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**Dr. Binod Mishra**

**Associate Professor of English, IIT Roorkee**

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**THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF  
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## INDIAN JOURNAL OF ENGLISH STUDIES

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## Editorial

While writing this editorial, I find myself in a pitiable condition like most of you who feel perplexed about the happenings around us. If literature happens to record the activities around, we ought to be worried about the records we are going to leave behind for our posterity. Today we are living amid instances of hatred born out of small matters that have no place for a civilized human race who can boast of ethical episodes from our scriptures. The poetics of protest may be realized even without making unnecessary brouhaha for the world at large. There is no denying the fact that protests express the modalities of human existence. But what is of immense significance is the fact that such protests should not annihilate our endeavours to 'becoming'. We have to remember that 'to be', one has 'to become'. Protests for the sake of protests have always been detrimental to the process of becoming, of development, of harmony and of happiness. Life may have a goal, but the ways to attain goals sometimes become so misleading that it affects our language and also the meaning. Language, being at the core of all human interactions, has not only the power to express but also to impress with the proper selection of words having the right intention and not the creation of contention. Both history and literature in this regard have plethora of examples how language has helped mankind come out of the predicament from time to time. Dialogue and a proper discourse have always worked as a recuperative force in mitigating the suffering and horror of all times. We have to introspect to discover that language has been lost in the conflict between our heart and mind. The materialistic attitude of huge harvest without 'proper sowing' seems to be at the root of all ailments.

Globalization, being the mantra today, should not blind us to the ancient practice of our being the proponents of *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*. What is there to offer to the world when we declare ourselves to be caged, imprisoned and stifled? Actually, we have been so obsessed today with the technological advances that our emotions have dried up and

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we look forward to receiving reliefs from other quarters. The mechanical life styles seem to seal our natural instincts which earlier brought us close to our fellow beings. Cyber identities, bordering on the likes and dislikes unreasonably poured on our sites, have distanced us from our insights and hence the thoughts of love, loyalty and life seem to retrograde. It is once again hightime we retreated to poetry which can help us emerge from the breakdowns and build bridges of co-existence and cordiality. History is not only repetitive, but also recreative. What T.S. Eliot wrote in his poem “The Rock” is true to all times:

Where is the Life we have lost in living?  
Where is the wisdom we have lost in knowledge?  
Where is the knowledge we have lost in information?  
The cycles of heaven in twenty centuries  
Brings us farther from God and nearer to the Dust.

All of us have to admit that every moment we are nearing death and farther from God. It is beyond doubt that while Time continues to be in a flux, the struggle between good and evil always continues. It is for us as humans to decide whether to be with the good or with the evil. While being with the good may, at times, bring suffering yet let us remember that suffering brings us close to God which is a blessing.

The fifty-third volume of *The Indian Journal of English Studies* is a collection of scholarly papers presented at the 59<sup>th</sup> AIETC held at Rajasthan Technical University, Kota, 19-21 December, 2014. The volume in your hand includes incisive papers by faculty members, research scholars and other literary lovers spread out in different parts of the world continuing their quest for authentic knowledge. It has always been the policy of the IJES to be transparent in terms of selection and inclusion of papers for greater good, keeping into consideration the real sparks emanating both from the experienced as well as from the young ones. What makes every volume of IJES exceptional is its motto of equal space and representation of several voices emerging on the literary firmament. Hence, voices of love, of disillusionment

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arising from crises of poverty, of the complexities of human relationships, of exile and anger melting into the world of acute realization of global challenges, have been registered in this issue. In addition, papers on literary theory, translation studies, language teaching and on the contemporary relevance of Swami Vivekananda’s thoughts have also been considered. The volume, apart from including scholarly articles, has also given space to a short story, twelve poems and four book reviews. Despite exercising utmost care in editing and formatting of the content, some errors might have crept in. The editor requests readers to ignore them and instead mail their creative suggestions. I extend my gratitude to all contributors of this volume and wish them my heartiest greetings for the upcoming Christmas and New Year 2016. I also look forward to cherishing the imperishable love and faith of all readers.

**BINOD MISHRA**  
**Editor-in-Chief**

## World Literature in English

*Hari Mohan Prasad\**

World Literature in English is a comprehensive, complex, sprawling and eclectic topic; it may have and does have myriad connotations. World literature is sometimes used to refer to the sum total of the world's national literatures, but usually it refers to the circulation of works into the wider world beyond their country of origin. Often used in the past primarily for masterpieces of Western European literature, world literature today is increasingly seen in global context. The term, world literature, was first coined by the German writer and philosopher, Goethe, in 1827, to describe a literary perspective and a new cultural awareness. Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels used the term in their Communist Manifesto to describe the cosmopolitan character of bourgeois literary production. Since then it has been used by a great many literary minds with differing ideas on just exactly what it meant. David Damrosch argued for world literature as less a vast canon of works and more a matter of circulation and reception, and he proposed that works that thrive as world literature are ones that work well and even gain in various ways in translation. Whereas Damrosch's approach remains tied to the close reading of individual works, a very different view was taken by the Stanford critic Franco Moretti in a pair of articles offering "Conjectures on World Literature." Moretti argued that the scale of world literature far exceeds what can be grasped by traditional methods of close reading, and he advocated instead a mode of "distant reading" that would look at large-scale patterns as discerned from publication records and national literary histories, enabling one to trace the global sweep of forms such as the novel or film.

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\* **Prof. Hari Mohan Prasad**, Formerly Professor and Head, Department of English and Dean, Faculty of Humanities, Magadh University, Bodh Gaya.

Moretti's approach combined elements of evolutionary theory with the world-systems analysis. French critic Pascale Casanova, explores the ways in which the works of peripheral writers must circulate into metropolitan centers in order to achieve recognition as works of world literature. Both Moretti and Casanova emphasize the inequalities of the global literary field, which Moretti describes as "one, but unequal."

However, a valid and sustainable meaning of world literature has been offered by Hendrik Birus in his article, "The Goethean Concept of World Literature and Comparative Literature," where he presents a new reading and understanding of Goethe's famous dictum: "National literature does not mean much at present, it is time for the era of world literature and everybody must endeavour to accelerate this epoch". According to Birus, the dictum is not to be taken at face value today. Goethe's concept of world literature ought to be understood in the sense that it is not "the replacement of national literatures by world literature we encounter." Rather, it is "the rapid blossoming of a multitude of European and non-European literatures and the simultaneous emergence of a world literature -mostly in English translations. Here, we have to give attention to a subtle point. In fact, there are two movements at present: World Literature and World Literature in English. All the above thinkers have discussed the concept of world literature as such, but here we are concerned with world Literature in English. These two movements overlap in many ways, but both have a separate identity. In case of world literature what we have in mind is a wider canvass; it is the literature from any part of the world and it is written in any language. Literature in any language from any part of the world may constitute the catalogue or course of World Literature. We may have in mind Roman Classics, Greek Tragedy, Elizabethan Drama, French Comedy, Chinese Poetry, Japanese Plays, Sanskrit epics as well as writers from whole of Europe, America and non-European and Non-American countries. Such courses have been designed in some American universities and are being discussed in various conferences and seminars.

But World Literature in English is literature from any part of the world written in English language, we may spell it out as a journey from English literature to Literature in English. Though there have been contributions from several writers from different parts of the world to the development and emergence of a global perspective to English literature, there have been three great historic points in creation of world literature in English. The first historic point is the growth of English literature from the Great Britain. English literature is generally seen as beginning with the epic poem *Beowulf*, that dates from between the 8th to the 11th centuries, the most famous work in Old English, which has achieved national epic status in England, despite being set in Scandinavia. The next important landmark is the works of the poet Geoffrey Chaucer especially *The Canterbury Tales*. Then during the Renaissance, especially the late 16th and early 17th centuries, major drama and poetry was written by William Shakespeare, Ben Jonson, John Donne and many others. Another great poet, from later in the 17th century, was John Milton. The late 17th and the early 18th century are particularly associated with satire, especially in the poetry of John Dryden and Alexander Pope, and the prose works of Jonathan Swift. The 18th century also saw the first British novels in the works of Daniel Defoe, Samuel Richardson, and Henry Fielding, while the late 18th and early 19th century was the period of the Romantic poets Wordsworth, Coleridge, Shelley and Keats.

It was in the Victorian era that the novel became the leading literary genre in English, dominated especially by Charles Dickens, but there were many other significant writers, including the Brontë sisters, and then Thomas Hardy, in the final decades of the 19th century. These eminent writers from England were icons of literary excellence and their work is a transcript of English life and culture as well as an articulation of the European sensibility. But at the same time, English literature is a repository of human heritage.

In the nineteenth century later part the steady and stable sensibility of English literature began to get challenges for

expansion and diversion. A good number of American writers became articulate. An increasing desire to produce uniquely American literature and culture, a number of key new literary figures emerged, perhaps most prominently Washington Irving, William Cullen Bryant, James Fenimore Cooper, and Edgar Allan Poe.

Ralph Waldo Emerson's work influenced not only the writers who gathered around him, forming a movement known as Transcendentalism, Emerson's most gifted fellow-thinker was perhaps Henry David Thoreau wrote *Walden*, a book-length memoir that urges resistance to the meddlesome dictates of organized society. His radical writings express a deep-rooted tendency toward individualism in the American character. Nathaniel Hawthorne collected some of his stories as *Twice-Told Tales*, a volume rich in symbolism and occult incidents. Hawthorne went on to write full-length "romances", quasi-allegorical novels that explore such themes as guilt, pride, and emotional repression in his native New England. His masterpiece is *The Scarlet Letter*.

Hawthorne's fiction had a profound impact on his friend Herman Melville who made name for himself by turning material from his seafaring days into exotic and sensational sea narrative novels. Inspired by Hawthorne's focus on allegories and dark psychology, Melville went on to write romances replete with philosophical speculation. In *Moby-Dick*, an adventurous whaling voyage becomes the vehicle for examining such themes as obsession, the nature of evil and human struggle against the elements. Ernest Hemingway was a big name. In 1954, he won the Nobel Prize for literature. Canada born, Chicago-raised Saul Bellow would become one of the most influential novelists in America in the decades directly following World War II. In works like *The Adventures of Augie March* and *Herzog*, Bellow painted vivid portraits of the American city and the distinctive characters that peopled it. Bellow went on to win the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1976.

Regarding the war novel specifically, there was a literary explosion in America during the post-World War II era. Some

of the best known of the works produced included Norman Mailer's *The Naked and the Dead* Joseph Heller's *Catch-22* and Kurt Vonnegut Jr.'s *Slaughterhouse-Five*. John Updike approached American life from a more reflective but no less subversive perspective and his work is also deeply imbued with Christian themes. Frequently linked with Updike is the novelist Philip Roth. Roth vigorously explores Jewish identity in American society, especially in the postwar era and the early 21st century.

In the field of Poetry, in the 19th century, a distinctive American idiom began to emerge. By the later part of that century, when Walt Whitman was winning an enthusiastic audience abroad, poets from the United States had begun to take their place at the forefront of the English-language *avant-garde*. The final emergence of a truly indigenous English-language poetry in the United States was the work of two poets, Walt Whitman (1819–1892) and Emily Dickinson (1830–1886). On the surface, these two poets could not have been less alike. Whitman's long lines, derived from the metric of the King James Version of the Bible, and his democratic inclusiveness stand in stark contrast with Dickinson's concentrated phrases and short lines and stanzas, derived from Protestant hymnals.

The development of these idioms, as well as more conservative reactions against them, can be traced through the works of poets such as Edwin Arlington Robinson, Stephen Crane, Robert Frost, and Carl Sandburg. Frost, in particular, is a commanding figure, who aligned strict poetic meter, particularly blank verse and terser lyrical forms, with a "vurry Amur'k'n" (as Pound put it) idiom. This new idiom, combined with a study of 19th-century French poetry, formed the basis of American input into 20th-century English-language poetic modernism. Ezra Pound and T. S. Eliot were the leading figures at the time, with their rejection of traditional poetic form and meter and of Victorian diction. Both steered American poetry toward greater density, difficulty, and opacity, with an emphasis on techniques such as fragmentation, ellipsis, allusion,

juxtaposition, ironic and shifting personae, and mythic parallelism. Pound, in particular, opened up American poetry to diverse influences, including the traditional poetries of China and Japan. Numerous other poets made important contributions at this revolutionary juncture, including Gertrude Stein, Wallace Stevens, William Carlos Williams, Hilda Doolittle, Marianne Moore, E. E. Cummings, and Hart Crane.

In the field of Drama, in the modern age it took a greater international perspective and derived itself from ideational concepts. There was an explosion of ideas that led to the spirit of modernism. The Positivism of Comte, the evolutionary theory of Darwin, the economic concepts of Marx, the psychoanalysis of Freud, the theory of Relativity of Einstein, the god is dead movement of Nietzsche, the Existentialist concept of Sorren Kierkegaard, the concept of Time of Bergson, the theory of Absurd of Beckett and Camus and many more ideas shook the traditional concept of human life and existence. Modern drama is an attempt to answer who is man, what is the meaning of human existence and so on. In fact, Modern drama is the collective, cumulative product of contributions made by a large number of playwrights from different countries—Ibsen from Norway, Shaw from Ireland, Strindberg from Sweden, Chekov from Russia, Pirandello from Italy, Brecht from Germany, Beckett from Ireland /France, Camus from Algiers and many others.

In the twentieth century, more particularly in its later part, the scenario of English literature took new turns. A number of writers who became significant, achieved international recognition and who won Awards including the Nobel Prize emerged from non-European and non-American countries, it will be relevant to know a little about the literature in English from such countries. African Literature: It is interesting to observe that African creative writing in English found its major voice, from the works of Chinua Achebe to those of Ben Okri. Wole Soyinka, winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1986, is known for his drama, poetry, and prose. Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*, is

perhaps the best-known African novel of the 20th century. Okri blends fantasy and reality in his novel *The Famished Road*. The spiritual and real worlds are linked in the novel, the one a dimension of the other, in a narrative mode that African storytellers have been using for centuries. The novel *July's People*, by Nadine Gordimer, who received the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1991, takes place in an imagined postindependence South Africa.

J.M. Coetzee, winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature in 2003, wrote *Life and Times of Michael K*, a story with a blurred hero and an indistinct historical and geographical background. It describes a war that could be any war, a country that could be any country, a bureaucracy that could be any bureaucracy.

Australian Literature - During its early Western history, Australia was a collection of British colonies; therefore, its literary tradition begins with and is linked to the broader tradition of English literature. However, the narrative art of Australian writers has, since 1788, introduced the character of a new continent into literature - exploring such themes as Aboriginality, *mateship*, egalitarianism, democracy, national identity, migration, Australia's unique location and geography, the complexities of urban living and the "beauty and the terror" of life in the Australian bush. Australian writers who have obtained international renown include the Nobel winning author Patrick White, as well as authors Christina Stead, David Malouf, Peter Carey, Bradley Trevor and such others.

Canadian literature reflects the country's dual origin and its official bilingualism. The literature in English in Canada represents the quest for a myth of origins and for a personal and national identity. As the critic Northrop Frye observed, Canadian literature is haunted by the overriding question "Where is here?" thus, metaphoric mappings of peoples and places became central to the evolution of the Canadian literary imagination. Arguably, the best-known living Canadian writer internationally is Margaret Atwood, a prolific novelist, poet, and literary critic. Some great 20th-century Canadian

authors include Margaret Laurence, Gabrielle Roy and Carol Shields. This group, along with Nobel Laureate Alice Munro, who has been called the best living writer of short stories in English, were the first to elevate Canadian Literature to the world stage.

Literature of West Indies — The term “West Indies” first began to achieve wide currency in the 1950s, when writers such as Samuel Selvon, John Hearne, Edgar Mittelholzer, V.S. Naipaul, and George Lamming began to be published in the United Kingdom. A sense of a single literature developing across the islands was also encouraged in the 1940s by the BBC radio programme *Caribbean Voices*. Many—perhaps most—West Indian writers have found it necessary to leave their home territories and base themselves in the United Kingdom, the United States, or Canada in order to make a living from their work—West Indian literature ranges over subjects and themes as wide as those of any other “national” literature, but in general many West Indian writers share a special concern with questions of identity, ethnicity, and language that rise out of racial consciousness. Two West Indian writers have won the Nobel Prize for Literature: Derek Walcott (1992), born in St. Lucia, resident mostly in Trinidad during the 1960s and 70s, and partly in the United States since then; and V. S. Naipaul, born in Trinidad and resident in the United Kingdom since the 1950. (Saint-John Perse, who won the Nobel Prize in 1960, was born in the French territory of Guadeloupe

Indian English literature (IEL) refers to the body of work by writers in India who write in the English language and whose native or co-native language could be one of the numerous languages of India. It is also associated with the works of members of the Indian diaspora, such as V. S. Naipaul, Kiran Desai, Jhumpa Lahiri, Agha Shahid Ali, Rohinton Mistry and Salman Rushdie, who are of Indian descent. Like the literature of other nations, Indian English novel is a transcript of Indian, life and society, its poverty and rural surroundings, exodus to the cities, struggle for independence, partition, social change, cultural interaction,

crisis for identity, diasporic experience and modern Indian predicament. R K Narayan, Mulk Raj Anand, Raja Rao were three big founders who were followed by Kamala Markandaya, Anita Desai, Nayan Tara Seghal Bhawani Bhattacharaya and several others. In the recent times, we have important major novelists are Salman Rushdie, Jhumpa Lahiri, Kiran Desai and Chetan Bhagat who are portraying contemporary Indian social life.

An overlooked category of Indian writing in English is poetry. Rabindranath Tagore wrote in Bengali and English and was responsible for the translations of his own work into English. Other early notable poets in English include Derozio, Michael Madhusudan Dutt, Toru Dutt, Romesh Chunder Dutt, Sri Aurobindo, Sarojini Naidu, and her brother Harindranath Chattopadhyay. “Notable 20th Century authors of English poetry in India include Dilip Chitre, Kamala Das, Eunice De Souza, Nissim Ezekiel, Kersy Katrak, Arun Kolatkar, P. Lal, Jayanta Mahapatra, Dom Moraes, Gieve Patel, and A. K. Ramanujan, and among several others.

Now an interesting point emerges here. There is a significant difference between American contribution and Non-European contributions to the development of English literature. American, and indeed European, academic history, national, cultural and linguistic boundaries have been coextensive and conflatable. Dividing literature departments by nominally linguistic criteria has thus de facto divided them into separate national and cultural traditions: French literature has meant both literature in French and the literature of France, English literature has meant both literature in English and the literature of the British Isles and North America, and so on. Writers in English from other nations and cultures thus pose a problem of classification, and expose a tension between defining texts in terms of national and cultural affiliations, and defining them in terms of the language in which they are written. Texts in English from Nigeria, for example, often cannot be fully appreciated or understood without placing them in relation not only to

British precursor texts, but also to precursor texts and traditions in the Igbo or Yoruba languages, Linguistic, intertextual and ideational nuances in modern Indian English-language writing often cannot be grasped when the texts are studied in isolation from Indian literary traditions in Hindi, Sanskrit, Bengali, Tamil, and other languages, and without sufficient knowledge of Indian history, society, and cultural practices. Should such texts then be approached primarily as part of “Indian literature”? At the same time, such texts often cannot be sufficiently understood in isolation from precursor texts and traditions in English from Britain, North America, and elsewhere. Should they then be approached primarily as part of “English literature”? Clearly, neither approach is adequate, as these texts are often related to multiple linguistic, cultural, and national traditions, and demand a criticism informed by a deep and wide-ranging familiarity with such traditions. In fact, they are twice born and to have a proper understanding of then an awareness of both streams is necessary.

Now the second point that we can derive is that the literatures in English from these non-European and American countries has added many new facets. Moreover, one of the functions of literature is to assert the very rich diversified culture and history of a writer’s text. Meyer states “Literature allows us to move beyond the inevitable boundaries of our own lives and culture because it introduces us to people different from ourselves, places remote from our neighborhoods, and times other than our own.”

For example a reading of Southern African Literature from writers like Doris Lessing (*The Grass is Singing*), Nadine Gordimer (*July’s People* understanding of the realities of Apartheid, oppression, victimisation and segregation in the Southern African region of the Commonwealth. The experiential variety of intercultural interactions, multiplicity of races, diversities of communities, varied matrix of mythologies of different communities, national tradition, change and development, feminist concerns, gender awareness, diasporic distress anguish of alienation, and such

other facets of human reality have enriched, and intensified human understanding and so this literature has added expansion and, diversification to literature in English. These writers have made a real move towards a global human perspective. Literature is an agent to understand human life and the immense variety of life gives an idea of human heritage across the globe.

The next point is that these writers rise above the context of origin. For instance, Chinua Achebe is not only an African writer, Raja Rao is not only Indian, V. S. Naipaul is not merely West-Indian, Patrick White is not only Australian or so on but they are contributing to the world literary tradition. No matter how different writers are, say from Canada or Nigeria, New Zealand or Australia, what they are supposed to have in common is the heritage of common humanity.

World Literature is, in fact, moving towards literature of mankind. More and more writers are springing from different parts of the world. And also, significant literature in any language and in any part gets global response only when it is translated into English. Thus, gradually, they will also form part of World Literature in English. World Literature in English may overlap and even overshadow World Literature as such. It will grow into Literature of mankind showing a prismatic kaleidoscope of human reality and life of large parts of the globe. A man in the 22<sup>nd</sup> century will read and write English Literature having in his mind both Dante and Eliot, Sophocles and Shakespeare, Walt Whitman and Patrick White, Hemingway and Achebe, Forster and R. K. Narayan, Maupassant and Melville, Greek Tragedy and Sanskrit Drama, American Plays and Japanese Noh dramas – the legacy of a large human heritage, almost the whole mankind. He will be virtual literary citizen of the world.

## Indian and Western Canon

Charu Sheel Singh\*

Canons are culture-specific. Different cultural, mythological, philosophical and literary traditions do have different methods of canonizing the textual tradition. 'Speak! Speak! And it shall be delivered unto you', says Western tradition. 'Remain silent and you shall get it', says Indian tradition. The Western tradition carries the dialogical process to a certain extreme which undoubtedly gives us knowledge; the approach, however, is limited to the empiricity of experience. The Indian tradition carries on this dialogical approach to a level where the empiricity gives way to a certain transcendentality of experience. The temporalisation and the Trans-temporalization carry the main stream of the Western and Indian tradition.

Wlad Godzich said in his Foreword to Paul De Man's *Resistance to Theory* that every tradition has a primary text and secondary text. The letter is the tradition of commentary and exegesis. Under the formal category comes the Bible which contains the basic canon of the Western tradition. The Bible symbolizes a collectivity of experience carrying an episodic structure. The old and the New Testament not only complement each other; they also serve as two mutually opposite forms of realizing canonical experience. The hero of the Old Testament is Moses who demands submission to the law and authority. For this reason he creates *Ten Commandments*. This is the model of prescriptive text which can grow under rules and regulations. Northrop Frye, in his seminal study, *The Bible and Literature*, calls the Bible as a journey from imprisonment to liberation. Frye makes the biblical images pass through various phases which carry the burden of a psychological journey beginning from the literal

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and descriptive to the analogical and the anagogical phases. Frye's study is an outcome of the study of the poetry of William Blake that he carried out in his masterpiece *Fearful Symmetry*.

Blake said that Moses acted by rules, Jesus acted by inspiration and imagination. This is the basic difference between the canon promulgated by the Old Testament and the New. Frye says that if Blake was not there, he would never have evolved into a critic. The Old Testament has a certain centrality of experience whereas the New Testament diversifies the canon and makes it a collectivity of experience. The books of Saint Paul, Saint Augustine, Ezekiel, among other prophets carry out the core experience born out of the process of the confessional poetics where the life already lived turns out to be a waste of time while the life yet to be lived is visualized as an ideal. This ideal is Trans-temporal. The New Testament essence is located here as a moment of liberational poetics.

The New Testament canon evolves a multiple typology originating from multiple experiences of the Prophets concerned. Blake shows us how the biblical canon can be exploited to the maximum into the form of a mega poem which he calls *Jerusalem*. The Old Testament is history centered. It gives us the belief that there can be only *The History*. The New Testament is an exercise in Neo-Historicism where *The History* is diversified into a typology of multiple experiences which raises the level of historicity of a transcendental experience of God. The book of Ezekiel is a testimony to this experience where, as in *Bhagwad Gita*, everything resides in the body of God who is also a man.

Blake is the first English poet who incorporates this chance in his poetry by installing inspiration and imagination as the guiding principles of creativity. Blake revolted against the infernal trinity of Bacon-Newton-Locke, who constitute the Satanic Selfhood. Blake brought out the theory of a certain universal canon which goes beyond written history into the realm of primitive religion and mythology. He wrote two tracts: there is no natural religion and all religions are one. In the former he claimed that man perceives more than his

senses do; in the latter, he said that the basic principles of canonization of the major religions of the world are the same. Blake was familiar with Jacob Bryant's *Ancient Mythology* in four volumes. In a remarkable statement on how Blake evolved a canon for the East and the West both, Frye said that Blake was among the first of European idealists able to link his own tradition of thought with that of *The Bhagwad Gita*.

It must be recalled that Blake was familiar with Charls Wilkins' translation of *The Bhagwad Gita* into English published in the year 1785 from the India House Library London. Blake had even painted Charls Wilkins' in the act of translating *The Gita*. Blake placed at number 10 the exhibition of this painting in his *A Descriptive Catalogue*. The painting has, however, been lost from the British Museum. The Romantic canon of poetry in England does not necessarily recreate the Bible. It, on the contrary, recreates the cultural imagination of the times which are decidedly pre-biblical. The Romantic poets borrow their mythology from Greek, Latin, Pagan and Indian sources. The Romantic Movement in England owes a great deal to the Indian influence. The British had established the East India Company in Calcutta in about 1600 AD. Distinguish Indologists like Charls Wilkins, William Jons, J.Z.Holwell, A.J. Arberry; N.B.Halhed among many others translated a number of Indian literary, philosophical and historical texts which brought about a remarkable change in the very concept of the western canon. Of particular importance is William Jones's translation of the story of Shakuntla. This story went into subsequent translation in German and other languages. Shlegel Brothers were familiar with these developments and they did not shy away from such influences.

Blake made Albion the ancestor of English people in his major poem *The Four Zoas*. Here, Albion's body is divided into four parts-senses, mind, intellect and soul- Tharmas, Luvah, Urizem and Los. The problem arises when Luvah enters into the domain of Tharmas Who, then, retaliates. Urizem is not to be left behind and he jumps into the fray.

Los, who represents the soul, is a distant onlooker. In *Bhagwad Gita*, Krishna says that higher than the sense is the mind, higher than the mind is the soul (intellect). What is higher than the soul is *Atman* which is a part of God. When one faculty interpolates into the other, the warfare ensues. The same typology is exploited by Blake in his poem *Milton*. There are three characters called Rintrah, Palamabron and Satan that represent the three *Gunas* (qualities) of the *Gita-Sattva, Rajas* and *Tamas* – goodness passion and darkness. The cause of trouble here is the same- one faculty entering into the others domain and creating trouble. This is how Blake and other poets of the Romantic period in England made use of Indian philosophy and mythology by still keeping the outer structure Western. Blake, therefore, changed the canon and compelled the English readers to read him in the light of oriental and specifically Indian thought. In the English tradition, apart from Blake, W.B.Yeats, T.S.Eliot and Ted Hughes are other poets who follow Indian/oriental canon. W.B.Yeats was a great student of Alchemy, Indian philosophy, esoteric religion, who studied *Bhagwad Gita* under the guidance of Purohitsuwami. Yeats' major theoretical work is an exercise in these domains known as *A Vision*.

T.S.Eliot was a student of the great Sanskrit scholars Charls Lenman and James Haughton-woods. They were also the editors of Harvard Oriental Series at that time. Eliot studied Sanskrit under their tutelage and acquired a comprehensive mastery of the language. Eliot had also studied the *Bhagwad Gita* and the *Upanishads* in the original Sanskrit. He once made the Statement that now he must stop reading Hindu Scriptures else he might become a Hindu. Eliot was also well versed in Buddhism and he had read Henry Clarke Warren's *Buddhism in Translation*. The evidence is there to show how Eliot changed the English canon in favor of a canon not originating from the English, American or the European soil. Blake, Yeats and Eliot, therefore, don't follow the Western epistemological paradigms. Eliot's major poems *The Waste Land* and *The Four Quartets* are exercises in the repetitive use of the Buddhist and the Hindu sources.

Plato, Plotinus, Descartes, Kant, Hegel, Husserl, Heidegger, Karl Jaspers, among others, have chalked out a way that has a lot to show of the Indian influences. Plato, and before him, Herodotus, show a deviation already from the Western canon by positing a spirit against the forces of nature. Plato's familiarity with the Indian sources is well documented in available scholarship. Kant was familiar with Paul Duessen's *Translation of the Upanishads*. Descartes inaugurated phenomenology by enquire into the existence of the self. Copernicus before him had revolutionized the Western approach to knowledge formation by claiming that the subjective apparatus is more important than the objective and, therefore, a study of the self is highly desirable. Kant posits intuition along with the *sensus communis*. He also talks of the theory of apperception on his way to the transcendental experiences. Such approaches indicate that the main theoretical postulates got circulated in the Western tradition directly or indirectly. Sometimes, the native moorings remained grounded in empiricity. This might have compelled the philosophers in the Western canon to switch to the transcendental, if not exclusively, to the spiritual experience. Hegel and Husserl are purely *Vedantic* in their approach and method. Heidegger owes a great deal to Buddhism. He was familiar with D.T.Suzuki's translation made of Buddhist sources. He combined phenomenology and existentialism with the insights taken from the Buddhist sources, particularly, the philosophy of the Great Cypher (*Shunya*).

There are two books that transfigured the Western canon into the canonical texture of the philosophies and literary traditions not originating from the Western tradition. The first of these is P.J.Marshall's *British Discovery of Hinduism in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century*. The second is Martha Pike Conant's *Oriental Tale in England in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century*. Apart from these, the translation of the *Bhagwad Gita* alone is a landmark achievement in the history of Western imagination.

Warren Hastings, the first Governor General of India, wrote in his Foreword to the book that *The Gita* shall continue to influence English imagination long after the presence of

the British has ceased in India. The Indian canon is inaugurated by the first written book of the world, *The Rig Veda*. *Vedas* are *apurusheya*, not having been written by any author. This way of canon formation is unique and unparallel in the cultural or scriptural history of the world. The Bible is *written*, not so the *Vedas*. When human consciousness merged into the divine, man lost an awareness of his mind-body consort. The divinity used human body as the vehicle for inaugurating scriptures into the first poetic genre of poetry. The Indian canon, therefore, is evocatory and meditative in nature. It reconstitutes the elemental nature into the metaphorical strength of language carried to the extremity of *Mantra*. The *Vedic* tradition was expounded and commented upon by the *Upanishads*. The *Upanishads* constitute the core of Indian thought process. They are theistic, polytheistic, monotheistic and even atheistic.

The primary text of *Vedas*, therefore, divides into the typology outlined above. The Indian canonical tradition canonizes Buddhism as well as *Vedanta* both mutually opposite to each other. The schools of philosophy that originate from the primary text of the *Vedas* are *Mimansa*, *Nyaya*, *Vaisheshik*, *Samkhya*, *Yoga*, *Vedanta* apart from Buddhism, Jainism and Sikhism. The textual tradition in India is multiple and encyclopedic. *Puranas* are the best example of mythopoeia imagination where history and religion become poetry and literature.

The authors who have made the Indian tradition canonical are the *Rishis* who picked up *mantras* from the *Vedas* and expounded upon them in *The Gyan Khand*, *Karma Khand*, *Bhakti Khand* and *Yoga*. The ritualistic partition of the *Vedas* is secular and aims to establish a human society based upon the welfare of all. The Indian canon says: *Vasudhaiv Kutumbakam*- The whole world is our family.

In the modern times Shri Aurobindo, Rabindra Nath Tagore, Vinova Bhave, Mahatma Gandhi, among others have formed the literary and social canons of Indian society. In the Indian English narrative tradition, Mulk Raj Anand, R.K.Narayan and Raja Rao have recreated India under the

different auspices of the cultural and philosophical modals available. Anand and Narayan script an India based upon the Buddhist modal whereas Raja Rao recreates *Vedantic* India.

The Indian literary canon begins with the writing of the *Natya Shastra* by Bharata who belongs to the fourth century A.D or so. To this period also belongs the great Buddhist thinker Nagarjuna who wrote *Mulmadhyamika-Karika* and *Vigrah-Vyavartini*. Bharata gave a theory of the dramaturgical principles (*Abhinaya*). His range and depth in syllabic language is almost unparalleled in the dramatic traditions of the world. Such literary traditions were the offsprings of corresponding philosophical traditions India had developed over the ages. A vibrant theoretical culture further multiplied theoretical principals as is shown by the theories of Vamana, Bhamaha, Dandin, Anand Vardhana, Abhinav Gupta, Kuntaka, Kshemendra, Mammata, Pandit Raj Jagarnath, among others. These theorists put emphasis upon one aspect or the other. Thus, metaphor (*Almkar*), *Riti* (style) diction *Rasa*, *Dhwani*, (suggestion), *Auchitya* (appropriateness) & *Vakrokti* (oblique statement) were emphasized during the process of action and reaction that literary reading involves. Mammata in his *Kavya Prakash* showed an encyclopedic range and put the major theories together. *Rasa* and *Dhwani* emerge as the champions of theoretical postulates.

The other part of the major literary canon comes from the two great epics the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*. The *Ramayana* is written by sage Valmiki while the *Mahabharata* is narrated and written by Vedvyasa. In these two great epics we not only come across the major *rasas*, we also have the best example of what in Western theory is known as a chronological plot and a round character. The plot in the *Mahabharata* is episodic where one episode leads to another as a matter of causal urgency. In South East Asia the story of Lord Rama has underwent more than one hundred versions. The *Mahabharata* is the greatest and longest epic of the world containing one lakh *Slokas* & more. The *Rasas*

of *Lalitya*, *Shringar*, Heroism, Bravery, *Vibhatsa* among the rest come as the occasion demands. Incidentally enough, the *Mahabharata* goes without a single hero. The war between the Pandavas and Kauravas is not for a piece of land; it is for the establishment of righteousness, justice and peace.

Both the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* are stories of suffering and pain and liberation. In the Indian tradition, the cosmos is taken to be the *Lila* (play) of God. The tragic is apparently so because after the tragic the characters achieve the company of Gods which it leads to. Krishna is the essence of Indian culture, philosophy and religion. He is also the inaugurator of the canon of Yoga and Music. A masterpiece upon the life and deeds of Krishna is written by Shukdeva, the sun of Ved Vyasa. The work is known as *Shrimad Bhagwat*. India has a great tradition of secret narrative and the two epics apart from Soor Sagar, Katha Sarit Sagar, Panchtantras; Jataka tales fall in that tradition. Under the Indian canon, the purpose of literature is not entertainment; it is liberation.

*Agam* and *Nigam Shastras* have their own canons and *Tantra Shastra* abounds in satiating bodily, mental and spiritual practices and disciplines. The *Vam-margis* sanctify what is generally considered to be unsacred. There are a number of theories of perception. Vedanta evolves the theory of elusion and reality. There are sages who claim a single origin for the world. Sage Kapila pronounces *Prakriti* and *Purusha* as the two principles constituting this world. There are language theorists like Bhratahari, Patanjali who posit the existence of *Brahma* in the word (*Shabda Brahma*). Nagarjuna disagrees with the single origin theory. He says that there are four great sentences. The first is: 'This is', 'This is not', 'Both this is and this is not' and 'Neither this nor this is not'. A fifth condition of existence, says Nagarjuna, does not exist. This leads to the Buddhist theory of the Great Cypher (*Shunya*).

Giving this enormity of textual tradition and commentary, the Indian tradition invites comparison with the older cultures and literatures of the world. The Bible tells us that the temple

of King Solomon was built by the gold imported from India. There were trade routes between India, Mesopotamia and Babylon and ancient Greece. It is a general belief documented at some places that Jesus came to India by one of these trade ships. He studied the *Vedas* and the *Upanishads* in the Himalayan region. *The Bible*, for example, tells us about Jesus only till the age of 11. Thereafter, Jesus appears at the age of 30. Where has he been all these years? Another book published by the Penguins also holds that Jesus came to India and lived here for quite some time. The title of the book is *Jesus died in Kashmir*.

A study of unparalleled scholarship was written by Dr.S.Radhakrishnan under the title: *Eastern Religions and Western Thought*. The book is a compilation of lectures Radhakrishnan delivered in England as a fellow of All Souls College, Oxford. This book is singularly enough to tell the Western world what it owes to India and the orient.

It is now time for common universal poetics where traditions merge, theories multiply and ideas play their respective role in time leading to the timeless Infinite. Another masterpiece in this genre is Arthur O.Lovejoy's *The Great Chain of Being*. Such books are not written very often as are the books written by Rene Wellek: *Theory of Literature, Concepts of Criticism, Discriminations, and History of Literary Criticism*. Literary studies in India should make a fresh beginning inaugurating the era of a common poetics maintaining yet the cultural specificities of different localities and nations.

Another book that will pass the canon is by Livingstone: *Road to Zanadu*. Eliot said one such book is enough. Indian textual tradition is interplay of images, symbols and tropes of language. Krishna demonstrates it amply in *The Bhagwad Gita*. Distance is the secret of the creation as well as the reading of literary form. Indian system is not only genetic but also hermaphroditic as far as literature is concerned. Nature is God's creative power which He moulds and shapes in very many ways. When the cogniser and the cognised become one, art achieves its end. Time creates art just as art

creates time.

The physical and the temporal time lead to the mental and the spiritual time. *Gita* has already set the canon when it proclaims that higher than the sense is the mind, higher than the mind is the soul. What is higher than the soul is *Atman*. These are the four levels of metaphor, symbol, allegory and anagogic imagination. The highest achievement of art is to see the One into many and *vice versa*. This is the core of Indian textuality. The text is born out of suffering and renunciation. Buddha sets the canon in motion by his own example. His theory of dependent-origination is an exercise in mutual inclusiveness. His *Sambhog-Kaya* – the body of coition sets the creative energy ablaze. *Nirman-kaya*—the body of conceptual framework and structure sediments the syllabic strength of a work of art. Continuous practices over literary form lead to an intersection of triangles—male and female. This begets us the hermaphroditic form also called *Ardhanarishwara*.

Jainism gives us the canon of *Syadvada*-relativity of all things created, conceived or understood. This negates absolutism of any kind once a medium is involved. The *Purush-Shukta* of *Rig Veda* makes it clear that the three-fourth of the *Purusha* is visible; the rest is invisible. This is the high watermark of the Indian canon. Krishna also says in the *Gita* that He cannot be approached with the help of words. He is much beyond them. This semantic aspect remains a mystical experience for it can be realized in *Samadhi* but not expressed in words. Feminism has made an important signature in the Western canon. Simone de Beaubouir' *The Second Sex* and Showalter, Toril Moi, Kate Milet, Susan, Sontag, Julia Kristeva, among many others, have thrown a great challenge as far as the creation as well as the reading of literature is concerned. The burden of feminist thought in the West is, in some way or the other, turns out to be anti-male. The cry for revisionism does not go very far. A rewriting of religious history is not possible. If yes, then female goddess shall have their separate exclusive apartments. The Indian canon, on the other hand, does not

celebrate such isolated celibacies. As already outlined, *Ardhanarishwara* is the canon. Savitri and Kunti will serve the purpose. Savitri brings her dead husband Satyavan back to life winning over Yama- the Lord of Death. This is textual celibacy. In the next case, when Krishna begs Kunti to ask for anything that she desires, Kunti is a bit hesitant. Then she asks for suffering because in suffering alone she remembers Krishna the most. These two are the perfect examples of the Indian ideal of womanhood. The Indian canon of textual formation is a saga of constant and variation. The beholder is required to see the variation in the constant and the constant in the variation.

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**Mahesh Dattani's *Ek Alag Mausam*:  
Art for Life's Sake**

*Mukesh Ranjan Verma\**

Drama as a performing art has a strong and immediate impact on the emotions and thoughts of the people that throng to watch a play. That is why many dramatists have used drama as a medium for social change by creating awareness and making people think about social, political, economic and ethical-moral issues. Problem plays, Comedy of Ideas, political plays, street plays, thesis plays and other such plays are drama with a message. They were written and continue to be written not so much to entertain as to stir a thought and provoke a reaction. Whether they are written to be staged in the theatre or in a market place, whether they are used as a script for a film, and whether they are meant to be read or broadcast on radio or telecast on television, they always confront us with issues that we are either unaware of or choose not to think about. The plays of Mahesh Dattani, the leading contemporary Indian English dramatist, fall under this very category. He has used drama as a means of creating awareness about the marginalised sections of society or about social issues like gender discrimination, communal violence and child sexual abuse. His play, *Ek Alag Mausam*, which is a screen play with this Hindi title, is about HIV positive people whom Indian society at large has discarded mainly because of lack of medical knowledge about it but also because this issue has a social stigma. It is a plea for helping the terminally ill AIDS victims live their short life with as much happiness as possible for them.

Like *Thirty Days in September* (2001), a play on child sexual abuse, which was commissioned by RAHI, a support

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group for women survivors of incest, the film *Ek Alag Mausam* (2005) was supported and presented by Actionaid India for the cause of the people suffering from AIDS. While the former was written as a stage play, Dattani wrote the latter as a screen play. This accounts for stage (script) directions like 'Flash of George driving a truck. Surreal.' or 'Exterior. Car. Road. Tree.' The play has been written as a succession of short scenes. Dattani has written screen, stage and radio plays, and though in all these kinds of plays the differences of their various forms are there, they all contain the basic features of drama and can easily be transformed from one form into another. For example, *Seven Steps Around the Fire* was first broadcast as *Seven Circles Around the Fire* by BBC Radio 4 on 9 January 1999 and it was performed on stage at the Museum Theatre, Chennai in August 1999. This is also true of *Ek Alag Mausam* which has been published in Dattani's *Collected Plays: Volume Two* and which reads like any other of his plays, though I am not aware of its having been produced on the stage.

Like any good play, *Ek Alag Mausam* is a well-knit play. It immediately draws us into the vortex of its action, though, like *Thirty Days in September*, it does not broach its subject immediately. It first puts us in a situation which arouses our curiosity but leaves us clueless about it. When the play begins, Aparna, the central character, is getting ready for a journey and Paro is putting on her school shoes. Aparna's mother is unhappy about Paro's going away from there and Paro obviously is unwilling to do so. Soon we see Aparna and Paro travelling in a car which Aparna is driving (an apparent deviation from a stage play). They, as their conversation reveals, are going to a school where Paro is going to be admitted. The conversation between the two raises more questions in our minds than it gives answers to:

Paro: Is this like the end of our relationship?

Aparna: I never pretended to be your mother. You will have enough money to see you through college. After college, you are on your own. I have left my flat to you so you won't have to worry about not having a home . . .

Paro: A home without you.

Aparna: Yes. Better get used to the idea. (474)

All these statements arouse our curiosity about the relationship between them, the background of their coming together and the reason for their parting which seems to be the termination of their relationship. The next statement of Paro adds a new dimension to the situation:

Paro: You are running away from me now . . . the way you ran away from George. (474)

The dramatist does not immediately give answer to any of the questions that arise in our minds. It is much later in the play that we know about the relationship between Aparna and Paro, and even later, the meaning of Paro's accusation that Aparna ran away from George.

In his plays Dattani makes a very effective use of flashbacks which become all the more effective in a screen play. The mingling of the past and present in a way suggests cause and effect but we can see the overall picture only when all the bits of the whole have fallen into place. A very brief scene which shows Aparna announcing to Suresh that it is confirmed that she is pregnant and Suresh's response to it in the form of a drunken mumbling followed by his falling into a drunken sleep tells a lot about their relationship but the full implication of it is not revealed to us immediately. The scene that follows is again a conversation between Aparna and Paro, picked up from where the earlier scene had left it:

Paro: I want to be with you when you are dying.

Aparna: I want to be left alone. (476)

The voice of Rosalynd Cooper, a volunteer nurse at the Central Hospital, cuts into the scene. She tells Aparna over telephone that she and Dr. Sanyal, Aparna's gynaecologist, want to meet her and her husband and that it is 'extremely important' that they meet 'as soon as possible'. The next scene shows Suresh refusing to go to hospital with Aparna even though she says that she is scared and wants him to be with her.

Dattani uses the technique of a detective story in his plays

where one clue leads to another and then a partially clearer picture emerges, though it is only at the end of the story that we are able to weave all the clues into a complete story. He uses the same technique in *Ek Alag Mausam* also. It is the second scene of the flashback which puts us in the first clear picture of the story and it is also in this scene that the dramatist introduces his theme. When Aparna goes to the hospital, she is shocked to learn that she is HIV positive. She cannot believe it. As an educated woman she is aware of this disease and its reasons:

Aparna: It just can't be! . . . I haven't had a sexual relation with anyone but my husband, I haven't had any blood transfusions, I always make sure the doctor uses a disposable syringe . . . No, it can't be. (479)

She realizes the numbing truth behind Dr. Sanyal's statement that she has contracted the disease from her husband.

Since *Ek Alag Mausam* is a thesis play, Dattani uses every opportunity in the play to describe the various aspects of the subject of his play. There are two basic objects of this play/film: to create awareness about this disease and to highlight the human tragedy that it involves. It encourages those who have become a victim of this disease to try to eke out as much happiness from their remaining short life as this painful disease would permit them. It also appeals to the society not to discard the children of such parents who generally inherit the disease, as they are innocent victims of the disease. The first and foremost important step in the prevention of AIDS has been to make people understand the hazard of promiscuous and unprotected sex. Dattani highlights it in different scenes of the play. He focuses on two sections of society - the higher and the lower, not that the middle class is free from it but perhaps because the sexual morality largely prevalent in this section has left it less susceptible to it. The higher society is represented in the play by Aparna's husband, Suresh. When an angry Aparna, who has not only to lose her unborn child but also to bear the bitter truth that she would be dying a premature death all

because of her husband, confronts him with this:

Aparna: And you didn't tell me.

Suresh: I - I didn't know how to . . .

Aparna: And - how . . . do you think you got it?

Suresh looks away.

How often?

Suresh: Please!

Aparna: All those business trips! Those late nights. How many women have you infected so far?

Suresh: I don't know!

Aparna: You are too drunk to know. (482)

Dattani presents the character of Sukhia to highlight the unprotected sex that people from lower classes indulge in with prostitutes. Sukhiya has heard about George spending most of his time in a hospital and when George tells him that some of the children at that hospital have AIDS, he asks him to sit away from him. Sukhiya has heard about this disease and is afraid of contracting it, as he considers it to be contagious. But when the prostitute he has visited takes out a packet of condoms before having sex with him, he is irritated and threatens to go to another prostitute if she insists on that. Not willing to lose her earning, she surrenders to him. Dattani presents another example, this time of a shopkeeper. Rita, the mother of Paro, has to procure a piece of red cloth from which she wants to make a dress for Rita which she will wear while taking part in Aparna's stage show. Not having money, she can pay for the cloth the only way she knows how to. She is suffering from AIDS and not wanting to pass it on to somebody else; she asks him if he has a condom when the shopkeeper beckons her to the back part of the shop. The annoyed shopkeeper asks her if she wants the cloth or not. She hastily says 'yes' but also mutters to herself, 'Die you pig'. (542) Since *Ek Alag Mausam* is a play with a message, Dattani has exploited every situation that his plot provides to spell out the message. In the scene when villagers come to George's parents' home and ask George to go away from there as Sukhiya has told them about him, George tries to explain:

George: So what if I have Aids? You can't get it by talking to me or by touching me! You can eat my leftovers and

you still won't get it, you understand! (537)

The villagers, however, will not listen to him. They ask him to leave the place and also to take his parents with him. His presence, they insist, will contaminate the whole village. George this time retorts:

George: Yes I will leave and I will take my parents out of this hell! But it is not I who will contaminate the village. Ask your son where he goes when his work in Bombay is over. Ask your brother what he does when he visits his uncle in Kanpur. It is they who will destroy all of you. They will pass on the infection to their wives, their wives will give it their newborns and soon the whole village will be a graveyard. (537)

To convey the message of the play loudly and emphatically, Dattani has used a scene outside a red light area where George, Manoj and Shyamu, who have converted George's truck into a makeshift stage, address a gathering of prostitutes. The scene begins at the end of the speech that George has been giving to them. We hear the concluding part of it where George catechizes, with Manoj and Shyamu responding to his questions, in order to buttress his message:

George: So to conclude . . . Can HIV be spread through touch?

Manoj and Shyamu (*forming a chorus*): No!

George: Can HIV spread through mosquitoes and flies?

Manoj and Shyamu: No!

George: Can HIV spread through living, eating sleeping with an infected person?

Manoj and Shyamu: No!

George: Then how can you get infected?

Manoj and Shyamu: Through unprotected sex with a man or woman.

George: Any other way?

Manoj and Shyamu: Through infected blood and contaminated injection needles.

George: Any other way?

Manoj and Shyamu: From infected mother to newborn.

George: Any other way?

Manoj and Shyamu: No. (525)

Dattani, however, is too good a dramatist to allow this kind of messaging to mar his drama. He deftly links this scene with Rita, a prostitute infected with HIV, and Paro, her five year old daughter who later on in the play is shown to be HIV negative and so free from the disease. Rita is being driven out of the red light area as she had told the journalists that she had AIDS and now the prostitutes of the area were losing customers. The people involved in flesh trade look upon social workers like George as their enemy. Rita is also resentful towards him:

Rita: (*turning on George*). All your fault. Now how will I feed my daughter? Why do you go about telling these loafers about Aids? Before you came here they didn't know anything. If you want to be helpful, will you look after my daughter? Will you feed her? Educate her? No? If you can't do all that then don't pretend to help? (527)

This outburst of Rita shows the enormity of the problem and also the utility of places like Jeevan Jyoti, a hospital for HIV patients in the play. The issue that this play/film highlights is that there is not merely an urgent need to create awareness among the people so that the spread of the disease may be prevented but also a pressing need for hospitals and shelter houses where people affected with this disease can be taken care of. But the biggest problem is the attitude of society towards this disease and its victims. As unprotected promiscuous sex is the main cause of this disease, it has attracted moral censure towards it. It has turned into a social stigma. Even doctors and hospitals are averse to treat HIV infected patients. Dr. Sanyal says to Aparna that he is not going to admit her in the hospital on the ground that it will upset the nurses and other patients. While she is coming out of the hospital, a lab technician and a nurse stop chatting when they notice her. They look at her with a 'mixed feeling of pity and disgust'. Manoj tells other inmates of Jeevan Jyoti that when he had visited a dentist, he had suggested gum surgery to save his teeth. He thought that he should tell the dentist about his being HIV positive. The doctor looked strangely at him and asked him to wait outside. But after an

hour his assistant came out to say that the doctor was not free to do the surgery and he should go somewhere else. Manoj went to another dentist but this time he did not tell him anything and let him do the surgery. Now he has perfect gums. It takes Dr. Machado all efforts to keep Jeevan Jyoti running. He has even to smuggle medicines from abroad to give free treatment to his HIV infected patients. Even donations do not come his way as AIDS is a taboo in Indian society. When the lease of the land on which Jeevan Jyoti is situated expires, he sees no means of saving this rare shelter and hospital for HIV patients. Had George not sold his trucks and godown to pay for the lease agreement, it would have been the end of Jeevan Jyoti.

Dattani has very effectively conveyed the social stigma that AIDS carries through bits of conversation at different places in the play. Aparna's mother, who has come to live with her, tells her:

Mother (*patting her*): I am here for you. But be careful of the world. Don't let anyone know of your illness. I remember when people thought my uncle had TB, nobody even came to visit us. (500)

In the scene where George boldly confronts the villagers who have come to ask him to leave the locality, he is mortified when he finds that his parents also have the same attitude as the villagers:

George's Father: You may live for another seven years. But you have killed us before we have entered our graves. What face do we have left in this village? (*With great effort.*) Don't come back. Leave. Go George! (*Making a gesture as if to a beggar.*) Go! (537)

Aparna also tries to conceal the fact of her being HIV positive when she comes to Jeevan Jyoti for the first time. So she is disconcerted when Dr. Machado tells her that Dr. Sanyal had telephoned him about her. It is towards the end of the play that the dramatist shows Aparna coming to terms with her being HIV positive. Just before the start of the stage show which Aparna is going to hold on the occasion of the World Aids Day, George, who has come to say good bye to

her, tells her not to feel ashamed for being HIV positive. It is not her fault and so it is her duty to make the world understand that. Aparna has also realised this fact and that is why she announces before the audience that she too is infected with the virus. There is a murmur in the audience at this announcement. Dr. Machado is surprised at this public disclosure. Aparna's mother is shocked and embarrassed. But Aparna has gained an inner strength and so can face the world without any shame.

*Ek Alag Mausam* addresses as much the HIV infected people as it does the public at large. It encourages those sick people to face life courageously, to try to extract as much happiness as life would permit them and not to die before their death. In the first scene at Jeevan Jyoti, Dattani shows Dr. Machado exhorting the inmates there not to surrender to the fear of death:

Dr Machado: You are not alone in this world. There are hundreds of thousands of people like you suffering in silence. Why? Because they all think that they are going to die. Of course they will die. Of course you will die. We will all die one day. Who is to say when? Then why this fear of dying? What is important is that we are alive today. We are alive right now! (486)

The character of George symbolizes this attitude in the play. The way he enjoys playing and dancing with children and the way he plays a trick upon Aparna when they meet for the first time shows his zest for life and his determination to live every moment till death puts an end to it.

As a problem/thesis play *Ek Alag Mausam* is very effective. It succeeds in doing what it sets out to do. But as drama it is not as good a play as *Thirty Days in September* which also is a problem/thesis play. The reason perhaps lies in its being a screen play which has its own demands, film being a different medium with its own box office considerations. *Thirty Days in September* has strong characterization, multiple layers of emotions and a very powerful dramatic impact, even when we are reading this play. Dattani has built that play in such way that it gradually

moves towards a crescendo and when it ends, it gives the impression of a tectonic movement of emotions. Lillete Dubey, the first Director of the play, has written in her 'Note' on the play:

After every performance, women have come backstage with their own traumatic stories writ large on their faces, grateful for the catharsis the play offers, but even more, I think for the expiation of their own guilt which they have carried as a heavy burden for so long. Meeting them, alone, has made the play worthwhile. For through it they believe, their silent screams have been heard. (4)

*Ek Alag Mausam* fails to achieve this kind of impact. It is largely because the emotions evoked are too generalised to create a deep impact. It is more like a propaganda play than a depiction of human tragedy. The dramatist does not focus on the deeper levels of the personal tragedies of the central characters of the play - Aparna and George. The scene where the realization of her predicament hits Aparna for the first time has been created powerfully, but after that the emotions are depicted generally on the surface level. The dramatist also does not devise dramatic ways to connect her rejection of George at first with her emotions against Suresh. Her resolve not to get into any emotional relationship is presented only through her sharp reaction to Paro when she calls her mother.

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### Encounters in the Human Zoo through Albee

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Seen as Off-Broadway's "enfant terrible", or "angry young man", Edward Albee is a voice unparalleled in American theatre. Albee believes that if the theatre must bring us only what we can immediately apprehend or comfortably relate to, let us stop going to the theatre entirely. His theatre is essentially the theatre of disturbance. He seems to delight in prodding and unsettling conventional sensibilities in order to break the stupor of complacency and self absorption. Albee's ability to fuse social relevance with existential profundity has been one of the defining features of his work. Albee's somewhat paradoxical position in American culture was summed up by the Kennedy Centre's Honours ceremony of 1996, at which he was lauded by President Clinton in these words: "Tonight our nation born in rebellion pays tribute to you, Edward Albee. In your rebellion, the American theatre was reborn." (Qtd. Mel Gussow 385)

Ann Paolucci opines that Albee goes "beyond social commentary to the disease of contemporary life" (5). She further says that "he has probed deeper than most other American playwrights, for the implications of our moral and spiritual exhaustion" (ibid). In raising profound questions of what constitutes tragedy for the post industrial, capitalist society, Albee bombards the reality on the audience's head so as to make them reassess and reevaluate their otherwise complacent lives. The inherent contradictions and paradoxes of life both within and without are put to autopsy in order to unravel a parable about the human condition.

Albee's *Homelife* (2004) charts Peter's day with his wife Ann, immediately prior to his fateful meeting with Jerry in

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the Central Park on a sunny Sunday afternoon in the summer that forms the mainstay in the *Zoo Story* (1958), a play proclaimed by Christopher Bigsby as “the most impressive debut by any American dramatist” (129). Elaborating on the writing of *Homelife*, Albee says:

... it occurred to me that even though I was fairly happy with *The Zoo Story* when I wrote it, I really didn't do a full job on the character of Peter. Jerry we know very well. So I'm writing a play about Peter, before he meets Jerry, called *Homelife*. Peter at home with his wife, Ann and how this affects his reaction to Jerry – to the extent that it does. (Interview with Stephen Bottoms 231)

On the part of the playwright the writing of this play was a balancing act and he wanted the audience to respond to the two “Peter and Jerry – *Homelife* and *The Zoo Story*” (ibid) together: “I'll be very interested to see how I react! *Homelife* tells me a good deal more about Peter, and so the balance of what happens in *The Zoo Story* is now more complete” (ibid 232). He insists that they be performed together as it becomes a “full evening” and we get to know both the inner/domestic as well as the outer/public interactions in greater details.

When *Homelife* opens, Peter is alone, reading a textbook in seemingly absorbed posture that expresses his unease within the domain of letters. He “turns a page, frowns, turns back, rereads something, turns forward again” (9) as if he were searching for the connecting links. Peter's absorption in the textbook offers both a defining and limiting frame that is clearly indicative of the gap existing between him and his wife, Ann. The need for talk/reciprocity is highlighted in the first sentence itself.

Peter at home with his wife presents both the pretence and hollowness in their conjugal relationship. He believes in leading an ordered life full of symmetry and planning. Ann makes fun of his lack of virility and jokingly calls him “Mr. Circumspection” (32). To match with her circumcised husband she thinks of hacking her breasts full circle as it would lessen the risk of breast cancer. Peter's life is devoid of thrills or

adventures. He admits it candidly: “I'm not a bad person, you know; my life may not be very exciting . . . no jagged edges . . .” (42). The disparity of expectation and attainment comes to the surface when Ann complains: “. . . I know you love me . . . as you understand it, and I'm grateful for that – but not enough, that you don't love me the way I need it, or I think I do; that's not your make up – not in you, perhaps, . . .” (44). She points towards the guts, the extra edge, the true manliness which Peter is acutely deficient of “. . . that may be none of it's ever occurred to you – that you . . . don't have it in you?” (44).

Peter has a preference for a risk free, calculated journey of life, “a smooth voyage on a safe ship . . . a pleasant journey” (45). He in his encounters with Ann all these years has been careful, gentle, thoughtful, honest and good. This has resulted in the sameness and routinized conduct of life led in a ritualized manner that lacks liveliness, gaiety and jubilation. What Ann wants is difference along with sameness and predictability. Like the ebb and flow of the wave, the course of life must have the components of order/disorder, predictability/astonishment, pleasure/pain, love/hate, civilized veneer of human life/the rage of animal. She makes it pronounced:

... when we come together in bed and I know we're going to “make love”. I know it's going to be two people who love each other giving quiet, orderly, predictable, deeply pleasurable joy. And believe me, my darling, it's enough; it's more than enough . . . most of the time. But where's . . . rage, the . . . animal? We're animals! Why don't we behave like that . . . like beasts? Is it that we love each other too safely, maybe? That we're secure? That we're too . . . civilized? Don't we ever hate one another? (48)

Just being good is not enough, one has to be a little bad sometimes to keep the human animal alive when one acts instinctively without any prior mediation of the intellect. The instinctive sincerity and its spontaneous expression can pave the way of better understanding.

If Peter's experiences with his wife present one side of the story, the other side is revealed in Peter's bohemian encounter with a girl in his college days when at a sex party he had anal sex: "But it was what she wanted she said, and it was real exciting and so I did. And it was, it was real exciting, and disgusting, and it turned me on in an awful way" (51). The mad fury of the encounter (obviously more than an animal because animals do not violate the natural laws of sexual union) ended up in failure as the girl was charging him: "you hurt me! And I said that's what you said; you said you wanted me to hurt you! I'm sorry! I'm sorry! I'm sorry!" (52).

Ann's call about being an animal – nothing more emerges as a value if heterosexual relations are to be functional. Both the aberrations being more than an animal (as is the case with Peter's experience with the girl) and less than an animal (as is evident in his relation with his wife) are dubbed as blemishes that can thwart the possibility of a healthy, living, loving relationship. In *History and class consciousness*, Georg Lukacs analyses the radical redefinition of the relationship of man and nature under capitalism:

Nature . . . acquires the meaning of what has grown organically, what was not created by man, in contrast to the artificial structures of human civilization. At the same time, it can be understood as that aspect of human inwardness which has remained natural, or at least tends or longs to become natural once more. (Qtd. Berger 15)

John Berger, in his essay "Why Look at Animals?" suggests that in Lukacs' schema, "the life of an . . . animal becomes an ideal, and ideal internalized as a feeling surrounding a repressed desire" (ibid 15). As Berger observes, twentieth-century corporate capitalism has ruptured what had previously been, throughout history, the close proximity of man and animal, man and nature. The element of creative energy and the play of fantasy can enliven the go of life. Peter's defect is that he is too careful and gentle. It is not just enough to always remain in the safe zone: "Maybe it's just being secure; maybe that's the killer. It's not pain I want, or

less; it's what I can't imagine – but I imagine imagining" (54).

The closure is marked by a suddenness that accommodates both pleasure and pain simultaneously inflicted on Peter in order to wake him up from a lulling stupor:

Ann (Rising)

(Goes to him, looks at him in the face, smiles, slaps him hard. His mouth opens in astonishment; she kisses his cheek where she slapped him.) (55)

Her desire to have a little disorder, a little chaos, a little madness emerge as values that can reinvigorate the otherwise dull, insipid frame of conjugal life. The irony lies in the fact that Peter is so thick skinned that he cannot respond to the call of Ann and on a hot, sunny, Sunday afternoon he is all set to move out to the central park. Harold Hobson is of the view that Albee often passes "melancholy judgment" "on the institutions of family in America or anywhere else" (115). The failure of the family as an institution that can hold, sustain and solidify interpersonal relations is severely critiqued. The dysfunctional nature of all familial ties including Peter's relations with his wife and daughters established during the play affects his responses to Jerry.

Peter's retreat from contact and commitment to solitude and conformity highlights the mainstream society's precarious condition. For the author, the polarization of Jerry and Peter represents man's alienation from himself. According to Phillip C. Kolin, *The Zoo Story* "creates a dialectic through the seemingly polar opposites of character, geography, fictionalities, and even props – Jerry versus Peter; the rooming house versus central Park; animal versus man; freedom versus imprisonment; conformity versus confrontation" (Bottoms 18).

Albee generates much of the play's tragic tension by yoking opposites together. Peter, the passive listener, lives on the East side of the New York City, and his world seems conspicuously well ordered. He represents the successful

businessman, the seemingly contented, comfortable, upper-middle-class family man. Peter lives by a routine that restricts and defines him. A conformist and isolationist, he is both Jerry's nemesis and hope, enemy and heir. Living on the credo of 'Organizational Man', Peter's Job, family and life style validate the mainstream rituals of the Eisenhower era. A follower of herd psychology, Peter leads an unexamined life, devoid of risk, challenge, spirit. He is the compliant citizen who, in Jack Kerouac's words, has sold out to the "cop souls". Even in the Central Park, he fails to relate to the foliage, trees and sky that are easily available to him. He is placid, self-enclosed in a make-believe world of his own that gets reflected in his persistent absorption in the ordered, abstract, defined world of letters represented in text books. On the other hand, Jerry is the active speaker, lives on the west side in rooming house and his world is essentially fragmented. The "rooming house" symbolically called "Jerry's underworld" by Anderson (99) is in fact, a human parallel to the zoo. Some of the occupants of the rooming house include a colored queen, a lady who cries all the time and a Puerto Rican family, all of whom impress us as being either eccentrics or social outcasts.

Jerry's varied possessions include "two picture frames, both empty" (70) which clearly indicates that Jerry has no frame of reference worth remembering. He is a "Permanent transient" (84), a soul on the run, a sensitive from schedules, family, ties, loneliness and time. His dialogue stresses the necessity of his transiency: "I took the subway down to the village so I could walk all the way up Fifth Avenue to the zoo" (68). Jerry's baffling remark "sometimes a person has to go a very long distance out of his way to come back a short distance correctly" (68) throws telling light on his confrontations with an unsuspecting Peter. Exceeding the limits of expected propriety for a chance first encounter, Jerry bombards Peter with a disarmingly shrill and frank account of his private life. But he does this because Peter's initial indifference prompts Jerry to rely on the powers of invention, the weaving together of fact and fiction.

Jerry's life so far has been a chronicle of failed human relationships. He is a product of the broken home, since his "good old mom walked out on good old pop" when he was "ten and a half years old" (70). Obviously, he could not have known the security or stability that a happy or harmonious domestic situation sometimes offers. Soon afterwards, his father also "slapped into the front of a somewhat moving city omnibus" (71) and committed suicide. Having been orphaned, literally and psychologically, he moved in with his "mom's sister" whose only memory he still has is that "she did all things dourly: sleeping, eating, working, praying" (71). She too dropped dead on "the stairs of her apartment" on the "afternoon of his high school graduation" (71). Thus cut off from all kinds of familial bonds rather early on in life, Jerry had been set adrift on his solitary voyage. He admits that ever since he has had a homosexual liaison with a "Greek boy" in his adolescence, he has never been able to have sex "with the little ladies" "more than once" (72). His relatively early initiation in to homosexuality seems to have crippled his responses to a well-adjusted, integrated heterosexual relationship. In his dire need of establishing contact and communication, he has come to the point of desperation. Jerry's encounters with peter, the landlady and her dog and other human animals confined in their cages, reveal the essential nature of the problem.

The lustful landlady who emerges as the gatekeeper of prison-like rooming house tries to corner Jerry in the hallway, grabbing him, pressing him "in some foul parody of sexual desire" (74). She is contemptuously described by Jerry as a "fat, ugly, mean, stupid, unwashed, misanthropic, cheap, drunken bag of garbage" (74). Every time she pressed to his body and mumbled about her room, he was about to thwart her seductive designs by saying, "Love; wasn't yesterday enough for you and the day before?" (75). He was able to combat the threat of her morbid sensuality by using fantasy as a substitute for real experience.

When Jerry failed to respond to the landlady's crude, almost tyrannical sexuality, she tried to make contact with

him through the dog. Contemplating the psychological plight of an isolated individual, R.D. Liang says: "The last hope of break through . . . may be through a homosexual attachment or . . . may be with the other as child or animal" (146). It is no wonder that the dog only "had to do" (77) with Jerry, as he himself puts it. Jerry's landlady sought to project her own aggressive sexuality into her dog that "almost always" had "an erection" (76). Her identification with the dog is indicated as Jerry tells us that while eating hamburgers the dog made "sounds in his throat like a woman" (78). A little later, when the landlady learnt about her dog's sickness, her eyes "looked like the dog's eyes" (79). In a way, the dog becomes a projection of her instinctual, biological reality.

Jerry's attempts to feed the dog, and thus keep him away, show not only his "kindness" as he puts it, but even calculated efforts to thwart the overweening demands of the landlady's sexuality. His attempt to poison the dog and thus kill it is almost a surrealist attempt to kill the landlady's unbridled, animal-like sexuality. It is not surprising that "her bewildered lust" (74) is forgotten when the dog falls ill and is instantly revived when "the dog recovered his health" (80). Jerry's failure to make contact with the dog is his failure to relate to the landlady.

"The Story of Jerry and the Dog" in the words of Ronald Hayman, is "an analogue of Albee's view of human relationship" (11). Rejected by family and all others, Jerry enters into a relationship with the dog, for "Where better to make a beginning . . . to understand and just possibly be understood...a beginning of an understanding, than with . . . A DOG" (82).

Jerry describes the stages of his relationship with the dog: the dog was not 'indifferent' to him unlike the people; he stalked, he attacked Jerry every time he entered his room in the house. Jerry in order to overcome the situation decided to "kill the dog with kindness" (77) and if that didn't work "just kill him" (77). But neither of the two strategies worked for him. After eating the poisoned hamburgers, the dog fell "deathly ill" (79). It was then that Jerry wanted the dog to

live "so that I could see what our new relationship might come to" (80).

The dog recovered his health and on their next encounter they made 'contact'. This has enabled Jerry to learn a paradoxical lesson that "neither kindness nor cruelty by themselves independent of each other, creates any effect beyond themselves" (82) and that "the two combined, together, at the same time, are the teaching emotion" (82). In the next stage of their relationship both Jerry and dog have "attained a compromise; more of a bargain, really. We neither love nor hurt because we do not try to reach each other" (82).

This painful lesson Jerry wishes Peter to understand: "I have gained solitary free passage, if that much further loss can be said to be gain" (82). He advertises the injustices to the self in a world indifferent to individuality and relationships. Most important for Jerry, is saving a drone like Peter from a life of sterile stalemate.

Jerry uses Peter as an emotional sounding board largely because he senses the pervasive lack of communication and felt sense of estrangement entrapping the individuals in a zoo, the controlling metaphor of the play. As Jerry explains:

I went to the zoo to find out more about the way people exist with animals, and the way animals exist with each other, and with people too. It probably wasn't a fair test, what with everyone separated by bars from everyone else, the animals for the most part from each other, and always the people from the animals. But, if it's a zoo, that's the way it is. (86)

The entire human condition, for Jerry, is a zoo of people (and animals) forever separated by bars. Jerry seeks to break down the enclosures which keep Peter, his family and those like them isolated in their own little zoos. Peter cannot understand or accept those like Jerry, as his outburst indicates: "I DON'T WANT TO HEAR ANYMORE" (83).

When verbal assaults fail, Jerry takes recourse to physical measures to make a deep inroad into the psyche of Peter.

This parallels with Ann's attempts earlier to wake Peter up from his stupor. When Jerry tickles and then punches Peter (using the paradoxical blend of kindness and cruelty he exercised with the dog) he hits him in his ribcage, reinforcing the image of Peter's solitary confinement in his own skin. At first enjoying the playfulness, Peter revealingly laughs, "I had my own little zoo there for a moment" (85).

The parallels between Jerry's encounters with the dog and Peter are obvious. As Jerry and the dog challenged each other over territory – the entrance to the rooming house – similarly Jerry and Peter challenge each other over territory – the Park Bench. As the dog tried to keep Jerry from his world, so Peter tries to screen Jerry from his. Further, as Jerry and the dog engaged in physical skirmishes, so the tension between the two men builds when Peter stakes his claim over the park bench: "GET AWAY FROM MY BENCH" (90).

From this point onward Peter appears aroused, angered, and ready to define himself through concrete deeds than false compromises. Within the closing febrile scenes of the play Peter experiences Camus's "definitive awakening", a moment of epiphany in which he comes to consciousness wherein he can apprehend both subjective and objective world in qualitatively new terms.

When Jerry impales himself on the knife held by Peter, he not only gains expiation but also shatters all of Peter's predictable patterns. Face to face, Jerry forces Peter into the 'contact' he has been seeking throughout the play. Jerry finds his ultimate mode of engagement and communication; but paradoxically, it is the knife (death) that gives meaning to his world while at the same time severing his contact with the world. Peter's howl: "OH MY GOD!" (95) brings forth a total transformation. Significantly altered by a new awareness Peter will never return to routine habits called by Samuel Beckett, a key influence on Albee as "the great deadener" (121) within human experience.

The prescribed formulas and labels around which Peter operated will no longer work for him. Peter's subsequent

language and action will be founded within a more expansive humanistic context, one in which Jerry's "teaching emotion" will forever temper his every gesture we can expect that his relation with Ann, his daughters, and other social links will get qualitatively altered in the light of his encounter with Jerry.

When Jerry dies and an absolved Peter exits, Albee would like actor and audience to become one within a collective stage experience. If theatre can serve to remind us of basic human responsibilities, to alert us to the unexamined artifice of the everyday life then it may well be more real than anything. When Antonin Artaud wrote of "the theatre and its double", he meant that life ought to change to mirror the revelations of the stage, rather than the other way around. Albee reminds us that we stay alive by staying alert, by continually questioning the traps that we set ourselves, the roles we box ourselves into. He stresses the need to keep challenging ourselves, to resist the allure of conventional lies if we are to encounter the global realities of the present successfully.

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## John Dryden and the Restoration Milieu

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The restoration of monarchy in England in 1660, though primarily a political event, led to certain fundamental and far reaching changes in the English literary sensibility which did not diminish in the years immediately following the event but remained in operation with varying intensity for more than a hundred years. The event marked the end of the Renaissance literary tradition with its rhetorically grand but conceptually abstract and vague ramblings about human nature and its infinite potentialities, its largely Latin-derived literary values, its extremely powerful and rich experiments of realizing the universal ramifications in essentially temporal and local themes by virtue of its unbounded and exuberant imagination, its half-comic, half-serious habit of lumping the lover, the lunatic and the poet together, its tendency of inwardness and personalism in matters of creativity and inspiration, its aggressive Protestantism and in certain cases its extreme Puritanism, its refusal to separate essentially human affairs from the cosmic gyrations, and above all, its abundance and variety in matters of literary productions, compelling even a cool-headed and hyperbole fearing (except in his characteristic lampoons and burlesques, and more often in his panegyrics) man like Dryden to concede with a little of pride but not less of regret that the writers of this tradition constituted the giant race before the Flood. The Restoration mood was against rhetoric divorced from truth, it was also against allowing the writer to trespass accepted canons of civilized conduct and cultured good breeding. It was for enforcing social and moral discipline and it found the writer,

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specially the poet, an excellent instrument for spreading and popularizing a culture originating in the cultivated circle of the English Court and percolating the lower orders of the English society. The writer became a public figure and was called upon to use his creative talent in throwing light on those questions and problems which were vexing the public mind. Traditional literary genres were harnessed to meet new challenges, leading to a bold reappraisal of the hierarchy of forms. Epic and tragedy which had been at the top of this hierarchy retained their elevated status but certain other, and traditionally marginal literary forms such as the ode, the elegy, the panegyric, the satire and the moral fable received an unusual impetus because they were more suited to the new national temper.

John Dryden as the greatest man of letters and the most talented Restoration writer exemplified through his life and works these changes. A gifted and versatile genius, he lent his support to the emerging literary culture and through his practice showed how a writer should tune his art to new realities and at the same time maintain his distinctive and independent status. He openly aligned himself with the political establishment without compromising his freedom. He became the public writer par excellence, boldly participating in the raging political controversies, enthusiastically championing the causes of stability and enlightenment and fiercely attacking the forces of chaos and obscurantism. The Restoration marks the beginning of classicism in English poetry. Fully aware of the spirit of his age Dryden significantly remarked:

Now, if any ask me whence it is that our conversation is so much refined, I must freely, and without flattery, ascribe it to the court; and, in it, particularly to the king, whose example gives a law to it.... At his return, he found a nation lost as much in barbarism as in rebellion. And as the excellency of his nature forgave the one, so the excellency of his manners reformed the other. The desire of imitating so great a pattern first wakened the dull and heavy spirits of the English from their natural reservedness, loosened them from their stiff forms of

conversation, and made them easy and pliant to each other in discourse.<sup>1</sup>

Living in an age of polish and refinement which were considered necessary attributes of a cultured poet, Dryden looked back to the Renaissance period with a mixture of pride and disgust:

If Love and Honour now are higher rais'd  
 'Tis not the poet, but the Age is prais'd.  
 Wit's now arriv'd to a more high degree:  
 Our native language more refin'd and free;  
 Our Ladies and our men now speak more wit  
 In conversation, than those poets writ.<sup>2</sup>

It does not mean that Dryden was blind to the achievements of the Renaissance writers. In fact, with advancing age, the defects of his age appeared before him in bolder relief and he was quick and honest to acknowledge their greatness:

Well then, the promis'd Hour is come at last;  
 The present Age of wit obscures the past:  
 Strong were our Syres, and as they fought they writ,  
 Conqu'ring with force of Arms and Dint of wit:  
 Theirs was the Giant Race before the Flood;  
 And thus, when Charles Return'd, our Empire stood.  
 Like Janus, he the stubborn soil manur'd,  
 With Rules of Husbandry the Rankness cur'd:  
 Tam'd us to manners, when the stage was rude,  
 And boisterous English wit with Art indu'd.  
 Our Age was cultivated thus at length,  
 But what we gain'd in skill we lost in strength.<sup>3</sup>

Such moments of doubt and ambivalence notwithstanding, Dryden was completely a man of his age. As a poet, dramatist and critic his virtues and limitations emanate from the peculiar temper of his age.

The rapid growth of commerce and overseas trade had continued during these years despite civil wars and internal strifes. This was aided by a great scientific and intellectual movement which made itself felt in practically every sphere of life. It affected literature, and even the arts of which

architecture and music were the most vigorous. The literary transition from the Renaissance to the Restoration is nothing more or less than the progressive movement of a spirit of liberty, at once, fanciful, brilliant, and adventurous, towards a rule and a discipline both in inspiration and in form. Classicism became the pole which attracted the hidden working of individual minds. In the greater part of the Restoration period, the Renaissance habit of positing absolute faith in the infinite potentialities of man was checked with an increasing awareness of the human limitations. Gaiety and jocularly are as much characteristic of the Restoration mood as reflection and sobriety. Changes in the social structure are also of significance. The Elizabethan aristocracy and feudalism had declined and a new middle class had emerged. This middle class possessed a democratic temper and expected to receive attention from poets and artists. It was the period when what Eagleton calls the public sphere was rapidly enlarging and widening, a period when conventional boundaries among writers, polemicists, satirists, philosophers and divines was collapsing. The tradition of addressing major literary works to patrons continues but the patron, far from representing the top of the social hierarchy, in fact, represents cultured taste and literary good-breeding which can transcend social classes.

Conventional notions of marriage of sex and married life came under severe strains as is evident from the scenes of licentiousness and downright levity in the Restoration comedy. There was mushrooming of public festivals and popular entertainments with the reopening of the theatres. Conventional notions of vice and virtue also underwent a change and tolerance often bordered on encouragement for breaking civilized codes and conduct.

Paradoxically enough, while freedom in morals and manners was allowed to touch dangerous limits, there came about an emphasis on the place of authority in politics and art. Literature particularly was looked upon as a repository of order and balance, harmony and poise. The characteristic virtues of the Augustan tradition are restraint and discipline,

a proportionate relationship between meaning and music. Paradoxically once again these virtues were cultivated by the inculcation of what Rachel Trickett has designated as “a fundamental realism”, which, she continues “is indeed the inspiration of good Augustan poetry, even at its most polished and formal. The artifices which are used to achieve this polish and formality may produce an effect of naïve pomposity in the work of a poet of little thought and feeling.... Dryden showed how an exuberant amplitude of manner could be matched with unadorned statement of the fact;...”<sup>4</sup> A work of art was, as Dryden said while defining a play, a just and lively picture of life.<sup>5</sup> Enthusiasm in politics and religion which one finds even in such a poet as Milton came to be suspected and the stress fell on judgement and sense. The Restoration writer had to exclude the primitiveness and uncouthness of the popular forms and redouble their power and appeal by polishing and refining their expression.

The desire for achieving an urbane tone in literature literally forced the writers to assemble and settle down in London. With the introduction of coffee by a Turkish merchant in 1657, there mushroomed coffee-houses which were centre not only of relaxation and past time but also of lively intellectual debate. These coffee-houses provided plenty of food for thought and although they attracted only well-off sections of the populace, for a writer they were favourite haunts for observing contemporary modes and manners.

The Great Plague of 1665 and the Great Fire of 1666 transformed the external appearance of London. The epidemic took a heavy toll of life and its virulence far exceeded the Black Death of 1349 and the Sweating Sickness of 1507. Its ravages have been recorded for posterity by Pepys, Hodge, Defoe and Vincent. London was still reeling under the killer epidemic when the Great Fire broke out in 1666. The Restoration English man's spirits were not dampened by such natural catastrophes.

The spirit of rationality received an unusual boost from Hobbes, who was out to banish the myths and fairy tales which had been so deftly exploited by the Elizabethan writers.

The philosophy of the Englishmen was uncompromising in its rejection of popular beliefs and customs which were not firmly rooted in human experience.

During the Restoration age, there was a rapid development of science. The sciences of physics, mathematics and other natural sciences made spectacular strides during those years, further boosting the stream of enlightenment. The establishment of the Royal Society was a landmark in the history of England which gave further impetus to the growth of science. In scientific researches the Baconian emphasis on abstract theorizing was replaced by a desire to base theories on actual investigations. What happened at the Restoration, therefore, was simply that the scientific movement came out into the open day-light of fashion and favour and this was primarily due to the real and striking advances that it was making. Dryden himself confessed that he had learnt much about style from his readings of scientific literature of the period. R.F. Jones has observed:

He (Dryden) joined the Royal Society the same year in which it received the patronage of Charles II, and the poem addressed to Dr. Charleton bears eloquent testimony to his admiration of and interest in the new science. He too was a member of the committee appointed to improve the tongue, at the meetings of which... he discussed stylistic matters with Cowley, Clifford, and Sprat. That he was no indifferent listener to the scientific discussions of the society is revealed in his answer to the charge of being magisterial, preferred against him by Robert Howard: 'I must crave leave to say, that my whole discourse was skeptical, according to the way of reasoning which was used by Socrates, Plato and all the Academics of old...and which is imitated by the modest inquisitions of the Royal society.'<sup>6</sup>

Dryden was specially proud of the achievements of his countrymen in the field of science. The British scientists have opened new possibilities for knowledge and discovered truth by freeing it from the Tyranny of the Greeks, specially Aristotle: The longest Tyranny that ever sway'd/Was that

wherein our Ancestors betray'd/Their free-born Reason to the Slagirite,/And made his Torch their universal Light.

In the same poem he pays tribute to Bacon, Gilbert, Boyle, Harvey, and Ent: The world to Bacon does not only owe/Its present knowledge, but its future too./Gilbert shall live, till Lode-stones cease to draw/Or British Fleets the boundless oceans awe./And noble Boyle, not less in Nature seen,/Than his great-Brother read in states and Men./The circling streams, once thought but pools of blood/(whether life's fewel or the Bodie's food)/From dark oblivion Harvey's name shall save;/While Ent keeps all the honour that he gave.<sup>7</sup>

The influence of French culture and arts on the Restoration period, is though disputed a fact. After the Restoration, Charles who had been domiciled in France for long years returned almost a completely changed man. He brought back with himself not only French fashion and manners but also a sense of the prestige of the French monarchy. The French influence though superficial was widespread and did not remain confined only to the fashionable circles of the court but also in the provincial areas which were inhabited by the cultivated classes. In course of time its influence penetrated to the modes of feeling and thinking and through the language as well as through the authority of precepts and aesthetic examples, it fashioned and encouraged certain habits of taste.

Another important cultural fact of significance in the Restoration period was the growing conflict between the norms of social life and the problem of free literary creativity. Science culture had become the privilege of a coterie of aristocrats and nobles, the artistic activity was supposed to be guided by their tastes and predilections which was likely to inhibit free literary expression. The writer could not ignore the social reality and his own vulnerability; therefore he chose a patron and apart from following his individual aesthetic callings, some times wrote poems eulogizing his patron or transforming a petty personal achievement into a public occasion.

During the Restoration age, politics gained the upper-hand and consequently political dissensions began to grow. Though the real political power was still confined to the upper class, the class as a whole was no longer homogeneous. There were people who supported the king while there were others who stood in the way of monarchical powers and prerogatives. The Tories, the Anglican Church was synonymous with the English nation. The Whigs on the other hand stood for tolerance. The Tories derived their power from that section of society which stood for conservative values and life-styles. The Whigs were usually those members of the land-owning class who were in close touch with commercial men and commercial interests. Individualistic tendencies in matters of religion were not looked upon with favour. Conservatism and moderation existed side by side. Men had learnt to fear individual enthusiasm and therefore they tried to discourage it by setting up ideals of conduct in accordance with reason and common sense. Rules of etiquette and social conventions were established and the problem of life became that of self-expression within the narrow bounds which were thus prescribed. George de Forest Lord has observed that a “major development in the poetry of the period is the shift from the introspective intimacy of lyric to a predominantly public, rhetorical mode...”<sup>8</sup> and the reason for this shift was nothing else but to provide a definite, unmistakable social context to literature.

The spirit of the Restoration literature was very much different from the spirit of the Elizabethan literature, and the chief reason for this difference was shift in emphasis from the individual idiosyncrasy to general truths of human experience. Flights of imagination and the tendency to gloss over facts were replaced by a controlled imagination and force of judgement. The one Elizabethan poet who received renewed and respected attention during this period was Ben Jonson. He was canonized as the greatest model and authority in the art of literature. But the characteristic tone was set by Denham whose 1642 poem, *Cooper's Hill* which in Dryden's opinion was marked by its majesty of style and

was also the embodiment of the exact standards of good writing. In his famous and oft-quoted apostrophe to the river Thames Denham wrote: Oh, could I flow like thee and make thy stream/My great example, as it is my theme!/ Though deep yet clear, though gentle yet not dull;/ Strong without rage, without o'erflowing full.

The Restoration writer looked askance on the extravagance and eccentricity of the Renaissance, and worked hard to emancipate himself from his predecessors. Clarity of expression with the profundity of experience, elegance and power, force tempered with judgement and controlled imagination—these qualities Dryden always kept in his view.

The most noteworthy evidence of the temper of the time in literature was the tacit agreement of the writers in both prose and poetry upon rules and principles with which they should write. The Restoration writer laid emphasis on correctness of rules and regulations and these were mostly borrowed from the great classical writers, in particular to the Latin writers for guidance and inspiration. This habit, which in the eighteenth century became orthodoxy during the Restoration is a part of that desire for moderation in style because the poet had to accomplish his role as an enlightener of the reading public.

The Elizabethans, too, had drawn upon the ancient, but they used it freely and joyously, bending the work of the classical authors to their own mills. The Restoration attitude to the ancients is deeply coloured by reverence and deference, because the ancients, in the view of the Restoration represent the first and most glorious spring of man's creative energy. They were also the most perfect in that they had what Pope later said methodized nature. Rothstein has singled out three attitudes towards the ancients which can be discerned among the Restoration and neo-classical authors:

The classical work may be a neutral model, useful because familiar and therefore available for remarking and parody. The classical work may be the norm as art and as a bearer of values: Restoration and eighteenth century poets then

can draw on it for its prestige alone, or... for a contrast between its artistic and/or cultural values and those of a modern work or society. The third and rarest treatment of a classical model is to accept its artistic value but to challenge or reject its statement.<sup>9</sup>

The spirit of criticism and scrutiny towards the classical authors became more prominent towards the end of the neo-classical period. During the Restoration however such critical attitude can be found only in Dryden. But by and large Dryden regarded the ancients as the norms and bearers of aesthetic and moral values.

The ideal of correctness which the later neo-classical poet adopted as his exclusive motto is rare in the Restoration period. The Elizabethan enthusiasm is as yet not entirely gone though enthusiasm is generally avoided. Emphasis is now on moderation. Dryden led this classical movement, but he did not take it as a literary orthodoxy.

The Restoration period was different from the Elizabethan period in yet another respect. Instead of the Italian influence, it was the French influence which appealed more to the Restoration. The famous French writers of the period who influenced English literature were Pascal Bossuet, Racine, Corneille and Moliere. French influence penetrated deeply into drama, especially into comedy—the most copious literary production of the Restoration. Moliere was the most outstanding exponent of the French influence. However, the French influence was not accepted without criticism. Dryden the greatest poet of the period refused to be tied down to one particular channel of influence; it militated against his strong patriotic sense and this is revealed most unambiguously in his celebrated “*Essay of Dramatic Poesy*”. In the case of Dryden, at least, the French influence was not alone; he assimilated influences from every possible directions and judged them on merits and not on reputation. He is absolutely candid about these influences. The Restoration period showed an unusual liberalism in absorbing influences both native and foreign. Sometimes these influences worked on them unconsciously but quite often the writers consciously

borrowed ideas and resorted to open imitation. Dryden defended imitation on artistic grounds. Justifying his use of Shakespearean and Homeric parallels in his plays, he said:

We ought not to regard a good imitation as a theft but as a beautiful idea of him who undertakes to imitate, by forming himself on the invention and the work of another man; for he enters into the lists like a new wrestler, to dispute the prize of the former champion. This sort of emulation, says Hesiod, is honorable... when combat for victory with a hero, and are not without glory even in our overthrow. Those great men, who we propose to ourselves as patterns of our imitation, serve as a torch, which is lifted up before us, as high as the conception we have of our author's genius.<sup>10</sup>

The Restoration writer, committed to echoing the contemporary tastes and predilections is thus guided by the nature of facts and creates the defamiliarizing not by the flights of fancy but by the manipulation of the facts of life in a work of art.

A fundamental realism—an attempt to see things as they are—is indeed the inspiration of good Restoration poetry, even at its most polished and formal. Of all the Restoration writers, it is Dryden who shows an amplitude of manner which could be matched with an unambiguous statement of fact. English poetry of the Restoration period presents in a realistic manner the corruptions and controversies in which English society was involved at that time. Personal experiences and idiosyncrasies had no place because the accepted mode of art was public and not personal.

It does not, however, mean that Restoration poetry lacks variety and complexity. Because of renewed emphasis on directness and simplicity of expression, the poets adopted immediate intelligibility as the most important motivating force behind poetry. But this did not prevent them from experimenting with a variety of poetic forms and genres. Although the period from Restoration to the death of Samuel Johnson is dominated by satires, it witnessed the revival of many poetic genres such as ode, elegy, panegyric, etc. and

Dryden displayed his genius by attempting all of them. G.M. Hopkins's enthusiastic praise of the masculine style of Dryden is apt and well deserved:

I can scarcely think of you not admiring Dryden without, I may say, exasperation... what is there in Dryden? Much, but above all this; he is the most masculine of our poets; his style and his rhythms lay the strongest stress of all our literature on the naked thew and sinew of English language.<sup>11</sup>

And this masculinity Dryden had learnt most from Ben Jonson. The influence of the metaphysical style can be noticed in the early poems of Dryden but it was later on thrown off. About the middle of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the metaphysical wave had exhausted itself and had left literary standards and values confused. Ben Jonson with prophetic vision, had seen this danger and also shown a way out. He preferred literary order and discipline to lawless impulse and unbridled fancy. His example was ignored for a time but it was effective later on when the metaphysical method began to produce uninspired imitation. Edmund Waller and Sir John Denham were the pioneers of the new movement. The poetry of this age was marked by balance, exactness, ardour and polish. Poetry became satirical and didactic and was dominated by intellectual vigour, irony and wit. Heroic couplet was adopted as the medium of expression in poetry in preference to the blank-verse which was the favourite with the Elizabethans.

Outside Dryden who is the best of the lyrical poets of the period, there is little that can be called lyrical poetry. Love which had always formed the basis of lyrical poetry itself underwent a transformation during this period. It became a game, an intrigue indulged in by the fashionable, irresponsible men and women who did not believe in any higher conception of love than a mere sex-instinct. The witty, gay, licentious verse of the Restoration period could not import sincerity of feeling to the lyrics that were produced during this time.

Ode was another form which was popular during the Restoration period. Dryden occupies a place of importance in

this class of poetry. His odes reflect the full maturity of his poetic genius and his unfailing ability to handle the form with dexterity and distinction. These odes also reflect Dryden's major political aesthetic preoccupations. They combine the emotions of praise and grief within the texture of the same poem, quite often obliterating the distinction between panegyric and elegy.

The best medium for realizing the poetic ideals of the time proved to be the heroic couplet. It was suitable for drama, epic and satire—the three most widely practiced literary forms of the age. Dryden used the heroic couplet for a variety of poetic compositions but it is in his satirical poems that he perfected the medium. Satire was the most potent weapon at a time when various kinds of controversies were raging and the poet was expected to play a decisive role. Dryden's *Discourse Concerning the Original and Progress of Satire* came out in 1692, very late in his poetic career, but he had been practicing the form throughout. He successfully accomplished poetic renderings of the satires of Horace and Juvenal. Edward Pechter observes:

All of Dryden's comparisons are self-conscious in the sense that he is always aware of what he is doing. But ... the comparison of Horace with Juvenal... is characterized by a special intensity of self awareness. It is again, like the comparison of Homer and Virgil, a kind of critical set-piece. Dryden himself lists the predecessors. Ragalitus, Heinsius, Dacier, the elder Scaliger, Casanbon. Each of these commentators has his axe to grind, his partiality to one or the other of the satirists, and this is Dryden's objection to them.... Dryden for his part labors "to divest myself of partiality and prejudice."<sup>12</sup>

Partiality and prejudice are present in his satires in abundance and this was as it should be. Dryden was a Restoration poet, a man of his age and he could not shut out the realities of his time. He was an active collaborator in the power game which is the single most characteristic feature of the period.

The period is considered richest in satire but other poetic forms also received equal attention. During the Restoration period proper, all poetic forms were inspired by the poet's desire to play his role in the on-going political struggle. Consequently, a strong topicality characterizes the major poetic output of the period. This topicality it was which forced the writer to lean heavily on a style which approximated to the canons of rationality and persuasiveness. This was the period which witnessed the closest proximity between poetry and rhetoric. This was inevitable because the age emphasized new poetic emotions which needed new vehicles of expression. Rachel Trickett has very rightly suggested that the Restoration and Augustan poetry excelled in three poetic forms in accordance with three subjects which dominated the period—Panegyric for praise, Elegy for grief and Satire for reproach. The emotions of praise, grief and reproach were not personal. Panegyric praised and celebrated public virtue and nobility. Elegy mourned the loss of this virtue and nobility embodied by a person. As for satire, it focused attention on the dilution and decline of virtue and nobility and set out to reproach and rectify those forces which were responsible for this dilution and decline. And the poet who almost pioneered these forms was Dryden and in all the three he prepared the ground which was to produce such a rich of harvest of panegyrics, elegies and satires in the eighteenth century.

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## Folklore and Film: Commemorating Vijaydan Detha, the Shakespeare of Rajasthan

*Neeru Tandon\**

Literary folklore is described as the body of expressive culture including tales, music, proverbs, riddles, beliefs, custom, oral history and so forth within a particular population comprising the traditions of that culture. Indigenous prose or poetry becomes part of folklore only after the memory of its creator had been erased. This term folklore was coined by W.J. Thomas in 1846 to designate the traditional learning of the so called uneducated people (or as I call experienced but without having degrees). Its three major elements are traditionality, irrationality and rurality. Joseph Dan makes the concept of folklore clear, “As these narratives rarely stood the tests of common sense and experience, folklore also implied irrationality: beliefs in ghosts and demons, fairies and spirits; it referred to credence in omens, amulets, and talismans. From the perspective of the urbane literati, who conceived the idea of folklore, these two attributes of traditionality and irrationality could pertain only to peasant or primitive societies. Hence they attributed to folklore a third quality: rurality. The countryside and the open space of wilderness was folklore’s proper breeding ground. Man’s close contact with nature in villages and hunting bands was considered the ultimate source of his myth and poetry. As an outgrowth of the human experience with nature, folklore itself was thought to be a natural expression of man before city, commerce, civilization, and culture contaminated the purity of his life.” (*The Idea of Folklore: An Essay*)

Folklore can include folktales, but also includes ideas and practices derived from generations of use. A folk tale is just

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that, a story which is found in the aural tradition, folklore is the collective term for everything handed down in a culture, and it will include things like customs, superstitions, sayings, as well as folk tales. Folklore is the body of expressive culture, including tales, music, dance, legends, oral history, proverbs, jokes, popular beliefs, customs, and so forth within a particular population comprising the traditions (including oral traditions) of that culture, subculture, or group. It is also the set of practices through which those expressive genres are shared. Folklore is based on word of mouth, true or made up, it defines a culture.

Legendry Rajasthani folklorist, literary icon, Bard of Burunda, Vijaydan Detha, better known as ‘Bijji’ is remembered for his unique storytelling and his folktales in Hindi and Rajasthani. His own stories being straightforward and down to earth took the shape of folktales. Along with his friend, Komal Kothari — a folklorist and ethnomusicologist— Detha founded *Rupayan Sansthan*, established for collecting folk tales and songs to bring out the richness of the Rajasthani language at Borunda in 1960. By narrating traditional folklore in a modern lingo, Bijji transformed the folklore itself — turning it into major literature with its universal themes, says Arun Kumar, a one-time journalist and Delhi-based social activist. The Hindu declared: ‘Hailed commonly as the Shakespeare of Rajasthan, a crown that sat uncomfortably on his head as he deserves more than being a parallel, Bijji never offered you a stale word.’ His books *Choubali and Other Stories Volume 1 and Volume 2*, translated and published by Katha Publications got immense love and recognition and fetched the 2012 AK Ramanujan Book Prize for Translation, the Excellence Award, Best Book on Asian Socio-Economic Scene and the Asian Publishing Awards 2011. The book is a part of the Katha Classic Library. He was an excellent oral story teller as well as a prolific writer of both folklore and contemporary tales. A K Ramanujan thought that the folktale was infinitely adaptable, “a travelling metaphor that finds a new meaning with each telling”, and in Detha’s work the folktale sporadically seems to find in itself the energy to find

not just a new meaning but a new self. He lived this tradition and expanded it too. Amitava Kumar, a writer and a journalist had very aptly described Detha's writing, "Any first-aid kit for those malnourished ones deprived of literature's genuine gifts will always include the stories of Vijaydan Detha." By deliberately writing in Rajasthani, a language yet to be constitutionally recognized in India and considered a poor cousin of the dominant Hindi, as well as compiling folklore, he gave a new life to the language by translating the oral to the written and transforming it richly in the process. His fourteen volumes *Batan ri Phulwari* ("A Garden of Stories") is an unparalleled work compiling folklore from the desert state which he adapts with his inimitable style and decorates with commentary, often also citing the source of most of these stories. It is perhaps the only one of its kind available in India.

A reaching-out, almost Freudian, to his early childhood, as pointed out by his own son Kailash Kabear, who has translated most of his works into Hindi, reveals a strong recognition of the power of the word as a force for social dissent. Of the more radical of his stories is titled *Dohri Joon* (Two lives/New life). The story of two women choosing to spend their lives together given the turn of events that brought them together speaks of nothing short of a rebellion against patriarchy, challenges notions of gender and openly celebrates same-sex relationships. One wonders though if Bijji was talking more about the freedom a woman needs from an oppressive marriage? There is an indirect critique of the greed for dowry among the parents and the twist in the tale brings to fore the underlying assertion of a desire to be loved and treated equally. Many Indian feminists have expressed wonder at the rendition of the feminine psyche in this story. Bijji was told by many that 'only a woman could have written so lucidly about feelings emanating from such inhibited and repressed desire'. The story is rich also in language, and shows the expression of love and accompanying lust handled delicately with a suggestive – and at times explicit – sublime eroticism. It was also adapted for the stage in the 1980s. A

more satirical story *Putia Chacha* ("Uncle Putia") is peppered with very local humour. It has at its centre a man always found in 'the company of women', known for his penchant for seducing women- reveling in female attention. The lurking sexual tension and a certain control Putia *chacha* (uncle) exercises on the teachers in the school that he manages is comical and at times hilarious. The pandering of his desire – to be at the centre of everyone's attention – by all the women in the school is sure to remind an Indian reader of that one uncle or neighbour who is the butt of all hushed jokes for his apparent machismo, the wannabe alpha-male. His position of this dubious power when threatened by a young woman asserting her desire for his arch-rival presents the reader with an emotional story – both funny and sad.

Many of his stories have been made into films and the most popular one has been *Paheli*. Yes, the one with Shahrukh Khan and Rani Mukherjee. It appeared even for Oscars. They all hailed Dehta as 'a waterfall from which the new generation draws its water of creativity.' Writing was as natural for him as 'singing is for the *koel* (nightingale) or dancing for the peacock.' No wonder he was nominated for the Nobel Prize in Literature in 2011. As a storyteller mastering the short story form, he often mentioned that his thoughts, among other things, were hugely inspired by Chekov, Tagore and his most beloved Sarat Chandra Chattopadhyay, but his style he claimed – rather emphatically – to belong to his surroundings, his rural environment, to the inherited lyric of his forefathers, 'of dust-laden bookshelves and thirsty throats on a summer afternoon in the small quaint village called Borunda, where he had been living for half a century, collecting stories, re-telling them and inhabiting a cosmos both fantastic and rustic. He believed that"... language is made not by professors of linguistics but by the illiterate rustic folk. I learnt the art of language from them. I'm still paying *guru dakshina*. Whether they accept or not is their wish."

This paper focuses on Vijaydan Detha's contribution to folklore and presents a comparative analysis of his story

Duvidha and Film Paheli .I have conducted a research on this subject, in which 32 persons have taken active part. The questionnaire focused on the following questions:

1. Analyze the story elements of the film Paheli, for instance, the major themes of the film (particularly in terms of folkloristic themes). Are these themes successfully incorporated in comparison with the story Duvidha? Explain.
2. Analyze a few specific scenes in terms of the acting of the film to show how it is good or bad comparing film Paheli and story Duvidha.
3. Which elements of the directing (camera shots, lighting, blocking, pacing, the overall feel of the film, etc.) contribute to or detract from keeping the folklore as its major ingredient? How so?
4. Which scenes were most and/or least successful in recreating the local colour through folklore? Why? I am looking for analysis of the film here — not just repetition of why you liked or disliked it.
5. How does this film connect to our class concepts, genres, definitions, and examples (be specific and clear)?
6. Compare the ending of the film and the story.

In the second part of my paper I tried to explore how the icon of Indian culture industry – the Bollywood films (represented by Amol Palekar's Paheli) – relate with images of India based on folklore and folklife created by colonial folklore collectors. It was also taken into consideration how the films themselves create changes and new values. And in the third part of this paper the colonial and the Bollywood examples may let us compare the kind of changes that have been experienced at the two planes. Film story is visually located in the region where the folk story was located, and the music and song too tend to be in the ethnic styles of the region. In the Indian context the religion of the imagined community too plays a role, but the film has to appeal to audiences of all religions to be a commercial success. So the makers are faced with quite a challenge – to retain ethnic authenticity and create modern nationally and even

internationally acceptable narrative. The film based on a folktale is actually shot in touristic locales and in false sets. What we see here is the increasing distance between the narrative and its ethnic integrity. This distance is not a conscious artistic distance that the new narrator filmmaker wants to bring in, but the distance between this new narrator and the folktale. Bollywood treats folk narratives literally and romantically, trying to recreate an imagined reality of folktales, and this imagination is often very akin to the images of India created by colonial rulers. Now let us see what happens in the Bollywood style translation/transformation: the folktale may be from any Indian language or dialect, but is translated into the Bollywood style Hindi. In this translation, however, the original language does not completely disappear. So when the narrative is located in Muslim community, Hindi is liberally peppered with Urdu; when it is based in Rajasthan then a Hindi dominated by Rajasthani accent. Not only does it not care for the oral genre of narration, it freely mixes genres of narration, music and dance. Herderian unity is not forgotten, but created artificially. The unity is superficial, but commercially very powerful within and outside India, probably because it conforms to the already internationally known folktale called India. The truth is disjunction from orality, its narrators and its genre.

In many ways the language of cinema makes possible the narration at another plane. An oral narrator would narrate in one genre, but the film mixes many folk genres to create a new kind of authenticity. This narration that seems simplistic and bizarre to a more literate audience is rather complex in its layered construction—the layers that emerge due to the context of film makers as narrators of folktales. And the film makes super profits from the use of non copyrighted pieces of narratives and songs, and quite often even by use of folk artists who remain without identity. The use of folktales has continued and such films emerge at regular intervals. German pioneer folklorist Johann Gottfried Herder, the inventor of the term folksong, talked of folklore

as representative of the unity of language, spirit and nation. Folktale is based in Rajasthan that's why film uses a Hindi dominated by Rajasthani accent. Herderian unity is not forgotten, but created artificially. Bijji always insisted on his role being that of a storyteller as opposed to a story writer. Stories are a collective wealth that the writer, according to Bijji, shifts through, adds to and mirrors to society. He used to pay a daily wage to women in the village who came and told him stories that they shared with each other in *angans* (courtyards in traditional Rajasthani households). His stories then have a sharp sensibility attributed mostly to the feminine, the music of a whirling sandstorm or as he put it – “the stories of the desert – like its sand, fine and transparent.” More than the power of meaning attributed to words he lays an emphasis on the ‘arrangement of words’ (*shabdo ka niyojan* as he aptly puts it in Hindi). The form then makes his storytelling unique in ways that leave the reader hooked to a story with its musical, lyrical, visual and sometimes very complex yet mesmerizing structures.

Vijay Dan Detha's story *Dwidha* was translated into English by a fiery feminist in 1970s and has been made into a film by Mani Kaul and Amol Palekar. My research findings are affected by the results of the above questionnaire. Let me share my research findings with you. The most important difference between the two is not of technology, but of the form of storytelling. Song and dance are not only essential parts of these films, but essential tools of storytelling – they do not merely create an interlude but carry the movement of the story. Within the span of a song the story really moves on in leaps and bounds, or is narrated at an altogether different plane.

This story of a young woman married to a man who deserts her soon after marriage to go away on family business is really interesting. A ghost falls in love with her and assumes the guise of her husband, and lives with her like a very loving husband. The ghost and his beloved live as man and wife in the community for four years, when suddenly the real husband comes home. “All the wealth in the world cannot

bring back time past,” writes Detha, and his story appears to side with those people who value time and human relationships over material values. The movie is narrated by two puppets, voiced by Naseeruddin Shah and his real-life wife Ratna Pathak Shah. Enthusiastic young Lachchi (Rani Mukerji) is to be married to Kishan (Shahrukh Khan), the son of the rich merchant Banwarlal (Anupam Kher). Gajrobai (Juhi Chawla) plays the role of her husband's sister-in-law. Lachchi is thus presented a riddle (hence the title “*paheli*”) between the representation of all of her desires in the form of the ghost and her real husband. She takes this new, fond, sexual, magical, social, self-confident version of Kishan as hers. As Kishan, the ghost befriends all of the real Kishan's family and keeps Bhanwarlal happy by providing him with magical, possibly illusory, gold coins. Lachchi's bliss goes on until four years later, when she is pregnant and the real Kishan returns to see if the rumors about his wife's pregnancy are true. He returns to find the ghost in his (Kishan's) own form. Kishan's family is unable to determine who is who. They decide to visit the king for the decision. On the way to the king they meet an old shepherd (Amitabh Bachchan) who asks the real son of Bhanwarlal to pick up hot coals and to gather the sheep, and asks another to enter a water-bottle. The real Kishan is found out and everyone returns home. Lachchi is devastated over the loss of the ghost. In the very end it is revealed that the ghost has escaped the bottle and taken control of Kishan's body in order to live with her. By now Lachchi has given birth to a daughter, Looni Ma, by whose identification the ghost exposes his identity to Lachchi and the film ends on this happy note. The ‘opulent sets, shiny and colourful clothes and jewelry, and glamorous stars’ add charm to this interesting story. The puppets close the film, remarking that the film's plot is “an old story”.

In the promos of *Paheli*, the producer-actor Shah Rukh Khan talked of the film as an attempt to portray the needs and desires of a woman, to explore, in short, what women really want! It tries to recreate a world gone by; a world where ghosts were common, where people travelled in bullock carts

and entertainment was provided by puppet theatre. *Paheli*'s plot, except for its end, remains by and large true to that of "Duvidha." Some felt that the folktale vanished in the background, and the focus of discourse was the designer dresses, designer jewellery and big stars.

*Paheli* is evidently an attempt, though a light-hearted one, at making a statement about women's needs, desires, and agency. In the original story, the possibilities of the written word allow the writer to trace the thoughts of the girl who finds herself in such a strange situation. In the film, on the other hand, when the ghost declares himself and confesses his love, the girl sheds a few tears of confusion and then immediately accepts him as her lover. Till the end she faces no difficulty due to her choice, confronts no conflict in terms of social opposition or pressure. The question doesn't arise because her lover is a ghost who looks exactly like her husband. In our society, most women are unable to exercise their will, not so much from inner inhibition as from fear of public outcry and persecution. The girl in the film (as well as the original story) has it easy because of the surreal plot device that makes any potential problem disappear.

The ghost in the film is supposed to be symbolic, standing for the ideal love/lover every woman desires, according to the promotional interviews of the film. At one point in the film (as well as the original story), in answer to the husband's query about his identity, the ghost replies that he is the "love" in a woman's heart. As mentioned earlier, *Paheli*'s end is different than that of "Duvidha." And it is a difference that is crucially important. In Detha's story, the ghost is tricked into a bag, and the bag is thrown in the river. The ghost is thus truly defeated. The last paragraph of the story describes the girl walking towards the bedroom with the baby at her breast grieving over her fate. Even animals, she rues, are freer than women, and all that a woman can hope for is better life for her daughter! Detha's story has folksy simplicity, but its ending pointedly confronts real problems faced by real women. In a feudal, patriarchal family and social structure, a woman is able to exercise very little control and choice.

When the ghost comes to her, she easily overcomes any inhibition she may feel and accepts him with open arms. But it is beyond her powers to choose him over her rightfully wedded husband. The defeat of the ghost in the story is in that sense meaningful because it is in keeping with his earlier assertion that he is a reflection or an embodiment of the love in a woman's heart, in other words, what a woman really desires. But between a woman's dream and its fulfilment is a whole social system that has for centuries discriminated against women. Dreams, even those of loving husbands and sexual satisfaction, can become realities only if the whole structure changes. A woman cannot go on living in a completely patriarchal world and get her heart's desires.

Its end, the ghost inhabiting the husband's body seems to suggest a change of heart in men as a solution to the problem of the thwarting of women's desire. *Paheli*'s choice of a more palatable end than the original "Duvidha" reveals an ideological position that assumes that liberation, even sexual liberation, is merely a matter of individual choice and agency. Now look at the ending of Detha's story translated by Ruth Vanita. I quote, "Her husband sat waiting on the bed of flowers. How many lives would she have to endure in this one bedchamber? —Even animals cannot be so easily used against their will. At least they do shake their heads in protest. But are women allowed to have any will of their own. Until they reach the cremation ground, they must be in the bedchamber, and when they escape the bedchamber, they go straight to the cremation ground."

Ravi K Chandran's cinematography is spellbinding as he casts us into the fabulous sandscapes of Rajasthan with fluid harmony. Each frame of the film is picture-perfect, marinated in intoxicating colour. The screenplay and dialogues are adapted and re-written by Amol Palekar's wife Sandhya Gokhale and much to Detha's satisfaction and approval. Keeping the simplicity of the original folk form intact, *Paheli* has been added with contemporary dimensions that stand monumental in Indian literature.

“When you consider the vast volume of folklore that Bijji committed to writing,” says Lath, “you have to marvel at the depth of knowledge, creativity and learned self-awareness among the village communities that Bijji knew so well.” By narrating traditional folklore in a modern lingo, Bijji transformed the folklore itself — turning it into major literature with its universal themes, says Arun Kumar, a one-time journalist and Delhi-based social activist. “Bijji’s stories were narratives about the complex value structures and social systems of what *Bharat* (pre-modern India) understood in its own terms and with its own categories of thought,” says Kumar.

To conclude, Vijaydan Detha had a gift for picking the most provocative and compelling stories from the rich folk landscape of the Rajasthan he inhabited, and recreating them in a literary form as engaging and daring as his oral sources. Detha’s stories are guided by a clear moral compass, but never moralistic. They are entertaining and enriching, majestic and magical. Negotiating the promiscuous relationship of language and literature, he wrote much to be read, told and cherished for generations, quite in the spirit of what he believed stories are meant for. His demise would bring a setback not only to the Rajasthani folklore but to Indian folklore in general. He would be remembered for his simplicity, his way of making words come vibrantly alive and for an enriching and entertaining reading experience.

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## Rethinking the Concept of Diaspora: Exile Literature in a Globalised World

*Muktha Manoj Jacob\**

Displacement, whether forced or self-imposed, is in many ways a calamity. Yet, a peculiar but a potent point to note is that writers in their displaced existence generally tend to excel in their work, as if the changed atmosphere acts as a stimulant for them. These writings in dislocated circumstances are often termed as exile literature. The word “exile” has negative connotations but if the self-exile of Byron is considered, then the response to that very word becomes ambivalent. If a holistic view of the word “exile” is taken, the definition would include migrant writers and non-resident writers and even gallivanting writers who roam about for better pastures to graze and fill their oeuvre. World literature has an abundance of writers whose writings have prospered while they were in exile. Although it would be preposterous to assume the vice-versa that exiled writers would not have prospered had they not been in exile, the fact in the former statement cannot be denied. Cultural theorists and literary critics are all alike in this view.

The study of world literature might be the study of the way in which cultures recognize themselves through their projections of ‘otherness.’ Where, once, the transmission of national traditions was the major theme of The world literature, perhaps we can now suggest that transnational histories of migrants, the colonized, or political refugees - these border and frontier conditions - may be the terrains of world literature. (Bhabha 12) The diasporic production of cultural meanings occurs in many areas, such as contemporary music,

film, theatre and dance, but writing is one of the most interesting and strategic ways in which diaspora might disrupt the binary of local and global and problematize national, racial and ethnic formulations of identity. (Ashcroft 218) The multivoiced migrant novel gave vivid expression to theories of the “open” indeterminate text, or of transgressive, non-authoritative reading. (Boehmer 243) In an interview with Nikhil Padgaonkar for Doordarshan, Edward W. Said reflected on the condition of exile: “I think that if one is an intellectual, one has to exile oneself from what has been given to you, what is customary, and to see it from a point of view that looks at it as if it were something that is provisional and foreign to oneself. That allows for independence—commitment—but independence and a certain kind of detachment.” (Said 13)

John Simpson in *The Oxford Book of Exile* writes that exile “is the human condition; and the great upheavals of history have merely added physical expression to an inner fact” (Simpson “Introduction”). Indeed, it is so if exile is taken to be identical with self-alienation in the modern, post-Marxist, Brechtian sense of the term. Physical mobility often heightens the spiritual or psychological sense of alienation from the places one continually moves between. The world, in existentialist terms, appears absurd and indifferent towards one’s needs. In such a situation one cannot help but feel like an outsider. Therefore, it is well agreed that exile is a part of the human experience. Many a Shakespearean play has in it exile in the form of banishment and it dates back even before the time of Pericles of Athens. As for writers of yore there is Ovid whose hyperbolic lamentation on being exiled from Rome for publishing an obscene poem forms part of his *Tristia I*.

The effect that exile has, not on the writers’ work, but on the writers themselves seems apparently paradoxical at first. Exile appears both as a liberating experience as well as a shocking experience. The paradox is apparent because it is just a manifestation of the tension that keeps the strings attached and taut between the writer’s place of origin and

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the place of exile. Whatever may be the geographical location of the exiled writer, in the mental landscape the writer is forever enmeshed among the strings attached to poles that pull in opposite directions. The only way the writer can rescue oneself from the tautness of the enmeshing strings is by writing or by other forms of artistic expression.

The relief is only a temporary condition for no writer's work is so sharp a wedge that can snap the strings that history-makers have woven. Even if a writer consciously tries to justify one end, simultaneously, but unconsciously, there arises a longing for the other. Therein lies the fascination of exile literature. Prominent in exile literature are the works of writers who were made to flee their countries by oppressive regimes. Two of the Russian writers namely Gorky and Solzhenitsyn form an amusing pair of victims of political exile. Gorky's works—especially his communist manifesto *Mother*—incited the Tsarist regime as much as what Solzhenitsyn's works—like *The Gulag Archipelago*—did to the Communists when they came to power. Such is the dichotomy of world politics faced by the writers. If not politics then there are racial segregation, religious discrimination, and war that force writers to flee from their countries. The First World War saw a large exodus of writers who felt that they could not write in wartime Europe as they have previously written. The Second World War saw the Nazi's persecution of the Jews. Thomas Mann wrote from his refuge in Chicago to Hermann Hesse in Germany about the uprooting and also mentioned that Europe would be a different place after the war (Simpson 227). As it turned out, the whole world became a different place as soon as Enola Gay flew over the sky of Hiroshima. What these writers benefited from their exile was freedom of speech but they could never forget the shock of their original expulsion. They always believed that it was their right to be home, yet those who were privileged to return home, were often disappointed with the changes. At home few friends remained and they missed the society of like-minded intellectuals that they had formed during the time and in the place of their exile. Once an exile becomes forever an

exile and the works of such writers hold the verve of restlessness.

In Kafka's short story *The Departure* the protagonist mentions that he can reach his goal by "getting out of here." When asked what his goal was he gives a memorable riposte: "Out of here - that's my goal" (Quoted in Simpson 96). Many writers get out of their native land because either the weather does not suit them or the society does not suit them or they just get out in search of the springs of Hippocrene for their muse. R.L. Stevenson preferred to live in Samoa because he enjoyed health in the tropics. P. B. Shelley was the quintessential radical. Even before his elopement with Mary Godwin he showed signs of his radicalism by publishing a tract called *The Necessity of Atheism* for which he was expelled from Oxford. Eventually the conservative English society forced him to leave England. Shelley's exile from society was so acute that in one of his letters to Mary he expressed his desire to desert all human society. He wrote, "I would retire with you and our child to a solitary island in the sea, [. . .] and shut upon my retreat the floodgates of the world" (Quoted in Simpson 216). On the other hand, Byron's was a self-exile into the continent in search of the fire to keep his muse's torch burning. He even participated in the Greek War of Independence because England did not provide him with such a stimulating atmosphere in which to write. Exile in the form of migration has been the cause of emergence of a large number of writers who have given direction to the progress of English literature. Irish-English writers like G. B. Shaw and W. B. Yeats have produced works that have become landmarks of English literature. Joyce in his novel *The Portrait of an Artist as a Young Man* writes: "When the soul of a man is born in this country there are nets flung at it to hold it back from flight. [. . .] I shall try to fly by those nets" (Quoted in Simpson 258). Similar was the case with American-English writers like Henry James and especially T. S. Eliot who in his poems expressed his observations about the rootlessness of modern life. As intellectual exiles from America to Europe, they were fleeing from what they

perceived to be the provincialism of America and its intellectual barrenness. They fed the European sense of cultural superiority due to their restlessness and incipient exilic predicament. In this regard their exilic condition, apparently, appears to be weak when compared to that of Conrad. Joseph Conrad was born in Poland but had to spend a part of his childhood with his family exiled in northern Russia. He went on to seek refuge first in France and then in Britain. He knew little English till the age of twenty years, yet, when he made his home in Canterbury, Kent, in England he had a considerable amount of English works under his name. D. H. Lawrence did a bulk of his writing while traveling. Such was the case with Katherine Mansfield - first she was away from New Zealand and then she was away from England. The cases of Hemingway and Isherwood, who migrated from the continent to the New World, are still more poignant for they became distinctly established as American writers.

Internal exile is another form of exile that many writers face. Perhaps it is the most damning of all exiles for in this case the exiles stay in their own country and yet are alienated. The Russian writer Dostoevsky looks back in his autobiography on the effect of his Siberian sentence thus: "I had been cut off from society by exile and that I could no longer be useful to it and serve it to the best of my abilities, aspirations, and talents" (Quoted in Simpson 180). In fact, it was the colonial powers that made most people aliens in their own country - firstly through linguistic displacement. It is in this colonial context that the native writers spawned the various sub-genres of English literature. Writers like Mulk Raj Anand, R. K. Narayan, and Raja Rao, who established Indian-English literature, were all subjects of the British rule in India. Even after the colonized countries got independence, writers of many of those countries still faced a state of exile—either because of dictatorship in their countries, or because of racial persecution, or because of ethnic cleansing, or because they chose to migrate. African-English writers like Ken Saro-Wiwa, Ngugi wa Thiongo', Wole Soyinka, and Ben Okri all found themselves in some sort of exilic state.

The Indian-English writers, notably, Raja Rao became an expatriate even before the independence of the country; G.V. Desani was born in Kenya and lived in England, India, and USA; and Kamala Markandaya married an Englishman and lived in Britain (ref. Mehrotra 180, 186, 226). Nirad C. Chaudhuri preferred the English shores because his views were not readily accepted in India. Salman Rushdie's "imaginary homeland" encompasses the world over. The Iranian "fatwa" phase has added a new dimension to Rushdie's exilic condition. Colonial and post-colonial India are divisions that are now more relevant to a historian than a *littérateur* because Indian-English literature has transcended the barriers of petty classifications and has become almost part of mainstream English literature. A major contribution in this regard has been that of the Indian writers, like Rushdie and Naipaul, who live as world citizens - a global manifestation of the exilic condition. Indian-English writers like Anita Desai, Bharati Mukherjee, Shashi Tharoor, Amitav Ghosh, Vikram Seth, Sunetra Gupta, Rohinton Mistry, Jhumpa Lahiri, and Hari Kunzru have all made their names while residing abroad. The non-resident Indian writers have explored their sense of displacement—a perennial theme in all exile literature. They have given more poignancy to the exploration by dealing not only with a geographical dislocation but also a socio-cultural sense of displacement. Their concerns are global concerns as today's world is afflicted with the problems of immigrants, refugees, and all other exiles. These exilic states give birth to the sense of displacement and rootlessness.

The Indian diaspora has been formed by a scattering of population and not, in the Jewish sense, an exodus of population at a particular point in time. This sporadic migration traces a steady pattern if a telescopic view is taken over a period of time: from the indentured labourers of the past to the IT technocrats of the present day. Sudesh Mishra in his essay "From Sugar to Masala" divides the Indian diaspora into two categories - the old and the new. He writes that:

This distinction is between, on the one hand, the semi-voluntary flight of indentured peasants to non-metropolitan plantation colonies such as Fiji, Trinidad, Mauritius, South Africa, Malaysia, Surinam, and Guyana, roughly between the years 1830 and 1917; and the other the late capital or postmodern dispersal of new migrants of all classes to thriving metropolitan centres such as Australia, the United States, Canada, and Britain. (Mishra 276)

Especially after Indian independence the Indian diasporic community has acquired a new identity due to the processes of self-fashioning and increasing acceptance by the West. It is interesting to note that the history of diasporic Indian writing is as old as the diaspora itself. In fact, the first Indian writing in English is credited to Dean Mahomed, who was born in Patna, India, and after working for fifteen years in the Bengal Army of the British East India Company, migrated to “eighteenth century Ireland, and then to England” (Kumar xx) in 1784. His book *The Travels of Dean Mahomet* was published in 1794. It predates by about forty years the first English text written by an Indian residing in India, Kylas Chunder Dutt’s “imaginary history” *A Journal of Forty-Eight Hours of the Year 1945* published in 1835 (ref. Mehrotra 95). The first Indian English novel, Bankimchandra Chatterjee’s *Rajmohan’s Wife*, was to be published much later in 1864. It shows that the contribution of the Indian diaspora to Indian writing in English is not new. Also interestingly, the descendants of the Indian indentured labourers in the so called “girit colonies” have predominantly favoured writing in English, the lingua franca of the world. The likes of Seepersad Naipaul and later Shiva Naipaul, V. S. Naipaul, Cyril Dabydeen, David Dabydeen, Sam Selvon, M. G. Vassanji, Subramani, K.S. Maniam, Shani Muthoo, and Marina Budhos are significant contributors in that field.

V.S. Naipaul’s characters, like Mohun Biswas from *A House for Mr. Biswas* or Ganesh Ramsumair from *The Mystic Masseur*, are examples of individuals who are generations away from their original homeland, India, but their heritage gives them a consciousness of their past. They become

itinerant specimen of the outsider, the unhoused, for the world to see. Their attempts at fixity are continuously challenged by the contingency of their restless existence - a condition grown out of their forefathers’ migration, albeit within the Empire, from India to Trinidad. Naipaul’s characters are not governed by actual dislocation but by an inherited memory of dislocation. For them their homeland India is not a geographical space but a construct of imagination. Their predicament can be explained in Rushdie’s words: “the past is a country from which we have all emigrated, that its loss is part of our common humanity” (12). The novels of the older generation of diasporic Indian writers like Raja Rao, G. V. Desani, Santha Rama Rau, Balachandra Rajan, Nirad Chaudhuri, and Ved Mehta predominantly look back at India and rarely record their experiences away from India as expatriates. It is as if these writers have discovered their Indianness when they are out of India. Obviously, they have the advantage of looking at their homeland from the outside. The distance affords them the detachment that is so necessary to have a clear perception of their native land. In that sense, through their writing, they help to define India.

Makarand Paranjape notes “that instead of worshipping the leftovers and relics of a now inaccessible homeland as the old diaspora of indentured labourers did, the new diaspora of international Indian English writers live close to their market, in the comforts of the suburbia of advanced capital but draw their raw material from the inexhaustible imaginative resources of that messy and disorderly subcontinent that is India” (252). These writers record their away from India experiences and even if they look back at their homeland it is often in an elegiac tone rather than with nostalgia. Paranjape explicates this point in considering the novels of Rohinton Mistry (251). Ultimately, Indian writers in the West are increasingly identifying themselves with the literary tradition of the migrant writers of the world. Rushdie says that “Swift, Conrad, Marx [and even Melville, Hemingway, Bellow] are as much our literary forebears as Tagore or Ram Mohan Roy” (20).

The modern diasporic Indian writers can be grouped into two distinct classes. One class comprises those who have spent a part of their life in India and have carried the baggage of their native land offshore. The other class comprises those who have been bred since childhood outside India. They have had a view of their country only from the outside as an exotic place of their origin. The writers of the former group have a literal displacement whereas those belonging to the latter group find themselves rootless. Both the groups of writers have produced an enviable corpus of English literature. These writers while depicting migrant characters in their fiction explore the theme of displacement and self-fashioning. The diasporic Indian writers' depiction of dislocated characters gains immense importance if seen against the geo-political background of the vast Indian subcontinent. That is precisely why such works have a global readership and an enduring appeal. The diasporic Indian writers have generally dealt with characters from their own displaced community but some of them have also taken a liking for Western characters and they have been convincing in dealing with them. Two of Vikram Seth's novels *The Golden Gate* and *An Equal Music* have as their subjects exclusively the lives of Americans and Europeans respectively.

Two of the earliest novels that have successfully depicted diasporic Indian characters are Anita Desai's *Bye-Bye Blackbird* and Kamala Markandaya's *The Nowhere Man*. These novels depict how racial prejudice against Indians in the UK of the 1960s alienates the characters and aggravate their sense of displacement. Bharati Mukherjee's novels like *Wife* and *Jasmine* depict Indians in the US - the land of immigrants, both legal and illegal - before globalization got its impetus. Salman Rushdie in the novel *The Satanic Verses* approaches the allegory of migration by adopting the technique of magic realism. The physical transformation of Gibreel Farishta and Saladin Chamcha after their fall from the bursting jumbo jet on the English Channel is symbolic of the self-fashioning that immigrants have to undergo in their adopted country. Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni in her novel

*The Mistress of Spices* depicts Tilo, the protagonist, as an exotic character to bring out the migrant's angst. Amitav Ghosh's novel *The Shadow Lines* has the character Ila whose father is a roaming diplomat and whose upbringing has been totally on foreign soils. She finds herself as much out of place in India as any foreigner. But when she conjures up the story of her doppelganger Magda being rescued by Nick Price from Denise, it shows the extent of her sense of rootlessness. Amit Chaudhuri in his novel *Afternoon Raag* portrays the lives of Indian students in Oxford. Similarly, Anita Desai in the second part of her novel *Fasting, Feasting* depicts Arun as a migrant student living in the suburbs of Massachusetts. The important point to note is that in a cosmopolitan world one cannot literally be a cultural and social outsider in a foreign land. There are advantages of living as a migrant - the privilege of having a double perspective, of being able to experience diverse cultural mores, of getting the leverage provided by the networking within the diasporic community, and more. But it is often these advantages that make diasporic Indians, especially of the second generation, encounter the predicament of dual identities. Such ambivalence produces existential angst in their psychology. The world simply refuses to become less complex.

The diasporic Indian writers of the first generation have already established their credentials by winning numerous literary awards and honours. But recently the ranks of the second generation of Indian writers in the West have swelled enormously and many among them have won international recognition. Meera Syal, who was born in England, has successfully represented the lives of first generation as well as second generation non-resident Indians in the West in her novels *Anita and Me* and *Life Isn't All Ha Ha Hee Hee*. Hari Kunzru in his novel *Transmission* traces a part of the lives of three diverse characters— Leela Zahir, an actress, Arjun Mehta, a computer expert, and Guy Swift, a marketing executive - traversing through Bollywood, the Silicon Valley, and London. Sunetra Gupta has shown with candor both the unpleasantness and the pleasantness of intercultural

relationships through characters like Moni and Niharika from her novels *Memories of Rain* and *A Sin of Colour*. Jhumpa Lahiri's book of short stories *Interpreter of Maladies* and her novel *The Namesake* convincingly illustrate the lives of both first generation and second generation Indian migrants in the US. This is possible because big issues like religious intolerance and racial discrimination are no longer the main concern of these writers. What matters now in the current world are the small things. Little, unacknowledged things gain enormous importance in changed circumstances. It is here that the differing reactions by Indian, Western, and diasporic characters towards similar situations are found to differ only superficially. It demonstrates that the inner needs of all human beings are the same. Alienation is a part of the experience of the Indian diaspora and even if people are at home in any part of the world it does not mean that they will not become victims of the sense of alienation. Increasing acceptance into the host society does not indicate that the diasporic characters can feel at home. Social alienation is replaced by metaphysical alienation.

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## Quintessence of Hope and Trust in Mulk Raj Anand's *The Bubble*

*Binod Mishra\**

Mulk Raj Anand, one of the triumvirates of Indian novels in English during 1930s made himself known by academia because of his fulminations mostly bordering on the gap between the privileged and the under-privileged. In his initial phase, he came to be labelled as Communist and a rebel who shook the Indian populace and created a niche among downtrodden and debased people. Anger seems to work as a vital force in Anand's fiction. But such a view circumscribes his fictional world. A comprehensive reading of Anand's works offers different layers and makes his readers realize that the angry novelist mellows with time and provides a cosmic view which encompasses 'a spiritual, metaphysical and lyrical quality in his novels.'

My intention through this paper is to show the evolutionary phase of Anand and hence I have chosen his masterpiece, *The Bubble (1984)* as it transcends time and space. While the novel has been analysed as autobiographical yet the various selves of the protagonist permeate the core of every human being who wants to enlarge his horizon. Krishan, the hero of the novel is not shown as a fixed category but as an individual who struggles to establish meaning and maturity through hope and trust and through his consciousness.

*The Bubble* is spread in nine parts and they provide an exegesis of the differing selves of man destined to make his home in ecstasy. The arrest of energy, which reverberates in the crusader, finally makes room for its release in the said novel, thus making the novelist a creator who rises above

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with an aspiration to climb mountains with an urge for more knowledge that can lead to eternal bliss. The novel under study moves beyond the petty human discriminations and paves way for realizing and absorbing bigger realities that hinge on hope and trust. While many readers may again find Anand raising many unusual issues yet they cannot deny the fact that 'every self transcends itself'. The philosophy of the human person rests on faith not only in human beings but also on birds, beasts and nature. Apart from his philosophic fomentations, Anand makes his readers realize that the formation of human personality lies in blending the external with the internal in order to ensure an ideal harmony.

Anand's internationally acclaimed novel, *The Bubble* offers release from the contortions and convulsions of his protagonists in his earlier novels. The novel is unique in the sense not because it is autobiographical but because it provides a comprehensive analysis of the hero's inner selves which assimilate plethora of emotions and experiences. The various sections of the novel comprise letters, diary entries and the pulsating experiences of the protagonist trying to carve his niche in the world of contractions and contradictions. The hero of *The Bubble*, Krishan appears as the mouthpiece of the novelist who unpacks his frustrations and endeavours to look at life which is full of hope and harmony. Krishan undertakes a sojourn of self, which encounters several challenges that put him to test yet strengthen on the whole.

The first part of the novel is entitled 'The Exile', which contains letters written to his friend, Noor. This part is a nostalgic record dealing with the trials and trepidations of an ambitious scholar distanced from his homeland. Krishan is hit hard by loneliness in an alien world and his attempt to rationalize his mind turns him into a philosopher exploring the wisdom of the heart. But the philosophical quest, according to the protagonist will help him discover himself. While he calls his quest as exile, one can find the growing philosopher annexing himself to happiness through memory. He tells Noor: "But all of you are in me. And I am in you. So we are not really dead to each other. As long as I go on remembering.

That is why I have begun writing a letter to you.” (*The Bubble*, 03) As Krishan starts meeting people in England, his loneliness subsides and he proceeds towards new possibilities gathered through books. His acquaintance with Prof. Dicks opens new avenues which propel him to inquire and analyse further the conflict between the spirit and mind. Knowledge and experience ennoble his dwindling spirits and help him come out of the confines of past.

Krishan’s initial days in England appear to him as trite because of his unfamiliarity with the surroundings and lack of friends. During such hours he misses his homeland and starts reminiscing his past. The memory of his past life soothes him yet he does not cling on to it for long. Past, however pleasant it may be, should not blur his future. He is aware of his mission, which can be achieved only through hope and trust. The idea of unlocking the secret of his heart through letters may prove cathartic since he’s to come out of the confines of his past. He is well aware of the fact that hope is the ladder to success and trust in his surroundings alone can ease the ennui of the enterprise he’d started. This stirs his soul-searching and allows him to traverse several encounters that provide a new glow to his spiritual awareness. The unceasing faith and hope in his mission prompts him to move forward, which he writes to his friend, Noor in his letter: “The wish to move forward filled me with warmth that urged me on. I wanted to live, to breathe, to expound my soul to run wild.” (81)

The craving for his homeland makes him homesick though he is not blind to several taboos prevailing in his country. What makes Anand critical at times is his rational thinking opposed to the blind obsession with one’s native land. He tries to rationalize faith against a sea of superstitious beliefs which many of us often cling to either in the name of religion or tradition. Indian myths despite soaked in several heresies fail to offer the rationality that people in Western countries most often practice. Indians seem to lack in the philosophy of human will, which according to Anand, can help in observing and experiencing around them. Assertion in human faith

prompts Krishan towards hope and harmony. Inspired by Goethe’s idea of ‘becoming’ besides the Hindu idea of ‘to be’ widens the scope of hope in Krishan. Prof. Dicks’ suggestion to cleanse himself from ‘old jargon’ and to view all knowledge as ‘probabilistic’ provides the budding scholar with ample thoughts for his research. Unlike Indians, Krishan learns that he has to evolve a philosophy of human will and liberate himself from the confines of bodily urges which impede our growth because of obscurantism.

The second part of novel is entitled ‘The Ascent of Mount Snowdown’, which has its setting in North Wales. The picturesque rural atmosphere, which makes him reminiscent of his own country, offers him ample scope for rejuvenation and re-discovery. Freedom provides him room for rationalizing his Indian beliefs and rediscovering himself through his consciousness. The dogmas of various philosophers enable him to compare and analyse in order to reach the philosophy of human heart. Krishan as a representative of Anand finds the Western philosophy full of pale ideas except that of Descartes, whose ‘Cogito ergo sum’ (I think therefore I am) attracts him. But his faith in the assertion of human will prompts him to add ‘I am therefore I think’. He comes to realize that as human, he has the freedom of choice which can help him in becoming. He says:

So to exist is to be. And to be is to become aware. The mountain is there but does not exist without my seeing it. Matter cannot become. I can, because I can in relation to things, through my curiosity about life. Every new experience makes me. I can choose to be. Nature cannot. I have the freedom of choice. I can create myself through my consciousness. (72)

Krishan’s proclivity towards past may fill him with negation which can impede his progress and hence the desire to waft in his consciousness prompts him to be more accommodating. His stay in England allows him to expand his vision and see the largeness of heart. Anand’s protagonist in *The Bubble* is not the rigid one who can ape the stereotyped notions like fellow humans. His encounter with Lucy in North

Wales gave him mixed feelings. Lucy was pure and innocent yet her adoration of Buddha irks him. Buddha according to Krishan symbolized negation and escape. The regression of passions blocks human's cravings for warmth and life. Life doesn't lie in fixity but in flexibility. Krishan believes that humans should struggle to liberate themselves from hangovers and endeavour to make an authentic existence. Suffering should strengthen people and make them shine like gold. Krishan represents Anand's optimism when he says:

I want my happiness even at the expense of others. I am anti-Christ. I want the romantic night, even this brings sorrow and melancholy. I shall have to live through the inner chaos. (138)

The hope to move forward is not devoid of happiness. It is in this respect that Krishan admires the Britisher's tenacity towards their work. Happiness, according to Anand, does not lie in negativity but in the acceptance of truth. Happiness comes out of activity and not from passivity. Buddha's philosophy consisted of passivity which blocked the existence of love, hate, adversity and death in human world. Vibrations and vitality in life can result from activity and not passivity. Krishan believes that the integration of the body, the spirit and the mind alone can make us a fuller being, the whole man. This integration is not possible without activity. It is in this respect that Anand's struggle in England makes us remember what Russell says of happiness:

It is impossible to be happy without activity, but it is also impossible to be happy if the activity is excessive or of a repulsive kind. Activity is appreciable when it is directed very obviously to a desired end and is not in itself contrary to itself.

Anand adopts a confessional method in his autobiographical novels to make his personal experiences impersonal in order to become an authentic writer. While Krishan's personal maladies tended to give him despair, the external experiences and interfaces gave him melodies. These novels provide Anand a platform to relax his tensions tedious and to allow a sort of self-awareness to widen a greater and

a nobler consciousness. Krishan's realization of his anguish makes him overcome the gap between the two worlds to ensure a better living a nobler vocation. Anand rightly in *Morning Face* says:

Now I began to realize actually the nature of differences between the two worlds in which I lived, the world of the compromise of my father and the world of the principles of the nationalist. (438)

The second part of the novel describes Krishan's experiences with Lucy who believed in the purity of the body. Krishan is of the opinion that body has its own demands and it cannot withstand its claims. The third part of the novel is a description of the body in the making of personality. The rationality of the mind depends upon the gratification of the body. And this has been depicted exhaustively in the third part which records Krishan's association with Irene, a free-spirited girl who taught him not only the dynamics of the body but also strengthened his philosophical quest leading to a *Weltanschung*. The difference between the pleasure principle of poetry and the reality principle of philosophy get new dimensions in Irene's company. While Irene's body fascinates him, it doesn't stop his spiritual yearning. What Anand says has got much substance:

He wondered what his mentor, Iqbal would say about the descent of his falcon down from the sky to the earth, the comedown of the students of the philosophy to the vague restiveness of Epicureanism. But he pretended he would be burning and melting on the flame. (138)

The protagonist of *The Bubble* is the quintessential Anand who uplifted on the wings of the falcon flying from the gloom towards the sun. Krishan sustains on hope and joy which Irene provided him and propelled him towards an alternative world. The commingling of desire and fantasy provides more hope and happiness. This is amply supported by Sudhir Kakkar who says:

Desire and fantasy are, of course inexorably linked. Aristotle's dictum that there can be no desire without fantasy contains even more truth in reverse. Fantasy is

the mise-en scene of desire, its dramatization in a visual form. (27)

Description of sex and bodily association in the third part of the novel has been vehemently criticized by readers and critics. But this does not attest to the truth of civilizational and evolutionary process of life. The natural urges that unite a man and woman is not only romantic but also religious for evolutionary process. The idea of possessiveness in such relations often brings despair whereas the mutual faith provides a sort of transcendence. Anand's views about the culmination of body get ample justification in what Kakkar says:

In the coming together of sexes, we resent the violation of body's boundaries even while we want nothing more than to transcend them. We fear sexuality's threat to the tenuous order we have carved out for ourselves during the course of our development...Even as we long for its dissolution into a veritable Mahabharata, a "great feeling" that will allow us ecstasy and exaltation rather than the small joys and rebels of pleasure we extract from our inner order. (142)

Anand's views help his readers find the revolutionary fire that can amend many assumptions that impede the clear light of day. The life force offered by the revolutionary Anand helps in recreating on various human follies to bring redemption and joy. Faith in life leads to hope and happiness springing forth from love—the life force. Anand's greatness as a writer attracts his readers because of his frankness and fidelity to life. What Anand himself says about faith in life has subtle significance:

Faith in the love of life in all its forms—human beings birds and flowers and they would be part of his philosophy of the human person. He saw the pigeons in the smiling shimmer of the spring sun. Suddenly he was struck by the change of colours of their vital grey necks. He looked up at the sky for answers. (290)

The fourth part of the novel is titled 'Thieves of Fire' and is a description of journey to Paris and back. Krishna's

consciousness achieves greater consciousness and allows him to reconcile with his past evaluations of places and people. He realizes that happiness cannot be explored without understanding the dynamics of the body. Body is neither a prison house nor a repository of all evils. The body has to be explored in order to achieve the wisdom of the spirit. The confinement of the body is the confinement of the spirit. Death is of course, inevitable and humans have to emerge from breakdowns. Progression in life is not possible without negotiating with contraries of life.

The fifth part of the novel describes Krishan's interaction with many luminaries. This helps him in realising that what was of great significance was 'to live from experience to renew ourselves above all the doubts, and win through the assertions of contrary wills.' Anand rejects the hullabaloo of Indian thinkers whose coffee house spiels are devoid of the real Indian problems. The struggle of the Irish for their country fires his spirit and carets in him a longing for his homeland. The sixth part of the novel helps the protagonist reconcile with a metaphysical anguish. His inspiration to write about Bakha cannot materialize unless he shed his Bohemian lifestyle and experienced his character's genuineness and simplicity. Krishan decides to return to his country to realize his dream. The seventh part of the novel is a collection of letters written to Irene. The eighth and the ninth part of the novel are Krishan's communication in the form of letters to his father. This part contradicts the sentimentalities of both the father and the son. Krishan's logical and rational reasoning do not block the bonding between the two. Communication alone can clear all doubts and strengthen the bond. Anand rightly records:

But how can a young man hold his head high and look at the stars if he is always falling at the elder's feet? I have learnt that in order to grow up, to be adult, I must not revert back to the old order of relations between father and son, where the son is always bent head before the father and can't ask questions, answer back, or disagree, even if he respectfully. (595)

While Krishan's assertion raises questions over Indian traditions yet it does not stop the rationality and the worldview. The dead and decaying traditions must always be forsaken to achieve newer heights which hinge on hope and happiness. Life is a progression towards maturity of an artist who suffers yet does not submit at lower wages. The novel provides an encounter between east and west but it also gives an exegesis of hope and harmony.

*The Bubble* as a novel is not only explorative but also expansive. It provides an answer to Anand's early zealous critics who straitjacket him as a period novelist. Many critics have called him a propagandist who philosophizes too much through his fiction. Anand's unusual and rebellious views bear resemblances with German writer and philosopher Nietzsche who propounded the death of God. The depiction of cruelty of man at the hands of man because of certain biases and its criticism through fiction cost the novelist the wrath of many. But Anand's heroes might find much substance in what Nietzsche wrote in *The Gay Science* (Section 125, *The Madman*):

God is dead. God remains dead. And we have killed him. How shall we comfort ourselves, the murderers of murderers? What was the holiest and mightiest of all the world has yet owned has bled to death under our knives: who will wipe this blood off us? What water is there for us to clean ourselves? What festivals of atonement, what sacred games shall we have to invent? Is not the greatness of this deed too great for us? Must we ourselves not become gods simply to appear worthy of it?

Nietzsche might sound questioning the supreme authority but we should never forget that as a prolific German philosopher and existentialist, the former tried his best to awaken the sleeping mankind from many so-called dogmas. Anand's recalcitrance is not without his indifference towards God, who seemed to distance his mother from the physical world, while she tried to connect herself with her idols. He also believed that there was no God and man had killed God. He often wondered how could there be innumerable problems

on earth if there was God. In one of his novels, Anand writes: "No god, he felt could make such a world and consign it to such suffering, for if he did so, he was not a good God." (*The Big Heart*, 68)

Anand believed that the individual was caught in a mouse trap and he had to liberate himself through struggle and hope. This is the reason that his language of protest becomes mellow and poetic in his autobiographical novels. His autobiographical novels are soaked in the mild experiences of the novelist trying to extract meaning from the wisdom of the heart where the various echoes meet, melt and create in the author a new vision to bring reconciliation. *The Bubble*, as Anand's masterpiece, subtly records the various stages where the agitated mind transcends towards the making of a brooding philosopher in whom the local and the alien colors dissolve in each other to give his protagonist an authentic vision. It would, thus, be pertinent to close this paper on an optimistic note of hope and trust. The description of the novelist, of course, adds a new dimension to Krishan's character who thinks: "One cannot remain fixed in the type one has become, because then one cease to be. One must awaken to fresh possibilities, latent in the winter's decay, the opening of buds into flowers and the promise of the coming of lascivious fruit on the tree of happiness." (603)

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## Poverty in the Novels of George Orwell

M.P. Singh\*

Orwell's novels deal with two important themes – poverty and politics – or, as he put it, 'the twin nightmares that beset nearly every modern man, the nightmare of unemployment and the nightmare of state interference'. The autobiographical—*Down and Out in Paris and London*, the novels—*A Clergyman's Daughter*, *Keep the Aspidistra Flying* and *The Road to Wigan Pier* deal with the first theme while *Burmese Days*, *Homage to Catalonia*, *Animal Farm* and *Nineteen Eighty-Four* with the second'. The novels of poverty are as old as that of Defoe but the main English tradition runs from Dickens through Gissing and Orwell to John Wain & John Osborne. Orwell's master and model for the novel of poverty was George Gissing. Orwell writes that we all in terror of poverty and its psychological and social effects are one of his dominant themes. Though almost all of his books treat this question in a significant way, the exploited natives in *Burmese Days*, the plight of the common soldier in *Homage to Catalonia* and of the dehumanized proles in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. But his four novels *Down and Out in Paris and London*, *A Clergyman's Daughter*, *Keep the Aspidistra Flying* and *The Road to Wigan Pier* are completely devoted to the exploration of this theme. Whenever Orwell thought in terms of poverty he thought of starvation and his mind was always haunted by the problems of the social outcasts, tramps, beggars, criminals, prostitutes and of "the lowest of the low". He was fed up with the respectable world and was in search of an escape from the company of the snobs, the hypocrites, the tyrants and the like. He thought it once for all to be with down-trodden to live at place like lime house, to

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sleep in common-lodging house and be friendly with dock labourers, street hawkers, derelict people, beggars and if possible criminals. He had a strong desire to be "at the bedrock of the western world". His sole endeavour 'which made him spend restless days and sleepless night' was to eradicate poverty and make human beings live as human beings. From the very beginning of his life he was busy fighting against poverty.

*Down and Out in Paris and London* is his first attempt to expose the evils of poverty. The novel was written when the writer was a wanderer & acutely in want of money. He had nothing in his purse and none to help him in cities like Paris and London. "Poverty" Orwell writes in *Down and Out in Paris and London*, "is what I am writing about, and I had my first contact with poverty in this slum. The slum, with its queer lives, was first and abject lesson in poverty, and then the background of my own experiences. It is for that reason that I try to give some idea of what life was like there".(9) The story of the novel is the story of social outcasts, economically wretched, mentally retarded and physically disabled. The two cosmopolitan centers of materialistic civilization have been denounced as the dejected alleys of dirty and crowded houses. The book is in two sections- the first dealing with his life in Paris and the second with his life in London. It opens with a slum of Paris. Orwell lived in this slum with workers as a victim of poverty. His observations were based on his personal experience of the lives of the poor and the downtrodden. He thought of it as the greatest curse of humanity and suggests indirectly that the Government should try to free the people from this evil.

Orwell's experience of the Government maternity hospital in Paris, which had virtually turned into centres of prostitution, was horrible. The poor women were encouraged to sell their chastity for money. A moving picture of the same is seen: "You know the Government maternity hospitals? They are places where women who are enceinte are given meals free and no questions are asked. It is done to encourage child bearing. Any woman can go there and demand a meal, and

she is given it immediately". (87) Coming to the close of Paris section of the book Orwell devotes a chapter on the life of 'Plongeurs'. 'Plongeurs' in Paris were slaves. A plongeur's work is simple but excessively boring and dull. He is at the lowest layer of the society. He is paid barely to keep his life. He compares the work of plongeur with the work of a rickshaw-puller in India. London in some ways was worse than Paris. The writer lived in poor lodgings. He joined tramps who moved from one place to another in group. Orwell was terrified to see the animal-like looks of tramps in a civilized place like London. In the last chapters Orwell expresses his concern for the condition of beggars in London. The novel is a journey to the world of starvation and humiliation. The writer presents a gallery of 'Down and Outs' who build a mountain of poverty.

*A Clergyman's Daughter* is the third novel of Orwell which describes the middle class daughter of a clergyman whose name was Dorothy. The troubled mind Dorothy had repressed her physical desires against a state of humiliating poverty. The novel deals with the loss of her memory which forms an important part of the plot of the novel. Orwell wants to tell a story of poverty and exploitation of the working class. There is the same miserable tale of starvation and housing problems as of coal-miners in the *Road to Wigan Pier* and of 'Plongeurs' and tramps in *Down and Out in London and Paris*. The poor heroine is put to severe economic crisis when she is disengaged from work. Her life under the open sky on the roads of London in cold night is heart breaking. We find a great similarity between the daughter of a Clergyman in Lawrence's *Daughters of the Vicar* and the daughter of a Clergyman in this novel. Orwell is a witness to the conditions of the poor than a fiction writer. The reader is really moved to the pity of their lot. The people drag out their terrible and hopeless existence as they had no money. Extreme poverty and unemployment have given them a feeling of despair which makes normal life impossible. Orwell's concern with the exploitation of working classmen is expressed through the life of Dorothy who runs from the church to a farm in

London where she is taken for hop-picking. The lodging problem, lack of food, and over work are the experiences she undergoes. Dorothy's three anxieties— lack of money, loss of faith and sexual frigidity converge in the Square scene. This square scene was the only part of the novel Orwell was pleased with. It is only in this scene, however clumsy, that the themes of the novel fuse into a coherent whole.

Orwell's bitter experience at a bookshop at Hampstead town became the base of the novel, *Keep the Aspidistra Flying* which bears a symbolical title suggesting its imaginative significance. The leaves of Aspidistra causing mental disgust to the hero Gordon stands for the value of money. The novel has its central theme 'the struggle against the money- God'. The writer criticizes the vulgar materialistic civilization. The hero of the novel Gordon Comestock sets out as an angry young man of the generation with a burning passion and strong will to eradicate the social and economic evils. He finds the importance of money- cult as the root of all evils : " Money and Culture : In a country like England you can no more be cultured without money ..... money for the right kind of education, money for influential friends, money for leisure and peace of mind, money for trips to Italy: Money writes books, money sells them. Give me not righteousness, O Lord, give me money, only money". (13).

The word 'money' has been repeated many times in the novel in order to lay emphasis on the materialistic trend of the society. Gordon wages war on money but is defeated every time and forced to adjust himself to the pattern. His voice against the materialistic value remains unheard and he travels alone on his path. In return, he gets only suffering and frustration. Orwell has introduced Gordon working in a bookshop where he is behaved like a slave and captive. Poverty has reduced him to an ugly creature. The materialistic background had an authority to make or unmake a man. This idea kills all the fair and virtuous feelings of a man. Gordon's belief that 'our civilization is dying' and the 'whole world will be blown up' is based on his fear of the money-age. It is very touching and pathetic. Orwell is superb as a

writer of the theme of poverty and graphically exposes its evil effect on the mind and body of the people. "The first effect of poverty is that it kills thought". So Gordon decides to get out of the 'money world' and abandons jobs and jobs in favour of writing.

Orwell went to the industrial North of England to find out the real condition of the working population at a time when poverty and unemployment were menacing the land. *The Road to Wigan Pier* is a record of his impression of this journey made through one of the depressed areas of England. Orwell describes the condition of the dirty and congested lodging house of Mr. Broker as he does of the dilapidated lodging house of Madame Monce in *Down and Out*. In all the above mentioned three novels the writer attacks vehemently on the filthy lodging houses in Paris, London & Spain. But Orwell is an observer, not a sufferer as in *Down and Out*. Orwell's description of the coal-miners and of their tough life is vividly pathetic. Down the coal mines it is very terrible to see the condition of the miners at work: "Most of the things one imagines in hell are there – heat, noise, confusion, darkness, foul air and above all unbearably cramped space". (9)

Orwell draws our attention to the housing condition of the miners. He had the experiences of being homeless and living in dirty houses in Paris and London. He presents an economic data of the old houses standing in Wigan and suggests the need to raise the condition of the poor people by giving them good houses. *The Road to Wigan Pier* describes realistically, after D.H. Lawrence, the life of coal-miners in England. The exposure of poverty and filth in 'Wigan' is a revolutionary step in our literature. Through the filth and poverty of the mining area a character is created who resembles Dorothy, Comstock and Bowling. Wigan has become the symbol of ugliness and filth. The title *Wigan Pier* is ironical. *Wigan Pier* is a subject of joke in Lancashire. Where a man fails to afford to go to Black pool during holiday weeks to get a change, they pretend going to *Wigan Pier*. But *Wigan Pier* has actually no pier and hence *Wigan Pier*

means nowhere.

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## Contemporary Relevance of the Thoughts and Teachings of Swami Vivekananda

*Roopesh Chaturvedi\**

All nationalist leaders in the early part of twentieth century, when the freedom struggle was gaining ground had unreservedly acknowledged that Swami Vivekananda and his speeches and writings inspired them to dedicate themselves, heart and soul, to serve the cause of the motherland and strive hard for her freedom."If you want to know India, study Vivekananda. In him everything is positive and nothing negative."<sup>1</sup>On the backdrop of emerging nationalism in British-ruled India, Swami Vivekananda crystallized the nationalistic ideal. His intrepid patriotism gave a new colour to the national movement throughout India. More than any other single Individual of that era Swami Vivekananda had made his contribution to the new awakening of India. His nationalistic ideas influenced many other great Indian thinkers and leaders. Mahatma Gandhi writes "I have gone through his works very thoroughly and after having gone through them, the love that I had for my country became a thousand fold. I ask you young men, not to go away empty-handed without imbibing something of the spirit of Swami Vivekananda."<sup>2</sup>Swamiji was regarded by the great Shri Auribindo as the one who awakened India spiritually. He has been counted as the pioneers of the Hindu reformers, maintaining the Hindu religion in a state of splendor by cutting down the dead wood of tradition.

With the change in government at national level, the name of Swami Vivekananda is being pronounced by the top leadership every now and then. The Bhagwad Geeta and

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the literature of Swami Vivekananda have been the most preferred gift articles from India to the foreign counter- parts. The relevance of the teachings and thoughts of Swami Vivekananda in present context is the theme of this paper. How well the thoughts of nationalism have been infused in the psyche of top leadership by the acts and deeds of Swamiji rightly points towards the then significance of his teaching. How significant they are in twenty first century shall be explored in this paper.

A singer, a painter, a wonderful master of language and a man of letters Swami Vivekananda was a complete artist. He was a powerful orator and a writer in English and Bengali. Most of his published works were compiled from lectures given around the world. His teachings were blended with humour and his language was lucid, testifying to his belief that words whether spoken or written should clarify ideas, rather than demonstrating the profundity of speaker or writer's knowledge.

Vivekananda found his mentor in Shri Ramkrishna. He continued to visit his guru even when he was in great distress. During the days of his graduation he was stripped off all fortune. Sudden death of his father left the family burdened with heavy load of debts as his father lived beyond his means. His grief was multiplied when creditors like blood-thirsty hungry wolves began to prowl about his door and the relatives brought litigation for the bifurcation of the parental home. He was the one who had to shoulder the responsibility of his family. He started search for job but in vain. Friends turned into enemies and so-called well wishers slammed their doors in his face. Almost everywhere he was welcomed by inhuman treatment. However, he got a job in a school though he gave it up soon. His family's economic condition improved a lot and he could renounce the world life and became a sanyasi. He foiled every attempt of his family to get him married and remained a lifelong devout bachelor.

He was the follower of Swami Ramkrishna, though he did not want his fellow followers of Shri Ramkrishna to be the traditional ascetics in solitary place. According to Swamiji,

the ascetics of new age should rather broaden their vision by assimilating the tough currents of the world. While renouncing the worldliness of the life they should actively participate in the activities of life. Swami Vivekananda decided to understand India. For that he criss- crossed India. He set out for the intensive tour of the country in the year 1890. He travelled far and wide, lived among kings and pariahs. But he could not make a mark on society until his genius was recognized by America, it was in America that his in-depth knowledge and talent were understood and highlighted before the world and India as well. Every one celebrated the establishment of Indian thoughts at the parliament of Religions in 1893. Then onwards he was known throughout the world by a new name “Swami Vivekananda” given to him by the king of Khetri on his departure for foreign land.

Never for a single day in America, he forgot his mission of life to save people, body and soul, the body first and the bread first; to bring the whole world to help him out in his task by spreading his appeal until it became the cause of the people. In Swami Vivekanand’s outlook the task ahead was a double one to take India to prosperity and goods required by Western civilization, and to acquaint the West with the promise of spiritual treasure that India holds. For him West does not hold only material goods but it has at the same time social and moral goods to offer as well. Swami Vivekanand was filled with admiration and emotion by the democratic equality in a spectacle where a millionaire and a working woman elbowing each other in the same means of public transport. Swamiji always felt very poignantly the inequity of the castes and the outcast back in India. “India’s doom was sealed the very day when the invented the term mlechchha (the non Hindu, the man outside) and stopped from communion with others. He preached the primordial necessity of an organization that will teach Hindus mutual help and appreciation after the pattern of western democracies.<sup>3</sup>

Swami Vivekananda was not only critical of Indian ways of life and its helplessness but at the same time he criticises the role of much well- to- do Christians. And he said so by standing amidst them during his visit to the parliament of religion. He was very bold to affirm the fact that:

You Christians who are so fond of sending out missionaries to save the soul of heathen, why do you not try to save their bodies from starvation. In India during the terrible famines, thousand died from hunger, yet you Christians did nothing. You erect churches all through India, but the crying evil in the east is not religion, they have religion enough but it is bread that the suffering millions of burning India cry out for bread, with parched throats but we give them stones. It is an insult to a starving people to offer them religion, it is an insult to starving man to teach him metaphysics. In India a priest that preached for money would lose cost and be spat upon by the people, and I fully realised how difficult it was to get help for heathens from Christians.<sup>4</sup>

He founded Ramkrishna mission. The organization did not have democratic outlook as the time was not right for democracy. He was in a hurry and wanted quick and pragmatic results. The work was in full swing, as the members of the mission had started actively participating in relief work and the work of societal reform. A massive monastery was built at Belur, but the problems before him were more complicated, more numerous and more momentous than the problems in any other country worldwide. Rule, religion, language, and government all these make a nation. The elements which compose the Nations of the world are indeed very less, taking race after race, when compared to our country. Here have been the Aryan, the Dravidian, the Tartar, the Turk, the Mogul, the Europe all Nations of the world, as it were, pouring their blood into this country. Of languages the most wonderful conglomeration is present here, of manners and customs there is more difference between two Indian races than between the European and Eastern Races. To make a great India of future, everything’s organization,

accumulation of power and co-ordination of wills, being of one mind is the secret of society. And the more you go on fighting and quarrelling about all trivialities the farther you are off from that accumulation of energy and power which is going to make the future India.

He was thirty nine years of age. He had once said that “I shall not live to be forty years old”.<sup>5</sup> He attained Mahavira, but he had nothing to repent for his early departure at the age of thirty nine, as he said, “I have done enough for fifteen hundred years”.<sup>6</sup> Before his “Mahasamadhi it is reported that, he had written to his western follower, it may be that I shall find it good to get outside my body to cast it off like a worn-out garment but I shall not cease to work I shall inspire men everywhere until the whole world shall know that it is one with god.

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## Diasporic Dilemma and Cultural Conflict in Jhumpa Lahiri’s *The Namesake*

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Jhumpa Lahiri belongs to the group of eminent writers of Indian diaspora like Salman Rushdie and Amitav Ghosh. ‘Diaspora’ means the dispersion of people from traditional homeland to foreign land or from native culture to accepted culture. Robin Cohen describes diasporas as community of people living together in one country who ‘acknowledge that ‘the old country’- a notion of the buried deep in language, religion, custom or folklore-always has some claim on their loyalty and emotions.’ (ix) Cohen further adds that ‘a member’s adherence to a diasporic community is demonstrated by an acceptance of an inescapable link with their past migration history and a sense of co-ethnicity with others of a similar background.’ (McLeod, 2007) Diasporic dilemma means the dubious and difficult situation of migrant people to choose between the two cultures-homeland culture and alien culture. Cultural conflict refers to confrontation of two cultures. The paper aims to investigate the diasporic dilemma and cultural conflict portrayed in Jhumpa Lahiri’s *The Namesake*.

Diasporic people search for home-the real root. They make efforts to compromise with the foreign culture. They suffer and try to find out solution to their psychological tensions. They are helpless without a homeland culture in the foreign land. Diverse spectrums of cultural and ethnic focuses blur them. The conflict between tradition and newer developments forms generation gap. The process of diasporisation involves such factors as loss of language, family ties and support, insecurity of life for evaluating different cultural vacancies

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at the cost of religion, race, caste and creed. Rushdie remarks in his *Imaginary Homelands*: 'A full migrant suffers traditionally, a triple disruption: he loses his place, he enters into an alien language and he finds himself surrounded by beings whose social behaviour and codes are very unlike, and sometimes even offensive to, his own. And this is what makes migrants such important figures because roots, language and social norms have been three of the most important parts of the definition of what it is to be a human being.' (277-278)

Diasporas are haunted by sense of loss and loneliness and feel inferior to the people of alien land. Their dreams of dollars, better base of belonging, and wide range of reputation and sense of superiority are broken in the willed home. Rushdie remarks: 'Writers in my position, exiles, immigrants or expatriates are haunted by some sense of loss, some large to reclaim to look back, even at the risk of being mutated into pillars of salt'. (10) Lahiri deals with multi-cultural society as a diasporic writer. She makes efforts for her native identity and tries to develop a new identity in an adopted Anglo-American land. In such clash of cultures, she finds an immigrant's dislocation and displacement. The sense of belonging to a particular place and culture and simultaneously being an outsider to it forms an inner tension in her characters.

Diasporic Indian writers search the multi-dimensional anxieties of 'emigre' life. Diverse identities interact and create a crisis of identity. Subhendu Mund writes: 'For various reasons, the present diaspora tends to alienate the immigrants from their roots in spite of themselves, compelling them to live between two worlds: the imaginary and the real, the past and the present, and the virtual and the material.' (108)

In *The Namesake*, Ashima Bhaduri is betrothed to Ashoke Ganguli of Alipore. Ashoke shifts to Boston for Ph.D in fiber optics. Ashoke bears nostalgic mood and wants to return to India to enjoy Bengali lifestyle and culture. He feels homeless and helpless. He is dissatisfied with alien culture and likes to accept homeland culture. Lahiri describes Ashima's

immigrant experiences, the clash of cultures in the United States and her non-acceptance by the American society. Ashima is the most diasporic character in the novel. There is no space for her to assert herself in America. She is uncomfortable with the American ambience. Lahiri writes: 'Ashima has been consuming this concoction throughout her pregnancy, a humble approximation of the snack sold for pennies on Calcutta sidewalks and on railway platforms throughout India, spilling from newspaper cones'. (1)

Ganguli observes the Bengali rituals and ceremonies in the U.S.A. and they are 'humble approximations' of the originals. The practices of the indigenous rituals abroad indicate the schism in the diasporic psyche- the split between present reality and an attachment for past tradition. Ashima is upset and experiences homesick as she is spatially and emotionally dislocated from her parental home. According to Barh Avatar, 'Home' is 'a mythic place of desire' (192) in an immigrant's imagination and 'all diasporas are differentiated, heterogeneous, contested spaces'. (ibidem 84). Ashima is caught between India and America. She is at home nowhere. She inhabits mentally somewhere in a 'liminal' 'in-between' terrain.

Ashima passes her days in nostalgia in a Boston apartment. There is no one to console and comfort her during the hard time of pregnancy. No doubt, motherhood is glorious for a woman. But loneliness and strange environment in the foreign land destroy such feelings of the migrant. In America, Ashima awaits her baby's birth and thinks about the different ways in which babies are born in America and in India. Lahiri writes: 'Ashima thinks it's strange that her child will be born in a place most people enter either to suffer or to die.... In India, she thinks to herself, women go home to their parents to give birth, away from husbands and in-laws and household cares, retreating briefly to childhood when the baby arrives.' (4) Ashima feels abnormal in Cambridge. She is very thoughtful of attaining motherhood in a foreign land. Lahiri observes: 'That it was happening so far from home, unmonitored and unobserved by those she loved, had made

it more miraculous still. But she is terrified to raise a child in a country where she is related to no one, where she knows so little, where life seems so tentative and spare'. (6) During the period of emotional storm, Ashima is comforted by the *Desh* magazine that 'she'd brought to read on her plane ride to Boston and still can't bring herself to throw away.' (6)

In America, Ashima does not possess filial warmth and approaches a hospital for child-birth. She forms a mental image of her parent's flat in Calcutta and counts Indian time there. The victims of diaspora remember the 'original home'. Home refers to security, love, care and a sense of belonging. It is connected with a person's identity. Migrants attain home through imagination. About Indian migrants, Rushdie writes that 'our physical alienation from India almost inevitably means that we will not be capable of reclaiming precisely the thing that was lost, that we will, in short, create fictions, not actual cities or villages, but invisible ones, imaginary homelands, Indias of the mind'. (10)

The diasporic tension is spatial (torn between nations/cultures) and temporal (split between the past and the present). Homi Bhabha explains the pain involved in the process of remembrance: 'remembering is never a quiet act of introspection or retrospection. It is a painful remembering, a putting together of the dismembered past to make sense of the trauma of the present.' (Cited in Gandhi, 9)

According to the Indian custom, Ashima's grandmother selects a name for the child of Ashima and Ashoke. The letter containing the name from India does not reach in the proper place in America. The imaginative space created by the lost letter is emblematic of the 'in-betweenness' of the diasporic condition. The American child authority does not accept a *daknam* (pet name) for the baby's discharge. The hospital compiler of birth certificates Mr. Wilcox requires an official name. Ashoke names the child as Gogol to fulfill the requirement and to get rid of the dilemma. The episode reveals Ashima's intense desire to stick to the convention of the homeland and she is grieved for his failure to do so. Lahiri sketches the emotional state of Ashima when Bengali fellow-

expatriates visit them: 'For as grateful as she feels for the company of the Nandis and Dr. Gupta, these acquaintances are only substitutes for the people who really ought to be surrounding them. Without a single grandparent or parent or uncle or aunt at her side, the baby's birth, like most everything else in America, feels somehow haphazard, only half true. As she strokes and suckles and studies her son she can't help but pity him. She has never known of a person entering the world so alone, so deprived'. (24-25)

All cultures and identities are based on exclusionist practices. Unfortunately, some distant cultures are ignorant of the practices and customs of other cultures. Consequently, any possibility of transaction is denied. In *The Namesake*, Gogol goes to kindergarten and he has to bear a new name. The principal, Cadence Lapidus does not follow the difference between 'a good name' (*bhalo nam* in Bengali, *schooler nam*) and 'call name' (*dak nam*). This is not similar to 'nick name'. The principal remarks:

"I'm not sure I follow you, Mr. Ganguli. Do you mean that Nikhil is a middle name? or a nick name? Many of the children go by nicknames here. On this form there is a space."

Ashoke replies:

'No no, it's not a middle name', Ashoke says. He is beginning to lose patience. 'He has no middle name. No nickname. The boy's good name- his school name, is Nikhil.' (Lahiri, 58-59)

Representations of cultural encounters discourage the proposed sites of unity of cultures of India and America (east and west) and encourage polaric positions.

Ashima is nostalgic about the past and considers American experience as alienating. She feels loneliness and engages herself in reading Bengali poems, stories and articles. She lives alone in the house with the newborn baby in the absence of Ashoke and moves to supermarket of Cambridge where Americans are unfamiliar to her. In home, she is disappointed for not getting mails from Calcutta and remembers her ailing grandmother.

Ashima lives in Boston and Ashoke migrates to a university town outside Boston. He is hired as an assistant professor of electrical engineering at the university. Ashoke's migration is drastic and painful for her. Her reaction is very poignant: 'For being a foreigner, Ashima is beginning to realise, is a sort of lifelong pregnancy – a perpetual wait, a constant burden, a continuous feeling out of sorts. It is an ongoing responsibility, a parenthesis in what had once been ordinary life, only to discover that previous life has vanished, replaced by something more complicated and demanding. Like pregnancy, being a foreigner, Ashima believes, is something that elicits the same curiosity from strangers, the same combination of pity and respect.'(49-50)

Indian immigrants are attached to their Indian culture, native people, native gods and goddesses, native dresses, language and literature. The Bengalis in America observe their cultural activities with zeal. They enjoy cultural resilience with other Bengalis on family's get-together and feel at home in the foreign land. Lahiri reports: 'The families drop by one another's homes on Sunday afternoons. They drink tea with sugar and evaporated milk and eat shrimp cutlets fried in saucepeans. They sit in circles on the floor, singing songs by Nazarul and Tagore, passing a thick yellow colourbound book of lyrics among them as Dilip Nandi plays the harmonium. They argue riotously over the films of Ritwik Ghatak versus those of Satyajit Roy. The CPIM versus the Congress Party, North Calcutta versus South. For hours they argue about the politics of America, a country in which none of them is eligible to vote'. (38). Ganguli's get-together in America with Bengali families during naming and anaprasan ceremonies, birthdays, and marriages shows their deep attachment to home culture. Cohen observes that immigrants' 'adherence to a diasporic community is demonstrated by an acceptance of an inescapable link with past migration history.' (ix) Bengali immigrants take abroad with them their 'beliefs, traditions, customs, behaviors and values.' (McLeod, 211). They make visits to India to revitalise their cultural built up. They make efforts for emancipation from dislocation,

displacement and disorientation. The home culture is a shaping force for them and acts as an elemental force for their biological and spiritual growth.

Indian immigrants in America are divided souls oscillating between their loyalty to America and India. They are in dilemma while choosing the baby's names. Names indicate the cultural identity of migrants. In American context, many Indian parents consult books namely *Finding the Perfect Name*, *Alternative Baby Names*, *The Idiot's Guide to Naming Your Baby* and *What Not to Naming Your Baby* for the names of the babies. Many think that parents should not force a name on the child. They feel that 'human beings should be allowed to name themselves when they turn eighteen.' (Lahiri, 245) In Indian context parents wish that the name of the child should express one's character and it must 'signify a virtue : Patience, Faith, Chastity.' (Lahiri, 243)

The first generation immigrants are proud of their Indian culture. But the second generation immigrants pass remarks about its aberrations and deviations. The former are caught in a cultural mess due to the contamination with multi-cultural beliefs and glorification of home culture. The second generation as America Born Confused Deshis (ABCDs) are emotionally dislocated from the home culture. The former have cultural disruption and a 'double-consciousness' whereas the latter are more conflicted persons and bear a cultural eruption in 'false-consciousness'. Gogol is brought up in America. He does not want to go to his hometown (Calcutta). He considers India as a country having uncomfortable environment and surroundings. To Gogol and his sister Sonia, relations are not close to them. Lahiri observes: 'Gogol and Sonia know these people but they do not feel close to them as their parents do.' (81)

The second generations Bengalis do not follow the cultural beliefs of India. They criticise Hindu Fundamentalism, poverty of people, beggars. They celebrate Christmas, like continental food like other Americans. They are conflicted in America's hybrid culture. They practice American way of life

in friendship and love – affairs. Gogol had affairs with many American girls, Ruth and Maxine. Ashima is deeply shocked while mourning her husband's death whereas Maxine laughs at her. She does not understand the intensity of pain. Gogol hoped to marry Maxine. But she gets engaged to another person with an encouragement from her mother. He marries Maushumi to fulfill 'a collective deep seated desire because they're both Bengalis'. (Lahiri, 224). But Maxine has affairs and sexual engagement with Dimitri. Gogol is filled with shame and a sense of failure. Gogol's unsuccessful love affair with Ruth and Maxine results from conflict between two alien cultures. His disconnection with Maxine is mainly due to his attachment to familial values and filial obligation. In an extended sense, his marriage with Maushumi breaks off owing to cultural conflicts. Lahiri describes the trap of Gogol in cultural dilemma. He experiences the feeling of 'in-betweenness' and belonging to 'no where'. He crosses two cultures and suffers from the loss of roots and social dislocation.

Ashima is shocked for her husband's death. The flat at Pemberton road in America is sold and she decides to live six month in the States and six months in India. She becomes without borders, a resident of everywhere and nowhere. Her world is broken to pieces: 'For thirty- three years she missed her life in India. Now she will miss her job at the library, the women with whom she's worked. She will miss throwing parties..... she will miss the country in which she had grown to know and love her husband. Though his ashes have been scattered into the Ganges, it is here, in this house and in this town, that he will continue to dwell in her mind'. (Lahiri, 279)

The diasporic dilemma of Ashoke, Ashima and Gogol focuses this intense sense of loss, pain and nostalgia for the native land, the people and culture. *The Namesake* unfolds the chief characters' feelings of alienation and deep sense of despair. The novelist also highlights the unfortunate consequences of cultural differences. She puts forward the opinion that antagonism of cultures should be abolished and

mutual accommodation and cross- fertilisation of cultures should be encouraged. The nourishment of cultural identities should be accomplished through hybridisation and integration of cultures and not through appropriation or assimilation of one culture into another.

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## The Small World of Conferences: A Reading of David Lodge's *Small World*

Shailesh Singh\*

David Lodge is a distinguished British novelist and a literary critic. Before he retired, he taught English literature at the University of Birmingham for twenty-seven years. He has also edited anthologies of literary criticism. Given his considerable accomplishments to date which include awards, prizes, honours and appreciation, it seems appropriate to explore one of his novels, *Small World* (1984), which thematizes academic conferences in a comic-satirical mode. Academic conferences now figure as a prominent feature in higher education - regardless of their quality or number. Lodge has exposed this enclosed world to comic ridicule and satire in his novel *Small World* which forms part of a trilogy of campus novels, the other two being *Changing Places* (1975) and *Nice Work* (1988).

*Small World* is sequentially the seventh novel by Lodge. It was inspired by his own travels around the world to conferences on many topics. The details of the novel are definitely fictional but they are, at the same time, based on the author's own experience of academe and the outside world. For the reason that he knew the academic world very well from the inside, all of his literary works including *Small World* are largely based on personal experience. He has explained that he begins a novel when he realizes that part of his "own experience has a thematic interest and unity which might be expressed through a fictional story." (Write On, 72). He further adds that he is able to write about the academic and real world for one reason. He explains:

I have always regarded myself as having a foot in both camps- the world of academic scholarship, and higher education, and the world of literary culture at large, in

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which books are written, published, discussed and consumed for profit and pleasure in all senses of those words. (After Bakhtin, 7)

*Small World* retains some characters and settings from the previous novel, *Changing Places* (1975). The Prologue to *Small World* begins with the famous opening lines of Chaucer's General Prologue to the *Canterbury Tales*. The author goes on to observe that the present day equivalent to Chaucer's pilgrims is academics going to conferences : 'The modern conference resembles the pilgrimage of medieval Christendom in that it allows the participants to indulge themselves in all the pleasures and diversions of travel while appearing to be austere bent on self improvement' (*Small World*, xi).

*Small World* is subtitled 'An Academic Romance', and this phrase is explained in the epigraph from Nathaniel Hawthorne: 'When a writer calls his work a Romance, it need hardly be observed that he wishes to claim a certain latitude, both as to its fashion and material, which he would not have felt himself entitled to assume had he professed to be writing a Novel'. The novel opens in familiar realistic manner, though, at a dull and ill-attended conference of English Lecturers at Rummidge. Among other things, the novel has some familiar figures from *Changing Places*: Philip Swallow, Morris Zapp, Hilary and Desiree. Lodge highlights the painful, dull and corrosive boredom which attends the lecture-session in a conference:

Persee yawned and shifted his weight from one buttock to another in his seat at the back of the lecture-room. He could not see the faces of many of his colleagues but as far as could be judged from their postures, most of them were as disengaged from the discourse as himself. Some were leaning as far back as their seats allowed, staring vacantly at the ceiling, others were slumped forwards onto the desks that separated each row, resting their chins on folded arms, others again were sprawled sideways over two or three seats, with their legs crossed and arms dangling limply to the floor. In the third row a man was

surreptitiously doing The Times crossword and at least three people appeared to be asleep. (*Small World*, 13)

After the opening in dismal Rummidge, the story takes off in every sense, and becomes global. Many more characters appear, high-flying academics from different countries, hastening to or from conferences in all parts of the world. The story moves forward with the rapid movement and quick alternations of scene that characterise Lodge's comic fiction. Lodge has stated, 'As I worked at *Small World* I became more and more interested in the romance idea, weaving in as many romance motifs as I could, and I very deliberately exploited the narrative codes of mystery and suspense. I wanted to have a lot of enigmas and moments of uncertainty, and if you have a good many characters you can naturally create suspense by leaving one character and moving to another.' (Haffenden, 162)

Indeed, Lodge sounds earnest as the novel, *Small World* enacts ideas about the nature of narrative that the novelist was interested in as a critic; despite the prevailing air of fantasy and mystery it also contains a substantial amount of travelogue-fiction, with episodes in New York, Tokyo, Lausanne, Turkey, Hawaii, Israel, South Korea. It is worthwhile to mention in this context that critics such as Bernard Bergonzi and Merritt Mosley have highlighted the romance motif in the novel, drawing parallels with Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*, a remarkable romance. (Bergonzi, 20-21. Mosley, 82-83). Further, Mosley points out the role of coincidence, which figures as a key feature in romance, thus, giving the subtitle 'An Academic Romance' its meaning and significance. He observes:

In *Small World* the coincidences have a different effect. They do, of course, remind us of the authorial role behind the plot; but they also have a more important structural role to play. This is a novel with a very large cast of characters and an extraordinary amount of detail about the world of international academia, writing, publishing and reviewing. The only way to make it a manageable world as well as a small one is to interrelate characters

and details by what we might call over-determination. (Mosley, 83)

The academic world is a small one as there are only a small number of people in it, or in its upper echelons. Apart from coincidence, it is a comment on the narrowness of the academic upper reaches that these superstars (distinguished professors and novelists) know each other. The central focus of the smallness is the UNESCO chair in literary criticism, an immensely desirable position which is to be filled on the recommendation of famous literary critic Arthur Kingfisher. It will carry a tax-free salary of \$ 100,000, will not require its occupant to move anywhere, since it is a notional chair, will carry no duties and, of course, will make the person who wins it the most prestigious professor of literature in the world. The pursuit of the grail occupies most of the upper-level academics in the novel, including Morris Zapp; Fulvia Morgana, an Italian Marxist critic; Michel Tardieu, a French narratologist; Siegfried von Turpitz, a Sinister German reception-theorist; and Rudyard Parkinson, a Cambridge fogey. In a typical turn, Philip Swallo's name appears on the short-list, though this is a manoeuvre against Morris Zapp.

Although the contestants expend enormous energy and anxiety on this pursuit, it is hardly of tremendous importance. The salary for the said chair might have appeared a much too large sum to academics, it was otherwise not a big amount. Lodge seems to make an ironic presentation of the academic world in which bitter disputes are triggered for a small stake. In his critical book *Write On*, Lodge has put it: "to the worldly eye the issues which preoccupy academics often seem comically disproportionate to the passions they arouse." (*Write On*, 171) And the UNESCO chair is, arguably, small prize for the ordeals - the conniving, the cringing, the bootlicking - which people will undergo in order to gain it. In this way, this world is small in another way.

It is obvious, then, that *Small World* has a dual focus. One of its major subjects is the small world of high-level academic travel, conferencing, and power-mongering, and the related worlds (also small) of book-publishing and book-

reviewing. The other focus is on the individual quest, the quester in this case being Persse McGarrigle. The first body of material, the broad, comic, satiric view of the small world, is driven primarily by the drive for power, only secondarily on the drive for sex. These two are the determinants of action in the academy, according to Lodge (*Write On*, 170). Both these drives bring out the quest motif of the novel as Michel Tardieu remarks much later: "Each of us is a subject in search of an object." (*Small World*, 200). This gives the organizing framework for the story (or stories since the novel has many sub-plots), but it also allows Lodge to explore something more serious.

The first of these drives dominates the first part of the book, using ironic juxtapositions and rich coincidences to expose the human frailties of the academics. It is romantic in its freedom from the laws of probability which would otherwise rule out the extensive play of coincidences; it is romantic in being plot-rich, character-diffuse, multifarious and multifoliate; and it is romantic, finally, in exploiting very cleverly the parallel which Lodge has noted between modern academic travellers and medieval pilgrims. He has explained:

The modern conference resembles the pilgrimage of medieval Christendom in that it allows the participants to indulge themselves in all the pleasures and diversions of travel while appearing to be austere bent on self-improvement. (*Small World*, 1)

However, one may accept this with a proviso because it is really more than this. The conferees are all pilgrims or questers. Their quests (pilgrimages by implication) are, as the above analogy might suggest, very much products of mixed motives, but all are in quest of something. For the highly influential and the distinguished academics like Morris Zapp and Falvia Morgana, the quest is for fame and the gratification of their life-long ambition for international renown and the dignity which accompanies it. For lightweights such as Rodney Wainwright and Philip Swallow, the quest is for occasional escape from tedium, for a momentary relish of the world of human flesh.

The quest motif runs throughout the novel as a constant. It helps Lodge to organize the broad satire of academia, swinging between comic irony and satire. Mosley remarks that "This novel far more than *Changing Places* approaches the scope of a comic anatomy of the academic world." (Mosley, 85) It is filled with characters from the academic and literary worlds, almost all of whom are quirky. They figure in odd small snapshots; Felix Skinner, publisher of the several of the writers in *Small World*, including Philip Swallow's Hazlitt and the Common Reader, discovers in unusual circumstances (while seducing his secretary) in the storeroom that Philip Swallow's book has never been reviewed because the review copies were never sent out. It is worth noting that the same thing happened to Lodge's novel *The British Museum is Falling Down*, though the discovery was less sensational. Unsurprisingly, Felix attempts to repair the situation as he solicits reviews for an outdated book. He also tries to engineer favourable notices. Even more interesting is Rudyard Parkinson's decision to use a review of Swallow's book in the Times Literary Supplement as a weapon against Morris Zapp's claims to the UNESCO chair. Thus he accidentally elevates Swallow over and above himself into the candidacy. All these form part of a slyly funny view of the literary world and its complicated moves and countermoves.

However, Philip Swallow is not the only singularly comic character. Other characters appear as variations on the same theme, though with differing personalities and pursuits within the academic world. Lodge has purposively picked up several characters from his earlier academic novel, *Changing Places*. Howard Ringbaum is such an example. He is an unpleasantly competitive man who destroyed his chances for tenure at Euphoric State when he claimed while playing a game of Humiliation started by Philip Swallow, that he had never read Hamlet. Now, emerging from the wilderness (Southern Illinois University) to attend Morris Zapp's conference in Tel Aviv, he is fiercely competitive still, but now in the sexual sphere. He is determined to belong to the "Mile High Club, an exclusive confraternity of men who have achieved sexual

congress while airborne” (Small World, 90). He pesters his wife Thelma to help him qualify. Later in Israel he demands sex in a cable car at Masada.

The comic edge of the satire is perceptible through another character, Robin Dempsey of the Department of English at Rummidge University. Now he has left Rummidge and moved to a new university in Darlington, where he has taken up computer assisted analysis of style. He has coded all of Ronald Forbisher’s work, for instance, and discovered among other traits that Forbisher’s favourite word is ‘grease’. This reminds us of a satirical statement by Lodge made elsewhere: ‘the most frequently recurring word in a given text is not necessarily the most significant word. If it were, computers could perform the initial critical task for us.’ (Language of Fiction, 85)

Thus, Robin Dempsey exemplifies the failure of critical intelligence with his inability to distinguish between computers and human beings. Hence, we are not surprised to find him spending all his time confessing his problems and needs to an interactive computer programme which (rigged by the technician) tells him to kill himself.

But more than these figures, Philip Swallow becomes the centre of comedy and satire. Not unlike his presence in *Changing Places*, he is again cast as an academic lightweight with almost no solid accomplishment. His approach to literature lacks the rigour contemporary scholarship demands. He extols nothing more than a vague but enthusiastic love of literature and unapologetically invokes the unfashionable rubrics of great literature as the repository of great truths, of great writers as persons of genius and wisdom, of literary meaning as authorially intended, and of the critic’s job as an obligation to “unlock the drawers, blow away the dust, and bring out the treasures into the light of day” (*Small World*, 317).

It is not that the Philip Swallow of *Small World* is precisely the same figure he was in *Changing Places*. “I built up his character a little”, Lodge admitted (Haffenden, 164) Now

older Philip is also more confident - a development one colleague attributes to the affair with Desiree. Thanks largely to attention; he has assumed the position of English chair (and professional rank) at Rummidge. He has published a modest book on William Hazlitt which has been referred to earlier and Morris Zapp calls him “totally brainless” (Small World, 235). What is more, he has entered the British Council circuit so that he often travels to distant lands to lecture on the love of literature or on Hazlitt (or on both). Thus, his academic accomplishments render him a laughing stock in the academic world which is heavily inclined towards specialization in a specific area of literature. Nevertheless, he remains a potential candidate for the kind of advancement the UNESCO chair represents. Of course, Parkinson first sees Philip as a way of promoting his own candidacy. In order to subvert Morris Zapp, Parkinson writes an essay titled “The English School of Criticism” which is published in the *Times Literary Supplement*. He makes Philip and his book the centre of this essay which discredits contemporary theory. But the creature outstrips the creator in this instance, as a UN official misinterprets the motives behind the TLS article and leaks to the press that Philip Swallow is the leading candidate for the UNESCO chair, to Philip’s puzzlement and the other candidates’ consternation.

In fact, Philip’s rapid rise comes up as one of the many opportunities to satirize the global campus. International conference hoppers are shown as generally intent on everything but scholarly concerns - and mostly on the conviviality and riotous escape from ordinary existence afforded by fancy hotels, rich cuisine, heavy partying, and late sleeping, usually paid for by a university or granting agency. Not surprisingly, since they are freed temporarily from domestic constraints, the participants are hardly averse to sexual adventuring. As Lodge observes elsewhere, “It is precisely the tension between professional self-display and erotic opportunity, between the ambition to impress many and the desire to impress one, that, among other things, makes the conference such a fascinating human spectacle,

and such rich material for fiction.” (*Write On*, 71)

Besides Philip Swallow, other characters illustrate the more common human frailties of academics, and of course of everybody else: hypocrisy, self-absorption, laziness, careerism, insincerity, sexual infidelity, ingratitude. Lodge, in fact, does not seem to deliberately assign these faults exclusively to academia or to suggest that these weaknesses are more rampant there than in other areas of human life. He is rather amused by them, and is largely tolerant of their human weaknesses. The academic world may be small but it has the full range of human weaknesses. However, despite the smallness of the academic world, *Small World* is a significantly different novel. The globalization of campus is a crucial aspect of this book. As a critic has remarked,

It depicts not simply a later period in the lives of academic characters encountered earlier but a strikingly different academic culture. Here the local campus communities in which Swallow, Zapp, and their colleagues worked have been replaced by a single global campus that knows neither national nor linguistic boundaries. A worldwide marketplace of ideas has supplanted the various national ones as the site for agency and exchange. (Bruce K. Martin, 40)

This observation is amply substantiated by Morris Zapp’s remark in the novel: “Scholars don’t have to work in the same institution to interact, nowadays: they call each other up, or they meet at international conferences” (*Small World*, 43). But this disclaimer hardly alleviates the smallness of the academic conferences with the maximum participation of a few hundred delegates. Most of the conferences, though fictive, depicted in *Small World*, focus on literary theory which itself has limited followers in the form of critics and readers. Aside from this narrow and small world of academia, *Small World* derives its interest from the inclusion of subplot on romance at the centre of which stand Persse McGarrigle and his pursuit of Angelica Pabst, a quest which remains a mere quest till the end of the novel. *Small World* might be called an achievement of sorts as it has gained an

appreciative international readership. It is rich in fun, comedy and satire. Lodge has nicely captured the spirits of the academic world and romance bringing them together to relieve the reader of the tedium experienced by the sameness of conferences.

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## Stages of Initiation in U.R. Anantha Murthy's *Samskara*

*S.Chitra\**

U.R. Ananthamurthy, (1932-2014), a renowned Kannada writer, is one of the most important representatives of the 'New Movement' in the literature of the Kannada language. He has published five novels, one play, eight short story collections, three collections of poetry and eight essays. His works have been translated into several Indian and European languages. His writing, generally known for its humanity, boldly questions the cultural norms of decadent Hinduism, especially Brahminism. His best known work, widely acclaimed and also much criticized of the religious novels of the 60's is '*Samskara*' (1966), made into an award-winning film in 1970. The novel divided into three parts and set in a decaying Brahmin colony in the south Indian village of Karnataka, adopts the traditional pattern of three-part rituals as Question, Delay and Answer through three stages of initiation. Contrary to the four stage divisions of life in Hindu samskara, the novel projects the central figure's initiation happening in three stages. Firstly, the novel opens with the death of an anti-brahminical Brahmin, Naranappa, whose death rites' performance becomes the central question. Secondly, finding an answer becomes the responsibility of an ascetic Vedanta Praneshacharya, 'the Crest Jewel of Vedic Learning', as he is reverentially addressed. During the process of finding an answer which delays, Praneshacharya experiences life by passing through an ordinary world in counter to his past. Thirdly, the answer is found in his re-birth and transformation of self. Usually a Brahmin is endowed with the second or spiritual birth during Upananyana, the sacred thread ceremony, which is one of

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the twelve samskaras or purifactory rites. In the novel, the spiritual rebirth of Praneshacharya, in its real sense, happens the moment he sheds his Brahmanical austerity by encountering an ordinary life experience with a low-caste woman. Thus, the paper attempts to trace the ritualistic journey of Praneshacharya through the life-cycle ceremony of separation, transition and re-incorporation. In fact, how does the central figure's internal conflicts result in the discovery of self, would be critically analyzed by reworking through the Hindu myths and traditional symbols.

### **Introduction:**

The cycle of birth, death and rebirth not new to Hinduism and literary studies, this theme is reworked by U.R. Ananthamurthy within a specific cultural context. The novel's plot set in a decaying Brahmin colony in a south Indian village captures the decadent Brahminism and its lost glory in the lucid three-parts. Opening with the death of Naranappa, an anti-brahminical Brahmin, the central event shifts the focus of the plot toward his parallel character Praneshacharya, the scholar and ascetic, only to strip the community of its hypocrisies and pretensions. According to Milan S Sharma, "the sudden death of Naranappa brings the real examination of Acharya's ideals, learning and wisdom." (Sharma 187). The crucial question revolves around who is a Brahmin and what is his samskara? Does it refer to one who follows the rituals mindlessly or one who brings reforms by being a revolutionary rebel or is it a sham? What's the role of compassion, understanding and being a human in the circumscribed society that is breaking under the weight of its own rigid tradition? The paper attempts to trace the process of purification by closely examining the conflicting thoughts and actions in ritualistic life as experienced by the protagonist.

According to Hindu Dharma, there are four life-stages such as Bramhacharya, Grahastha, Vanaprastha and Sanyasa. Pranesacharya, the Crest-Jewel of Vedic Learning, has earned this title by studying the scriptures in Kashi (Benares). This middle-aged man, revered by the Madhva Brahmin community of Durvasapura as their local pundit

and guru, falters from this state to realize his real self. Hindu Dharma has divided the life of a Brahman in such a way that he is gradually prepared for the renunciation through the process of detached-attachment. Undermining this philosophy, Praneshacharya completes his studies in the Bramacharya stage and enters the next level of becoming a Grahastha by deliberately marrying an invalid woman. Thereby he attempts to skip the experiences of the second stage, continues to be a celibate to enter the third stage. In the physical world as a married man he leads the life of an ascetic in a detached manner in order to attain salvation without falling prey to carnal desires. In fact, he is proud of his self-sacrifice and is ready to undergo any test on the path to salvation. Unfortunately, the void and emptiness of his unfulfilled desires devours Acharya at an unexpected moment only to consume his body and self and makes him realize the ordinary world.

The death of Naranappa, a victim of plague brings alive the issues pertaining to the miniscule village society of India such as casteism, untouchability, and suppressed feelings. The plague symbolizes the destruction of a rigidly ritualistic society and the birth of a radical transformation in realism. The test appears in the death and in the question of who should perform the funeral rites, so that the corpse can be disposed. The debate poses more pertinent queries:

Is Naranappa, a Brahman at all, for he didn't live the life of a Brahmin. Sadly, "Not a human soul there felt a pang at Naranappa's death except an obscure fear and an unclean anxiety. Alive, Naranappa was an enemy; dead, a preventer of meals; as a corpse, a problem, a nuisance." (Ananthamurthy 3).

For, when alive, Naranappa left his legally wedded Brahmin wife to live with a low-caste woman in the agrahara; he drank, ate meat with Muslim friends and shattered the beliefs of the community. Yet, he was not excommunicated and the fellow members of the small community lived in fear of his abuses. Thus Part One of the novel exposes the problem as well as the attempts made by Praneshacharya to find a

suitable answer which is elusive and gets delayed. He could not get any direct answer either from the vedas or scriptures. "...the Book of Dharma had no solution to the present dilemma." (Ananthamurthy 46). However, Acharya's consciousness of his renowned title and the necessity to safeguard his good name in the eyes of the community drove him sleepless: "Whatever one loses, one shouldn't lose one's good name, it can never be retrieved....Even in this situation, thinking only of his reputation!" (ibid). His ordinary self yearns for name and fame contrary to the objectivity of a refined intellectual. This weakness in him is going to give way as he proceeds to find an answer. The weight of the problem at hand gets complicated when Naranappa's mistress, Chandri submits the gold ornaments to meet the expenses of the rites. To remain just in handing over the responsibility of performing the rites to a person who is not greedy, Praneshacharya seeks the divine help. Crossing the stream he reaches the temple of Lord Maruti to resolve the ordeal. Unable to derive solution from the divine source, Acharya returns helplessly and on the way in his physical encounter with Chandri, Naranappa's mistress, Acharya finds an answer for his life.

Maheshwari states, "Samskara means religious purifactory rites and ceremonies for sanctifying the body, mind and intellect of an individual so that he may become a full-fledged member of the community." (as cited in *Journal of Culture, Literature and Media Studies* 186). In connection with this, the first step of initiation that qualifies a Brahmin boy to learn the Vedas by heart is the Vedic ceremony of Upanayana. It is an elaborated ritual in which the Brahmin boys are elevated to the twice-born status of 'dvujan' by investing them with a sacred thread consisting of three strands of cotton worn over their left shoulders. Pranesacharya's attainment of such qualification and scholarly wisdom as per the expectations of the samskara proves to be an empty ritual for his second or spiritual birth happens much later in life. So far he has been living in the physical world yet beyond it; now, after his union with

Chandri, his transition commences. His conflicting thoughts and actions to maintain the ritualistic life shatters into pieces thus leaving him down-to-earth to be realistic. For instance, Praneshacharya's narration of stories from Puranas, filled with sensual description drove adults like Shripathi to consummate their burning desires with the low-caste women of the village. Yet, Acharya could restrain his emotions as he was under the false impression that he had crossed the stage of Grahastha unpolluted by desires. This misconception kept him above the other ordinary selves until he lost himself in the folds of Chandri by experiencing a woman. From that moment, Acharya's ritualistic journey in search of realism begins with an internal conflict. From external conflict, the plot subtly shifts its focus to the inner conflict resulting in separation, transition and re-incorporation, steps crucial for the discovery of self.

The irony is that Acharya, in his effort to resolve the ordeal of Naranappa's death rites, becomes one with the dead man's anti-brahminical practice. In the shoes of Naranappa, he is transfixed and the reality makes him reflect on the life of his Gurukula friend, Mahabala, who in Kashi fell for a prostitute. In opposing their ways, he becomes one with them and comprehends the reality of life. When he returns to Durvasapura to confess the truth, plague has already taken toll of the life of his wife and the village is deserted except dead rats and birds of prey. The members of the community had already left the village to seek an answer from the Guru in the Mutt. He cremates his wife and leaves the village initiating his separation from the community. This journey mixed with the fear of the familiar social eye's recognition of him and his fallen state, the haunting memories of the moment and the yearning desire for Chandri tears him into pieces, driving him to "Escape this ambiguous Trishanku state" (Ananthamurthy 101).

As he walked aimlessly, he met Putta, a character counter to his past. Unable to separate himself from the company of Putta, Acharya reaches Melige and attends the temple's car festival. Throughout the journey, his mind is

restless conflicting over his actions. Wherever he goes, there is a fear that people might recognize him and would question about the Agrahara. Acharya feels that his actions have turned the Brahmin lives upside down and he has shattered their faith on him. He ponders about his return and the confession to make: "What shall I tell them? I slept with Chandri. I felt disgust for my wife. I drank coffee in a common shop in a fair. I went to see a cock-fight. I lusted after Padmavati. Even at a time of mourning and pollution, I sat in a temple-line with Brahmins and ate a holy feast....Not a confession of wrongs done. Not a repentance for sins committed. Just plain truth. The truth of my inner life." (131-32). He draws parallel for his condition from mythologies that of Vyasa and Vishwamitra, and wonders how the sages would have resolved it? Concluding that everyone's experience is unique and individualistic, Acharya decides to face the fellow-brahmins and proceeds toward Durvasapura.

The inner struggle and conflict results in Acharya's transition from beyond everyone to that of an ordinary man and prepares him for the reincorporation with the community. The novel ends without any conclusion and the resolution remains incomplete. Though the novel opens with the problem of performing the death rites, it diffuses into nothing when Chandri cremates Naranappa's body with the help of Muslim friends. The dimension of the problem changes toward Praneshacharya, who passes through the phases of question, delay and answer to discover his buried inner self. Ultimately, the process of purification that Praneshacharya undergoes, not through rites but by means of real-life experiences, shifts him from ritualism to realism.

### **Conclusion:**

To sum up, the central figure Acharya's self-denial in the second stage of life by marrying an invalid wife, only arrests him in the first stage as a celibate student. Unaware of it, he believes that he has progressed to the third (forest-dweller) or even to the fourth (ascetic renouncer). His failure to take lessons from the life of Mahabala and Naranappa is evident in his marriage with an invalid woman, which would

only cripple him in all the pursuits. Despite all his virtues, the Acharya does not have the virtue of living out fully his present stage. As a result, his “sense of dharma had to be undone and remade by it”. (Ananthamurthy 146).

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### Where Literature Speaks History: Unearthing Secrets in *Ice Candy Man*

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Bapsi Sidhwa’s magnum opus *Ice-Candy Man* is a seminal work in the history of partition novels. It presents the plights and horror of the most unfortunate event in the history of Indian subcontinent—the partition. *Ice-Candy Man*, also known as *Cracking India* was published in 1988. This novel has also contributed to the plot of Deepa Mehta’s successful movie *Earth 1947*. *Ice-Candy Man* presents the trajectories of inhuman violence, communal conflict, selfishness and avarice. Its major plot circumnavigates the partition of the sub-continent into two parts: India and Pakistan. The novelist Bapsi Sidhwa was eight years old at the time of partition. She was a child witness of the partition and of the traumatic conditions of post-partition period and the brutal impact, it had on the lives of people. In the novel, the story is seen by the blameless eyes of an eight year old girl: Lenny. She, being polio stricken, moves in a limited arena, accompanied by her ayah, Shanta, who is stunning and attracts towards her lot of male attention. On her regular visits to the Queen’s park, Lenny observes a gradual transformation in the attitudes of citizens around her due to growing feelings of communalism in the environment. The novel is full with incidents of communal hatred, ruthless assassination and enormous obliteration of certain section of people.

Lenny, the protagonist of the novel, is a polio-stricken Parsee girl. The portrayal of Lenny and many a patterns of narration are quite interesting as suggesting the layers of meaning—better to say the first meaning, the second meaning,

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and the third meaning of the sad event of humanity-the partition. Partition was a major catalyst behind the creation of *Ice Candy Man*. Andrew Whitehead observes: "partition has proved a remarkable spur to literary endeavor. How could it be otherwise? Several nations are born amid turbulence and turmoil...if little else of value has come out of those dark and dispiriting days...the corpus of compelling writing is some slender consolation". Bapsi Sidhwa herself believes that, "literature can dig into painful, memory and try to make sense of it more successfully than history can." Lenny is just a passive protagonist. The protagonist in her looks at her inability to look beyond her illness. There is an interesting turn in her life with the character of Ayah, who is her Hindu caretaker. Ayah takes her on a tour of Waris Road; she sees the incidents happening around her from her pram. It is symbolic in a way. The pram is a symbol of relative security. Ayah personality is attractive and around her she finds a swarm of admirers. The characters represent the microcosm of society in the Indian sub-continent. The people around Ayah discuss almost everything in society, and thus present the debate on culture, politics and religion. The world of Sidhwa's female child, Lenny, is quite constricted due to her lameness. Lenny experiences enclosure within enclosure as her space shrinks. Her lameness is allied to her femaleness to deprive her of a proper education. The doctor tells her parents, "She'll marry-have children-lead a carefree life, happy life. No need to strain her with studies and exams"(15). Lenny is the narrator of the novel, and pacing the flow of the novel with her development she leads it towards making a *bildungsroman*. Lenny's movement from one phase of her life, i.e., childhood to adolescence gives her exposure to the rainbow hues of society. In the course of this journey, she makes herself abreast of the changes taking place in the society like men's attitude towards women and women's state of subjection. Her journey helps her in understanding the world outside, and in developing a more mature vision towards life. She becomes a perfect onlooker of the relationship between men and women which awakens her young mind to develop a vision of her own. She finds her life as narrow and

small, she says, "My world is compressed." (1) Lenny, as a physically handicapped child finds her world to be restricted to the four walls of the house. As a small girl Lenny spends most of her time with her grandmother. She terms her grandmother's room as, "My refuge from the perplexing unrealities of my home on Warris Road." (1) As a child Lenny had no fascination to have female possessions, though from time to time she was advised to have one by the women of her family. The protagonist remembers, "I can't remember a time when I ever played with dolls though relatives and acquaintances have persisted in giving them to me." (138). It reflects the sexual identity, which is thrust upon her time and again. Her schooling is stopped as suggested by Col. Bharucha, her doctor, because she was suffering from polio. He concludes, "She'll marry, have children lead a carefree, happy life. No need to strain her with studies and exams." (15) Lenny concludes that the suggestion made by Col. Bharucha sealed her fate. It reveals the limitations associated with a girl's life.

Lenny in the mode of *bildungsroman* gives many insightful comments, "but there are other things they fight about that are not clear to me. Sometimes I hear mother say no, Jana I won't let you go! I won't let you go to her!" (212) One day, Lenny reports: "I surprise mother at her bath and see the bruises on her body." (212) These comments show Lenny's journey towards maturity. The adult protagonist figures herself as accepting and adopting the simpering performances: "and as the years advance, my sense of inadequacy and unworthy advances?" (79) The following passage from the novel also adds towards the note of *bildungsroman* in the *Ice Candy Man*, "Things love to crawl beneath Ayah's sari. Ladybirds, glow-worms, ice candy man's toes. She dusts them off with impartial nonchalance. I keep an eye on Ice Candy Man's shoes. Sometimes, in the course of an engrossing story, they travel so cautiously that both Ayah and I are taken unawares. Ice candy man is a raconteur. He is also an absorbing gossip. When the story is extra good, and the tentative toes polite, Ayah tolerates

them. Sometimes a toe snakes out and zeros in on its target with such lightning speed that I hear of the attack only from Ayah's startled 'oof.'" (28-9). Lenny's rendering of Ayah's negotiation with her admirers also unwittingly, reveals how, "Ayah is able to consort with her admirers-while taking her young charges to the park- by depending upon Lenny's indulgence and silence bought by 'candy bribes'...thus Ayah's servant body and her sexual accessibility make her available not only to surrounding men—over whom she can exert some semblance of power in coquetry and refusal—but also to Lenny's desires." (397)

Plight of women is another major concern in the novel. Lenny was shocked to perceive Ice-Candy-Man pushing his wife Ayah into the business of prostitution. From the very eye of Lenny, it is all seen. Lenny says:

The innocence that my parents' vigilance, the servants' care and Godmother's love sheltered in me, that cousin's carnal cravings, nor the stories of the violence of the riots, could quite destroy, was laid waste that evening by the emotional storm that raged around me. The confrontation between Ice Candy Man and Godmother opened my eyes to the wisdom of righteous indignation over compassion to the demands of gratification and the unscrupulous nature of desire. (252).

"Literature, in the contemporary times, is rather a product of market forces and socio-economic pushes." (Singh 2). He further cites L. W. Pye, and observes: "In the case of new literatures in English, and specially that of the Indian writing in English, this trend has an old root which can be understood." L. W. Pye comments:

From the 1950s, the US designated modernity as a complex imbrications of industrial, economic social, cultural and political development, towards which all peoples of the world were progressively headed. The founders and husbands of this discourse were political scientists and economists, mostly associated with US universities, research institutes, foundations, corporations, and international organizations. Among the premises of this

modernity were nationalist fellow feeling and individual/state sovereignty as habits of thought.... Development necessitated displacement of 'the particularistic norms' of tradition by 'more individualistic' blends of the modern to help create 'achievement-oriented' societies.

Bapsi Sidhwa's monumental work *Ice Candy Man* drifts a little apart from it, and therefore, it is a classic. It takes history into account, and weaves a web of human emotions around in such a way that the contemporaneity fuses with the historical purview of human life. Saumya Kulshrestha finds the strains of history quite close to literature. Saumya comments:

There are important strains of narrative which often history forgets to recollect. There are voices of countless millions which are muffled in discourses which tell us of our past. Thankfully, for the readers today, where the historian fails, the literary writer emerges and succeeds. It is a writer who dares to construct a parallel track of history which talks not of politics, or war, or heroes, or leaders, but of the silent sufferings of the oppressed masses who are most affected by events which can be considered watershed moments in history.

Bapsi Sidhwa's novel is a recollection of the emotions on partition. In an interview, she tells Feroza Jussawalla about one of the haunting scenes when as a child she was walking with her gardener to her tutor. She says, "The gardener just pushed a gunny sack lying on the road and a body spilled out of it. The man was young, good looking, well-built. There was no blood, just a wound as though his waist-line has been trimmed." Such incidents moved her to present the graphic picture of partition in the novel. Lenny, echoing the impact of such momentous events, says, "I am the monkey man's performing monkey, the trained circus elephant, the snake-man's charmed cobra, an animal with conditioned reflexes that cannot lie." (193).

Further Saumya Kulshrestha, extols *Ice Candy Man* to be a work, which unearths many unwritten stories. She reflects:

One such watershed moment in the history of not just India as we know it today, but the entire sub-continent is the Partition. Scholars have remarked that partition is one of those events which has not died, which continues to live on in the hearts and minds of people - which is an inseparable part of the story of the birth of our modern nation. However, partition was not just about Jinnah, Gandhi, Nehru or Mountbatten. It was not an event which can be surmised in statistics of death and destruction. The partition had many stories behind it, one of which Bapsi Sidhwa, is her acclaimed novel - *Ice Candy Man* - has tried to unearth.

Madiha Habeeb finds the *Ice Candy Man* as a work concerning human plight, and with this perspective traces the trajectories of human rights herein. She writes:

*Ice Candy Man* presents violation of human rights and pathetic conditions during the partition of Subcontinent in 1947. Through the character of Lenny, Bapsi Sidhwa gives the details of how the political changes affect the citizens of India. The novel realistically represents the exploitation and suppression of women. Men using their masculine powers fulfill the desires and brutally assault the women. Sidhwa as a novelist talks about the power and skills of women.

Thus, the importance of this novel lies in unearthing many unwritten facts in history. It is a novel that deals with one the most traumatic times in the history of Indian subcontinent and provides numerous insights about the motives and behaviours of the people affected by it. It gives us glimpse into the socio-political-cultural ferment as experienced by the various ordinary individuals in those days. This novel richly contributes to our understanding of the partition period and brings to light vividly glimpses of reality, which are often obscured in the formal histories.

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## Bombay and the Phantasm of Apocalypse in Manil Suri's *The City of Devi*

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Manil Suri, born in Bombay and now settled in and teaching Mathematics at the University of Maryland, USA, has gained a prominent position as an Indian diasporic author. Suri shot to fame with the publication of his debut novel, *The Death of Vishnu* (2001). Ever since, he has written two more novels, *The Age of Shiva* (2008) and *The City of Devi* (2013), which complete the trilogy which he originally intended to write. Suri's oeuvre conspicuously shares a common feature – its locale is invariably the metropolitan city of Mumbai which exposes the underbelly of India, and the Mumbai which Suri projects in his three novels is a chaotic one – full of tensions, exoticness, corruption and communal disharmony. The present article will discuss the theme of communal disharmony in the urban space of Bombay as highlighted in Suri's latest novel *The City of Devi*. By offering insights into some other Indian English novels, it will address the fictional representation of Bombay and will show how postcolonial Bombay has become a site of intense struggle where power politics is continuously played out between different communities, concomitantly questioning the very idea of India's postcoloniality.

Contemporary Indian Writing in English has focused too much on Indian cities. Salman Rushdie's Booker winner novel, *Midnight's Children* (1981) can be credited for getting this focus on city started. Ever since, there has been an upsurge of novels depicting Indian cities. Be it Aravind

Adiga's *The White Tiger* (2008), Jeet Thayil's *Nacropolis* (2012), Rohinton Mistry's *Family Matters* (2003), Suketu Mehta's *Maximum City: Mumbai Lost and Found* (2004), Vikram Chandra's *Sacred Games* (2008). All these novels expose the darker shades of Indian cities. One can cast a sceptical eye over the dystopian narratives told by contemporary Indian writers in English as they are turning into the negative narratives about darker India. And these narratives have been structured, positioned, disseminated, and, in many cases, even legitimised especially by the Western world's award-giving politics. It must be pointed out that there are diverse ways of experiencing urbanity in postcolonial India as anywhere else, and therefore, these cities challenge any metanarratives. Cities are places which attract large number of migrants and hence the image of the city can never be a static one, a continual negotiation is in play between different emergent relationships, but ironically this teasing and annoying representation of Indian cities have gained utmost importance in the literary world. It seems, this is the kind of India in which Western readers are deeply interested, as they had been in the past.

The narrative of *The City of Devi* (hereafter cited as *TCD*) opens in a tense Mumbai which is about to be hit by a Pakistani nuclear bomb. It is at this critical moment that Karun, husband of Sarita, miraculously disappears without telling his wife anything about it. The married life of the couple is not a happy one as Sarita still longs for that final act of consummation with her husband. Sarita is clueless and decides to search for missing Karun. The fragmentation of humanity in Mumbai starts appearing when during her search mission Sarita first comes across a fruit-seller and stops to buy the last piece of pomegranate for Karun which is priced at one-thousand rupee. Even though Mumbai is on the verge of being completely destroyed, the fruit-seller is adamant of making the most of this precarious situation, and Sarita gives her *mangalsutra* to him. For Sarita, pomegranate is a hope of reviving the love in her married-life as according to Vâtsyâyana's *Kamasutra*, a pomegranate acts as aphrodisiac

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to enhance sex-power.

With the pomegranate concealed in her *duppata*, Sarita moves inside the 'bomb shelter basement of Bombay Hospital' (2013, 6) where khadi-clad people, who supposedly belong to the Hindu Rashtriya Manch (HRM), are discussing the lurking danger of the atomic bomb attack on Bombay. During this ominous cloud-formation of hatred, the figure of Muslim has become a source of terror and hatred for right-wing Hindus. It is at this spectral moment that Sarita intervenes to save a boy named Gaurav from HRM people whom she does not even know by identifying him as a Hindu boy 'Gaurav Pradhan'. However, one of the other occupants in the building chides Sarita for lying and tells everyone that she herself is a Muslim. At this juncture, religion and religious signs could either save or eliminate one's life. Hence, the paradoxicality of religion and its signs start playing a vital role. Although Sarita has the *bindi* on her forehead, the missing of the *mangalsutra* heightens the apprehensions of religious extremists. But in the midst of a chaos in the building, Sarita manages to escape oblivious of the fact that Gaurav is following her.

Under the threat of the nuclear attack, Hindutva saffron can be seen everywhere in Bombay, "the same type of religious chauvinism, engendered by the screening of the *Ramayana* on national television" (2013, 87) which according to a radio news reporter eventually brought the BJP in power. Bombay once again came under the control of religious fundamentalists with the screening of *Superdevi*, influenced by Hindutva ideology, which urged people to purify the country's population. And HRM follows *Superdevi*'s message by recruiting "half million villagers, posting them in strategic outposts all over India for a promised battle against non-Hindus" (2013, 88). Bombay thus became dubbed as "City of Devi" by local businessmen as it proliferated hatred and rivalry between Hindus and Muslims. The city was burning, but business men tried to make most of this tense situation by cashing in on the image of *Superdevi* which now could be seen all across Bombay – "Literary festivals, dance events,

school essay contests, and the Taj Hotel's "Best Avatar Costume" (2013, 88) The very idea of Bombay being a cosmopolitan city was dismantled as "[I]t promoted commerce, the true religion of the city." (2013, 89)

The year 1992 could be seen as a watershed year in the history of Bombay. Following the demolition of the Babri Masjid in Ayodhya, Shiv Sena activists became highly active and led to the outburst of many violent attacks on Muslims in Bombay. The famous historian, Gyan Prakash makes a pertinent point when he suggests that this tragic incident seriously questioned the city's cosmopolitan outlook:

The communal violence and bomb blasts left many people wondering if Bombay's cosmopolitanism had been just a façade. India's political commentators spoke sadly about the passing away of Bombay's self-image as a modern, sophisticated city. For a place that prided itself on its cultural diversity and staked its claim to being a capitalist center where the worship of Mammon trumped the worship of all other gods, the riots and bomb blasts appeared atavistic. (2006, online)

It was soon after that Shiv Sena activists rechristened Bombay as Mumbai in 1996. Speaking on the death of Bombay and its concomitant cosmopolitanism, Manil Suri contends in an interview:

I call it Bombay. I had to train myself to write Mumbai in certain circumstances. ... In the West, people feel guilty when they say Bombay because of the British colonial history. That's a strange dynamic — political correctness, perhaps? How you refer to the city has a lot to do with how you grew up in India. Bombay is what the English-speaking middleclass said. And even among their younger generations, that's what they still say. (2013, online)

Such evocations of Bombay/Mumbai clearly suggest that it has become a site of communal hatred as it inevitably questions India's concept of nationalism which supposedly promotes peace and celebrates 'unity in diversity.' Although one cannot deny the absence of corruption and communalism in postcolonial India, but one cannot ignore or deny the same

in various other countries as well, including the Western world. But still the bulk of the narration of Indian diasporic writers continues to focus on the darker side of India; almost alluding to the fact there is no good thing to be found here. Although for many Indians Bombay stands as a city of hopes and dreams, for a diasporic author like Suri, writing from the US, it is a city which is at once communal and parochial, and therefore fraught with confusion, terror, and danger. And this, sadly, has been the recurrent theme of recent IWE. In fact, Ana Cristina Mendes has a point when she says that the bulk of contemporary IWE is all about 'Dark India' because "Dark India has been acquiring of late a significant exotic cachet in the cultural industries" (2010, 276)

It is not Suri alone, but as pointed out earlier, a fairly large number of diasporic authors, especially after Rushdie and his *Midnight's Children* (1981) who continue to generate handsome money and reputation by downplaying India's image in the literary world. Such a sweeping reductionism of India's nationalism and postcoloniality by its diasporic writers is a skewed one. For one thing, this kind of literature is written with a certain readership in mind (the West), and secondly, it marks a shift in literature from aesthetics to political concern. By pandering to the tastes of Western readers (here I want to point out that not all Western readers are racists), they also outflank their counterparts who are settled in and writing from India. Perhaps, it was this burgeoning literature that led Fredric Jameson to make a demarcation of literary products between First World and Third World in his famous yet polemical essay "Third World Literature in the Era of Multinational Capitalism" where Jameson hastily concluded that "[T]he third-world novel will not offer the satisfactions of Proust or Joyce" (1986, 65), and quite shockingly, he went on to remark that all third world literary texts were 'allegorical,' and hence they should be read as 'national allegories.'"(1986, 69).

Like many other critics, I do not agree with Jameson's structuralist views— this kind of reiterating literary, cinematic or any other form of negative implications attempts

to exoticize India by sacrificing postcolonial tools of 'resistance', 'marginality' and 'authenticity'. Graham Huggan in his famous book, *The Postcolonial Exotic* (2001), theorizes the 'postcolonial exotic' as a 'cultural commodity' which can be:

[e]ither a contradiction in terms (for postcolonialism) or a tautology (for postcoloniality). It is many different things at once: a mechanism of cultural translation for the English speaking mainstream and a vehicle for the estrangement of metropolitan mainstream views; a semiotic circuit in which the signs of oppositionality are continually recoded, circulating alternately as commodities within a late-capitalist, neo-imperialist symbolic economy and as markers of anti-imperialist resistance in an age of 'adversarial internationalization. (2001, 32)

Huggan further argues that the postcolonial exotic "represents the interface between two apparently incompatible systems—the oppositional system of postcolonial resistance and the profit-driven system of the transnational culture industries and global trade." (263)

Seen from this angle, it becomes apparent that Indian diasporic writers have strategically devised this narrative technique, which in turn proliferates and sanctions the colonized version of India, and ensures the hegemony of Western discourse. This acute interest in and one-side representation of dark Indian cities particularly by diasporic Indian Writers in English is highly contentious and problematic as these writers are predominantly interested in showing the backwardness and fragmented lives of postcolonial Indian cities. It is a well-established fact that cities are considered to be sites of modernity and postmodernity, but by projecting only the flip side of Indian cities, it can be argued that the growing body of diasporic writers evokes unhomely and dystopic images of India. John Urry's theorization of places as centres of gazes can be applicable in this case, as Urry argues that:

Places are chosen to be gazed upon because there is

anticipation, especially through daydreaming and fantasy, of intense pleasures, either on a different scale or involving different senses from those customarily encountered. Such anticipation is constructed and sustained through a variety of non-tourist practices, such as film, TV, literature, magazines, records and videos, which construct and reinforce that gaze. (2002, 3)

Such representations of Indian cities suggest that India is still struggling to overcome issues of communal tension, corruption and criminality. And this is the kind of India which has been stereotyped through many colonial texts. It panders to most Western readers since this is the kind of India which appeals to them.

Likewise, Suri's *TCD* follows typical Bollywood movies' formula of projecting Muslims and Pakistanis as enemies in order to appeal to the mass Hindu audience. Sarita is shocked to hear from Rahim, a resident of Mahim colony where she is forced to take shelter, that Mahim colony is the only safe place to be in Bombay at this critical moment as it is considered to be a 'Pakistani colony' governed by some persons living in 'Dubai and Karachi.' The frustration of the Muslim community comes out vividly when Rahim tells Sarita and Gaurav (real name 'Ijaz, and also known as 'Jaz' throughout the novel) that he was 'bottle-fed' about India's secularism, but the Nehruvian and Gandhian model of '*Sare Jahan Se Achcha*' ceases to exist anymore in postcolonial India. Like Bollywood movies, Suri goes on to heighten the tension through Rahim's point of view:

So what if our government perpetrated years of carnage against its own citizens of Kashmir? Or systematically filtered Muslims out from its armed forces and police regiments? Or turned a blind each time the Hindus decided to here and there roast a few minorities alive? I was content to keep singing patriotic songs, brand Pakistan the enemy, marched against terrorism with all my fellow brainwashed Muslims hand in hand through the streets. (2013, 165-66)

Rahim then goes on to mention the ethnic cleansing of

Muslims by HRM activists in Bombay during which all Muslim families were "wiped out and nobody did anything – not the government, not police, and certainly not our *fellow* Hindu citizens" (2013, 166), and this eventually changed his entire belief in the idea of Indian secularism. It seems as if Suri has carefully observed Bollywood's success mantra for he leaves no stone unturned in making religion a recurrent tableau in this novel. This *leitmotif* of religious hatred and communal tensions makes this novel a truly Oriental text. Pointing out this increased focus on religion in postcolonial nations, Gill Anidjar makes an incisive comment that "religion is the Orient, the imperial realm, to be governed and dominated, bombed, reformed and civilized." (2006, 66) It is this Oriental that Suri is out to exploit and marginalize by questioning and disseminating images of India's flawed nationalism, and the ramification of such negative portrayals is the acceptance and recognition of his literary talent in the Western world.

That Suri might have borrowed the idea of this novel from a Bollywood movie cannot be ignored because, as already pointed out, there has been an upsurge of such movies in Bollywood in the recent past. In an interview given to Terry Hong, Suri acknowledges the influence of Bollywood on his writings, saying that "Sure, *Devi* has elements of Bollywood in the story... My exotic elephants are self-referential, self-mocking." (2013, online) Speaking about this special interest in colour and religion in Bollywood movies, Vijay Mishra makes a great observation:

The limited space occupied by Muslim culture and history in the popular film (even though... many of the current crop of important stars as well as production teams are Muslims) leads to a number of uneasy consequences. First their marginalization may imply that they are not legitimate objects in the domain of popular... Second, their stereotypification means that their emotional range is limited... With rare exceptions, in Bombay cinema the Muslim as a character is simply written out of considerable chunks of cinematic history. (2002, 216)

Whilst Bollywood movie mainly projects Muslims as villains and a lurking threat to India's peace, security, and nationalism, Suri's dystopian Bombay is a place where both Hindus and Muslims openly contest against each other in the bloody violence. The novel evokes the dystopic vision of Bombay as earlier projected by Rohinton Mistry in his polemical novel, *Family Matters* (2002) which was shortlisted for 2002 Man Booker Award. Although there are many passages in this novel which flak Bombay and its pseudo-cosmopolitanism, I will only quote those passages which represent a complete loss of any hope of revival of this city. For example, one of the characters in the novel, Mr. Kapur, is quite apprehensive about Bombay's unity, and he claims that "My beloved Bombay is being raped" (2002, 33); whereas Yezad, the central character in the novel, absolutely hates Bombay because according to him "[C]orruption is in the air we breathe." (30) And finally at the end of the novel, Dr. Fitter, says "[W]ell, we are dying out, and Bombay is dying as well," and "[W]hen the spirit departs, it is no long before the body decays and disintegrates." (404)

Suketu Mehta's *Maximum City: Bombay Lost and Found* (2004) is yet another novel by a New York-based Indian diasporic author which presents a claustrophobic and highly erotic view of Bombay. In this novel, Mehta furiously asks:

Why do people still live in Bombay? "Every day is an assault on the individual's senses, from the time you get up, to the transport you take to go to work, to the offices you work in, to the forms of entertainment you are subjected to. (2004, 508)

Mehta seems highly critical of Bombay's life style because the novel is full of such dismissive views of it, and concomitantly undermines its cosmopolitanism. Whilst the novel was severely criticized in India, it received a great attention and praise in the West. For example, in one of the reviews of this novel published in *The New York Times*, Akash Kapur says that "Giving depth and shading to such a complex subject, "Maximum City" is narrative reporting at its finest, probably the best work of non-fiction to come out of India in

recent years."

Turning back to *TCD*, we find that Bombay is gripped with tension and communal split due to a political leader, Bhim. Bhim, is the one who is orchestrating the ethnic cleansing of Muslims in Bombay. Bhim is the leader of the Hindu extremist group whose mission is to promote peace as he does not believe in any "particular religion or philosophy," (2013, 280) and he believes that "[O]ne day this war will end...and we will begin to rebuild. Let us all look together towards that day and in a united voice shout *Jai Hind*." By exposing the hypocrisy of Bhim, Suri takes a jab at Hindu leaders and their fanaticism. Even the name 'Bhim' has been carefully chosen, as 'Bhim' is considered to be Lord Hanuman's brother who is whole-heartedly devoted to Lord Shri Ram. With the mission of making India a pure nation, Bhim has collected all "the brightest and best" (2013, 285) Hindu scholars/scientists of Bombay in a big flat where no one is allowed entry.

Sarita and Jaz somehow manage to sneak into that flat, and Jaz is lucky to find Karun there. Unfortunately, Bhim comes to know about this and refuses to let them go out from there. Hoping to get Karun's co-operation in his mission of rebuilding India after that lurking nuclear attack, Bhim tries to motivate Karun by telling him about his *dharma*: "Does anyone understand the dharma I must fulfil? Look at the world around us, torn to bits. Do people realize I'm the only one balancing our fate?" (2013, 292) It sounds more like a speech of *the Bhagwad-Gita* delivered by Lord Krishna at the battle-ground of Kurukshetra where Lord Krishna tells his favourite disciple Arjuna about the relevance of action and *karma*.

Bhim almost gets driven away by his own lyricism of *dharma* theory as he instigates Karun to "stem the tide" because "Hindus are the only remaining hope, the sole bulwark, against the terrorist religion...sweeping the entire planet." (2103, 292) In order to justify his action, Bhim cites the examples of Emperors, Ashoka and Akbar, by pointing out that "both rulers had to go through similar crusades of

violence before achieving stability to renounce bloodshed.” (2013, 293) Bhim then plays down the charges of “annihilating Muslims” by making a shocking revelation that he has also killed many Hindus: “Just yesterday, I had to give the order to wipe out a whole gathering of them at Chowpatty.” (2013, 293)

As readers, we come to know that the *superdevi* is also the brainchild of Bhim whom he had picked up from a slum of Bombay in order to make Hindus of Bombay believe that by praying to her and believing in her they could be saved from the apocalypse. But the *devi*'s inclination towards Jaz and Sarita when they come in contact at Bhim's place during a show, infuriates Bhim and threatens his political motives. Therefore when the *devi* is performing her show before the audience, Bhim raises her up and pointing towards the audience, he exposes the real side of her saying: “[L]ook, she's just an ordinary girl, that too from the slums. She's not a real *devi*, so no need to work yourselves up this match.” (2013, 331) He further reveals that “I'm the one who found her, installed her here for you to worship. The miracles, the fireworks, it's all a show – I even write the lines she mouths” (2013, 332), and if the Bombay people want to protect themselves from the lurking nuclear attack, they should follow him. However, this last revelation spells doom for him, as the public catches him and kills him.

Bombay, as Priyamvada Gopal rightly points out, thus becomes “the paradigmatic site for the exploration of that which haunts the margins of the aspiring democratic nation—the disenfranchised, the minorities, the unvoiced—and so challenges its claims to inclusivity and full representation.” (2009, 8) It, therefore, also becomes a stereotyped Oriental site full of chaos and confusion needing some external force to bring it back to an order. One can easily argue that *TCD*, is a novel which perpetuates Orientalism as Edward Said contends in his ground breaking book, *Orientalism*, which marked the beginning of postcolonial theory, that Orientalism is practised through discourses of hegemony and “having authority over the Orient” (2003, 3) because it “deals

principally, not with a correspondence between Orientalism and Orient, but with the internal consistency of Orientalism and its ideas about the Orient’ (Said 2003: 5). In the same way, Suri has also produced a dystopic Bombay for Western readers. If Said's concept of Orientalism projected the dichotomies of East/West, White/non-White, then by the same token, Suri's *TCD* produces and spreads new binarism of ethnic divisions of Hindus/Muslims, and thereby projects India's nationalism as dark and chaotic. Suri's panoramic view of Bombay is thus highly contentious as it is constituted by a continual tension.

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## Cross-Cultural Analysis of Mistress of Spices

*Savita Yadav\**

Indian-American author Chitra Banerjee has written more than sixteen novels. Most of her works deal with the experience of immigrants to the United States. Generally, her characters of the novels are set in Kolkata, and in the Bay Area of California. She is a perfect interpreter of a cultural multiplicity of India. Her novels reflect Indian, especially Bengali cultural traditions of India in an intimate family garb closely related to social, cultural and psychological norms with respect to food. The Bengali ethnicity has been visited and revisited again and again to emphasize how the immigrants keep their home culture alive in the dominant and incompatible culture of the foreign country.

Through a close analysis of *Mistress of Spices*, this article delineates the dichotomies of race and culture. San Francisco, the big city seems to hold all the temptations and which, through the majestic stature of the Golden Gate, is perceived as a symbol of the greatness of America, and Oakland, where Tilo lives and which is home to her secret empire of spices. Major themes of the novel *Mistress of Spices* include the struggle faced by the immigrants who have moved geographically, politically, socially and culturally from their Homeland India, and try to come to terms with a new existence in an alien land. The spices are used as a symbol of un-American. They succeed in recapturing the Orient in the minds of those who are fascinated by them.

*Mistress of Spices* shows the immigrants who face cultural predicaments in the foreign land and at the same time stick to their own cultural beliefs and customs steadily imbibing the cultural ways of the host country too. **Divakaruni's**

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novels depict the issues of her own cultural location in West Bengal in India. She has faithfully projected Indian culture and tradition in realistic terms in her novels. In this paper, an approach of cross cultural studies has been done with the various contexts of multiculturalism, post colonialism, and globalization focusing on the American character, culture, and people, and developing theories and critical debates on globalization.

In this novel Divakruni successfully depicts the conflicts of cross-cultural confrontation of the Indian immigrant women who leave behind their home and look for new home in their host culture. America holds out to those immigrants with the promise of a bright future, a world free from gender and racial differences based on multi-national customs, religions, traditions, and languages. But the immigrant who carries dreams of aspiration also carries with them the native identity and therefore they face nostalgia or homesickness. They think about their culture, the familiar environment in their homelands and find themselves unable to adjust in a new culture. Because of this alienation from the mainstream American society, most of them lose their hopes.

Tilo first encounters the brutality of racism when one of her working class patrons, Mohan, is brutally assaulted by two young white men one evening. As his attackers approach, Mohan 'hears the steps, fall leaves breaking under boots, a sound like crushed glass'. (169). The two men who attack him are skinheads, and the attack is definitely racially motivated as they slur out, 'Son of a bitch Indian, should a stayed in your own god dam country' (170) The young men classify Mohan who has lived in America for over a decade, in the same category as all immigrants in the United States, just another minority amongst others. As he is being beaten, Mohan experiences such excruciating pain that Divakaruni describes it, 'like fire, like stinging needles, like hammers breaking' (171).

He cannot even wrap his mind around the horrific way he is breaking apart; he tries to defend himself, 'even though it hurts to breathe and a small jagged thought-ribs?-spins

up for a moment into the lighted part of his mind' (170). At one point he experiences, 'a blow to the head so hard that his thoughts splinter into yellow stars' (171). His wife Veena is shown to be a very supportive woman, and Mohan is simultaneously shown to be dependent on her support. As Mohan recovers in the hospital, he wants his wife there all the time, even while acknowledging she needs to occasionally go home and rest, 'Only wish Veena could be here, it would be nice to have someone's hand to hold on to when outside the sky turns inky purple like that night' (ibid.). Here, Divakaruni has focused on the cross-cultural tensions that arise when crossing national borders. Mohan's story is short and relatively sparse; readers do not receive as much information about him as they do about other characters such as Haroun.

Tilo feels protective and worried about Haroun in a way she cannot quite define, but from very early on she senses his good nature may be short lived, 'O Haroun, I sent up a plea for you into the crackling air you left behind...But there was a sudden explosion outside...It drowned out my prayer' (28). Tilo puts a hand on Haroun's new taxicab, she is overwhelmed with a vision of disturbing physical damage to Haroun, in which she sees someone slumped against a steering wheel; in reflection, she asks herself, 'the skin is it broken-bruised, or only a shadow falling?'. As Haroun leaves, Tilo observes him as "silhouetted against a night which opens around him like jaws' (112).

Haroun's body appears to her in this way almost as though she can sense an immediate danger of physical damage. Tilo waits for him outside of his home, she is anxious, referring to, 'footsteps ring as on a fiery anvil, splintering pavement sirens drills through the bones of skull in corkscrew motion followed by images of the 'shatter of brown glass' (228). When Haroun finally stumbles up to his apartment, his body is crumpled and bloody as a result of the attack. The doctor who attends to him says it, 'looks like they used an iron rod. Skull could have cracked like snail shells' (230). The experiences of Haroun are a powerful illustration of the way

in which Indian-Americans often experience a shattering of their former selves.

Following the attack, Tilo is present as they take Haroun into his apartment. As they enter, a multiple indicator of his identity is noticed by Tilo on the walls of his home, observing 'whitewashed walls empty except two pictures hanging where his eyes would first fall on waking. A passage from the Koran in a lush curved Urdu script and silver Lamborghini' (229). Hameeda nurses Haroun back to health, it becomes apparent that her support indeed plays an integral role in his recovery. He is angry; he tells Tilo If, 'I catch those bastard pigs, those shaitaans...also thankful for the chance to recover. But also I have been lucky...And I have found such friends - like family they are, a list in which he includes Hameeda first' (282). Ultimately, he marries Hameeda and permanently gives her the care-giving role, 'Haroun who has so much to live for, for whom the immigrant dream has come true in a way he never thought' (283-84).

United States, where the male and female roles are more fluidly and more freely defined has put the traditional social values under stress, gender roles often are presented as a function of culture. Their ways of adapting are also different. Here is one character Raven's mother Celestina, who is not a white but also remarkable. She hates her own community. She pretends to be a white as she thinks it gives her self-esteem and happiness. Thus, the East-West encounter as a recurrent theme in her novels is directly related to her experience as an expatriate who inherited Indian values by birth and acquired Western values by choosing to live in America. Divakaruni's frequent return to the theme of the East -West encounter and especially of the Indo-American meeting and her masterly treatment of it in great depth and seriousness shows her genuine and resolute concern for the global and contemporary situation.

The first generation of immigrants suffers the trauma of alienation. The second generation of immigrants promotes the aesthetics of acceptance and assimilation. However, the third generation of the children of immigrants is free from

the burden of divided consciousness but they inculcate the psyche of an isolated self in homeland and host land. The children of immigrants, in spite of being born native, cannot fully segregate themselves from their ancestral cultural heritage and subsequently bloom to inspire them to reclaim their native cultural identity.

The first-generation immigrants are invariably more obsessed by the home, which they have left behind. This always makes them suffer from a feeling of uprootedness that makes it more difficult for them to adjust. First-generation Indian-Americans are acutely aware of readily apparent cultural differences. Here modernity clashes with tradition, where Indian culture clashes with American culture and where theory clashes with practice and family becomes a battlefield. American culture becomes the basis for interactions outside the home. Inside the home first-generation Indian-Americans attempt to preserve their cultural and religious heritage and expect to live according to Indian cultural values.

The second-generation problems are of a different kind. Having been born in the new country they are able to become a part of the new culture more easily. They often reject their parents' social expectations. They are also individuals who have broken away from their original communities in moving to the United States. But they face and experience a greater sense of rejection and are constantly reminded by their peers that they are different, that they do not belong to the adopted land and all this leads to a great deal of conflict in the minds of these easily influenced children born and brought up in a foreign land. The conflict is not only caused by their parents, but also, because they are expected to adhere to different values at home, the child grows up with two distinct personalities. This is especially true of Asian immigrants because, even though they belong to the second or third-generation, they continue to remain aliens in the land of their adoption. One of the major reasons for this is the color of their skin. They can never integrate and become a part of the white society of the European. At home and within the

local community component they are governed by Indian lifestyle developed by their parents and the broader American community.

The third generation American-born Indians, however, are more securely placed in the adopted society. Growing up in the West, they acclimatize to its mores and ways of life in a seamless manner, in a way their parents never could. By virtue of knowing India only as visitors and having limited acquaintance with their native culture, the importance of the 'original' homeland for these second generation immigrants is generally related to the background. They do not have any deep-rooted psychological or emotional attachment to India and instead, identify themselves primarily as American citizens.

Geeta's grandfather, who belongs to the first generation, was still in India after the immigration of his family to America. He comes when his son convinces him to join them in the U.S. saying, 'we are all here, what for you want to grow old so far from your own flesh and blood...I crossed the kalapani and came to this America' (85). In America, he has to confront his granddaughter Geeta, and does not understand how she dresses, why she works, why she cuts her hair short, how much makeup she wears, or how she can justify buying a shiny, expensive new car. Nothing about her behavior meets his expectations of how a woman should behave. He always shouts at her American style of life. He complains to Tilo saying that Geeta is coming late at night with her friends after work.

Tilo tries to convince him by telling him that it is America after all, and even in India women are now working. She changes his mind and tries to adjust with the younger generation. Geeta's family is a good example those Indian family in America who still try to follow and keep their culture. Geeta's grandfather resembles those Indian people who still value their culture though they go abroad leaving their country. The Indians who go to settle abroad try to preserve their culture and their way of thinking according to the way it was when they left the country.

In India, the Indians keep changing and accept the Western ways of thinking. They are more tolerant towards many things in the younger generation, whereas those who settled abroad still resent them in their children. Tilo hopes that Geeta will be able to find a resolution that allows her to be herself while straddling a balance between the old ways of her family and the new ways of her life in the United States 'Geeta whose name means sweet song, keep your patience your humor your zest for life...Geeta who is India and America all mixed together into a new melody, be forgiving' (87).

It is the children, who suffer the most. It is natural for them to have a conflict, to rebel at times. 'Jagjit with his thin, frightened wrists, who has trouble in school because he knows only Punjabi still, is a second-generation Indian-American. Jagjit whom the teacher has put in the last row next to the drooling boy...Jagjit who has learned his first English word. Idiot. Idiot. Idiot' (38). When Tilo observes him, she wonders if he knows his name means 'world-conqueror' and hopes for his future that he will find someone to support him emotionally 'who will you take him by the hand, who will run with him and laugh with him and say See this is America, it's not so bad' (40).

Thus, all three generation are living in America as a minority class and though these people have been settled in America, adopted the American way of life and feel and mourn at the loss that the country has undergone but at the same time are worried about their own existence in the host country. As a result of language barriers, elements of adjustment to America can be challenging for immigrants on multiple levels. Not only do diasporic people not always speak English very well at first, sometimes they don't even speak the same language as others of their immigrant community. Saturdays, for example, are described as the busiest days for Tilo's shop, during which she hears everyone speaking together all these voices, Hindi Oriya Assamese Urdu Tamil English, layered one on the other (*Mistress of Spices*, 40). There are so many different people and experiences and

histories occurring in the store at any given point that they all exist together, and on top of each other. Despite their shared experience of immigration and new establishment in a host country, people also have multiple different primary languages.

Thus, Chitra Banerjee depicts problems faced by Indian immigrants who attempt to assimilate into American lifestyles. She has herself claimed in many of her interviews that the diasporic subjects, especially women, are concerned about their identity, an identity which they try to reinvent constantly. More often than not she creates characters that lack a stable sense of personal and cultural identity and float gleefully in the multi-cultural society of America.

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## Kamala Das: A Unique Literary Phenomenon

*Rahul Kumar Shukla\**

Kamala Das, a distinguished and notable poetess, with her uninhibited phrasings and bold treatment of love and sex, made a mark among Indian English women poets. Unlike Western feminists who always underplay the feminine trait of women, and the extreme radicals who reject traditional femininity, she depicts the picture of a woman's liberated self. She portrays an identity which does not forego her own identity. She establishes herself as a revolutionary who relentlessly tries to explore her 'self' in the inner world while struggling with the challenges laid down by male chauvinism. She provides the macroscopic view of hidden oppression and dominance in patriarchal society. Her sensibility is filled with agonizing circumstances of feminine predicament and the ensuing anxiety and angst in hostile environment.

Kamala Das belonged to the southern state of Kerala, noted for the high status of women measured by near-complete female literacy and 'normal' population birth, death and sex ratios in contrast to the rest of India. It is believed that Kerala's superior development has occurred largely because of and without any erosion of high women's status, which in turn, is credited to the matrilineal/matrilocal kinship history. The women in Kerala are same as women under 'matriliny' who enjoy high status in comparison to the women under 'patriliny'. The life-long security and shelter for old women and girl is ensured. Remarriage and divorce are permitted and women have considerable rights to terminate the unsatisfactory marital relationships. Female veiling and seclusion is nearly absent enabling girls to access education easily. The concerns such as girls' sexual purity and need for

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early marriages, like elsewhere in India, are absent in this society. Even the dowry system is absent in matrilineal inheritance. Though women do not usually have high personal autonomy in matriliney, they have substantial control over property rights, marriage etc. The birth of daughter is never a disappointment in such a society. Yet, some of the stories demonstrate that their noteworthy advances do not translate into autonomous condition for women. It is because of the hidden patriarchal forces. One such story is of Kamala Das who has been a unique literary phenomenon in India. A close analysis of Kamala Das's writings reveals that her poetry presents a tragic and gloomy side due to her early life influences and memories. Her neglected and rejected childhood, early marriage to an unsympathetic husband, and constant ill health resulted in depression and making her violent. Her dreams of blissful life faded away in oblivion without any hope of regeneration. All these misfortunes of her life became a part and got manifestation in her poetry.

## II

Kamala Das can be described as a true 'woman' by "the definition of Hélène Cixous—"the woman in her inevitable struggle against the conventional man and the universal subjects who just bring woman to their senses and to their meaning in history" (Cohen and Johen, 880). Her writings are similar to the writings of the feminists across the world. These feminists acknowledge that their strength has been obtained from the strength of women, passed on from one generation to another generation. Like other feminist writers, Kamala Das has been able to articulate her wounded experiences undergone in the insensitive male-dominated world. Her personal experience, as depicted in her poetry, shows how weak females are when confronted with domineering men. She writes:

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. (*The Old Play House 1*)

She freely borrows most of the forward looking ideas concerning women's liberation from European avant-garde feminist writers like Simone de Beauvoir and Virginia Woolf. In spite of the fact that her poetic temperament tilts towards the liberation on women, her natural credentials for poetry is because of her abundant love for life, liberty and progress. These factors prompt her to become a rebel as she finds that her natural credentials for feminine supremacy are crushed under the social wheel of religion, tradition, morality and conventions. She believes that there is only one life and it is meant to be lived with much happiness.

Moreover, her poetry is spontaneous, straightforward and simple. She opens new fields of feelings and emotions for the reader in an earnest way. What she presents before a reader is synthesis of rare and contrasting thoughts of lonely mind. She perceives the world as if it were a dream. Her heart flows out in world abounding in the sensual rhythms and soulful laments. She experimented with all forms of art ranging from verse and fiction to drama and painting. Her popularity stood on the grounds of the honesty of expressions, depth of emotions, outright narrations and her deceptive casualness in the expression of the fact of life.

Before Das picked to writing poetry, the traditions of Indian-women poetry raced in different directions—the traditional transcendental poetry of Avvaiyyar & Mira Bai, the romantic tradition of Toru Dutt and Sarojini Naidu. Her poetic temperament did not follow any of them as her poetry had a different mission which was about the colourless and brazen world. Das describes it in her own words:

The prescribed themes for women's writings were God and domestic bliss nothing else. This body, this physicality was to be ignored. We had Avvaiyyar, Mira Bai, but they wrote of God, they sang of God. That was allowed. But what happens to you, what happens to a woman, when a man becomes her God, her living God? Has she not

right to write about that God? (“My Instinct, My Guru” 156)

There is also a modernistic harrowing and agonizing dimension of Kamala Das’s poetry. She tries to establish a very new way of looking at a woman as an entity created with unique prerogative in the naturalistic context. The simple definition of modernism is the conscious rejection of traditional forms and use new forms of expression. It is not only breaking away from tradition, but also the expression of collective sensibility of time and space in which the author exists.

### III

The thematic range of Kamala Das’s poetry is limited. Repetition and monotony can be easily witnessed in her poetical works. Her poetry is more a poetry of feminine longings, her restlessness as a sensitive woman moving in a patriarchal society, and she emerges as a champion of women’s cause out of them. Her thematic and structural complexity is an outcome of the complexity of modern world. Though Das is chiefly called a feminist poet by her detractors, it seems that she broke herself away from the regular kind of feminism. She does not argue for gender equality and reservation, but demands care and cooperation from the male counterpart. She narrates the miseries of a housewife in the poem “The Old Play House”. It is a long touching tale of homely duties of a wife. She shows resistance to become a submissive and docile wife under the monstrous ego of her husband. She becomes iconic:

Always the same, he serves his love in lethal doses,  
For, love is Narcissus at the water’s edge, haunted  
By its own lovely 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 (*The Old Play House* 1-2 )

This poem is against the male dominance and selfishness and the disregard of her husband for her love. In this context it would be apt to quote Irshad Gulam Ahmed as he remarks:

Her writing in general and her poetry in particular can

be seen as a critique of the hegemonic and oppressive patriarchal structure of power, antecedent to a profound sense of alienation in personae of her works. (56)

She forcefully raises voice against the male tyrannies in the poems like “Summer in Calcutta”, “An Introduction” “Hérons” etc. She emerges as a representative of Indian women’s ‘lib’ movement. The monotony and tiresome job of a woman and her longing for freedom is beautifully expressed by Das in the following lines:

I shall some day, leave the cocoon  
You built around me with morning tea.  
Love words flung from door way and of course  
Your tired lust, I shall someday take  
wings fly around.... (*Summer in Calcutta* 52)

She articulates here as a ‘liberated’ woman, who represents the ‘cocoon’ built around her and desire to flit about without any restriction.

Love, unquestionably, is one of the most popular themes of Kamala Das’s poetry. Her love poems breathe the air of unconventionality and urgency. She says that fidelity in love is only for immortals as the human life is too short for the absolute bliss. She seems to justify her wanton love in her poem “Gyno” when she talks about her intimate relationship with a foreigner. On the contrary, in the poem “In Love” she shows her hatred for the lust without love. She seems to be bored with skin-communicated love. She says:

This skin-communicated  
Thing that I dare not yet in  
His presence call our love (*Summer in Calcutta* 14)

She also upholds the sanctity of domestic love and marital relationship. She gets disheartened when marital relationship degenerates into lust.

She has, time and again, brought the issue of frustration in her poems. The poem “The Testing of the Sirens” talks about her experience with another man other than her husband. He makes love to her and takes her outside for sightseeing, but at last, she finds that there is no more light,

no more love or peace and only the white sun burning. Out of frustration, she asks a question: "Why does love come to me/Like pain again and again and again?" (*The Best of Kamala Das* 140) Her search for love and kindness ends up in a barren wasteland, where there is neither life nor hope and she spends her life in agony and frustration, repenting and weeping most of the time. She cries in "The Sunshine Cat":

They let her slide from pegs of sanity into  
A bed made soft with tears and she lay there weeping  
For sleep had lost its use; I shall built walls with tears,  
She said, wealth to shut me in ...Her husband shut her  
In, every morning; locked her is a room of book (*Summer in Calcutta* 49)

O.J. Thomas, therefore, says:

Her romantic ideas about love and home have been shattered by an insensitive husband and the cries to whom she turned for love. Her husband hurts her feelings and evokes a sense of disappointment in her. The very first attempt made to express his love and affection towards her, produced a negative emotion in her. (28)

Death has always been among Kamala Das's favourite topics, and is like an obsession to her. She was many a time in deathbed due to the cardiac problems and had encountered death face to face. She was sometimes ready to welcome death. She uses the images of deathbed, delirium, death etc to show the inevitability of death. She calls death mediocre which could be achieved effortlessly she writes, "Death is so mediocre, any fool can achieve it effortlessly?" (*The Best of Kamala Das* 111)

Few of her poems represent Kamala Das's obsession with the thought of Krishna. She makes love to each person thinking that he would turn out to be a real Krishna. She imagines herself to be Radha-the faithful beloved for Krishna. She writes:

Your body is my prison, Krishna  
I cannot see beyond it

Your darkness blinds me  
Your love words shut out the  
wide world din (64)

Undoubtedly, Kamala Das is such a poet who left no stone unturned for the accomplishment of her poetic task and also to unravel the agonies of man-woman relationship of the modern world. Her poetic excellences can be seen through her realizations of life's predicaments, in a directness of expression. Moreover, a close reading of the whole corpus of Das's work reveals that her thought, style and tone have allured wider readership for its lyrical directness, immediacy and quickness. She has infused her poetry with the female sensibility and female desires with forcefulness and forthrightness. It cannot be commented whether she was serious about the freedom and emancipation of women, but her seriousness as a poet and artistic craftsmanship show that she is a poet and writer who kept fighting for women's cause.

Thus, we can say that Kamala Das does not illustrate or spiritualize her poems, but makes a discovery of human existence and narrates her experiences vividly and passionately. She demonstrates the continuity of theme and expression concerning the central division of self. She tries to redefine herself by speaking out her heart both as woman and as a poet. She takes a strong stand against the marginalization and social injustice inflicted against women and communicates the powerful female sensibility in her poems. She struggles against the familial problems and dilemmas, and speaks against all dominance and oppression forced on her.

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## Vaishnava Poetry and Rabindranath Tagore: A Case of Adaptation, Translation and Transcreation

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In contemporary translation studies, adaptation or transcreation are identified as not altogether different from 'proper' translation, but as a part of the different stages and strategies of especially literary translation, be it in the nature of paraphrasing or paraphrasing. Whereas adaptation is the method of using and adjusting of a literary source to another genre or medium, transcreation refers to the more creative process of adapting a message from one language to another, while maintaining its intent, style, tone and context. But in the context of translation studies as well as comparative literature, both are seen as essential attempts of 'fusing' the 'horizons of expectations', as maintained by the reception theorist, Hans Robert Jauss. In reception theory, the reception of the text is always stressed upon more than the production of the text; that a text has different 'horizon of the expectations' when it was produced and when it is received- its past and present- only the awareness of which can enable the receiver identify the universality and the timelessness of the text beyond its subjectivity or temporality. For the literary translator, too, this holds much truth as she/he is trying to either rework the signs of one language with the same language, or interpret the signs of one language with the signs of another. Not only the contextual difference, he or she has to be aware of the cultural and the textual gaps of the source text and the target text before actual adaptation, translation or transcreation can happen. This paper proposes to locate in this context one such interaction, much celebrated

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in Bengali literature, between Padavali poets and Rabindranath Tagore.

Rabindranath's interaction with Vaishnava literature in general, and Vaishnava poetry in particular, has been long traced and referred to in terms of the latter's formative influence specially on the poetic philosophy of Tagore. This interactive influence with the ancient poets of the Vaishnava literature has started with Tagore in the very early part of his career, and he carried some of their poetic impulse throughout his long poetic career, so much so that Prof. Harekrishna Mukhopadhyay dubbed him 'the last heir' of the Vaishnava poetic tradition. But a careful study of this interaction has revealed to me the different layers of Rabindranath's relationship with Padavali literature, a relationship which seems to have taken the shape of a journey. And this journey has had several vital junctures where Tagore has stopped to reassess his strategic parameters to deal with them, to identify and explain the new 'horizons of expectation' he has discovered for them as well as to be in terms with the 'fusion' of the old 'horizons' in the Jaussian sense of the term (Abrams, 263). But despite this stops, the journey has been a continuous and wholesome one, epitomizing one of the fascinating instances of absorption, assimilation and fusion of two different poetic discourses. In this paper, I would try to use the standard tools of comparative method of study to understand how much Rabindranath has adapted, translated and recreated the literariness of the Vaishnava kind.

Vaishnava literature or Vaishnava Padavali arose out of the Bhakti movement in medieval Bengal and attained a pan-India status during the 13<sup>th</sup> -17<sup>th</sup> centuries. Vaishnavism in Bengal was given a tremendous boost by Sri Chaitanya (1486–1533), whose intense spiritualism infected many and started a movement across many regions of India. Padavali poetry which often focuses on the Radha-Krishna legend, reflects an earthy view of divine love and proposes an intensely personal form of devotion. The subject matter of the poetry is the love of Radha and Krishna, on the banks of the Yamuna

in Vrindavana; their secret trysts in the forests, Krishna's charms including his magic flute, the love of the gopis for Krishna, Radha's viraha on being separated from Krishna and her anguish on seeing him sporting with the other gopis. Much of the poetry, though written by men, focuses on the feelings of a woman in love. Besides its tryst with notions of emancipation and intense spiritualism, Padabali poetry, as the etymological meaning suggests (The term *padavali* has the literal meaning "gathering of songs"; *pada*=short verse, lyric; +*vali* = plural; collection), is noted for its musicality. The songs are often set to a romantic raga such as Pilu or Desh, and borrow freely from folk tunes and other traditions. (Wikipedia)

The ideals and the musicality of the Vaishnava poets has moved Tagore since his childhood days, which eventually has resulted in the composition of his own *padavali* verses collected in *Bhanusingher Padavali*. Rabindranath's early interaction with the Vaishnava poets like Joydeva or Govindadasa is directly through translation, freely paraphrasing and paraphrasing not only their thoughts but language as well. Govindadasa's intense desire for the eros and the thanatos in: 'E sakhi virahe maran niradanda/Oiche miloye jaba shyamarachanda'(Mukhopadhyay,197): is echoed in Tagore's 'Maran re tuhun mama shyama saman': Death you are my love alike(*Maran, Sanchayeeta*, 17) and 'Ko tuhun bolbi moi': What will you tell me(*Prosno, Sanchayeeta*, 18) Surprisingly enough this vision of death that has happened to the young poet, remains the same even with the matured poet; only that it would have different metaphoric expression quite his own. Not only has the spirituality, Rabindranath also consciously tried to imbibe the Vaishnava poets' intense love for nature. The image of the dark clouds which in Vaishnava poetry reflects mystery and beauty of the Krishna cult, the freshness of the rainy days occur recurrently in Tagore's poetry:

'Bharater purba seshe  
Ami base aji, je shymal bangadeshe  
Joydev kabi ar ek barsa dine

Dekhechilo diganter tamal bipine

Shyamachaya purna meghe medur ambar." (*Sanchayeeta*)

(In the eastern part of India I am sitting amidst the same greenery of Bengal where once Joydev, the poet, on such a rainy day, has visualised the sky across the vast horizon full of dark, Krishna-coloured clouds)

Identifying himself to be carrying with the tradition of Vaishnava cult and culture, Rabindranath continues to adopt themes and ideals of Gyanadasa, Sasisekhara and others in his poetry: 'Simar majhe asim tumi bajao apan sur/ Amar majhe tomar prakash tai eto modhur.' (*Sanchayeeta*) That means 'You sing of your infiniteness in finitude and thus your manifestation is revealingly sweet in me.'

However, the more the Vaishnava cult and culture has found their manifestation in his poetry, Rabindranath has become aware of the obsolescence of the archaic tone and temper of the Vaishnava poets in the modern context. The perception of the ever-increasing divide between the reception-aesthetics of the 'implied reader' of Vaishnava poetry and the actual reader of Tagore's time, has led him shun the efflorescence of Gyanadasa or Govindadasa:

Ekhanache brindaban manuser mane.  
Sarater purnimai  
Sraboner barishai  
Uthe viraher gatha bane upabone  
(*Sanchayeeta*)

(Still brindaban reverberates in the heart of man. During Summar's full-moon or May's rains, it still sings songs of melancholic separation).

Leaving the models of formal equivalence which stresses on being faithful to the source text, Tagore now switches over to the dynamic equivalence mode to sum up the essentialist thoughts of the source poems, leapfrogging from direct translation to thematic adaptation.

However, Tagore's thematic allegiance to the Vaishnava poets cannot sustain for long as the highly subjective,

essentialist discourse of the Krishna cult is bound to clash with Tagore's new 'horizons of expectation' which will be determined by the individual poets' continuous interaction with his universal self, the 'welt literature.' So we now find him questioning the 'Vaishnava discourse:

Sudhu baikunther tare baishnaber gan?  
 Purbarag, anurag, man-abhiman,  
 Abhisar, premlila, virahamilan  
 Brindbangatha,-ei pranay swapan  
 Shraboner sarbarite kalindir kule  
 Chari chokkhe cheye dekha kadamber mule  
 Sarame sambhrame-e ki sudhu debatar?  
 E sangeetras-dhara nahe mitabar  
 Deen martabasi ei naranarider  
 Pratirajanir ar pratidiboser  
 Tapta prematrisha? (*Sanchayeeta*)

(Does the Vaishnava sing only for heaven? Are all these sufferings, struggles, pains for gods only? These musical outpourings cannot quench the hot thirsts of the man for love)

The universal self, the lover of man no longer finds the answer in the padabali verses. So he tries to find the answer himself by recreating those images in a new form, by giving it a local habitation and name, thus extending his 'horizons of expectation' in the new context. The Vaishnava ideals not only find a new mode of expression, but a new way of perception. Thus, he answers the question: 'E gita utsava majhe-/Sudhu tini ar bhakta nirjane bireje'

(Amidst this songs and festival, only God is there sitting with his devotee)

The above lines truly sum up the essence of the Vaishnava discourse, but everything here from form to expression, idea to its execution is Tagoresque. Thus, Tagore assimilates, absorbs the Vaishnava poets in his verses, and then recreates them with his own vision to provide it with a light which only highlights the uniqueness of the hidden treasure of the *padavali* verses:

Ami amar apaman sahite na pari  
 Premer sahe na to apaman  
 Amarabati tyege hridaye eseche je  
 Taharo cheye se je mahihan

(I can tolerate the chastising of myself, but not of my love which has left heaven for love, and thus nobler than that). (*Sanchayeeta*)

Rabindranath's transcreation of the Vaishnava cult and culture mark the merger of the original and the new, the past and the present, the author, the text and the reader.

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## Indian Response to Nature and Ecology

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Indians have a very glorious tradition of eco-friendly existence since time immemorial. Religions in its beginnings and ends have a bearing on nature. Almost all religions, sociologists would agree, have their roots in the worship of nature. The adoration of trees, birds and animals, the worship of sacred groves, and the attributions of sacredness to all life forms true to the spirit of religions. This is true indeed, as there are many references to the worship of nature in Rigveda. Besides, Buddhism and Jainism advocate quintessentially eco-friendly way of life. In today's world of science, technology, and industrialization, the problems like global warming and ecological imbalance are looming large. Modern and Post Modern conditions have left us insensitive to the sensitive problems like environment; as a result, we have invited troubles for ourselves and lost healthy way of life. So called developmental projects like construction of huge dams, setting up of Special Economic Zones etc. are merely façade of modernity. All such detrimental developmental project would precipitate inevitable disaster of human civilization. Rousseau, the dynamic power behind Romantic Movement in Europe in general called for going back to Nature, i.e. simplicity of life. He formulated the concept of 'noble savage'. He said "man is naturally good, and only by institutions is he made bad" (Russel 625).

India's attitude to nature was one of comradeship. Flowers, birds, beasts and men shared the one life, facing the same suffering and pain of the upward travail, entertained the same sentiments and affections. The early

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Vedic Indians became lyrical in their adoration of nature and its manifestations. This is a description of the Dawn in the Rig Veda. Usha, the dawn, is often invoked, and is the subject of some of the most beautiful hymns that are to be found in the lyrical poetry of any ancient nation.

Beauteous daughter of the sky!  
Hold they ruddy light on high,  
Grant us wealth and grant us day,  
Bring us food and morning's ray.  
White-robed goddess of the morning sky,  
Bring us light, let night's deep shadows fly.

This light, most radiant of lights, has come; this gracious one who illumines all things is born. As night is removed by the rising sun, so is this the birthplace of the dawn... We behold her, daughter of the sky, youthful, robed in white, driving forth the darkness. Princess of limitless treasure shines down upon us throughout the day." – Rig Veda, I. 113.

We gaze upon her as she comes  
The shining daughter of the sky  
The mighty darkness she uncovers,  
And light she makes the pleasant one that we see.

Of the hymns to other deities, the hymns to those to Usha, the Dawn, are especially beautiful. Some of the loveliest nature poetry of this period is dedicated to her, depicted as a young maiden who comes to mankind in the special characteristics of the dawn. Dawn bring a feeling of hope and refreshment, of entering into the activity of the universe.

The Aryans worshipped Nature. They were fascinated by their natural surroundings. Gods representing the forces of nature are mentioned in the hymns of Rig Veda, *Rta* was the term used to mean the natural law of the cosmic order and morality. It was the regulator of the whole Universe. The lotus keeps its vigil during the night and opens its heart to play a game of hide and seek. All nature, flowers, trees, birds and deer grieve over Shakuntala's departure from her father's hermitage and her leave-taking is one of the most touching scenes in the drama of Kalidasa. The swan paints a poetic picture of Nala on whom Damyanti had set her heart.

The bird Jatayu gives a fight to Ravana to rescue Sita as she is being kidnapped to Lanka. Indian literature is suffused with a feeling of tenderness towards all sub-human manifestations of life (Motwani n.p.)

There are many references to Himalaya in the ancient texts. Here in *The Bhagvat Gita* we come across a beautiful description of mighty Himalaya: Of the immovable things/I am the mighty Himalayas. (The Bhagavad Gita, Tenth Discourse; Shioka 2.5) A very beautiful and charming description of the Himalayas is contained in the *Kumarasambhava*, which describes the snow-clad mountain range as the treasure house of innumerable precious stones, minerals, important herbs, trees, plants, creepers with delightful flowers; as the abode of the Siddhas, ascetics, Yakshas, Kinnaras, Kiratas and various types of animals and birds; as the source of the Ganga and several other rivers.

Even the mention of mountains in India brings the word Himalaya immediately to the mind. The Himalayan range as a whole is sacred because it is in the north, which for Hindus is the direction of wisdom and spiritual rebirth. It also includes the highest peaks in the world, which are a sight to inspire awe and wonder in people of any race or creed. Even Mount Olympus in Greek mythology would pale in front of the reverence shown to the Himalayas in the Hindu stories. Neither is Mount Fuji as significant to the Japanese as the Himalayas to Hindus. From times immemorial, the Himalayas have given out speechless invitations to sages, anchorites, yogis, artists, philosophers et al. The western Himalayas teems with esteemed pilgrimages so much so that the entire Kumayun range can be called *Tapobhumi* or land of spiritual practices. Ancient Indian poet Kalidas wrote: "The Himalaya is a great devatatma, a great spiritual presence, stretching from the west to the eastern sea like a measuring rod to gauge the world's greatness."

From the Himalayas has originated so many life-giving perennial rivers that have sustained such a rich civilization. Of these the Ganga (River) is the most respected one. Shankaracharya (788-820), who propounded the *Mayavad*

doctrine, referred to the holy river as the goddess of divine essence, and established one of the four cardinal hermitages in the Garhwal Himalayas. Scientist J C Bose (1858-1937), also ventured into the Himalayas, as expounded in his sagely philosophical essay "Bhagirathir Utsha Sandhane" to explore how the Ganga flows down from the "matted locks of Shiva."

Apart from being a natural heritage, the Himalayas is a spiritual heritage for the Hindus. The most visited places of pilgrimage in India are located in the Himalayas. Prominent among them are the Natgh troika of Amarnath, Kedarnath and Badrinath. There are also three seminal Sikh pilgrimage spots in the Uttarakhand and Himalayas. All sages and prophets have found the Himalayas best for spiritual pursuits. Swami Vivekananda founded his Mayavati Ashram 50 km from Almora. The Mughal emperor Jehangir said about Kashmir, the westernmost extent of the Himalayas: "If there is a paradise on earth, it's here".

As the loftiest mountains on Earth, the Himalayas have come to embody the highest ideals and aspirations. The sight of their sublime peaks, soaring high and clean above the dusty, congested plains of India, has for centuries inspired visions of transcendent splendor and spiritual liberation. The Himalayas are sacred for followers of five Asian religions- Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism and the indigenous Bon tradition of Tibet. These religions revere the mountains as places of power where many of their most important sages and teachers have attained the heights of spiritual realization. Himalayas are often referred to as *devatma* or God-souled. *Giri-raj* or the King of Mountains, as the Himalayas is often called, is also a deity by itself in the Hindu pantheon. Hindus view the Himalayas as supremely sacred, as a corollary to seeing god in every atom of the universe. The mighty altitude of the Himalayas is a constant remembrance to the loftiness of the human soul, its vastness, a prototype for the universality of human consciousness. Mt. Everest being the highest spot on earth has been truly recognized as the crowning glory of the Himalayas. It is the mother goddess for Sherpas, who worship it as Chomolungma while the

Nepalese call it Sagarmatha. Hindus, by far the largest group in India with more than, 800 million adherents, regard the entire ranges, the God:

Himalaya, father of Parvati, the wife of Siva. King of the mountains, Himalaya lives high on a peak with his queen, the Goddess Mena, in a palace ablaze with gold, attended by divine guardians, maidens, scent-eating creatures and other magical beings. His name, composed of the words hima and alaya, means in the Sanskrit language of ancient India the "abode of snow.

As a reservoir of frozen water, the body and home of the God Himalaya is the divine source of sacred rivers, such as the Ganga and Indus that sustain life on the hot and dusty plains of northern India. W J Grant writes:

India has stupendous mountains and quiet, village dotted plains. Her rivers sweep majestically on the plains and sing silver songs among the hills. The Himalayas form a great northern battlement with an average height of about 18,000 feet.

The grandeur of this region outwits description, its scale is so baffling. It is a dwelling place for gods. A throne of stupendous whiteness, mystery, power majesty. But above all, mystery - that mystery which no science can banish and no reason conquer. This is where Supernatural walks with regal feet. At Darjeeling, with the majesty of the Himalayas looking down on one's littleness. It does one no good. The air is pure and strong. The scenic vastness kills petty conceits... (web. n.p.)

According to *Shiv Purana*, Brahma and Vishnu emerged from Shiva, the unmanifest Source of all. No sooner had they come into form than they began to argue about which of them had the superior role, as the creator, and the protector of the universe. To stop their quarrelling, Shiva manifested as a column of light so radiant that both Brahma and Vishnu were temporarily blinded, and had to stop their bickering.

Goddess Earth, the consort of Vishnu,  
You whose garments are the oceans and  
Whose ornaments are the hills and mountain ranges;

Please forgive me as I walk on you this day."

Atharva Veda says that the earth is our mother (Dharati Mata), or the Universal Mother. Furthermore the earth as a whole looked upon as a gigantic super organism, which is living, dynamic, evolving, and continuing. The earth is only Planet in the Solar System that harbors life, as we know. Like all living organisms, the earth system also shows properties of irritability and response, and reacts to any natural or human perturbations.

Atharva-Veda which was composed five-thousand years ago by the *Rshis*, there is a beautiful hymn to the Earth:

May She, Queen of what has been and will be,  
make a wide world for us.

Earth that bears plants of various healing powers,  
may she spread wide for us and thrive.

O Earth - brown, black, red and multi-colored  
the firm Earth protected by Indra,  
on this Earth may I stand -  
unvanquished, unhurt, unslain.

This earth, our mother, has nurtured consciousness from the slime of the primeval ocean billions of years ago and has sustained the human race for countless centuries.

Rock, soil, stone and dust with these  
Earth is held together and bound firm.  
My obeisance to gold-breasted Earth...  
Rising or sitting, standing or walking,  
May we, either with our right foot or our left,  
Never totter o the earth.

AtharvaVeda 12.1.26, 28 (Source: timesofindia.com n.p.)

The Gayatri Mantra (chant), which forms the core of the Hindu faith, is actually addressed to Surya:

O ! splendid and playful sun, we offer this prayer to thee  
Enlighten this craving mind.

Be our protector.

May the radiance of the divine ruler guide our destiny.  
Wise men salute your magnificence with oblations and  
words of praise. (Ibid.)

*The Rig Veda* says that the Sun is the soul of the universe and it controls the animate as well as the inanimate. The Sun's rays have the amazing power to heal. Sun worship helped Sambha, Krishna's grandson, get cured of leprosy. Solar treatment was a well-developed science in ancient times. Its exponents could revive dead persons by concentrating the Sun's rays on the dead body. Till recently, Swami Viryananda, Swami Dayananda's preceptor, and Swami Vishuddhananda were experts of this science and reportedly, could perform such miracles. Gopinath Kaviraj has recorded that he himself saw Vishuddhananda reviving a dead bird thus. When Alan Leo, the renowned astrologer, visited India, he was astounded to see the longevity of rural women who ate very little nutritious food. Then he noticed that they wore heavy silver ornaments and concluded that they got solar energy through the silver which probably prolonged their lives.

Buddha too, much before, advocated simplest way of life. His 'Middle Way' is the most relevant and eco-friendly way of life, as E.F. Shumacher underlines:

While the materialist is mainly interested in goods, the Buddhist is mainly interested in liberation. But Buddhism is 'The Middle Way' and therefore in no way antagonist to physical well-being. It is not wealth that stands in the way of liberation, but the attachment to wealth; not the enjoyment of pleasurable things but the craving for them. The keynote of Buddhist economics, therefore, is simplicity and non-violence (41).

Gautam Buddha taught the world to treat even the lowest creatures as equal to himself. He held the life of even the crawling things of the earth to be precious as his own. Gandhiji says, "It is arrogant assumption to say that human beings are lords and the masters of the lower creations. On the contrary, being endowed with greater things of life, they are trustees of the lower animal kingdom." And Buddha, the Enlightened One lived that truth in his own life. As we all know all the major events from birth to *Mahaparinirvana* in Buddha's life occurred in Nature. Thus, Buddhist way of life

is absolutely eco-friendly, that makes him first and the foremost environmentalist in the world indeed.

A modern economist is used to measuring the 'standard of living' by the man who consumes more is 'better off' than a man who consumes less. A Buddhist economist would consider this approach excessively irrational: since consumption is merely a means to human well-being, the aim should be to obtain the maximum of well-being with the minimum of consumption. Thus, if the purpose with the smallest possible effort, that is, with the smallest annual destruction of cloth and with the help of designs that involve the smallest possible input of toil. The ownership and the consumption of goods is a means to an end, and Buddhist economics is the systematic study of how to attain given ends with the minimum means.

Modern economics, on the other hand, considers consumption to be the sole end and purpose of all economic activity, taking the factors of production—land labour and capital as the means. The former, in short, tries to maximize human satisfaction by the optimal pattern of consumption, while the latter tries to maximize consumption by the optimal pattern of productive effort. It is easy to see that the effort needed to sustain a way of life which seeks to attain the optimal pattern of consumption is likely to be much smaller than the effort needed to sustain a drive for maximum consumption. We need not be surprised, therefore, that the pressure and strain of living is very much less in, say Burma than it is in the United States, in spite of the fact that the amount of labour-saving machinery used in the former country is only a minute fraction of the amount used in the latter.

Simplicity and non-violence are obviously closely related. The optimal pattern of consumption, producing a high degree of human satisfaction by means of a relatively low rate of consumption, allows people to live without great pressure and strain and to fulfill the primary injunction of Buddhist teaching: 'Cease to do evil; try to do good.' As physical resources are everywhere limited, people satisfying their needs

by means of a modest use of resources are obviously less likely to be at each other's throats than people depending upon a high rate of use. Equally, people who live in highly self-sufficient local communities are less likely to get involved in large-scale violence than people whose existence depends on world-wide systems of trade.

The teaching of Buddha, on the other hand, enjoins a reverent and non-violent attitude not only to all sentient beings but also, with great emphasis, to trees. Every follower of the Buddha ought to plant a tree every few years and look after it until it is safely established, and the Buddhist economist can demonstrate without difficulty that the universal observation of this rule would result in a high rate of genuine economic development independent of any foreign aid. Much of the economic decay of south-east Asia (as of many other parts of the world) is undoubtedly due to a heedless and shameful neglect of trees.

Modern economics does not distinguish between renewable and non-renewable materials, as its very method is to equalize and quantify everything by means of a money price. Thus, taking various alternative fuels, like coal, oil, wood, or waterpower: the only difference between them recognized by modern economics is relative cost per equivalent unit. The cheapest is automatically the one to be preferred, as to do otherwise would be irrational and 'uneconomic'. From a Buddhist point of view, of course, this will not do; the essential difference between non-renewable fuels like coal and oil on the one hand and renewable fuels like wood and water-power on the other cannot be simply overlooked. Non-renewable goods must be used only if they are indispensable, and then only with the greatest care and the most meticulous concern for conservation. To use them heedlessly or extravagantly is an act of violence, and while complete non-violence may not be attainable on this earth; there is nonetheless an ineluctable duty on man to aim at the ideal of non-violence in all he does.

Just as a modern European economist would not consider it a great economic achievement if all European art treasures

were sold to America at attractive prices, so the Buddhist economist would insist that a population basing its economic life on non-renewable fuels is living parasitically, on capital instead of income. Such a way of life could have no permanence and could therefore be justified only as a purely temporary expedient. As the world's resources of non-renewable fuels-coal, oil and natural gas-are exceedingly unevenly distributed over the globe and undoubtedly limited in quantity, it is clear that their exploitation at an ever increasing rate is an act of violence against nature which must almost inevitably lead to violence between men.

This fact alone might give ample food for thought even to those people in Buddhist countries who care nothing for the religious and spiritual values of their heritage and ardently desire to embrace the materialism of modern economics at the fastest possible speed. Before they dismiss Buddhist economics as nothing better than a nostalgic dream, they might wish to consider whether the path of economic development outlined by modern economics is likely to lead them to places where they really want to be. Towards the end of his courageous book *The Challenge of Man's Future*; Professor Harrison Brown of the California Institute of Technology gives the following appraisal:

Thus we see that, just as industrial society is fundamentally unstable and subject to reversion to agrarian existence, so within it the conditions which offer individual freedom are unstable in their ability to avoid the conditions which impose rigid organization and totalitarian control. Indeed, when we examine all of the foreseeable difficulties which threaten the survival of industrial civilization, it is difficult to see how the achievement of stability and the maintenance of individual liberty can be made compatible" (qtd. in Schumacher 65).

Gandhi's view of the relationship between the humankind and nature was influenced by the Vedic perceptions about the earth being home of a very large family of living organisms (*vasudaivkutumbakam*). Gandhi saw natural world and the human world as constituting a whole. M. P. Mathai sums up

the implications of this oneness as follows:

This perception of oneness of creation is of vital importance in Gandhi's world view, for a whole gamut of practical consequences flow from it. Nature is not an object to be exploited, or repository of hostile forces to be combated, conquered, or dominated and ruled over by man. It is indeed our God-given habitat, our Mother for whose bounteous plenitude man must be ever bound. Every object of nature, sentient and non-sentient, is to be viewed and approached reverentially. Moreover, it becomes the bounden duty of man to shape a creative lifestyle in tune with laws of nature in order to ensure his full development through a proper integration with his natural and social environment. The relevance of the concepts of simplicity, vegetarianism, nature cure, etc., that emanate from the above vision cannot be gainsaid, especially in the contemporary world situation of all-absorbing consumerism, depletion of natural resources and ever-growing health hazards. (qtd. by Khoshoo 6)

Being environmentally conscious, Gandhi was vegetarian, yet he was not a puritanical vegetarian (like the vegans to avoid even milk and milk products and honey). The English Romantic poet Shelley had strong bearing on Gandhi so far as his vegetarianism is concerned (Oerlemans 113). Gandhi said 'I am puritan myself but a catholic towards others'. His reason for vegetarianism was that one does not kill plants is in the sense animals are killed. Furthermore, plants are the primary producer, and as long as we maintain the health and tilt of the soil, good water supply and clean air, vegetarian food will be always available for all times to come. Many Indians, like Gandhi, are vegetarian by conviction on moral and religious grounds. George Bernard said, 'Meat-eaters are walking graves of the slaughtered animals'. Gandhi categorically stated, 'I refuse to buy from anybody anything however nice and beautiful if it interferes with my growth or injures those whom Nature has made my first care.'

Ravindranath Tagore said about Gandhi, 'he appeared at the threshold of the dispossessed, dressed like one of their

own. He spoke to them in their own language: here was a living truth at last'. Gandhi identified himself with the villagers and was concerned about the urban rural divide. Our village economy stems from the perceptions we have of our agro-ecosystems. The perceptions of a village in India covers the growing of in a particular ecological regime, the way the villagers conserves soil and water, constructs his dwelling and lives in it, the way he uses animals, the way he organically fertilizes the soil, and the way he treats the adjoining forests for extraction of the fodder, fuel, and some timber. 'India is in villages, if villages perish, India will also perish', opined Gandhi. On no account Gandhi advocated a back-to-nature approach; but he advocated respect for nature. He gave alternative that followed a suitable path, which would create minimal or manageable levels of pollution and eco degradation.

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**Traditions and Modernity:  
A Critique of Female Characters in  
Vijay Tendulkar's *Silence! The  
Court is in Session and Kamala***

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Vijay Tendulkar is the chief architect of the new drama that brought a breakthrough in the tradition of Marathi Theatre. In his plays he upholds several issues in relation to society, politics, culture, tradition, man-woman relationship, etc. He represents women as victims of various social vices. His plays brilliantly explore conflicting emotions and complex issues of women in post-colonial India. One root cause of the ambivalence and inner psychological divisions among Indian women is the conflict between 'traditions' and 'modernity', existing in the Indian woman's consciousness. The word 'Tradition' is defined as passing of beliefs or customs from one generation to the next. The term may also imply an assimilation of the past in understanding of the present. 'Modernity' refers to a period marked by a questioning or rejection of tradition. It prioritizes individualism, freedom and equality. Modernity also functions as an economic, political and social tool to achieve women's independence, freedom and equality with men. It is connected with the idea of the 'new' woman who is educated, self-confident, self-assertive, professional and is also able to express her views.

India is a land of contrasts. Here tradition and modernity coexist, but they are at times in conflict with each other. The position of Indian Women is in-between tradition and modernity. There is a constant struggle on the part of the educated, self-assured modern Indian women to emancipate from their traditional role, defined by a male-dominated

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society. Ranjana Harish considers that Indian women's quest for a dignified space is a journey from the margins to the main stream, from the private to the public, from the object position to the subject position, from powerlessness to authority. It is, as she mentions, "a journey from the metaphor of needle to the pen, i.e. from 'feminine' helplessness to 'female' authority, from tradition to modernity (Harish 167)".

In Tendulkar's plays this conflict between tradition and modernity is discernable. This paper is a study of Tendulkar's female Characters in *Silence ! The Court is in Session and Kamala* to understand their ambivalent situation in patriarchal discourses in contemporary Indian society. These women are caught between 'tradition' and 'modernity', between assertion and confrontation, between freedom and prohibition. 'Traditional' notions are related to woman's role, social status, social security, responsibilities, and privileges. On the other hand, 'modernity' proposes progress, freedom, rights and self-assertiveness. Tendulkar's female protagonists strive to liberate themselves from the fetters of 'traditional' values which idealize a woman and constitute a strong male-dominated cultural pattern where the destiny of a woman is not at her hands. In words of Shanta Gokhle:

As characters, Tendulkar's women are among the most convincing in Indian theatre. They are not romanticized, idealized, or forced to live by their creator's symbolic purposes. They are first and foremost human beings of flesh and blood...They are allowed to inhabit the entire spectrum from the unbelievably gullible to the clever, from the malleable to the stubborn, from the conservative to the rebellion, from the self-sacrificing to the grasping (Gokhle 81).

The two female characters in *Silence*, Miss Leela Benare and Mrs. Kashikar stand for two types of middle class Indian women. They are presented in pair and they symbolically represent two conflicting selves of the feminine psyche in the Indian context. They are different, even sometimes opposite, in their ideas and behavioural traits. Whereas Benare appeals to us as a young, unconventional, educated, charming,

financially independent, free individual, Mrs. Kashikar is a middle-aged woman with conventional mindset. She has been thoroughly assimilated in the system of patriarchy and has internalized the traditional notions of morality and womanhood.

Benare is the chief female protagonist in the play *Silence*. She like Sarita in *Kamala* and Jyoti in *Kanyadan* is Tendulkar's New Woman. She, as Gokhle notes, is "arguably Tendulkar's best known and admired female character" (Gokhle 81). Benare impresses us as a woman with independent mind and originality of her own. She is conscious of her intelligence, social status, better education. She has a natural love and lust for life and has decided to lead her life in her own terms ignoring social and cultural constraints. In a powerful voice she says, "My life is my own...My will is my own. My wishes are my own...I'll do what I like with myself and my life!" (FP 58)

Benare is a romantic rebel who refuses to remain confined within the boundary of Hindu tradition. As a dynamic woman she, unlike her male colleagues in the theatre group, is successful in her professional life. She passes sarcastic comments on her co-actors, pointing at their failures and weaknesses in real life. She playfully sings and talks, and freely mixes with the male members of the group without any feminine reservedness. Ponshe complains that her behavior is different from a 'normal' unmarried woman as "she runs after men too much" (FP 81). Interestingly the other female character in the play, Mrs. Kashikar, who is a docile, traditional woman, disapproves of such 'free' woman: "Should there be no limit to how freely a woman can behave with a man? An unmarried woman?...Look how loudly she laughs! How she sings, dances, cracks jokes! And wandering alone with how many men, day in and day out!" (FP 100)

She is unusual and inclined to rebel against the traditional notion of love and marriage. In her puberty she fell passionately in love with her maternal uncle. This kind of relationship is strictly prohibited in traditional Hindu culture. Again, in years of maturity, she was engaged in a love affair

with a married man, Prof. Damle. All these affairs show her natural inclination for freedom in choosing her mate. Her role in the play is apparently opposite to traditional gender polarity that asserts that men are intrinsically superior to women and men are more active than women in pursuit of love. It appears to be as a reverse gender polarity that upholds that women are not passive in building social relations and they are intrinsically superior to men.

In her liberal thoughts, desires, sensibility, sexuality, love for her body, Benare is a 'modern' Indian woman in quest for an independent, dignified space in social life. She is fearless in challenging and resisting the authority which attempts to deprive her of her natural right to become a mother. As a self-assertive woman, she believes that she is the real possessor of her body, her reproductive system and no social, legal or moral authority can control it. So she wants to give birth to the love-child, growing in her womb and thereby fulfil her womanhood.

But Benare, like other Indian women, is ambivalent in her relation with the society and culture. Though she is young, well-educated, modern and self-confident, she is sensitive to the traditional values and customs. She is not totally disrespectful to the institution of marriage and the idea of motherhood. To fulfil her dream of a happy life she insisted on marriage, but in each case her dreams have been ruthlessly shattered. In her relationship with Damle she dwindles between two opposite identities —mistress and wife, and would have remained his eternal bride like Radha, had that been permitted by the society. Like a submissive, devoted beloved she did not betray Prof. Damle by disclosing his name publicly. As a mother, she is concerned about the future of the unborn baby and when the biological father has refused to take the responsibility, she is desperately in search of a husband who would be legitimate father of the baby. Being an Indian woman, her body and mind have been trained by social institutions to develop a docile, social, rational self and so she seeks a societal sanction for herself and her unborn child.

Her traits also reveal typical longing of a traditional Indian woman — preference for a male child and a family: "...a tender little bud—of what will be a lisping, laughing, dancing little life—my son—my whole existence!...He must have a mother...a father to call his own—a house—to be looked after..."(FP 118) Again, in the professional sphere, while dealing with the children in the school she plays the role of a traditional teacher who tells stories or recites poems in the class and does not attempt to 'corrupt' their innocence. Though she 'swallowed the poison', as an ideal teacher she taught her students 'beauty', 'purity': "I cried inside, and I made them laugh. I was cracking up with despair, and I taught them Hope."(FP 117)

Benare's defence against the onslaught of upholders of social and traditional norms in a long soliloquy is not a vehement attack to the patriarchy and established values, but as Arundhati Banerjee puts it "...is more a self justification than an attack on society's hypocrisies. It is poignant, sensitive and highlights the vulnerability of women in our society."(Banerjee ix) Thus, an insightful study of Benare's character reveals the conflict between tradition and modernity, a psychological battle between social and individual selves within her.

Mrs. Kashikar, whose character lacks any kind of individuality, is ideologically moulded to conform to that tradition which mystifies the womanhood and constructs a tradition-bound female self. She prefers to be on the protected side by acting as an agent of a malicious male community which is determined to punish a non-conformist rebel like Benare. Mrs. Kashikar considers her married status as a symbol of power which the unmarried Benare lacks. But she is childless and jealous of Benare. It is she who physically forces Benare to the dock when the men hesitate to do so. She, like a submissive wife, helplessly endures Kashikar's constant insult and snubs, because she believes, "He has an automatic right to do so by virtue of being man and her husband." (Gokhle 82)

Benare and Mrs. Kashikar represent two classes of Indian

women; both are 'trapped in the patriarchal order'. But while Mrs. Kashikar has internalized the middle class notions of morality and traditional role of a wife, Benare willfully accepts the unusual and risky way that leads to a transformation from tradition to modernity. They uncover many layers of complexity and conflicts between tradition and modernity, between freedom and imposed norms, between social and individual existence, between rights and restrictions.

The situations of Sarita and Kamala in *Kamala* are not too dissimilar. Through Sarita and Kamala, Tendulkar explores the positions of women in contemporary Indian society. They are also non-identical in their traits. Whereas Sarita is educated, sophisticated and assertive, Kamala is an illiterate, a naïve and traditional. Sarita plays the role of a duty-bound housewife. In her, Tendulkar shows an antithetical relationship between tradition and modernity in the Indian context. Traditionally, a wife is treated by husband as an object that provides physical enjoyment, social companionship and domestic comfort. Indian society is more duty-oriented than right-oriented. Sarita performs all the household duties and is sensitive to her husband's needs. As a traditional and loyal wife, she believes that it is her duty to satisfy and please her husband by her service. She makes notes of all incoming calls of her husband, Jaisingh Jadav, a flamboyant journalist. She becomes an educated and sophisticated slave in her husband's house. Jain, a friend, sarcastically comments: "Hi Bhabiji, I mean, an English hi to him and a Marathi hai to you. This warrior against exploitation in the country is exploiting you...Shame on you! Hero of anti-exploitation campaigns makes slave of wife" (FP 17).

Sarita, the 'lovely bonded labour' of Jaisingh, is unaware of her slave-like existence. Meanwhile Jaisingh bought Kamala for Rs.250/- from a flesh market in Madhya Pradesh to present her at a press conference as incontrovertible proof that such things still happen in modern, democratic India. Sarita's eyes are opened when Kamala, the victim of flesh

trade, asks her:

Kamala: Can I ask you something? You won't be angry?

Sarita : No. Go on.

Kamala: How much did he buy you for? (*FP* 35)

Sarita's conversation with Kamala makes her aware of the selfish hypocrisy of her husband and she realizes that her position in the house is no better than Kamala. Her encounter with Kamala reveals to her that her relation with her husband is similar to the relation between the slave and the master. The institution of marriage representing tradition is attacked through the husband-wife relationship of Jaisingh and Sarita. But Sarita, as a modern, self-confident woman, decides to change her condition and assert her individuality. While speaking to Kakashaheb, she raises her voice to secure equality with men:

Why aren't women ever the masters? Why can't a woman at least ask to live her life the same way as a man? Why must a man have the right to be a man? Does he have one extra sense? A woman can do everything a man can (*FP* 47).

She now refuses to comply with her husband's desires. Even she shows her courage to go beyond the boundary of tradition and devises strategy for self survival. She decides to disclose the hypocrisy of Jaisingh in a press conference. N.S.Dharan in this context comments: "Sarita ,like Nora in Ibsen's *A Doll's House* , has, thus, undergone a sea change, and now is entirely an independent and assertive woman who finally discovered her real identity" (Dharan 47).However, Sarita's emancipation as a rebel is obstructed by her role as an affectionate and sympathetic woman who extends her emotional and moral support to her husband when she comes to know that he is to be sacked from his job. Gokhle notes:

Sarita defers her own decision about the future in order to give him the moral support he needs. She may have decided to stop being a slave, but not to stop being a compassionate human being (Gokhle 94).

Thus, Sarita emerge as a modern Indian woman who dares to challenge the male chauvinists, but does not ignore her role as a wife and a compassionate human being.

Kamala, on the other hand, is an illiterate, unsophisticated, unassertive woman who represents the traditional, poor, meek, marginalised section of woman of rural india.She readily agrees to come with Jaisingh because she is very poor, helpless and thinks that women are born to be sold. Leaving the village with him means many things for her—it means change of fortune, it means shelter, home and children. In her idea all women are slaves and since she is purchased, it is her duty to fulfil the desires and obey the orders of her master. To an uneducated, simple, rustic woman like her, the flesh market is the only reality and all women are bought by masters. She thinks that Sarita has also been purchased by Jaisingh. When she comes to know that Sarita is childless she readily expresses her desire to bear Jaisingh's children. She proposes to Sarita:

Memsahib, if you won't misunderstand, I'll tell you. The master bought you; he bought me, too. He spent a lot of money on the two of us...So ,memsahib, both of us must stay here together like sisters .We'll keep the master happy...The master will have children. I'll do hard work, and I'll bring forth the children, I'll bring them up...Fifteen days of the month, you sleep with the master; the other fifteen , I'll sleep with him.( *FP* 35)

Such an unsophisticated, bucolic woman from rural India doesn't differentiate between mistress and wife. She is unaware of the social status of a wife. To her, marriage means to serve the husband, satisfy him and bear his children. Kamala represents those innumerable rural Indian women who are marginalized by patriarchy which uses them as commodities and objects to satisfy their sexual lust. Being uneducated and oppressed for centuries they are absolutely ignorant of social, cultural and economic freedom.

Thus, an insightful analysis of Tendulkar's female character in *Silence ! The Court is in Session* and *Kamala*

reveals the ambivalence and complexity of Indian women today who are crushed between their traditional role, determined by authoritative society and their claim for freedom as autonomous individuals. Benare and Sarita represent the modern, educated, sophisticated ladies of society. But, as Wadikar rightly points out “mere formal education has not solved their problems. It is observed education has not enabled us to overcome the traditional barriers of sex discrimination, and women still fall victims to the male dominated society” (40). However, there is the inclination to emancipate from the bondage of male domination. They are not insensible to the tradition, but want to voice their aspirations and love for freedom. They face the tension between family and profession, between culture and nature and strive to resolve the paradoxes and conflicts by balancing between tradition and modernity.

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### Uma Parameswaran as a Multicultural Writer

*Rekha Tiwari\**

Multiculturalism, as an evolving category and concept, has appeared in diverse guises since its emergence in post-world war II American and European discourse and its subsequent proliferation in global contexts. In western cultural discourse, it inspired a removal of ethnic literature and suppressed cultural legacies from the 1970's onward. In a more recent development, it has reoriented itself around the notion of hybridity, positing more eclectic and unexpected modes of affiliation across diverse cultural boundaries.

Bikhu Pareekh in his book *Rethinking Multiculturalism: Multiculturalism and Political Theory* suggests three central insights of multiculturalism.

1. Human beings are culturally embedded. This means that they live in a world structured by their cultures and understand it on the basis of an inherited system affiliated to their cultures.
2. Different cultures represent different systems of meaning and vision of good life. No culture is either totally worthless or perfect. It is not worthless and hence cannot be eradicated and it is not perfect and hence cannot be imposed on others. Culture can enrich themselves by mutual exchange of experience. Dialogue between cultures is necessary and the primary requirement for a dialogue is that each culture should treat other as equal and should have respect for and trust in each other.
3. All cultures are internally plural. A culture cannot appreciate the value of others unless. It appreciates the plurality within it. A culture on other culture can only

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be at ease when it is at ease with its own internal differences.

Pareekh's insight into multiculturalism and preconditions for the existence of multicultural stable societies appears to be quite reasonable and sufficient but the real and difficult question is not what is required for multiculturalism, but how the requirements are to be managed and arranged.

In Indian perspective we, have had glorious tradition of living together and made rich contribution to Indian culture and hence Indian culture has evolved a composite culture. There is a high level of mutual identification and acceptance among immigrants and native born Canadians. Canadians view immigrants and demographic diversity as key parts of their own Canadian identity. Compared to every other western democracy, Canadians are more likely to say that immigration is beneficial, less likely to believe that immigrants are prone to crime, and more likely to support multiculturalism and to view it as a source of pride.

The greatest single fact of our age has been the next human migration caused by war, colonization, decolonization, ethnic cleansing, political and economic revolutions, devastating natural occurrence as famine, draught, earthquakes, floods like Tsunami or Katherine. All these have made the era an era of exiles, refugees, emigres, expatriates, consequently making multiculturalism, pluralism a historical predicament of cultural and socio-political life—the world over. On the one hand, this plurality has added value to society, on the other hand, added problems. Managing social and cultural diversity is a big challenge confronting most of the societies of the modern world, and a source of social conflict and political debate, on the other hand the diversity is increasingly a source of creation. It has contributed to create a branch of literature popularly known as diasporic literature or expatriate literature and making an expatriate writer.

Most people are principally aware of one culture, one setting, one home, but an expatriate is aware of at least two, the plurality of which gives rise to an awareness of

simultaneous multiple dimensions. The process of acculturation is an inevitability that cannot be escaped by an immigrant to a culture different to his or her own. The transplanted writer explores the immigrants' experience, reflects their sensibility, the feelings of alienation, nostalgia, and the transplantation they undergo in the process of acculturation and acclimatization. Uma Parameswaran located in Canada is one of the notable contributors of Indo-Canadian drama, who has always been sensitive to her cultural heritage and the socio-political cultural issues of living in a pluralistic and multi cultural society as an immigrant. According to Parameswaran, women have the ability to relate to two homes simultaneously. She, in her works, brings out the static quality which nostalgia confers upon a culture and the manner in which self-imposed ghettoization interrupts the process of acceptance of and by the host culture. The experiences of migrancy vary from person to person, depending upon the levels of education, age, background and point of entry. But neither dislocation nor absorption can be total, there has to be an ongoing involvement with reality.

Uma Parameswaran was born and educated in India and has lived in Canada since 1966. Her writings have references to Indian culture because she has always been involved in promoting India and India's culture in Canada. The paper proposes to study the problems faced by the immigrants at various levels and their struggle between the pulls of two cultures as depicted in Uma Parameswaran's *Sita's Promise* and *Rootless but Green are the Boulevard Trees*. She wrote *Sita's Promise*, a drama that connects the two homelands by having Rama, Sita and Lakshmana visiting Canada during their fourteen year exile. She in her works has tried to bridge the gap, usually by showing the best of both the cultures. She feels that life outside India, no doubt, shapes one's responses to India but the responses can vary a lot depending on one's own personality and values. As an academic working on diasporic experience, she noted that there are different stages that we as individuals and as a

community go through: from nostalgia for the old country mingled with wonder at the new environment, on to a phase when our main social interaction is with our own South-Asian fellow immigrants, to a phase when we move into the larger Canadian community and take our place in the social and political structures of our adopted country.

For the expatriate Hindu writer from India, its epics, legends and deities function both as resource and stimulants for clarifying to himself the ethos and culture that he has left far behind. In fact, the people and place that he parted with have changed in course of time, and when he writes about his homeland it is often an anachronistic, outdated picture that he presents either in terms of over idealization or condemnation. Such a long journey through an alien land and culture, through time and space, in all physical and metaphysical terms, is bound to defeat the expatriate writer's efforts to represent a true picture of what he abandoned on the native shores and what it has evolved into in the present.

But the repertoire of our myths and legends is an *akshya patra* (the legendary vessel of Draupadi that never empties) for all writers of all times that facilitate a revisioning of our ethos and culture. The *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* have been decisive forces in the formation of the Indian mind during moments of dilemmas and crisis of dharma, the characters and messages from the myths in these mammoth literary sources of references and classification.

According to Uma Parameswaran there are several phases that all immigrants go through starting with a sense of wonder and fear of new world and nostalgia for the lands left behind, they move to a phase of hard work oblivious to all issues—political, cultural, or social, once settled they turn towards organizational activities within their own ethnocentric society and finally an active participation in the larger political and social arena outside their community.

Though Uma Parameswaran claims that most immigrants reach the final phase, but the question remains whether complete assimilation is possible. According to James

Thyhurst, a psychiatrist, a merger into the cultural mainstream of the host nation is very difficult for the first generation. The first generation might acquire a relative adjustment that is acculturation but not assimilation. Acculturation is the adoption of changes in external behaviour for the smooth acceptance by the new society, whereas assimilation is the ability to react instinctly and emotionally to a culture. The degree of assimilation depends on the attitude of the host country, the age of the immigrant and the length of his stay in the alien culture. The old order has to give place to new. The process of transplantation is relatively easier for the younger generation who has got his roots firmly fixed in the culture of his birth. All these problems and the narrow stages in the process of acculturation and assimilation are vividly portrayed by Uma Parameswaran in *Sita's Promise* though symbolically and explicitly in *Rootless but Green are the Boulevard Trees*.

*Sita's Promise* (1981) links epic India with modern Canada through myths and dance like her earlier dance drama *Meera*. Uma Parameswaran states that the play belongs to the first collective phase of Indo-Canadian experience. This play is in the form of dance drama and was written for the *arangatram* of her first graduates in Bharatnatyam at Winnipeg. The narrator and the slide projections in the backdrop interspersed with the thematised recitals of Bharatnatyam dance indicate the author's deft combination of the anti-illusionistic theatre with indigenous art forms effective and subversive use of the generic features of the original, managing a revision in terms of art as well as vision. The main characters of the play—Rama, Sita and Lakshmana—have been taken from the epic *Ramayana*. The play begins saluting Lakshmi with an invocation dance *Vara Veena*, evoking association with the curtain raiser moments of *Yakshgana*, the indigenous art form of Karnataka. With abundant mythical references “the story is purely imaginary” with bold digressions “and the play is not supposed to claim anything authentic.” In the play the dance is more important than the story, various dance forms predominate. In “Author's

Statement First Person Singular” Uma Parmeswaran herself comments upon the story of the play in relation to the epic Ramayana. Its only point of coincidence with the original epic is that Rama was exiled for fourteen years. The characterization of Rama is interpretive not traditional. It traces Rama’s growth from narrow preoccupation with codes of Kingship to an awareness of what it is to be human to a point where he realizes his divine mission.

Sita is presented as a change — loving girl who stands in sharp contrast to her mythical counterpart. Lakshmana is shown bringing a bird thinking Sita will be pleased. The strange blue bird delights her and she decides to take care of it. Rama is seen worried at the child like behaviour. Sita wants to make the best use of her exile, wanting to see all that remains to be seen “so many lands, so many people, so many skies, so many birds.” Perhaps this is the positive side of being an immigrant or in an exile when one has an opportunity to know and see so many more. Later Lakshmana brings an Arctic tern, Sita is glad to have it and wants to know more about it. Rama tells her:

“an Arctic tern that divides its time between to North and South Poles making this flight of twice ten thousand miles each year.” This bird belongs to the countries of the West. “Its destination now is the primeval ocean where - Lord Vishnu reposes on Snake Adishesha.”

At Lakshmana’s suggestion “It wants to go home why not take it back to its home. Sita is thrilled but Rama does not agree saying “where had we the wings of an eagle.” At Sita’s suggestion that the mythical bird Jatayu will help, but Rama tells that Jataya is away visiting Himavan. After much persuasion Rama agrees. They travel to the Northern Mountain they reach the palace of Himavan and with the help of the sacred eagle Jatayu; they reach the primeval ocean, called Lake Agassiz and leave the bird there.

The story of the play is specified as happening in the eleventh month of the tenth year of Rama’s exile. Uma Parmeswaran depicts the plight of the immigrants and the pangs of alienation through the suffering of the transplanted

bird. The love and concern shown to the bird suggests that the natives should comfort the immigrants. The native children, request Sita to stay, for they believe that flowers blossom wherever she goes and she is so lovable. They allow her to go only after she has promised to return, Sita does promise: “I promise the children, I shall come again to this love land of lakes and blue skies and snow. I through my people shall surely come again and we shall build our temples and sing our songs with all the children of all the different lands who make their home.”

This symbolizes Uma Parmeswaran’s vision of Canada as a mosaic of cultures. *Sita’s Promise* constitutes a testimony to her cultural rootedness. Perhaps, the best way to survive the pressures of hybridity is to keep contact with one’s roots, The creative vision that conceived *Sita’s Promise* is crucially related to the expatriate writer’s attempt at reclaiming from his native culturescape, some roots that would clutch in the metaphysical barrenness that paradoxically confronted him out of the apparent luxuriance of a materialistic culture. The Indian expatriate author has not only quested into *Ramayana* but also carried from it precious content the problematic of Sita’s return to the earth at the overfetishisation of dharma by Rama, and resituated it on the host land, validating not only this ethically loaded feminine counter desertion of the patriarchal code of dharma of the mother culture but also legitimizing the author’s own placement in the host country. Thus the migration of the Indians to the Canadian shores has been posited as a necessary act in order to answer the problematic of one of the icons of Indian femininity.

*Rootless but Green are the Boulevard Trees* shows real life like people in the Indo-Canadian community. The events, situations, experiences and pictures are not only common to the families of the immigrants in Canada, but true to immigrants elsewhere too. The play centres on an east Indian family living in the suburbs of Winnipeg. The characters of the play belong to three generations—the parents Sharad and Savitri Bhave, Sharad’s sister Veejale and her husband

Anant Moghe represent one generation. These two families left India in their middle age after marriage for respectable job- for different reasons.

The Bhaves and Moghes children who are in their early twenties represent the second generation. As they have spent half their lives in India and the other half in Canada their tradition and values is a unique blend of the two. Krish Bhave and Priti Moghe aged 12 and 10 have never been to India and are only exposed to residual elements of Indian culture as expressed through food, clothing, language and religious stories. They are deeply immersed in the culture of Canada. Uma Parameswaran's depiction of these three generations—their character and the situation they are put in reveal how acculturation depends on the age and the length of stay in the two cultures. Sharad Bhave, an atomic energy scientist in Trombay India, had quit and settled in Canada as a real estate broker. His daughter Jyoti pictures his plight. It couldn't have been easy for him to move out after thirty five, and it is no bed of roses here, painting the house and doing hundred different things done by servants in the luxury of a family back home.

Savitri, his wife is Indian to the core. She cannot cut herself off from the Indian ethos and sensibility. Though she gets acculturated to Canadian situations externally, by not stopping her daughter from dating, but at heart she is deeply rooted to her Indianness—dress, food habit, tradition and rituals. Sharad feels sorry for having left India. He values family ties and is shocked to know that Veejale has resigned her job and has decided to return to India, leaving her family. It was not Anant's illicit relationship as he suspected, fearing Anant had been influenced by Canadian culture—that was making Veejale return, leaving her family but her decision to leave is because of racial discrimination. Asked if she had been discriminated because of her gender, she said, "I happen to be of the wrong colour".

Migration and memory go together; it is what one remembers of the past and how one remembers it that determines how one sees the future. Assimilation is difficult

for the first generation. Many of them, like Sharad bear all hardships silently for practical reasons, but rebellious spirits like Veejale prefer to suffer in their own country than in alien soil. Asked if conditions were any better in India, she said they were not but she would feel better wasting her life in her native country than wasting it in the backwoods of Canada.

For the first generation since their roots are in India they can always fall back upon their country and culture. But the second generation suffers the worse, as they think Canada is their home, their land, tries to send roots and get assimilated. But when the truth dawns on them that the whites are not ready to accept them and to consider them equals, they are greatly disappointed. In order to save themselves from the psychological crisis of identity, the immigrants cling to their people and their tradition. They have come to realize that if one has strong roots in his culture he can flourish anywhere.

Parameswaran gives a lot of importance to family bondage and emotional ties between family members—the core of Indian culture and that is voiced by Sharad when Veejale decides to return, without coming to him, her brother and sharing her problems. Expatriate in the words of Wallace Stevens is a mind of winter in which the pathos of summer and autumn cloud, but it also has the potential of a spring nearby. This is what Vital, Jayant and Sridhar hope that one day Canada would become a land where different people from different land and culture would co-exist on equal terms. To quote from N. Sharda Iyer:

Uma Parameswaran envisages that come a couple of generations everything would be more even all around, within the community and outside. We would have a lot more brown children...It is symbolically pointed out by the flourishing beautiful boulevard trees though rootless they are. It is enough, it still survives, is green and beautiful.

*Sita's Promise and Rootless but Green, are the Boulevard Trees* indicate the nostalgic passion of an expatriate writer to

represent the characters and message from the greatest resources of her native culture with the help of her talent and learning and to represent them to an alien audience, learning from them if possible, the same love and regard that she carried within her for the precious reasons that lay beyond the door she shut behind her.

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### Exploring Subjectivity in David Malouf's *An Imaginary Life*

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The present paper intends to focus at how David Malouf has employed syntactic structures within which the protagonist grows as a subject. Before, the proposal embarks upon the complex journey of exploring the process of subjectivization; it is imperative to look into some philosophical and intellectual domains which may explicate the process of one's becoming. Therefore, phenomena of subject and subjectivity can be approached through three different philosophical traditions- Empiricism, Cognitivism, and Pragmatism.

Empiricism emphasizes upon knowledge which can be attained through perception and experience. It implies epistemology which means study of knowledge which raises some questions like what knowledge is, how knowledge is acquired, and what we know, how we know. Cognitivism is the study of how people think, perceive, remember, speak and solve problems. Similarly, Cartesian logic of "I think therefore I am" privileges rationality or reason as an essential condition for existence. It rejects introspection as a valid method of investigation, unlike symbol-driven approaches. G.W. Leibniz in his famous work the *New Essays Concerning Human Understanding (1896)*, really believes that languages are the best mirror of the human mind, and that a precise analysis of the signification of words would tell us more than anything else about the operations of the understanding. French psychoanalytic theorist Jacques Lacan (1901-1981), Freud and Slavoj Zizek epitomize the palpable shift from outright attempts to exert control over

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subjectivity to attempts to use the concept of subjectivity as the occasion for much broader exercises in analysis. Lacan in his Book *Ecrits: A Selection* (1981) avers the fact that “unconscious is structured like a language” (203).

He states the fact that people have innate potential through conscious, unconscious and subconscious these layers, which constitute ones identity/subjectivity. In Lacan’s theory of the Mirror stage, the infant is confronted with his/her own image in the mirror, that image provides both an illusion of a complete and controllable being that is the “self” and also sense of irresolvable tension given the infant’s continuing experience of its body as always fragmented and incomplete: “the sight alone of the whole form of the human body gives the subject an imaginary mastery over his body...[one] which entirely structures his fantasy life” (Lacan 1991 a:79). Lacanian perspective, our very “selves” are created through language: “The form in which language is expressed itself defines subjectivity... I identify myself in language, but only by losing myself in it like an object” (Lacan 1977:85-86). Freud’s *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality* (1976) draws the gradual growth of the self into the reality of a subject. In addition, Slavoj Zizek’s *The Sublime Object of Ideology* (1989) articulates the fact that:

In ‘post-structuralism’, the subject is usually reduced to so called Subjectivization, he is conceived as an effect of fundamentally non- subjective process: the subject always caught in, traversed by the pre-subjective process (of ‘writing, of ‘desire’, and so on), and the emphasis on the individuals’ different modes of ‘experiencing’, ‘living’ their positions as ‘subjects’, ‘actors’, ‘agents’ of the historical process.... The subject is therefore to be strictly opposed to the effect of Subjectivization: what the Subjectivization masks is not a pre or trans- subjective process of writing but a lack in the structure, a lack which is the subject. (174-75)

Pragmatism is the combination of Empiricism and Cognitivism. It tries to connect the internal and external reality and pursuits of practicality over aesthetic qualities; a

concentration on facts rather than emotions or ideals. Subjectivity is the intersection of two lines of philosophical inquiry: Epistemology (the study of how we know what we know) and Ontology (the study of the nature of being or existence). “Hegemony” is the term used by the theorist Antonio Gramsci (1891-1937) to convey the extent to which belief systems are thoroughly naturalized that dominate the consciousness of individuals. Louis Althusser’s “Ideology and Ideological State Apparatus” (1971) enumerates that one’s subjectivity is controlled by ideological and repressive apparatuses which helps them to inculcate the new identities and forget the old one. Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770-1831) contributed to the theories of subjectivity through historicizing existence and self-conception. Hegel in the second section of his *Phenomenology of spirit* (1806) makes the revolutionary claims that “Self-consciousness exists in and for itself when, and by the fact that, it so exists for another; that is, it exists only in being acknowledged” (111). Subjectivity is not only repressed by the social and economic factors but it is also affected by the male patriarchy. It is well described by Simone de Beauvoir in *The Second Sex* (1952); One is not born, but becomes a woman. No biological, psychological, or economic fate determines the figure that the human female presents in society: it is civilization as a whole that produces this creature, feminine (249). Similarly, Judith Butler in her two famous interventions *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (1990) and essay *Imitation and Gender Insubordination* (1991) made the distinction between Sex and Gender. Sex is biological but gender is culturally constructed and it is based on the cultural performance. Stephen Greenblatt argues in his influential work *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare* (1980) that early modern period has been changed in the intellectual, social, psychological and aesthetic structures and it has been governed by the generation of identities. In addition, Michel Foucault explicates the technologies of the self in his *Knowledge/Power* (1977) and states that “[T]he goal of my work during the last twenty years has not been to analyse the phenomenon of power, nor to elaborate the

foundations of such an analysis. My objective, instead, has been to create a history of different modes by which, in our culture, human beings are made subject” (07). He also asserts that care for the self, be true to yourself, express yourself, discover yourself refers to ways of forming a relationship of self to itself. Therefore to study the constitution of the subject as an object for himself: the formation of the procedures by which the subject is led to observe himself, analyse himself, interpret himself, recognize himself as a domain of possible knowledge. Veerendra Kumar Mishra in his book *Modern Novels and Poetics Of self: Reading Modernist Bildungsroman* states that “[...] The process of subject formation and the reality of subjectivity are profoundly embedded into the social, political, economic, cultural, psychological, linguistic and physical realities of the contemporary world”. (2014:10)

David Malouf covers the theme of subjectivity and the growth of character as a subject where the character experiences linguistic, economic and cultural realities. The close examination of his novel *An Imaginary Life* (1978) explains the plentitudes of Subjectivization. His writings are characterized by a heightened sense of spatial relations. He emphasizes upon exploring something new around oneself to recognize the mystery of life. His language is powerful and unique. Characters seem to exist both in and out of time. He acquires art as a tool to bridge the gulf between past and present. *An Imaginary Life depicts* the final years of the Roman poet Ovid and the novel portrays the beautiful experimentation of language that Malouf exhibits in his works. The novel explicates the complex phenomenon of the epistemological development of the child into a subject. In this process of becoming, the child goes through the social, cultural and linguistic realities which entail upon the process of epistemological construction. In this novel, characters are found to be caught into the complex rubric of identity and consciousness where they strive for new identities. Self, Subject and subjectivity are the thematic hearts of these two novels. His characters endure alienation, suffer from exile or

get estranged from a linguistic community. They discover self *centered return* to home, or are absorbed into a common speech and the life of the community. It also depicts the relationship between the protectors and protected, become an alliance between two people in a foreign land. He takes his readers to a natural landscape from physical environment. He enriches the relationship in three terms: the animal-human, human- human and human – divinity relationship respectively. His protagonists in most of his novels are found to be seeking and fighting for their development as a new subject.

*An imaginary Life* depicts the life of Roman poet *Ovid*, during his exile in Tomis (place near Black Sea) the language, the people are alien to him. He accepts his new surroundings when he meets a wild boy. Ovid gradually reverses his Roman decadence and begins again with *Tabula Rasa* (John Locke, 1690). Malouf disconnects both Ovid and readers from their known language because he believes that one can be estranged from the language of civilization before one can learn the dialogue of nature. He stresses upon the function of language because he knows the fact that language is more than simply a means of communication. It deconstructs the very nature of language and let Ovid undergo retrogressive metamorphosis to overcome the feelings of nostalgia. A noted critic opines that in *An imaginary Life* the very notion of “home” is redefined by Malouf as a demystified way of seeing the world—a condition in which man’s natural, aesthetic, and moral states are harmoniously integrated—rather than an actual, known/remembered place. In this novel Malouf reflects the relationship of human and divinity and it is evidently clear when he articulates in *An Imaginary Life* ; “[...] the child is wrestling with his demon, the animal spirit who protected him in the forest, and is fighting now to get back” (112).

He doesn’t want to lose his new identity which he has achieved through his constant dialogue with Ovid. His past is fighting to question his new subjectivity. The protagonist achieves new identity through his interaction with Ovid and

the linguistic reality of the place. It is important to note that the epistemological reality of the character is achieved when he comes into the symbolic reality.

In nutshell, the complex discourse of structuralism and post structuralism has revealed the fact that the phenomena of language have deeply been involved into the process of subjectivization. The structuralist or the empiricist believes that it is through experience that the mind constructs its knowledge and the experience comes through the dense texture of linguistic realities. Similarly, some Cognitivists or psychoanalysts have expanded that the process of subjectivization takes place only through the instrumental function of language. Lacan has clearly established that the unconscious cannot exist without language. And therefore, the emergence of thought depends upon the complex reality of language. To continue with it, Sapir and Whorf in their 'linguistic determinism' explain the fact that thought and language are inseparably intertwined and thus the present study has explicated the proposition that the construction of the self is possible through linguistic realities. The process of Subjectivization can be recounted through three major strands of philosophical and intellectual complexes. They can be examined within the limited preview of structuralism/ empiricism which explains the phenomena of subjectivity through the complex rubrics of feminism, new historicism, Marxism and cultural studies. The second strand namely cognitivism or psychoanalysis explores the uncanny domain of human mind through three different layers namely unconscious, subconscious, and conscious. It is evident from the fact that the former strands locate the phenomena of subject and subjectivity within complex texture of external realities in which socio, economic, political and cultural realities plays some important roles. The latter strand searches the unknown domains of human mind where the reality of subject and subjectivity may be attained. In addition to those two strands, the philosophy of pragmatism advocates the integration of external with internal, physical with spiritual, material with spiritual etc. thus the chapter does not only

provide a foreground for the research in the context but it also expounds some basic *topoi* of the present research work.

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## “I Must Not Look Down”: Tijan M. Sallah’s *Harrow* Poems

*Nibir K. Ghosh\**

Many of us may recall Professor P. Lal, the legendary founder and Director of Writers Workshop, Calcutta. Since, in 1958, no one was interested in publishing his writings, he set out to undertake the job himself. What may have appeared a small step for him then paved the way for a giant leap for Indian Writing in English with hundreds of writers falling in line to bring their creative renderings in English into the clear light of the day. Professor Lal was very forthright in articulating the mindset of publishers who were wary of publishing the works of new writers in English. One may find in the Writer’s Workshop catalogue countless Indian writers who benefitted from Professor Lal’s inspiring initiative in launching their own expressions of creativity. Standing significantly apart in that list is the name of Tijan M. Sallah, the celebrity Gambian poet, short story writer, biographer and essayist whose maiden poetry and prose collections were published by the Writer’s Workshop. This essay is an attempt to introduce Tijan M. Sallah to readers in India by dwelling upon his latest collection of poems titled *Harrow: London Poems of Convalescence*.

Tijan M. Sallah is the most significant living Gambian poet and is described by critics as one of Africa’s most important writers following the generation of Chinua Achebe and Wole Soyinka. His works have been broadcast over the BBC and the National Public Radio in the U.S. An economist by training, he has taught economics at several American universities before joining the World Bank where he manages

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the agriculture, irrigation and rural development program for East African countries. He has published to date 9 books, of which two books, as indicated earlier, were published with Writers Workshop when Professor Lal was alive. He has published articles and books extensively on political economy and agricultural development. He believes that “economics” speaks to the head, and “literature” (poetry) speaks to the heart.” His most recent books are *Dream Kingdom* (a book of selected poems), *Chinua Achebe: Teacher of Light* (a biography) and *Harrow: London Poems of Convalescence*.

An advocate of intrinsic multiculturalism, Sallah is fond of Indian ethos and is concerned with the nuances he observes in the Indian social, political and economic fabric. When I recently interviewed him for *Re-Markings* and asked him for a message for upcoming young writers, he lucidly stated:

India is on the rise and has much to offer to the world. Young upcoming Indian writers must capture the rich experiences of the current moment of India’s interphase with globalization to tell the story of the poor, the disenfranchised, the marginalized, the socially excluded because of, for example, caste, to those fortunate Indians and the world at large. I truly believe that literature has a social mission and that its highest purpose is to capture the struggles of the current moment to uplift humanity to its highest ideals through imaginative narratives. Young Indian writers must draw cultural resources from the myriad glories of the past but ... they must not forget the widening gap between the rich and poor; they must sing how the lives of peasants herding cows, sheep and goats in Bihar must be valued and uplifted on the same scale as the elites living in the mansions of Delhi (*Re-Markings* 9-10).

*Harrow: London Poems of Convalescence* is a unique departure from the usual socio-political and cultural concerns that Sallah addresses in his earlier works. The poetic terrain in this slender volume, comprising eighteen poems and a “Foreword,” is neither Africa nor America (where Sallah

currently lives and works) but a hospital in Harrow, London where, nursing his wounds, he sets out to explore the veritable landscape of the soul crowded with myriad impressions that range from the immediate to the timeless, from the explicitly particular to the inherently universal. The volume is dedicated to Chinua Achebe and Nadine Gordimer, whom Sallah refers to as “two dear friends; two great African heroes.” Sallah mentions in his “Foreword” to the collection how the poems were the outcome of a near-fatal accident, “the child of a harrowing experience in London,” that he had on the night of October 12, 2000: “The poems in this volume were inspired by that tragic episode....They were written in Harrow while convalescing from the accident. Every day, I wrote one poem and read it when the Ward family came. It became a liberating ritual, a catharsis” (10).

On that fateful October night, narrates Sallah in his “Foreword,” when he walked out of Sheraton Heathrow Hotel to get “a quick dinner” he was caught unawares with a speeding “saloon car” hitting him with tremendous force resulting in extensive fractures on his left femur along with bruises and lacerations. He was rushed to the Middlesex University Hospital in Hounslow, London where he underwent surgery and was then transferred for recovery to The Clementine Churchill Hospital in Harrow (8-9).

The prosaic rendering of the episode that one finds in his “Foreword” is described in great detail in one of the longish poem titled “I Must Not Look Down” where he reflects on his near-brush with death: “For a moment, I thought, as I flew in the air,/ That death has suddenly beckoned me to final rest./ But, thank Great Kindness, I was half-spared./ I now have to reflect and anticipate the best” (25). As he lay in the surgical ward “like a wounded animal,/ Awaiting surgery in painful delirium” he hoped to be rescued from the “pandemonium” of anxiety, pain and anguish by the benevolent “Great Kindness” (27). Even a cursory glance at this poem reveals Sallah’s intrinsic ability to transform graphic prosaic details into exquisite lyrics suffused with rhyme and music.

As a survivor, Sallah finds it comforting to reflect and meditate on the significance of eternal spiritual values that we often tend to lose sight of in our perpetual race for materialistic pursuits, “the world is too much with us” syndrome that William Wordsworth had popularized in his own time. In the poem “Near-Death Experience” Sallah records: “Near-death experience can be religious/ It turned my eyes to the obvious/.../ That mindless seeking of silver and fortune/ Can lead to a spiritual misfortune/ “It seems moderating the passions is the key,/.../ When we are soaked in world-lust, engulfed in the tempting sea/ We should pray daily and be mindful./ If nothing, to our own soul-yearnings be careful” (35).

This mindfulness for spiritual and human values gives Sallah various perspectives to view the trauma of the accident. On the one hand he observes, “Unable to stand on my feet,/ I swallowed the throes of defeat./ .../ Dependency is the child of paralysis;/ I have come to this after much analysis” (“Unable to Stand” 44), while on the other he is reluctant to “sue” the driver of the car that hit him. He is quite forthright in stating in “Some Friends Say”: “Some friends say I should sue the driver,/ But I do not want to create a paradise for lawyers./ I do not want to be in their garrulous game./ I do not want to trundle to the courts for fame” (29). Rather than think of penalizing the driver in any way, he allows his humaneness to come to the fore by appreciating the driver’s gesture of heeding to his own conscience and stopping “to cover me with his jacket” (“I Must Not Look Down” 25) instead of running away from the scene of the accident.

The collection takes one through numerous instances that highlight how the human body and mind in torment and agony can draw strength and sustenance from small mercies and endearing human gestures. In “Here I Lie Now” Sallah is quick to appreciate how the love of the friends who come to visit him in the hospital with “warmth in their faces” takes away his mind from the “Dickensian hell I have been in” (13). Even when the Nurse attending on him jokingly says that his funny gait suggests that he must have “stayed at

the pub long last night,” he doesn’t feel embittered or sour: “All I know is the nurse jokes with a certain passion;/ I can only think of it as compassion” (“The Nurse Says” 19).

In the poem “Tribute to the Body-Carpenter” he is visibly aware that his “mortal furniture is broken” and that “My body is no better than a broken furniture/ Wobbly it is, and its music squeaks./ Looking like some animated painful picture,/ I move slowly making sure nothing breaks” (16). Yet he feels impelled to acknowledge his debt to the attending surgeon whom he refers to as the “carpenter of scars,/ Who joins muscles and bones with herbs and bark” (17). He reiterates the esteem he shows for the “Body Carpenter” (the doctor) in another poem entitled “Next to God, the Doctor” where he says: “When in pain, next to God, is the doctor.../ The doctor’s words ring true like God’s trombones.../ And the prescriptions must be held with the sacredness of treasure” (20). While dwelling on the healing touch that a doctor imparts through his skills, the poet is reminded of Epicurus, the Greek philosopher, who saw pain and pleasure as “Two sovereign principles” that “Nature bestowed on humanity” (20).

In his famous essay, “The Convalescent,” Charles Lamb had remarked in good humor about the predicament of the convalescent: “...what else is it but a magnificent dream for a man to lie a-bed, and draw day-light curtains about him; and, shutting out the sun, to induce a total oblivion of all the works which are going on under it?” Unlike Lamb, Sallah in *Harrow Poems* shows his marked preference for allowing his roving mind and sensitive soul to move from wallowing in self-pity in the depressing confines of a hospital ward to encompass “all the works that are going on under” the Sun. In “The Nights Can Be Long” Sallah writes: “I feel tonight like a throbbing newborn,/ But with a history; so without the garment of innocence./ I am conscious of the past, but helplessly forlorn;/ Waiting for time to unfold to morning in patience” (14).

While poems like “Mad Cow” and “The African Penguins” show the poet’s awareness of contemporary events, poems such as “The Maid that Brings” and “A Lesson of History”

reveal the poet's desire to see the present in relation to the past, especially in the context of the English Empire. Harrow, which figures in the title of the present collection, is also the location of "Harrow School,/ Where children of the British elite/ Get groomed for the high seat" (38). In the present time many Asian children are also on the school's role in keeping with the idea of "The new rainbow-Britain drawn from the global sphere" ("The Maid that Brings" 38). In an ironical tone Sallah remarks: "Britain is really a great place,/ Open to all the world's cultures and races,/ Wedded by this English, this maxim-tongue,/ That flows like water, and to all belongs" (38). The content of the poem helps one recall postcolonial discourses that can be found in texts like *The Empire Writes Back*.

The tenor and tone of "A Lesson of History" is no less pungent. Here the poet juxtaposes "England invaded by the magic/ Of aboriginal histories, a rich panache of lore, craft and lyric" with the hard fact that "Empires also smell of aboriginal/ skeletons" (42). Lying on the hospital bed, the poet muses: "I lie down here in this land of Empire./ After it has retreated, reflected, retired./ I am reminded of Hindustan and Bantustans./ Of English incursions into indigenous lands" (43). The poem ends on an ominous note imbued with a prophetic warning: "I am reminded of suppressed histories, buried tongues./.../ England will become the world it vanquished./ Convergence is the future of the invader and the anguished" (43).

Another poem in the collection that needs to be mentioned specifically is "God Save Us." Here Sallah describes how he awoke one night terrified by a raging storm "That roared all night like a hungry lion, scaring us from sleep" (22). He saw the storm as Nature's revenge on man for mindlessly playing with the environment for material gains, violating thereby what Rousseau called the "Social Contract." Aware of the implication of "global warming" he pleads with God thus: "God, save humanity from mindless terror on nature,/ Else, we are doomed to suffer its revenge and torture" (23). It is significant that a convalescent struggling to come to terms

with his own pain and agony does not withhold himself from thinking of pressing environmental issues that threaten mankind.

Taken together, these beautiful lyrics can veritably be seen as the dispersed meditations of a sensitive soul in search of panaceas to assuage individual suffering as well as collective misery. If these "idioms of hope" could be for Tijan M. Sallah "a liberating ritual, a catharsis," there is reason enough to believe that readers will find in this superb collection as well as in his other creative renderings the urge and the inspiration to create what W.H. Auden outlined in the concluding stanza of his poem, "In Memory of W.B. Yeats": In the deserts of the heart/Let the healing fountain start/, In the prison of his days/Teach the free man how to praise (198).

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## Shashi Deshpande's *Shadow Play*: A Complex Web of Human Relationships

Himani Jain\*

The fact is that our identities do not contain just us; by ourselves we mean nothing. Any identity becomes active, positive and meaningful only in relation to others. The whole potential of who we are and what we are is realised only through our relationship with others. (MO: 2004:56)

Human relationship is the source and the maker of man's identity. The moment one is born in this world, one's identity is defined in relation to somebody else-father, mother, brother, sister and so on. One comes to the world as a guest constantly striving to forge relationship with everyone- human relationship by birth- and continues to be in it even after one's death-people refer to their ancestors to mark their identity. The inherited blood relationships cannot be broken. They follow human beings just like shadows and help them perform their role given by family, society and nation conforming to the existing tradition and culture and facing the emerging situations and circumstances. Apart from inherited relationships, we struggle to forge new relationships with others. We need to connect and communicate with them and enjoy their love, affection, friendliness and playfulness. Relationships make us seem more attractive, friendly and less threatening.

All relationships on the earth are forged due to mutual dependence, mutual needs, mutual security and mutual fulfilment. Moreover, human relationships have social, economic and cultural basis as well. Changes in socio-economic conditions, in course of time, affect cultural environment which, in turn, affect human behaviours and human relationships. P. Rajendra Karmarkar, in "*Filigree*

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and *Sovereignty of Human Bonds :A Study of Dynamics in Ameeta Rathore's Blood Ties*" emphasises the role of society in shaping and maintaining human relationships in the following words:

Traditions, customs are as important as 'blood ties'. They hold the people in their places and guide them with the force of an undercurrent and pursue them to follow the etiquette. Though people might neglect the traditions, traditions seem to cling to them, like parents who do not discard their children even if children are unkind to them. In their compass, traditions rule both the rich and the poor. People preserve the relations for the sake of social life, harmony and honour though their love is at its low ebb. (IJES: 43:2005-2006:113)

Shashi Deshpande, like other Indian novelists, has dealt with human relationships with high seriousness because the traditional heritage of India gives great importance to human values and human relationships. Her latest novel *Shadow Play* (2013), which is sequel to her previous novel *A Matter of Time* (1996) deals with a complex web of relationships. Aru, the female protagonist in *Shadow Play*, while working as an apprentice to Surekha, is now convinced that "human relationships are so complex, the variation in human behaviour so myriad, humans so skilful in devising new forms of cruelty, that it is impossible for statutes to provide for every single contingency" (2013,82)

Chanchala K. Nayak writes in the 'Introduction' to her seminal work '*Writing Difference: The Novels of Shashi Deshpande*':

Human relationship has always been central to her work and she considers its complexity not as 'given' but as a product of the social reality we live in. And this social reality is not a static figmentation but a version of one's own individualised perception which is ever in a state of flux. (2005:21)

Gopal, the central male character, in *Shadow Play*, when injured and treated by unknown people, muses over human relationship: ".....you have no place on this earth if you are

not connected to anyone, to anything. Only saints can soar over their own physicality and attain a bodiless existence which serves you from everything in life.”(2013:60)

Shashi Deshpande's main concerns in *A Matter of Time and Shadow Play* are parent-child relationship and husband-wife relationship and she sees them not separate but interrelates. In her early novels, Deshpande has shown the intricacies of parent-child relationship, particularly in the context of urban middle class background, and told Gita Vishwanathan, in an interview on June 3, 2003 that parent child relationship “is a very deep and complex relationship.” (2005:229)

As parents and children belong to different generation, the generation gap - the difference between ‘then’ and ‘now’ - plays an important role in filial relationship. Parents are often labelled ‘traditional’ - those who prefer to be authoritative and dominating and judgmental and responsible showing concern for social customs, family tradition and economic security, while the children are often labelled ‘rebels’ - those who prefer to keep authority, observe transparency, take risks, exercise autonomy and remain open minded. Such attitudes and mindsets reflecting generation gap often disturb the harmony in filial relationship. Parents often tell their irritated children, “You will never know until you become a father/mother.” In fact, having children changes one's equation with one's parents as is the common saying: “without being a mother one is just half a mother; without being a father one is just half a father.” There is an interplay of ‘patience’ and ‘impatience’ between parents and children - the children lose patience and get irritated but parents are never tired of being parents, even if they become grandparents. The generation gap in modern post-globalized India is wider than ever and filial relationship is heading towards south.

Shashi Deshpande's novels, being woman-centric have female protagonists who rebel against their mothers. According to Medha Sachdev, “Deshpande's novels do not valorize motherhood. In fact, the bond between mother and daughter is perpetually under question.”(2011:182) She has

thus deconstructed the classical Indian myths which valorize mother-son relationship. She has also deconstructed the Indian myth of a loving mother, a person with an unlimited capacity for sacrifice and forgiveness as mothers in her novels are jealous, selfish and possessive, even cruel. According to Shalmalee Palekar:

The conflict between mother and daughter is presented by author as a conflict between tradition and modernity, a clash between freedom and dependence, of the assertion of selfhood and the need for love in relationships. (2005:60)

Deshpande's presentation of mother-daughter relationship in *A Shadow Play* is different from her other novels. The daughters of dead Sumi, feel oppressed by their mother's memories. Aru, in *A Matter of Time* loves her mother and wants her mother Sumi to live a happy life. She is angry with her father, Gopal, who has caused misery to her mother by deserting her along with her children and placed them in an outer circle. She asks him, “Why did you get married at all, why did you have children?”(62) When Sumi breaks down, the mother-daughter relationships are reversed. Aru moves forward to steady her mother.”(34) and Charu holds the sobbing Sumi close to her own body and “rocks her, as if she is the mother and her mother her child, until both of them are soothed into a tearless calm.”(112) Aru is piqued with her mother for not taking a stand against Gopal, her husband. But in *ShadowPlay*, she forms a new respect for her dead mother Sumi. When one of her client commits suicide (because she was deserted by her husband), Aru understands her mother's plight for not filing a case against Gopal,

She could not get away from the memory of the woman banging her head on the table, of her saying, ‘I can't, I can't’. She kept thinking of the flames enveloping her, heard her anguished cries as the flames touched her..... she could have been Sumi, the thought had come to her at one terrible moment. But Sumi did not lose her place in the world without Gopal. Aru found herself full of a new respect for her mother.....I wronged Sumi thought she was weak, I kept prodding her to fight, when what I really wanted to punish Papa....(2013:14)

Sumi's relationship with her mother, Kalyani, is also harmonious. When Sumi is deserted, Kalyani is visibly upset to know it. She cries, "No...no... my God, not again..."(12) She brings her daughter home. She goes to Gopal and pleads for his return home. She takes the entire responsibility of Sumi's "carelessness" on herself, apologises for Sumi's shortcomings as a wife and asks him to forgive her failings. She says, "But...how could she have known what being a good wife means when she never saw her mother being one? I taught her nothing, it's my fault, Gopala, forgive me and don't punish her for it."(47)She also assures him that Sumi will inherit all her jewellery, but in vain. Kalyani does place Sumi firmly in the role of a subordinate who had failed to please, but it shows her love and concern for the well-being of her daughter.

But Kasturi's relationship with her mother was not harmonious. Gopal thinks of Kasturi's relationship with her mother:

She spoke of her mother to me, she told me how much she regretted not being fair to her, that she had thought her dull and had been impatient and irritated with her; she had given her mother neither love nor loyalty. Even when her mother died, Kasturi was so involved with her own life that she scarcely mourned her. In any case her mother was such a joyless woman, she said that it was hard to mourn her. (2013:164)

The fathers in Deshpande's novels do present the various facets of masculinity and patriarchy in Indian society, but they are more progressive and broad-minded than mothers. They act as true guide and supporter who contribute significantly in multidimensional development of their daughters who happen to be the protagonists in the novels. In many of her novels, daughters are more attached to their fathers but in *A Matter of Time*, Aru is angry with her runaway father, Gopal. Her father's desertion has brought with it social stigma and myriad of unanswerable questions. Her searing questions: "Why did you marry? Why did you have children?" leave her father puzzled. But in *Shadow*

*Play*, father-daughter relationship seems to reconcile. "Gopal and Aru watch Seema all the time. It's like they've gone back to the old days, to their old partnership, when they looked after baby Seema because her mother was ill and couldn't care for her."(2013:89) Gopal thinks about his failed relationship with his daughters, "I destroyed our relationship. Aru will never trust me again. But even now when I enter a room, she looks up at me, her face eager and welcoming, then she remembers and turns away."(2013:163) Gopal, like other fathers in Deshpande's novels, is concerned about his daughter's welfare: "when I saw my daughters in tears, I knew why they were weeping, I knew whom they were grieving for. Sumi has been everywhere, in everyone's thoughts, all the time in this wedding...." (2013:13)

It seems to suggest that the filial relationship in *Shadow Play* is the reversal of the role play of her other novels. In *A Matter of Time* and its sequel *Shadow Play*, mother-daughter relationship is harmonious and the father-daughter is a problematic one.

Conjugal relationship as such, is one of the two most important relationships human beings are generally concerned with, the other being filial relationship. Conjugal relationship, however, differs from filial relationship on the ground that it is not a blood relationship; it is a man-made relationship, not a God-made one. According to Shashi Deshpande:

Marriage is a more complicated relationship because it is not a blood tie. Also there is physicality of sex. And there are enormous demands made on each other and it is that which interests me. Because when it comes to crunch, you put stress on it, it comes apart. It is so human made. (2005:229)

Deshpande's *A Matter of Time*, according to Vimala Rama Rao, deals with a peculiar problem concerning conjugal life "a person assuming *sanyasa* of a kind which is often encountered in our society."(*JIWE*: 1997: 136)Gopal and Sumi's is an unusual conjugal relationship marked by their pain, suffering, endurance, understanding, love and support

extended to each other. They had a love marriage. Gopal initially reciprocated Sumi's love and needed her warmth, her humanness, and her womanness. He "wanted it all" and did "everything"-caring for babies, tending them caressing them with joy and passion. He was free from complexes and he "could cross the barriers between the sexes with ease...and do something most men found hard-present his whole-self to female, not just a part of himself."(107) But his passion for idealism defeats his physical desires. His body now fails him. He could lie "beside Sumi night after night, quiescent, feeling nothing."(69) He feels disillusioned and deserts his wife and their three children-Aru, Charu and Seema. It is his betrayal and cruelty to his wife as the novelist puts it: "Gopal's desertion is not just a tragedy; it is both a shame and disgrace."(13)

Unlike his daughters, she is not angry with Gopal. She does not blame him. She does not accept her 18 year old daughter, Aru's suggestion for filing a case against her him. But if she ever meets him, she would certainly ask him:

What is it Gopal...that makes a man in this age of acquisition and possession, walk out on his family and all that he owns. Because it was you who said that we are shaped by the age we live in, by the society we are part of. How can you, in this age, a part of this society, turn your back on everything in your life? (27)

According to Usha Bande, Gopal committed a grave injustice to his wife by deserting her. To quote her:

Gopal leaves his family in the mid-current: his daughters are in their teens (a difficult period for growing up adolescents"); his wife is not employed and is not economically equipped to meet the day to day requirements: his in-laws are economically sound but they have their own problems. Add to this the social disgrace and psychological "displacement". (2005:196)

Gopal's desertion has created a vast void in Sumi's life and left her purposeless and directionless. But she exhibits her dignity in exploring the ways of coming to terms with the painful reality and going on with life. Vijay Guttal sees a new light in Sumi's attitude when he says:

But it is in Sumi that we see the struggle to learn to leave alone and assert oneself against the tide of tragedy. If Sumi is trying to work out a strategy to withstand the shock and the emptiness left behind by Gopal, and create a life for herself and her daughter, Aru is full of the sense of injustice and protest against her father. (2005:174-175)

According to R. S. Pathak, Sumi suffers silently, learns to become her own refuge and preserves her self-respect. To quote him:

Sumi appears to be an epitome of silent suffering and passive resistance...She blocks out unpleasantness. She has a good opinion of herself. She is more concerned with getting on with life. She does not want pity. She would do anything for pride. She distances even her husband. (1998:158)

Sumi meets Gopal several times after the desertion. They meet; they exchange news; she tells him of her new ventures and about the daughters. She speaks freely of life and leaves Gopal wondering at her vivacity. She confronts the past with such admirable self-control that Gopal longs to possess her. Thus Sumi, after desertion, progresses in a positive direction. She is just beginning to discover herself when she, along with her father, dies in an accident as they rode a borrowed scooter to enable Sumi to take up a new responsibility in a school. Gopal, on the other hand, continues living over his pupil's printing press in ascetic self-contained manner and finally leaves for Alaknanda in his quest for peace.

What happened between Sumi and Gopal was not sudden. Gopal had his own inner emptiness. He was conscious of man's essential loneliness and futility of human relationship. After marriage, he had admitted that conjugal life made demands and it was not possible for him to "tolerate a life time commitment."(69) He could not believe that marriage was a union of two souls. Rather he believed that two people have two bodies and two hearts and they can never beat in such unison that there is only one sound. According to Jasbir Jain what makes him walk out is "the need for a sense of privacy and of freedom, the need to keep

a part of oneself in one's possession, the need to preserve the self that may disrupt a relationship.”(2003:110)But there is yet another reason which Gopal mentions for walking away, based on his patriarchal mindset and gender discrimination: “...For a woman from the moment she is pregnant, there is an overriding reason for living, a justification for life that is loudly and emphatically true. A man has to search for it, always and forever.”(68) And Gopal does not have son for his support and redemption as the *Epigraph* to Part-II “The Family” suggests thus: “Whatever wrong has been done by him, his son frees him from it all, therefore, he is called a son. By his son a father stands firm in this world.” (91) But such an explanation is biased against women and favourably disposed towards the rights of men. Why can't the women have the same privilege?

But the two other things here are not in keeping with the genuine Indian concept of renunciation/*sanyasa*. First, Gopal renounces the world before discharging all his responsibilities and fulfilling his commitment towards his family. Second, he is still haunted by the desire of body. He remembers that he touched Sumi's bare flesh “in the river and could feel it respond” to his touch. At later stage when Sumi visits him in a room, and as they talk about their marriage and their daughters, Gopal realises that “the space between them in the room is filled with desire, his desire, that his body after all these many months, is awake. Why now? Why here?”(223). Obviously, he was mistaken and Urmi's mother, Kalyani, with her experience of life, is able to perceive that Gopal is “driven by a need he does not know himself” and that all his efforts are directed to “make peace with himself.”(245) According to N. Poovalingam, Gopal's renunciation is far from the concept of Vedic renunciation. To quote him: “Gopal's abandoning the family is not the result of saturation in the worldly life. His is more a withdrawal in pain than a renunciation due to contentment.” (1998:174)

But Gopal cannot be called a coward as he admits his fears quite candidly. Besides, after renunciation, he never looks back and regrets. He cuts himself from worldly

pleasures, reduces his needs to bare minimum and prefers to live in the hermit like solitude. After Sumi's death, he is able to hold himself in with an iron self-control holding the essence of wisdom that “Everything passes, nothing remains.”(237)But the winner is, in fact, Sumi who endures all with a quite magnanimity. She is a real wise person, a true renouncer who neither hates nor desires and is capable of transcending the pairs of opposites such as pain and pleasure, loss and gain, and defeat and victory and one who, while doing all these, believes that one is doing nothing. She is wiser than Gopal. She does not want to hold him against wishes.

The novel juxtaposes human bondages with *sanyasa* as the two different ways of attaining self-fulfilment. While Sumi seeks fulfilment through the human bondage, Gopal tries for it through *sanyasa*. Forging and maintaining human relationships are certainly more difficult than becoming a *sanyasi*. Gopal also realises that human beings are not free but time's captives. He admits: “Only the creator is free; only the creator can be free because he is out of it all. I (Gopal) didn't know it then. I know it now.”(55) Shashi Deshpande seems to be in favour of human relationships which give fresh lease of life in the face of recurring crisis. Suvarna Shinde appreciates it in the following words:

This understanding between Gopal and Sumi makes their relationship a unique one in Deshpande's fictional world. All the man-woman relationships in her novels are oppressive, strange, uncomfortable or silent. Sumi and Gopal stand out uniquely in spite of the fact that Gopal leaves them for something unattainable. (2001:132)

The novel also adds another dimension to conjugal relationship-the husband deserting the wife and children unilaterally. Sumi-Gopal relationship collapses and goes through crisis that devastates the whole family and ends in death. Their relationship is a serious comment on marriage than the earlier novels which work primarily through a psychological base. It leads to a reconfiguration of relationships and a reworking of emotional responses. Aru,

the elder daughter who has gathered a very negative impression of marriage, declares: "I'm never going to get married."(76) Besides, *A Matter of Time* is the first novel of Shashi Deshpande in which she makes an effort to highlight a male protagonist.

Shashi Deshpande's exploration of man-woman relationship is not only within the framework of marriage but also without it. She explores extra-marital relationship-pre-marital, in-marital and post-marital relationships-in most of her novels. She considers marriage a very important institution but not a sacred institution. She thinks that monogamy, fidelity and sanctity of marriage are hard for human beings to adhere to and, therefore, majority of men and women find it to be a very difficult institution. She is of the view that there is no need to uphold marriage at any cost except at one's convenience. In her interview on 3-6-2003, she says about an incident in one of her novels: "When Gopal walks out of her marriage in *A Matter of Time*, it's not an easy decision for him to take. He suffers on account of it. On the contrary, Sumi is able to accept it more comfortably." (2005:230) In Shashi Deshpande's novels, extra-marital relationship is no longer the privilege and luxury of the socialites with easy moral code as it happens in the novels of Nayantara Sahgal, Shobha De and Namita Gokhale, it is a need cutting across the barriers of class and gender.

Gopal and Kasturi in *Shadow Play* forge a relationship which does not come under extra- marital relationship. Their relationship is not sexual. To Kasturi, it is an escapade to find some human empathy and to share a fulfilment of her desire for affectionate relationship, a kind of inner satisfaction that her relationship with her husband failed to provide. They both were travelling on the same road. "Kasturi has been thinking of Gopal too, having the same thought that, inspite of their spending time together, she knows very little of his personal life."(2013:123) Their relationship is never precisely defined as a man- woman relationship.

Relationships define the way in which people are connected and have dealings with each other. It is the major

sustaining factor of human civilization but it is always shrouded in mystery. It is quite difficult or almost impossible to find out the truth of one's relationship with others, be they parent, spouse, children or whatever.

Moments of happiness, moments never to be forgotten. Magic moments, which travel with us and stay with us all our lives, illuminating even our darkest days. The right time, perhaps, to leave the family to themselves at this ephemeral moment of celebration, of happiness and togetherness. (2013:297)

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## **Memories of Violence, Gender and Trauma in *Khamosh Pani*: A Partition Narrative**

*Farzana S Ali\* & Urmila Dabir\*\**

Partition of India and creation of Pakistan recur within the films as disruptive trauma and connections are established between women's experiences of ethnic tensions within the contemporary settings of the films and the gendered experiences of 1947. The issue of gender is central to the memory of partition, where the 'lone woman' is an iconic symbol of suffering. Director Sabiha Sumar of the film *Khamosh Pani* (Silent Waters, 2003) tells the story of one such woman "Ayesha" with simple honesty. The film illustrates that the nightmare of partition and bloodshed doesn't ever end - it just comes back in different but equally devastating forms. As Kabir says, "Partition 'tore the social fabric' that had held communities together" ("Gender, Memory, Trauma" 180). Many critics point to Partition as a wound, or as a bodily violence, the formulation of which points us to both the individual body harmed, as well as the collective one. Butalia bemoans that those who suffered through Partition 'have no monuments' (*Other Side of Silence* 40).

Partition violence is unintelligible, and the way in which the fabric of society was ripped apart cannot be comprehended. As Bahri outlines, this also allows for Partition to be represented without fear of personal disclosure from women who suffered due to the nation and the patriarchal family (227). *Khamosh Pani* articulates the trauma of a nation that has not worked through the gendered violence of its

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formation. Set in 1979 with flashbacks of 1947, the film's structure reveals the disruptive potential of individual women's history upon dominant national narratives, especially at times of increased religious nationalism. The film is set in a small village in Pakistan's Punjab in 1979, and focuses on Ayesha (Kiron Kher) and her son Salim (Aamir Malik) who gets increasingly involved within religious extremist politics during the film. From the beginning the narrative is disrupted by small intermittent sections that refer back to Ayesha's experiences of the 1947 Partition, creating Partition as the film's past tense. This past tense is set up largely through images of a well that come to stand in for 1947, and act as motifs of memory, gender and communal violence throughout the course of the film. As the film proceeds we learn through the flashbacks that during the communal riots of Partition, Ayesha's mother and sister jumped into the local well at the behest of her father. Ayesha is also to jump but at the last moment runs away and is captured by a group of Muslim men. She converts to Islam and marries one of her captors (Afsaan) and then settles in the same village of Charkhi where she had lived up to her death. The site of the well comes to hold much significance in the film. As the location from which Ayesha escapes the threat to her life, it is one she avoids until the very end of the film when she returns to the well to end her life. Ayesha's isolation is starkly reflected in her death, the wide shot showing the well in its empty surroundings. The shot shows Ayesha from behind, taking away the individuality of her face from the shot. This also encourages the viewer to imagine Ayesha alongside many other women; through this framing she comes to stand in for many others whose lives have been affected in similar ways. Before jumping, there is also a shot of the inside of the well, reflecting alongside her jumping, that history has come to the present.

The film, thus, encourages a thematic analysis of ideas of history and memory, and as Maureen Turim aptly notes: "The flashback is a privileged moment in unfolding that juxtaposes different moments of temporal reference. A

juncture is wrought between present and past and two concepts are implied in this juncture: memory and history." (Flashbacks 1)

In *Khamosh Pani* the flashbacks present a time when Ayesha's religious and national identities shift, from Indian and Sikh to Pakistani and Muslim. Set against increased religious nationalism in 1979, these flashes of '47 expose not only Ayesha's traumatic history but also the nation's traumatic founding. The film utilizes the tropes of trauma to create a particular viewing experience that points to the power structures at play across history, using the mode of trauma in order to represent history and engage with repressed memory. In Caruth's words; "trauma is not experienced as a mere repression or defense, but as a temporal delay that carries the individual beyond the shock of the first moment. The trauma is repeated suffering of the event, but it is also a continual leaving of its site." (*Trauma and Experience*)<sup>10</sup> The film's structure honours trauma through maintaining gaps and absences and making the viewer partake in the disruption and slow gleaning of information caused by the flashbacks. The flashbacks themselves are short and interspersed throughout the narrative of 1979. Though they disrupt the viewing experience and story of 1979, they are not shown to be disruptive for Ayesha. The first flashback has a voiceover that states 'Summer days in 1947 seemed so much hotter'. Subsequent flashbacks directly engage with Ayesha's own experience of 1947 and reveal her story slowly. The form of the film with the flashbacks recreates elements of trauma through slow incremental revelation of the past.

Ayesha's trauma is however juxtaposed with national trauma – a trauma on the socio-political landscape as well as an individualized state. Ayesha's story is a story that exemplifies the trauma at the site of the nation. Ayesha's loss operates on several levels, but most pertinently she has been separated from her Sikh past. She has effectively mourned this loss and detached from her past self, but she maintains this self as important through keeping objects that are related to her past Sikh identity in a suitcase. The case

becomes a symbolic container of her individual but also collective past. Ayesha keeps this case locked but regularly opens and peruses the contents, pointing towards how the case comes to act as a memorial of her past life. Ayesha's past remains important to her, signified through her return to the suitcase, but the containment offered by the suitcase demonstrates the labour she is doing to temporally fix her past identity and acknowledge it as lost. Although this past may have produced the present, it does not rupture it. Acting out occurs when the past is not rendered past and can continue to pervade the present. It is not only allowed to effect the present but becomes an active part of the present through the compulsion to repeat. Also crucial is to distinguish between what is past and what is present, at what point these are collapsing in perception, and what role we play in keeping the past alive (Antze and Lambek xxvii).

The film begins by showing us how Ayesha is effectively working through her individual trauma, but the nation's inability to recognize her history means that this working through is effectively sabotaged. She may exist in the present and locate herself there, but the national narrative refuses to make space for her in its story, thus leaving her with limited options. Ayesha's escape here not only claims agency for herself but refuses the patriarchal protection that requires her death. She not only escapes the threat to life but challenges the validity of this threat to have existed in the first place. Our engagement with Ayesha at the start of the film is of someone who is settled and valued in her community. As contemporary events come to mirror those she lived through in 1947, this working through is slowly undone. As her Sikh past is discovered and considered incompatible with the Islam and public politics, Salim asks her to declare her Islamic faith and renounce her Sikh past publicly. Ayesha returns to the well and begins to relive the past; returns to the well to jump in, to complete the threat to her life that she had previously escaped and thus end herself. Ayesha's current circumstances can be understood as the result of acting out at the level of national politics, whereby the gendered

conditions of 1947 repeat within the village. This counters her own labour of working through, resulting in the traumatic repeat of the past for her on an individual level.

In *Khamosh Pani*, silence and Partition are remembered. Silence about Ayesha's past is also silence about the incidents that befell women. Ayesha's individual working poses a challenge to the attempts to construct a cohesive national narrative around the events of Partition. Veena Das has pointed out that 'the figure of the abducted woman becomes the site whereby the state exerts and forms itself. This is achieved through returning women to their families and reinstating a correct kinship' (21). The new nations established a social contract that recognized the suffering of women only in so far as it could be a symbol to which the state could respond (37). Women were often returned to family members who did not want them, or parted from abductors with whom they had now settled and were successfully rebuilding their lives. Ayesha's story signifies the systemic gendered violence of a time, and it is this history that the national narrative is repeating, suggesting that it will be compelled to repeat such instances until the story of violence is done justice to. The demands being made on Ayesha are repetitive: in 1947 we see Ayesha's father wanting her to jump into the well to save his honour, and then in 1979 Salim wanting her to publicly declare her Muslim faith to save his reputation. The repetition of women's roles in this paradigm is central and we see the repeat of women as symbols and repositories of community honour. When Jeswant finds Ayesha to speak with her he asks her to leave Pakistan with him to see their father who is on his deathbed. Jeswant implores her, stating that their father wishes to die in peace and wishes to see her one last time. Ayesha refuses and in one of the most affecting scenes of the film states:

Ayesha: What do you want after all these years? What do you want?

Jeswant: Father is dying. He wants to see you one more time.

A: So he can finish the job? Wasn't killing mother and

Jeeto enough?

J: He just wants to die in peace.

A: He wanted to kill me for his peace. What will he do if he sees me alive and a Muslim? How will he go to his Sikh heaven? And what heaven is there for me? A Sikh heaven or a Muslim heaven? You were happy to think I was dead. But I'm alive. I made my own life without you. Now this is my life and my home. Go away. Leave me as I am.

J: Veero.

A: Go. Go back.

In this scene the past stands between Ayesha and Jeswant and is symbolized through their positions on either side of the well. Where patriarchal modernity has caused violence and dislocation for women, it also upholds the conditions by which their stories cannot be heard, for these stories hold within them the threat of disruption. ...'figures of women have critically cut into the construction of nationalist stories of the past'..... and formulation of trauma something that happens too quickly is useful to apply to the political context of Partition; the repetition incurred by this can also be recognized across the Indian subcontinent where the patterns of gendered violence and dislocation of Partition can be seen to repeat.

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## Magic Realism and Hagiography in Basavaraj Naikar's *Bird in the Sky*

*Kh. Kunjo Singh\**

Defining the term “magic realism” in an ordinary and normal literary formulation is not an easy task. But we know that the term was originally applied in the 1920's to a school of painters and is used to describe the prose fiction of Jorge Luis Borges in Argentina, as well as the work of writers such as Gabriel Garcia Marquez in Columbia, Gunter Grass in Germany, and John Fowles in England. Referring to the above writers M. H. Abrams attempts to define the term as: “These writers interweave, in an ever-shifting pattern, a sharply etched realism in representing ordinary events and descriptive details together with fantastic and dreamlike elements, as well as with materials derived from myth and fairy tales” (GLT 135).

Observing the above definition we may construct a form of “magic realism” to be a combination of sharply-etched realism, fantastic and dreamlike elements and material derived from myth and fairy tales (Kunjo 245). Originally, the term connotes a kind of structure of novel. But in the postcolonial space where writers are concerned with the reconstruction of history, refinding of roots and belongingness, recovery and revival of lost culture, restructuring of identity and setting pace in the global race, the technical contexts of the term “magic realism” have been employed in play also. Many postcolonial novelists have adopted native history as a proper and significant theme of their novels successfully. In doing so they have mingled ordinary details of life with historical, fantastic and dreamlike elements of society and materials derived from myth and fairy tales.

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The term “hagiography” or “hagiology” has been defined by many Standard English dictionaries as “that branch of literature dealing with the lives of saints.” In many European countries there have been hagiological or hagiographical literatures about Christian saints and their legends. Though there are countless *puranas* or legends in Indian regional literatures about great and powerful saints and sages, hagiographical literary works are not produced. But in Indian English literature there is the possibility of writing hagiographical fiction in realistic style rather than in an idealistic and glorifying mode. Hagiographies or hagiographical fiction can be written on the living aspects of many major religions of India like Vaidicism, Saivism, Virasaivism or Lingayatism, Sikhism, Jainism, Buddhism, and Indian Christianity.

*Birds in the Sky*, the latest novel from the pen of Basavaraj Naikar, an eminent literary scholar of Indian English literature, may be assessed as a magic realism novel. At the very outset, we see the plot of the novel is developed on Indian history, particularly of Karnataka in South India. The plot begins with the birth of the protagonist Siddharudha on 26<sup>th</sup> March, 1836, the festival Ramanavami (Salivahana Saka 1758, Durmukhi Samvatsara, Chaitrasuddha Navami, Punarvasu Naksatra, Saturday) (B.N. – 1). The boy born in Chalakapur village in Bidar District of North Karnataka grew up through his own miraculous experiments and experiences to the stage of a super saint popularly known as Siddharudha Bharati of Hubballi. Starting from the boyhood stage of about 5 or 6 years of age, this boy began to perform miracles and magical fits because of his inborn intuitive power. Of the many miraculous deeds mention may be made of one such event as the death of a buffalo. Once he cursed a female buffalo to death. His mother asked the reason for killing the buffalo. Seeing the worried mother he “uttered a pentagram, *Nama Sivaya* and caressed the back of the buffalo with his fingers. Lo, the dead animal recovered her life and stood up as before.” (BN 6). Another example of his miraculous performance was that once on a picnic in a jungle he touched

a single blue-berry lying in front of them. "Instantly it was multiplied into a big heap of excellent and juicy blueberries." (BN 10) Siddharudha went on peregrinating from place to place and also undertook pilgrimage to many holy places like Kanchi, Sriramgam, Madurai, etc. performing various miraculous fits. He reached many of the important holy places of north India even those by the bank of the rivers Ganga, Yamuna, Mahanadi, etc.

Another historic year is mentioned in the course of the plot, i.e., A.D. 1872 when Siddha was 36 years old. The year is historic because the traditional Car Festival celebrated on the Full Moon Day of Gauri was changed into another day, i.e., the Holy Night of Siva (Sivaratri). The change was made under the instruction of Siddharudha. Another historic year mentioned in the continuation of the plot of the novel is the year 1895. It was in this year that Siddharudha accepted Sayyad Amin, a young Muslim as his disciple. "In course of time Siddharudha instructed him in the philosophy of Vedanta. From that day Sayyad Amin was called Kabiradasa." (BN.108). Another remarkable year mentioned in the plot in historic order is 01-12-1915 on which Kabiradasa expired. "Sri Siddharudha bade him adieu with tears in his eyes." (BN.130). One more historic year ingredient in the construction of the plot is the year 1919-20 when Sri Siddharudha predicted that a boy called Siddayya would become the Chief Pontiff of Sri Gajadanda Swami's monastery in future. (BN 159-160).

Another historic year mentioned in the course of the plot is 1920 when Siddharudha recognized a poor old woman as his best disciple while delivering his spiritual discourse during the Sivaratri Festival in the presence of Rajas and Ranis of Sangli, Miraj and Kolhapur. (BN166). One more politico-historic year mentioned in the continuation of the plot is the year 1924 when Mahatama Gandhi visited Hubballi and delivered a public address in a function presided over by Siddharudha. Another important historic event mentioned in the plot is the visit of Lokmanya Tilak to Hubballi to give a public lecture on political affairs in the year 1926. The

function was also presided over by Siddharudha. Another historic year in the plot is 01-05-1924 when Siddharudha made a will leaving his monastery in the hands of his disciple, Siddappa. Then there lodged a law suit against this will and the case was transferred to the Dharwad Court on 12-09-1927. The last but not the least in importance is the year 1929, the year of the death of Siddharudha Bharati on 21<sup>st</sup> August at the Hubballi monastery. With the death of the protagonist the plot also has been cut short there. From all the above mentioned historic years spanning for about 60 years covering the transitional decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, we know that one of the important ingredients of magic realism, i.e., history or reality has been employed as the background of the plot of *Bird in the Sky*.

One important strand of magic realism in the novel is the novelist's use of fantasy through many acts of the protagonist Siddharudha Bharati. When he was only a boy of hardly five or six, "one day he went to the kitchen in his house and took out a dirty earthen pot containing a little quantity of sesame. But he managed to distribute it to the entire village by miraculously multiplying the grains." (BN 2) Another important fantastic deed performed by the protagonist is when "he led one of the boys into the midst of water and made him sit under the surface of water thereby training him in the art of holding one's breadth in deep water." (BN 2).

There are also evidences of using myth as a strategy in constructing magic realism in the novel. One such evidence is the myth of Saraswati giving learning to the people. When his mother asked him to start to go to school from that day, the boy answered, "Mother dear, does Goddess Saraswati ever go to any school?" (BN 2). Another evidence is seen when the temple-school teacher, unable to understand the philosophical words spoken by Siddharudha, said to the father of the boy: "He seems to be an incarnation of Lord Siva Himself in the human form." (BN 4). One more evidence of the mythical reference used in the novel is when Siddharudha replied to the queries of the villagers how could Devadatta stay alive so long under the water. He replied, "His life-breath ascended

through the *susumna nala* to the *sikha chakra*. Then like a *chataka* bird enjoying the *swati* drop, he dwelt in the *puritati nala* happily without any danger (BS.9). The use of the myth of Goddess Ganga is seen when the womenfolk of the village Chalakapur after bathing and swimming cheerfully in the beautiful lake of Bhimaraya garden on a picnic, offered their food to the Goddess Ganga. "After frolicking in the water, the womenfolk unpacked the food from their respective baskets, offered it symbolically to the Forest Goddess and Goddess Ganga." (BN 9).

The myth of Siva is recurrently used as a strand of magic realism in the novel. When the boy Siddharudha was stung by a snake his father and mother cursed Lord Siva for killing their son. But by the timely arrival of Lord Siva the life of the boy was saved. "By that time Lord Siva with his celestial companions took the guise of a wandering *jangama* and walked to Chalakapur, He went on announcing to the public, "we shall cure patient with snake-bites." (BN 15).

Another strand in the magic realism novel is fairy tale. This technique is also used in this novel very effectively through the miraculous deeds of Siddharudha as if he was graced by the fairy god-mother. Once on a picnic, many villagers began to pick up a few fruits and eat them. Siddharudha wanted to surprise them and "he, therefore, touched a single blue-berry lying in front of them. Instantly it was multiplied into a big heap of excellent and juicy blueberries." (BN10). In the fairy tale anything and everything is provided by the unseen fairy god-mother as and when the thing is needed. Likewise in this novel also the protagonist Siddharudha Bharati could have anything when he needed as if provided by the fairy god-mother. One such example is seen when Siddharudha cured of a chronic disease of a Marwadi by pouring on his head holy water from the Gomukha Tirtha. "He took the holy water in his cupped palms and poured it compassionately on the head of the Marwadi. And lo, within no time the Marwadi was cured of his disease." (BN 82).

One miraculous incident which would have occurred in fairy tales only was also happened in the real life experience of the protagonist in this novel. Once a tiger of the Hubballi circus company escaped and frightened the whole of Hubballi. The manager of the company, Kashinath Chatre wanted to search for the tiger with many men armed with rifles. But Siddharudha told Kashinath who was his devotee that nothing was required to bring back the tiger which they fed and fondled. So, only Kashinath and Siddharudha went to the forest to search for the tiger. Addressing the tiger as Siva, Siddharudha called him to come to him. "In a few minutes the tiger bounded in and wagging its tale like an affectionate pup, rolled at the feet of the Swamiji... The tiger licked the feet of Sri Siddharudha as if in apology." (BN 145-146).

Another fantastic, miraculous, mythical and fairy-tale like incident happened in the plot of the novel was when Siddharudha used his power over even the natural phenomena by bringing down rain during a severe drought season. Once the people of Hubballi requested Siddharudha during a drought time to tell Gangadevi to come down to enable them to supply drinking water to everybody in the annual fair. Siddharudha asked the people to come next noon with preparations to worship Gangadevi. Accordingly, next noon the women performed the *puja* in the tank-bed. "A minute speck of cloud floated from nowhere and hid the sun. In a matter of minutes the tiny cloud spread from horizon and heavy drops of rain started pelting down... It poured for hours together and the tank was filled to the rim by evening." (BN147).

One more fantastic and miraculous incident in the novel is seen when Siddharudha managed to satisfy more than forty to fifty of his devotees with less than half of a plate of food. A poor lady once invited Siddharudha and four to five of his devotees to a lunch. But Siddharudha took about forty to fifty devotees with him. So the woman was angry because her preparation might not be enough to serve all of them. Understanding her inner feelings, innocence and purity of

intention, Siddharudha asked his devotees to put some food on a plate. He touched it with his right hand and wished, "Be victorious, Mahadevi." Then he took out a morsel from the plate and put it into the mouth of each of the forty to fifty devotees. Miraculously, all the devotees were satisfied with a single morsel of food each and began to belch satisfaction." (BN154).

*Bird in the Sky* is really a hagiographic novel dealing with the real life of a super-saint, his miraculous activities, renunciation, deliverance and salvation. The hero Sri Siddharudha Bharati, born and brought up in Karnataka, South India, is projected as a religio-spiritual guide of many devotees even including powerful and wealthy Rajas and Ranis. He trudged his long journey of his life from 1836 to 1929 by performing miraculous activities to lead his devotees to the spiritual path to reach the final salvation. He taught his devotees the need for renunciation and leading of an austere life for attaining *Nirvana* (salvation). He tried to show his own life experiences and experiments as proofs of victory of liberation in the conflict between bondage and liberation through renunciation; and victory of spirit in the struggle between flesh and spirit through austerity.

With a protagonist whose life is full of mystery and miracles the plot of the novel begins with the protagonist's leaving of "home thereby disappointing his parents, wandered all over India and finally settled down in Hubbilli, where a large number of his devotees built a mega monastery for him and drew inspiration from him to do their socio-religious service to humanity." This plot shows a long life span of a super-saint of India who knew Vedanta by heart and who wrought miracles to please, attract, and guide his devotees along the right path. With all these mysterious and miraculous activities of a super-sage the novel can be termed as a hagiographic novel.

To conclude, it can be said that Basavaraj Naikar has adopted the theme of renunciation and detachment to bring forth the idea of self-sacrifice, honest service to mankind and observance of the moral and social codes for bringing in a

new society totally free from corruption, faithlessness and moral degradation. Picking up one great saint and narrating various mysterious, miraculous and mystical events occurred in his life, the novelist attempts at bringing in a new society which can command well-being and welfare of its people in this age of globalization.

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## The Question of Equivalence in Translation: To Be or Not to Be?

*Rajiv Ranjan Dwivedi\**

Translation has emerged as a new discipline in its own right. It is a complex creative process, rather than a mere act of transference of words and ideas of one language into another. The whole process of translating is so unusually complex that Richards went on to say, it “may very probably be the most complex type of event yet produced in the evolution of the cosmos”. (Studies in Chinese Thought, pp. 247-62) But yet, since the very beginning, a debate over the status of translation as a creative activity has consistently taken place. The major source of this debate is the issue of fidelity to the original. It is the hot button which initiates the discussion of loss and gain in translational activity. The question of loss and gain is primarily inspired by the problem of equivalence that a translator has to rigorously wrestle to solve, with a question flung open whether this fidelity to the original by finding equivalence is a justifiable demand in an ever-evolving concept of translation.

Since translation is about at least two languages and literatures, its recognition cannot be made in isolation. It offers a comparative and contrastive space as it involves two texts, two languages and their multiple intricacies, idiosyncrasies and subtleties associated with language, culture, context, style, theme etc for an agreeable evaluation of any endeavour of this kind. J Levy opines in this context:

A translation is not a monistic composition, but interpenetration and a conglomerate of two structures. On the one hand there are the semantic content and the formal contour of the original, on the other hand the entire system of aesthetic features bound up with the language

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of the translation. (The Art of Translation, Prague, 1963)

In such a comparative and contrastive purview, the translational activity is challenged by a number of core issues like loss and gain, untranslatability, equivalence etc. which constantly question the identity of translation as a creative process.

Now, the question of loss in translation is inspired by the low status accorded to the practice and a sense of inferiority is implanted in translation as any kind of endeavour. It has been perceived as a marginal activity since its tradition. The inequality of status thus has often left the Source Language (SL) with the impression of ‘superior original’ and the Target Language (TL) with the impression of ‘inferior copy’. Consequently, the hard-pressed need for the translator is to remain faithful to the original to carve out any identity of the translated text of its own, meaning thereby that fidelity to the original, by finding optimal equivalence in the TL is the secret of success for both the translator and the translated text. But simultaneously the hackneyed idea of translation as the mirror of the original usually tends to confine the calibre of the translator to the mechanical task of decoding and recoding.

Any distinction between writer (of the original) and the translator proves detrimental only to the latter. It has been constantly perceived as a subsidiary act and derivative, hence deprived of the dignity of the original. So, the problem of evaluation in translation is ultimately connected with the problem of low status of translation. This enables critics to make pronouncements about translated texts from the position of assumed superiority. Sometimes the translators are branded as traitors while at other times they are expected to show a dog-like devotion to the original. Amidst the prevailing situation an ontological uncertainty looms large on translation as a creative process.

However, the notion has changed over a period of time. Translation is no longer considered a secondary, subordinate or subservient activity. It is now universally acknowledged

as an independent, self-sufficient discipline in itself and even contributory at times to the original. Rabindranath Tagore's Geetanjali is a case in point. The cannibalistic theory of textual consumption advocates and acknowledges the creativity and the independence of the translators. The previous emphasis in this regard was on comparing the original and translation, critically analyzing what is lost and betrayed and finally evaluating with a value judgement. But today's approach rejects the conviction and holds the view of: a) foregrounding the manipulative power of the translator, b) translation as a bridge- building across the space between SL and TL and c) identifying the shifts of emphasis from the supremacy of the original to the genuinity of the translation. In the new, post colonial perception of the relationship between source and target texts, that inequality of relationship has been rethought. Both original and translation are now viewed as equal products of the creativity of writer and translator. However, Octavio Paz in this respect holds a little different opinion as follows:

It is up to the writer to fix words in an ideal, unchangeable form and it is the task of the translator to liberate those words from the confines of their source language and allow them to live again in the language into which they are translated. (Translation: Literature and Letters, pp.36-55)

Thus, the translator is seen as a liberator, someone who frees the text from the fixed signs of its original shape making it no longer subordinate to the source text but visibly endeavouring to bridge the space between source author and text and the eventual target language readership. This revised perspective emphasizes the creativity of translation, seeing in it a more harmonious relationship than the one in previous models that described the translator in violent images of 'appropriation', 'penetration' 'possession' etc.

Translation, as it is often argued now, ensures the survival of a text. It effectively becomes the after-life of a text, a new 'original' in another language. This positive view of translation serves to reinforce the importance of translating as an act both of inter-cultural and inter-temporal

communication. As a matter of fact, the old arguments about the need to be faithful to the original start to dissolve. Lawrence Venuti too 'insists upon the creativity of the translator and upon his or her visible presence in a translation'. (*The Translator's Invisibility*, 1995). Translation according to Venuti, with its allegiance both to source and target cultures 'is a reminder that no act of interpretation can be definitive'. (*The Scandals of Translation*, p.46) It is therefore a dangerous act, potentially subversive and always significant.

Translation has perennial challenges posed by the linguistic and cultural aspects of the two texts. It is pestered by their peculiarities and limitations resulting most often in the untranslatability of the words and sentences of a given text. Expecting equivalence in such a context is not only undesirable but also atrocious. Susan Bassnett has rightly remarked in this regard: "Equivalence in translation, then, should not be approached as a search for sameness, since sameness cannot even exist between two versions of the same text, let alone between the SL and the TL version." (Translation Studies, p. 36)

In fact, a translator is not only supposed to be bi-lingual but also bi-cultural. No language can exist unless it is steeped in the cultural flavour and, of course, no culture can exist which does not have at its centre the structure of a natural language. So a translator has to discharge dual responsibilities, rather manifold responsibilities, i.e. s/he has to know the SL, the Source Language Culture (SLC), the TL and the Target Language Culture (TLC). On the linguistic level, untranslatability occurs when there is no lexical or syntactical substitute in the TL for an SL item. For instance, Hindi has a specific linguistic structure, with its lexis, grammar, syntax etc. totally different from English or any other language. The usage like '*chaay-waay*', '*genius-wenius*', '*kahte kahte*' etc. are language specific. Similarly, Hindi follows the common syntactic structure of 'subject+object+verb' which readily gets subverted into with 'subject+verb+object' in English. Syntactically speaking, on the other hand, Sanskrit

is more flexible than either Hindi or English. Syntactic pattern in Sanskrit is controlled by the precise forms of different words, and not by their very order in a sentence. It could be verified in the examples like *Aham pustakam pathami* or *pustakam pathami aham* or *Pathami aham pustakam* or *Pustakam aham pathami*. All these structures communicate the same meaning, i.e. *I read a book*. The change in word-order does not at all affect the meaning of any of the sentence patterns. Moreover, the gender distinction is identified by the form of the principal verb in Hindi syntax whereas it is done so by the change in pronouns in Sanskrit syntax, and not by any change in the form of the verb. In Hindi, for instance, we say, '*Wah jal peeta hai*' and '*Wah jal peeti hai*' translated into Sanskrit as *Sah jalam pibati* and *Saa jalam pibati* respectively, whereas there is no such distinction identified by the change in the form of verb in English syntax, however, we have he and she as pronouns to identify the gender distinction in English. Addressing elders in plural verb forms has a rare reverential echo in Hindi language.

Now the cultural untranslatability occurs due to the absence in the TL culture of a relevant situational feature for the SL text. The cultural words or the language embedded in cultural features create untranslatability. For instance, four types of culturally defined 'uncles' are in use in major Indian languages whereas English 'uncle' has only one generic meaning. A translator is always under fear of failure, if not exposed to cultural contexts of the two languages in conveying the real relational network in the TL. Names like 'Garima, Kirti, Pawan pankaj Shashi, Pratibha' etc. in Hindi are a linguistic cultural element with their associative values. No formal expressions like 'good morning', 'good evening', 'have a nice day', 'sorry', 'thank you' etc. are much prevalent in Indian culture. The list goes limitless when we garner issues like dress code, ornaments, food-habits, custom and tradition, beliefs and feelings religious elements, myth and legends etc.

Apart from the cultural and linguistic worries,

geographical and environmental elements which, however, affect both language and culture, are a major consideration in translation. "*Shall I compare thee to a summer's day*" is a difficult poetic line to translate. However, poetry in general is notorious for its untranslatability. But the given line cannot be translated into a language where summers are quite unpleasant.

The translator's task becomes even more troublesome when he is called upon to render proverbs, idiomatic expressions and figures of speech of one language into those of another language. The English expression *mouse potato* has nothing to do with the *potato*, and its literal translation would only produce ridiculous effects. This is also true of some well-known expressions from Hindi like '*nau do gyarah*', '*ghar ki murgi daal barabar*', '*naak ka baal hona*' and so on. There are some idiomatic and proverbial expressions in Hindi and English which can be paired together and which, notwithstanding differences in associations and exact nuances, express more or less similar sense. For example, '*Oont ke muh me jeera*' parallels with '*A drop in the ocean*'. '*Chor ki dadhi me tinka*' can be loosely rendered as '*A guilty mind is always suspicious*' and '*Nach na jane aangan tedha*' can be accepted as an equivalent of '*A bad workman quarrels with his tools*'. But since proverbs and idioms are repositories of the cumulative inherited wisdom of the speech community, they cannot be translated easily. The pragmatic aspects of these expressions have got to be taken care of by the translator. What is *A nine day's wonder* in England is *Char din ki chandani phir andheri raat* in India.

Translating elements like collocations, cohesives, phatic expressions, terms of politeness, and endearment, 'cultural fillers' slangs, speech fillers, kinship terms, colour words, jokes and figurative expressions, especially similes and metaphors pose equally difficult problems for any translator. In this context, M B Dagut opines:

Since a metaphor in the SL is, by definition, a new piece of performance, a semantic novelty, it can clearly have no existing 'equivalent' in the TL...what is unique can

have no counterpart. Here the the translator's bilingual competence...is of help to him only in the negative sense of telling him that any 'equivalence in this case, cannot be found, but will have to be created (Susan Bassnett, p.24).

This also applies to the other items listed above. 'Some elements have to be left untranslated by the translator', (International Journal of Translation, pp.1-12) his primary aim being to attain a fit between formal and functional equivalence drawing on both socio-semantic and socio-linguistic dimensions. Warrd and Nida are very correct with their view in this respect: "The crucial problems of translation are often stated in terms of a conflict between formal correspondence and functional equivalence." (From One Language to Another, p.36)

While talking about the 'dynamic equivalence' based on what Nida calls 'the principle of equivalent effect', where the relationship between receptor and message should be substantially the same as that which existed between the original receptors and the message, he opines that the message has to be tailored to the receptor's linguistic needs and cultural expectation and 'aims at complete naturalness of expression'. Naturalness is a key requirement for Nida. Indeed, he defines the goal of dynamic equivalence as seeking the 'closest natural equivalent to the source-language message' (Nida 1964a: 166). This receptor-oriented approach considers adaptations of grammar, of lexicon, and of cultural references to be essential in order to achieve naturalness; the TT language should not show interference from the SL, and the 'foreignness' of the ST setting is minimized in a way that could be criticized by later culturally oriented translation theorists. Nida could also be taken to task by certain religious groups who maintain that the word of god is sacred and unalterable, the changes necessary to achieve dynamic equivalence thus verging on the sacrilegious.

Thus, even dynamic equivalence sought to be achieved through the closest natural equivalent is not quite safe and sufficient for the one who is ambitious regarding any

translated work. In fact, any such ambition is untrue and undue in light of the cumbersome exercise of a translator putting in his best effort, yet not meeting the expectations quite undesirable. The translator in his/her serious venture of translation experiences the throe of a woman who undergoes a *twin-delivery* in the process of attaining her maternity. The biggest question here is whether to seek any kind of equivalence is reasonable amidst the constraints of translation practices. On the contrary, the practice should be commendable before the mammoth nature of the translation work. It's not at all necessary to find equivalent in the TL (translation) to maintain fidelity to the SL(original). The great poet Kabir used to say that it was not necessary for him to go on chanting the name of God to please Him, for Indian wives who devote their whole existence to their husbands, never call them by their name.

Translation as a new writing is, what P. Lal coins the term, *transcreation* (Sujit Mukherjee, p. 64). And transcreation, as the term suggests, is an evolution, a new birth, hence, translation a new original in another language. It should not undergo any comparative assessment with the SL text. As such, it is no longer a second rate task and, therefore, deserves optimum appreciation due for an original work of art. One can just imagine the possibility of translating Shakespeare's line about an infant "Mewling and puking in the Nurse's arm" (*As You Like It*, 2.7). Does it have a sense in a country like ours where the child continues to have a life-long deep attachment with the mother and not the nurse? If not, then, isn't it absurd to advocate for equivalence in such cases of translational pursuits? Shouldn't the translator here be free to exercise his creative potential to render an alien cultural context into the native (TL) textual creation for its wide readership? Then, would it be an act of transgression? Certainly not. Rather, given the liberty, a translator can work wonder with his own acumen and thus can do great service to the TL readers.

The inter-textual re-creation, while minimizing the faithfulness to the original text, can be in many ways an

enriching experience. Rushdie remarks: "It is generally believed that something is always lost in translation; I cling to the notion-and use, in evidence, the success of Fitzgerald-Khayyam- that something can also be gained." (*Midnight's Children*, p. 29)

The rudimentary principle of translation is thematic and, hence, its success rests on what we say *Bhavanuvaad*, and not *shabdanuvaad* (literal). As such, translation like God covets emotions or feelings of love (*bhav ka bhookha*), and not alone reason and intelligence. A text translated with this perspective not only retains the essence of the so called original but also falsifies and condemns the statement that the sole task of a translator is to show a dog like devotion to the original. What is meant by 'original' after all? Paz in this context has a quite veritable remark as stated below:

Every text is unique and, at the same time, it is the translation of another text. No text is entirely original because language itself, in its essence, is already a translation: firstly, of the non-verbal world and secondly, since every sign and every phrase is the translation of another sign and another phrase. However, this argument can be turned around without losing any of its validity: all texts are original because every translation is distinctive. Every translation, up to a certain point, is an invention and as such it constitutes a unique text. (Traducción: literatura y literalidad, p. 9)

Hence, it's not a dog-like devotion. What can be a dog-like devotion is to try to find equivalence off and on and thereby maintain fidelity to the original. On the contrary, it's God-like devotion when one pours out his best in the service of the original ahead of him and yet oblivious of it while translating. And this is how a text could be transcreated and not translated, and the person could be called a transcreator and not a translator. Defending the point, in regard to the translation of poetry, Sri Aurobindo is said to have remarked that, "A translator is not necessarily bound to the original he chooses; he can make his own poem out of it, if he likes, and that is what is generally done." (Translation: A Creative Process, p. 65)

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## Exploring Anger in *The God of Small Things* and *The White Tiger*

Lal Veer Aditya\* & Devendra Kumar Sharma\*\*

Anger, as defined in Cambridge English dictionary, “is a strong feeling that makes you want to hurt someone or be unpleasant because of something unfair or unkind that has happened”, and Macmillan dictionary depicts it as: “the strong feeling you get when you think someone has treated you badly or unfairly, that makes you want to hurt them or shout at them”. The free encyclopedia, Wikipedia, shows anger as ‘wrath’, as another term. It states that anger or wrath is an intense emotional response. Anger is a normal emotion that involves a strong uncomfortable and emotional response to a perceived provocation. Often it indicates when one’s basic boundaries are violated. Some of us have a learned tendency to react to anger through retaliation. Anger may be utilized effectively by setting boundaries or escaping from dangerous situations. It further states, with an example from William DeFoore, an anger-management writer, who describes anger as a pressure cooker: we can only apply pressure against our anger for a certain amount of time until it explodes.

I.K. Sharma examines ‘dimension of anger’ in his study of “*Untouchable: Lava of Love*”, and calls anger as *krodha*, which blinds intelligence, and he further defines it, as:

The *krodha* of the first type is positive because it is meant for the protection of the weak and the vulnerable while the second is negative because it protects none, not even who is loaded with it.

Anger, in ordinary life is the militancy of mind. This militancy may be sudden or prolonged. It may be the

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outcome of a failure in love or of frustration on some ground. (70)

Arundhati Roy’s *The God of Small Things* (1997) and Aravind Adiga’s *The White Tiger* (2008) are debut novels which deal with anger and protest, the tensions and conflicts of Indian society at a transition period, and in search of a real and true portrayal of life. TGST, Arundhati Roy portrays Mammachi, Velutha, Ammu, Estha, and Rahel in a critical way as the victims of violence, and also the victors, as Pappachi, Baby Kochamma, Chacko and all victimise them as culprits. There is no evidence in the novel to correct them up, but to think and project the problem in front of readers as an element of anger and rage. On the other hand, Aravind Adiga continues the process of anger and protest in his novel, *The White Tiger*. This novel is a reverberation of the Economic Liberalisation in India, and the LPG, (Liberalisation, Privatisation and Globalisation) model, which imbibes the anger of Balram Halwai with his entrepreneurship in the globalised economic world. Jean Baudrillard in his book *The Agony of Power* asks whether exploitation still exists. He further mentions three illusions, namely economic, democratic, and metaphysical. Baudrillard concludes that the agony of power is no longer political but metaphysical and symbolical. He emphasizes that ‘it is a confrontation, a divide that exists not only at the heart of the dominant power, but at the heart of our individual existence’. (56) It reminds us of what Martin Luther says, “When I am angry I can pray well and preach well.” And hence through the positive use of his rage and anger, Balram thinks of his future, ‘tomorrow’, what he can provide to society by his social services honestly. For example:

I love my start-up – this chandelier, and this silver laptop, and twenty-six Toyota Qualises – but honestly, I’ll get bored of it sooner or later. I’m a *first-gear* man, Mr. Premier. In the end, I’ll have to sell this start-up to some other moron – *entrepreneur*, I mean – and head into a new line. I’m always a man who sees ‘tomorrow’ when others see ‘today’. The whole world will come to Bangalore tomorrow. (TWT 319)

Further, the same depiction is also noted as examples from Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things*:

They chose him because they knew that they had to put their faith in fragility. Stick to Smallness. Each time they parted, they extracted only one small promise from each other.

'Tomorrow?'

'Tomorrow.'

They knew that things could change in a day. They were right about that. (TGST 339)

Velutha with his back against the mangosteen tree watched her walk away.

She had a dry rose in her hair.

She turned to say it once again: 'Naaley.'

Tomorrow. (TGST 340)

The further aim of the present paper is to make an attempt to suggest that anger can be a positive source of construction, which can create new jobs and also can be used as an outcome of social responsibilities. This paper revisits and develops some critical ideas from an essay "Investigating Relationship between Class Hierarchy and Power Politics in Aravind Adiga's *The White Tiger*", published in *The Indian Journal of English Studies* Vol. LI, and now, has two broad objectives. The first of these is a response to U.S. Bahri's *Language Forum*, Vol. 21, No. 1-2 1995, a special issue on *Anger in Action: Exploration in Indian Writing in English*. While attempting many of the claims, from its writers, about human expression, their feelings, interpersonal relationship and behaviour, or coping up with the build-up of tensions and frustrations that might cause feelings of indignation, rejection or helplessness. And secondly, the chemistry of anger, the psychology of anger, feelings of rage, and dimension of anger converts and develops differently in the present piece of study.

Anger is a vital political tool, which enables new prospective, understandings of oppressive conditions that have previously remained unquestioned. Oppressive conditions are purely based upon Louis Althusser's *Lenin and Philosophy and other Essays* (1971) namely: Ideology

and Ideological State Apparatuses. The oppressive apparatuses are like: Judiciary, Armed Forces, and Police Force etc. impose the dominant order of the power in social realities. It is a story of power politics which involves the binary opposition of the oppressor and oppressed, master and slave. It is, like master-slave dialectics of Hegel, mentioned in the research article, "Investigating Relationship between Class Hierarchy and Power Politics in Aravind Adiga's *The White Tiger*", says:

The politics of dominance and subordination is a connived consequence of the unknowable, irreducible, and immutable machinery of power politics. The power which is not a concrete entity but a pervasive abstraction, which comes from every possible direction and controls everyone who comes under the preview of its exercise as it is absolutely immanent and genealogical in nature. Now it is evident that the phenomenological reality of power is immanent it is preciously so because it is supported by certain coterminous forms of agency and apparatus, which are based upon Marxist philosophy of labour, labour surplus, and alienation. Louis Althusser also articulates the mechanics of power formation through his remarkable essay entitled "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses". The essay encapsulates the fact that ideology and consciousness, which construct the human being is the result of two remarkable apparatuses namely ideological and repressive. The ideological apparatus is constituted by religious institution, educational and familial. These all replicates, reciprocate, and reinforces, and reinstates the ideology and consciousness of the power. It is commonly known that the religious institution not only instills the dominant voice of the dominant ideology but it also subjugates and subjectivizes the individual of society. Similarly, the educational institutions along with familial realities perpetuate the messy and massive system of power politics. (220-21)

In the opening pages of the novel, Arundhati Roy portrays her anger through the death of Ammu. That time she was just thirty-one: 'Not old./ Not young./ But a viable die-able

age' (*TGST* 3). Roy uses perfect poetic devices on her linguistic use of language. However, there are some semantic variations and linguistic ambiguities. The novelist through Estha and Rahel — as choice of child protagonists tries to play with language. Such depiction gives strength to Arundhati Roy's anger and protest to humane tyrannical or suppressive apparatuses.

Roy depicts how Ammu, Velutha, Rahel, and Estha become culprit of the continuous rage of Baby Kochamma throughout the storyline. Kochamma is the great-aunt of the twins and she is also disappointed in her unrequited love for an Irish priest, a saffron Santa! Further, Ammu faces not only the angers of Pappachi, her husband, Baby Kochamma, Chacko, but also of Inspector Thomas Mathew. The ordinate delay in providing the receipt of Ammu's ashes is also a testimony of anger by the crematorium In-charge. It shows that she was never treated as a human being both before and after her death. It is an irony that Ammu is being treated as inhuman due to this displaced anger. As in the case of Velutha, he is victim of barbarous treatment from the family members, fellow communists, recruiters, and from the police force. His anger is real in nature, but due to being state of untouchable and have-nots, he becomes the god of loss. In grave anger, Baby Kochamma weakly projects Velutha as a culprit of 'attempted rape' because he is Paravan, who is having sour-metal smell, but later on she becomes fully successful. Adding to this, Kochamma has strong feeling of annoyance with Ammu, Rahel and Estha too. Baby Kochamma is a merciless fiend who always carried daggers at Estha and Rahel.

She never forgot her irrational rage at the other two younger children who had for some reason been spared. Her fevered mind fastened like a limpet onto the notion that Estha was somehow responsible for Sophie Mol's death. Odd, considering that Margret Kochamma didn't know that it was Estha – Stirring Wizard with a Puff who had rowed jam and thought Two Thoughts – ... Estha who had abrogated a sickled smell by waving a Marxist flag at it. (*TGST* 264)

In *TGST*, anger is demonstrated through war of the words. Kochu Maria, another worker, sniggers, "Africa's full of ugly black people and mosquitoes." In reply, Rahel, by calling her Stupid Dwarf, protests, "You're the one who's ugly". Roy has endowed her narrative with a typical angry flavor, full of protest and Indianisation of English language and with no compromise in it. The expression of anger helps her to show the linguistic richness in this novel. Velutha does not have any support or protection from the Communist Party, though he is a card-holder communist. This boosts anger in Velutha, who looks helpless in his rage. Velutha becomes a tool of protest for Arundhati Roy. She attempts to push the English language, an 'Indian domicile'. In *The Shape of The Beast*, Roy articulates, "My language, my style, is not something superficial, like a coat that I wear when I go out. My style is me – even when I'm home. It's the way I think. My style is my politics." (*TSTB* 33). Roy expresses her anger in the following:

...the English language – the language that separates India's elite from its fellow countrymen and binds its imagination to the western world. Macaulay couldn't have asked for a more dedicated disciple.

The only people who might have a valid reason to view the British Empire with less anger than the rest of us are Dalits. Since to the white man all of us were just natives, Dalits were not especially singled out for the bestial treatment meted out to them by caste Hindus. But somehow, I can't imagine Manmohan Singh bringing a Dalit perspective to colonialism while receiving an honorary PhD in Oxford. (*TSTB* 212)

Velutha, as one of the left-wing Dalit revolutionaries and so called Naxalite, does not protest actively, but becomes a culprit and subject to oppressive apparatus. In the continuation of Dalit and untouchable inequalities and in satirical regime of EMS Namboodiripad, he becomes 'subaltern' and 'The Small Voice of History' and also makes Velutha a likely agent of the possible social change. 'All creatures are easily moved to anger and fight either in attack or defence' (*PVI* 1). Alex Tickell interprets Arundhati Roy's

quote and depicts anger, in her own special way, once speaking to the Dalit Sahitya Akademi audience, as:

I know that you share the anger ... at the heart of *The God of Small things*. It is an anger that the 'modern' metropolitan world, the Other India (the one in which I now live), tends to overlook, because for them it is something distant, something unreal. ... you better than anyone else know that there is nothing unreal about barbarism and caste inequality is going to be, and indeed ought to be (India's) biggest challenge in this century. (AT28)

Hence we can say that, in Arundhati Roy's novel, anger is subdued and largely passive in nature. The portrayal of the conflict becomes a powerful mode for the expression of novelist's anger.

On the other hand, in Aravind Adiga's *TWT*, the anger is multi-dimensional in nature and much more vehement and violent. This novel further depicts a moral vision and its anger is also having moral qualities. Here, anger is multi-dimensional. Adiga insists on breaking Rooster Coop', from half-cooked/formed/digested/correct ideas, from half-baked clay entrepreneurs.

And our nation, though it has no drinking water, electricity, sewage system, public transportation, sense of hygiene, discipline, courtesy, or punctuality, *does* have entrepreneurs. Thousand and thousands of them. Especially in the field of technology. (*TWT* 4)

The protagonist, Balram, calls himself as he is raised in Darkness of anger, but now he is in Light. He takes advantage of his active anger, to start a business with entrepreneurship. Adiga registers his anger, as billions of rupees from the Darkness are taken away, and transferred that money into a bank account in a small, beautiful country in Europe full of white people and black money. We must not forget, Arundhati Roy's interpretation, as it is 'remote controlled and digitally operated'. It is similar to the 'lactification' concept of Frantz Fanon. In such a way, the filthy politicians are trying to make their 'black money' into

the white one. We are reminded of Frantz Fanon's *Black Skin, White Masks* (1952). Fanon has formulated voice of the black people, *Black Skin, White Masks* to combat oppression of the racism (here, in India, casteism is a prejudice or discrimination on the grounds of caste) and dehumanisation inherent in situations of colonial or such a typical domination.

This white tiger (Balram) generates employability to the India of Darkness where he wants to develop a place of light, an India of Light and to produce another white tigers, the 'White Tiger Drivers'. It is his moral anger, through which he accepts his responsibilities, his forgiveness in creation of good nation, and to break out the Rooster Coop. Symbolically, Ashok Sharma (alias Balram) optimistically finds his 'Dharam' (moral duty) to remove the black mud of Mother Ganga, from murderer to entrepreneur, from bad to good man, from past and present to future, at a new dawn. As he says: "I'm always a man who sees 'tomorrow' when others see 'today'." (*TWT* 319)

Aiyar aptly argues that the growth of science and technology has not been able to reduce violence but has provided more efficient and more reliable instruments of ordure. Similarly, the protagonist of Aravind Adiga, through his moral anger, has projected darkness of Indian villages to turn out to be a decent city, where humans can live like humans and animals can live like animals. He has a vision to make New Bangalore and further, for a new India. For India, his future plans and visions are also big, as uncorrupted and free from the cruel Darkness.

I think I might sell everything, take the money, and start a school – an English-language school – for poor children in Bangalore. A school where you won't be allowed to corrupt anyone's head with prayers and stories about God or Gandhi – nothing but the facts of life for these kids. A school full of White Tigers, unleashed on Bangalore! (*TWT* 319)

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## Translation as a Bridge in the 21st Century

*Yugeshwar Sah\**

### Role and Relevance of Translation

The term translation has been derived from the Latin word "translatum" which is made up of two segments – 'Trans' i.e. 'beyond', 'through', 'across' and 'latum' means 'to carry'. Thus, the term translation refers to taking/carrying something beyond or across. According to Nida "translating, consists in producing in the message of the source language, first in meaning and second in style". Translation is such a medium through which we can travel the whole world sitting in our home "*Yatra Vishwam Bhawati, Ek neeram*" (qtd in Agarwal, 1999, p. 15) and it makes us realize "*Vasudhaiv Kutumbakam*" (the whole world is my family). Translation plays a key role in national unity and cultural integration and it is true in the case of India.

According to E.S. Bates, nothing moves without translation in the 21st century. What belongs to nobody belongs to everybody. No man's area becomes everyman's area. 21st century era is an era of translation because it is an era of knowledge. Translation pervades the whole human history and the entire world. Gregory rightly says "Every act of communication is an act of translation". Every word we utter is a translation of ideas, images and experiences. Where there is word there is translation. Words determine, illustrate and illumine our world. Bhartrihari rightly said "Jagat sarvam shabden bhashte" (We get the cognizance of the world through words) (quoted in Singh: 2014). There is no world without words and without word we can't share and disseminate the inexhaustible source of knowledge. Translation is to know the best that has been said and

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thought in the world. The knowledge text is written almost in 7000 thousand languages of the world. There are more than two hundred members in UNO but there are only six official languages i.e. English, French, Spanish, Russian, Chinese and Arbi. So without translation, we cannot disseminate and democratize the information to all in all languages. “No language, no nation is sufficient unto itself. Its mind must be enlarged by the thoughts of other nations or else it will warp and shrivel. The central book of the English speaking peoples is a translation – although it comes to us as a shock to many to realize that the Bible was written in Hebrew and in Greek, and translated by a committee of scholars”. (Highet, 1994: 106). So, it can be said that “Jagatsarvam anuvaden bhashte” (we get the cognizance of the world through translation) (quoted in Singh 2014) in the 21st century. No human activity is possible without translation. Whenever and wherever we use/utter a word there is translation. We translate abstract ideas into language through words. Words construct/make language, language creates knowledge and this knowledge is acquired, preserved, created, disseminated and applied in the world through translation. Translation makes this ‘knowledge century’ conceivable intelligible, perceivable and perceptible.

### **Translation as a Bridge**

“Ati apar je saritbar, jo nrip setu karahin,  
*Chadhi pipeelakau param sukh bin kshram parahi jahin.*”  
 (quoted in Verma)

(If the king builds the bridge across the river then even an ant crosses the vast river without any difficulty.)

Tulsidas’s couplet from the *Ramcharitramanas* highlights the role of translator and the relevance of translation in contemporary times. Translation is a bridge between two languages, two nations and two cultures of the world. Without translation, man will be a stranger or an alien in his own community, country and continent. “India is perhaps the one country, where the citizens visiting a neighbouring state become foreigners in their own land. On the other hand, Indian currency is the only currency in the world to be

inscribed with multiple languages” (Ravi 2012:12).

Translation functions as a bridge across different linguistic groups, across numerous cultures, communities, countries and continents, across various caste, colours, and creeds. According to Prof. Avadesh Kumar Singh, “It offers itself as a bridge across different cultures and their knowledge systems and their five basic aspects: acquisition of knowledge, preservation of knowledge, creation of knowledge, dissemination of knowledge and application of knowledge”. (Singh 2014: 06).

Tagore’s poem also emphasizes on the function of translation as a bridge.”Thou hast made me known to friends when I know not,/ Thou hast given me seats in homes not my own,/ Thou hast brought the distant near and made a brother of stranger...”, i.e. Translation makes me familiar and friendly with the stranger and brings the distant very close to us, makes this world a global village in this 21st century and we can easily realize the philosophy of Vasudhaiv Kutumbakam (the whole world is my family). In a country like India, there is so much differences, divisions and diversities such as lingual, cultural, religious. We will be strangers and alien in our own community and country without translation. India is a diverse land where human happiness, hope and harmony rests on translation. It is only translation which has the capacity to create the culture of clarity, comprehension, unity, amity, friendliness, togetherness. It can deconstruct the culture of chaos, age-old prejudices and biases, doubts, disbeliefs, discrimination and differentiations. Translation serves as a bridge where dialogue and development, peace and prosperity, education and employment can go hand in hand.

We need translation in the 21<sup>st</sup> century for the democratization of knowledge, and also for making our society “a knowledge society and to uplift the society. Translation is needed to know our nation deeper and better, to establish peace and non-violence, to make developing nation, a developed nation and to build the culture of dialogue amongst us. It is also needed to expand the horizons of our knowledge, to make man a superman, to make country a continent, to

convert illiterate and uneducated society into a knowledge society, to make poor nation, a prosperous nation, to transform “mere thinkers” into “man thinking” (Emerson), to awaken sleeping masses, to enlighten the ignorant masses. It is also needed at the international forum to strengthen bi-lateral relations and economic ties, to enhance socio-economic development, to root out racial, cultural, religious and linguistic prejudices and biases, to resolve age-old conflicts and contradictions, to bridge the linguistic gap that divides our society and nation. Translation is a must for nation building, global brotherhood, universal hope and harmony. And the translation of the Bible, the Gita, the Quran has brought peace, prosperity, hope, happiness and harmony in the whole world.

Translation is one of the effective media to extract the best from all cultures and to impart it at school, college and university levels. Bhabha asserts that “Translation is the performative nature of cultural communication” (Bhabha, 1994:228). Translation is perceived as a cultural activity and has become a respectable profession. “One does not translate language but cultures” and “in translation we transfer cultures not languages” (House, 2002:92). Jhumpa Lahri also emphasizes that “translation is not only a finite linguistic act but an ongoing cultural one.” (Lahiri 120). Now like English language, translation is the need of the time. It has become our social, cultural, commercial, professional and above all it is our global need. Like Internet it connects us with the knowledge of the whole world. No one can learn all the languages of the world, therefore it is said that “The limits of language are the limits of knowledge” (Wittgenstein). But we have challenged these limits and barriers which have been put upon us since ages with the help of powerful weapon called translation.

### **Teaching of Translated Texts**

Every act of teaching is an act of translation and translation is central to teaching because teaching is “an act of interpretation”. Teaching of translated texts can create a

powerful bridge across different and diverse social, lingual, political and cultural groups and all can thrive together and can commence a new era.

We continue to receive the knowledge of world’s greatest literature through translation. The translation of *the Bible, the Gita, the Mahabharata, the Ramayana, the Vedas, the Upanishadas, the Gita, Panchtantra* etc. has revolutionized the whole world. History is a witness that translation of *the Bible* has played a crucial role in spreading Christianity. We have been reading the greatest writers of the world in translation such as Socrates, Aristotle, Plato, Kalidas, Tagore, Tulsi, Tolstoy Dante, Petnarch, Virgil, Horace, Cicero etc.... and it is a long list. “Classical influence flows into the literature of modern nations by three ways- translation, imitation, and emulation.” (Highet, 1949: 104). Had Indian sacred texts such as the Vedas, the Upanishads, the Gita been not translated then India would not have emerged as a spiritual leader across the globe.

“In view of it, if we focus on Indian situation, we find that English classroom is a site of teaching through translation. In reality too we have been teaching much of translated texts but we have never noticed them. The literary criticism paper, for instance, is basically constituted of no-English texts. Plato, Aristotle did not write in English but in Greek. The works of Horace, Cicero and Quintilian are in Latin, which were later translated into English. Later on A.W. Schlegel, AC Schlegel and Schiller wrote in German, not in English. Ferdinand de Saussure, Claude Levi-Strauss, Roland Barthes, Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault, Jean Francois Lyotart and Pierre Bourriard did not write in English but they are being prescribed and taught in English class-rooms. But nobody questions the issues of their originality nor equips ourselves with new strategies to teach them as translated texts. Why are all these questions raised in case of teaching translated texts in Indian class room? The reason is in the mind-set because these texts happen to be translations of Indian works” (quoted in Singh: 29).

In order to maintain the integrity and unity of India the

need of the hour is to focus on teaching translated texts in our institutions. There is a need to establish the department of Translation Studies with the courses such as B.A., M.A., M.Phil, and Ph.D. in translation studies. This will also enable and expand academic engagement and interactive prospects at the level of higher education to encourage mutual understanding pertaining to language, literature, culture and society.

### **Translation and Employment**

There is immense potential and prospect of translation in India as it has been an age-old practical ground of all forms of translation. There is huge employment opportunity in India. English is the second official language along with Hindi in India. So the translations are needed to all the central government and state government offices. Apart from it, the employment opportunity is in the court, railway, university and many other government institutions and organizations. There is also job opportunity in the field of interpretation. Interpretations are needed in tourism, in Lok Sabha, Rajya Sabha, meeting with foreign delegates, UNO etc. Translation creates employment opportunity in the private sectors such multinational companies, publication house, media, mass communication, translation of literary texts, non-literary texts, facebook, dubbing, subtitling, google etc. There is very urgent need of translation of knowledge texts in all the major regional languages of India and NTM (National Translation Mission) is engaged in this pursuit of democratization and dissemination of knowledge.

Without cultural, linguistic and knowledge transaction, commercial investment and trade ties will not be durable because all relations, treaties and ties are based on understanding and translation would help us to understand one another profoundly. Translation of world literature only will not help us achieve our desired goal. Therefore, we have also to pay attention to the translation of knowledge texts i.e. philosophy, sociology, science, psychology, education etc. which will instill into us with valuable knowledge and enable

us to comprehend the social processes and philosophical thoughts cropping up in the societies. We also need to focus on the translation of music and cinema which will have enduring impact on the minds of the people of both the nations. The poorest of the poor and the commonest of the common people have access to music and cinema. Even the illiterate and uneducated ones listen, watch and understand message inherent in the music and cinema. Films and movies are the reflection of society's culture and social problems and prospects. So, they would help us comprehend social perspectives and correct social and cultural problems. There is a great scope of translation in this field which will lead to socio-economic development and boost bi-lateral relations. There are three activities from which nations can be developed "War to expand their territory, commerce to accumulate wealth and expand their economic activities and translation to expand their cultural, artistic and economic productions." (Nyongwa, 2012:34)

### **Conclusion**

Thus, it is clear from the discussion that the progress of the nation and refinement of culture are centered on the axis of translation. No country can progress or develop in isolation and therefore the unity of the nations is needed for cultural, intellectual, moral and spiritual enrichment and also for socio-economic development and it is possible through translation. Translation is an effective medium of promoting dialogue and diplomacy, education and employment, bi-lateral relations, socio-economic ties and treaties etc... It is emerging as a global means of communication in an era of globalization. Translation is a powerful weapon through which we can unite all the nations under one banner and establish peace and harmony across globe and ensure bi-lateral dialogue and development in the field of education, tourism etc... among all nations. Translation encompasses various aspects related to language, culture, literature, philosophy etc...of the society which need to be studied, imparted, incorporated into academic curriculum at institutional level for the expansion and promotion of intense

interactive possibilities that will result in strengthening global dialogue, bi-lateral relations, and economic ties.

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## Teaching Grammar to the Young Learners of ESL

*Susanta Kumar Bardhan\**

The controversy over the issue of grammar teaching in the teaching-learning of ESL is an age-old one. The main issue relates to whether Grammar should be taught as a separate component or subject in the enterprise of English as Second Language Teaching or should be taken integrally or organically along with skill-based English teaching. Language acquisition or learning is synonymous with the acquisition of the grammatical system (in a wider sense) by the learner or speaker. The present paper does not enter into that controversy. It rather attempts to explore how grammar component can be taken up in the teaching of English as a Second Language to the young learners.

### Top of Form

Language learning in general means the acquisition of the linguistic systems operating within the language concerned and of the ability to use that appropriately in several communicative situations in oral as well as written means, To put it in other words, learning a language does not refer to *learning about that language*. Language which is, according to Halliday (1999: 6), *a resource for meaning making—a semogenic system* is acquired or learned to develop that language system or grammar from the linguistic data s/he is exposed. In case of first language acquisition child is provided the complex grammatical rules (such as parts of speech, sentence structures, clause, tense, etc.). S/he is exposed to the data in the society and gradually starts using it with his/her family members and with others

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of the society. A five/six years old child can use his/her language competently in different situations even though s/he does not or cannot describe the complex linguistic systems of *the language* concerned. Similar is the case with foreign or second language learning. Here let us give analogy which the present author got from my Teacher (Rahul Sharma): If a person undergoing training for driving two/four wheelers is taught about the complex systems of those vehicles relating to speed, mechanisms function for the speed, capacity like Horse power, etc., s/he will fumble, rather be afraid, to start the vehicle. If instead of teaching those, s/he is just given instruction how to switch on & off, gear, brakes, s/he will be able to drive that and gradually get exposed to the complex system of that. This will help him/her to be a driver.

Hence, it can be clearly stated that language learning/acquisition process is the process of developing the grammatical system along with vocabulary and usage functioning within the language concerned. This process involves the grammar of that language which is an integral and organic constituent of that language, not an isolated and compartmentalized one as supposed in the grammar-translation method. Language as a complex network of psycho-biological, social, cultural product is learnt not in bits or parts, but in whole or all parts simultaneously. In this context, we can safely quote the statement of M. A. K. Halliday (1999: 6),

What the grammar does is to construct a semantic flow—a flow of meaning – that is analogous to the flow of events that constitutes human experience — - - - . Understanding and knowing are semiotic processes – processes of the development of meaning in the brain of every individual, and the powerhouse for such processes is the grammar.

Grammar is the total mechanism which a language possesses and through which its users are able to communicate with each other. Every native speaker of a language, literate or illiterate, knows and controls his/her grammar, without this, communication is not possible. Hence,

in ESL/EFL teaching the proper systematic and graded linguistic data as presented in a textbook with a focus on the specific grammatical aspects of English can help the learners develop their competence in it and as a result they can use it correctly in different socio-academic situations. Hence the present writer strongly believes in what Nunan (2010: 129) has stated: "One of the quickest ways of killing motivation is by overloading beginning learners". Even today in our classes separate periods are allotted for textbook and grammar book. In Grammar classes they only cram the definitions of metalinguistic terms and some isolated examples (mechanical, not related to life) and as result, they are overloaded with those terms without proper application of the ideas attached with those. Students are forced to remember those terms and some example in isolation. When they are asked to describe some real life situations orally or in writing, they fumble and make mistake in using the language. This extra and unwanted burden not only hampers their learning ability but also demotivates them to learn English. They learn about English, not English. Language teaching-learning without any proper contexts (real or imaginary) help develop knowledge about English. They can define present tense, past tense but they cannot produce sentences to describe events of the present or past time (e.g., \*They have come yesterday) They are taught the dull rules of narration change (from direct to indirect), without any touch of context, hence we find such error as

\*Linda told us that we **would** have to submit our project by 10.03.15.

(This date refers to the future time i.e., has not yet elapsed. Students are taught that if the reporting verb is in past tense, the reported speech will be in past tense.)

To avoid such problem or to make English class amusing and learning friendly, we as teachers of English need not take resort to the metalinguistic terms when we take up a lesson. We can present the text before them and reframe or develop the activities to suit their levels and at the same time focus on the particular grammar item. For instance,

1. We can ask them to write their daily life, daily school activity, how they spend the time on holidays, when we want to focus on simple present tense.
2. To teach the use of *there* or *it* we ask them to write about their village (There is a pond in our village. It is full of clean water., etc.),
3. To teach and practice the use of *used to*, first I give my past school days and my father school days or one person known/unknown to them. Then I ask them to get information about their parents' past school life and write four five sentences using *Used to*.

Let us now state that six principles of grammar teaching as mentioned by Nunan are not only relevant in the teaching of ESL/EFL but also useful in developing competence in the use of English among the learners. Teaching a text and a chunk of Language data should always be made with a view to developing grammatical systems operating in the language. The following discussion based on a text can illustrate how some of the principles are followed.

We shall take a concrete example from the West Bengal Board of Secondary Education (WBBSE) Class V textbook titled *Butterfly* for the purpose of driving home the argument so far dealt with. WBBSE has introduced the series of new textbooks for classes from V to VIII from the academic session 2013. That is why, it seems important to take a piece of text from new textbooks as these are at present being used for the English teaching-learning. These books contain prose and poems coupled with pictures and variety of activities. An explicit attempt to make learning English more lively and joyful to the learners can be easily detected. Aveek Majumder (2012) states in the *Foreword to Class VII textbook Butterfly*:

We have tried to develop and formulate the textbooks in line with the vision of NCF 2005 and RTE (Right to Education) Act 2009. In this textbook we have shifted from the conventional approach to a child-centric, activity based approach to learning. The exercises for the learners have been designed accordingly. A special effort has been taken

to develop the conversational skills in English for the learners.

These textbooks clearly discourage the direct teaching of English grammar in isolation and even direct reference to grammatical items/topics at the time of teaching the textbook lessons is also not supported in it. This series prepared on the basis of functional communicative approach stresses on *knowing the language in use in society*, instead of *knowing about the language*. Actually, the language learning, be it conscious or unconscious, is preconditioned by the internalization of the linguistic system underlying or governing that language. Grammatical system of the second or foreign language develops in the cognitive faculty of the learner in consonance with the formal exposure to the linguistic data in terms of oral and written meaning-based as well as societal experience centric activities, exercises, practices, etc.

Hence, in order to develop the linguistic system/ grammatical system of English among learners within the prevalent schooling framework teacher may prepare the following activities basing the Lesson 3 titled *Phulmani's India* (see the Appendix) of Class V textbook. The teacher will decide that two or three grammatical aspects will be given priority at the time of teaching this lesson. Then s/he will develop activities centring round the decided grammatical aspects. The text chosen here, as we see, contains several grammatical aspects such as Simple Present Tense, Simple Past Tense, Use of Adjectives, Use of Introductory *there*, Interrogation, and so on. Out of these let us select three: Simple Present Tense, Simple Past Tense and Use of Introductory *there*. The following activities can be well planned and developed and taken to the learners without a reference to the grammatical terms. (It is necessary to mention here that the activities shown in the following are not the absolute ones. Teachers may be required to modify, simplify, and recreate novel and different types of activities which will suit their learners.):

**Activity I: Focus on Simple Present Tense**

- Write five or six sentences describing what you do on every Sunday.
- Teacher will collect those from the learners and correct their errors, if any. Then interchange those among the learners and ask each of them to describe what his/her friend does on Sunday. Learners will use *He* or *She* at the beginning of each sentence.
- Divide the learners in pairs and ask each pair to exchange their writings and to talk on his/her partner's routine using *You* at the subject of the actions.
- Think of a girl/boy who plays in the afternoon after returning from school. There are different kinds of games such as *Kabaddi*, *Kho Kho*, *Football*, *Cricket*, *Table Tennis*, etc. Learners will be allowed to take any one of these games and frame sentences describing how s/he plays along with his/her partners.

**Activity II: Focus on Simple Past Tense**

- Now ask the learners to report what they did in the morning of that day.
- Show a picture of a farmer/gardener working in the field/garden. Ask them to imagine that these activities were done some days back (in the past time). Now instruct the learners to write five sentences describing the activities done by the farmer/gardener in the past time.
- Show a doll made of jute. Inform the learners how it was made.

**Activity III: Use of Introductory *There***

- Ask the learner to write down the sentences beginning with *there* from the text.
- Show a picture of a village or town. There may be pond, post-office, bank, school, market, playground, garden or park, etc. Instruct the learner to frame sentences beginning with *There* (e.g., *There is High School in the village/town. There are three ponds in the village, etc.*). While doing this activity, learners should be allowed to

consult among themselves and teacher will monitor their consultation. This will be a lively activity.

- Now ***Rashtriya Sarba Siksha Abhijan (RSSA)*** has launched a drawing competition among the students of the school on *The Idea of Nirmal Vidyalay (Clean School) as Imagined by the Individual Student*. Students in general get interested in such activity. This can be a very insightful and brain-storming learning aid and activity. The student can be asked to compose a paragraph on his/her imagined Clean School by using *There*, wherever possible. Students will enjoy freedom in carrying out such activity. The Teacher will act as a guide and facilitator and monitor the work being carried out by the learners.
- Then ask each learner to write a paragraph on his or her village or town using *There*.

It should be stated that the activities proposed may not be adequate and suitable to the learners across the board. These are only just some samples which can be followed for the purpose of planning and preparing better and lively learner-friendly activities in order to develop and consolidate the grammatical aspects mentioned here.

Moreover, grammar exercises are or are to be framed on the basis of the learners' level of knowledge of English, their socio-cultural background, their knowledge about the surroundings, and other socio-academic factors. The exercises like Missing Word and Gap-filling as shown by Nunan (2010) for the young learners have been framed mainly on the principles such as

1. Grammar should be taught in context,
2. Grammar can be taught without technical labels, etc.

In the exercise Missing Word, students have been asked to use the colour words mentioned in the list without using the their metalinguistic label colour adjectives. Similar is the case with Gap-filling in which students are asked to fill with *do* or *does*, not auxiliary verbs. The exercises are taken from real life situations: items mentioned here are known to

the students in their day-to-day lie. Hence such kinds of exercises do not overload the students with technical labels and instead help them develop communicative competence so that they can use appropriate, acceptable, feasible, language.

Let me develop an activity developed on the basis of the principles as shown by Nunan. Students already know the meaning (to some extent use) of prepositions like **in, on, from, between, for, of**. Normally, the first exercise can be based their school premise. It can be followed by their house, their village, locality or picture of a village, or locality. These are known to them. They will get interest in these activities and learn this grammar item without remember what they are in the grammar book.

### Activity

Fill in the blanks with words given in the box.

**on, in, between, of, by, at, over, with**

The name———our school is Sarojbashini Sishubhaban. It is———the West of Suri. It is——— the main road. We come——— school——— 10.30 A.M. We stand——— queues and sing national song *jana gana mana*. Our classroom is——— office room and dining room. We sit——— the stools. There are two fans——— our heads. We play——— our friends.

The above exercise which is an instance of a localized version or rendering can easily attract the students and do the work with interest and enthusiasm. They are asked to do the activity in pairs and then their work is corrected taking the attention of all. Such activity helps them describe the location of other buildings, place, and write about these.

The principal motto of the present discussion, as repeatedly mentioned above, is to show how an English teacher can teach English to the learners of primary level without directly mentioning and discussing grammatical aspects. It is hoped that the learner will be free from the

burden of remembering those metalinguistic concepts/terms and thereby will get more time inside and outside the class to build English within himself/herself. Classroom will not be resounded with the boring and high sounding questions like *What is part of speech, What is noun, What is tense, What is interrogative sentence*, and so on. Let us conclude with the declaration made a competent car driver, 'I know driving well, though I do not know the mechanisms and systems operating the car.' A holistic approach to the teaching ESL is much needed for the purpose of achieving our desired goal of ESL teaching endeavour i.e., our learners of English can use the language as a second language in different socio-academic and socio-cultural interactions. Let us conclude our discussion by quoting great ELT expert Wallwork (1974: 160) who argues with conviction and reflection:

It is perhaps the most important task of the language teacher to try to modify both attitudes— to encourage realization of the true nature of functions of language as an integral part of human life and society, and also to relate students to acquire the linguistic resources necessary to equip them to cope adequately with the tasks with which they are likely to be confronted.

## Globalization and Role of Information Technologies in Education

*Sanjay Kumar Singh\* & A. A. Khan\*\**

### Introduction

Globalization is a process, which has affected many areas of human life, one of those being education. With globalization, the information revolution and increasing demands for a highly skilled work force, it is clear that nations must accord high priority to building the capacity to effectively utilize technology in education. Given the much wider use of ICT in the workplace, a person's facility for using technology is fast becoming a basic competency. The use of ICT in education offers a clear promise for accelerating learning. ICT can lower the cost of implementing student learning assessments and can better link those assessment results to both teacher development and the allocation of education resources.

ICT has changed the scenario of education, particularly pedagogy and instruction making teaching-learning process more productive, creating collaborative, learner-centered and interactive global learning environments. Therefore, information technologies are assumed to play a constructive role in education to make the teaching and learning process more productive through collaboration in an information rich society.

### Information Technologies

Information & Communication Technology "is any

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computer-based tool that people use to work with information and support the information and information processing needs of an organization" (Haag. 1998; pp.17. 518). It includes computers and its related technologies; WWW, Internet and Videoconferencing etc. Information technology can be used to promote the opportunities of knowledge dissemination. Earlier, means of information were limited and confined to the elites but "the advent of printing enabled information to be truly widespread throughout the world to move to a more equitable level in terms of access to knowledge" (Menon, B., 2000, p.xi). At present, knowledge may be regarded as power and it comes from having information. Information encompasses and relies upon the use of different communication channels or technologies –called information technologies, for its effectiveness and equal access. Information technologies may extend knowledge beyond the geographical boundaries of a state or country providing relevant information to the relevant people round the clock.

### Education and ICT

Education is considered a part of a collaborative dynamic process to enable growth and development in support of a modern inclusive society. Education is a key driver in the creation of knowledge to accelerate diffusion and encourage innovation. Imparting education without technology's outcomes may be passive, formal, instructor driven and time dependent while imparting education with technology's outcomes may be active, informal, student centered and independent of time.

When students have access to up-to-the-minute, current information, and when that information is shared with their peers and faculty, the learning experience changes dramatically. The ICT tools like, Blogs, Forums, Communities, Webcast, PodCast, User Groups, Picassa (Google) and Flickr (Yahoo), W3Schools.com, Webopidia, Wikis, Webconferencing, VideoConferencing, Chat, E-mail, Instant Messaging, Bulletin Board, VOIP, Data Conferencing, Shout Box, Image Board, YouTube, SlideShare, etc are very useful in the field of promoting

education.

Information technologies can be used in the teaching learning process in different ways. For example, computers are used in education for various purposes as they can store and retrieve a huge amount of information. All 20 volumes of the Oxford English Dictionary are contained on one compact disc. The disc provides instant access to 616,500 words and terms, 137,000 pronunciations, 2.4 million illustrative quotations, 577,000 cross references, and 249,000 etymologies. Similarly, American Memory includes Library of Congress collections of primary materials from American history. Available on a combination of computer audio and videodiscs, American Memory contains 25,500 photographs (dated from 1800 to 1920); 500 prints and cartoons about Congress; 60 sound recordings (pre-radio) of early 20th century leaders; 1,610 color photographs taken during World War 2nd, 28 motion pictures of President William McKinley and 350 pamphlets by blank authors from Reconstruction to the First World War (Menges, 1994; pp 184-185). There seems a shift from teacher centered teaching to student centered learning. Menges (1994) stated that the eight “shifts” of Collins (1991) reflect the effects of information technologies on teaching and learning process.

### **Role of ICT in Education:**

Information technologies have a potential role to play in the field of education and it can help in promoting opportunities of knowledge sharing throughout the world. The need of new technologies in teaching- learning process grows stronger and faster. Increased deployment of ICT can lead to greater digital opportunities, including economic and human development and ICT is regarded as a potent tool in reducing poverty, extending health services, expanding educational opportunities and generally improving the quality of life.

### **Making Students Independent in their Studies**

Using information technologies students can decide about their studies, learning time, place and resources in a better

way. Students can work in more supportive environments, seek help from teachers and fellows, and share their learning experiences and ideas in romantic and productive fashion. Dede (1996, p.4) stated that the development of high performance computing and communication is creating new media such as the Www and virtual realities. In turn these new media enable new type of messages and experiences, such as interpersonal interactions in immersive synthetic environments lead to the formation of virtual communities.

Internet and WWW provide learners latest relevant information at their own pace and they can form a virtual community of learners at global level. Information technologies facilitate students in their learning process through their active participation on one hand and help teachers on the other hand. Therefore, students may use Information Technologies to:

- Improve the ways of learning in new learning fashions
- Enhance the ability and skills of applying their learning in real situation.
- Work in groups for co-operative and collaborative learning
- Develop self-learning habits at their own pace and time.
- Learn with the teacher rather by the teacher.
- Develop inquiry-learning habits.
- Focus and use right information at right time to achieve right objective.
- Review and explore qualitative data.
- Share and exchange learning experiences and information with others students and teachers living anywhere in the world.

### **Teachers may use Information Technologies to:**

- Present the material in more interesting and attractive way.
- Guide and help students in searching the qualitative material.
- Coach the students.
- Provide individualized instruction.

- Direct the students toward cooperative as well as collaborative learning activities.
- Prepare learning material for students, rather teaching in conventional situations.
- Diagnose the learning problem of students and help them to overcome.

A student should have the skills and capabilities of understanding and applying knowledge in real situations. Without the application of knowledge students can no longer retain it. Information technologies would develop in students, the ability of judging the validity and precision of information. Learning by information technologies, students would analyze and explore the information to achieve certain objectives of their study.

### **Getting Ready For the Age of Information Technology**

Certain skills and capabilities of using different information technologies are necessary for students as well as for teachers. Therefore, familiarity with the technologies is necessary to prepare them for the age of information technology. Such as-

- Encouraging students to use electronic mail to interact and submit assignments.
- Becoming familiar and explore the capabilities of compact-disc read-only memory (CD-ROM), tele/videoconferencing etc.
- Using computers to develop class notes and editing a version to use as students' handouts.
- Using computer programs for keeping records in large class-enrollment lists, test items and so on and having students review and update their own record from time to time.
- Encouraging students to include visual elements as part of their projects.
- Learning to plan a presentation, assembling projection graphics, video clips, animation, sound and other materials; trying to match particular materials with

specific learning objectives; and integrating the materials into a unified presentation.

### **Conclusion**

Information technologies are the result of knowledge explosion and with the help of Information Technologies learners may learn collaboratively, share information, exchange their learning experiences and work through cooperative activities in virtual learning communities. Information technologies facilitate teaching learning process in more productive fashion. Similarly, the role of teacher is also different in new settings than in the conventional system. A teacher facilitates and guides the learners in their study playing the role of a coach or mentor. Now the teacher is not at the center of the instruction and sole source of information as in conventional classrooms. He/she decides contents/ experiences and/or activities, locates the resources and guides learners how to have access and utilize the information for required outcomes. In nutshell, information technologies are restructuring teaching learning process to meet the International standards.

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**Road Not Taken***Ramesh K. Srivastava\**

Once Kushagra Mathur landed in the U.S., he realized that his attempt to steer his lonely way was no longer a utopian vision but a reality. He touched his head, pinched his skin, shook his hands and stamped his feet only to realize that it was not a dream but a reality.

"Brother," his sister had asked him when it was decided that he was going to the U.S. "It is heard that America has moon-complexioned fairies. Would you bring one for me?"

"Who told you about it?"

"My class teacher."

He realized now before him that these moon-complexioned beauties were moving all around—their cheerful, smiling faces, attractive red lips and liquid black or hazel nut eyes—as he was walking down the dormitory over the wide-spread green lawn with jets of powerful sprinklers as if invisible children with their invisible *pichakarīs*—water-guns were shooting jets of uncolored water over invisible passers by!

As he sat down in an isolated spot in a canteen with his tray of breakfast items, an extremely charming American girl stood before him, saying, "Hello! *Namaskar*. May I take a seat here?"

"Most welcome, sir, I mean Miss" he fumbled.

She smiled and said, "*Aap Hindustan se hain?* You are

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from India? I am Cynthia Winward.”

“Yes. I am Kushagra Mathur—say Kush, Cynthia. Do you know Hindi?”

“*Un peu*, a little. *Thori thori*,” and she laughed. “Trying to learn some foreign languages to work in the United Nations. Where do you come from, Kush?”

“From a village in Uttar Pradesh.”

“U.P. is a beautiful State,” Cynthia said. “I heard about the Taj Mahal in Agra, Kumbha fair in Allahabad, and temples in Benares.”

Looking appreciatively at her, Kushagra said, “You are good in general information about India. By the way, where do you come from Cynthia?”

“Connecticut.”

“Please write it down so that I know how to spell and pronounce it.”

She wrote down on a paper napkin “Connecticut” and hurriedly pronounced it while he attempted to internalize the spelling with pronunciation. Then he gradually pronounced it, “Co-nne-cti-cut.”

“No, Kush. In Connecticut, ‘c’ is silent.”

“Okay,” he said. “It is O-ne-ti-ut. But I never heard of it.”

Cynthia laughed and said, “Not all C’s are silent, only the second one is not pronounced—Conne-ti-cut!”

“I am poor in English,” Kushagra laughed.

“No, you are not,” Cynthia too laughed, “but you have quick reflexes and a playful mind.”

When Kushagra reached the dormitory, he felt better. He read the lines on a poster already pasted in the room in front of his bed: “And I took the road less traveled by/ And that has made all the difference.—Robert Frost.” He thought over his own case and recalled how from his childhood, his father had insisted on his becoming a Primary School teacher in his own village of Nirwari, but he himself was prevailed upon to take a different road—more ambitious, seemingly

inaccessible—and he was here in the U.S. He thought of his parents, particularly of his younger sister Priya, whom he teased frequently.

Going around the dormitory, surrounded by beautiful lawn and colourful flowers, he plucked a rose and took it to his room. As he looked at it, he had tears in his eyes. He remembered, once at home in India, his sister Priya had plucked a flower from the neighbour’s house and on the latter’s complaint, she was badly scolded by their mother.

“Mother,” Priya had said. “Please don’t get angry. Give me gum and I’ll paste it back.”

Recalling the incident, Kushagra wondered, what must she be doing now? The thought made him somewhat upset. Then lying down on the bed, he wondered what sort of fate had he that despite being poor, he had reached the U.S.—a place about which many students merely dream but cannot reach. It all began when he was in the B.Sc. first year.

Usually a back-bencher and somewhat hesitant in speech because of his rural background, Kushagra Mathur was completely lost in solving a mathematical sum, nearly oblivious of the famed Mathematics teacher Dr Eknath Ranade’s act of solving a highly complex sum on the blackboard in the class. Dr Ranade addressed all the students of the class, somewhat cheerfully, “This is a very difficult sum. I am happy that you have understood it. For those who have insatiable anxiety, let me point out that this sum can be solved in one more way. If any one wishes, he can try.”

All of them were looking at the teacher somewhat gratified. One of the boys got up and said to him, “I am so happy, sir, that you have solved it. My uncle is a Mathematics teacher in a Degree College here, teaching B.Sc. classes. He and I together tried to solve this sum, but could not. It is very very difficult.”

With his prying eyes, Dr Ranade noticed that during the entire period, Kushagra Mathur was writing something without lifting his eyes. In order to bring some lightness to the class after a heavy dose of solving the mathematical sum,

he asked, "Kushagra, you have not been looking at the blackboard at all. You probably are busy writing a love letter, ignorant of classroom activities."

Everyone laughed and for a moment the tense silence was lifted, though there was no embarrassment on Kushagra's face. Somewhat happy, he got up and looking at the teacher said in a tone of cheerfulness, "Sir, I was listening to your solution and at the same time solving the same sum. I have already solved it in three ways and I am confident that it can be solved in two more ways."

Now it was time for Dr Ranade to be shocked. Calling Kushagra to his lecture desk, he took the latter's answer book and carefully scrutinized the ways and steps of the three solutions of the same sum and found them to be totally correct. Before returning the answer book to Kushagra, he rechecked the sum solved and found nothing wrong with any one of the solutions. Finally, sending the boy back to his seat, he said to all others, "I am very very happy to tell you people that Kushagra has done more than I could. I am proud of you, Kushagra."

Dr Eknath Ranade was well-known to be a great mathematician who had done his Ph.D. in Mathematics from the University of Massachusetts at Boston in the U.S.A. He was considered a model teacher and a Mathematics wizard. His one word in praise of anybody was taken as a testimonial in gold letters. It was his comment, Kushagra thought, which had changed the course of his life, placed him on an unusual road from where he was catapulted into the U.S.A. He looked at the room, the bed, the ceiling only to reassure himself that his presence in the U.S. was decidedly a reality.

Even for a Ph.D. degree in the U.S.A., there were some mandatory courses which Kushagra was expected to complete such as two foreign languages, certain major and minor courses, comprehensive examinations, but Professor Johnson, in order not to waste a genius's time in these requirements, got them waved off. An Indian student in the U.S. was surprised that Kushagra could do his B.Sc. in one year and

come for a Ph.D. to the U.S. without his M.Sc. degree. He said, "You must be having the Education Minister of U.P. or the Vice-Chancellor of Allahabad University as your godfather; otherwise such a thing has never been heard of earlier."

Kushagra recalled what had happened. It was a couple of days after he had solved the sum that many more such sums were asked from him in the class and he had said, "Sir, I have solved all the sums found in Mathematics books of B.Sc. Parts I, II and III, and even most problems of M.Sc. as well."

It was hard for any one to believe that a student of B.Sc. Part I could solve all the mathematical sums and problems of the next four higher classes. Since Dr Eknath Ranade had verified these claims himself, there was no question of doubting him. Dr Ranade met Principal Abhyankar and told him about Kushagra Mathur. Even though none in and around Allahabad was known to disbelieve Dr Ranade, Principal Abhyankar advised him to bring Kushagra with him. Meanwhile, he also quietly invited three reputed mathematicians from Allahabad city. The books of mathematics of all the three parts of B.Sc. and two parts of M.Sc. were brought. In the presence of the Principal, these three professors asked Kushagra the most complicated mathematical sums from the entire syllabi of these courses, suspecting all along that he would not be able to solve them, but Kushagra went on doing the unexpected with complete ease as if he were on a familiar path.

After two hours of intense grilling of the boy, the three professors muttered half to themselves:

"Miraculous," one of them said.

"Unbelievable," said the second one.

"A second Ramanujan in embryo," said the third one.

Since the committee was formed under the chairmanship of the Principal of the college, a report was prepared with the signatures of all the three mathematicians. The committee as delegation met the Vice-Chancellor of Allahabad

University with the request that since Kushagra Mathur is decidedly a genius, efforts must be made to see that he does not waste his three years in the traditional system of examination of B.Sc. Instead, he be allowed to appear in all the three parts of B.Sc. in one year—each one with a gap of a few months.

The Vice-Chancellor too happened to be a man of international fame and was fairly open-minded. He felt convinced that Kushagra's case was genuine, but it was not very easy to allow such an examination. The fears of the members of Academic Council and Executive Committee were that once such a special case was made out for any candidate, it might tempt other unscrupulous Vice-Chancellors and political powers to do so for their favorite candidates. Consequently, a committee of five eminent professors of Physics, Chemistry and Maths was formed to conduct Kushagra's examinations of all the papers of three parts of B.Sc.—each one with the gap of three months. When the aggregate marks of all three results were taken, they came approximately to 99% which broke all previous records.

Dr Eknath Ranade had worked with Professor Harold Johnson on various research projects for a couple of years. He wrote about Kushagra to the latter. After fixing an appointment with the Principal of the College, Professor Johnson came to India. After his preliminary talks, Professor Johnson said, "I have not come across such a bright person in life. We would be happy to welcome him to the U.S." Turning to Kushagra, he asked, "Would you be willing to study in the U.S.?"

There was a confused smile on Kushagra's face and he looked to his class teacher Dr Ranade for help who said, "Of course, he would be, but his parents are very poor and would not be able to spare even a penny towards his education. Only if somehow his educational, living and travel expenses could be managed!"

"We'll take care of all that," Professor Harold Johnson said. "I have a great desire to see his parents."

In the evening, Dr Ranade, Professor Johnson and Kushagra went to Nirwari village. When Kushagra's father began to touch the feet of Dr Ranade, the latter held his hands, saying, "Uncle-ji, it is I who should touch your feet."

"No Ganga flows backwards!" Kushagra's father said. What he meant was that being the teacher and guide of his son, he deserved the honour.

Dr Ranade's view was that being an elderly person and having blessed the land by parenting a genius, Kushagra's father deserved the honour, and said, "God can do anything. If not Ganga, didn't the flooded Yamuna give a safe passage to Vasudeva while he was taking Lord Krishna in his infancy out of jail? Now God is ready to give a safe passage to your son for study in the U.S. Let us hope that he brings honour to the family, the village, the country, and even to the world."

Kushagra's father remained silent for some time and then murmured, "We had hoped that after his B.Sc., Kushagra would become a Primary School teacher in Nirwari village. Everyone felt happy with him, playing with children, visiting his old school and helping the young ones in learning multiplication tables and simple sums."

"Uncle ji, Kushagra has to abandon this rural dusty road. He is meant for something greater than Primary School. Now the road to the U.S.A. is opening before him. That is an opportunity very few people get."

"How far is that?" Kushagra's father innocently asked. "Will he go there by bus or train? Would he be able to come here on Saturday evenings? Our bones are not strong enough to do hard work now."

Meanwhile, Priya, Kushagra's sister, brought glasses of water in a tray and offered them to the visitors. Kushagra introduced her, "She is my younger sister Priya. I have to arrange her marriage within a year or so."

Dr. Ranade wished to convey things without making his father upset, saying, "America is very far, Uncle-ji. One cannot go there by bus or train. One has to go by aeroplane."

“Aeroplane?” Kushagra’s father was surprised. “But it is so small, like a kite. How will he sit in it?”

“It looks small from the earth,” Ranade explained, “but it is bigger than a bus. In a bus about 60 people sit, but in a normal plane the seats are between 150 and 300. I had gone to the U.S. and come back to India in the aeroplane.”

“Is that right? Were you not afraid of going so high?” Kushagra’s father was horrified. “And did you have to give it a push midway when it didn’t start as we do to our busses?”

“No,” Ranade laughed. “It never happened.” He thought of explaining everything but decided to keep quiet.

“Must be very expensive. We don’t have train fare; who would pay for airfare?”

“We are going to take care of everything. You don’t have to worry about it.”

## II

While working for various courses in the U.S., Kushagra began to be liked by most teachers. With a receptive mind and active imagination, he was quick to point out the association of a problem with other allied subjects.

Professor Johnson, feeling a sense of moral responsibility, invited Kushagra a couple of times to his residence for dinner in order to make him feel at home. He was well aware of the fact that such geniuses are extremely sensitive and are prone to insanity or suicide on the smallest provocation.

His daughter Jane was 21, almost the same age as Kushagra. Her father placed the responsibility of entertaining him on her. Taking him as a young man of her age and having respect for his intelligence, she wanted to give him good time. Once she took him outside on the sea beach where numerous beautiful girls of all ages in their bikinis were tanning themselves. She said, “Kush, do you mind if I too dismantle transitorily centuries of burdening cloaks of respectability?”

Though Kushagra understood its meaning, he remained dumbfounded. Jane giggled and said, “I am removing my

clothes like them to enjoy playing in water.”

Being fully dressed, he remained sitting, observing the scene intently. After she had taken a dip and was dripping with water, Jane asked him, “Kush, please give me the towel.”

As he approached her to give it, Jane caught his hand and threatened to pull him into water, unless he agreed to accompany her. He said, “I don’t have the swim suit.”

Laughing but without leaving his hand, she said, “I knew this is what you would say, hence I have brought the swim suit of my father. Now you have two options: either come as you are in your formal dress or go to the car and bring swim suit from there.”

Making a wry face, Kushagra began to go, saying, “Okay. I’ll bring the swim suit.”

“Not this way,” Jane said, still holding his hand but with a smile. “I don’t want to hurt you by forcing you. It will kill all the pleasure. Say smilingly that you would agree to it.”

Now Kushagra smiled, somewhat disarmed by her cheerful attitude, saying, “Jane, your method of persuasion, your captivating smile are good enough to disarm a powerful, belligerent fighter, let alone a poor mathematician. No, Jane. I am tempted to play around in water with you. I’ll go and bring your father’s swim suit.”

As he was coming back with the swim suit, he found Cynthia coming out of water. She felt happy in meeting Kushagra again and asked him, “*Aaj tum kaise ho?* How are you today?”

“*Achchha hoon,*” Kushagra laughed. “Quite well.”

Cynthia clarified, “I translate my Hindi expressions into English because some Indians do not understand my Hindi accents!”

“I understand both of them. You speak quite well.”

“Kush, at some more convenient time, I want to discuss something important with you,” Cynthia said. “After listening to your story, I feel there could be many more hidden geniuses in India who fail to get proper educational opportunities

because of poverty. Can such children be explored and helped? Just think it over.”

“It’s an excellent idea, Cynthia,” Kushagra agreed. “It is great of you to be so considerate to others. I am what I am all because of Dr Eknath Ranade. But we’ll discuss these things later on.”

Meanwhile, they reached the beach. Kushagra introduced her, “Jane, this is Cynthia Winward from One-ti-ut.”

When Jane felt puzzled, Cynthia laughingly explained, “Connecticut. Kush is being playful. I told him that the C in Connecticut is silent and he turned all C’s silent.”

All three of them went into the shallow part of the sea, threw water on one another, playing, running, splashing, or ducking while far away surfers were racing on the sea waves. The forceful waves of the ocean pushed them against one another. Sometimes in fear, sometimes in forceful jerks, they held one another. The electrifying presence of Jane and Cynthia made Kushagra momentarily forget his constantly bothering mathematical problems or nostalgic memory of his sister in India.

When he was back to work, he looked at his watch and thought he had wasted a lot of time whereas his complex problems were lying unsolved. With a guilty conscience, he began to work but was surprised to find that the obscure and somewhat confusing steps of mathematical problems got resolved faster than he was doing earlier. The feeling of guilt disappeared as his reflexes had quickened after coming from the beach. Now he was working on a complex problem on which his dissertation was to be written. He also felt obliged to Jane and her father Harold Johnson for helping him not only in his research work but also in making him feel at home in a foreign land.

Unlike American students who worked hard on weekdays but remained totally relaxed over the weekends, Kushagra tended to work on the weekends as well. In his dormitory, he was virtually the only person who worked in the

department or laboratory on Fridays till late in the night.

It was Saturday afternoon. Kushagra realized that he had been working continuously for 18 hours without food or sleep. A phone call from Jane brought him back to his senses when she asked, “Kush, where are you?”

“In the lab.”

“In the lab in the weekend? How long have you been there?”

“I don’t know,” Kushagra said in somewhat puzzled way. “I came on Friday. What day is today?”

“My god!” Jane gasped. “You don’t even remember the day of the week! A strange person. My father would be mad at me that I did not take care of you. I am coming to collect you from the lab. You better come out. I’ll be there in ten minutes.”

Since Jane’s parents had gone to Chicago, she was alone. She had some mathematical problems which she wanted to discuss with him. Realizing that Kushagra too might be hungry, she got two pizzas, some French fries, a bottle of Johny Walker whisky and a couple of bottles of soda. Placing all of them on the central table, she changed her shirt and slacks for an undershirt and a short in order to be comfortable and at ease. She told Kushagra also to remove his formal clothes if he would like to be at ease. Then she poured whisky into two glasses. Looking at her, Kushagra’s face began to grow pale and he said, “I haven’t taken liquor in my life, Jane, and if you don’t mind, I would not like to do it now.”

“I am sorry, Kush,” Jane said withdrawing the glass from him. “There must be something against it in your religion, isn’t it?”

“No. Nothing of this kind. As a matter of fact our gods have been known to be enjoying *Somras*—a sort of wine. My only problem is: I have never taken it in the past.”

Jane had a hearty laugh with her sparkling teeth beautifully encased between two beautiful red lips. In her undershirt, her shapely breasts jerked spasmodically,

attracting involuntarily the eyes of Kushagra. Picking up the tumbler in her left hand which she had earlier pushed away from him, she dragged Kushagra to her side with her right hand and planting a kiss on him, she said, "My poor little baby! Isn't it for the first time that some pretty American girl has kissed you? If so, why didn't you say anything against it? Whisky is not the only thing you are taking for the first time in life! Your visit to the U.S., your travel in an airplane, your friendship with an American girl, your education in the University of Massachusetts, Boston, your stay in the university dormitory—everything has been for the first time in life. There have been and will be thousands of other things for the first time. So what?"

As she had held him in a tight embrace, the soft, warm flesh of her body created some ripples of warmth in him. Taking the glass of whisky, Kushagra said, "You can write an essay or a poem upon it."

Embracing and kissing him again, she said, "My baby, you take this *Somras* and hopefully mathematical poetry will flow from your lips."

Both of them laughed. In between eating, they took liberal draughts of whisky and soda. After Jane had successfully coaxed Kushagra for the third peg, he felt that his speech had slowed down though no such signs were visible in Jane. She said, "Kush, what do you like the best in this country?"

Kushagra's eyes appeared quite laden now with intoxication. His eyes threatened to bring their shutters down but with strenuous efforts he looked at her and she appeared extremely captivating, so irresistibly beautiful, that he said, "You, Jane, you."

"It is you, Kush? You say it? I am so happy," Jane said, and feeling overwhelmed, she hugged and kissed him repeatedly in a tight embrace. Meanwhile, the liquor and her company had closed his eyes in intoxicated ecstasy.

In the morning, Kushagra got up and looked for his clothes, saying, "I don't remember when I put off my clothes."

"And you must also not be remembering when you removed my clothes and what you did to me."

He saw Jane in all nakedness and felt somewhat ashamed. There was a feeling of guilt within him that he had done something he should not have. She was his Professor's daughter, the greatest benefactor who had changed the entire course of his life. Not knowing what to say, somewhat befuddled, he said, "Jane, I feel guilty in doing it. I must not have been in my senses. Any punishment you give will be acceptable to me!"

Jane saw that Kushagra had become so emotional that there were tears in his eyes. Reaching out to him, she said, "Don't be so upset, Kush. You have done nothing wrong because anything done during intoxication shows that it was not the person but the liquor which is responsible for the deed." Making him sit up in her lap, she caressed his hair, wiped his peeping tears with her hands, kissed him again saying, "Poor little baby. You just played with your doll! No harm has been done to it."

Somehow all along, Kushagra had considered Jane as his sister—a grown up Priya, her American substitute. A couple of days back, at the time of *Raksha Bandhan*, he had received a *rakhi* from Priya and it was tied on his wrist by Jane. This was not a mere act of mechanically tying a holy thread to his wrist but an evidence of the fact that he had transferred his sense of obligation due to his professor now to his daughter Jane. Taking her as a sister, he felt Jane's happiness was his happiness.

Kushagra stayed in the U.S. for roughly two years. During this period, his Ph.D. became complete and his research papers were published in many international journals of Germany, France, U.S.A. and Canada. He had created a name for himself all around.

### III

When Kushagra Mathur landed in India, he got a hero's welcome! Newspapers had created public interest in his achievements with catching headlines, such as, "A village

boy conquers America” or “Kushagra’s achievements justify his name.” Many media people surrounded him, though the electronic media was not so active then.

In his village, his reunion with his parents was touching. The village people too arranged a country band with garlands to welcome someone who had earned a name for the family and the village. In the night as all the members of the family sat together, his father, after praising him for achievements, said, “Kushagra, Priya is now 19 and has to be married off. It is a village and you cannot keep a marriageable daughter in the house for long. You have already sent enough money for her marriage. Now that you are here, stay for a couple of months. After Priya’s marriage, you may go back.”

Kushagra agreed. The prospective bridegroom Dhairya Kumar was a Lecturer in Political Science in a private degree college in Allahabad. The boy felt himself proud of the fact that he was being associated in a matrimonial alliance in the prestigious family of Kushagra Mathur.

After the marriage was celebrated with reasonable satisfaction, his father said, “Now Kushagra, you too get married. We are old people. In case of illness, there is none to offer us even a glass of water.” Looking at Kushagra’s face, he continued, “Now that your name is well-known in the area, good proposals for marriage are coming.”

He thought for sometime, and then slowly began, “Priya has been talking about bringing a moon-complexioned girl for her *bhabhi* from the U.S.A.”

“Do you have someone in mind?”

“No,” Kushagra promptly replied. “None in particular but my supervisor whom you had seen wants me to get married to his daughter.”

“What did you tell him? He has done so much for you.”

“True father,” Kushagra said, “but she cannot remain in India. She would not be able to adjust in this country. Hence I cannot marry her but at the same time, I cannot say ‘no’ to him or his daughter.”

“You’ll have to do one of the two things.”

“Yes, but I want to evade both. I can extend my stay in India by one more month and get married to someone before I leave for U.S. If they accuse me of betrayal or ingratitude, I can always put blame on you people that you insisted on my marriage.”

“It would be a good idea,” his father was happy.

Kushagra went through the pending proposals for his marriage. It was felt that the girl should be from a reasonably well-to-do family and also educated so that if and when the need arose, she could stay in the U.S., communicate in English, and even could take up any job just to keep busy.

Akrati Kulshreshtha was the daughter of a famous criminal lawyer in Allahabad. He visited Kushagra’s home and sang songs in praise of his daughter. When Kushagra visited his house, he found her quite beautiful. Both of them talked with each other and their ideas appeared to be more or less similar. Of course, she spoke English more fluently than he did.

In order to forestall his marriage with Jane in the U.S., Kushagra got married to Akrati Kulshreshtha. While going to the U.S., he promised to call her the moment he has a house and a regular job in the U.S.

#### IV

Most people of the country were stunned when some of the morning newspapers carried shocking news: “Nursing Home holds a great scientist for ransom” and “Kushagra held in captivity for five lakh rupees.” Since the name of Kushagra Mathur was well-known, sincere efforts began to be made for his help by the right-minded people. Cynthia Windward incidentally was in Bombay at that time. On reading the news, she traveled to Allahabad and met Kushagra in the nursing home, asking, “Kush, what has happened to you?”

His face remained wooden as if nothing has been registered in the head. Cynthia reminded, “Kush, I am Cynthia Winward from One-ti-ut” and laughed. There

seemed some indication of the words reaching his head but no change was visible. Then she continued, "Kush, in my flight to Bombay, I met a slow-witted African boy. He was so excited in reaching Bombay that the moment the arrival of the flight at Bombay was announced, he began to shout, 'Bombay! Bombay.' The airhostess yelled at him, 'Be silent.' Rather than becoming quiet, he dropped B and shouted 'Ok. Ombay! Ombay!' The airhostess angrily said again, 'I say: Be silent.' The boy dropped the remaining B and began to shout 'Om-ay! Om-ay!' Everyone laughed. He was a real dumb boy—completely in contrast to you."

Without any words, a faint smile appeared on Kushagra's lips and then tears rolled down his cheeks. Cynthia could not control herself from crying, wiped off her eyes. Becoming emotional, she composed him by caressing his hair, kissing him vigorously as if this was a talisman to revive him, the nurses and attendants in the nursing home gazed with bulbous, popping eyes in reality what was disallowed even in Bollywood movies then. When he did open his eyes, she assured him, "Don't worry, Kush, I'll NOT go back to the U.S. without bringing you out of this dungeon."

She met the officials of the U.P. government and attempted to impress upon them that Kushagra is a genius, that if given proper treatment, he could get a Nobel Prize, create a name for India in the world, but talking to them was like telling something to the statues in Nek Chand's Rock Garden she had recently visited at Chandigarh. She approached the charitable organizations and got some response. Then she met Dr Eknath Ranade and with his help went to teachers and students of local colleges with a passionate appeal to contribute some amount to save the life of a great scientist. She succeeded in her mission and Kushagra was released.

The parting advice of the Nursing Home was: "Kushagra Mathur is suffering from the serious nature of paranoid schizophrenia. It is important that three precautions be strictly observed: first, he must take the prescribed medicines regularly. If he discontinues them at any time, his condition will revert to the first stage and the treatment would have to

be started all over again. Two, he must not get any tension, shock or any work which puts undue stress on his mind. Three, he must not remain alone; the best thing for him would be to be in children's company, playing simple games with cards or chess or even teaching them. Hence the best thing for him would be to be a school teacher."

After Kushagra had remained at home for a month, his condition showed a significant improvement. The story gathered in bits and pieces from him turned out to be a series of shocks which his sensitive mind could not bear and led to his catastrophic illness.

After his marriage in India, Kushagra reached the U.S. and felt a bit relaxed. He had fulfilled all his liabilities in India and the feeling of guilt which he had earlier about his possible marriage with Jane was no longer there. He could proceed with his research linking his mathematical skills and with the outer space and planets.

The information of his marriage with an Indian girl brought a shade of darkness on Jane's face but she showed cheerfulness and congratulated him. The same was the reaction of her father Harold Johnson who added, "You didn't invite us for marriage. We could have come."

"It was done in a hurry to satisfy my parents."

"Would you like to bring Mrs. Mathur here?" Jane asked.

"Not now. May be sometime later."

Jane was working for her Master's degree and Kushagra had helped her in completing it but he noticed somewhat cooling down of her attitude towards him. After the thesis was done, one day he was going through some research journals in the library and was surprised to find that the research paper on which he had worked hard and was going to publish it in a prestigious journal was already published in the names of the duo—Harold Johnson and Jane Johnson.

If the earth had caved in, he probably might not have felt so much shocked as he was by their act of plagiarism. He had all along nourished an impression that the academic honesty is the greatest virtue in the U.S. universities but his

faith was shaken. He went to the dormitory and remained confined to his room during the entire day, skipping his lunch and dinner. Early next morning after he had snatched an hour's sleep, he began to be somewhat normal. On second thoughts, he felt a little consoled that the kind of help which was provided by Professor Harold Johnson and Jane has at least partly been repaid. What continued to bother him was that neither father nor his daughter ever referred to this research publication. Even in the acknowledgement of Jane's thesis for Master's degree, whereas other persons were thanked, his name did not find any mention while a major part of the thesis was helped by him.

The unholy development began to occasionally disturb his sleep. Many times he felt homesick while the letters of his sister Priya began to trouble him. She wrote how her husband Dhairya Kumar was making unreasonable demands by pestering her to arrange through her brother a grant or fellowship to enable him to visit the U.S.A. Kushagra made enquiries but found that it was just not possible. When Priya could not bear his repeated thrashings, she came back to her parents' home. Then his wife Akрати Kulshreshtha insisted that she be called to the U.S without further delay.

Kushagra could not sleep for three nights and days in succession. He consulted a neuro-surgeon who after various tests suggested that he better go back to India for a month or so in order to have complete rest.

When he reached home in India, he found his sister Priya with tell-tale marks of her husband's torture. This anguished him more. When his wife came, she insisted on staying away from his parents. The house, being in the village, had no proper facilities including electricity, water, bathroom and good toilet. Kushagra felt so much upset that even sedatives failed to bring him any sleep. Then hallucinations haunted him and he shouted, "She has plagiarized my paper" or "He has stolen my research and has published it in his name."

Kushagra's old friends and his teacher Dr Ranade got him admitted to a nursing home where some improvement did take place. He was advised to stay for at least 15 days in

the same nursing home.

Meanwhile, Akрати Kulshreshtha went back to her parents and served on him a legal notice of divorce alleging falsely that Kushagra was impotent, that his parents had taken all her ornaments, that they were torturing her and that her husband was a mad man now. Whenever Kushagra attended the court, the news of allegations, charges and arguments in the court found detailed but distorted reports in the newspapers because he was a national celebrity now. He read them and they made him all the more upset. He began to run around naked, calling all of them liars, cheats and criminals.

When his condition deteriorated further, he was shifted to a Nursing Home which was quite expensive. The change brought some improvement in him. When he wanted to come out, the nursing home refused to release him till its bills of five lakh rupees were cleared. When this fact was brought to the notice of his father, he cried, "From where can we arrange so much of money? Even if we sell our entire land, we cannot pay so much. Why were you born in a poor man's house, Kushagra?"

After Cynthia's successful efforts for his release, his stay at home and active association with children brought a significant improvement in his condition. Gradually he played simple games with children, narrated familiar stories from the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*. The children surrounded and were reluctant to leave him. As he recovered more, he began to visit the local primary school which he was already visiting occasionally before going to the U.S. Since his method of teaching school children was innovative and imaginative, both teachers and children felt very happy. He taught arithmetical sums after devising strange methods and devices, bringing with him the village vegetables, such as, potatoes, tomatoes, brinjals and onions. The result was that he created a new kind of interest among the children for learning mathematical sums and tables. He drew funny diagrams, weird figures of birds and animals on the blackboard, coined stories, like the ones used in *Panchatantra*

and *Jataka* tales, composed verses and doggerels to teach them arithmetical sums and he became very popular among the children in the school.

Cynthia all along visited him regularly till he was completely alright. Feeling pity over him, some of his old colleagues and teachers came to him to see his plight. They suggested that he better apply for a standard job in Indian Institutes of Technology at Kanpur, New Delhi or Bombay because his talent was being underutilized in the Primary School. Kushagra smiled, brushed gently aside their suggestions and said, "I would prefer not to take that road again for now."

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**POETRY**

**Cinderella: New Version**

*Pashupati Jha\**

Drudging in office for eight hours a day  
is not my cup of tea. I need promotions  
to higher rank, faster the better, so that  
I may boast of status in my cocktail circle  
and enjoy each moment of my young life.

Cinderella's tale was okay in my adolescent years  
but I have grown now in the ways of the world;  
I too crave for designer shoes and wardrobe  
and a long limousine to ferry me to my office  
from home and back there in late evening.

I have seen my boss eying me intently many a time  
with desire writ large all over his drunk, flushed face.

I shall inform my family I would be late  
in returning this evening; there is an urgent  
work to be completed in the office that day.

Now the smell of wine and cigarette smoke  
floats in my life, fills my dreams  
and not the prince charming in shining armour  
racing to me on the winged Pegasus;  
one, after all, has to be a realist someday.

**The Only Expertise**

I married a man, but  
he turned out a mask  
many-layered.

I tore the pink part  
within was the black one  
then the pale...and then  
chameleon like, changing colours  
to suit any occasion; and  
finally the white one  
all dead and lifeless.

Should I blame  
his family which shaped his mindset  
or my family which zeroed on him  
or me who dittoed their choice  
or this age, expert only in masking?

- \* **Pashupati Jha**, Professor of English, Department of HSS, IIT Roorkee-247 667.

### Dreams

*C.L.Khatri\**

I dream to bloom in the air  
Like a lotus in a cesspool  
My legs firm on the native soil like Angad.  
I wish to be a tree  
That makes fruits with carbon dioxide-  
A free fall for all.  
But I won't allow parasitic creepers  
To hang on me, suck my sap  
And turn me into firewood.

### Love

Once a Rishi was speaking to his disciples  
At his Ashram in the recess of a jungle  
On the foot of the Himalayas.  
Indian Rishis loved living in caves  
That we call hideouts today.  
They either spoke in aphorisms  
Or tell through tales with a spiky tail  
That pierces straight to your head.  
He begins there was a poor peasant.  
He planted a sapling of mango tree  
Watered it, tended it as he tended his son  
It grew into a tall shady tree.  
He spent his leisure under the tree  
Sharing his days' delight and duress.  
Once for days he could not get work  
He turned to his tree with sullen face.  
The tree poured sweet words and fruits

Their friendship grew with growing rings in the trunk.  
In a winter his teeth were rattling in cold  
The tree asked him to cut its branches to make fire  
That winter passed warmly.

In monsoon flood washed away his hut  
Grief stricken he rushed to his friend  
And asked 'if he can cut its branches  
And trunk to rebuild his hut.'

It felt pity on him  
Re-enacted Dadhichi's pledge.

The man still sat beside the stump in remorse  
And wished it would grow again.

It was a harvest season  
And he didn't have a plough.  
Very ruefully he returned to the stump  
'Sorry friend, you have to go  
For a piece of plough  
For the crops to grow

But don't worry, a new one will hurry.'  
The Love spoke, "In it lies my fulfillment."  
Now there is no stump, no new tree  
But parts of the root must be buried there in the soil.

- \* **Dr. C L Khatri**, Patna. [www.clkhatri.com](http://www.clkhatri.com)

### A Triolet: Khajuraho-Belles

*A.K.Vishnu\**

The lotus hearing your ankle-bells  
Still fills these walls with the pink of love  
My soul under your spell O belles!  
The lotus hearing your ankle-bells  
The space over-brimming with sweet smells  
As the forest with a mating dove  
The lotus hearing your ankle-bells  
Still fills these walls with the pink of love

**The Beautiful Soul I Love: A Triolet**

Yes, you're the beautiful soul I love  
 My passion for you is golden fire  
 Weave the nest in my heart's tree o singing dove  
 Yes, you're the beautiful soul I love  
 We're blessed by the earth and the heaven above  
 Even gods our true union admire  
 Yes, you're the beautiful soul I love  
 My passion for you is golden fire

- \* **Ashwini Kumar Vishnu**, Head, Dept. of English,  
 Sitabai Arts College, Akola (Maharashtra )

**Inner Desire***Meenakshi Choubey\**

Shrinking skin and hoary hair  
 Foretell the coming event  
 When soul will break the worldly snare  
 And meet great judgement.  
 Though steps of time are very swift  
 I wish to cross the hazy mist.  
 Thunderous storms and roaring waves  
 Sometimes strong winds too block the ways.  
 O God! Just put Your hand on me  
 Help me realize Your presence within.  
 I would come out of earthly mire  
 And soar to fulfill deep desire.  
 A voice in me forever says:  
 "Your dream will come true very soon.  
 Your inner desire will be admired  
 You will be blessed with rare boon.  
 Your race will be perfectly run  
 Your fame will be as bright as sun.  
 Your songs will sooth the seething soul  
 Your words will show the real goal.  
 No one will take the crooked ways

The path will be as clear as days.  
 No more promises be broken then  
 Harsh words will never hurt again.

Evil on earth will soon vanish  
 Tears from eyes you will banish.  
 There will be love in every heart  
 Flowers will bloom in dreary desert."

Heap of dust settled on heart  
 Has made the truth unclear.  
 O Great God! Pray come just once  
 And make my vision clear.

Let not my life be waste despite  
 Engulfed in trifling lot.

I long to spread the lurking light  
 Ere reach Thy royal abode.

- \* **Dr Meenakshi Choubey**, Assistant Professor Govt.  
 Girls' College, Betul, M P.

**Mother's Womb***Sagar Mal Gupta\**

I was very comfortable  
 At peace and safe  
 In my mother's womb  
 I had plenty to eat  
 And drink had plenty  
 Of space to play.  
 Had physical connectivity  
 And knowledge connectivity  
 When I was pulled out  
 Of my mother's womb  
 I cried bitterly  
 But nobody paid  
 Attention to this cry.  
 Here I feel so miserable  
 Smitten by sorrows  
 Deprivation.

I have only polluted air  
 Polluted minds  
 Around me.  
 There are only shrinking hearts  
 And shrinking places.  
 There are disputes  
 of religion, caste  
 And colour.  
 Oh God, why was I forced  
 To come out?  
 Couldn't I have lived  
 There till eternity.  
 Dear God if that is  
 Not possible can you make  
 This world as comfortable  
 Peaceful and safe  
 As my mother's womb?

\* **Dr. Sagar Mal Gupta**, Retired Professor of English,  
 Mansarovar, Jaipur.

### **The Voice of Humanity**

*Zafar Khan Bharati\**

(Tribute to Martin Luther King Jr.)  
 No bullet can silence  
 the voice of humanity  
 against a tyrant man.  
 A fire was fired  
 In a distant motel  
 but its echo resounds  
 in every corner.  
 And with this echo his soul has passed  
 into a thousand unborn kings,  
 but can the spirit die?  
 It was reborn  
 in Buddha, Jesus and Gandhi.  
 A shot is fired  
 and I can see

he is reborn  
 in a distant land.

\* **Dr. Zafar Khan' Bharati** retired as Professor of English.  
 He presently lives in U.S.

### **Hats off**

*K. Balachandran\**

My God, I don't have a hat  
 And so, 'No hats off to You!  
 Yes, you have been "watching everything  
 Indifferently, doing nothing at all."  
 No, You are doing everything!  
 When adamant adharma reigned  
 The court of Duryodhana, especially  
 Thutchothana tried his level best  
 To strip the saree of Panjali, You only  
 Saved her from being disgraced.  
 When abhorrent adharma ruled  
 The court of Ravana, where he was  
 Greedy to remarry Sita, consort of  
 Lord Rama, it was Lord Anjeyana who  
 Could offer her solace and the evil  
 King fell dead in the warfront.  
 Wherever and whenever adharma  
 Tries to dominate dharma, though  
 Atfirst ahdarma may seem to win  
 Finally it will be dharma the winner  
 For satyameva Jayath... Justice triumphs!

### **Water Hyacinth**

Aquatic plants we are with  
 Thick round glossy leaves and  
 Large beautiful purple or violet  
 Flowers! Alas! Our beauty is a  
 Nuisance to the environment!  
 Why? Since we, water hyacinth

Spread very rapidly to form  
 Large green mats covering vast  
 Areas of fresh water; we can be  
 Dispersed by wind and water current!

Don't you know that a single  
 Plant can produce 5000 seeds?  
 Waterfowls eat and transport us  
 To new locations. We clog waterways  
 Making fishing and boating impossible!

Don't we make the water quality  
 Poor? Don't we block the sunlight  
 Entering and reduce the oxygen levels  
 Underwater? Are we not harmful to  
 Fish and underwater plants? Yes!

- \* **Dr. K. Balachandran** retired as Professor of English from Annamalai University.

### **The Martyr's Song**

*Binod Mishra\**

Born in a humble family  
 like most of us  
 raised like many of us  
 and sent to government schools  
 taught the same alphabet  
 yet fed with values  
 he swore to serve his nation  
 to see his family oven always aflame.

His body bled several times  
 enemy's bullets piercing his unshaken faith  
 medals everytime making his batallion proud save once  
 besieged and bruised, the emissary of valour and peace  
 belches out a suppressed smile in the army hospital  
 finally closes his eyes to see his family oven always burning  
 his five- year old son lighting the funeral pyre-  
 the drumbeats invoking the martyr's song.

- \* **Dr. Binod Mishra**, Department of HSS, IIT Roorkee.

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## **BOOK REVIEWS**

**Jha, Pashupati. *Awaiting Eden Again*. New Delhi: Authors Press, 2015. Pp.91 (Hard Cover), Price: Rs.195, ISBN 978-93-5207-047-3**

*Awaiting Eden Again* is the fourth poetry collection of Professor Jha, a well-known Indian poet in English. His other collections are *Cross and Creation* (2003); *Mother and Other Poems* (2005) and *All in One* (2011). The present collection contains 64 poems on different aspects of life. Introducing the theme of the collection, the poet aptly remarks: 'The collection deals with all the aspects of life-- love, compassion, pathos, personal and social relationships, exploitation of the weak, moral decline, and hypocrisy. Despite the depiction of dismal scenario, there is always a glimmer of hope at the end of the tunnel that things would ultimately change for the better, that Eden would emerge finally from the present fury and mire of human veins.' (p.5)

The caption of the collection is quite suggestive. Eden is symbolic of godliness, divinity, bliss, happiness, and nature with pristine glory and unmatched beauty on the one hand and 'godly abode' on the other, inhabiting a better system; and man afflicted with corruption, violence, evil and hypocrisy is waiting for that Eden to emerge and decimate the evil forces prevalent all over the world. The poet prays to Goddess of Poetry, in his poem 'The Prayer of a Poet,' to bless him with 'empowered words' so that he could move 'stony hearts with the milk and tears of human kindness':

O, the Goddess of words  
 bless me with empowered words in plenty  
 so that when I need them urgently  
 they are ever ready in my mind  
 to be reborn on virgin pages  
 for moving the stony hearts  
 with the milk and tears of human kindness. (P.65)

The poems in this collection can be roughly divided into

six categories: poems of pain; poems of pleasure; poems dealing with various facets of life, poems of love, poems of other relationships, and poems of death. 'The Way of the World' and 'Earth Mother' depict pain encountered in everyday life very tellingly. There is only one poem on pleasure and that is 'You'. After a brief separation when the lovers meet again, their joy is indescribable:

And when we are together again  
days and nights assume wings  
making us drift in dreams, reenacting  
our romantic past, when all  
was ripe and plentiful  
with no trace of nagging wants  
no fear of future twists. (P.18)

Death is inevitable in life. The poet deals with this immutable theme in his poems 'The End', 'Your Death' and 'Last Questions' very effectively. When a loved one dies, the other members die too- mentally and emotionally. They are simply dragging their lifeless and inactive bodies:

The day you died  
my whole world died too  
with you, engulfing me in total  
darkness, when the body is officially alive  
but really lifeless, inactive, obsolete  
like the carcass of a dinosaur  
a museum show-piece and nothing more. (P.50)

Love is a favorite theme with all poets irrespective of their social and political commitments. Among the best poems of love are the poems entitled 'Winter Does a Lot', 'Made for Each Other' and 'Love without Mask'. In the poem 'Made for Each Other', the poet divides love into love among young people and love among the people of advanced age. For young people, separation is unbearable and the meeting after that brings them bodily and emotionally together:

When, on return, we meet again  
we rush at each other—  
as the warriors of ancient epics—  
not for the fight this time, but

for hugging breathlessly like primitives  
unmindful of everyone around.  
And then  
we make love. (P.29)

Notice how long lines shorten to indicate two bodies melting into one another.

Various facets of life find an expression in majority of poems such as 'Meet Again', 'Changing Meaning', 'Her Desire', 'Fake', 'Let There Be Light', 'Fair and Foul', 'Mother India' and 'Sacrifice'. In Indian household, a woman sacrifices her desires and wants and even her food for other members of the family without any complaint or expectation of a word of praise or appreciation. The poet wants us to feel this unsung event around us:

When shall we see this sacrifice  
taking place in each home?  
When shall we realize  
her significance before it's all too late? (P.59)

The human relationship is changing fast. The poet candidly describes the present day reality about honesty and love. Honesty is just a ploy, a game for many, a principle of life for a few; love a mere satisfaction of ego for many; surrender and sacrifice for only a few. Life is an enigma and it is difficult to figure out its meaning. The puzzled poet asks:

Where shall I go now  
in search of meaning? Which  
dictionary should I consult,  
which scripture to get  
the exact answer?  
Where can I seek the meaning of life  
when my parents are already dead  
and other relationships  
have turned out to be mere formalities? (P.31)

His love, concern, and compassion for suffering humanity and his expose of hypocrisy and corruption is noteworthy. He pours unmitigated sympathy on hawkers in 'Winter Does a Lot'; a rape victim in 'The Way of the World,' and for an emaciated woman in 'Earth Mother.' 'Her Desire' exposes

hypocrisy and double-facedness of humanity. The agony of a rape victim finds expression in the poem 'The Way of the World'; where her agony is being compared to that of the mythical nightingale:

A virgin dragged out from her defenceless hut  
and ravished then with relish  
bears stoically the torture of rape  
her dress as torn and soiled as her heart.  
She utters her agony in subdued sobs  
like the mythical nightingale  
fearing the clouts of the ravishers;  
and they coin the age-old wisdom:  
discretion is the better part of valour. (P.17)

In spite of the depiction of a desolate picture of life, the poet hints at glimmer of hope in poems such as 'The First Rage' and 'Your Death'. He visualizes hope in the face of death:

They say when the sun dies here  
it is still present somewhere else.  
So be it; it enkindles hope within me  
to see and feel you  
to be with you and be alive  
like the Phoenix of yore  
rising from my ruined desires. (P.50)

His language and style is simple but effective like Wordsworth's; his imagery is both apt and evocative; his use of potent figurative devices is replete with alliteration, pun and irony. His streak of optimism, that the negativity in the world will come to an end through divine intervention, is quite inspiring. His poetry is the fountainhead of sheer delight and pleasure for the lovers of the Muse.

**Reviewer: Dr Sagar Mal Gupta.** Retired Professor of English, Mansrovar, Jaipur.

**Prashant Mishra and Susanta Kumar Bardhan.** *Linguistic Criticism and Literary Studies: Theory and Practice.* New Delhi: Adhyayan Publishers. 2015. XXII + 333 pages. Rs. 1100/-. ISBN 978-81-8435-446-1.

The book entitled *Linguistic Criticism and Literary Studies: Theory and Practice* edited by Susanta Kumar Bardhan and Prashant Mishra has been published as Festschrift to an eminent linguist S.V. Parasher, who always dreamt of a marriage between language and literature. A collection of scholarly articles, the book under review has an edge over many other books bent on providing excessive literary interpretation on textual elements such as plots, characters and themes. The said anthology earnestly endeavours to appreciate the very questioning of literary texts on the basis of stylistic differences. The contributors of this volume have vociferously underlined the fact that the nuances of literary and artistic writing cannot be devoid of the unique potentialities of language.

The book essentially intends to apply language not simply as a constituent unit but as a critical tool. The introductory essay by the editors reminds us of the history of linguistic criticism that began with the unmaking of language behind the making of literature. Needless to say that Structuralism had initiated the discussion on the arbitrariness of language on the authenticity of literature. T.Sriraman's essay titled 'Postcolonial Stylistics' tries to impart a new hue to postcolonial literature through its indication of a new area – the application of language to analyse postcolonial writing. Postcolonial writing is fundamentally a criticism of the hierarchical order of the world where some nations are stereotypically more important than the others. There is more than one reason behind this marginalization. Sriraman opines that language is one of the key factors in postcolonial criticism. The popularity of English as a language for writing still confuses the critics whether we have really come out of the cocoon of colonial domination. Z. N. Patil's 'Aspects of Linguistic Politeness in Indian English Novels' is a very interesting study of what constitutes politeness and impoliteness in Indian imagination. Though culture-specific, the essay shows that even on a universal scale behaviour seems to be a misleading trait of a man. While the extent of politeness depends on the addressee, the application of

linguistic specificities always tends to create the gap between being polite or impolite.

Vijay Singh Thakur's essay discusses the interconnectedness between language and relationship through a close study of Vikram Seth's *A Suitable Boy*. Baisali Hui's article is about the retrospective state of both language and literature, especially their performative purport in Chinese and Ukrainian folktales. Ivy Lai Chun Chun shows how the same story written in prose has to be considerably different in the poetic version in terms of meanings and patterns. Achal Deep Dubey's paper is a subtle analysis of some Indian novelists who, in their writings, have made an 'English' of their own through the inevitable introduction of native words and expressions.

Susanta Kumar Bardhan and Prashant Mishra linguistically probe Eugene O'Neill's play *Thirst* and discover tragic situation engendering quite appropriately because of the tense tone used in it. Suresh Kumar Agarwal's essay focuses on the contribution of language in identity formation, especially how gender influences and is influenced by the choice of language. Prasun Banerjee in his article on John Fowles' *The Collector* traces the limitations of language on which textuality is inherently reliant.

Prashant Mishra and Susanta Kumar Bardhan in yet another article analyse the tone and the text of Robert Frost's poetic language which get intermingled to accentuate the uncertainty of life. Pradeep Sharma's essay captures the transition of psychoanalysis from the classical one to the Lacanian version of the theory and its substantial impact on literary trends. Marlia Fontaine-Weisse analyses J.M. Coetzee's *Waiting for the Barbarians* and shows the immediacy of postcolonial narratology that circumvents stylistic meta-narratives. Apurba Saha makes a unique approach towards language. His 'Creole and Calypso on Gavaskar' is a wonderful study of a representative 'Calypso' on the Indian Cricket legend, Sunil Gavaskar, thereby exemplifying the euphonic synthesis of English and Creole in calypso songs.

S. K. Bardhan's 'Vakrokti and the Poems of Jayanta Mahapatra: A Critical Study' analyses Mahapatra's poetry from the point of view of Sanskrit poetics where the sound and the sense are equally important for poetic harmony. B. V. Rama Prasad's paper treats linguistic structure and literary narratives equally and shows how the essential nature of language and literature is identical, for both can be split into different units, thereby adding sense to a sentence (linguistic) or a dialogue (literary). Veerendra Kumar Mishra, in his paper, observes that language as a means of pure communicative action has failed and therefore scientific objectivity in linguistic criticism no longer holds water. Prashant Mishra in "Indianness in Style: Nissim Ezekiel's 'The Patriot'" discusses the Indianized language of the poem where the colloquiality of the words such as '200%', 'Hindiwallas', 'lassi' or 'Indira Behn' is entwined with the central theme of the poem i.e. patriotism. Sagar Mal Gupta and Nagendra Nathawat's article is experimental in tone. They examine whether speech act theory can be applied to drama and finally discover that the way language is used plays a key role in determining the dramatic intentionality. Utsab Mukherjee's essay is a review of Emily Bronte's *Wuthering Heights* from narratological perspectives.

What makes the volume different from other volumes on understanding literature through linguistic theories is its diverse approach. There are multiple articles in the book but they are very different from one another in terms of thoughts and themes. The book attempts to bridge the gulf between language and literature through profound insights beyond the horizon of apparent similarities. The editors seem to have worked hard to collect incisive articles and provide exhaustive sources, appendices, and a good index. However, as reviewer, I personally feel that both the erudite editors could have restricted themselves to one or two articles; so as to accommodate some more scholars to contribute their scholastic gems. The book, despite being a little expensive, remains to be an interesting read for students, researchers and teachers at all levels.

**Reviewer: Dr. Binod Mishra**, Associate Professor, Department of HSS, IIT Roorkee.

**Binod Mishra & Prashant Mishra, eds. *Lotus Wine: Critical Responses to Indian Literature in English*, Adhyayan Publishers & Distributors, New Delhi-2015, Pp. 288, Rs 995/**

“We should remain rooted and yet fly in imagination to regions where none have fled.” These watch words of ‘Foreword’ written by Prof Charu Sheel Singh echoing our aestheticians down the ages sets a litmus test for our literary endeavour and the present anthology seems to be a sincere attempt in that direction.

First the title “Lotus Wine” is poetic; it is the subtitle that dispels the doubt that it is not poetry but a prose work. Next foregrounding of critical approaches is in most cases Indian. In almost all papers there is a definite critical perspective to look into the respective author or text. For example Nikhil Kumar adroitly uses semiotics in a masterly study of Aurobindo’s Mantric poetry, Susant Kumar Bardhan & Prasant Mishra make a brilliant application of stylistics in understanding the Oriya archetypes in Jayanta Mahapatra’s *Dawn at Puri*, or Imran Stuti’s application of folk study in the evaluation of Karnad’s *The Fire and the Rain*. The other important canons of evaluation applied here include feminism as in U Dhoke’s study of Deshpande’s least known novella *Ships that Pass*, self and identity figure prominently in half a dozen papers, culture study of Arvind Adiga’s *The White Tiger* and of Shobha De’s novels and ecofeminist reading of Kamala Markandaya’s *Nectar in a Sieve* and *Coffer Dams*.

The anthology comprising twenty four well researched and documented papers offers relevant and sumptuous critical materials on all four genres of literature: novel & short stories, poetry, drama and non-fiction prose. Novel, being the dominant genre today, occupies the largest slot with fifteen novels covered under eight papers. The novels are Deshpande’s *Ships that Pass*, Arundhati’s *The God of Small Things*, Adiga’s *The White Tiger*, Amrinder’s *Lajo*, Taslima Nasrin’s

*Lajja*, Paranjpe’s *The Narrator*, Markandaya’s *Nectar in a Sieve* and *Coffer Dams*, Namita Gokhale’s *Shakuntala*, Amitav Ghosh’s *In an Antique Land* and Pawan K Varma’s *When Loss is Gain*. Sushila Shekhawat in her brilliant research paper makes a comparative study of female identities taking up four novels from three different continents for a sort of case study: Shashi Deshpande’s *Small Remedies*, Manju Kapur’s *Difficult Daughters*, Doris Lessing’s *The Golden Notebook* and Nadine Gordimer’s *The Conservationist*. Besides these there is a synoptic paper on Shobha De’s novels by Rashmi Gupta. She is all praise for the living portrayal of upper class society in a metropolitan city of Mumbai.

Next to novel is poetry with five papers covering poets like Jayanta Mahapatra, Manohar Shetty, Aurobindo, S C Dubey, a comparatively lesser known poet and Charu Sheel Singh who carries forward the legacy of Aurobindo. Rudra Kinshuk holds Shetty as a canonical voice in post- Ezekiel Mahapatra canon of modern Indian poetry. Mahapatra with a group Oriya poets is very much active even today; more visible than Shetty. In this context one wonders is it really post- Mahapatra age? Rashmi Bajaj and Aparna Batra in their paper “Dynamics of Poetic Creativity in Contemporary Women Poets” empathetically examine the poetic process and their recurrent engagements with internal and external world. Rashmi Bajaj is a charming poetry performer. Why is this sex bias in evaluation of literature? I am yet to come across a research on contemporary male poets. May I hope they would pay attention to us also?

The book covers two important contemporary playwrights of India: Girish Karnad and Mahesh Dattani. Imran Surti comprehensively explores Karnad’s use of folklore as well as devices of folk theatre that help him relate the present to the past by re-contextualizing and reinterpreting folklore to echo the contemporary situations as he does with myth and history. Similarly myth as an archetype with myriad possibilities of reading is scholarly analyzed in the context of Karnad’s plays by K Manjula Bashini.

Mahesh Dattani 'a surrogate to the episteme of transcendentalism' treads in his plays where angle fears to tread and powerfully explores the world of LGBT and explodes many conventional myths about sex, marriage, and love. Radha Krishna Pujara evaluates Dattani's *Seven Steps Around the Fire* in this perspective and projects the alternative sexuality explored in the play. Short stories have often been ignored in literary studies. But here we have two papers on short stories—one on Jhumpa Lahiri and another on Shama Futehally. Not only the genre of novel, drama, poetry and short stories but also non-fiction prose has got its due to make it a sample representative of Indian English Literature. Archana Parashar makes a comparative study of perceptions of India in Anees Jung's *Unveiling India—A Woman's Journey* and V S Naipaul's *An Area of Darkness*. Similarly, Jose-Carlos Redondo-Olmedilla unveils the concept of identity in relation to such complex issues as nation, race, religion and individual.

However, I feel that papers are randomly put together; they could have better been arranged genre wise. On the whole it is a valuable addition to the studies of Indian English literature particularly of contemporary literature by contemporary scholars. A piece of advice for the editors let's try to bring out books in three forms: hardbound, paperback and e-book. We should also look beyond the institutional buyers.

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**Ajay K Chaubey, ed. *V. S. Naipaul: An Anthology of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Criticism*. New Delhi: Atlantic Publishers and Distributors (P) Ltd. 2015, ISBN 978-81-269-1904-8, Pages 283, Price-995/**

The book entitled *V S Naipaul: An Anthology of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Criticism* edited by Ajay K Chaubey is a collection of essays, which seems to offer incisive criticism by both experienced faculty members and young research

scholars who have analysed Naipaul's world with candour and charisma. The volume, divided into three sections, contains 17 essays contributed by eminent academicians and research scholars from reputed institutions. The anthology contains Foreword by Prof. Manjit Inder Singh, who has his own book also on Naipaul. V.S. Naipaul's corpus, as Singh believes, is full of 'uncompromising stances about life no one deny' (ix). The present anthology offers a fresh critical insight on V S Naipaul.

The first section, titled 'Contexts and Convergences in Naipaul's Fictions', encloses seven essays on the fictional world of Naipaul. The essays included in this section take up multiple themes, issues and desires of Naipaulian protagonists in the 'neo-colonial' world. Prakash Chandra Pradhan's paper delves deep in the world of Naipaul's *Guerrillas* against the backdrop of race, ethnicity, sexual violence and neocolonialism, racial tension and political disorder which are indissoluble constituents of 'postcolonialism'. Vishnupriya Sengupta attempts to map Naipaul's mind and its homelessness in a world of dissolving boundaries and expanding horizons. Valiur Rahman studies Naipaul's *Magic Seeds* in the Saidean framework of "memory" and "place" and tries to deconstruct references and allusions sprung from writer's memory. Chandan Kumar Panda examines the travails of second and third generation of Indian expatriates in Trinidad, who survive by negotiating with the 'peculiarities' of the Caribbean region. Sayantan Pal Chowdhury explores the pitiful plight of the third world women and advocates for the allocation of power and gender binaries. The essays on the problem of migration, exile and quest for identity by Paramita Ghosh, Satendra Kumar, Balkar Singh and Asis De address diasporic questions and identity crisis of an individual, which gathers momentum from a spirit of mimicry and the subsequent hybridization.

The second section comprises four essays majority of them hinge on Naipaul's travel narratives. Contributors of this section namely Shasanka Shekhar Sharma, N.D.R Chandra, Aju Mukhopadhyay, Bishun Kumar and Amod K Rai hail

Naipaul as a post-colonial writer who telescopes historical events and posits ample socio-political paradigms through non-fiction and travel writing. Naipaul's notions bear close resemblances with Western scholars on India like Sir William Jones, Max Muller and Edwin Arnold feels Aju Mukhopadhyay. Majority of contributors opine that Naipaul's imaginative explorations have the imprint of the post-colonial realities on anvil.

The third and final section of the anthology consists of five essays bordering on the question of home. The search for home and happiness, which results out of marriage and establishment in an alien land has been a continuing quest for mankind. The contributors of this section deliberate upon the novelist's longing for his home reverberated through his seminal work, *A House for Mr. Biswas*, which can be called everyone's novel. Scholars like Madhu Sharma, Vineet Kashyap, Deepak Kumar, Shagufta Naj, Mujeeb Ali Murshed Qasim and Shalini explore autobiographical echoes in Naipaul and underline the need of freedom, belonging and spatial cravings of man in a globalised world.

The contributors of this anthology have critically argued, deliberated and postulated Naipaul's global perspectives through close quarters, which render his cosmopolitan status. The deliberations made by different scholars in this anthology are not only critical but also creative because of the several dimensions undertaken by essayists. While much has been written on Naipaul yet the various layers of his writings interpreted in this anthology will, of course, be helpful to scholars engaged in studies of exile, of diaspora and of migration. The book could possibly gain the attention of more buyers, save for the price, which appears a bit high in a digital age. Yet, the book can be a valuable addition to the library of bibliophiles.

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