by combining the words:

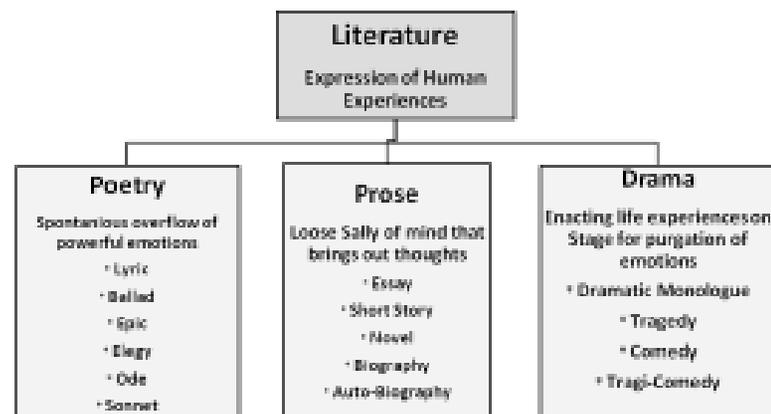
Teaching sentence construction and other aspects of grammar without proper training in making phrases may not really develop students' syntax skills. So it is advised to teach the art of composing meaningful phrases using creative faculties like emotions, feelings and imagination. The phrases like Earth and Heaven; the blue sky and green fields; the setting sun and twinkling stars; the waning and waxing of moon; colourful flowers and singing birds, God's creation and man's procreation; human misery and heavenly bliss can inspire the learners to generate numerous thoughtful word combinations. The learners must know that thought springs first and language is only a tool for expression of thoughts. So they are advised to develop creative thinking first and learn language next. Later on the elements of grammar can be taught with methodical procedures. Figure 3 illustrates the logical order of teaching English vocabulary and grammar.

Figure 3 Categories of English

Teaching literature to budding creative minds:

Nature is filled either with enchanting beauty of vales and fields or with the misery of living beings. A sensitive poet or writer who is moved by the moving situations and circumstances begin to become emotional about it, feels much on the subject and becomes very imaginative to bring out inspiring thoughts and finally presents them in musical lyrics or meaningful essays. Sensory perceptions and thoughts supplied by mind make literary treatises and they again stimulate innovative ideas.

Students in educational institutions are asked to study poetry, prose and drama without explicating to them the meaning, significance and classification of literature. English words become literature when the writers blend their creative imagination with them. Literature is replete with thought and philosophy with which people can comprehend both physical and metaphysical worlds. In short, literature is an expression of human experiences (both mundane and divine) with which they can become seers to know the mysteries of God's creation. It also develops the creative faculties of students to become talented artists or skilful artisans. Figure 4 can serve the purpose of having the panoramic picture of literature and demonstrates its different aspects.

Figure 4 Elements of Literature

Conscious efforts of New Era English Teachers and the Educational Institutions

Promising scholars and teachers of English need to make practical experiments in linguistics studies and evolve internationally acceptable TELL strategies to make it more purposeful. Using their creative abilities, they can suggest some experimental methods of clearer learning and better methods of teaching vocabulary, grammar and forms of literature.

Despite the changing status of approaches and methods in language teaching, the study of past and present teaching methods continues to form a significant component of teacher preparation programs. The reasons for this are the following:

- The study of approaches and methods provides teachers with a view of how the field of language teaching has evolved.
- Approaches and methods can be studied not as prescriptions for how to teach but as a source of well-used practices, which teachers can adapt or

implement based on their own needs (Richards & Rodgers 2001).

Educational institutions need to provide necessary infrastructure for imparting the technical aspects of English language. They need to set up language laboratories in which the students can have good practice in the technical aspects of language like phonemes, syllables, stress, tone, intonation, accent and dialect. As soft skills became the order of the day in industrial, business and administrative circles, it is again imperative on their part to provide proper soft skills training through Skill Development Centres to enable the students, job seekers, employees and general public become better communicators.

Conclusion

To sum up the important findings of this paper it is necessary here to mention the importance of paradigm shifts in learning and teaching of English Language as well as Literature. The genesis of English language and Literature has been discussed in the paper for understanding their real significance. The present day practices of learning and teaching English have been examined to know their usefulness. The important aspects of vocabulary and grammar have been presented in graphical designs for knowing the logical sequence of studying them. A new word **Anglobalization** may be coined at this juncture to emphasise the need of providing one single process design of TELL to the students in all countries where English is loved, learnt and disseminated.

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An Estimate of Indian Poetry in English

**Sushil Kumar Mishra*

Indian poetry in English obviously began in the backdrop of a historical accident namely—the arrival of the Britishers and their gradual mastery of the Indian people, under the annexation of India by a law of parliament in Britain. At first, it was prose which occupied the attention of Indians who gradually mastered the language with grace and effect. Raja Ram Mohan Roy was obviously first Indian who saw the virtue of learning English language with grace and effect. However, a small group of Indians used language for poetry and for creative purposes. In this small group there were certain pioneers such as C.V. Ramaswamy who was perhaps the earliest Indo-Anglian poet and a translator in verse. The claim therefore, goes to Henry Louis Vivian Derozio and he is usually described as the first Indian English poet. His intellectual idealism and romantic enthusiasm inspired whole generation of youths of Bengal who turned to him for guidance and inspiration. Derozio was a pre- Macaulay poet and produced a significant long poem “A Faqueer of Jungheera” and several short poems (lyrics and sonnets). By modern standards Derozio may appear to be a derivative poet, combining the virtue of Byron and Keats. Some of his notable poems like—”To India My Native Land”, “The Harp of India”, and “To the Pupils of Hindu College”, are well –known to every student. Derozio was a pioneer in the use of myths and legends, imagery and diction which are at once Indian and Western. Derozio was followed by Kashi Prasad Ghose and Michael Madhusudan Dutt.

Towards the end of the 19th century, Dutt family produced two other brilliant poetesses-namely Aru and Toru

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Dutt. Toru Dutt became a legend in her life time. Like Derozio, she also died very young but produced some very beautiful poems which were published posthumously under a title “Ancient Ballads” and “Legends of Hindustan”. Her poems “Savitry”, “Baugmaree”, “Lakshman”, are quite remarkable. Her best known poem is “Our Casuarina Tree”. Toru Dutt’s best poetry exhibits the qualities of quite strength of deep emotion held under artistic restraint and acute awareness of the abiding values of Indian life.

The same Dutt family produces personalities like R. C. Dutt who was a great intellectual and a writer of miscellaneous interests. His “Lays of Ancient India” is a collection of verse translations from Sanskrit and Prakrit classified from such books like “Rig-Veda,” “The Upanishad” and “Dhammapada”, and of course from the great Indian Epics in Sanskrit, “The Mahabharata” and “The Ramayana”. He also translated verse from Kalidash and Bharavi.

Among the younger contemporaries of R. C. Dutt, two Indian poets incidentally both brothers and equally famous, came to the poetic scene. M. K. Naik observes, “Manmohan’s career is a sad story of arrested artistic development and Shri Aurobindo’s glorious chronicle of progress is from patriot to poet, yogi and seer.” Manmohan Ghose wrote some fine poems. His poems were collected after his death under a title “Love Songs and Elegies” and later on as “Songs of love and death”. But only a handful of poems such as “London”, “Songs of Pain”, “Passion”, and “The Mystery of Death,” and two dramatic fragments, “Nullow and “Damyanti”, and “Persus and Gorgon” remained incomplete.

As for Aurobindo, he was certainly a prodigy and it was difficult to measure his poetic achievement which span over a period of sixty years. He wrote all kinds of poem: - lyrical, narrative, philosophical and epic. To start with, his early short poems are usually minor verses of romantic twilight written in the 1890 and dealing with standard romantic theme—such as love, sorrow, death and liberty written in the usual romantic style. Another group of short

poems written during the period of 1890-1900 contain some mystic insight. These poems like "Invitation", and "Revelation", give true indications of Aurobindo's development as mystical poet. Again in the next phase 1902-1930 Aurobindo wrote a group of reflective and symbolic poems which at once reflect his political thought and mystical growth. The poems like "Rakshasas" "The Meditation of Mandavaya", "Transformation," "A Dream of Surreal Science", "Parcelete", and "Rose of God", are some of those poems which show Aurobindo's growth as a highly mystical poet. Finally, he wrote "The Magnum opus" of life called *Urvasi* over a period of twenty years and in 1950 "*Urvasi*," was completed. "*Urvasi*" is a mighty achievement. However, the poem which made Aurobindo immortal was "*Savitri*" which is the most accomplished literary achievement of Aurobindo.

Of all the Indo-Anglian poets, Rabindranath Tagore was certainly the most accomplished poet and he was first major poetic voice in the annals of Indian English verse. Tagore's versatility is truly astonishing but he was basically a Bengali poet and only single poem of Tagore "*The Child*" is written originally in English. Tagore's career as an Indian English poet began just by sheer accident. In 1912, Tagore sailed for England for his medical treatment and spent his time on board by translating some of his Bengali poems into English. Unfortunately, his manuscript was lost and recovered in the Tube railway and it was later recovered by William Rothenstein and W. B. Yeats. They were so much overwhelmed by poems of "*Gitanjali*" that they recommended the proper authorities for an award of "Nobel Prize".

Younger than Tagore and Aurobindo was Sarojini Naidu who won recognition in England much earlier. Like Toru Dutt, She also went to England quite in her teens and studied in London and Cambridge and met leading London critics and Professors, Arthur Symons and Edmund Gosse. Both advised her to write Indian poems dealing with Indian scenes, landscape and people. Her poetic volumes of note are: "*The Golden Threshold*," "*The Birth of Time*", "*The*

Broken Wind" and "*The Sceptred Flute*". After her death, her daughter produced small collection of lyrics written quite early under a title "*Feathers of the Dawn*". Her poems are usually of three kinds:—"poems of nature", "poems of love" and "poems dealing with Indian panorama of life". Some of her best known poems such as "*Palanquin Bearers*", "*Wandering Singers*", "*Indian Weavers*," and "*Coromondel Fishers*," belonged to this category. Similarly a poem like "*The Purdah Nashim*" describes a conservative Muslim house-wife beautifully. Some of her love songs are written against the background of Krishna - Radha cult. She is also a beautiful nature poet and a poem like "*Champak Blossoms*" makes it clear enough.

In short, Sarojini Naidu is an authentic Indian Poetess and all her songs and lyrics show her mastery of the verse rhythm. Indeed in her some love songs one discovers clapping, sweetness and lack of intellectual fibre. Prof. K. R. S. Iyengar claimed that Sarojini Naidu was the Keats of India and Sri Aurobindo was a great innovator in the art of versification. Certainly two groups have emerged among discerning readers and critics. Some of them are admirers of pre-independence poetry represented by Tagore, Sarojini Naidu and Manmohan Ghose.

As a matter of fact, since the sixties Indo-Anglian poetry has acquired a new character and a distinct voice of its own. Poets like Jayanta Mahapatra, A. K. Ramanujan, R. Parthasarathy, A. K. Mehrotra, Arun Kolatkar, Gieve Patel and Kamala Das are some of the well-known new poets who have won name and fame abroad and in our own country as well. Even Nissim Ezekiel, a matured and talented poet turned to poetry writing and published his poems under the title "*Collected Poems*".

Again when it comes to the question of roots or identity the modern poets seem to be providing better credentials of their peculiar awareness. Poems like "*A night of the scorpion*" and "*A River*" by Ezekiel and Ramanujan respectively demonstrate the Indian reality as the major pre-occupation

of the new poets. Ezekiel has a significant advantage of viewing the Indian situation from both advantage point and a detached angle because he is at once a native and a foreigner. Ezekiel remarks "The Indian landscape sears my eyes I have become part of it to be observed by foreigners" The poet exposes the various kinds of hypocrisy and prejudices that are prevalent in India. For example, here is a scathing criticism of an Indian politician in the well-known poem of Shiv Kumar:—"An Epitaph on Indian Politician." Likewise, Kamala Das in her well-known poem called "An Introduction" writes a truly confessional poem which is at once her poetic manifesto and a defence of dignity. She refuses the advice of her friend and critics who restrain her from writing poetry in English because it is a foreign language. Kamala Das's retort is typical. "The language I speak becomes mine its distortion, its queerness all mine alone" She defends this kind of efforts on something quite honestly, though funny and it is certainly useful to her. Again in this poem she also expresses her frustration in marital love and justifies her extra marital relationship with a person who took response to her urges. "I met a man, loved him, called him not by any name, he is everyman who wants a woman, just as I am every woman who seeks love". The poem ends with a confession of her sin:—"I am a sinner. I am a saint. I am the beloved and the betrayed". This kind of boldness was something new in the Indo-Anglican poetry of the fifties. Kamala Das speaks with rare courage of her heart, humiliation and loss of identity in the dominated society.

The modern English poets no longer celebrate the glory of nature but they also respond to its darkness. Thus in a poem called "A River", A. K. Ramanujan does not sing a traditional song of praise for the full river but rather speaks words of truth. The river is no doubt beautiful and quiet in the summer but when it floods, it causes suffering.

Lastly, Indian English poets refer to a variety of modes ranging from simple melancholy to bitter disappointment. If frustration in love is the root cause of pervasive melancholy in Kamala Das's poetry, the existential agony of the modern

man remains Shiv Kumar's major concern. Similarly Daruwalla's poetry is a graphic description of communal violence and note of melancholy originating from different causes.

Modern Indo-Anglian poets do not like to be praised without being judged critically. Ezekiel, Kamala Das, Parthasarathy, Shiv Kumar and Jayanta Mahapatra are all competent craftsmen who can handle Free verse and Metrical Verse with equal competence. Even the erratic Kamala Das at her best remains one of the finest practitioners of English verse. In short, contemporary Indian poetry in English is gradually expanding and turning into true criticism of Indian life.

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Conversation with Daniel Libeskind: The Architect of Cultural Bridges

*Nibir K. Ghosh

At a resonant 1776 feet tall, the Freedom Tower — in my master plan, second in importance only to the 9/11 memorial itself — will rise above its predecessors, reasserting the preeminence of freedom and beauty, restoring the spiritual peak to the city and proclaiming America's resilience even in the face of profound danger, of our optimism even in the aftermath of tragedy. Life, victorious.
—Daniel Libeskind

A few years ago, I was delighted to receive a call from my friend Robert Schmidt, Cultural Affairs Officer at the U.S. Embassy in New Delhi, telling me that the internationally famous Architect, Daniel Libeskind, was visiting Agra to see the Taj. He wondered if I could club the visit of the famed Cultural Ambassador with an opportunity where he could meet and interact with students and teachers and other young citizens of Agra. The meet was organized at Agra College, Agra where I teach. It was indeed a great event for it gave us all the chance to hear the astounding tale of an immigrant who became an icon battling against his early experiences of extermination of Jews in Europe with the indomitable will and courage never to submit or yield. In this conversation Libeskind reveals his innate ability to blend history, personal experience, and the physical environment with a uniquely fresh international vision to show how faith and love for mankind can move mountains.

Ghosh: You have just returned after visiting Emperor Shahjahan's dream of love in marble. How would you describe

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your first impression of seeing the Taj Mahal?

Libeskind: It is completely magical, completely unlike anything I saw in pictures. It was really transformed completely by the sky and the light into something incredibly magnificent.

Ghosh: Do you see the Taj as an emblem of romance that celebrates Shahjahan's love for his queen Mumtaz?

Libeskind: I believe that the Taj Mahal tells the story not just about a limited period of time, not just about personal relationship or what's happening there, and not just about the tomb and the personal tragedy but it tells the story of an entire culture. It points back to the deep roots that are there in the building and also points to the story forward for today and for tomorrow because it is in the light and in the sky and we can smell and scent with all our being the ongoing drama of what Architecture communicated to all people.

Ghosh: What initially brought you to New York?

Libeskind: I started my life in Poland; my parents were survivors from the extermination of Jews in Europe. I came to New York as an immigrant at the age of thirteen with my parents who had no money, no connection, we did not know the language and we couldn't speak English. You see the world differently when you cannot speak the language.

Ghosh: I guess you have lived for some time in Israel too.

Libeskind: When I was eleven, I, my parents, and my older sister immigrated to Tel Aviv, Israel. Two years later, in 1959, I won an America-Israel Cultural Foundation scholarship which enabled us to move to the United States.

Ghosh: As a teenager, what glimpse of hope did you get as you entered the land of opportunities and endless possibilities?

Libeskind: I arrived at New York on a boat as a teenager, an immigrant, and like millions of others before me, my first sight was the Statue of Liberty and the amazing

skyline of Manhattan. I have never forgotten that sight or what it stands for. The Statue of Liberty is not just a symbol but an incredible inspiring statement that every immigrant that comes to New York is welcomed to become themselves. And I saw that skyline, not just as a representation of steel and concrete and glass, but as really the substance of the American Dream.

Ghosh: How do you look at your formative years in the U.S.?

Libeskind: I am the first person in the family to go to a university. I learnt to speak English, got interested in sciences and studied in Bronx High School of Science. I was the only one from my school to become an architect.

Ghosh: Was Architecture your first love?

Libeskind: No. I had a childhood propelled by music. At the age of six, I appeared on live Polish television playing the accordion. I continued to study music and to perform, but as I matured, I found music to be less and less satisfying. I realized music was not about abstract, intellectual thought—it was about playing. I didn't find it interesting enough. Besides, I couldn't see spending my life on a stage. My heart craved for a different kind of creative and intellectual exploration.

Ghosh: To what extent did your education lead you toward Architecture?

Libeskind: In school I became very skeptical of many things that were taught by the teachers.

They thought Architecture was very abstract, practiced in a very abstract world.

Ghosh: Did you think differently?

Libeskind: I always thought that Architecture really belonged to the people. It is an act of communication, it's an art, it's more like story-telling than like analyzing material. After studying to become an architect, I spent many years teaching and developing my theories of design rather than

actually creating buildings.

Ghosh: What would you consider to be your first major breakthrough in the profession?

Libeskind: The Jewish Museum in Berlin, the project that took 15 years to shape up. It opened to the public in 2001, the year of 9/11. This assignment gave me the opportunity to translate my teachings and ideas into a work of tremendous significance.

Ghosh: In what way?

Libeskind: It was a challenging enterprise because one needed to recognize what happened there, needed to recognize what happened in those terrible years that we know about but also how that event and that understanding of extermination could give some hope to people in a future that would be better. To bring new light, to bring new sound, to bring in new thought in the perspective of that historic calamity that shook mankind.

Ghosh: What were your priorities in designing the Jewish Museum?

Libeskind: I desired to design a building that would embody remembrance, melancholy, and departure. I was looking for an architectural symbol in a specific Jewish discourse at the core of which is German history and the history of Berlin after 1933, which ended in total catastrophe.

Ghosh: Wilfred Owen underlined war and the pity of war in his poetry. What inspired you to undertake the Imperial War Museum project in Manchester, U.K.?

Libeskind: The Imperial War Museum at Manchester is a museum dedicated not to war but to study the conflicts that are ongoing all over the world. It's not a museum of weapons, it's a museum that tells the story of what happens to women in war, to children in war.

Ghosh: How does your design convey the pity of war?

Libeskind: My design is a dramatic and symbolic

sculpture, with three linked buildings shaped as shards from a broken globe.

Ghosh: What does the 'broken' globe signify?

Libeskind: It reflects the way war has devastated our world. For three broken shards, it is impressively serene and beautiful, as well as challenging and disturbing.

Ghosh: The design for the Freedom Tower at Ground Zero seems to be your magnum opus. What attracted you to the project primarily?

Libeskind: The Freedom Tower is a kind of the most dynamic statement of the Ground Zero site, asymmetrical to the Statue of Liberty, arising very dramatically into the sky. It's not just the tallest tower in the world but a tower that is 1776 feet, the figure that magically corresponds to the date of the Declaration of Independence, the Document on which the United States of America is founded. I was deeply moved when I read the Document because it is the first document that brings democracy to the modern world.

Ghosh: What were your priorities in designing the Freedom Tower?

Libeskind: When I first began this project, New Yorkers were divided as to whether to keep the site of the World Trade Center empty or to fill the site completely and build upon it. I meditated many days on this seemingly impossible dichotomy. To acknowledge the terrible deaths which occurred on this site, while looking to the future with hope, seemed like two moments which could not be joined.

Ghosh: How did you plan to resolve the "impossible dichotomy"?

Libeskind: I wanted to bring together the seemingly contradictory aspects of the memorial, which is about a tragedy and how it changed the world, but also about creating a vital and beautiful city of the 21st century. I sought to find a solution which would bring these seemingly contradictory viewpoints into an unexpected unity. So, I went

to look at the site, to stand within it, to see people walking around it, to feel its power and to listen to its voices.

Ghosh: What did the "voices" tell you?

Libeskind: To construct a memorial that is no longer symbolic of the powers that arise but powers that bridge cultures that can negotiate the sadness of calamities created by man himself, cultures that renew man's faith in democracy. I believe that this project joins Architecture to questions that are now relevant to all people.

Ghosh: But weren't you building on the very same foundation that was reminiscent of a grim tragedy?

Libeskind: I must say that the foundations of the WTC tell not only the story of tragedy but also reveal the dimensions of life. We should not forget how the foundations withstood the unimaginable trauma of the destruction and stand as eloquent as the Constitution itself, asserting the durability of Democracy and the value of individual life. We needed to be able to enter this hallowed, sacred ground while creating a quiet, meditative and spiritual space. It was necessary to journey down, some 70 feet into Ground Zero, onto the bedrock foundation, to get the feel of the deep indelible footprints of Tower One and Tower Two.

Ghosh: How did you wish to remember the martyrs who lost their lives on that fateful day?

Libeskind: Those who were lost have become heroes. To commemorate those lost lives, I created two large public places, the Park of Heroes and the Wedge of Light. Each year on September 11th between the hours of 8:46 a.m., when the first airplane hit and 10:28 a.m., when the second tower collapsed, the sun will shine without shadow, in perpetual tribute to altruism and courage. The sky will be home again to a towering spire of 1776 feet high, the "Gardens of the World."

Ghosh: Why gardens?

Libeskind: Because gardens are a constant affirmation

of life. A skyscraper rises above its predecessors, reasserting the pre-eminence of freedom and beauty, restoring the spiritual peak to the city, creating an icon that speaks of our vitality in the face of danger and our optimism in the aftermath of tragedy.

Ghosh: Did you visualize something positive emerging from the 9/11 disaster?

Libeskind: Yes. Every disaster has its own lesson to impart. People from ninety six countries perished in the terrorist attack. What is more significant is that people from more than ninety six countries came to the rescue because New York is a city of the world and also an awesome microcosm of the world.

Ghosh: Why was it so important to respond to this challenge as an architect?

Libeskind: Because, it was not just a matter of creating an infrastructure. It was significant to create a spiritual connection to the site. It was a site of death where so many people perished. I took the challenge and won the competition with a scheme that wasn't just about the obvious but was about the ideas that restore faith in life as a blessing.

Ghosh: What was the fountain source of your inspiration?

Libeskind: I was really inspired by what I saw as a teenager of the Statue of Liberty. I had the torch of freedom in mind. My imagination was fired by the idea that bonds are much greater than just the geographical borders that separate people. Cities, countryside, nature and culture have really to be taken care of in a world of shrinking resources, a world that is threatened by amnesia, a world that is threatened by the fact that we will forget thousands of years of achievements and that technology will solve all problems.

Ghosh: Are you against technology?

Libeskind: Not really. I am aware of the fact that the world is threatened by illusory notions that technology is a

kind of a garb that will do everything for us instead of the fact that the spirit that drives people is the cause that has driven reality throughout history. Architecture is a mission to explain ideas that go far beyond buildings.

Ghosh: Do you think the terrorist attack on the World Trade Centre is a backlash of American gunboat Diplomacy?

Libeskind: I am not a politician. For me, Architecture is a cultural answer because it is about making something, building something, doing something positive. Building is just building a future; it is not about politics, it is not about division. It involves all the metaphors we have of the world; about the ground, about the sky, about orientation, about culture and the beyond that comes from our experience of the world.

Ghosh: Could you please elaborate?

Libeskind: Good Architecture is sustainable, ecological, something that is not disposable like cars or hair dryers. It is a part of much more serious cultural endeavor. Architecture is not all about glass, marble or stone, but is about citizens, about the souls of people who make it. It explores the spiritual domain, the realm that cannot be visualized, that deals with the unspeakable. A building can be experienced as an unfinished journey. It can awaken our desires, propose imaginary conclusions. It is not about form, image or text, but about the experience, which is not to be simulated. I think Architecture is all about human spirit. Only human souls can create architecture.

Ghosh: As the first Cultural Ambassador for Architecture, appointed by the U.S. Department of State, as part of its CultureConnect Program, what are your impressions of your visit to India?

Libeskind: I have studied the famous monuments of India, not merely the buildings but philosophy and mythology. I have studied innumerable books about India but nothing actually prepared me for the most interesting thing about India which is not the monuments, not the

incredible things I saw, but the people of India.

Ghosh: What do you see as conspicuous about our people?

Libeskind: The diversity and intelligence and the bright light that is radiated from the people I met, particularly the young people that I had a chance to meet in various cities in India. I was amazed by India's incredible history, incredible potential and incredible breath of freshness in a world that is often seared by negativity and by darkness.

Ghosh: What is your parting message to youngsters here and elsewhere?

Libeskind: That life it is not just a series of calculations and a sum total of statistics, it's about experience, it's about participation, it's something more complex and more interesting than what is obvious.

Ghosh: Thank you! It was a rare pleasure talking to you. I do hope we meet again in Agra.

Libeskind: The pleasure is mine too. It is always inspiring that there are such great educators to bring a new generation of architects into the world. I too hope that we can meet again in India or in NYC.

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Sin and Redemption in *The Ancient Mariner*

*R.P. Kachhway

S.T. Coleridge occupies a unique place in the history of English literature. He is called the high priest of romanticism. He belongs to the group of elder romantics. For the younger generation of his own contemporaries, he is a prophet and teacher. He has written the poetry of highest order. This is the reason, why even today the magic of his poetry is felt by us. In fact, romantic poetry manifests the protest against the Neo-classical age. In other words, we may say that romantic poetry is poetry of revolt against the artificial poetic diction of the 18th century and the use of the heroic couplet. Romantic poetry is dominated by imagination whereas the 18th century poetry is dominated by reason. The romantics felt disgusted with the form of the 18th century poetry, for the romantics could not express their ideas as much as they wanted. Therefore, Coleridge discarded the heroic couplet and adopted a number of metres and verse-forms. Therefore, he is a great innovator in this area. *The Ancient Mariner*, *Kubla Khan* and *Christabel* are his great contribution to poetry. Of all English romantic masterpieces, they are the most unusual and the most romantic. So far as *The Ancient Mariner* is concerned, in this poem an old Mariner narrates how he committed sin by killing a bird, how he suffered and how he got redeemed of his sin. Therefore, the present paper aims at exploring sin and redemption in *The Ancient Mariner*.

The Ancient Mariner is a long narrative poem which deals with the suffering and purgation of the mariner. The ancient mariner starts his journey with cheerfulness, but

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he sinks into the state of guilt consciousness. Suddenly, the storm breaks out and the ship is drawn towards the South Pole. The atmosphere grows tense and exciting. The water of the ocean turns into white ice. It looks like the marble floor of W.B. Yeats' *Byzantium*. In that very critical situation, a bird of good omen seems to be coming through the snow fog. It is welcomed by the group of the mariners. But the ancient mariner proves to be fatal to the bird and kills it with his arrows. This idea is reflected in the following lines:

At length did cross an Albatross,
Through the Fog it came;
As if it had been a Christian soul,
We hailed it in God's name.

This wanton act of killing the Albatross brings a quick and dreadful turn in the life and journey of the ancient mariner, because it is not an ordinary incident, rather it is a heinous crime against the law of nature. In fact, the Albatross is the emblem of some benevolent and mysterious power imparting blessings to the mariner and his friends. This bird symbolizes three ideas. Firstly, it represents Nature. Secondly, it has a human association, and therefore, it is treated as a guest. Thirdly, it is received as a Christian Soul. In this way, the Albatross has a spiritual association. But it is put to death by the mariner and is significant in two ways. It is an act of sin. It is a violation of moral code. It is also a crime against Nature, because crime destroys the sanctity of human life created by God. In the beginning, the Albatross is hailed as a Christian soul; it is welcomed as a guest. But the ancient mariner, being a host, kills his guest as King Duncan was killed by Macbeth which is a slur on the face of humanity. Thus the relation between man and nature is disturbed. The result is that the natural breezes stop to blow. Nature starts showing her apathy towards the mariners. Day after day, they get struck in the frozen ice and the sun does not appear in the sky so that the ice may melt. Now their position is critical, for they have no pure water to drink. They find "water, water everywhere, but not a drop to drink." This idea gets a vivid expression in the following lines:

Water, water everywhere,
And all the boards did shrink,
Water, water, everywhere,
Nor any drop to drink.

The sun gets hot and its scorching rays fall upon the surface of the ocean water. "The slimy things" start feeling restless. They begin to crawl upon "the slimy sea". The mariners get angry with the ancient mariner. Here I would like to point out that other mariners also suffer, because they unknowingly make themselves his partners in his sin by justifying his act and saying that it was right to kill the Albatross which brought the fog and mist. This is for the reason that other mariners grow furious with the ancient mariner and they hang the dead body of the bird around his neck instead of a Cross. Here again Nature smiles on the atmosphere and the ship by conspiring against the human life, but the ancient mariner is pleased to find a horror rearing itself up. It is a skeleton ship, and on it there are two persons-Spectre-Woman and her Death-mate. In other words, we may say that they are "Life-in-Death and Death-in-Life". They are casting dice for the ancient mariner; and ultimately, life-in-Death wins the mariner who is the killer of the bird. Other mariners also fall dead one by one. The ancient mariner is left alone and all alone in the wide sea. This idea is reflected in the following lines:

Alone, alone, all, all alone,
Alone on a wide wide sea!
And never a saint took pity on
My soul in agony.

The long period of penance and repentance for the mariner, i.e. seven days and nights is a sin of self-imposed suffering, a sense of guilt and a way of being relieved of his suffering. This leads to his catharsis. For seekers of the religious truth like Buddha, Job and Gandhi, an introspection and a prolonged look into spirituality is a great help. Incidentally, Job had also sat in the ashes for seven days and nights. The ancient mariner suffers a lot and his suffering purifies his soul and leads him to right path. What I mean

to say is that after his physical and spiritual agony, his heart is filled with pity. He shows his love for the sea-creatures. Actually, the Mariner's spiritual regeneration starts when he begins to bless the water-snakes unaware and his heart is in harmony with the universal law of love. After this Nature also begins to sympathise with the Mariner and supernatural forces start working for his redemption through angelic agency.

Beyond the shadow of the ship,
I watched the water-snakes:
They moved in tracks of shining white,
And when they reared the elfish light,
Fell off in hoary flakes.

The Mariner has love for the water-snakes. He is attracted towards them and admires their beauty and rich attire. His admiration is expressed in the following lines:

O happy living things! no tongue
Their beauty might declare;
A spring of love gushed from my heart
And I blessed them unaware;
Sure my kind saint took pity on me
And I blessed them unaware.

The Mariner gives blessing to the water-snakes, no doubt, but this blessing brings a turning point in the poem. Just as the Albatross was not a mere bird, in the same way these are not mere water-snakes, rather they stand for all "happy living things". The first phase of redemption, the recovery of love and the power, depends on the Mariner's recognition of his kinship again with other natural creatures. In this way, the curse of the Mariner finishes. He has also realized that all the creatures are made by God, and they should be loved equally. After this, peace comes into his mind. He goes to sleep and dreams of "rain and it rains." Sleep and rain symbolise cleansing process. The recognition of the beauty of God's creation and affection for all living beings bring purity for him and redeem him of his sin:

The selfsame moment I could pray;
And from my neck so free

The Albatross fell off, and sank
Like lead into the sea.

His spiritual recovery is marked by the sweet sounds he hears. He sees that the dead mariners are filled with angelic spirits. They come into sense and they get up. They begin to control the ship with their oars. The ship starts moving and the old Mariner has a ray of hope that he will reach his own country; and there will be regeneration of man. Finally, the ship reaches the port. The mariner wonders whether what he sees is true —his own native country! At last the pilot and his boy and the Hermit come in a boat to meet the ship, but the ship goes down like lead. The mariner is taken in a boat and the hermit makes him free from his sin. The hermit brings harmony into the heart of the mariner who has undergone the storm of soul resulting in his spiritual regeneration. The poem ends on a peaceful note, and the final lesson of the poem is a total acceptance of God and this universe through humility with general love for man and beast. The moral of this poem lies in the following lines:

He prayeth best, who loveth best
All things both great and small;
For the dear God who loveth us,
He made and loveth all.

To sum up, we may say that *The Ancient Mariner* is a poem based on remorse, suffering, relief, forgiveness, grief and joy. Man should not go against the law of Nature. If he violates it, he has to suffer a lot as it has happened with the ancient mariner who has passed through the life of extreme torture and horror. Through these sufferings he is redeemed of his sin. We should love all the creatures equally whether they are birds or beasts. Every creature is equal in the eyes of God.

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Decoding Indian Culture and Tradition: A Study of Major Writings of Chetan Bhagat and Ravinder Singh

* *Chandra Shekhar Sharma*

In recent years, Indian English Literature has witnessed tremendous changes in terms of style, content and voices. The developments in economy, trade, information communication technology and higher education, particularly the expansion of technical and management education has led a deep impact on Indian society and culture. The youths in contemporary India are silently engaging themselves in the evolution of a new culture (to be academically safe-cultural trends). While the 'serious literary writers' focus on traditional societal issues like women empowerment, casteism and rural life; the young writers of new generation are successfully depicting the popular cultural contours of educated young Indians. The current era that is marked by globalization, liberalization and privatization is highly characterized with the deep hues of individualization. In the shadows of individualization and professionalism our cultural aspects are undergoing dramatic changes. There are visible changes in cultural apperceptions which rarely find place in the writings of literarily valued and critically appreciated old writers. At the same time, there is a breed of writers like Chetan Bhagat, Shoba Dey, Ravinder Singh, Durjoy Dutta and many others, who are busy in reflecting the contemporary nuances of the youths of present-day India. These new generation of novelists are also important as the characters, plots and stories come out of their personal experiences or through the observation of the young mass.

Though, these new young writers are not well received

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by literary critics with an excuse of lack of literary merit, aesthetics or seriousness but are very popular among the new generation. These young writers are from metros and urban cities, are well educated through modern system of education, and are the off-springs of the economic growth that came with globalization. Thus, they are well connected to the diurnal affairs of present days and popular cultural trends. They are liked more by the young generation of not only India but also that of America, China and the other South Asian countries. Though their writings are not given the credit of being included in "Literature" easily, yet they are sold so incredibly that they set new records of best-selling. Under such scenarios of success and popularity, it is inevitably necessary to consider the fictions of the writers of new generation in whose writings our young generation identifies its problems, identity, solutions, language and perception well represented. The critics in the literary world and the established writers need to consider these new voices as a part of contemporary literature. Rickett's opinion advocates for considering fiction as a true reflection of its age: "The characteristics of an age are more faithfully reflected in its imaginative literature than its formal histories and chronicles" (194).

As fiction emerges out of society, it surely reflects a society's culture and character. In a way a piece of fiction hints upon the tendency of the society it is rooted in. Every piece of fiction reflects the peculiar characteristics, tendencies and cultural trends of the age it is produced in. Thus every novel, every piece of fiction is its creator's interpretation. Fiction is thus a true representation of good and bad, criticism and appreciation, rise and fall of customs, and the emerging tendencies. In this way a writer is a social critic pervading culture of a society. The term 'culture' is very broad and obscure to be defined. Culture includes beliefs, habits, art, moral, values, institutions which are commonly accepted by a society. Technical and spiritual advancements have added to the dynamicity of culture. Bhagat's and Singh's fiction emerges from this dynamicity of present times and

presents the way the new generation of youth denies the cultural norms so as to invent new cultural trends.

To his credit Bhagat has five bestselling books- *Five Point Someone* (2004), *One Night @ the Call Center* (2005), *The 3 Mistakes of My Life* (2008), *2 States* (2009) & *Revolution 2020: Love, Corruption, Ambition* (2011). The plots of all of his novels are set in modern India and the changing cultural backdrop in Indian society. All his novels portray the sentimentalities of youth. He writes in simple colloquial English of young generation of Indians. It can be noted easily that all of his novels have a narrator and novels are written in first person narrative.

His first novel, *Five Point someone* that was released in 2004 vindicates the advent of fresh sensibilities in the form of Hari Kumar, Ryan, Alok and Neha. Ryan mocks at the academic culture and tries to prove that knowledge is not confined to books and Professors. His overall attitude is rebellious towards existing education system. He criticizes, as the youth do it today, the education system of the premier institute:

“ You know guys, this whole IIT system is sick. Because, tell me, how many great engineers or scientists have come out of IIT? I mean that is supposed to be the best college in India, the best technology institute for a country of a billion. But has IIT ever invented anything? Or made any technical contribution to India? Over thirty years of IITs, yet, all it does is train some bring kids to work in multinationals. I mean look at MIT in the USA...What is wrong in the system...This system of relative grading is overburdening the students. I mean it kills the best fun years of your life. But it kills something else. Where is the room for original thought? Where is the time for creativity? It is not fair.” (34-35, *Five Point Someone*)

He disapproves the Indian philosophy of ‘Gurur Bharma’ (The teacher is akin God) and through his activities and speeches mocks at the philosophy of Indian education system. Bhagat sets the plot of the novel at IIT Delhi, which happens to be one of the premier colleges, and through Ryan

questions the modern system of shaping the brains. Hari projects the pathetic result of relating education with employment and the selfishness that has percolated in the society due to high pecuniary attitude: “Boss, mugging is the price one pays to get IIT tag. You mug, you pass and you get job” (25). Ryan, the revolutionist among the trio, makes everyone awestruck when he asks:

“That is the problem, there is this stupid system and there are stupid people like you....continuous mugging, testing and assignments. Where is the time to try out new idea. Just sit all day and get fat...” (25, *Five Point Someone*).

The intensity of such temper signifies the yearning to liberate from suffocating teaching-administrative culture which keeps them bound to assumptions. In many ways *Five Point Someone* is a serious critique of Indian system. It projects the denial of the youths towards age-old customaries which have been followed blindly. It voices the revolutionary tendencies that look forward to redefine ethics. The notorious trio- Alok, Hari and Ryan glom the exam-papers, yet they have their own justification for their unethical act of theft. They don't feel guilt of their wrongdoings rather feel proud and enjoy. Towards the end, the confessions of the Head of the Mechanical Engineering Department make the reader awestruck. His confessions clearly aver that he accepts a pitiful defeat of his age old principles, ethics and ideologies by the new sensibilities. Such defeat points to the crashing of the hollow and false cultural assumptions, at the hands of new generation.

“.....GPAs make a good student, but not a good person. We judge people here by their GPA. If you are a nine, you are the best. If you are a five, you are useless. I used to despise the low GPAs so much that when Ryan submitted a research proposal on lubricants, I judged it without even reading it. But these boys have something really promising. I saw the proposal the second time. I can tell you, any investor who invests in this will earn a rainbow” (261, *Five Point Someone*)

Bhagat's another novel, *One Night at the Call Center*

narrates the cultural enigma India's employed young generation with reference to globalisation. Globalization has not only created new job opportunities but has also contributed to social, cultural and economic transitions. It cannot be refuted that call-centers are phenomenal offshoots of globalization. The majority of the workforce in these centers comprises of young boys and girls who are well educated and have fresh sensibilities towards culture and language. It must be emphasized that the call-centres have not only changed the economic scene thereby providing employment to innumerable youths, but has also changed the socio-cultural panorama of India by becoming a hub of young technically qualified and English speaking young graduates coming from different caste, religion and region to the metropolis. However, working at call-center is not reckoned an upstanding job. Bhaghat's this novel is set in the backdrop of the call-center-phenomenon and the struggles of youth. Bhagat, being an IITian and ex-employee of an MNC has a deep penetrating insight into the lives of the youths working at call-centers. Hence he is successful in his ambition. The six characters in the novel- three girls and three boys work together at Connexions Call Center situated at Gurgaon in NCR due to some personal compulsions. As usual, the novel projects the youth and their sensibilities in positive light despite their frivolities, weaknesses and faulty. There are six major characters in this novel, namely- Shyam Mehra, Esha, Priyanka, Radhika, Varun and Military Uncle. These six characters symbolize the strong participation of youth in technical growth and connectivity. The plot of the novel is shadowed with the economic recession that is sure to give a blow to the jobs of the six characters. Recession here is a metaphor to physical/ economic negativity, which is beaten by the optimism and collective efforts of the youths. Unlike the four representatives of college life that we found in *Five Point Someone*, here we come across a worried yet confident guild of youths struggling to keep their job.

Shyam Mehra's initiation to trim his name to Sam and

that of Varun to Vroom symbolizes the cultural transition in consent to the demands of trade and commerce. Both the characters conscientiously allow change their name as they find their altered anglicized trimmed names can be easy for their clients for pronunciation and can eventually help in getting professional praises which can lead to monetary gain. Name is critical personal identity and Indian culture doesn't allow changing it for pecuniary purposes. The changed name 'Sam' and 'Vroom' implies to the cultural departure of the youths like Shyam and Varun in pretext of West centered cultural values, trade and globalization. Bhagat signals that youths are forced for distancing themselves from culture and tradition which is too demanding in context to global economic trends. Such a distancing is mainly to with the western values.

The six characters in the novels are representatives of different types of youths. While Shyam represents those who work for earning a living, Priyanka's career objective coincides with those who work to not to sit idle. Esha belongs to a different class of girls who are modernistic in their views and have incurred the cost of having faith in modernism. She had accepted to mortgage her virginity for becoming a model but all in vain. She clearly and happily violates the cultural boundaries for the personal aspirations and gets subject to mental agonies. Radhika, a cultured lady, is suffering of her unfaithful young husband. She is the voice of those youths who bear the harsh weathers of life to support family to overcome economic hurdles. Varun (Vroom) represents the jolly class of young generation who find pleasure in merrymaking, boozing and leads a care-free life. Varun has to overcome the shock of being terminated as a journalist. Shyam and Priyanka are struggling to overcome psychological shocks of their break due to latter's forceful engagement to an engineer in US. Priyanka's mother's persistence had led such unwanted breakup. Both, Shayam and Priyanka had broken cultural boundaries by vowing to be life partners but due parental affiliations they have to break-up; though it is ironical that they have to work

together and live like good friends. They have shared bed and enjoyed ultimate intimacy yet due to tradition and culture they have to sever their intimate ties. Bhagat, in this episode, appears as critic of cultural norms that binds the youths thereby limiting their individual choices. The youths in this novel are emotionally connected to each other not because of culture or region but because they share the same disgust that has fall on them due to challenging professional and personal life. All in all, Bhagat's characters portray that life is not cakewalk rather it has its own challenges. But even among the dark patches they find time to "chill." The call from God is symbolic to the awakening of inner conscience. By listening to their will they triumph.

Culturally their acts are unethical but Bhagat extols their acts in the name of liberty and fraternity. He upholds that they follow their inner voice to lead a happy life. Their triumph is a triumph of personal choices over our long hailed culture and tradition. The youths today are inclined more towards personal choices and individualism towards the evolution of new socio-cultural trends marked by liberty.

The novel *Two States: The Story of My Marriage* is a clear document on the denouncement of cultural, caste-related, regional limitations by the youths in the name of personal choices. The protagonists- Krish, the narrator who hails from Punjab and his Tamilian girlfriend-Anusha SuryaNarayanan together fight back to overturn cultural barriers to individual choices without failing to draw inspiration from their roots. It is an autobiographical novel depicting two educated couples from two different states struggling hard to convince their parents to approve their marriage. It must be emphasized that in this novel Chetan Bhagat hails the modern view on marriage which denounces traditional arranged marriage as a celebrated age-old tradition and as a cultural institution. Bhagat criticises: "Because they are parents. From biscuit to brides, if there is anything their children really want, parents have a problem" (39, *Two States*). Bhagat upholds that marriage is largely recognised by new generation as a matter of individual

choices and love between a boy and girl. That's the reason we see increasing number of intercaste and cross cultural marriages nowadays. Bhagat's this novel sprouts from the contemporary Indian scenario where youths are denouncing cultural institutions, rejecting traditions in the name of new personal values and individuality. Yet, the other aspect of the youths today is that they are emotional about their ties towards their roots. Krish and Ananya would have easily eloped but it is because of strong familial ties to their respective families that they decide to make their parents agree. The shock of Krish's mother in knowing that her son has a girlfriend (43, *Two States*) and Ananya's offering handshake instead touching feet to seek blessing implies to the clash between older and youth sensibilities towards culture. Though individualism is the key focus of this novel, it also presents an appealing delineation of national spirit in addition to ethical values, patience and persistence in youths. Krish and Ananya work patiently to bring their parents together. Mahatma Gandhi is praised for peace and his efforts for national integration (37). Interstate, intercultural marriages are considered as key tool as such marriages will crush the narrow boundaries of caste, culture and region and create one national identity. Krish appeals as a thoughtful manner:

"(One) National anthem, national currency, national team- still we don't marry our children outside our state. How can this tolerance be good for our country?.....They will be Indian. They will be above all this nonsense. If all young people marry outside their community, it is good for the country. that is greater purpose." (102-103, *Two States*)

Bhagat' another novel, *Revolution 2020*, marches out to expose the corruption in the contemporary Indian Society. It has three major characters- Raghav, Gopal and Arti, and a corrupt MLA - Mr. Shukla. Raghav, the firebrand revolutionist starts a newspaper- Revolution 2020 to expose a frivolities, scams and political wrongdoings. On one hand teh IITian Raghav struggles in his life due to his principles of truth and honesty, on the other the IIT-entrance-failed

guy Gopal succeeds in owning an engineering college by applying all hooks and crooks. Gopal stands as a mouthpiece of those materialism which doesnot believe in social ethics and principles. It is well commented:

“Revolution 2020...represents subtle and subdued revolution that is making in the hearts and minds of Indian youth today. Existential angst and motivational power of goodness also paradoxically run together, through the woof and warp of the novel. Bhagat's achievement is in...critical stance he adopts” (Singh 169)

Ravinder Singh's famous novel- *I too had a Love Story*, which Singh says, “A 21st century love story, whose foundation was modern-day gadgetry” (27, *I Too had a Love Story*), incorporates youths and modern development but the couple protagonists- Ravin and Khushi, are not revolutionist. The novel is autobiographical and the plot rests largely on a the real story of Ravinder Singh's lost fiancée. Written first person author omniscient voice, the novel is extremely simple. The protagonist, Ravin finds his fiancée through an online matrimony site. The reference to online matrimonial site points to the triumph of technology over personal and cultural matters. Khushi values culture and tradition despite being gifted with modern insight. We find her preparing herself for engagement in traditional hues, decorating jars and purchasing everything that is traditionally required. The novel tells how technology changed the society and has been, as well, assisting in cultural affairs.

No talk on Bhagat's and Singh's Novel is complete without considering his women characters as they have been considered as the traditional forerunners of Indian culture and tradition. The present era is marked by critical awareness of women towards identity and rights. Women are educated, empowered, supported by the collective feminist will to win over the masculine oppressions. In the novel *Five Point Someone*, Neha, the HOD's daughter, despite being aware of her father's averseness for mingling with boys, makes Hari her soul-mate and sleeps with him to derive secret pleasure thereby renouncing the strict Indian cultural

prescripts that prohibit premarital/extramarital sex. She denies all the cultural aspects that act as barrier to her will so as to create her own ethical patterns marked by liberty and joy. She does not mind sleeping with her friend as such act, for her, is not akin to losing sanctity, virginity or moral fibre, rather it is an act of pleasure, a sign of individualistic authority and proclamation of liberty. She, like Ryan, is definitely revolutionist but in difference sense. While Ryan is a sympathetic revolutionist, Neha is trigger-happy and straightforward. She is epitome of those young Indian ladies who , being qualified, wish themselves liberated from social, ethical, traditional and cultural regulations and become empowered. Priyanka too falls in class of young ladies. She loves Syam, evading all the cultural expectations. She submits herself to Shyam as symbol of innate affection. But she is unable to evade her mother's affection. As soon as her marriage is arranged with Gopal at the behest of her mother, she breaksup with Shyam portraying a woman's traditional faithful image towards her husband. She is a typical traditional-cum-modern girl as she believes personal choices yet can't fightback for them. Ananya discards all the principles of chastity for her love-of-life, Krish. Though she is modern in her views yet she doesn't want to make her parents life miserable by eloping, and thus, lays tremendous efforts for an arranged marriage. She breaks the cultural walls but silently, without any violence. It must be acknowledged that the young girls in the novels of Bhagat and Singh are not promiscuous like those of D H Lawrence. The female characters of Bhagat and Singh follow their inner voices in the shadows of limited morality. They are daughters of modernism and followers of popular culture, which lay emphasis on individuality rather than customs. Their advances are not licentious but conscientious, which suggests that the new cultural sensibilities are evolving amidst the women folk.

Conclusion:

The new writers in the arena of Indian English literature may be criticised for abhorring the traditional ways

of writings but we cannot afford to neglect them as they successfully project fresh cultural sensibilities of Indian youths who are well educated and have sound connectivity to global themes than any of the previous generation. Bhagat and Singh are hailed by youngsters as their voice; they identify their concerns well represented in their writings. Their fiction reflects the cultural nuances of contemporary society. It must be noted that they do not follow any literary schism rather simply write from their personal observations. Their characters sprout from contemporary India which is marked by global values and connectivity. Their fiction echoes in highest possible pitch that our age-old 'cultural norms' are perceived now as 'cultural precincts' by our youths. Their protagonists feel suffocated to live within the inherited cultural boundaries and step forward to break them so as to keep atop personal choices and individual identities. The clash between the old ideologies and the new ones are visible in these novels. A close reading of these novelists shows that contemporary Indian society is passing through a crucial period of social changes where the old social order is being challenged and dismantled by the new way of life.

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Literature and Movies – Major Impact of Visual Media on Indian Youth

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"Cinema is a matter of what's in the frame and what's out"
– Martin Scorsese.

Literature and Movies are the two sides of the same coin 'media'. Youths learn many behavioural patterns and style from the visual media. They learn many things that are useful and harmful to them via media. In this paper, I would like to stress the impact of visual characters on youngsters, especially in India. The major focus is on the emphasis given to the characters in the movies. There are so many literary books like novels which became the background of movies in Telugu and Hindi. Visual media covers all the main concepts of effective English Teaching Strategies like Listening and Speaking (Movies)-whereas, reading texts develop Reading and Writing (Literature).

India, a land of secularism and democracy, had a wide range of cultures and traditions. Unity in diversity is always the heart and soul of India. Before and after Independence, media plays a crucial role in attracting the youth. Media, as World Dictionary says, is 'the means of communication that reach large number of people through newspapers, radio and television'. Now-a-days, movies create a lot of difference in the mindset of an individual from the childhood to old age. Especially, the impact of movies is more on the youngsters or teenagers.

When a person reads, his mind may or may not remember the concept. But if he watches, the chances to remember and recollect are more. So, visual media plays a vital role on the mindset of every individual. There are many

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writings in Literature in various forms. Reading a novel surely influences a person. But, for effective and immediate impact, the novel should be given a visual form. For example, Chetan Bhagat's *Five Point Someone* received high recognition after getting the visual form only.

If anyone wants to convey information through written scripts, it is believed that only Western filmmakers are drawn towards novels and have an impulse to adapt them into films. However, stories from the Indian mythology, like *Raja Harish Chandra*, the first picture in Bollywood, *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* have been continually adapted into pictures, directly or indirectly. One cannot forget how perfectly Prakash Jha's *Rajneeti* taught stories from *Mahabharata* and projected it into a visual pleasure relating it to the current political scenario. Raj Kumar Santoshi's *Lajja*, echoed the condition of a woman connecting it to the character of Sita from *Ramayana*. Some classic examples are *The Guide* which is made on the references taken from R.K. Narayan's *The Guide*, Sarat Chandra Chattopadhyay's classic novel adapted into the films thrice in the years 1936, 1955 & 2002 titled *Devdas*. The novel *Sahib Bibi Aur Ghulam* by Bimal Mitra was made into a movie with the same name in Bengali and Hindi.

The Namesake by Jhumpa Lahiri is released as a movie with the same name. *The Blue Umbrella* by Ruskin Bond, *Maqbool* is filmed by drawing references from Shakespeare's *Macbeth*. *Parineeta*, Sarat Chandra Chattopadhyay's classic is also filmed with the same name, *Black Friday* is based on *Black Friday – The True Story of the Bombay Bomb Blasts*, a book written by S. Hussain Zaidi, *Omkaara* is referenced from Shakespeare's *Othello* and *Slumdog Millionaire* is based on Vikas Swarup's *Q&A*.

Amongst the surplus films which were made from the novels, *Hellowas* filmed based on *One Night @ Call Center* by Chetan Bhagat, *Aisha*, a modern version of Jane Austen's *Emma*, disappointed the audience. Moreover, films like *Three Idiots*, partly inspired from Chetan Bhagat's *Five Point Someone* and recently released *Kai Po Che* was taken from

Chetan Bhagat's *Three Mistakes of My Life* retained their fascination amongst the audience.

In comparison, the impact of movies is more than the impact of novels on the youth. Things keep on changing when it comes to visual portrayal of the described content. Narration is not through words but through living characters. The audiences feel enthused to watch and know the concept rather than reading a 250 pages novel. In the movie, the entire content is compressed into a three-hour film. The audience need not put in effort to imagine things. They can see it on screen. But, it is not possible to convey all the contents of the novel in three hours. Compressing the story to fit in the time length ultimately muddles the essence of the story which leads to the failure of the movie.

English novels are not the only novels that are filmed. There are a plenty of Telugu novels which acquire reputation after taking the shape of a movie. There are many Telugu novelists who act as script writers in many tollywood movies. Literature and movies are intertwined as art of language. Yaddanapudi Sulochana Rani, Muppalla Ranga Nayakamma, Arekapudi (Koduri) Kousalya Devi, Malladi Venkata Krishna Murthy, Yandamuri Veerendranath, Vishwanatha Satyanarayana, Chalam, Kaalipatnam RamaRao, Rachakonda, Vishwanatha Shastri, Adivishnu are well known Telugu novelists who acquired fame after visualizing their ideas through movies. Yaddanapudi Sulochana Rani's *Meena*, *Jeevana Tarangalu*, *Prema Simhaasanam*, *Secretary*, *Jyoti*, *Vijetha*, *Agni Poolu*, *Girija Kalyanam*, *Radha Krishna* are visualized with the same name.

Muppalla Ranga Nayakamma's *Ballipeetam*, *Krishnaveni*; Kousalya Devi's *Premanagar*, *Shankhu Theertham*; Malladi Venkata Krishna Murthy's *Teeneteega Chantabbai*; Yandamuri Veerendranath's *Raakshasudu*, *Abhilaasha*, *Raktha Sindhooram*, *Raktabhishekam*, *Akhari Poratam*, *Marana Mridangam*, *Oka Radha Iddaru Krishnulu*, *Agnipravesam*, *Konguchaatukrishnudu*; Kommanapalli Ganapati Rao's *Aranya Kaanda* GV

Amereshwar Rao's *Rendilla Pujari*; Mallik - *PraugoParugu*, Pothoori Vijayalaxmi's *Sreevaariki Premalekha* are some of the examples of telugu novels who are visualized and got reputation to the writers.

While teaching English, complex print texts have to be discussed in the classroom. There should be a progression in the complexity of plot, character, and authorial style as the students' progress from one grade level to the next increases. For example, *Romeo & Juliet*, often studied at the basic level, is unquestionably less difficult in terms of plot, character motivation, and use of imagery and metaphor than *Hamlet*, often studied at advanced level. Similarly, a novel such as, *To Kill A Mockingbird*, regularly studied in English affords the student a moderate introduction to the study of character and symbol before moving to the increasingly more challenging structures of the novels in advanced level. Students are afforded the opportunity to support prior understanding of text and had to acquire comprehension of the terminology associated with this understanding.

Video is a valuable and possibly another classroom tool. There is always the temptation to simply put a video and let the students watch a film without even challenging them to be actively involved. Video acts as a listening tool which can enhance the listening experience for the students. The setting, action, emotions, gestures, dialogues that the students can observe in a video clip provide an important visual stimulus for language production and usage. This is used as a tool in making the students acquaint with English Speaking Skills. So, the video must be an English movie. For Example, if the topic mainly concentrates on pronunciation skills, the movie *My Fair Lady* which is taken from *Pygmalion* by George Bernard Shaw has to be telecast. Students are supposed to concentrate on the pronunciation of the sounds. They will get motivation after watching this film because the theme highlights that continuous practice brings transformation in the language of a lady from rustic language to refined language. Students feel relaxed while watching movie.

When the video is used as a tool, the lesson plan should refer to specific films which have been released recently, however, they can adapt themselves for use with a similar scene in a different film depending on availability. The students should not concentrate too much on specific pronunciations as they may not be able to pick up. This allows the students at the basic level to be creative in the classroom using video as an appliance to entertainment and communicative activities.

The activities involve pre-viewing, while-viewing and post-viewing tasks. As a part of pre-viewing task, students are asked to gather the information related to the video which they will watch the next day. As a part of while-viewing task, some students are shown movies which have some scenes like debate or live interview and are asked to listen to the strategies used in participating in a debate or interview. They have to write a review after watching the movie, which comes under post-viewing task. Some students are asked to pay attention on the review presented by the team of students who watched the movie. They have to act as observers. This is effective at all the levels.

Students view a scene with the sound turned off. They then predict the content of the scene, write their own script and perform it while standing next to the television. After the performances, students watch the scene with the sound on and decide which group was the funniest or the nearest to the original. This is a good fun exercise. In this particular emotionally charged scene from High Fidelity, three people who work in a record shop have an argument. It is very graphic with plenty of gestures to stimulate the imagination. Good for intermediate levels.

Students watch a scene and then write a review or a newspaper article on what they have witnessed. Students are asked to work for a local newspaper and have to write an article on a rift between two men or accident or any tragedy. Pre-viewing and while-viewing tasks allow them to work on new vocabulary, while the post-viewing task gives them plenty of practice on the usage of tenses.

Students watch the scene several times and write the main words and short phrases that a particular character says. Each group is given a character and is encouraged to listen and exchange information, which usually works better if there are two characters in the scene. Working with someone from a different group, they are asked to write the script for the scene, including both characters. It is very difficult to remember all the dialogues so they cannot manage to write down the whole script from the listening exercises. They will have to use their imagination and fill in the gaps. This gives them an excellent opportunity to work on grammar. The pre-viewing and while-viewing tasks give plenty of practice with vocabulary.

Students watch a scene from a film which has lots of things that they can see and therefore write in their vocabulary books. You can teach and test your students' vocabulary by asking a series of true/ false questions and asking them to put a series of events in order. In some listening exercises we must concentrate on specific dialogue to enable our students to learn. It is necessary to challenge them to listen when dealing with features of pronunciation.

Movies afford a worthy source of authentic listening material for the practice of pronunciation. Watching Britain based movies is another useful source of learning pronunciation. This particular movie exercise deals with connected speech and sentence stress. English is a stressed-timed language .i.e. certain syllables in a sentence are stressed and some are unstressed. It also has an argument role-play allowing students to practice sentence stress in context. Students can learn the usage of body language, postures, intonation with lots of gestures, which adds weight to the situation from emotional scenes while watching the video.

With changing trends in the contemporary job market and client-specific demands on the employees, special focus has to be paid to students from rural and semi-urban

localities. The major learning methodology shifted to Information Communication Technology (ICT) and testing techniques becoming Computer Based. It has become extremely imperative to train students who came from areas with limited facilities and exposure. They feel comfortable in watching a movie and writing a review rather than reading a novel and write a review. The proposed set up for the Computer Assisted Language Learning Technology can offer an excellent and much required opportunity to hone the language skill set of students to gain better employability skills. In this manner, Integrated Skills are used in developing the language skills and parallelly employability skills. Students learn vocabulary, grammar, speaking, listening, reading and writing skills through watching English movies in the classroom and thus have more impact on the minds of students than reading novels. In this globalized world, if a person wants to survive and intend to be in a good position, he has to have the knowledge of English. This is my modest attempt to say that movies had more impact on young minds than novels.

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CREATIVE WRITING

SHORT STORY

JAGDALPUR

**Stephen Gill*

Whenever Reghu visited Chhattisgarh, he was warned against the Naxalites and witchcraft. He was visiting its territory Bastar again, where the bustle of both was at their apex. He worried neither about the witchcraft, because it had no scientific base, nor the Naxalite groups, because they were primarily against the government. Yet, he was taking a calculated risk because of his unbridled passion that was being nourished in the backyard of his childhood memories.

These and also thoughts about the Naxalites were in his mind during his stay at a hotel in Jagdalpur, the capital of Bastar. He had heard that Jagdalpur was known for its handicrafts and for shining gold. He went out again, this time with Dr. Baghel, a teacher from the University of Bastar who was a specialist in the local history, an Advasi himself and fluent in English. They visited some jewelry shops to buy a flat pearl in a ring of 23- karat gold.

It was a strange purchase because pearls were usually set in silver rings in India. He was told that for a pearl in a ring of gold he would have to place a special order for which Raghu had no time, because he was not sure if he would be staying for even a week in Jagdalpur. He was anxious to know why the pearl was not available in a gold ring. For the first time he came to know that pearl gives a cooling effect, as does the silver, and therefore their combination was ideal. That made sense to him. Another problem that he faced concerned the shape of the pearl. He wanted a flat one because a round pearl was easy to hit on a hard surface and break. A flat pearl in a gold ring was unheard of in Jagdalpur.

After an hour's attempts, they came back.

"Why do you want to buy a pearl?" Dr. Baghel asked, sitting in a chair.

"Because of my horoscope. Another stone of my horoscope is Alexandrite and Alexandrite is rare and expensive. One tradition that influences my decision is its use primarily by women in North America. Still, I want to wear a pearl because it does not cost much in comparison with Alexandrite. Moreover, to find a genuine Alexandrite is not that easy, not even in Canada," Reghu said with confidence.

"It means you must know the exact time of your birth. Without that, it is not possible to prepare a horoscope," Dr. Baghel said.

"No, my parents did not believe in things such as horoscopes. I know Hindu families who consult astrologers to choose a name that suits the exact time of the birth of their new arrival. Personally I don't believe in these horoscopes because all those who come in this world at the same time do not share the same fate," Reghu argued.

"The Adivasis also do not know the exact time of their birth because there are no watches in the jungles. It seems you are somewhat superstitious?" he asked.

"I do not believe in a ready-made fate. My conviction has a scientific base. Coincidences do play their parts. Everyone knows that on the nights of a full moon there are tides in the ocean. It is because of the gravity of the moon. A human body is eighty percent water. In addition to the moon, there are several additional planets. They all affect the liquid in the body that, in turn, affects the mood of the person. A calm person makes sensible choices and choices shape destiny. Planets have gravity and electromagnetism. We know the moon's gravity that causes the tides, but its magnetic capacity is almost non-existent. Then there are other planets, including the Sun, Jupiter, Mars. Christ knew the secrecy of the planets. He said about the last days that

"there shall be signs in the sun, the moon and the stars." It is said there are water elements in diamond and pearl. However, the part played by human will in everyday life cannot be ignored easily.

"Tell me something about the Adivasi." Reghu asked.

After a pause of a minute, Dr. Baghel added, "It is advised to be cautious while talking to an Adivasi. This area is also known for black magic. A witch may pick up any thread from the shirt or hair for evil intentions. He or she would focus on that hair or thread to lead the victim to a restless or a lunatic state. Their focus may affect the digestive system of the victim, leading to an acute form of constipation or cause blood in the urine."

Reghu looked straight in his eyes to emphasize, "I do not believe in these irrationalities, even though the Prince of Darkness is also resonant. I believe that a person who drinks the water of goodwill for all receives the minerals that are essential for the mental and physical growth to ward off the impurities blowing from the domain of the darkness."

Indo-Canadian Reghu was happy to visit Bastar, because of the irresistible talisman of its cultural heritage and the natural diversity of wildlife, temples, palaces, caves, waterfalls, forts and the overwhelming interest of its Aboriginals in witchcraft. Reghu's unabashed eagerness in the centuries-old region was beefed up when he learnt that residents of its surrounding cities kept cow dung in front of their houses to ward off evils. This belief became so powerful that even politicians at high levels and residents of the upper-class colonies were gripped by the fear when there was a rumor that witches knock at the doors in the nights to ask for onions and chapattis. To keep evils away, residents also wrote mantras on the fronts of their houses. There had been superstitions about lizards which were common sights in homes. It was believed that two baby lizards in the house indicated that any pregnant woman in the vicinity would give birth to twins. It was also said that lizards were to be

respected, not feared. The victims of epilepsy and schizophrenia suffered the most because they were chained and beaten to get the evil out of their bodies. Delayed puberty, inability to conceive, and still-births are also attributed to the devil. One remedy that was suggested was to throw stones on the hut of any old woman, and better to extract some blood from her to massage the body of the patient.

There had been incidents when women were savagely killed for practicing black magic. Once the eyes of a couple were pierced with a pair of scissors and the wife's tongue was cut off because she was branded a witch. The throats of many middle-aged women were slit. Two boys were arrested because they killed a woman, holding her responsible for practicing black magic against their fathers. One of them lost his father and the father of the other kept falling sick. A witch doctor was sentenced to death by the court for offering the head of an 11-year-old boy to a goddess to improve his fortune. The bodies of a two-year-old boy and a six-year-old girl were found in the home of another witch doctor. Both were sacrificed to a deity. A seven year-old-girl was murdered in the jungle around this region to offer her liver to a god for the growth of better crops. She was murdered in a grisly tribal ritual. A woman killed five young boys in order to conceive.

Another case is concerning a couple who was advised by a tantric yogi to offer eleven children to a specific deity for the wife to be able to give birth to a child. The couple managed to kill four. The fifth one survived the poison and reported it to police. Another tantric yogi advised a woman to kill a boy to restore her vision and cure her nightmares. With the help of her sons, she kidnapped and mutilated a boy before killing him. Police also discovered this case in which a man killed his wife and three children and stabbed himself under the spell of black magic. Many such incidents did not come to the attention of authorities because they happened in remote areas or no one ever reported them. Such incidents kept happening here in spite of laws against black magic and harassing women or labeling them as

witches. Next to women, children and animals were targeted.

This region was known for godmen, called baba, who sold totems to guard against negative influences. These babas were charismatic spiritual leaders, also called gurus. Many claim to possess psychic powers to perform miracles. They employ public relations techniques for their success.

The exotic facets of the black magic intrigued Reghu, though he was firmly against killing and macabre practices. Reghu knew that witchcraft was used to seek spirits to comfort, heal, or harm others. This area, known for witches, targeted mainly older widows who owned properties. They were accused and asked to leave their villages or they were killed. In several cases children were murdered on the pretext that their mothers practiced witchcraft that had caused losses in their business or tragedies in their families. In some cases human sacrifices were made to ward off evil spells. Hundreds of women were considered witches in the province of Chhattisgarh itself. This faith in black magic had been terrifying citizens. Some healers were forced to point out a witch. Legislation did exist to punish perpetrators but the laws were toothless tigers.

“What legislation had failed to achieve, Maharaja Pravir was able to achieve with his compassion and wisdom,” said a half-naked figure that entered the restaurant and sat across the table, where Reghu was enjoying tea. He had a staff in one hand, was slender and his forehead was marked with three flat white lines made with some herbal substance. He wore a brown necklace with the bark of some tree. His ribs were visible and he wore a bare loin-cloth. He seemed to be in his early sixties. Reghu looked at him with surprise in the dim light while outside it was almost dark.

“I know you are on a mission to understand the culture of Adivasi. I am on a mission for self-discovery,” he said with a faint smile.

“Too bad— you have not been able to discover yourself your whole life. You look healthy. Why do you carry a staff?” Reghu asked philosophically.

“This area, called Dandakarnya in mythologies, is known for sages. *Danda* refers to a staff. Even Moses used to carry one. I saw him carrying one in *The Ten Commandments*, a classic movie,” he said.

“His staff represented his divine authority to free the Jews from the slavery of the Egyptians. The Jewish were being punished for no fault of their own. The word refers also to *dand* — that means punishment. Perhaps the whole population of this area is under some kind of punishment and needs a Moses to get them out,” Reghu said. “This punishment seemed to be from generation to generation for the last five thousand years or more.”

Ignoring this statement, the figure spoke— “You want to see the real Adivasi, but are not going to find them as you will not be able to find real Aryans who invaded India some five thousand years ago. They have been intermixed with all kinds of bloods. The establishment cannot eradicate deep-rooted beliefs of the Adivasi with only laws and enforcers of laws who generate fear, not the understanding that is the fruit of sincere dialogues.

“Maharaja Pravir knew the language and the culture of the Adivasi. He was one of them, and also educated and wise. Because of him Bastar has been largely redeemed from the influence of black magic. I am sure you have never heard of the fetus oil. We used to have tantric yogis who used this oil to torment any person of their choice.”

“How did tantric practitioners used to prepare this oil?” Reghu was curious and nervous.

“It was extracted from a fetus,” the figure whispered while his eyes twinkled in the dimness of the light. As Reghu was attempting to read the concealed significance in the twinkle facing his face, he said, “I am terrified myself. Young pregnant women expecting their first child used to be victims. Tantric yogi cut open the uterus to remove the fetus without letting it touch the ground. The fetus was heated with rituals on a special fire using turmeric and coconut to invoke a deity. The woman was usually drugged, denuded and then

flattened on the floor.”

As the figure recounted the procedure, looking out the window, Reghu felt shaken, though outwardly he appeared to be calm. After a few minutes, the figure continued, “Tantric yogis also burned a part of that fetus into ashes. Then they take out a human skull into which they pour that extract of the fetus to mix with the ashes prepared in further frightening procedures to keep it in liquid form. Young bamboo plants are used for the fire. Such potions are prepared on moonless nights.”

The figure became deeply sober. Looking around, it suddenly spoke, “Another practice is equally bizarre but less cruel. It is in the form of a dance to ward off evil if a person is sick for no apparent reason. The patient is made to sit near an effigy in the color black. The sorcerer covered with thorns, nails and feathers would dance while the drums were played loudly. It appeared as if the participants were either doped up or became possessed. Dances were diabolic. During this ritual, an animal, usually a fowl, was slaughtered slowly amidst mantras and its blood was sprinkled on the sick.

“We are happy that Bastar has been freed from many of these utter insanities, though black magic in mild form is still alive. As I said before, laws and police officers cannot eradicate them, because they spread fear and the Adivasi are already under fear from natural phenomenon and unknown faces. Maharaja was a god from the dynasty of Kakatiya who was delivering them from fear. He was also King Pandu reincarnated. I used to hear people saying.”

Reghu felt nervous when he saw two young ones of the lizard swallowing insects. That meant someone was going to give birth to twins. But there was no female around. Reghu looked at the young ones of the lizard again before saying, “It seems Maharaja Pravir was a Moses.” He became silent, looked at the young ones of the lizard and said, “How could King Pandu be reincarnated in Maharaja Pravir after five thousand years?”

“Hindus believe that a person is born again in the form

of animals or human in a rich or poor family according to the person's deeds. Most wicked people may come back as dogs or reptiles. The present life is the result of the previous life and the life after death would be the result of the present life. Early Christians also believed it."

"Christianity advocates to keep loving everyone unconditionally. This is all what Christ teaches. " Reghu was quick.

"Hindu culture forbids hurting anyone. It means the same," the figure answered.

"Perhaps we both were lizards in our previous existence and kept the environment clean by eating insects. For this good work, we have been awarded human form." The figure giggled.

"I know my previous existence," the figure spoke.

"Impossible."

"Even you can if you know how. All you need is perfect solitude under a very very old and a special kind of tree, sitting with deep concentration without food. It may take days but eventually you will be in your former existence. You will go into a trance."

"How can a person come back? Is it dangerous?"

"Yes it is. An ordinary person may not like to come back if he was in his ruling position in his previous existence, enjoying luxuries in a palace. Therefore, the tantric yogi needs a guru to guide him," he said.

Reghu became scared as he heard the wind howling outside like evil spirits he had heard in horror movies. He was badly distracted, hearing a plate from the shelf breaking and dogs outside growling at nothing, though he could see no animal through the window. He felt some surreal emptiness that was deepening whenever he looked at the shadowy figure. Reghu was growing skeptical if the figure was a human. He looked at the walls again. He heard the silence speaking when he looked around. Two persons in

their early thirties, who seemed to be from China, or Tibet or Nepal or Bhutan, were drinking something quietly without raising their heads.

"They are enjoying Mua," the figure spoke.

"I know it is a drink of the Adivasi. It is made from the flowers of Mua," Reghu said.

The radio that broadcast melodies mercilessly in North India was quiet, as was the prevailing darkness to his right. He felt something happening. It was summer. He began to feel chilled as the image of the fetus appeared and disappeared, as well as of a young woman lying drugged. He felt something swirling around in that century-old structure and an immobilizing sensation coming over him like the thick tingling beginning from his upper part and passing through his neck and down to his stomach. He kicked his one leg and then the other. He felt them stop when the figure said, "he was stiff because of sitting so long.

"You know to the right side of the road there was a wooded empty section that had an eerie broken statue worse than this decrepit restaurant at the edge of the town. Not far from here there used to be a scrawny woman with bedraggled black-and-grey hair and one yellow and one green eye with a thick and crooked nose. She used to heal people with her herbal remedies. No one dared to look at her eyes, fearing that their cows would go dry and chickens die and children fall sick."

Reghu said nothing, and began to pray in his heart thinking those sensations were because of his false fear and stress. That uneasiness was around when he took leave of the figure and went to the desk to pay. The figure appeared as if it were just a torso in the dimness as the man was at the desk who took his money. He came out with the same uneasy feelings.

The hotel was within walking distance. As he came out, he heard the wind singing a strange sad song in a strange tongue that he thought was classical, coming from a distant

temple. The dirge began to hit his nerves. He began to see a woman with tangled hair sitting cross-legged. As he felt like shivering, Reghu began to pray again, vigorously.

The first thing Reghu did when he entered his room was to phone Dr. Pujari even though it was late. Reghu began to feel better when Dr. Pujari told Reghu that he was in such a region, but need not be nervous because he was on a peace mission. He wrote about this experience, prayed and went to bed, thinking of the widespread superstitions throughout India, but those superstitions were harmless. They included selection of proper dates for marriages, even filing of nomination papers for politicians to contest elections. Some people consult astrologers to pick a date for their travels.

“Health care was the main problem in some areas because of the belief in witchcraft and superstitions. There were several stories by Bastarans who had encounters with ghosts. He had heard intellectuals pointing out that India would not rise as a superpower in science unless it gets away from superstitious beliefs, such as in astrology.”

“I want to know more about the witchcraft. I heard such people can torture anyone with their black art,” Reghu asked Dr. Baghel the next day when he came to the hotel.

“There are professionals who work for money even if anyone wants to take revenge with their help. They suggest using a peacock to win love and if a woman wants her lover to be faithful to her, she should weep in such a way that her tears fall on the lips of her lover.

“Chhattisgarh is known for its open washrooms. It is advised that when a person urinates, the wetness should be covered with the dust. If an evil practitioner picks up the mud that is still wet and takes it to a ruin where black magic is practiced or to a burial ground in the moonless night, the evil practitioner would be able to contact spirits through rituals to torture the person whose urine they use.”

“Let us talk about the Adivasi,” Reghu suggested, even though slightly nervous.

“The Gond is the main Adivasi community in Bastar. They worship their own god and make their distinctive jewellery called Dhokra Handicraft, using cow dung and the red soil mixed with beeswax. They believe in possessive spirits, worshipping dead relatives and trees.”

“Any notable events of the Kakatiya dynasty?” Reghu asked.

Dr. Baghel began to scratch his head, and sipped tea saying, “Most of these events revolve around that famous diamond Kohinoor.”

“Kohinoor? How strange. What does the Kakatiya dynasty have to do with that most precious diamond now in the crown of the present Queen of England?” Reghu was surprised.

“We will get back to the saga of surrealism later. It is said that the Kakatiya dynasty had connections with King Pandu, who had five sons. King Pandu renounced his kingdom for killing a sage and his wife while they were making love. He took them for a deer in the jungle. The sage cursed the king to meet a similar death. Because of this curse, King Pandu did not have conjugal relations with his two wives while wandering in the solitude.”

“You said King Pandu was under a curse and therefore remained celibate to cheat death. You also say he had five sons.”

“Those five sons were fathered by different sages. Later when he wanted to be intimate with one of his one wives, he died because of that curse.

“Maharaja Pravir and King Pandu had some similarities.”

“What are they?”

“King Pandu was a good archer, though he killed a sage and his wife while they were copulating. It was because of the leaves of the trees that had blurred his vision. King Pandu renounced the world and so did Maharaja Pravir.

Like King Pandu, the Maharaja Pravir did not have any issue, though he was also married. He also killed someone with his arrow. Both were compassionate and looked after their subjects. King Pandu did not leave his people ungoverned. He asked his brother to rule even though he was blind.”

“Maharaja Pravir was not blind,” Reghu retorted.

“He was blind to the luxuries. He was simple,” Dr. Baghel replied.

“King Pandu killed a sage while copulating.”

“Maharaja Pravir killed his comforts and desires to serve the Adivasi.”

“You mean he was a lotus. The lotus flower symbolizes purity because it emerges uncontaminated from a contaminated environment. As the Buddha rose above earthly pleasures, Maharaja Pravir rose to a new world of enlightenment. I would like to know the blueprint of Maharaja Pravir to preserve the culture of the Adivasi,” Reghu asked.

“Leave the Adivasi alone. In other words, live and let live was his blueprint.”

“How?” Reghu asked.

“What the government found at his palace was an arsenal of bow and arrows. The bows and arrows symbolize a way of life, not confrontation. This way did not interfere in the ways of others. It begs to be left alone.” Dr. Baghel said.

“Did he not leave his kingdom in search of self-enlightenment as Buddha did?” Reghu posed another question.

“Not exactly like the Buddha. The only goal of his life was to serve his people selflessly. The ruler who stands out for bravery and intelligence in this dynasty is the Queen Rudrama Devi. She was the only female ruler around that time in all the princely states. She met a heroic death while

fighting against Muslim rulers of Delhi.”

“Has Delhi ended this fight against the Adivasi?” Reghu asked.

“Not really. Delhi is the emblem of establishment. In those days, the rulers with whom Bastar fought were despots. Bastar’s previous ruler, Maharaja Pravir, was also killed by the establishment in Delhi. He was a democrat, a god for the Adivasi who wanted to preserve the local culture. He was elected as a member of the legislative assembly, but resigned when he realized that the government was crushing the culture of his people. He was assassinated on 25th of March, 1966 at the steps of his own palace. A truckload of dead bodies was dumped into the Indravati River at night.

“Let me share further. Bastar was awakening under his leadership. Violence stifled his voice.”

“Why?”

“Bastar is powerful, but powerless when the enforcers of law use the missiles of malicious litigation, extortions and intimidations using the shoulders of the unethical establishment. Since its creation, the entire Chhattisgarh is becoming poorer even while rich in land because of iron ore, coal, bauxite, limestone, additional undiscovered minerals and herbs. The area is rich also in water, power and human resources. There is every possibility of a considerable extent of diamond mines.

“The world-famous Kohinoor diamond was unearthed in Kollur, when the Kakatiya dynasty ruled that area. Golconda Fort, not far from there, was built by the Kakatiya dynasty in the 13th century.”

“Tell me about the surrealistic saga of agonies and extinction you talked about,” Reghu asked.

“There were alarming prophecies about this diamond. One was that the diamond ought to be worn by God or a woman. Any other wearer, even aspirants, will bleed and mourn. There is a prophecy also about the invincibility of its

rightful owner. The diamond was never bought or sold. It changed hands with defeat and victory because it was a symbol of glory. According to gemologists every gem and stone does not suit everyone as we discussed earlier when we went out to buy a pearl in the ring of gold.”

“Who possessed it first?” Reghu asked.

“Leaving mythology aside, according to *Baburnama*, the memoirs of Emperor Babur, the diamond was in the possession of the Parmar Dynasty of Malwa in the 13th century who were fond of jewels and stones. The whole kingdom of Malwa was destroyed by Mohammed Khiliji from Delhi. Another account is more reliable. Khilji attacked the Kakatiyas in Warangle after destroying Malwa. King Prataprudera of Kakatiya battled all his life with external and internal enemies. Mohammed Khiliji let loose the reptiles of terror. King Prataprudera of Kakatiya was forced to sign a truce with a heavy tribute and Kohinoor.

“The wealth of the Kakatiya dynasty attracted the son after his father’s death. He attacked and arrested King Prataprudera. While the King was being taken to Delhi, he committed suicide in the River Narmada by drowning himself. Khilji was able to destroy the Kakatiya dynasty for a while.

“His father, Allauddin Khiliji, is the same who had destroyed Nalanda University. Its library was so huge that it kept burning for months. He also killed students. All because the university did not have a copy of their religious book. The Khilji dynasty encouraged conversion to Islam by rewarding converts. He and his son also rewarded Muslim missionaries in Bengal.

“Shortly, the Khilijis fell into decadence because of its violence and suppression. The Sultan was killed by an Indian Muslim slave. The dynasty was also uprooted from Malwa.”

“I was at Nalanda University in 2011 as a visiting professor. I found its calm, history and beauty merging in an unforgettable setting of humanity and literature. Science,

business and arts had close relations with humans as fruit has with its tree and a tree has with its roots. I believe any progress in any sphere without ethical progress is meaningless. I was overwhelmed to see the uniqueness of the university.

“It was the iceberg of religious intolerance that destroyed the centuries-old library of the University of Nalanda, where seekers from far-off nations, including China, Japan and Turkey, went for knowledge. A Buddhist centre from 427 to 1197 CE, Nalanda was the first great library recorded in history. The library that covered nine stories burnt for months when it was put to fire by invaders. That was a devastating loss to humanity.

“I wanted to write about the uniqueness of Nalanda University from the point of character building, touching the historical development of Nalanda University and comparing the modern educational system that has eroded the intrinsic values that were prized above the competitive values of today’s education. This sense of competition that excels in the financial area has killed humanity,” Reghu concluded.

Dr. Baghel looked into the vacuum to resume “In 1526, Kohinoor came into the possession of the Mughul Empire when Babur invaded India, defeating Ibrahim Lodhi, the last of the Khalijis, in the First Battle of Panipat. Babur was from Uzbekistan and was buried in Afghanistan. He mentions Kohinoor in his memoirs, in which he says it belonged to the ruler of Malwa. Apparently he made a mistake because Sultan Khiliji took it from Prataprudera of the Kakatiya dynasty as a tribute. The Mughul history is colored with blood. Most rulers were either killed or imprisoned by their own children. Brothers killed brothers in their history. Emperor Shah Jehan, who built the Taj Mahal, the seventh wonder of the world, had Kohinoor fixed in his Peacock Throne in the early 17th century. The throne was inlaid with rubies, pearls, sapphires, other precious stones and Kohinoor to symbolize the colors of the feathers of a peacock.

Nadir Shah, an insane criminal from Persia, invaded the Mughul Emperor in 1738. He built a pyramid with the skulls of the Hindus. He returned to Persia with the Peacock Throne, other treasurers, a few thousand Indian girls, and boys for his slavery, thousands of elephants, horses, and camels. Misfortune dogged him and his successors. The bands of the ascetic Sikh snatched Kohinoor from him, while his caravan passed through the mountains of India and escorted the girls safely to their homes. Kohinoor came back to India, eventually in the possession of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. He suffered humiliation at the hands of the East India Company. His young son gifted Kohinoor to Queen Victoria.

“Think of four Ks. The Kohinoor diamond is five thousand years old. It was with Lord Krishna. It was discovered in Kollur when Kakatiya were ruling. Then Sultan Khilji took it from them. It went to Nadir Shah of Persia when he attacked India. The Khiljis were destroyed in India and Nadir Shah and his successors in Persia. The Kakatiya dynasty was uprooted because of this diamond. It came back to India and the Sikh kingdom was destroyed by the British because of Kohinoor. The British also suffered in the first and second world wars. Kohinoor is still with them.

“Sometimes I wrestle with a question. If the British decide to return Kohinoor, who is the right country to claim it?” Dr. Baghel asked. “A successor of Maharaja Ranji Singh asked for its return when a prime minister of England visited their temple in Punjab.”

“It is really a good question. Kohinoor was discovered in India, remained in India for centuries, and then it was passed on to a Persian king, and came back to India. I don’t know,” Reghu replied.

“It has been argued vigorously that the diamond should go to Pakistan because it was a property of Muslim rulers and the British Raj snatched the power from them,” Dr. Baghel stated.

“If it is handed to Islamabad, it would end up with the Taliban and from the Taliban it would end up in Afghanistan

and the Taliban would consider it a piece from *kafirs*. As they smashed the carvings of Buddha, they would smash it into pieces for the sake of their life after death, which is more important to them than anything else, for obvious reasons,” Reghu answered.

“In that case, the diamond should go to the Indian government. It belonged to the Sikh kingdom and the Indian prime minister is a Sikh. It should come back to India,” Dr. Baghel suggested.

Reghu retorted, “Let it remain with the British. Gifts are not returned. Consider it as a gift from India to Britain for stopping this country from becoming entirely a Muslim nation. It would be an additional burden on taxpayers to pay for its security in a museum and to hire guards to protect it in a country where guards cannot protect whom they are supposed to. Then who is going to insure it? Indian political elites would divide it into pieces to sell and deposit the money with the banks abroad. The best is to focus on the present and the future and the problems that the country faces from enemies within. Kohinoor is just a symbol of prestige. Many nations spend their hard-earned foreign currency to produce nuclear energy for prestige. It is the result of ego and ego does not build roads, hospitals, universities, and shelters for abused children and women,” Reghu added. “Think of the joy of giving.

“The story of the universe is the story of what the Supreme Power has done, is about to do and is doing even now. The exciting climax of this journey of giving is yet to be reached. Every human is blessed with a spark of divinity. Christ has said in different ways to give and it shall be given to you. King Solomon about four thousand years ago said that one who waters will be watered. Giving is a gesture of love that heals. The joy of giving is a balm that heals the scars caused by the nails of neglect. Indian citizens are enveloped by the oxygen of concerns in the week of Gandhi Jayanti that is celebrated on October 2 from the year 2009. This day was set aside to inspire citizens to give. Gandhi

Jayanti is India's widely shared philanthropic carnival of everlasting experience. Those who have nothing can give their talents and skills or love. The gift of Kohinoor should be taken in this spirit."

Dr. Baghel added, "According to a legend, Kohinoor belonged to Lord Krishna. It is mentioned as Symantaka in *Bhagvatgeeta*. Kohinoor and Symankata carry the rare luster. When Dwarka was drowned in a flood after the death of Krishna, Kohinoor was lost."

"How did Lord Krishna get it?" Reghu asked after some awkward silence.

"Lord Krishna got it in dowry from Jambavan when he married his daughter Jambavati. Someone stole it when Lord Krishna was asleep. He found the stealer and got it back after a fierce battle. It was prophesized that the wearer, except God and woman, will suffer. The British knew the curse. Therefore, it is decorated in the crown of a woman. Let me say further that until the 19th century, India was the only country that produced diamonds."

"How did Jambavan get it?" Reghu asked.

"It is another surrealistic chain. In short, he received it from Suriya that means from the god of the sun."

"The British also suffered. They lost their colonies one after the other. They suffered at the hands of Hitler. Before the war it was the top nation in every aspect. The Second World War reduced this mighty empire to a third or fourth position. "

"You said Kohinoor belonged to Lord Krishna. Did he suffer?" Reghu asked.

"Dr. Baghel scratched his head and said, "Look at the Kurukshetra War. It was the bloodiest war in human history. According to one estimate, just close to four million perished in 18 days without any weapon of mass destruction like chemical gases and nuclear explosives. This loss was caused by arrows and spears. It is a huge number—more than the

armies of the US and India combined, considering the days the war lasted. According to another estimate close to 660 million perished. It is also estimated that close to half a billion."

"Do you mean Lord Krishna was also to be blamed for this war?" Reghu asked.

Dr. Baghel without any pause said, "Lord Krishna was the charioteer of the Pandavas and his own army fought on the side of the Koruas. Moreover, he picked up Kruksheter for the war."

"India must have been larger in those days, around five thousand years ago."

"Yes, it was," Dr. Baghel replied. "Afghanistan, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Burma were part of India even when the Moguls ruled. Nepal and Bhutan were also parts of India. According to one opinion, India included even Yemen and Mongolia. There were no territorial gains in the war of Krukshetra. It was the only war that lasted for days, not for years. Survivors were seven from the side of Pandavas, and three from the side of Kuruas. Lord Krishna himself was killed by an ordinary adivasi Jarathu."

"This diamond has been satisfying ego for centuries and ego symbolizes greed. Bloodshed creates more bloodshed and more and new problems than the war was able to solve. Look at the special paramilitary force that came from Delhi to kill Maharaja Pravir of Bastar. The Agents of Lucifer achieved nothing. Instead they have intensified problems. They stand for Self. The East Indian Company was destroyed because of this Self."

"Are you referring to those para-military or policemen as Agents of Lucifer?" Dr. Bhagel asked.

"They are dice in the hands of the Shakuni of the elites who masterminded the destruction of the Adivasi in the war for industrialization. Gandhian philosophy is the gem of nonviolence that forced the mighty British Raj to leave India without a single bullet shot. "

Reghu continued, "Wars are futile. Both losers and winners suffer. The Adivasi have every right to rule their region. If Kohinoor is to be returned, it should go to the Kakatiya ruler of today, Jai Deo Singh. People of Bastar have elected him as their Maharaja, though the Government of India has abolished the princely states. At the same time, think of the prophecies."

POETRY

Introspection

**Kedar Nath Sharma*

Plain paper becomes a worthy
Document when written
Upon; our life becomes worthy
When noble deeds are done.

To live in peace, not pieces, bare
Falsehood, dare devils, care
Relationship, share love, and bear
With all, be firm, but fair.

Injury on tongue cures quickest,
Propounds medical science;
Injury by tongue takes longest,
Cautions us moral science.

All advise: look before you leap;
Chemicals we are not,
Before we react, let's think, keep
Tongue in cheek, speak not rot.

Let's be gentle in our approach,
Not hard and cold in life:
Both tongue and heart are soft, reproach
Not, love all, all through life.

Those who are jealous hate them not:
Much better they find you;
Those who pull you down shun them not,
Much higher they find you.

When we lose, let's lose not the heart,
Be bold; be calm when win;
Change not the face, face the change; start
Afresh, God will help win.

Let's have faith in God and crib not
For prayers not granted:
Let's thank God for great gifts though not
Expected yet wanted.

***Kedar Nath Sharma**

Poetry

**Pashupati Jha*

Poetry
is not a luxury for me
not an opiate to fanciful dreams

of fragrant flowers, mermaids and fairies;
that age, perhaps, is gone forever.

Poetry

to me is the gnawing
of guts in the taut belly
surge of feelings like a cyclone
storming up the veins, lungs and heart;
rotating steely wheels within
demanding painfully slow digestion;
till the assimilated force
mounts up and up and up
to burst-open the third eye.
Not to destroy this time
but to create a budding blaze—
the rising sun, with all heat and glow—
to enlighten the engulfing depth
of darkness, transforming
fossilized stones to ooze
water—crystal pure, cool
and quenching.

My poetry is not meant for the moderns—
displaying literature
in designer decor of AC rooms,
suffocating Muse to
untimely death.
It is for the old ancestors
edging out from their graves,

eager and intent to listen
the ancient, elemental music
once again.

***Dr.Pashupati Jha, Professor of English,
Humanities Dept., I.I.T. Roorkee-247 667**

Solemn Silence, Please

**Sr. S. Susila Mary*

Gentle breeze croon inaudibly
Tender leaves flicker in the air silently
Turtle doves drop your downs
Down on the ground mildly;
For we need down drop silence.

Sweet smelling petals! wither
On the verdant grasses without noise
Saprrrows! Fly away and twitter elsewhere.
Butterflies¹ flutter not your wings.
Saucy bees and naughty wasps!
Do not drove and stab stillness.

Disturb not the solemn silence
That prevails in this serene church;
For here is anun kneeling alone
And praying to our Madonna
In the beauty of piety

For a peaceful life for the people
In the wickedwarring world.

Haiku

** Ashwini Kumar Vishnu*

(1)

Love lights bonfires
Fairies offering berries
Rabbits dance on the moon.

(2)

In my lonely night dreams
I hold you; dove's wings your arms
You fly far off the Milky Way.

(3)

Winged seeds of love
Seasonal breeze dropping clouds to
Furrows of colours.

(4)

The sun a red ripe cherry
Your perfume floating in the air
Oh joy! I'm in love.

(5)

Hall, kitchen, bedroom
How grim everything without you
Come home, say you love me.

(6)

Lengthening shadows
Locking lips, embracing arms
Transgressing lagoons.

(7)

Love disturbed all
Aubades, sonnets, ghazals,
Life an elegy now.

(8)

Difficult to say
Your so distinct touch-me-not mood
Makes or ruins my day.

TANKA

(1)

Rose, lotus, jasmine
They are neither yours nor mine
We make love in wild weeds
While meowing kittens in clouds
Spill moonshine all over us

(2)

Your memory and pain
Rest now here on the broken chair
Light and dark again
Outside that butterfly window
These stars pollens of your love.

Taste Nectar

**Sony Dalia*

One life, many splendours
one tune many responses

one source many tributaries
 one goal many paths.

'Want to drink life to the lees' said rightly Ulysses.
 Shrinking wavelength, narrowing options
 who knows when the bell rings?
 When it is time for curtains!

Lament not dear
 still time left for tasting nectar!

Son's duty to Father

**Dr.K.Balachandran*

Palani (60), a farmer, of Thagadi village near
 Thirukkoilur due to illness couldn't work
 On August 22nd
 asked his son Murugan (35)
 "Give me money to buy food for me and Manjula!"
 Now it is not like the days of the past. Is
 This not 'Kaliyugam'? "No, don't pester me for
 Money." Uttering Murugan went out angrily. Not
 Knowing what to do father too went out and
 Late night returned to sleep outdoors. Midnight.
 Son too returned. Seeing his ailing father there
 Smashed his father's head with a stone heavy!
 "Save me! Save me from my son's atrocity!"
 Screamed he for help. Manjula hearing his cry
 Rushed to see her hubby in a pool of blood.

Screamed she, "Ayyo, come here to save him!"
 With the help of neighbours took him to hospital
 At Thirukkoilur and later to JIPMER, Pondy.
 Alas! Died he leaving her in despair and dismay.
 Is it the way a son takes care of his parents?
 Are not parents the living gods to anybody?
 Will any son true deny food to his parents?

The Best Bequest

**G. Maria Joseph Xavier*

A decrepit man in his death bed
 Leaves unto his dera children with love
 What he pinched and scraped and saved

A man of means who has the seal
 Of death in his face lets his sons
 And daughters have an equal share
 Of what he has got in store for them

A rich man ere he has one leg
 In the grvae gives his dependents
 His palatial mansions and the riches therein.

An opulent landlord
 Gives his grown up children the expanse
 Of fertile fields and golden orchards
 besides other costly finery.

A crowned monarch who knows
 His end nearing, bequeaths
 With blessings his kingdom
 Bounteous mines of gold and silver.

The bequest of God to the faithful
 Will certainly surpass that which a human gives
 It will be more precious than the gold
 Of uphire , onyx , azure sapphire
 The crystal coral pearls and rubies
 The topaz of Ethiopia and emerald stones.

Beyond doubt matchless must be
 That which the divine maker gives us
 HERE HIS ASCENSION LIVING CHRIST
 Said unto His disciples
 “ I LEAVE PEACE UNTO YOU”
 Riches on earth are but drodd
 When compared with peace of mind
 Precious is peace we receive from
 THE PRINCE OF PEACE
 Praise the Lord; For He is good.

***Prof. G. Maria Joseph Xavier, Formerly HOD of
 English, S.N.College, Madurai, Tamil Nadu.**

The Highway

**M. S. Wankhede*

Blind alleys of man's ignorance
 Prevent his privilegedarrogance

To walk the highway leading to the Parliament
 Apassageway of progress got in complement;
 How long shall common man
 Stay there serene sans action
 Searching for the pathway
 Unknowing value of freeway;
 Being crushed like creatures in street
 Forgetting significance of Wide Street
 That leads to the progress way
 Not hopeless limit to alleyway.
 A course of action on the sidewalk
 Solve no problems of common folk
 For the human rights let them be cohesive
 To show the politicians not to be coercive;
 Let lane, channel, route, boulevard, avenue
 Not become the means of corrupt revenue
 Path, road, trail, thoroughfare, throughway
 Must become not footpath but expressway;
 Course, conduit, corridor, track, artery are not
 Simply the means of approach as they thought;
 Let those become man's way of reproach
 Not simply somehow the way of approach.

***M. S. Wankhede**

Generations Meet

**Vijoy Mishra*

Peels of laughter groomed
 The central hall of my grandpa
 When the news broke
 from my remote labour- room
 about the sweet advent
 of a male child... the record of the room
 Bearing female child was mercury high.
 My grandpa, they say, could hardly control
 His hands frequently kissing his moustache:
 A scheduled tribe was summoned
 To announce, beating drum, the inception of an heir
 To protect and perpetuate
 The age- old tradition of high family,
 Everyone there was feasting
 With the idea of a glorious life
 Of the promising chap in the womb of time; but
 Pragmatic time defeats all such emotional yearnings
 And gets things realized as per schedule.
 When my mother narrates my grandpa's story,
 His mirth and zealous bout at my birth; I , too, am
 Ready to risk all my wealth
 To make the past present; but it is
 Writ large on the historian time
 That it can't turn its book
 Backward or forward for
 Generations meet.

***Dr. Vijoy Mishra, Millat College, Darbhanga.**

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BOOK REVIEWS

Srivatava, Ramesh K. *Read, Write and Teach: Essays on Learning to Live Together*. New Delhi: Authors Press. 2014. Pp.237+ vii. Price (Hard Cover) Rs.700/

Ramesh K. Srivastava does not need any introduction because he has an established reputation as an academic, creative writer, and critic. The present collection of essays, dealing with diverse aspects of life, literature, and education, is meant to enhance and enrich the range of reader's ideas and experience, which this volume does admirably well. The mark of author's vast experience as a student and teacher of literature as well that of a sensitive and fully conscious, intelligent observer of what is happening around, is stamped on each page of this book. Thematic variety is another remarkable feature of this volume. On education, there are thought-provoking essays dealing variously with the art of teaching through creative reading and writing, possibility of wit and humour in the class-room teaching to relieve the tedium and enliven the monotonous atmosphere, exercises in writing as an essential element of teaching, need for regular evaluation of teachers and the essence of accountability for them, the question and validity of separate college for women, the prevalence of inbreeding in universities, and the way universities can be run properly.

Prof Sivastava is rightly very critical of the selective and spoon-feeding type of teaching and study. He, therefore, urges for adding creativity to them that will enable students to "imaginatively construct implicit relationships between ideas, events and contexts" (5). The scholar-author laments the utter lack of classroom writing exercises and surprise tests to measure the merit and preparedness of students, as well as the dearth of other innovative ways of teaching to encourage excellence among them. He is also critical of inbreeding, rampant in majority of the Indian universities: "For them, the world is not a family, but family is the world"

(43). He wants universities to be universal in scope and range, but they are made parochial and racial. To have “a Hindu, Muslim, Sikh or Men’s or Women’s university is a contradiction in term” (60). Thus, the ideas of Prof Srivastava are truly liberal, as Victor Hugo used to say about the real aim of education.

There are, then, essays on other important areas of life. On success, the author challenges the very idea of material gains, by fair or foul means, as marks of success: “One cannot serve God and Mammon at the same time” (143). According to him, success in human life should be related to a “fine discriminating mind, an aesthetic sense, and a warm humanity” (146). There is also a very inspiring essay on Dr. Olive I. Reddick, the former Director of U.S. Educational Foundation in India, who could be active and motivating for young scholars despite her crippling, physical handicap and growing age. The author recollects, with nostalgia, his many meetings with her that moulded his mindset and encouraged him towards excellence in education. The presence of wit and humour is part of many essays in this collection; a vivid example is the last essay: “Why USA cannot be More Like India.” He compares the common Indian sights with those of US to prove his point: “Though the USA boasts of various freedoms, the people there have no simple freedom even to spit tobacco or *gutka* anywhere.... have no freedom to throw a *biri* or a cigarette-but on the road. They know of no pleasure of eating ripe bananas and then of hurling the peels as missiles...” (233). So, after his return from there to India, the author feels happy (?): “Now that we are back in India, it is high time we stop thinking of the deficiency-ridden USA and how we can cope with all the available glorious facilities in the present-day India”(237).

Both by content and expression, the essays in this collection are intellectually quite stimulating. They activate the dormant mind of the readers by challenging their deeply entrenched thoughts. The over-all impact of these pieces makes them to question wrong beliefs cherished since long, and see things in a new and proper perspective. A man of

vast study, Prof Srivastava may refer to writers from different periods and countries quite effortlessly, such as Thoreau, Emerson, Poe, Wordsworth, Keats, Stevenson, Browning, A.G. Gardiner, T.H. Huxley, Prem Chand, Sarat Chandra, Tagore, Anita Desai, Salman Rushdie, Vikram Seth, Arundhati Roy, U.R. Ananthamurthy, Jhumpa Lahiri and many others. But when in a lighter mood, he may also talk of scamsters like Harshad Mehta, Abdul Karim Telgi and gangsters like Dawood Ibrahim. Thus, Prof Srivastava is master of handling not only serious topics of literature and education, but superfluous and funny aspects of life as well. In an age where nothing counts more than the genre of novel, it is a bold attempt by the author to popularize the genre of essay by his scintillating pieces that move both our mind and heart.

Reviewer: Prof Pashupati Jha, Humanities Dept., IIT Roorkee-247 667

Khatri, C.L. *two minute silence*. New Delhi: Authorspress. 2014. ISBN: 978-81-7273-920-1. Pp. 81, Price- RS. 195.00

Chote Lal Khatri’s *two minute silence*, his third poetry collection after *Kargil* (2000) and *Ripples in the Lake* (2006), is completely a novel and thought-provoking compendium of the poet’s innermost rumblings that can prompt every human heart to introspect what man has made of man. The collection, which contains thirty four poems along with fifty five haikus, has in its root an irreparable loss that cannot be compensated for despite our claims of being the denizens of a multi-lingual and multi-cultural world devoid of any boundary. A serious reading of the collection reminds us truly of what Shelley said of songs “*Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought.*”

The title of the collection itself hints at the poet’s realization of loss in various forms. While the book is dedicated to the poet’s mother, the ruminations of loss are being deliberated upon in various forms. Mother, being in the backdrop, the poet makes humans aware of various mothers who face the rough and tumble of life without any

complaint. The care-taker of all humans— the mother not only in her physical but in her natural form also stands a testimony to the atrocities perpetrated on her by her benevolent sons. A universal emblem of love and sacrifice, the mother ‘bore the cross all through her life, while the humans ‘slept in peace, bloomed in spring’ (20). Mother becomes a metaphor in the poet’s delineation of river, flower, and water; soil etc. which finally become the sheltering tree ready to clasp us when we grow weary of all our benign and malign desires. Mother, the giver ultimately appears dry and her sagging bones and bent waist are yet ready to stand as funeral grounds, on her bank where her cries are heard by the poet who stands desolate.

Khatri’s collection has some poems ironic in nature yet the poet commiserates with the eternal giver by saying, “There must have been some compulsions. / Nobody loves to betray the dear ones.”(29) Mothers, as the poet says, have shown exemplary courage by ‘sending their sons/ to wars putting *tilak* on their foreheads’ (29).

While *Two Minute Silence* also contains poems on other subjects yet the theme of loss rules supreme in the book and that substantiates the title. The poet seems aggrieved with man’s conflict with Nature and his environmental concerns prompt every reader to think beyond the poet’s message camouflaged in simple words. Khatri, at times, grows philosophic and shows his metaphysical anguish saying;

City afraid of the rivers—
Ganga, (east-north) Punpun (south) and Sone (west)
Rivers afraid of the city —
Fornicated dream of *Ganga pariyojna* (24)

The poet’s anguish in the form of irony is not devoid of truths that humans in their blind craze for development (sustainable, if any) come across and are a part of it. While the picture drawn in the aforesaid poem is that of Patliputra (Patna) but the said city is only a metaphor. In fact, all cities are dying and so are all rivers. Likewise, the poet fulminates his fire on various taboos and shows both his humour and

seriousness at the same time. The poet calls sex as any other hunger ‘immune to rags of time’ and feels it as a result of humans’ craze for the fast pace of life, which seems to blind all human considerations. Love has merely become a façade of sensual pleasure, which starts with our birth and is not law-bound. Generation gap, which confuses both the old and the young, also seems to be poet’s concern, which makes him sympathetic with the new generation who think of love and sex as a fundamental right. Like a mute spectator, the poet foreshadows the claims of the youth; I am no one’s colony/I have thrown away the albatross/ You had hung around my neck. (63)

Realism is the touchstone of two *minute silence*. The poet draws his readers’ attention and persuades them not only to observe silence only for human deaths but for other deaths as well. Death in the physical form only terminates life but death of various customs, mores, values and practices continue to pester all coming generations. We also ought to condole for eroding values and sacraments which often get lost amid rants of mechanized civilization hinging on the screws of gory illusions. No reader is left with painful thoughts when the poet says:

Friends, stand with me
To observe two-minute silence
On this great grand culture
On this glorious century
On its great promises. (68)

The poet’s knack of easing the pain comes as a palliative when he says, “Someone whispered in my ear/Can’t we do with one minute...?(68) On several occasions, Khatri reminds us of the word play of Eliot ‘mixing memory and desire’(24), just to see ‘a woman etherized upon the table’(27) ‘to rise like phoenix’.(46) The poet uses the metaphor of Coleridge’s albatross to celebrate the freedom of the body imprisoned in societal rigours.

The poems of *Two Minute Silence*, written in simple language are profound and expansive in meaning as they

touch upon various issues of everyday concern beginning from personal to national and physical to metaphysical meanderings. The collection is packed with Indian smells and charms in terms of everyday practices of food, dress and desires. The use of regional words adds charms to the anthology and makes it distinct in terms of understanding. Written in free verse though, the poems of Khatri's collection may lack in melody yet are not devoid of the melody of thoughts. The collection merely is not just an addition to the poet's kit but a meaningful addition to the world of Indian English poetry.

Reviewer: Dr. Binod Mishra, Associate Professor of English, IIT Patna

Singh, R.P. *The Flea Market and Other Plays*. Delhi: Authors Press, 2014, Rs.195/\$10, Pages 71

The collection, *The Flea Market and Other Plays*, consists of three plays: "The Flea Market," "The Expired", and "A Scientist E". The first play, "The Flea Market," shows different hues of life in a society overridden with ideologies, and psychological pressures emanating from the same. As one of the characters points out: "You are theorizing life, dear. You live in ideology, and ideology mars the emotions.... Many a philosopher came and went, many a theorist died, could they bring humanity to the right path. Just answer me, could they?" (47)

The playwright records here the experiences of an Asian traveller in Paris. A game owner, Jean Claude, and his Man Friday, Martin, trap him in a trick at the Flea Market of Paris, and arrogate some Euros. The first time gambler – Asian, swings on the seesaw of morality, angst and despair. Meanwhile a lady, almost in the state of broken psyche, repeatedly shows unwarranted interest in him. In the beginning, the tourist takes it as another bead in the series of traps, but later, he coincidentally comes closer to her—both ideologically and emotionally. Here starts the main plot which takes some serious twist. Corsea, the lady in rainbow

hues, is a serious scholar of cultural anthropology who has taken an altered path, having been emotionally robbed by someone whom she had loved, sometimes back.

The second scene creates a shift paradigm, and a debate starts here on feminism vs. humanism. Songs and poems have been tucked in the text that make it lively and racy. Poetic expressions "Money in slim & svelte/Money with curves & backs" in the first scene of the play, and later many other similar expressions make uncommon comparisons.

The song "Why'nt ye lock my lips, *vous* blonde? ..." in the second scene blends many French words in the English text with such skill that saves it from obscurity.

Indian references and expressions like *Srimadbhagwadgeeta*, Rabindra Nath Thakur, Ganga, *Shashwat* and *Vatsyayan*, besides several French expressions like "*Merci bereacoup....enchante...au revoir*", without translating them into English, make an urgent appeal for world culture.

•

Corsea's bashing the tourist calls on the reader for thinking over feminism. We find Corsea in an angry mood and vehement mind, when she says to Asian: "A man will never understand the plight of a torn-out woman. You are in the same boot, the boots of the oppressors" (35).

"The Expired", the next play in the collection, speaks about the reality of colonial rule in India. Set in Lucknow, it talks about some imaginary incidence happening on December 6, 1857. Two major characters – Hastings and Alice— make the serious appeal of the play, and Jay and Mallika bring in comic relief. The setting is gothic— a moonlit December night, the blows of icy wind, a grave in the road side cemetery, and the hooting of owls at regular interval. References like London's Ghost, and Andrew Marvel's "To His Coy Mistress" in the play, bring intertextual display and implication. The dialogues, many a time, are rhythmic, such as: "Seducing moon just sucking up the tar.

Why should then we keep afar?" (57)

"A Scientist E" is a small but effective play depicting many highly suggestive and relevant contemporary meanings. The main character, referred in the play as Scientist, makes the motif clear: "I was a brilliant professor with great laurels and patents... They gave me wine... I got into it... They snatched my career... I came to street with an empty bottle... Wine was in, wit was out..." (70). The broken sentences symbolize not only the drunk mental state but also a hopelessly broken academic, who has lost his intellect to Bacchus.

It is quite clear that R.P. Singh has mastered the art of dramatics—inventing stories and related situations, conceptualization and creation of characters, and writing dialogues appropriate to the occasion and event. He has a penchant for direct, effective, and witty expressions. This is just the beginning of a budding dramatist; his creativity points to greater achievements ahead. It is a good sign for Indian English Drama, which otherwise, is largely a neglected genre these days.

Reviewer: Prof Pashupati Jha, Humanities Dept., IIT Roorkee-247 667

Chambial, D.C. *Hour of Antipathy*. Maranda: Poetcrit Publications, 2014. Pp. 80, Price: Not mentioned.

Dr D.C. Chambial, who recently retired from the Himachal Pradesh Education Service, is a unique and committed poet, critic, and editor. He has been single-handedly editing and publishing the well-known bi-annual journal of poetry and literary criticism, *Poetcrit*, for the last twenty six years, that also from a small town like Maranda. *Hour of Antipathy* is his ninth poetry collection. His poems have won many acclaims and awards; poetic genius like Shiv K Kumar has praised his work "as a true unification of sensibility, ideas and images merging into a poetic synthesis" (*Hours of Antipathy*, 77). Bernard M. Jackson, the poet-critic

from England, speaks highly of his "rainbow-like precision" (*ibid.*), and S.N. Pandey appreciates his poetry for being "free from obscurity, pedantic use of language, and allusive use of images and metaphors" (*ibid.* 79).

The present collection, consisting of fifty-seven poems in all, is the outcome of creatively assimilating dreams with memories, personal mindscape with the natural landscape of the Himalayas, where the poet has spent almost entire life. His poems are reticent and cryptic, not profuse in expressing passions. Therefore, his poetics lies in subtlety and sobriety, and not in flamboyant, outward shine. His readers willingly cultivate a taste for semi-silent words, which speak little but tell a lot. For this effect, one has to brood and reflect on his lines, needing slow absorption, such as: "A pool of water/ Seeds down: / hopes" (28). Contrasting things are often juxtaposed, then assimilated and accepted by his poetic flow and philosophy, and then expressed in a simple yet profound way: "Thorns surrogated/ the flowers and/ tears, peals of laughter" (25-26). Chambial sings of birds, butterflies, dense green bushes and forests, and yet is aware of the possibility of snakes and scorpions inside. This dichotomy of God's idyllic creation spoilt by men's corruption is deeply rooted in the poems of this collection. He is mostly a poet of Nature, and in its depiction, he harmonizes the majestic sight before him with his deep insight into the suffering humanity:

From atop a hill looked at yonder hill
The light lightly stirred across and over
Rolled on the vast and verdurous valley
Down to the fog embraced plains below.

The kindred souls, in cold, they shiver
Spring up to toil and calm the fire in belly,
With first ray of sun, their faces aglow,
Pounce on the garbage hill, their sacks to fill. (38)

The poems of this volume have the feel of mountain breeze, the rhythm of flowing rivers, the serenity of lakes, the natural sweetness of chirping birds, and the beauty and

smell of wild flowers—in short, the poet has internalized and transformed the outside Nature into his emotions. In this respect, his poems have the reflections of both G.M. Hopkins and William Wordsworth. Again, like Wordsworth, there is a strong undercurrent of warm humanism in his poems, a crying need in the contemporary world, especially “in this cruel hour of antipathy” (18), when “The rainbow is lost/ in the cacophony/ of debates futile; / man has grown fangs to bite man...” (59). Poetry readers would love to have a copy of this wonderful, stirring collection and be possessed by its mystic charm while going through its pages.

Reviewer: Pashupati Jha, Professor of English, Humanities Dept., IIT Roorkee

Mishra, Binod and Prashant Mishra, eds. Post-colonial Pedagogical Issues: Strategies, Theories and Practices in English Language Teaching. New Delhi: Adhyayan Publishers and Distributors, 2014. ISBN 978 - 81 - 8435 -398 - 3, Pages 366, Price 1100.

During the last few years, many anthologies on English language teaching have been brought out. But most of the anthologies dealt with the Western theories and concepts which have been applied in the Indian classrooms indiscriminately over the decades and hence they have not yielded the expected outcomes. However, in the anthology under review “Post-Colonial Pedagogical Issues: Strategies, Theories and Practices in English Language Teaching”, a sincere effort has been done to make the ELT practitioner reflect on the use of indigenous methods and materials of teaching English in India in order to overcome the burden of the colonial meta theories which have long been proved as an obstacle in the way of the success of ELT enterprise in India.

The anthology comprises 24 articles contributed by ELT experts, scholars, and professors working in the field and who have tried to respond to the local ELT problems by making endeavours to evolve indigenous methods and

materials. The anthology opens with the scholarly preface of Professor Avadhesh Kumar Singh who advocates postcolonial pedagogy as he felt that the continuation of colonial methods for long become a pathological disease for the natives. Different articles in the anthology cover different aspects of pedagogical issues which concern the pedagogues. Some authors have also provided alternate native theories as a panacea for the failure of English Language Teaching enterprise in India. There may be differences in the view of the writers pertaining to the experimentation in methods and materials in order to contextualize and nativize them but almost all the writers unanimously agree to free ELT in India from the colonial hangover. The anthology will help ‘researchers and scholars in negotiating intricate pedagogical issues of post-colonial discourses in India beyond, and contribute to our understanding as well.’ (*Foreword, xiii*)

Susanta Kumar Bardhan, A.K.Paliwal, Murali Sivaramakrishnan, Anshu Surve and Santosh Kumar Mahapatra in their articles discuss the subversive impacts of colonialism on Indian education and pedagogy. They emphasize on the need of decolonization of English studies through contextualization by introducing Indian Writings in English Studies, New Literatures in English, Indian Literatures in Translation, Oral and Folk Literatures in the English curriculum by accommodating democratic, multi-cultural, multi-ideological contents that respect the historically marginalized voices in the ELT class room. Prashant Mishra and Binod Mishra, the editors of the said volume explore the application of Indian aesthetic theories to indianize and nativize English studies in India to contribute to the process of decolonization. Madhulika Saxena, Monali chatterjee, B.S. Jadhav and Hemendra Singh Chandalia explores the innovative support materials like films, songs, ICT, oral narratives, sayings and proverbs to provide a native environment in the ELT class room to remove the unfamiliarity and incomprehensibility caused by alien methods and content. Gagneet Kaur and Hemendra Singh Chandalia recommend using bilingual approach to assist the learners in getting over the hesitation and fear

associated with learning of an alien tongue. P.J.Paul Dhanasekaran further in his article highlights the positive aspects of bilingualism and regards it as a facilitator in the transfer of knowledge across languages. Z.N.Patil and Anindya Syam Choudhury draw the attention towards the diffusion of English from the native to the non-native varieties which resulted in the evolution of several non-anglo Englishes. This contributed in blurring the distinctions between Native and Non-Native varieties and compelled the pedagogues to reconstruct and reorient the objectives, methodology and the materials used in English Language Teaching. Bhuvaneshwar in his papers presents a critique of various western methods and approaches and advocated the need of decolonization of ELT due to the non-wholistic, non-experiential and non-contextual nature of these methods and approaches. He provides 'Karmic Language Teaching Approach' as an alternative to overcome various problems which retarded the growth of English Language Teaching in India.

The collection of articles on Post-Colonial Pedagogical issues initiates discussions among ELT scholars on non-feasibility of alien theories and approaches and the use of alternate native methods and materials to contextualize ELT in order to make it learner friendly. If freedom from alien rule became a reality, the possibility of ELT being taught through native methods also cannot be a far cry. The attempt of the editors of the present anthology is laudable and is a timely help to the learners and practitioners of ELT. However, the price of the volume may appear a bit high; one would love to recommend it specifically to college libraries at least for references in the areas of ELT.

Reviewer: Prof. A.K. Bachchan, P.G. Deptt. of English, L.N.M.U Darbhanga.

Mouli, T. Sai Chandra. Trans. 'Black Lotus: Telugu Dalit Women's Poetry' Adhyayan New Delhi: Publishers and Distributors. Pages: 75.

Black Lotus consists of 22 representative poems judiciously selected and translated by the translator who knows the Source and Target languages and cultures quite well. It opens with a preface by the translator which makes a statement:

"An honest attempt is made in this book to illustrate the deplorable conditions in which Telugu Dalit women live and make an effort to express their deep-rooted agony and seek justice for themselves and sufferers like them"(ix).

In India since ancient times caste discrimination, exploitation and injustice are part of the culture and it is still perpetuated against backward, illiterate, economically weaker section known as scheduled caste and tribes. The life history of these castes is enshrined in their literatures. In the section I the translator has discussed the importance of Dalit literature and underpins its place in the context of the Indian literatures in many Indian languages. Dalit literature emerged in 1960 in Maharashtra under the influence of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar, Mahatma Jyotiba Phule and Kabir primarily and spread its fire all over the country. Dalit writers, both male and female, are activists and social workers fighting against the caste discrimination, oppression, atrocities, violence and exploitation. They record the gruesome experience of their life in the literary genres such as poetry, short stories, drama, novels, autobiography, etc. "They present in their writings, their own language, environment, condition and issues"(BL,1). The Dalit women from Andhra Pradesh are members of the mainstream Dalit writing. The translator provides the history of Dalit writing in Telugu in short and quotes from several women poets to illustrate his perceptive. This exercise felicitates understanding of Dalit poetry by Telugu women across the nation.

The translation of Dalit literature from regional languages in India has always been a gateway to the understanding of Dalit sensibility. Most of the original writers from Marathi, Gujarati, Tamil, Malayalam, Hindi, Telugu, Bangla, in particular, besides those from other regions, treat

human experiences of the members from the backward and discriminated societies as great stories of sorrow and suffering inflicted on them in the name of caste and class, social deprivation and exploitation. *Black Lotus*, a collection of Telugu Dalit poems in translation, brings in fresh gusto of emotions that moves our heart and strikes our senses to explore in Indian ancient civilization the constitution of the brutal concept that has been called the sudra castes.

'Black Lotus' are the Telgu Dalit women. Lotus is national emblem of our culture, a proud symbol of purity, freshness and endurance of life against all oddities and adverse situation that is maintained in waste, muddy conditions. The lotus has turned black. Now it is the 'black lotus' which is a symbol of deprived people and community. It has lost its magnificent presence with its cultural aroma. Dalit women have grown into black-beauties, representing reality and culture, as these poets describe in their poetry. In their wombs they have nurtured the foetus of combustion. The torches in their hands are lit to burn the establishments that have ruined their hopes and inspiration, claiming that tomorrow and future is theirs. Their feelings and emotions are strong and volcanic, ever aggressively expressed but with a kind of compromise, if the high caste people show a sense of adaptability, togetherness and humanism. "Let us plant seed bed of affection/ Let us sustain them with water of humanism" is their mantra to all. In the writing of these women poets are embodied multiple issues of perennial significance: finding shelter in different faith and religion, emergence of resurgence, child labour exploitation, molestation and rape, labourer's issues, commitment to sacrifice for larger issues, social exclusion, expression of angst against high caste people and Hindu traditions prompted by Manu, etc. Some major concerns have been discussed in the follow up.

These poets' complaints about the conditions they have been pushed into. It is said that these untouchables are the 'Adi Andhra', the native of Andhra, the roots for Andhra Class' (BL,22).When required, Maadiga and Maala are

brothers but in practice they are deprived and denied their identity. If Maala 'garland' is so religiously used, why these people are subjected to torture and social deprivation? Devadaanam asks them to think over the grave issue with concern otherwise retaliation is not far away.

They called you Adi Andhra,
You are the root for Andhra clan
Doing good, spreading love
Grown you are for the world
Taking brother and held all,
Those maadiga brother
called the younger one 'our man'
The history shows that 'Maala'(BL,21).

Untouchability goes to the civilization of Hindu religion and society that have blunted the image, social progress, sweeping away and engulfing cultural mores. The division of society on caste-based compartmentalization, leading to discrimination and ostracize of people from the collective life has destroyed human mind. These untouchables are called 'Adi Andhra', then and 'Harijan' today, branding them 'Maalas' and 'Maadigas'. All forms of atrocities are used to exploit them. But when we look into the past, history reveals that we belong to this classes which are the roots of the Andhra Society.

The element of passionate optimism reflects in Bhooshi Anna Poornamma's expression. Present life, full of burden, has not mitigated her hope in life. Woman suffers more acutely in the society and even goddess who represents her and her class also finds it quite difficult to redress their grievance and provide a kind of succor. She finds it difficult to 'Unburden inner load' that is built up since days by social practices. Whether married early and late in the life, for a lady life is cumbersome. It is necessary to continue fighting against the atrocities with hope and insight. The collective struggle is to locate the reasons and sources of these inflicted sorrows and suffering:

You lament for the
Loss of your merit

Confined in the framework of family,
Carried by current of whirlpools
And unknown undulations (BL,19)

A positive frame of mind and determination lead to success. If this spirit and values are inculcated in mind poverty or age cannot deter them. All the associations of women working for the cause of women's upliftment should join hands and fight against those responsible for their plight, sexual assaults and discrimination. The poet asks Santhamma and all women to shed inhibitions and with courage stand firm on their feet to revolt against cultural evils and blind followers.

Motkupally Damayanthi Devi decries the unwanted respect given to the Brahmin and the pundits in everyday life and culture. It is her firm demand that Dalits should not behave like slaves to them. It unveils the whole Chaturvarnya system and conspiracy that Brahmins should maintain their superiority and honour at highest level. This land of languages and culture has become a shelter-house for Brahmins only. Despite continuous humiliation and torture the dalit are not in a mood to take revenge. The new name 'harijan' to denote the low caste society has failed to elevate their position and bring relief. It is necessary to remove the cancer of untouchability and all superstitious. Swarupa Rani prescribes suggestion: "This cancer has to be treated with radiation of harmony/ a psychological malady./ Without social equality? progress does not bloom / Nor does fragrance of humanity flourish" (BL,26).

As the name connotes, Jyothirmayi is an excellent voice which would continue ringing in our ears once you read her poem 'Future Fervour', a representative voice of the Dalit women, what she is and what she is not. Her 'dynamism' would glisten tomorrow as she is a 'blaze', 'a green sword' to cut the 'spreading demonic wings'. She is a 'poetic current', 'the sacred mother', the 'rose water', the pestle's song to drive away 'dark sorrows' (BL,27-28). She proposes humanism to be followed for equality and equal opportunity to all. The high caste politicians remain strong on the support

and votes of the Dalits. When time comes they covertly cheat and betray them. The poet, Geddada Kasturi is very ironic in her mood and expression when she delineates the shameless submission to the Dalits:

...eradicate 'molestations'-from tomorrow
End unemployment-with their kith and kin
Protect women-with police support
Eliminate untouchability-with hamlets afar
Exorcise devil of dowry-with new shoes

Establish 'Shantihi', peace-looking vainly for the dame
here they come, politician come after five years promising
paradise in the palm (BL, 29)

Why should woman look like Anusuya, Savitri and Sita, when their place in the culture of Manu's society is questioned, she asks women in the modern society. The etiquette and manner are taught to them to maintain low image in the family and society even though she is a 'jewel'. Instead it is now a necessity to stand against the patriarchy and order, which can be only done by lunging like a lioness to prove one's power and supremacy which we find in 'Adishakti'.

Conversion from Hindu religion to Christianity or any other religion provides relief from the disturbing pressure of clan and caste atrocities. The poet has submitted to Esu Swamy and begs reorganization of their life with punishment whenever required. Ratnamma is devoid of love and mercy which she could not find in gods and goddesses of Hinduism. Instead of guidance she received preaching from the high caste people, which remind her lower place in society. The 'Satan' in the cast-ridden society is still ready to devour her. Gulbanamma is absolutely religious, seeking peace and protection in Sree Yehova. Having gone miles away from the Hindu culture and oppression she is a committed worshiper of Christ; it is her desire to seek complete fulfillment in serving the 'The Sacred Lord', the only one against the thirty four thousand Hindu Gods and goddesses. Krupa sings the glory of the birth of 'Sree Yesu', the Jesus:

“The child is born for our sake to cleanse our sins on this earth”. We the Indians talk profusely of the immanent presence of gods and goddess who favour only high caste people and disregard those who belong to the lower castes. Fundamentalism and discrimination led the backward and outcaste to convert to Christianity to free from the fetters of the Hindu religion and ignoble practices.

Jaya Salomi has not forgotten her sour experience in her life that caste margin brought to her. Education and self-awareness can lift the downtrodden above their weak plight. In her view schools are the institutions that enlighten the illiterate. To overcome the disparity between high and low division of humanity; the affection for each other is the only way remaining. Balijepalli Vijayalakshmi has a close experience from the field as she got chance to look at the surrounding poverty among the down trodden. The poet declares that real revolution would come when workers and peasants stand against the injustice, inequality and corruption, against the exploitation and extortion and their movement would spread across the society like wild fire. When common people wake up against all sorts of atrocities, real revolution will take shape. Jaajula Gowri is directly influenced by the thoughts and path provided by Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar. She is determined to become violent and would take up all necessary weapons to fight against the caste crime and oppression. She remembers all sort of humiliating treatment given to her but today she is ‘braving innumerable torments, intolerable insults’ and would make all plans to break the shell covering social, orthodox structure of caste discrimination.

Gogu Shyamala faced cruel resistance and police harassment during her attacks against the traditional society. She declares “my ravenous hunger can consume mountains”(BL,29) by taking inspiration from mother Muthamma and sister Phoolan Devi. She knows that revolt is the only source of life in the context of present and future. She is decisive in her declaration “Caste is my target, Durban my triumph”(BL,29). The high caste people are ‘python’, the

snake that devours other’s body completely. In a caste divided society the high caste people assume that they are possessor of the Dalit women’s “body” and can play the master role anytime, but it is not possible today. Varre Rani no longer tolerates the declaration of ownership by the other. In search of this python she walks with courage and would soon skin the python to death. Mary Maadiga is a scheduled caste activist galvanizing the Maadiga women to organize and work together with solidarity. The agony and shamelessness of work that humiliates the young scavenger girls who suffer, have been worded by the poet. When the women from the other caste enjoy events with head held high, these women are absorbed in their work. In order to get out of this grief these women should rise and stand against the profession and demand their rights. These women have realized that self-respect is important to create their identity and they should assert their rights. “Forbidden history” of the low caste people is replete with many incidents about the wrought history of the have-nots and untouchable. Challapalli Swarupa Rani mentions the women of these castes in history and reveals the atrocities inflicted on them.

The Dalit activists and poets have been constantly presenting their plight and agony through their literary creativity. Dalit literature produced in the regional languages delineates their struggle for freedom and identity. Literature produced in Tamil, Telugu, and Malayalam languages is not comprehensible to the readers from the non Dravidian languages. Such kinds of translations remove the gaps, joining many cultures and languages. We can understand the mind and feeling of the people who have suffered due to the caste discrimination and violence in India since days unknown. Dr. Chandra Mouli deserves special thanks for bringing such worst picture of the Dalit people to the notice of the contemporary readers.

‘After Word’ is equally illuminating and makes readers know the poetry by Telugu women in terms of theoretical approach. Here the translator provides in-depth discussion of ‘Marginality’, its different types and also delineates views

of eminent thinkers and social workers on problems and issues of Dalit people and women in particular. It is quite revealing to know the views of K.Purushottam, Rama Rao VVB, etc. Different theories proposed by great feminists very often cite Indian social situation where Dalit women live and suffer. It is a fine endeavour by T. Sai Chandra Mouli to summarize Cynthia Stephen, Alice Walker, and African-American women writers in brief to sharpen the sensibility of readers and critics so that they are familiar with facts, when they read Dalit poetry by Dalit women. He deserves appreciation for such honest attempt.

**Reviewer: P.D.Nimsarkar, Deptt. of Linguistics,
Foreign and Indian Languages, RTM Nagpur
University, Nagpur**

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