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Research Department of English
The American College
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Editorial

The American College Journal of English Language and Literature (**ACJELL**) is the brainchild of the then Heads of the Department of English **Dr. S. Stanley Mohandoss Stephen** and **Dr. G. Dominic Savio** and the first issue was released in 2012 by the then Vice Chancellor of Madurai Kamaraj University **Dr. Kalyani Mathivanan**. She emphasized in her talk a pertinent point that “a journal is sustained by the citation it receives.” The second and third volumes were released in 2013 and 2014 respectively. Due to unavoidable circumstance, the fourth issue could not be brought out earlier than planned.

Keeping in mind the twin aims of the founding fathers of the **ACJELL**, the reviewers have selected articles from both literatures and language for the current issue. The twin aims are to inculcate research and publication culture in MPhil and PhD scholars and to provide platform for college and university teachers of English language and literature to publish their articles for the purpose of continuous professional development and career advancement. Articles included in the current issue range from problems in Teaching of English, Diasporic literature, Blended learning, Technology in Teaching, Literary Theories, New Literatures,

Fourth World Literatures, and of course the mainstream literatures as well.

ACJELL 2015 is special in the sense that it could reach out to more number of MPhil and PhD scholars than the previous issues. They account for nearly 50% of the articles in the current issue. Our aim is to bring out special volumes on the scholars' contribution periodically. Research and publication culture continues to be alien to Indian literary academia. It is heartening to note that the present day research scholars show enthusiasm on presentation and publication of research articles. We are planning to go online so that ACJELL can become an indexed journal thereby its impact factor and h-index value could be quantified. Eventually, it can branch off into special issues on different literatures in English, theories, and ELT related issues as wished by the founding fathers.

We assure you that ACJELL 2016 will be released before the end of the year with more new areas and contemporary themes. **Dr. M. Davamani Chritober**, Principal & Secretary and **Dr. Helen Ratna Monica**, Bursar of the College are thankfully remembered for their encouragement and support to the ACJELL publication every year.

“The Circle of Reason” Dismantling Canonical Ecological Ideology

AARTHI, S

ABSTRACT

A growing concern of postcolonialism is postcolonial ecocriticism that relates ecological problems encountered by the present day world due to different forms of imperialism. As postcolonialism dismantles the ideologies of colonial past, postcolonial ecocriticism goes beyond the ‘relationship between literature and the physical environment’ to focus on political and ecological imperialism of the Western world. ‘Ecological imperialism’ is a term coined by the British environmental historian Alfred Crosby that ‘ranges in implication and intensity from the violent appropriation of indigenous land to the ill-considered introduction of non-domestic livestock and European agricultural practices.’ (Haggan & Tiffin 2010:3) Postcolonial ecocriticism thereby foregrounds literatures’ engagement with the globalization of environment.

Keywords: Postcolonialism, Ecocriticism, Ecological Imperialism,

Amitav Ghosh is one of the well established contemporary Indian writers whose works draw wide readership and critical acclaim. His first novel **The Circle of Reason** (1986) is a fictional narrative of a history of a brewing war, dispossession and capitalist exploitation that has its roots in land. It is a critique on Western militarism and ecological imperialism in the Middle East. The story revolves around a young weaver Alu who escapes from India to the Middle East, eventually traveling to North Africa. The story is set in the 1960s and 70s, begins at Lalpukur, a non-descript village in the border of Bangladesh, from where Alu flees to Calcutta, then Mahe in Kerala, and from there takes an illegal passage to al-Ghazira in a steamer named *Mariamamma*. In the process of tracing his journey, Ghosh attempts to trace the ecological history of the Middle East and the native use of land before the

massive environmental disruption brought by the British and America neocolonial policies.

Environmental history and empire building are inextricably intertwined. Historical links are drawn among issues of environmental degradation and hegemonic structures of race, class and gender. Pablo Mukherjee views that any postcolonial studies cannot but ‘consider the complex interplay of environmental categories such as water, land, energy, habitat, migration with political or cultural categories such as state, society, conflict, literature, theatre, visual arts.’ (quoted in Haggan & Tiffin 2010:2). Western canonical eco theories do not address cartographic histories of empire and neocolonial forms of ecological imperialism, but postcolonial ecocriticism draws attention to historic events in which ‘world space’ has been radically remapped. Western expansion has drastically changed and influenced not just the culture, religion and language but the ecology of the colonized territory as well.

Ghosh’s fiction makes use of land as a witness to the ongoing tyrannies of ecological exploitation. He connects the past and the present through an ecological framework. In **The Circle of Reason**, Ghosh traces the beginning of colonial expansion to have started with cotton and silk—products of nature. Cotton, silk, teak, oil and human resources are all part of nature that paved way for the institutionalization of colonial power structure. He writes of Indian cloth found in the graves of the pharaohs, and Chinese cloth in India, and how the whole ancient world hummed with the cloth trade. He describes:

The Silk Route from China, running through central Asia and Persia to the ports of the Mediterranean and from there to the markets of Africa and Europe, bound continents together for more centuries than we can count. (59)... It was the hunger for Indian chintzes and calicos, brocades and muslins that led to the foundation of the first European settlements in India. All through those centuries cloth, in its richness and variety, bound the Mediterranean to Asia, India to Africa, the Arab world to Europe, in equal bountiful trade.” (60)

Ghosh maps out the origin of cotton from as early as 1500 BC in the cities of the Indus valley to the Mesopotamian kingdom of Sennacherib around 700 BC, then its way to Herodotus in Greece, and its slow but steady travel towards the east. He observes how cotton changed the world and shaped empires. He remarks that ‘it is a gory history in parts; a story of greed and destruction. Every scrap of cloth is stained by a bloody past.’ So is the case with many a land that has been transformed by bloody histories.

The Middle East abounds with the natural wealth of fossil fuel. The natural resources of the Middle East have been appropriate and exploited for years together. Hajj Fahmy describes the coming of the oilmen to al-Ghazira and the Western capital which had been used to build the Star. He narrates how the British had found oil in some of the kingdoms around al-Ghazira, and there were rumours 'that al-Ghazira was just a speck of sand floating on a sea of oil' and the British sent a resident there "to make the Malik sign a treaty which would let the British dig for oil." (268) The British emissary was humiliated by the Malik and very soon 'two war ships stopped on the horizon.' Hajj Fahmy recounts how the Malik was forced to sign the oil treaty. He wanted the Ghaziris to be employed in the Oiltown, but "Thin Lips wouldn't hear of it; he wanted only his oil men, men he could control. Finally, the Malik signed when the war ships appeared again." (271) The Malik was almost made a prisoner in the Old Fort. 'Thin Lips' virtually governed the town. Very soon the Oiltown prospered and needed more space. The whites got permission and went around looking for more land and finally located a few acres of land almost on the border of al-Ghazira.

The marshy bit of land located by the capitalists 'looked unused' and they assumed that they would have no trouble buying it. On the contrary, Hajj Fahmy explains:

But actually that was a very special piece of land. It was special for the Mawali because old Sheik Musa was said to be buried there; it was special for the shopkeepers of the Souq because they held fairs there on all the great feast-days, . . . and the shopkeepers grew richer every year; the Malik loved that bit of land too, for twice every year thousands of birds flew over it, ... for there was no better place in the world for falconry. (272)

The words of Hajj Fahmy differentiate the sense of place and belonging of the al-Ghazaris from that of the avaricious capitalists who view land merely as a source of income. Soon the British left and a new set of people arrived and surveyed the Oiltown. They were keen on occupying the swampy marsh land and 'for them life was war. Nothing was going to stop them getting what they wanted.' The new Oilmen joined hands with a few other al-Ghazaris and Amir, the half brother of Malik, and changed the place. Suddenly one night, they brought specially grown palms that could survive on any soil, planted them and laid claims to that bit of land so cherished by the al-Ghaziris. The Malik, with the aid of Jeevanbhai, Nury and Jabal schemed to thwart their plans. But Jabal, the Eunuch, betrayed them and joined the Oilmen. Thus the Malik lost the Battle of Palms and was 'left in the Old Fort, but more as a prisoner than a king,' Nury's thriving egg business came to an end, since 'all the eggs now came from the poultry farms of Europe' and Jeevanbhai

lost all his hard earned fortune: 'all his business and ships, his warehouses and customs contracts were seized.' The new city appeared overnight, 'like a mushroom,' and the whole country became the Oiltown of lucrative British and American agencies. Soon the fairs were stopped in the marshy bit of land, and an immense shopping arcade, with five pointed arms, called al-Najma, the Star was built.

Hierarchical structures of human beings prove that the affluent deprive fellow beings and organisms of their rights and resources. Murray Bookchin, a social ecologist, posits that oppressive systems of hierarchy make man cause violence to the natural world. He argues that hierarchies of power lead to treating people as commodities. Capitalist sectors of free trade and global partnership claim to offer open access to opportunities for the so-called third world countries, but do not in any way support the locals. It results in widening the divide between the haves and have-nots. The developed countries thrive at the cost of developing ones. The Star collapsed and the people of Ras were not alarmed except for their concern for Alu who was caught in its rubble. For the thousands of illegal immigrants in Ras, such collapses of mighty buildings were common. Several interpretations were given for the fall of the Star. According to Hajj Fahmy, it fell because no one wanted it. He explains:

the Malik didn't want it: he hasn't forgotten one moment of the Battle of the Date Palms, . . . nobody in the Souq wanted it: ... besides none of them had been allotted a shop in the Star. . . . the Mawali didn't want the Star because of their sheik's grave. The contractors who built it didn't care whether it stood or fell- they had made their money anyway." (284)

But Abu Fahl's interpretation was simple "it fell because too much sand was mixed with the cement" (284) and Zindi sees it as yet another incident in the chain of calamities that has befallen her house. Two of the three explanations given to the collapse of the Star, bear ecological connection. Alu caught in between two sewing machines, in the rubbles of the Star, murmured,

"We shall war on money, where it all begins." (260) The illegal immigrants believe that the expropriation of capitalist property creates an immediate paradise. The people of Ras try to fight against the tyrannies of power and money, only to be annihilated. Zindi, Alu and three others alone escape the massacre and getaway to Africa, hoping to find a life there.

Establishment of multinational corporate sectors that promise opportunities for the underprivileged is just a farce. In reality, the promised opportunities are illusionary like mirages. Once when people get into it, they realize that they are trapped in an irredeemable mire of political scheming that has its roots in ecological exploitation. Sanding on the deck of *Mariamamma*, all the illegal emigrants were thrilled on first looking at the lights of al- Ghazira. Professor Samuel comments,

“it’s near those lights that the queues are, because they aren’t any queues without money.”(203) Ghosh subtly hints at the power politics of the neocolonialism through the statement,

“for through a century and a half the same lights have shone in one part of the globe or another, wherever money and its attendant arms have chosen to descend on peoples unprepared for its onslaught, and for all of those hundred and fifty years Mariamma’s avatars have left that coast for those lights carrying with them an immense cargo of wanderers seeking their own destruction in giving flesh to the whims of capital.” (203)

Natural and human resources are exploited to such an extent, that they are completely destroyed and made unfit for restoration. Haggan and Tiffin analyze that environmental issues are not only central to the projects of European conquest and global domination but also as inherent in the ideologies of imperialism and racism. Neocolonialism and capitalist ventures have caused widespread changes in the ecosystem, created unequal power regimes, and exploited natural resources. People are mere instruments of production for those in power and nature is just a resource. The poor and politically less powerful groups are the affected and they have started to raise their voice to move towards environmental justice at different spheres of the globe.

Ecological imperialism looms large and leaves its lasting gloom in the colonized land. Elizabeth DeLoughrey and George B. Handley argue that place has infinite meanings and morphologies:

it might be defined geographically, in terms of the expansion of the empire; environmentally, in terms of wilderness or urban settings; genealogically, connecting communal ancestry to land; as well as phenomenologically, connecting body to place (4)

SUMMATION

A community or an individual is identified by the land, and when the land is transformed so does the community. On the ground of governing force, the colonizers occupied territories and extensive areas for their economic growth. The result is a bipolar effect of gain and depravation. Amitav Ghosh throws light on such imperialist modes of socio- political and ecological dominance in **The Circle of Reason**. War is waged for nature and results in the destruction of nature. Hierarchical social structure and developmental desire of nation states not only threaten human dignity and social justice but seek to exploit the natural world as well. The narrative therefore brings to light the connections and complexities between ecological practices and capitalist projects from a postcolonial ecocritical perspective.

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Autobiographies as the only Best Source of ‘Knowing’ the Marginalized

AISHWARYA, K

ABSTRACT

Autobiographies of individuals from the marginalized communities are the best possible source of actually “knowing” them, their cultural habits, traditions and historical roles. People from marginalized communities are often uneducated and it leaves them to produce their work in mother tongue which in turn gets translated into various languages thereby spreading their unique cultural significance to the world. Compared to the works by other writers about them, ‘the self-works’ put forth a detailed study of themselves. Trans-genders/ Hijras are marginalized even among the marginalized communities. They are not yet accepted whole heartedly by society and the problems and pains they undergo at the hands of cruel society are unimaginable and difficult to digest. All they expect from others is respect and a life with dignity. But what they get are insults and agony. Understanding what they really are, apart from how they are projected, would help to a maximum in treating them with humanity. And to “know” them, ‘self-written literary texts’ serve to be the best prototypes and that is what this paper proposes with illustrations from “The Truth about Me- A Hijra life story,” the autobiography of A. Revathi, who is a writer, actor and activist and above all a hijra. The book was the first of its kind from a Hijra community and was translated from Tamil to English by V. Geetha, who is also an activist.

Keywords: autobiographies, marginalized, cultural habits, Hijras, translation, prototypes, activist.

INTRODUCTION

Currently, people talk about marginalized communities and groups, but no one bothers to even notice that there are still a section of people who are not even treated as mere human beings. What are they known as in society? Most marginalized? No. Instead of respecting, people humiliate them by giving them insulting ruthless names and chide them off like untouchables. Indian society on the whole has become a highly westernized one when compared to the beginning of the post-colonial era not just in terms of science and technology, but in terms of culture as well. They do not have a unique culture anymore; it is partly a western culture and the time when western culture will take over Indian society is not far off. The only place where culture, tradition and ethnic uniqueness is safe in hands, pure from western contamination is among the 'marginalized,' who the majority of society fails to recognize. They are not allowed to enjoy the facilities like most of society- education, trade, government schemes, rights and much more. However, situations have slightly improved for some section of those people. The condition of such marginalized people being so, where will the sexual minorities like trans-genders and Hijras go when they are humiliated and neglected even among the marginalized?

DISCUSSION

It is essential to 'know' fellow human beings, their values and worth in order to treat them with respect. In that way their autobiographies will serve to be the best source of knowledge about them and their culture. Hijras are one of the few minority communities who protect and practice their culture even today and they are indifferent to what society speaks or how it looks down upon them. Not that there is no change in them over time but it is at much slower rate when compared to the majority of society and society never tires in forcing them to leave behind their preserved culture and tradition.

Hijras are slightly different from trans-genders and the term is particularly used in South Asia to denote males who have feminine physiology. The word 'Hijra' is an Urdu-Hindustani term derived from the Semitic Arabic root 'Hjr' meaning 'leaving one's tribe.' They have a good record of history in the Indian sub-continental cultures, part gender-liminal, part spiritual, and part survival. In south Asia many Hijras live in organized and well defined all-Hijra communities led by a Guru. They have sustained themselves over generations by adopting young boys at the initial stage of transformation, who are rejected by or flee from their family of origin, thus giving the appropriateness to the term 'Hijra' which means the same.

They even have their own language called 'Hijra-Farsi' and their strict familial hierarchical living is something society is ignorant about. Society's main

assumption about them has always been that they are all characterized with loose morale. During the British rule in 1871, they were categorized as 'criminal tribes' which was de-notified after independence. However, the stigma still continues to give them a negative shade. They face extreme discrimination in health, housing, education, employment, immigration, law and any bureaucracy that is unable to place them into male or female gender categories."The Truth About Me- a Hijra Life Story" is the autobiography of Revathi, translated into English from Tamil by V. Geetha, which gives a much detailed account of what a young Hijra has to face within oneself and in the outer world as well. Her life story speaks for the entire Hijra community with her representing each and every one of it.

In her book she describes the events right from her childhood when she started recognizing the feminine dominance in her then male body, how even as a ten year old she had to face the humiliating surrounding and restrict her femininity inside the inappropriate male body. She also talks about the caste discriminations that were prevailing.

I couldn't understand why my mother was scolding us. 'You must not accept food from that child. It'll pollute you!' she said. 'What does pollute mean?' I asked her. She retorted. 'God will poke your eyes out' said my mother. I made sure I never took food from anyone, for I was truly afraid of God poking my eyes out. (5)

It took about six to seven years for her to find her way into the Hijra community thinking that all her mental traumas would finally be over. But what she faced was not freedom, but restriction again. She had to undergo a life threatening painful operation to attain the closest possibility of being a woman. In spite of it, she chooses it just for the love of womanhood. There are many rituals that they undertake for Hijras who have 'changed,' similar to the puberty ceremony that is prevailing for girls in India. After the rituals, they are taken into one of the many houses of the Hijras and a specific Guru is chosen who acts as mother and guardian to the new Hijra. They have familial relationships in each house namely mothers, daughters and grandmothers.

They take up or are allowed to take up only three different professions to conduct their livelihood. They also have this habit of living in groups according to their professions. Hijras are seen as divine beings in north India and common people seek their blessings on special occasions like childbirth and weddings. They sing, dance and bless them on such occasions and are offered money for doing so. This is called 'Badaai.' The next is that they go to shops and other public places and ask for alms. The same belief of them considered to be divine beings works for this too. Shopkeepers consider it lucky to get the day started with the blessings

of a Hijra. Whatever the Hijra gets in a day, she has to share it among the other members of the house which leaves them to a difficult survival and nothing to save. They opt for the third profession—prostitution only to get a better income in spite of the numerous risks in it. However, ironically they die daily only to survive a little longer. The problems they come across in and by society are countless. There is no law to protect them from the evil eyes as police themselves are a part of the dominating society. Revathi provides readers with several instances in her book to describe the lawlessness and rudeness of police, which makes the readers shiver. As far as the AIDS threat is concerned, the Hijras have set their minds to face a fatal disease than to face a society that blocks all their ways of survival.

The Hijras seen in daily life wear a lot of makeup and cosmetics not to attract men but to appear more womanly in nature. They are psychologically feminine as well; they allow themselves to get flattered by false praises of being womanly in nature because all they want is to live the life of a woman.

One of the flower sellers at the market was different. Often she would entreat me to buy flowers from her. Her calling me sister and asking me to be her first buyer made me glow inside. My heart melted only when someone thought of me as a woman and spoke to me as they would to other women. (195)

The Hijras bound to the Hijra houses were not allowed to have partners or marry or fall in love. As in the case of Revathi, even if the marriage breaks off, there is no legal protection for her. The renowned lawyer, Rajesh Talwar, in his book **The Third Sex and Human Rights** talks about all the kinds of legal issues the third sex faces when they encounter various kinds of problems.

To explore their historical roles and significance, it is essential that one goes back to time of the epics. The incidents in the epics account for their lifestyle in the present day. In Ramayana, when Rama leaves for the forest in exile, he addresses the people gathered around the edge of the forest as 'men and women' and asks them to go back to their routine; whereas the trans-genders, who were neither men nor women, stayed back. Rama was surprised to see them at the same place after his exile and granted them the boon that whatever they uttered would happen for real. The belief stills stays fresh and reflects in their profession of blessing, and that is why they are considered divine.

In Mahabharatha, Arjuna gets the curse of being a trans-gender for a year in which he works for a Queen, and takes care of the household. Hijras, during the times of Kings and Queens, were appointed in the Queen's palace as entertainers and they were close friends of the royal people. In another instance of Mahabharatha, a situation arises before the battle commences, that a perfect man should be sacrificed

for the pandavas to win the great battle. Krishna, Arjuna and Aravaan were the only men who were considered to be perfect. But Krishna and Arjuna were too important to be sacrificed. Hence, Arjuna's son Aravaan volunteers. The only thing he wanted before death was conjugal bliss, but no woman was ready to marry a man who was about to die. So Krishna himself transformed into Mohini, and married him. This incident is still remembered and repeated each year in a unique temple for Hijras/ aravaanis in south India. They carry out rituals, considering Aravaan to be their husband and marry him. At the end of the rituals, they consider him as sacrificed and take up the widow form. This is another example to bring out how they are connected to the notion of 'conjugal bliss' even today.

Apart from all these mythical, historical and cultural significance they have in India, the Hijra community is marginalized geographically, economically and socio-politically. They find it difficult to get employment, official recognition in their feminine identities or protection from various arms of laws and judiciary. Only in April 2014, the Supreme Court recognized them as 'third gender.'

The narrative in her book slowly transforms from simple to the sophisticated. There is no artistic style; instead it is heartfelt and honest. Her thoughts and feelings gradually grow clearer and attain full gravity towards the end. One of the underlying themes of Revathi's life is that for each step she took to attaining her desires – the nirvaanam/castration, the financial power, the recognition is supported, applauded and valued her as a person. Although there are a few moments of happiness, details of painful moments is what describes the life of Hijras. It is a direct, plainspoken narrative of the life of someone who lives on the margins, in the liminal spaces that people in mainstream ignore, are uneducated about and are sometimes hostile towards.

SUMMATION

All of this can be brought out and expressed only by autobiographies which help the majority actually 'know' an individual personally and in this case, Revathi's voice helps readers know her community personally. Hence, they can be and are the only best sources of cultural, historical and traditional knowledge about individuals and communities; a means of paving the way for their own respectable positions in society.

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Sexual Assaults: An analysis with reference to Simone de Beauvoir's "The Second Sex"

AJITHA

ABSTRACT

This paper is an attempt to discuss the contemporary sexual assaults in India from the perspective of the book "The Second Sex" written by the French existentialist Simone de Beauvoir. This major book of feminist philosophy gives a lot of insight on various types of discrimination a woman goes through in society. Even though one may call this book as out-dated and misandric, it is notable that it is still widely read and referred to by Feminists around the world. So, the paper ponders over the thoughts of Simone de Beauvoir and possibly come up with a solution for the slut shaming and the victim blaming that have been going on. The study also deals with the causes which lead us into this grotesque state in reference to culture and history, contemporary news articles and laws enacted for women and their paralysation in India.

Keywords: rape culture, gender stereotypes, femininity, masculinity.

INTRODUCTION

One can even go to bed with a dead woman. Coitus cannot take place without male consent, and male satisfaction is its natural end result. Fertilization can occur without the woman deriving any pleasure

— Simone de beauvoir

It is quite appalling to think that rape has become a culture. According to the Wikipedia, there are certain norms for a country to have evolved a rape culture. It states: "Rape culture is a concept that links rape and sexual violence to the culture of a society, and in which prevalent attitudes and practices normalize, excuse, tolerate, and even condone rape." Certainly, if one compares the contemporary Indian scenario with the above statement, it is a regrettable fact that India, undoubtedly, fits the bill.

Not only does this society accept rape, it also blames and doubts the morality of the victim which is a logical mutilation. Even the great psychoanalyst, Sigmund Freud, victim-blames women for being “masochistic” and rape as a victim caused phenomenon. Simone de Beauvoir in her **The Second Sex** says that Freud has failed to understand women because he assumes that a woman feels like a mutilated man and she jubilantly submits to a man as a way to satisfy her penis envy. Alfred Adler, an Austrian psychotherapist replaces Freud’s drive with motives—everyone has a will power and an inferiority complex but for a woman, her inferiority complex is because of her rejection of femininity. These two assumptions are not sufficient according to Beauvoir:

The significance of sexuality were juxtaposed with that of other human attitudes: taking, catching, eating, doing, undergoing and so on; for sexuality is one of the singular modes of apprehending an object (refers to women; men as subjects); the characteristics of the erotic object as it is shown not only in the sexual act but in perception in general. (60)

Now when one looks at the current Indian context, the reason for blaming the woman (the victim) is that she is immoral, scantily clad, and happens to be out for whatever reason and so it serves her right to be mistreated. Indian society looks down on women who subscribe to the above code of conduct. The same idea finds an echo in Beauvoir’s words:

If a subject does not wholly replicate development considered normal, his/her development will be seen as being interrupted, and this will be interpreted as a lack and negation and never a positive decision. (60)

Beauvoir attacks the societal mind-set of judging a woman by using their yardstick. Society’s high standard of values results in victim blaming and slut shaming: Patriarchal civilisation condemns woman to chastity.... if she ‘gives in’ or if she ‘falls’, she arouses disdain, whereas even the blame inflicted on her vanquisher brings him admiration (397)

Volume I, Chapter I begins by the acts of misogyny that we have been witnessing. According to her, man is irked by the word “female” because it is an outright insult to him. Intriguingly, this is the reality. A man becomes ferocious when he is referred as ‘female’ because to him a woman represents ‘weakness.’ One can even witness this in Indian movies. But, on the contrary, when a woman or a girl is agile, the adjective ‘Tomboyish’ (which is meant and received as compliment) is used to define her which again reminds her that she is not a ‘male.’

When a girl climbs trees, it is, according to [Adler], to be the equal of boys: he (or the society in general) does not imagine that she likes to climb trees.” (61)

Seers prophesy that in shedding femininity, they will not succeed in changing into men and will become monsters. (777)

One cannot decide one's sex as it is a natural phenomenon. But gender is a construct of society. Certain norms relating to gender (masculine and feminine) were laid down ages ago and have now become part of society. It is therefore important that one does not confuse the two: sex and gender.

Emily Martin's idea about gender stereotypes in the field of science portrays a misconception on the idea of a woman and her roles in society. For example: In "The Egg and the Sperm: How Science has constructed a Romance based on Stereotypical Male-Female Roles," Emily Martin attacks stereotypes: "The stereotypes imply not only that female biological processes are less worthy than their male counterpart but also that women are less worthy than men." (486)

This gender stereotyping is the stimulant for misogyny. When a woman stops being the typical woman, she is loathed. It is because change is never accepted in society and stereotypes are inflicted in one's mind unconsciously. Gender stereotyping is a deadly parasite. The above gender stereotyping problem on gametes is also discussed by Beauvoir:

At least this basic biological level- prove false: the first one is the female's passivity; the living spark is not enclosed within either of the two gametes. It springs forth from their meeting; the nucleus of the ovum is vital principle perfectly symmetrical to the sperm's. The second bias contradicts the first, which does not exclude the fact that they often coexist: the permanence of the species is guaranteed by the female since the male principle has explosive and fleeting existence. In reality, the embryo equally perpetuates the germ cells of the father and the mother and retransmits them together to its descendants, sometimes in a male and sometimes a female form. (27)

One of the predominant factors used by society to further differentiate male and female is physical strength. A man most often resorts to his fists when he lacks words to argue or to prove his point. This, ultimately, is an act to subjugate a woman and to put an end to the argument. He is proud of his masculine power which is of a mere beastly nature when it is exploited.

The male has recourse to his fists and fighting when he encounters any affront or attempt to reduce him to an object: he does not let himself be transcended by others (women); he finds himself again in the heart of subjectivity. (354)

As Chimamanda Adichie says in her essay “We Should All Be Feminists, ” superiority cannot be based on physical strength in this twenty first century where intellectual strength is celebrated and recent studies have proven that the male and female brains are the same or equal.

Looking back on the culture and history of India, it is a well-known fact that women were considered equal to goddesses and mythical characters. The early puranas and vedas have portrayed good women as husband-worshipping, sacrificial mothers, virgins, fair-complexioned (which is improbable in this tropical country!) and long black-haired, graceful and fortune beings. These do not make things any easier for women. Even though the Indian penal code had long prohibited dowry system, it is still practised under the pretence of honour and this system demands (not openly like before) more money or gold jewellery if the bride is dark. Of course, no mention is ever made of the groom’s complexion!

In the field of entertainment, the interrogation and discussion can narrow down to Kollywood. Women are portrayed as nothing more than sexual objects; a gimmick; grotesque picturization of women as diabolic, unfaithful and sexually promiscuous. The worst part is that love blooms when the hero stalks the heroine and it totally misguides both women and men of all ages in India. A music album becomes famous in a fraction of second with its misogynistic lyrics. The entire analogy of art as aestheticism is lost; now art is misogyny when the bigger picture is looked at. But if these activities are questioned, everyone is indifferent and their answers point at the reality. What is reality? Do women traffic young boys for prostitution? Do women indulge in domestic violence? Do women practise polyandry? Are they the reason for this rape culture in India? Do women grope men in the public transport in broad daylight? Contemporary film culture plays a humongous role weaving this rape culture. The situation of Indian women is the same as in Betty Friedan’s image of American women in the 1940s as seen in her **The Feminine Mystique**. The voice of feminism, strong and loud, has made waves in the cultural scenario down the years. But now what is needed is a more strident voice that would tell our counterparts that ‘we too are humans and liked to be treated with respect.’

CONCLUSION

Nothing can be done to the adults now because they all have given in to their Id. But young boys and girls can at least be taught in schools about gender equality. Until and unless Gender studies become part of the curriculum and taught in an innovative way, this staining culture will spread among humans like plague: “men and women must...beyond their natural differentiations, unequivocally affirm their brotherhood.”(782)

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Digitization of Library: Learners of Text to Speech Output Method

AJUKESH, R

ABSTRACT

Because of the increase of 'digitization of library,' learning has become an easy task for the present-generation. More than ever, this has paved the way for the visually challenged learners (VCL) to exploit 'text to speech output (TTSU)' method to develop their learning interest. At first, this method has been carried out only in the special schools that are meant for visually challenged children. This paper highlights the (i) the increased number of screen reading software; (ii) viability of the portable screen reading software; (iii) specially designed technical devices with Speech Recognition Software for VCL; and (iv) available screen magnifiers enabling visually challenged learners to make use of the available materials in the general library. Moreover, this paper gradually explains these methods in connection with visually challenged learners and digitization of library.

Keywords: Digitization; visually challenged; Screen readers; text to speech output; Braille; Opportunity to Learn (OTL).

INTRODUCTION

That Digitization of library (DL) provides VCL the 'Opportunity to learn (OTL)' is the fundamental concept of this paper. Christopher Johnstone, Jason Altman, Joe Timmons, and Martha Thurlow have coined the term 'OTL' to ensure the importance of assistive technologies (AT) in the learning process of visually challenged learners. (2009) Since VCL have become technical assisted learners, Braille materials are unexploited. Hence, this research study believes that in recent years, AT and VCL are indivisible in the learning process. Moreover, this paper will gradually explain blindness, Braille method, and other accessibilities to ensure how AT VCL and DL are interrelated in the learning process.

DEFINITION OF BLINDNESS

According to oxford dictionary, the word blindness is stated as “Unable to see because of injury, disease, or a congenital condition.”

TYPES OF VISUAL DISABILITY

The word ‘visually challenged’ may indicate a particular group but their visual disability has been classified into four major kinds. They are: Partially sighted, Low vision, Legally blind and Totally blind. (2015)

PARTIALLY SIGHTED

The term ‘Partially sighted’ refers to a person with some type of visual difficulty which results in the need of special education. Here, the level of suffering is less by comparing with the other kinds of blindness. Even though they are thought in special ways, they mostly try using their eyes to get the things done. They would be medically blind and physically sighted (May 2009).

LOW VISION

It refers to the next level and the problem is quite serious than the previous. There is a severe visual impairment in a person. It does not necessarily have to be a distance vision problem. The term applies to all individuals who are unable to read a newspaper text of common size at normal reading distance and this disability cannot be corrected by glasses or lenses. Unlike partially sighted, these people usually use another sense or possibly other senses to learn. Some of them have the habit of making use of additional lighting and screen magnifiers or text size change/variation or optical character recognition software (OCR).

LEGALLY BLIND

A person has less than 20 / 200 sight in the better eye (the first number indicates the length in meters needed by a visually impaired person to see an object and the second number indicates the length in meters needed by a non-visually impaired person to see the same object. This is often accompanied by a very limited vision field.

TOTALLY BLIND

Those people have to learn with the help of Braille print and other non-visual aids. Some of them are able to recognize darkness and light, some of them do not perceive the difference at all. Besides, there are some categories also found such as Colour blindness and Night blindness etc. They do not directly fall into the category of visual disability (2015). All visually challenged would be familiar with ‘Braille method,’ unless one is not blind by birth.

BRAILLE METHOD

Braille is a tactile writing system used by blind people and was invented by Louis Braille, a visually challenged and developed in 1824 by himself. Therefore his name was given to the system. Braille generally consists of cells of 6 raised dots conventionally numbered and the presence or absence of dots gives the coding for the symbol. In 1852, it became worldwide standard, helping the blind read books, clocks, wristwatches, thermometers, sheet music and even elevator buttons (2006). In recent years, this system has been replaced by technical devices that have been dominating the present-day world.

WHY IS DIGITIZATION OF LIBRARY REQUIRED FOR VCL?

1. Visually challenged learners could not make use of printed copy of materials;
2. High cost of Braille printers as well as printed materials;
3. Shortage of readers and convincing readers;
4. Shortage of Braille materials;
5. Hardly concerned Braille materials, because of its dying nature;
6. Over reliance on technology assisted learning;
7. Hardly produced Braille materials of new publications; and
8. Digitization of library is easy to access.

ACCESSIBLE SCREEN READERS

A screen reader is a specialized type of software that converts electronic text to speech and outputs it to headphones, speakers or refreshable Braille devices, in line with user preference. Screen readers utilize an accessibility API (a software 'hook' to access either a computer's operating system, which in turn communicates with certain computer software or a web browser and the web content it renders.

SCREEN MAGNIFIERS

A screen magnifier is software that interacts with a computer to present enlarged screen content which is specially designed for low-vision. There are different kinds of screen readers and screen magnifiers that assist VCL to develop their acquaintance with all subjects. Speech recognition software allows VCL to operate their computer and enter data using voice rather than a mouse or a keyboard. Text-to-speech software converts written text such as, text files, web pages, PDFs and emails into audio files that can play on a wide range of devices, such as computers, MP3 players, iPods and CD players. (2015) Job Access with speech (JAWS), assists VCL to read materials in English and 30 different foreign languages (Freedom

scientific 2016). Non visual desktop application (NVDA) can assist VCL to read materials that are in vernaculars. These screen readers have been established in some of the general libraries to stimulate the learning interest of VCL.

WILL DIGITIZATION OF BOOKS REALLY BENEFIT THEM?

The answer is positive for the following reasons:

1. VCL can learn things on his/her own;
2. They can read more than once. There is no time limitation;
3. They can fearlessly participate in the academic activities;
4. They can read materials with regard to other studies, that are not their area of study; and
5. It will ensure their learning ability and their capability of analyzing and approaching things.

WILL IT AFFECT THEIR LEARNING PROCESS EITHER WAY?

1. VCL may not look for authenticity of text, that he/she read;
2. VCL may enjoy reading/learning, they might fail to recall what they have read/learned;
3. Their option for reading will certainly be technical readers (Screen readers); and
4. They may develop their hatred for manual readers.

Generally speaking, VCL have become the learners of 'text to speech output' method, because of several shortcomings in Braille method. Since technology assisted learning has been playing a convincing role in the present-day world, technical devices that are designed for visually challenged learners provide a space for them to participate in the act of reading/learning.

CONCLUSION

Hence, digitization of library can very well accommodate Visually Challenged Learners to stabilize their learning process with screen readers. At present this has been practiced in some of the general libraries such as, Anna Library, Chennai, (MRCDA) Loyola College, Chennai, (MRCDA) Madras University, Helen Keller Talking Book Library Madurai and Mohan Library EFL University Hyderabad. If it would be introduced in all schools and colleges in India, it will benefit VCL at all levels.

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A Journey towards Trans-cultural Identity: A Study of Bharati Mukherjee's *The Tiger's Daughter*

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ABSTRACT

Diaspora is an essential and inevitable phenomenon of this modern era. The breaking barriers and the ever widening frontiers have facilitated the flow of expatriates and immigrants. Such displaced persons find themselves in a cultural dilemma while having to adapt to the new environment. The dangling self and the immigrant sensibility find expression in the novels of Bharati Mukherjee. The Indian born Mukherjee, herself being an immigrant in Canada and later in USA has an intrinsic and intimate knowledge of both the Western and Eastern cultures which enables her to portray the emotions, fears and doubts of a cultural transplant in an authentic and skillful manner. The paper analyses the journey towards transcultural identity in Bharati Mukherjee's "**The Tiger's Daughter**."

Keywords: Diaspora, immigrant sensibility, Western and Eastern cultures, Cultural transplant.

INTRODUCTION

Diaspora is an essential and inevitable phenomenon of this modern era. The breaking barriers and the ever widening frontiers have facilitated the flow of expatriates and immigrants. Such displaced persons find themselves in a cultural dilemma while having to adapt to the new environment. The dangling self and the immigrant sensibility find expression in the novels of Bharati Mukherjee. The Indian born Mukherjee, herself being an immigrant in Canada and later in USA has an intrinsic and intimate knowledge of both the Western and Eastern cultures which enables her to portray the emotions, fears and doubts of a cultural transplant in an authentic and skillful manner.

Bharati Mukherjee, a Calcutta born Brahmin married Clark Blaise, a Canadian writer and settled down in Canada. There began her dilemma, caught between the two cultures of the East and the West. This conflict has constituted the main concern of her writings and she has become a celebrity for her distinctive approach to expatriate hood. It was not easy to adjust with the western way of life. Because of racial discrimination, she experienced pain, bitterness and frustration in Canada but after a few years the couple migrated to USA. There, life was fascinating and Mukherjee enjoyed her stay without any regrets. She delightfully declares that India remains a part of her past, of which she is proud of but at the same time she believes that her life is in the West. She feels herself to be part of the American literary scene. As such she never belittles or degrades the adopted country to glorify the native one. In her writings she emerges out to be an agent of attitudinal change. *The Tiger's Daughter*, is purely an immigrant novel and the protagonist of this novel, Tara is actually an imaginative rendering of Bharati Mukherjee's personal experience. The novel explores Tara's journey from self-alienation to self-actualization and the ultimate acceptance of her transcultural identity.

Tara, the Bengali Brahmin, daughter of an affluent industrialist, Bengal Tiger Banerjee, encounters a double culture shock – the first in the alien land, on going abroad to USA for higher education and the second, in her own native soil, on returning from USA to India, as the wife of an American writer, David Cartwright. Bengal Tiger sent his only child, a fragile young girl of fifteen, out of India for college. The motive for this decision remained a secret but the consequence was terrifying. Tara considers it an unsalvageable mistake. If she had not been a Banerjee, the great granddaughter of Hari Lal Banerjee, or perhaps if she had not been trained by the good nuns of ST. Blaise's to remain composed and lady like in all emergencies, she would have rushed home to India at the end of her first week (10)

She felt being pushed to the periphery of her old world. The tremendous difference between the two ways of life filled her with depression and frustration. Of course her classmates extended a friendly approach, lending her books, records and hand lotions unasked but Tara distanced herself from them thinking how could she ever share Camac Street thoughts with these 'pale, dry-skinned girls'. (11) Little things pained her. She sensed discrimination if her roommate did not share her bottle of mango chutney. She defended her family and her country vehemently whenever she conversed with the foreigners. She prayed to Kali, a portrait kept under silk saris in her suitcase, to bless her with strength for not to break down before the Americans.

It is irony that she fell in love with an American and had to settle down in New York. New York was certainly extraordinary but it had driven her to despair. When the exotic atmosphere seemed quite oppressive and unbearable, "She had

shaken out all her silk scarves, ironed them and hung them to make the apartment more Indian.” (34) She felt herself ‘victim of a love match’. Her husband being totally western, she could not express the finer nuances of her family background and life in Calcutta.” David knew nothing of Calcutta, Camacs Treet, the rows of gods, the power and the goodness of the Bengal Tiger”.(126) She could not provide any convincing explanations for his queries about the tradition and customs of her homeland. Thus uprooted from the native soil and culture, Tara is torn between the feelings of rootlessness and nostalgia and feels quite insecure in the new land and longs for her homeland.

To her great relief, after a span of seven years, Tara planned a trip home, to India. She believed that this home coming would soothe her scarred psyche and erase the displeasure of her life abroad. Disgusted with materialistic life of America she cherishes an idealistic image of her native land rich in cultural heritage but her visit to India shatters her dream. She is totally disillusioned with the deteriorating and degenerating social changes of India. She is also shocked to realize that her brief stay in USA has transformed her outlook on Indian life., Just now she discovers that the 22year old Tara has absorbed the alien western culture unknowingly and it has almost become a second self to her. There is a strange fusion of the Americanness and Indianness in the psyche of Tara and this new self is constantly in clash with the culture of the native land.

Tara finds in India nothing to her liking; whatever appealed to her once now appalls her: “Seven years earlier on her way to Vassar, she had admired the houses on Marine Drive, had thought them fashionable, but now their shabbiness appalled her”. (10) Tara has to travel alone from Bombay to Calcutta. Though her relatives advise her to fly, she prefers the train journey which aggravated her irritability after years of air planes and Grey hound busses. Tara, ought to have been thrilled with the train journey as her uncle was working with the Diesel locomotives and she had been trained since childhood to think well of Indian railways. But now the train journey depressed her. Fearing diarrhea, jaundice and polluted water she refused to buy food packet and starved herself. At last she ordered for a coke, and then suddenly panicked at the thought of infection, returned the bottle simply paying for it. She indulges in unhappy self-analyses:

For years she had dreamed of this return to India. She had believed that all hesitations, all shadowy fears of the time abroad would be erased quite magically if she could just return home to Calcutta. But so far the return had brought only wounds... She was an embittered woman, she now thought, old and cynical at twenty and quick to take offences. (25)

Reaching Calcutta, she found everything alien and hostile. At least the Bombay airport was clean but the squalor and confusion of Howah Station outraged her : “Coolis knocked her down, an attendant sneezed on her raincoat and offered to wipe up the mess with his dusting rag”.(27) Two truck full of relatives had come to welcome her: “Surrounded by the army of relatives, who professed to love her and by vendors ringing bells, beggars pulling at sleeves, children coughing on tracks Tara felt completely alone.”(28) The brutal atmosphere of Howrah station turned her mad. Not only the people, even the place horrified her. With riots, busses burning, the striking workers surrounding the ware houses, Calcutta has changed a lot. What confronted her was restive city which forced weak men to fanatical defiance or dishonesty. Calcutta was loosing its memories in a bonfire of effigies, busses and trams, “She longed for the Bengal of Satyajit Ray, children running through cool green spaces, aristocrats despairing in music rooms of empty palaces. It is under the grip of violence, caused by different classes of society.”(29)

Even her school St.Blaise’s had changed and the nuns are taking in Marawais by the dozens. Everything stinks. She finds it difficult to adjust with the changes in the city. What enthused and enchanted her before seems bare and meaningless now. Even the affection, warmth and intimacy towards her friends has evaporated. Once she had enjoyed the company of her friends and basked in their love. She had played with her friends, done home work with Nilima, briefly fancied herself in love with Pronob, debated with Reena at the British Council but now some instinct or intuition told her to stay away from her friends; she feared their tone, their omissions and their aristocratic oneness. This change in her and her obvious American attitude to life is sensed by her relatives and friends. Her friends express their disapproval of her, saying “These Seven years abroad had eroded all that was fine and sensitive in her Bengali nature.” (55) Such rudeness! It’s not like you all Gosh! That’s what happens when Bengali girls go to America (107) you have become too self-centered and European (107).

The surfacing American self disables her to partake in the religious rituals of the family. Tara’s mother, Arati was a saintly woman who spends a great deal of her time in the pooja room.”Tara had willfully abandoned her caste by marrying a foreigner. She no longer a real Brahmin was constantly in and out of this sacred room, dipping like a crow”(50). She is oblivious of the Hindu rituals too. After grinding the sandalwood paste she could not remember the next step of the ritual.”It was not a simple loss. Tara feared, this forgetting of prescribed action; it was a little death, a hardening of the heart, a cracking of axis and centered her inability to sing the bhajan, which she had sung in her childhood reflects the gradual loss of her cultural heritage. Her transplanted self in America has made such common rituals alien to her (51).

On several occasions Tara repents for having come to India without David. She is quite obsessed with his thought “Perhaps I was stupid to come without him ... Perhaps I was too impulsive, confusing my fear of New York with homesickness or perhaps I was going mad” (56). The recurring memory of her husband evidently suggests the second developed self in her. It reveals the fact that the alien land has become more of a home to her.

Bengal Tiger arranges for a trip, to Darjeeling to entertain Tara, but she gets consolation and peace nowhere. A beauty contest was held there for which Tara was one of the judges. When Antonie Whitehead, the American lady preferred bathing suit, Tara approved of it. This enraged the women who accused her contemptuously saying “Really miss Cartwright, I think your years abroad have robbed you of feminine propriety. You now as well as I do our modest Indian girls would not submit to such grace” (187). This led to some other ugly remark and finally everything ended up in uproar and furore.

Next, to show off Bengal’s industrial progress to his daughter Bengal Tiger planned a trip to Nayapur. Here Tara meets with the greatest tragedy. The politician and the industrial magnate Tuntunwala wrecks her completely, outraging her modesty. This is the fatal blow from which she could never recover. With this, her disillusionment with an India in upheaval is complete and she is determined to leave the land. In spite of her parent’s pleadings, she reserves a seat on a flight to New York. Soon after reservation while driving towards Catelli-Continental to meet her friends and break the news to them, she is caught in one of the periodic flare-up common in Calcutta. In the ensuing commotion and violence Joyonto Roy Chawdhury, a symbol of the old world order is brutally beaten to death. Pronob Tara’s friend, who tries to save him, is himself injured in the process. Twice bombs exploded and the novel ends inconclusively thus:

Tara, still lot in a car across the street from the Catelli-Continental, wondered whether she would ever get out of Calcutta, and if she didn’t, whether David would ever know that she loved him fiercely (211).

A close experience of both the worlds-the western and the Indian enables Bharati Mukherjee to give an authentic picture of Tara’s life and emotions. She leads Tara through a series of adventures and misadventures to a final self-realization and reconciliation with her Transcultural identity. It is ironical that Tara who survived the racial hardship of the foreign country meets with the tragic end in her native soil. The greater irony is that Tara an Indian finds solace, security and love only in the arms of her American husband, who represents the host land, USA. Thus her life is a sojourn from alienation to integration by which Bharati Mukherjee suggests that breaking away from one’s ethnicity, absorbing the new culture is imperative for the immigrants’ survival.

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Historicizing Fiction: A Study of Jean Arasanayagam's All is Burning

ANITA CAROLINE, T

ABSTRACT

This paper aims to study historical influences in the works of the Sri Lankan writer Jean Arasanayagam. A famous short story titled All is Burning is taken for analysis. Jean Arasanayagam reflects what she observes and witnesses in her works. Her works are true to life. She describes a war torn Sri Lanka and the troubled lives of its citizens. Along with her family she was put up in the refugee camp in the 1983 insurgency. Hence she speaks from experience and she remains to be the voice of the voiceless for more than four decades.

INTRODUCTION

Jean Arasanayagam is a renowned Sri Lankan Writer and a teacher. Born in a Dutch Burgher family, she has married a Tamil from a traditional family. In her four decades of life as a writer, she has written poetry, prose and short stories in English and is a celebrated writer around the world. She uses English language deftly to write about the real picture of current times in Sri Lanka. A keen observer and listener, she examines the various injustices and painful changes taking place in her country. In all her works she expresses her views on the ethnic, social and political conflicts of her nation.

DISCUSSION

The Dividing Line, one of her short story collections deals with the excruciating pain of the victims of the Sri Lankan civil war which spanned over a long period of time. Lost relationships, lost identities, lost properties are a few themes woven into her study of the oppressed. She has given voice to all the silent sufferers of war and crime. In an interview to **The Sunday Leader**, Jean says she is “. . .

constantly reviewing my role as a peace activist in the reassessment of my complex saga through life, writing radical changes in mind-thought and experiences in the milieu I inhabit." The dark history of the land has driven and banished people to faraway places. Jean speaks for them, ". . . for everyone who has undergone death, bereavement, the loss of hope in order to reinstate a new and transformed self who has emerged phoenix-like from the ashes." (The Sunday Leader) Michael Ondaatje has appraised Jean's writings as containing powerful and truthful stories about Sri Lanka. Her stories do not follow a linear pattern. Anders Sjöbohm remarks that "Different time planes, insightful character portraits, a circular composition and a rhythmic, detail-shimmering prose are some of the characteristics of her short stories."

Jean in her works includes personal, borrowed, felt and shared experiences of herself and of people she has known and observed. Hence, the history of her nation is intertwined in her works and the stories are just a reflection of reality. A study and analysis of her works demand knowledge of the social and political history of her nation. Hence a brief history of Sri Lanka is cited in this paper.

The Sri Lankan Civil War was an armed conflict between the government of Sri Lanka and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Elam which began in 1983 and continued till the year 2009. This 26 year military campaign has caused significant hardships for the population, environment and the Sri Lankan economy. There is an initial estimate of about 80, 000–100, 000 people killed in the war. The UN panel estimated additional deaths during the last phase of the war totalling around 40, 000 dead. But other independent reports differ and estimate the number of civilians killed to exceed 100, 000. The Sri Lankan government forces have been accused of human rights abuses, human rights violations, lack of respect for Habeas corpus, in arbitrary detentions, and forced disappearances. An estimate on the exact number of civilian casualties across the years is debatable.

The 1983 civil war resulted in mass outflow of Tamil civilians from Sri Lanka to South India. Many Sri Lankans are living in South India as refugees. Many of them who have witnessed war scenes have Posttraumatic stress disorder Symptoms which include disturbing chronic flashbacks, evasion or freezing of memories of the event. The insurgency of July 1983 culminated in bloody riots. Jean Arasanayagam and her family became refugees. Jean bears a writer's testimony of these events. This part of her life awoke the responsibility in her as a writer to talk about issues concerning displacement, up-rootedness and the ensuing problems. Poor living conditions in the camps, lack of medical care, sexual exploitation, physical harassment and psychological trauma are few issues discussed in her many of her works. Jean does not write for self-glorification but for the good of mankind. Her

writing she believes should be of use and should serve a noble cause of liberating innocent lives.

The short story titled “All is Burning” is about a mother who goes in search of her missing son-in-law in a war torn village. The enemy troops enter the village without any warning, at the blink of an eye, the serenity and peace of the village is swept out. They force open all the houses, point guns at all the men and take them away forcefully, to be slaughtered, to be butchered mercilessly.”Yama had visited every house in the village where there were males. They had all been taken away.” (170)

Alice, the mother, is a servant who does all kinds of odd jobs to take care of her daughter, Seela. Her husband deserted her when her daughter was little. All her life she obeys commands, receives orders, makes other people’s lives comfortable. Now that her daughter is of marriageable age, she finds a suitable groom for her. Her desire to slow down a little bit, relax herself after her daughter’s marriage crashes down when her daughter’s groom is forcefully taken away by the military.”. . . it will never end for me, ” (171) ruminates Alice. Her reflection “My strength grows with each crisis” emboldens herself to look for Sena. Groping her way in the dark, she searches for his body amidst other corpses. She needs to be certain about the truth, before taking the next step, before changing plans for her daughter’s life she had to find out if Sena is alive or not. Jean calls this act of Alice as “death walk, ” walking amidst dead bodies ‘spread-eagled on earth’ and smelling the odour of death.

When news of military troops visiting nearby villages reach her ears, Alice begins to see visions, “. . . she saw that vision- Yama. Yama, the god of death. He too was with them. On whose side was he? He was a constant guest on both fronts these days.” (171) On the government’s side and the militant’s side there are so many lives lost.

Alice talks about mass burials, denial of funeral rites and orations, the last respect a life deserves is not granted to all those innocent men. The tranquil, beautiful village becomes a deserted place, filled with ‘rotting vegetation’ of human bodies, all this change happens in a single day and Alice wonders, “Who’s going to start life here all over again. . .” (173). When she accidentally walks over corpses, she requests for their forgiveness, “Forgive me. . . . Forgive me, son, brother, father, husband, forgive me for touching your sleepy body with my foot.” (174) An unsettling feeling of fear and helplessness comes over Alice when she thinks about the two hundred and fifty men who are swept out in a day. With anger she blames god for being blind to all the injustices.”What new plants will grow here? or will it remain a desert, haunted by ghosts and spirits?” (174)

CONCLUSION

Because of her strong faith in humanity and her belief in the spirit of the phoenix, Jean closes the story on a positive note. Since the story of life has to go on, Alice decides that it is women's responsibility to take the place of men and continue the struggle of life. At the near end of the story, Alice is found very optimistic and that is the right way to live.

Jean Arasanayagam's works are true to life, she reflects and registers what she observes and witnesses in her works. In most of her works she describes a war torn Sri Lanka and the troubled lives of its citizens. She remains a voice of the voiceless for more than four decades and her efforts are to be truly commended.

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Green the Mind, Green the World: A Study in Eco-feminism

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ABSTRACT

The word 'Nature' gives us a pleasant mood and peaceful mind. Nature has its own qualities and it is considered as preserver, producer and destroyer. Likewise woman also has the qualities of nature. Not only woman is compared to nature but also is considered as nature. On the other hand, the oppression of woman and nature is deconstructed, when ecofeminism originated. This article explores the prosperous relationship between nature and woman through literature.

Keywords: Eco-centrism, Eco-feminism, Bonding, Comparison

INTRODUCTION

Green the mind, Green the world. When people keep themselves green (peace) and alternatively they can keep our world also green (eco). But this cannot be made possible by an individual and there are government policies for clean environment. Every time when nature is dominated by man, woman is also subjugated by man. Even in literature nature is considered as an 'object' and many writers use nature as a background to their works, whether that is a short poem or long narrative work like novel. For example, in Thomas Hardy's **The Mayor of the Caster Bridge**, nature is constructed as a background setting to describe the life of the protagonist Michael Henchard, but Thomson's "The Season" (1730) gives importance only to nature (ecology) but not to man (anthropocentric).

DISCUSSION

A new movement first emerged in the United States during 1970s and that movement became a relationship between literature and environment which is called as 'eco-criticism' or 'green studies.' This is much celebrated in the U. S

(eco-criticism) rather than the U. K (green studies). It shows the role of nature in literature. The main aim of eco-criticism is that the reigning religions and philosophies of western civilization are deeply anthropocentric. It means that they are oriented to the interest of human beings (especially men) who are viewed as superior to and opposite of nature. The general view is that man uses nature and woman as subordinates and man becomes the centre, and alternatively nature and woman are marginalized. This is the main cause behind the origin of eco-feminism.

The term eco-feminism was first coined in 1974 by Françoise d'Eaubonne and she called upon women to lead an ecological revolution. Eco-feminism comes from its different shades like socialist feminism, liberal feminism, cultural feminism, and radical feminism and ideas associated with cultural feminism have become most closely linked with it. Eco-feminism considers woman as a self esteem and it emphasizes the relationship between nature and woman. According to Abrams (2012), "A conspicuous feature in eco-criticism is the analysis of the difference in attitudes toward the environment that are attributable to a writer's race, ethnicity, social class, and gender. The writing of Annette Kolodny gave impetus to what has come to be called ecofeminism—the analysis of the role attributed to women in fantasies of the natural environment by male authors, as well as the study of specifically feminine conceptions of the environment in the neglected nature writings by female authors." (100)

Mostly in male writings nature is described as woman and they propose a parallel between the domination and subjugation of women and the exploitation and spoliation of the land. The dominance of male is clearly visible in their writings, and from anthropocentric point of view there are many comparisons between nature and woman, where these two categories are bound with one another. A north-east Indian writer Easterine Kire admires nature as woman in her novel **When the River Sleeps** (2014). In this novel the protagonist Vilie, hunter searching for a stone which gives untold powers to him is only possible to catch the stone when the river sleeps. The hunter usually speaks with nature."The forest is my wife, " Vilie had forcefully stated to them again and again." (9) Here the protagonist considers nature as his wife and he bounds with nature. But in Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain **Sultana's Dream** (1905) women's education is evident from the focus of the utopian feminist country of Ladyland. Rokeya lays particular emphasis on the importance familiarizing women with the world of science and is unequivocal in her condemnation of male militarism and that utopian land women hate the mechanical world. This makes them use nature in the prosperous way like solar heat and kitchen garden. According to Peter Barry, it's the fourth stage in Eco-centrism. Zanana, the guide expresses that "where there is no man and there is a blessing of nature, which means men are destructors of nature." (**Hossain 13**)

Margaret Atwood's **Surfacing** (1972) examines implications of the human-nature interaction in Northern Canada, where the novel is set in. The nameless narrator is present as a sensitive protagonist and accompanies with the three different personalities, Joe, David and Anna. The nameless narrator is in the search of her lost father in Quebec countryside, which is her childhood home. It is more or less psychic compulsion, for she never thinks that she would be on that road again. She discovers that the whole place is mutilated and dislocated. There is a vast change during her absence. She has a great shock of killing one another for any purposes and she draws attention to the meaningless killings: the shooting of the heron, as we have seen, and the explosions in the lake by Americans who come to fish. The nameless narrator feels herself hurt by whatever harms she sees done to the environment, including animals, she is disgusted for instance, by Joe and David's filming of a fish's innards. She does not want to kill the fish for any need: "I couldn't anymore, I had no right to, we don't need it. Our proper food was tin cans. We were committing this act, this act. Violation, for pleasure, recreation they call it." (Atwood 153)

The nameless narrator feels somewhat sad. She has never forgotten her past life with the man whom she loved and married with the knowledge of her parents but he abandoned and cheated after making her pregnancy. Atwood expresses the pain (psychological) of a woman, who aborts her child. She recalls that incident "I could recall the exact smells, glue and humid socks and the odour of second-day blouse and crystallized deodorant from the irritated secretary, and, from another doorway, the chill of antiseptic." (Atwood 83) The nameless narrator expresses a deep concern for nature and she tries to understand the relation between women and nature. Then the lake house 'a kind of retreat lodge' (Atwood 112), where the heroine stays with her companions and the scenery in Quebec is graphically present through the words of Atwood in this novel. All the four wake up by birdsongs instead of by alarm bells. Thus every incident emphasizes on the importance of nature. The narrator feels comfortable in that ambiance. She enjoys when she sees the coloured fish at the bottom of the lake. The variety of fishes fascinates her. She plunges into the deep lake. Surfacing from the deeps she communicates with fishes and she becomes a kind of mediator between culture and nature. When a fish jumps out from the surface of water, the narrator compares herself with that fish.

One day David captures the scenery in his video recorder and he compels Anna to be naked. Because in his short film, the viewers will expect an entertainment so David violently removes Anna's clothes and then he captures the naked appearance of Anna. This provokes the nameless narrator and tries to stop it. Such barbarian actions of David psychologically affect the heroine. She takes the tape out of the video recorder and runs to the forest. She is aware of men's domination of women

and nature. Many men and women have an idea that oppressing women is a quality of men and no one can come out from that doctrine. But the heroine wants to be different and she does not want to be dominated by men. She is very well aware that “the ultimate result of unchecked, terminal patriarchy will be ecological catastrophe...”(Kelly 118). In order to get self-humiliation she has communication with the wilderness. She thinks that the earth is her literal mother and she does not want to be under anyone. She has a clear vision that nature and woman are parallel and there would be any dominance with one another. The heroine imagines, “I lean against a tree. I am a tree leaning. I am not an animal or a tree. I am the thing in which the trees and animal move and grow, I am a place” (221). The heroine finds peace when the culture and nature merged. There is absolute boss over her to oppress. She may recreate a culture with assistance of nature. The heroine is not to depend upon anyone. The novel ends with the experience of the heroine in wilderness by saying, “The lake is quiet, the trees surround me, asking and giving nothing” (235). She feels that both nature and woman are traveling in the parallel lines.

This shows that the flora and fauna becomes part and parcel of a woman's life. Some female characters imagine themselves as nature or the authors portrays woman as nature. In Alice walker's fiction **Now Is the Time to Open Your Heart** (2004), the major character is Kate Nelson, grandmother of the author who eventually travels down the Amazon and receives spiritual treatment from native people. But this happens only in her fantasy or imaginary world. Sometimes she feels her physique as a river, where she gets spiritual power. Similarly in **Ambai's In a Forest, A Deer** the author uses the mouse trap technique. The protagonist Thangam Athai resembles the deer, which is wandering in the wild forest, “The deer could see the sparks from that fire. It hid itself. It sank down, exhausted from having gone round and round the forest all alone” (**Ambai 79**). The deer becomes a metaphor of Thangam, who has not attained puberty. She has fear of her family and relatives. In the end of the story the author compares Thangam with the forest and her fear resembles the deer.

CONCLUSION

The word eco-feminism not only expresses the relation between nature and woman but it expresses the enlightenment of both nature and woman. Thus the novels discussed here enable the readers to come out from anthropocentrism and to merge with nature.

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Pritish Nandy: The Pioneer of Erratic Themes and Techniques in Contemporary Indian English Poetry

DR. DOMINIC SAVIO, G

INTRODUCTION

The year 1830 stands as a landmark in the history of Indian English Literature and Language. It was the year of the announcement of Lord Macaulay's Minute on the study of English Language and Literature by the Indians. **The Minstrel**, the first work in English was written by Kashiprasade Ghose. He was one of the many pioneers who took to write English Verse. Modern Indian English Poetry is one of the forms of New Literature which began to emerge at the end of the Second World War after the end of Colonialism. Unlike the certain writing of African and the Caribbean, modern Indian poetry in English has been neglected by most critics, foreign readers and intellectuals for it has no direct relationship to the cultural movements which led to national independence. By 1947 the situation had changed and with it the concerns of the new poets become their relationship and alienation from the realities of their society.

By the later 1960's English Poetry in India had a handful of new classics volumes and established significant writers including A.K. Ramanujan, Kamala Das, Gieve Patel, Nissim Ezekiel and Jassuwalia. It was gain recognition from those with an interest in poetry and culture both in Indian and abroad. Other significant writers had begun to appear, including Parthasarathy, Arvind Krishna Mehrotra, Arun Kolkar and Dilip Chitre along with Pritish Nandy. The first quarter of the 19th century was the period of incubation for Indo-Anglian Poetry and Derozio was the moving spirit then. He died prematurely in 1831. The publication of Indo Anglian Poetry by Indian poets like Kashiprasad Ghose, Govin Charun Dutt, Raj Narain Dutt, and Michael Madhusudan Dutt assumed prominence during the second quarter of the century.

Indo-Anglian poetry has attained a dignified position after the entry of Rabindranath Tagore and Aurobindo Ghose who are belonged to the early phase of Indian writing in English. Tagore's reputation as a poet was well established and he was awarded the Nobel Prize for literature in 1913. While Tagore imagination is characterized by universalism, humanism and cosmopolitanism, Aurobindo's vision as a poet and a philosopher is much more erudite and comprehensive. In the history of Indian English Poetry many began to write poems like Toru Dutt, Manmohan Ghose, Sarojini Naidu and Ramesh Chandra Dutt. The contemporary poets of the post-1947 era, including well-known names like Dom Moraes, A.K. Ramanujan, P. Lal, R. Parthasarathy, and Nissim Ezekiel, mostly share the modernist tradition of English poetry. They are generally called as "New Poets". Lately, these New Poets' scornful attitude towards Aurobindo has undergone an interesting dramatic change; the situation in many ways reminds one of the treatments of Milton in the history of English literature and Harold Bloom's theory of anxiety of influence.

Dr. Srinivasa Iyengar remarks in the foreword of his famous book that poetry or drama, novel or short story, or history, biography, philosophy or political treatise, Indian writing in English shows no signs either of exhaustion or insanity. There is no doubt that with its own individual, vision and voice, Indo Anglian Literature will grow like other literature of contemporary India from strength to strength and help to make us a new nation and a new people wedded to the tasks of national reconstruction and international harmony.

In this paper my focus is on the notable poet Pritish Nandy and his poems. I am going to analyze the themes and its various concerns of Nandy's poems.

BIO SKETCH OF PRITISH NANDY

One should analyze the bio sketch of a writer before analysing his works because his life situations will certainly have an influence on his works. Pritish Nandy, was born in Bhagalpur, Bihar on 15th January 1951. He was educated at La Martiniere School, where his mother was a teacher. He is also said to have studied for a brief period of time at Presidency College, Kolkata. He has donned many caps in his career, those of a poet, journalist, politician, television personality and a film producer. He is also a member of the Rajya Sabha, the upper house of the Indian parliament. He has published several books of his own poetry to his credit. He has also translated poems by others from Bengali into English. Nandy's first book of poems *Of Gods and Olives* which was published in 1967. In July 1981 Nandy was nominated as a Poet Laureate by World Academy of Arts and Culture at the Fifth World Congress of Poets in San Francisco. He shared the credit of his latest book on love poems with another renowned Indian poet Kamala Das. He had been

honored with Padmashri and the E.M. Forster Literary Award. He had stopped writing poems after publishing 32 books of poems, before he left Kolkata and came to Mumbai and become a journalist. In 1982 Nandy become a full time Journalist. He was the Publishing Director of **Times of India** from 1982 to 1991, and editor of **The Illustrated Weekly** of India from 1983 to 1991. He is currently a columnist with **The Times of India** and **Dainik Bhaskar**. Pritish Nandy started his film production company called **Pritish Nandy Communications** in 1995. The first programme produced by the company was a chat show entitled the 'Pritish Nandy Show'. Nandy has presented over 500 news and current affair shows on Doordarshan, Zee TV and Sony TV. His latest book **Again** (2010) was released in the presence of a galaxy of luminaries. Some of his major works are,

- **Of God and Olives (1967)**
- **On Either Side of Arrogance(1968)**
- **Masks to be Interpreted in Terms of Messages(1971)**
- **Dhitarashtra Downtown: Zero (1974)**
- **Tonight, This Savage Rite/With Kamala Das(1977)**
- **The Rainbow Last Night (1981)**
- **Again (2010)**
- **Rites for a Plebian Statue (1969) Verse play.**
- **Selected Poems of Samar Sen, (translation)(1968)**
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Pritish Nandy started his literary career during the time of Naxalite movement started in Kolkata. His poetry gave a fresh air to the Indian Political environment and totally different from the main stream Indian writings of the day. His poem on Kolkata remains famous for its depiction of life and turmoil in the seventies. One of the most striking features of his poetry is the originality of his voice Modern Indian Poetry during 1975.

NANDY'S POEMS AND ITS FORTE

Nandy's Early Poems **Of Gods and Olives** (1967), **On Either Side of Arrogance** (1968), and his 'experiment in verse drama', *Rites for a Plebian Statute* (1969) give evidence of an enterprising and erratic talent. In his *Rites for a Plebian Statue*, an ambitious experiment in which Nandy tries in his own way to catch the reflection of old Indian myths concerning Ajatasatru and Priyadarshini in a contemporaneous

mirror. But it is more than dramatic, and play of word and ideas is more striking than the enfoldment of the theme. Nandy's first book of poems 'Of Gods and Olives' was labeled eccentric, pseudo-erudite, very smart, plagiarist and above all, a trickster trying to deceive the readers by pointless visual effects, and irrelevant reference. These extreme reactions however disturbed the smug atmosphere. As an experimental work, "**Of Gods and Olives**" was a successful one. Nandy could not confine himself to one predominant theme. His impressionable temperament responded to a variety of ideas and experiences that turned out to be the major themes of his poems. Like an indefatigable seeker, the poet travelled from the sphere of love to religion, then attempted to be a part of the landscape, followed it up by a return to his shelter, again plunged into metaphysical arguments and ended by arriving at some irreversible conclusion. Moreover, as he roamed far and wide, allusions from the Old and New Testaments, Hindu Mythology, the Greek Pantheon, Henry Miller and psychologists' notebooks peppered his work. Prithvi Nandy provided the clue in his introduction to an anthology of Indian poetry in English which he edited. In his words "The sixties was a critical decade for Indian poetry in English. The dynamics of a new sensibility which were released during the late fifties gathered force during these ten years and were finally shaped into a definitive movement. This movement was not restricted by reference to any specific infrastructure of values nor was it spearheaded by any ideological considerations. It was determined by a quest for roots." [in an Interview in *The Hindu*]

Nandy also found that irrepressible and unique personal voice which was varied, charged and penetrating because his poetry covered a wider frame of experiences. From the dulcet melody evoking the delicate raptures of physical love to the violent proclamations of a worldwide rebellion, with so many arranged notes in between, everywhere the distinct Nandy's voice could be recognized –esoteric or simple-according to needs. Readers of Indian poetry in English know that only Nandy can write lines like:

*Close your eyes
love before this loneliness
becomes unloving in the end
and memories arrive
with unfinished waves
and in the island
we see the open wound
that leads to total dementia. [from **Of Gods and Olives**]*

Nandy's poem on Calcutta was regarded as a continuation of the love-hate relationship that tied the Bengali poets to their crazy city from the days of Ishwarachandra Gupta to Sunil Gangopadhyay and Kamala Das. The most

important language used daily in India singled out Prithvi Nandy for fulsome praise. Its reviewer claimed that language was no criterion as long as the work stood the test. Nandy's poetry according to the critics could well be compared with the best that was produced in Indian language. All the key words were there-poignance, depth, passion scintillating imagery, depth, passion, scintillating imagery, deep-rooted Indianness and this single estimate, in importance, eclipsed the laurels Nandy won from many English newspapers. Nandy made to bring Indian Poetry in English into the mainstream of Indian literature through his poems and through that first-rate magazine 'Dialogue' which was for seven years (1967-1974) the best platform not only for him but also for other poets in India.

Nandy is a poet's poet. He belongs to a special and rare breed that use words with the fury of obsessed people. Very complex, beautiful and memorable poetry. Vividly and intensely original; filled with assonance, half-rhyme and decline word melody. It is poetry: magic, myth, melody rolled in one. Nandy followed the example of the adventures Victorians. He employed the language in a more challenging, even rebellious manner, when his seniors were still engrossed in the frippery of alliteration and end-rhymes. Nandy used Christian symbolism with conviction and originality.

Nandy explored inescapable theme in other poems but there love formed only a part of a broader caves. In 'Paeon', 'Pomegranate Love', and 'Image III', however the diverse aspects of romantic love operated as the controlling ideas. In 'Paeon' the poet recreated in a soft, lyrical style the beauty of a notch girl, the ephemeral romance associated with her, and ended by describing her return to a trivially daily act that almost questioned the aura of haunting love. The first stanza begins on a wistful note

*The bronze notch girl silent
with the delicate perfume
of smoking wood and soft wet mud
and the many rivers in her eyes
prayed for some more time.*

With the images of perfume, wood, mud and river conveying the sense of a flowing, languorous passion. This contrast with the immobility of the persons carved out of bronze. Nandy reintroduces nature images to preserve the flow of desire, not violent but distant and dreamlike in quality in the same poem as.

*And I saw a river in her eyes
breaking through silently
with the smell of wet brown earth.*

Nandy's postscript '*Remembering Kamala*' is a walk down memory lane about their first meeting in meeting in Mumbai, in Bank House where Kamala then lived and conducted poetry meetings. 'To Night This Savage Rite' contains many Kamala poems that have anthologized world-wide. This poetry is a collection of love poems. According to Nandy "Tonight This Savage Right" is about love. The magic and mystery of love, the miracles it brings to our life. He says in an interview that, "*I should know. For I have always believed that love over rides every emotion, it is the reason why we are who we are. It's also the reason why we read and write poetry, listen to it and still believe that it can change our lives more than 3D can*". The book is divided into two sections. The first part of the book includes thirty four poems by Kamala Das. It includes 'The Suicide', 'Sunset', 'Blue Bird', 'The Old Playhouse', and 'The Prisoner', 'A Paper Moon', 'A Request' and 'The Winner' which are resonates with theme of man-woman relationship un requited love, women emancipation, male egotism and domination. The second part of the book includes forty-one love poems by Nandy. Unlike Das, Nandy's love poems are more lyrical, powerful, immediate and classless in nature. Mask to be interpreted in terms of Message, a collection of poems deals with frank, brute, intense and direct confessional statements. Nandy did not allow himself to be an easy victim of feeling. That thoughtful and argumentative attitude present in him urged him to scan his material and arrive present in him urged him to scan his material and arrive at some concrete conclusions. The poet in him however shuddered at the thought of an arid, philosophical note making. He used a charged diction or striking images to convey his cogitations. Moreover, he never lapsed into emotionalism which helped him to keep the poem at the level of a passionate objectivity.

In the poem '**A God in the Garden**', Nandy pictured the arrogant messiah falling on Palestinian stones and sacrificing his algae-green blood. But this arrogance was strengthened by moral sanction. Arrogance was regarded as a divine prerogative. The principal theme of arrogance is stated and worked out in its entirety in the poem 'in transit mind seeks' and those that follow explore different aspects of this comprehensive idea.

The superb craftsman in Nandy deliberately employs the most deceptive lyrical style to project the failure. The long poem or extended chant 'From the Outer Bank of the Brahmaputra' represents the apex of the first creative phase which began with Of Gods and Olives and also marks the end of an exciting quest. It is integrally related to the earlier body of poems in theme, imagery and diction .The familiar conflicts and hindrance are again explored with the singular difference that they are ultimately resolved and removed in a credible way. Arrogance, accordingly slowly disappears and the passionate search for roots leads the protagonist to a realm of harmony where benediction is showered on him and through him on humanity.

The thematic apogee achieved in this book is also matched by a climax in artistry. The poem begins with an indirect evocation of the salvation. This is not illogical because the reader ought to be given a glimpse of the conclusion.

Nandy has plugged fully into the hidden crevices of his sensibility, angst or hope, succumbed to the torrential pressures swirling under the skin and through the scraping and melting of his consciousness has emerged with strange metaphors, wild combination and unexpected images. Without erasing the fundamental aspect of terror, Nandy invests death with a hallucinatory beauty. In other poems all attributions are sacrificed and the end is phrased in the most unadorned manner possible. But the surrounding associations and the depth of the vision transform the simple declaration into changed utterances. For example, 'For He was Already Dead' is given another dimension by the preceding expression 'blood casually signed a wound that needs not have been there in near Deshapriya Park they found him last'. Nandy set a new track for Indo-Anglian poetry.

The three constants are signified through the principal image—chains of eyes, city and shadow, the last denoting insubstantiality. Other images also serve as mediums but they remain subservient to the basic triangular pattern designed by these three. To preserve the conflict, to create a tension and primarily for the sake of Varsity, they often merge into mildly hopeful landscape or find places inside delicate lyrical strains. Nandy's poem 'Calcutta if you must Exile Me' deals about the big city Calcutta. Calcutta was already a nightmare to those living outside it—not to speak of those who burn inside—Nandy's tortured expression served as an appropriate poetic recreation of the agony. The scarred city instantly remained the English-reading public of the anguished conclusion: '*Calcutta if you must exile me destroys my sanity before I go*'. At the end, Nandy leaves the chosen spots, the selected figures and comes to the open road where the roving symbol of the city sells his wares—the hawkers. His whole experience is made up of scenes and sounds of the city: thus when he dies, whether in the street or in his little room, Calcutta invades his mind because death means the cessation of his walking and living in the city streets: 'and I will show you the hawkers who died with Calcutta in his eyes'

'Rites for a Plebeian Satue.' a verse poem deals with Ajatsatru, the name of the protagonist, a well known figure in Abadansatak who in order to wipe out Buddhism killed his father, the old monarch Bimbisara. But the Jatakas were totally silent on the story dramatized here, though the names Priyadarsani, Saikat, Irammad, Ajatasatru, Punyasloka and Agradootwre redolent of the Indian past and changed with mythical associations. The core of the drama, however, goes back to Nandy's own imagination and only tenuous links can be discovered with other myths. The impassioned prose poems in Madness is the Second Stroke embraced two different realms—socio-political and personal.

The very pursuit and the enigma associated with creative endeavor leads to lyrics to which Nandy ultimately returns. The journey began in '*Of Gods and Olives*' and then after many peregrinations the poet reaches the lyrics in the last pages of '*Riding the Midnight River*'. Even his prose poems, essentially lyrical in character like those of St. John Perse and others, belong to this gamut. His greatest poems are rooted in essence and hence daringly complex, in the rooted in essence, and hence daringly complex, in the truest sense of the term. But beneath the surface glitter of the brocade he has woven, he himself points to the path he has taken, the path of all troubadours.

CONCLUSION

Thus Nandy has contributed various facets through his poems to the Indian English Poetry. He gained name and fame through his energizing writing. He paved way for many emerging poets in the upcoming year in a different plane. Nandy pioneered certain aspects in Indian English Poetry and it is the duty of the emerging poets to continue the laurels to the world stage. Thus he can be precisely called as 'The Pioneer of contemporary themes and techniques in Indian English Poetry'.

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Breaking Boundaries: Pluriculturalism in the Select Fiction of Rohinton Mistry

FERNANDO DELISHIA

ABSTRACT

This paper highlights the broken boundaries and the dismantling of a societal disorder in the writings of Rohinton Mistry, the diasporic Indian writer who is now settled in Canada, mesmerising the people of North America with his wit, humour and satire. It narrates, describes and also argues about the trials and tribulations of immigrants in a distant land like Canada where the culture is very different. In the pure sense of culture it may be awkward for someone to point out how one ethnic trait could pervade the entire continent of North America. But he has outlined problems of boundaries in the family, in a colony of people and in a country which still glorifies its colonial traces. It is not the preview of all the efforts put in by Rohinton Mistry, but just a little light thrown to highlight the array of lamentation in the works of Rohinton Mistry, a Parsi writer, a Mumbaikar, whose work created a furore and has been removed from the University syllabus by the ruffle created by the Bal Thakaray clans not without reason. Mistry has criticised them in his works. He is untouched and unruffled by the oppositions and he currently lives in Canada.

Keywords: Pluriculturalism,

Mistry's works are highly acclaimed by the critics and the general reader. Pathos interspersed with a tinge of humour is his forte. In his own inimitable style he has expressed his views in most of his works especially in his collection of short stories titled **Tales from Firozsha Baag**. By virtue of an immigrant himself, he pours out the expectations of the society and the inner feelings of an immigrant in a more realistic manner.

Those two girls went abroad for studies many years ago, and never came back. They settled there happily. And like them, a fellow called Sarosh

also went abroad, to Toronto, but did not find happiness there. (Tales from Firozsha Baag 185)

Mistry, identifies himself with Sarosh in this lamentation in spite of the dichotomy which rules his heart. Sarosh changes his name as Sid. He wants to adopt Canadian culture by all means. He fails to squat as a Canadian would in WC and that makes him feel he is a total failure. Cultural merging never fails due to external inconveniences. Raymond Williams opines that culture itself is a “structure of feeling”. (34) Sarosh never felt great about both Indian and Canadian cultures. He does not have any strong reason to give up one to choose another. Sarosh is just the same as Yezad in **Family Matters**. The officers, who interview Yezad before granting him Visa to Canada, understand that Yezad is fascinated by Canada without ever attempting to love or understand Canada. This is just an example of how he threads his feelings into his writings. But the tears are interspersed with animosity because he makes this into a hilarious one. Even though he has already climbed the higher echelons of literary society, he does not forget the hard days and is ever ready to tell his readers the kind of life the immigrants leads in a distant land.

It is always astonishing to note how an Indian author could prove to be an eye opener for problems of the western world. But almost many a times, Rohinton Mistry makes many cry when they read his novels. As a contemporary writer he portrays the actualities of day to day life in Indian cities and rural areas which actually tell the stories of people who live elsewhere. Dismantling does not mean breaking open a device so as to set right a fault developed within the device, but a kind of repairing one does when one finds that the instrument is not working to its full potential and that is the work of Rohinton Mistry when he cuts open the wounds made by society.

Rohinton Mistry is the author of a collection of short stories, *Tales from Firozsha Baag* (1987), and three novels and were all shortlisted for the Booker Prize: **Such a Long Journey** (1991), **A Fine Balance**(1996) and **Family Matters** (2002) Citing his words from his masterpiece **A Fine Balance**, the tinge of humour interspersed with the sarcastic remarks about the state of affairs, things can be brought to their proper perspective.

It was the morning when the gulf flight bringing Maneck home landed in the capital after a delayed departure. He had tried to sleep on the plane but the annoying flicker of a movie being shown in the economy cabin kept buzzing before his eyelids like malfunctioning fluorescent lights. Bleary. -eyed, he stood in line for customs inspection... Construction was just beginning when he had left for Dubai eight years ago, he remembered. Waves of heat ricocheted off the simmering sun-soaked

metal buffeting the crowds. The smell of sweat, cigarette smoke, stale perfume, and disinfectant roamed the air.” (A Fine Balance 579)

This is the exact experience every immigrant has in flights of dreaming a life of abundance of an immigrant awaiting in a distant land. Whether the words are taken to heart or just taken with a wave of hand is individual's preferences. The other land may not be so pleasant for all the immigrants. As K. V. George opines, “Most of the stories had little to do with his experience as an immigrant in Canada but focussed instead on the uneventful lives of a group of Parsis who live in a ramshackle Bombay apartment block”(64). The Parsis who built the city of Bombay and ruled everywhere are no more. The empire of Tata is not the most famous industrial house. But the average Parsi in Mumbai thinks Mumbai is his place, whereas neo Marathi class tries to take the credit of building a Mumbai. Here the Parsi has to dismantle his image of Mumbai and build a new one to suit the tastes of the metro culture or pluriculture. The sky line has changed, the by lanes have changed but the quintessential Parsi still has to cope with the change. In the novel, **A Fine Balance**, the entire novel illuminates the poverty stricken Indian and the caste differences existing in India, here is one vignette that just gives a glimpse upon the plight of immigrants though this particular episode is about the incident in the local airport, he links in an in-extricable way that the reader understands the pain and agony.

Mistry's “work illustrates collectively certain basic preoccupations which the immigrant writer is concerned with and which inevitably arise from the very fact of his being relatively a newcomer on foreign soil” (Shahani 18) Mistry's two short stories—**Lend Me Your Light** and **Swimming Lessons** throw light on the immigrant's experience in Canada. Kersi, the protagonist in “Lend Me Your Light” is portrayed as a lost and a lonely person in a new atmosphere and feels secluded even amidst other Parsis in Toronto.”Their airs and opinions sicken him; they speak condescendingly of India and Indians (Shahani 22) an echo of this idea is reflected when the protagonist in **Swimming Lessons** is questioned when he goes for his swimming classes as: “Are you from India?” she asks, I nod.”I hope you don't mind my asking, but I was curious because an Indian couple, husband and wife, also registered a few minutes ago. Is swimming not encouraged in India/” (Tales from Firozsha Baag 280)

A Fine Balance is the tragic tale of not only the Chamars but also about the Parsi boy who had to throw himself in the railway tracks to end his life. The tragic tale tells the world that no life is spared but troubles and tribulations are parts of one's life. There are internal strifes and external troubles, but there is always way if one looks for it. Rohinton Mistry is a man of miseries. But his method of introducing pluri-culturalism transcends barriers of one particular ethnic community. In **Tales**

from Firozsha Baag he talks about different people. The way they treat the average Parsi is his major concern. One will always see a rebel emerge about in his writing when he writes about the excesses of emergency or the way Indians are treated in characters. He cleverly mixes the real life incidents with his characters. It has the traces of pathos intermingled with the ethos the author has been brought up with. It is the way in which he makes his character stand out of the ordinary that makes him one of the Contemporary Indian English writers. When he speaks about the political class, he spares no one. The whipping he metes out to the political class is an echo of the lashings he had been subjected to. Parsis, who were once considered to be superior in education, language and culinary sciences are nowhere to be seen. But the remnants of the glorious past still linger in the way, the erstwhile Bombay and today.

Mistry in this interview with Linda Hutcheon “voiced his opinion about the clash between the old culture of India and the new culture of Canada in his works. Undoubtedly, by referring to the two cupboards, Mistry makes his intentions clear about the presentation of transcultural space in his fictions” (Mishra 166). Even though Mistry basically a Mumbaiker, has transformed himself into a Canadian. Charu Chandra Mishra in his essay elucidates further,

Like most of the contemporary Canadian writers of South Asian origin, Mistry too can boast of a double identity; Indian by birth and Canadian by present habitation. In addition to his proximity to Indian culture, he hails from the Parsi community that has undergone double diaspora first from Persia to India (Sanjan in Gujarat) after Arabic invasion in 7th century A. D. and second from there to other parts of India especially Bombay in the later stages. (Mishra 166).

In Nandini Bhautoo-Dewnarain’s *Rohinton Mistry: An introduction*, the preface written by Pramod K. Nayar clearly states that his portraits of the Parsi community map the tensions of modernity and their struggle against marginalization. It notes how a process of ‘othering’ is central to Mistry’s critique of Post-independence India and addresses Mistry’s interest in two spheres—the national and cultural. It is the confluence of different cultural behaviours that make Mistry an alien in his own land, India. In India, he is the Parsi and in Canada, he is an Indian. This dichotomy makes Mistry to weave a cocoon around himself, from where he keeps on spinning his tails. Mistry’s work showcases a preoccupation with a multiple histories of the nation. He makes an attempt to redefine the role of the Parsis in the context of the Indian nation.

Rohinton Mistry describes with agony and compassion about the inhuman treatment meted out to the Parsis by the Marathi community. So it is apt to say

that being a Parsi, Mistry lead a life of an immigrant in his own country. Still today it happens in the streets of India and the complaints of the immigrant in the far off lands is too painful to be described in mere words. Absolutely unfearful of the modern day political thugs, Mistry puts forth his points which may have irked some of the present day politician. But the warrior in himself walks bravely with the armaments of written thought which speaks volumes of the happenings around the world for centuries. His critics may have difference of opinion about his remarks but those written words are testimony etched on the pages of history which would be read and would be felt by generations to come.

SUMMATION

After everything being said and done the human race has a set of problems which are universal. Hunger, Sickness, Irritation, Humour, Life and Death are the same for every life. All these characters transcend the barriers of ethnicity. And this is clearly brought out in the works of Rohinton Mistry. This time when we remember the great American who with his words “I have a dream” which paved the way for a black American President, this dismantling theory harps on everything that it is not the colour or creed but the conduct which says about a human being whether he is an Iranian, or an Indian or a Parsi or a Canadian. And this dismantling of boundaries of races and the innovative Pluriculturalism makes Rohinton Mistry a universal citizen or an International writer.

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Nature vs. Civilization in Toni Morrison's "Tar Baby"

GUNA SUNDARI, S

ABSTRACT

The paper titled Nature vs. Civilization in Toni Morrison's **Tar Baby** focuses on the constant war that runs between the characters throughout the novel. Toni Morrison, a Nobel laureate, is one of the prolific African- American writers. Her themes are often those expected of naturalist fiction—the burdens of history, the determining social effects of race, gender or class – but they are also the great themes of lyrical modernism—love, death, betrayal, and burden of individual responsibility for her own fate. **Tar Baby** mainly focuses on the conflict between Jadine and Son arises because of confusion of the races. The novel is designed to show the superiority of the blacks. It focuses on the conflict between Nature and Civilization. The term 'nature' here refers to natural world. In general, naturalism is opposed to the characteristic doctrines of religion, super-naturalism and idealism. The term 'Civilization' refers to man's advancement to nature and his attempts to overrule nature. Morrison makes her characters to struggle in life to find themselves and their cultural identity.

Keywords: Race, gender, lyrical modernism, nature, civilization, love, cultural clash, cultural identity

INTRODUCTION

The theme Nature vs. Civilization is highly symbolic. The conflict between nature and civilization runs throughout the novel. Most characters embody either nature or civilization. For example, Son, Therese, Gideon, the residents of Eloë, and the wild horsemen represents nature. These characters value racial and familial connection, and they demonstrate the importance of origin. They have a strong belief in the past and in the reality of myth, and they believe that no actions in the present can be divorced from the actions of the past. In contrast, Jadine and her urban friends believe in the importance of education and European forms

of culture, and they deny the values associated with nature. For them, nature is something to be mastered or overpowered. They appreciate the idea of a kind of cosmopolitan rootlessness, where people are free to separate from their racial, familial, and geographical pasts.

Tar Baby is set on a Caribbean island, Isle des Chevaliers, owned by a retired European American candy magnate-Valerian Street. He has settled there with his wife Margaret after his retirement as a candy manufacturer. His servants are Sydney and Ondine. Their niece Jadine is one of the two protagonists of the novel. She studied art history at the Sorbonne in Paris, an education paid for by Valerian Street. She values art, culture, and cosmopolitan, urban life and works as a model.

Son, a handsome black man is another protagonist of the novel. Son arrives at L'Arbe de la Croix as a fugitive and immediately upsets the house's staid way of life. He believes that white people and black people are fundamentally different and cannot live together, and he feels a strong connection to the natural world. Everyone feels uncomfortable with Son's intrusion except Valerian Street. Anyhow love blooms between Jadine and Son. Jadine follows civilization and Son is close to his black nature. There arises the conflict between their contrastive ideas.

The prologue emphasizes the major theme in **Tar Baby**: the conflict between nature and civilization. Morrison establishes the conflict initially by personifying nature—that is, by giving nature human qualities. In **Tar Baby**, nature is not just an abstract, impersonal force; it possesses personality and desires, which it then acts to fulfil. The fugitive Son, having hid in luxury liner, the H. M. S. Stor Konigsgaarten, jumps into “soft and warm” waters as the novel opens. But when he tries to turn toward the island, a powerful current seizes him and turns him away. He tries again, and again the current pulls him under and then away. The man's desire to swim to the island, and nature's insistence that he cannot, previews the conflict between nature and civilization that will appear throughout the rest of the novel.

Then he boards a boat that finally lands in Isle des Chevaliers. The oldest house on the island is called L'Arbe de la Croix. But the house's current owner, Valerian Street, falls in love with it and buys it so he could retire to it from Philadelphia. He spends a lot of time in his greenhouse, where he grows, among other things, hydrangeas a kind of flower that he misses from the United States. Valerian's greenhouse symbolizes the running conflict between nature and civilization. The greenhouse represents the human attempt to control nature and to shape it to its own ends. Valerian's love for a non-native plant, the hydrangea, displays a desire to be in charge and control nature. Valerian not only has control over the hydrangea in the greenhouse, but he also has power in his household, implying that he has control over both civilization and nature. On the other hand, Valerian's inability to

control the ants in the greenhouse, and his need for poison, suggests that nature is not totally under his rule.

The interactions during the breakfast scene on one December morning showcase the characters' relationships with one another. The narrator further reveals the characters' fears, desires, and motives by describing how they live with the past every day in the present. This power of the past is part of the conflict between nature and civilization. Although Jadine, Sydney, and Margaret appear to want try to change themselves by changing the past, they cannot escape the hold that the past, or nature, has on them.

Son enters their house and everyone feels disturbed by him except Valerian. Jadine's conversation with Son emphasizes her fraught relationship with nature and blackness. She leaves her room and goes outside, where the gravel hurts her feet because all she is wearing are thin gold slippers. The thin golden slippers represent a loss of contact with nature. This uncertainty also implies that she does not know how to survive outside in the natural world. His association with nature is apparent when Jadine describes his voice as speaking to her from above trees and at a great height.

After Son leaves, Jadine thinks about how glad she is that she books a secret ticket back to New York for after Christmas. She worries that her training in art history makes her unable to see Son properly or to really assess her feelings about him because she gets distracted by how attractive he is. After leaving Jadine, he thinks about how eager he is to go home but feels strangely compelled to try to stay at L'Arbe de la Croix every time he thinks of Jadine.

In the morning, he invites Jadine on a picnic where he proposes her. On the way back they run out of gas. After walking too far, Jadine sinks into a tar pit. She struggles to get free and finally succeeds. Jadine's struggle in the tar pit represents the island's strength over civilization. The scene also implies that even though Jadine does not know how to survive outside of a less civilized environment, she can still fight to escape it.

On Christmas Eve day, everyone is present at the same dinner table, which indicates how much the hierarchy has already changed. Son starts the confrontation that shatters the order of the household, as befits his status as the catalyst for all of the events in the novel. Son's confrontation begins a fight among all the characters and foreshadows the way nature will come to dominate civilization. Throughout **Tar Baby**, the narrator clearly links feminine identity to nurturing, domesticity, and nature.

Jadine and Son leave to New York where Son feels alienated while Jadine feels like she is reentering a lover's arms. She is determined to make New York belong to her, and she imagines how great it will be to explore it with Son. She says, "This is home, she thought with an orphan delight; not Paris, not Baltimore, not Philadelphia. This is home." (TB 222)

When Son turns on the tap in the hotel bathtub, he smiles because he is pleased to see how water has been transformed by civilization. Yet his smile masks the fundamental conflict between nature and conflict, which is that nature, needs to be protected by humans. Jadine's and Son's infatuations with one another interfere with their different upbringings in the civilized and natural worlds.

Spring begins to arrive. Finally Jadine and Son travel to Eloë, Florida. Son goes to see his father, whom everyone calls Old Man. Old Man tells Son that he and Jadine cannot stay together in Eloë because they are unmarried and that Jadine should stay with Aunt Rosa. At night Son sneaks into Jadine's room. Son falls asleep, and Jadine realizes that she left the door unlatched when she let Son in. She imagines that all of the black women from her life and from Son's have crept through the open door and stand in the bedroom. Women insist that Jadine should accept her role as a nurturer and propagator of the black race.

In the morning, Jadine feels like Eloë is "rotten." So, she leaves back to New York by herself. When Son finally returns to the city, Jadine and he fight frequently about the future. They both feel that their efforts to save each other are failing. As he talks, he gets increasingly angry and physically aggressive and invokes the story of the tar baby before leaving the apartment for a few hours. Jadine and Son have differing interpretations of the tar baby story. In the story of the tar baby, a white farmer makes a figure out of tar to catch a wily rabbit that wants to steal his cabbages. When the rabbit hits the scarecrow, it gets stuck in the tar. The more it struggles to escape, the more ensnared it becomes in the sticky substance. Son thinks that he is the clever trickster and rabbit, and Jadine is the tar baby that has enticed him with fake blackness until he has become caught in her and cannot free himself. Feeling hurt, Jadine leaves to L'Arbe de la Croix and Son follows in search of her. But Jadine plans to leave for Paris before Son arrives there.

Meanwhile, Sydney walks to the Valerian's greenhouse, and he notices that the walkway's bricks are coming loose and that ants are eating some electrical cords. The loose bricks in the walkway and the ants chewing on the electrical cords also emphasize nature's takeover. So, as Valerian loses control over his life, nature and the black characters in the house begin to take over.

Son gets to know about Jadine's leaving to Paris from Alma Estee at France and Son continues to feel that he must follow her. Gideon refuses to take Son to the

island, but Therese offers to take him instead. Therese says that he can either join the island's wild

SUMMATION

Although the narrator intentionally leaves the final paragraph somewhat ambiguous, it is clear from the language and context that Son ultimately chooses to join the wild men of the island. Morrison portrays, "The mist lifted and the trees stepped back a bit as if to make the way easier for a certain kind of man. Then he ran. Lickety-split...lickety-split" (TB 306) He has given up on being united with Jadine, but he has also given up on the hope of returning home to Eloë. At the most profound level, Son is first and foremost connected with nature, and ultimately he finds his way to the part of the world where he belongs. Thus at last, the nature and civilization i. e. Son and Jadine moves in the opposite direction. The novel argues that nature and civilization cannot be synthesized.

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Power and Social Structure

INDHU, M

ABSTRACT

Society is a construction of culture, belief and politics. Individual, institution and politics and everything is constructed by “Power.” “Knowledge is Power” goes the saying. According to Michael Foucault, Power represents knowledge. Power decides the centre and marginal. Consensus becomes the Centre and minority becomes marginal but it is interchangeable. Changes happen but it is not easily visible. Changes in society influence literature and also society has influence on literature. This paper deals with applying the concept of power in society and also literature.

Keywords: power, centre, marginal, consensus, society, changes.

INTRODUCTION

‘Change’ is a word which literally means to “make or become different” but in metaphorical tone it is like a butterfly. One can not fully visualize the metamorphosis of butterflies. Change is not easily visible to all because change has connection with the time. Change can be understood only through textualisation. **Leitch(1983)** argues that for Derrida, since everything is textualized, all selves appear as tools. In Foucault’s concept of ‘Power’ change is an important element because power theory reveals the social structure of power of centre and the powerlessness of the marginal. From the view of consensus, majority goes to the centre and the minority at any level stand on the margin. From generation after generation, there is a clash between man and woman. In every process of life man is at the centre. In the Indian context, classical literature expresses the man centeredness. For example Mahabharatha expresses the male superiority.

DISCUSSION

Chaucer's expresses the male centeredness. In **Canterbury Tales**, there are many characters, such as priest, knight, prioress, and clerk whose tales visualize how women were treated during that period and the male centeredness of chivalric personalities. The Wife of Bath is a distinguished character because the character has feminist thought. But knowledge of power takes place in man, and women are powerless as marginal."The Legend of Good Woman" is also a male-dominated work. At the dawn of Feminist period, Virginia Woolf paved the way for other feminists. For instance, **A Room of One's Own** scrutinizes the problem of women and keenly reflected the statement for solution.

"A Woman must have Money and a Room if she is to write." According to Virginia Woolf, if a woman has money and a room of her own, she is independent. World war is the base for feminist views. In war time women did the administrative work that gave the experience of Power which enabled them fight for liberation. So, power always unstable; it would be interchangeable. It is the period of struggle for women's liberation. They want liberation under the clutches of feminine characteristics. From Foucault's view power does not repress the powerless people' instead it constructs certain disciplines which unknowingly suppress the individual freedom. Thus this concept is applied in women's mind. In **A Room of One's Own**, Woolf justifies that women need money and shelter. In the twentieth century, the current scenario changes the concept of Power that moves from man to woman. Now woman takes the place of centre and man at the marginal. There is a change in social media and in television. For instance, ads express the dominance of women. Thus, change in society can be analyzed through such feminist views. New historicists uphold the view that society influences literature and vice versa.

Now there is a change in the concept of Power because nowadays Technology goes to the center particularly Mobile phones and the marginal is human. There is no separation between men and women since both of them are at the marginal. That is the reason for the concept of science fiction writing to emerge as a new genre in English. In 1960's Letter placed the important role. Letters not only expressed writers' feelings but also improved their writing skills. This paper does not intend to present a pessimistic view on technology but it is referred to how it effects changes in society and literature. People exploit mobile phones and at the same time people's mind and psyche is slowly changing. Statistical survey reports that "9. 84 percent of worldwide phone users can't go a single day without their mobile device in their hand." Mobile devices make a magical circle in their mind that unconsciously kindle their mind and mingle with the Imagery world.

Why did people mingle with the imagery world?

Did they like the real world?

Why did human psyche get changes?

According to the Post-modernist view, people give importance to dissension. They are not satisfied with reaching consensus any longer. Individual is important. A Man creates his own world through video games, face book et al. Technology mesmerizes the human mind and it does not consider the real things in the environment. People just capture the scenes through mobile phones.

Why do they cage the beauty in a rectangular frame?

Did beauty of nature is in cage or people's mind is in cage?

On the other hand, social scientists warn that the popularity of e-mailing, text messaging and playing games on mobile phone is affecting other important activities such as recreational reading and studying. Though it sounds a little pessimistic, there is some positive side. However, this paper examines a parallel view of power chain. At first, theology considered that god was the centre and man was marginal; then man positioned himself at the centre and marginalized women; then women was in power and men became powerless; and then now technology is at the centre and humans are marginal. Hence, Power theory is moving on from one to another.

SUMMATION

This paper analyzes the concept of power and exemplifies with reference to the literary text that how it is reflected in society. Power theory relates the real world with literary world but humans tend to consider the literary world as different from the real world. The concept is highly contestable.

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Enhancement of English Language Learning Through MALL Practice

JEANO, J

ABSTRACT

The use of technology in all walks of life is increasingly visible and therefore inevitable in the present century. Education is no exception. Technology changing traditional teaching methods and approaches into more sophisticated ICT-based methods so that instruction becomes more challenging and interactive. Using web 2. 0 together with mobile phone in classroom makes learners attentive, involving, and participatory. It also helps teachers deliver the content very effectively. MALL practices can be adopted because almost all learners have access to mobile phones. Many of them have informal learning experiences with mobile devices, and students are participating in communication and information gathering activities through mobile technology and in fact it has become their lifestyles. Since the Teaching of English as a Second Language (TESL) has become easier via mobile learning, the aim of this paper is to explore the benefits of mobile-based teaching and learning of English in the classroom.

Keywords: MALL

INTRODUCTION

Once upon a time reading was a popular pastime for people. This habit led to good reading and writing. Learners used to bring the reading habit into the formal learning situations as well. Reading as an act defines the status of being educated. Reality changes now with the advent of information technology use. The physical act of reading through printed books is being revisited and redefined since the twenty-first century learners are becoming more and more visual learners. They become violent while reading. They hate teachers for forcing them to read the text. Nowadays teacher-student bond is in a very poor and sorry state. Teachers are

trying to dump the textbook onto the students for the purpose of examination. Consequently, teachers become rigid themselves and react hard to students who failed to respond to their instruction on reading. It leads to a situation where students have begun to use electronic gadgets to relax their mind and become part of the virtual world. Thus the mobile technology has come to play an active role in their life. Initially, only business people used mobile for their trading purpose. Gradually, students began using this gadget in the classroom while teachers are explicating the text. On the other hand, some students are well-disposed toward buying costly textbooks, bringing them in their backpack, and using them in the class along with the teacher reading and explaining.

Technology constantly updates and students emerge as technology users. If they get bored with studies, they go to the social media and or surf the internet. It is a manifestation of students' irresistible love for conversion of print materials into the digital form. They become digitalized in their life and using laptop and mobile phones seems high. Technology is defining their life. No one can stop students from using such technology in and outside of the classroom. Only when teachers become adept at using technology in due course, students will take them seriously. Instead of blaming the student community on the whole, teachers can guide them on the exploitation of technology that is around them for learning.

The only trendy technology that can be used for study is mobile phones or preferably smart phones. So many apps are meant for gaining knowledge. Wherever learners and teachers are, they can stay connected with the rest of the world. That is special and unique about today's growing technology. Mobile phones with web 2.0 technology can be exploited in the classroom as well. The traditional view of banning the use of mobile phone should eventually be replaced with exploiting it for academic purposes. It is mainly in the hands of teachers. For instance, when there is a doubt in the teaching-learning process, contact can be established with virtual world through the mobile. It saves the very little precious time available for both teaching and learning. Gone are the days for lengthy explanation and explication. For English learners, mobile /smart phone technology is very useful. They can learn many things about the English language. Paradoxically, English is required for the optimal utilization of the web itself!

DISCUSSION

The following research questions were framed to focus on the attention of the topic during investigating:

1. What are the merits and limitations of the traditional classroom?
2. What are the features of Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL)?

3. How can MALL be a substitute to traditional classroom?
4. What are the limitations or problems in exploiting the MALL?

The traditional classroom is a place where students and the teacher meet synchronously in the fixed room at an appointed time for “on ground” or “on campus instruction.” It has its own inherent limitations through instructions that might run as follows:

1. Students must not bring any electronic gadgets such as mobile phones, laptop, i-pad, and so on.
2. They must keep quiet in any situation. If they make any noise, punishment is given to the whole class.
3. Do not write un-necessarily.
4. If any student is on leave, he/she should give leave letter when the student comes back to the institution.
5. They should learn speaking silently.

Mobile Assisted Language Learning is “an approach to language learning that is assisted or enhanced through the use of a handheld mobile device.” MALL is a subset of both Mobile Learning (M-Learning) and Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL). Web 2. 0 (internet) is the latest version that includes all the advanced technology that exists in the world. With MALL, students are skilled to access language learning resources and to communicate with their teachers and at anytime, anywhere.

In classroom, students use mobile phones during lecture time because mobile phone becomes part of their life. So, teachers and students have to take effort to learn how to use technology for learning purpose. Students spend more time with mobile phones than textbooks. In traditional classroom, teachers restrict student to use mobile phones. Teachers ought to encourage students to utilize the mobile use to learning while listening to lectures so that it could promote learning through discussion and interaction. Nowadays, speaking skill is important in the present day context than marks. One who equips oneself with the English language they will stand a chance during interviews for employment and higher studies. In speaking, pronunciation is very important. So MALL also helps to check their pronunciation through automated evaluation on the internet. They can use mobile phones in classroom to record lectures from teachers. They can use those lectures as reference in the future.

Students can study their tough materials by using chat: how to convert tough subject ideas into short sentences as conversational models and send them to their friends and to encourage them to use the English language for chat with friends.

It makes studies easier for students to learn the both language and subject. It also helps them do both reading and writing activity. Teachers also can join in social networks and students can easily connect with teachers anytime and anywhere in the world. Youngsters have much involvement in chatting through social network. So through this medium of communication, students can learn English easily, and also as early as possible. Then there are more audio stories, subjects and so on the internet. They can listen to those audios and follow along with printed text. It helps to develop both listening and reading skills. There are picture dictionaries with content. It helps to know the meaning with image of the new language and pronunciation of the word faster than searching in printed dictionaries. They can prepare for English proficiency tests, such as TOEFL and TOEIC.

The use of technology has its own problems. For every action there is an equal and opposite reaction. All mobile phones do not have the latest technology to develop their language skills. As technology grows, mobile features also get updated. Sometimes, updated mobile phones cost much higher than daily income of an employee in the Indian context. ON the other hand, the latest version mobile phones help them improve their language. Youths who do not have them are at disadvantage. In the developed countries students have money to buy any latest version technology. India being a developing economy cannot be compared with developed countries. Sometimes mobile phones can not display all the content that users need. Instead, many ads display while searching. It diverts their mind. Hence is there are possibilities for distraction from language learning.

CONCLUSION

The mobile phone users are growing and it is percolating into their lives. Hence, MALL plays a vital role in learning different dimensions of language. At present, there is a clear shift from teacher-controlled/led learning to autonomous student-led learning and MALL enables learners to feel free to use the technology more effectively and efficiently than classroom, textbook, and so on. More than CALL, the emerging technology MALL helps them learn English with less effort and cost. Language learning through mobile phones may take longer time compared to the computers. On the other hand, learning through mobile phones gives freedom of place and time. Consequently, they have much time to learn English whenever or wherever they are. Unfortunately, teachers feel bad and sad about students using it in the class. One should not forget the fact that technology controls and operates the GEN Y and the GEN ALPHA mind. Mobile language class gives a variety of learning styles in a timely and interactive fashion. It is a paradigm shift from Classroom to MALL room. When there is a huge demand for acquisition of foreign languages, traditional classroom will lose its currency. MALL can be considered an ideal alternative to it since it is not space-bound and time-bound!

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Is the Author Dead, or Alive to be Problematic?

DR. JOHN SEKAR, J

ABSTRACT

Roland Barthes' discourse is very often referenced while discussing the concept of reader-response theories. On the other hand, Foucault is rarely remembered. The latter is directly and critically responding to the former, though both agree that the Author is an unnatural, historical phenomenon that has unfortunately received mythological, heroic status and aim to contradict and complicate this status. The present paper establishes that their methods are radically and drastically different in the sense that "The Death of the Author" actively attempts to kill the Author and foregrounds the notion of reader, and "What is an Author?" casually submits to the inevitability of the death and further problematizes the notions of author and text. Besides, English literature academics in India neither see the death nor disappearance of the author, nor distinguish between author and writer, nor see text as a problem. This is evident in their language of explication and interpretation in the classroom and in their research theses. They continue to privilege the author/writer over the reader unproblematically.

Keywords: Author, Reader, Textuality, Death of Author, Reader-Response theory, Theory of Reception

INTRODUCTION

The loss of a basic New Critical premise caused the collapse of the entire mode of reading and investigating a text. Its main article of faith is that a literary text is an autonomous object that can be and therefore should be analyzed without any consideration for its contexts of production and reception. Nevertheless, the New Critical precept of "intentional fallacy" declares that the text does not belong to the author but to the reading public. The text "is detached from the author at birth and goes about the world beyond their power to intend about it or control it." While

New Critics were busy ‘deciphering’ the text, Barthes advocated the ‘disentangling’ the same.

Roland Barthes and Michael Foucault are two great French thinkers and theorists. In reaction against the New Critical premise mentioned above, Barthes challenged the traditional literary-critical mode of interpreting of literary texts and proclaimed the death of the author as well as the birth of the reader. On the other hand, Foucault, who also addressed the question of the author in critical interpretation, developed the idea of “author function” to explain the author as a classifying principle within a particular discursive formation. Though he does not mention Barthes in his 1969 essay “What is an Author?” his analysis can be read as a challenge to his depiction of a historical progression that would liberate the reader from domination by the author.

However, it should be noted carefully that both of them concur that the mythological hero status or even deity status given to the Author may be unnatural but a historically evolved phenomenon. Both attempt to complicate and contradict this status through different methods. While Barthes’ scathing attack aims at killing the Author, Foucault’ treatment of the death aims at claiming its inevitability, yet problematizing the underlying relationship between author and work. He goes on to declare that “it is not enough to declare that we should do without the writer (the author) and study the work itself.” Corollary to his assertion, he shifts his attention to the text by interrogating the very existence of the text. Three pertinent questions are

1. What constitutes the text?
2. Should everything that one writes like scribbling that would be discarded later and the notes that he would jot down be included as part of the text?
3. What is the role of the author’s name? Does author name have any functional value?

Death for Foucault is a sacrifice by the author and it can be understood not through analysis of relationship between the author and work, but between content and form. Death is literary for Foucault and metaphorical for Barthes. He then addresses the question of ‘author function.’

RESEARCH DESIGN AND RESULTS

The researcher assumed the principles of comparative study as a meaningful starter to comprehend the notion of author, text, textuality, author-function, and the death of the author as expounded by Barthes and Foucault. The following are some of the principles that were brought to bear on the reading and interpreting these theoretical concepts:

1. “Without comparisons to make, the mind doesn’t know how to proceed.” by Alexis de Tocqueville from **Democracy in America**.
2. “We learn through comparing” by Heidenheimer, Hecllo, Adams from **Comparative Public Policy**

Reflective method has been exploited to collect data qualitatively on the use of the concept of the author in English literature classes by teachers and students and researchers alike. He ponders over their frequent, inevitable use and apotheosis of the author as part of their idiom provoked him to look afresh at the views of these two towering thinkers on the issue. He sought to elicit the attitude and beliefs of English literature academics toward/about the position of the author and the nature of the text while they explicate the latter for both pedagogical and research purposes. The table provides the attitudes and beliefs of English literature academics toward/about the position of the author and the nature of the text.

S. NO	STATEMENTS	YES %	NO %	NO IDEA %
1	Author is transcendental	92		8
2	The author and the writer of a text can be equated	15		85
3	The persona in the text is the author	87		13
4	A text is the expression of the author’s vision of reality	94		6
5	Author can be ignored while reading a text		90	10
6	Reader’s context is as important as author’s	15	85	
7	A text transcends its time and space	95		5
8	Author has certain functions to perform in the text	90		10
9	Some authors are ‘transdiscursive’		4	96
10	If interpretation of text is author-centric, it imposes a limit on text	5	80	15

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In an attempt to foreground the impressions of the two discourses on the unknown readers, the present research chose to consider their views as posted on <http://www.goodreads.com/book/show/11289919-the-death-of-the-author> and the same were critically reviewed as follows:

Nikhilesh expresses that the essay has not only overthrown the hegemony of the institution of the author, but also has given him a new birth to the very paradigm of reading and interpreting. Praiz Sophyronja interprets it as confirming that the translation of thought into language removes the specific voice of the author. Rich is of the opinion that a text cannot be divorced from its context of

production and therefore the author is always important. Elias Vasalis Kontaxakis comprehends that Barthes is empowering the reader and text by siphoning fixation from the author. Basila says that the critical concept of the death of the author is a ruthless idea. Katie sums up her understanding of the essay that it clarifies the difference between writing and reading by demolishing the myth that writers are owners and readers are usufructuaries. The Essay "What is an Author" considers the relationship between author, text, and reader.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following questions were formulated and examined very closely and critically while reading and reflecting on the essays of both Barthes and Foucault:

1. Is the Author 'dead' or does he continue to 'function'?
2. What's the reaction of Indian teachers of English literature?

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The primary objective of the present textual, analytical, comparative study of two seminal discourses is to examine the (inevitable & indispensable) habit of invoking the authority of the author in the interpretation of texts in the present day classroom and research which is still pervaded and therefore contaminated by the humanist literary theories.

HYPOTHESIS

It is presumed that the Author is quite alive in the mind of readers, be it teacher-readers or student-readers, real-readers or hypothetical readers, or researchers.

THEORETICAL REFLECTIONS

Reading and interpreting texts by and large continue to rest on the author's identity in terms of their political views, historical contexts, religions, ethnicities, psychology, personal or biographical attributes. However, author's experiences and biases cannot serve as a "definitive" explanation of the text. It may be neat and tidy, and convenient, but is actually sloppy and flawed. Barthes affirms that "to give a text an author...is to impose a limit on the text." (149) Readers should therefore divorce the text from its creator and liberate it from the interpretive tyranny. A text contains multiple layers and meanings. By drawing an analogy between text and textiles, Barthes declares that "text is a tissue [or fabric] of quotations," drawn from "innumerable centers of culture," (149) rather than from one, individual experience. The meaning of a text depends on the impressions of the reader rather than "passions" or "tastes" of the writer. He categorically asserts that "a text's unity

lies not in its origins, but in its destination.” Here “origins” refers to the writer as originator and “destination” means the reader or the audience.

The writer is not the author but only scriptor who is “is born simultaneously with the text, and is in no way equipped with a being preceding or exceeding the writing, [and] is not the subject with the book as predicate.” (148) Barthes uses the term ‘scriptor’ in order to subvert the power wielded by traditional nexus between ‘author’ and ‘authority’. The scriptor is born to produce the text and not to explain it. A text is “eternally written here and now” with each re-reading because the “origin” of meaning lies exclusively in “language itself” and its impressions on the reader. He is firm in his assertion that the scriptor is “not the subject with the book as predicate.” (148) He cites linguistics to argue that the demise of the Author has proved a value analytical tool.

Moreover, the reader cannot assert precisely what the writer intended. Barthes introduces this notion at the beginning of the discourse by challenging the reader’s competence to determine “who is speaking?” in the passage quoted from Balzac’s *Sarrassine*. He further declares that “writing...the destruction of every voice...defies adherence to a single interpretation or perspective.” (146) It is not the writer who expresses, but the language does. He quotes the French poet Stephane Mallarme who asserts that “it is language which speaks.” He recognizes Marcel Proust as being “concerned with the task of inexorably blurring...the relation between the writer and his characters.” (148)

A text is characterized by the disjointed nature, their fissures of meaning and their incongruities, interruptions, and breaks. Readers do not discover “a single theological meaning.” Instead, they discover that writing “constitutes a multi-dimensional space,” which cannot and therefore need not be “deciphered” but “disentangled.” He refuses to assign a “secret” “ultimate meaning” so that it “liberates” the text which may be called ‘anti-theological activity, an activity that is truly revolutionary since to refuse meaning is, in the end, to refuse God and his hypostases—reason, science, law.” (149)

On the contrary, in his epilogue to the essay, Foucault quotes Beckett’s words “What does it matter who is speaking?” Writing is viewed here not as a finished product, but as a practice and he identifies two themes of this practice. One, writing is “rather a question of creating a space into which the writing subject constantly disappears.” (175) He echoes Barthes’ view that “writing is ...oblique space where our subject slips away, the negative where all identity is lost.” (147) Two, there is a close relationship between writing and death. He claims that writing wards off death since “the work...possesses the right to kill, to be its author’s murderer.” (175) It is because “writing subject cancels out the signs of his particular individuality...

he assumes the role of the dead man in the game of writing.” (175) He is critical of the authors being worshipped on account of being the sole creators of meaning. On the other hand, he argues that writing is almost a sacrifice, a voluntary disappearance into their own creation. In this sense, the Authors enter their own death. The real reasons for an author’s literary death can be discerned not through the study of relationship between the author and their work, but through the analysis of a work’s form and content.

Foucault problematizes the very notion of writing and author since no theory exists for the same. He reminds the reader that an author is necessary to consider a piece of writing or a work. He contends that even if someone is identified as an author, it is not certain that everything that they wrote in their life time constitutes “a work.” Foucault considers it inadequate to study a work and to disregard the author. He finds in theories about the ‘death of the author’ the spaces left behind and the possibilities they present. One such phenomenon is the ‘birth of the reader’ and recognition of the same lays foundation to finding significance within a work.

Foucault also raises another pertinent question on the author’s name though he admits that he is unable to resolve it since it involves several difficult issues. For instance, it can be a description of the person like all other names. It is a representation of the author’s body of work. It has the role of performing a “classificatory function.” This name creates the ability to put together a number of works and “define[s] them, differentiate[s] them from, and contrast[s] them to others.” His notion of author-function helps readers and critics alike understand the idea of the author having a persona or being a symbol rather than an ordinary individual. He describes the primary characteristics of author-function as follows:

1. It is connected to the legal system. The author is needed since the law insists on the individual author is accountable to subversive or transgressive communications.
2. It varies according to field and discipline. Scientific discourses can be anonymous whereas literary discourses demand the author in order to situate meaning within the text.
3. It is carried out through “complex operations” and “is not defined by the spontaneous attribution of a discourse to its producer.”

An author does not necessarily connote a specific individual “since it can give rise simulataenously to several selves, to several subjects—positions that can be occupied by different classes of individuals.”

Foucault goes on to explain the distinction between “author-function” and its relation to an individual work versus an entire discourse. He calls the latter category “founders of discursivity” in the sense that authors like Freud and Marx are “unique

in that they are not just the authors of their own works. They have produced “a certain number of analogies, but also a certain number of differences.” (183) For instance, Saussure’s structural analysis made possible a generative grammar which is radically different from the former. A re-examination of Freud’s texts and that of Marx modifies both psychoanalysis and Marxism.

While interrogating the idea of text, Foucault’s suggestion appears to be that its meaning and significance is not derivative of subject matter but the manner of arrangement of elements that constitute it. It is not agreeable to him if theories of authorship promote the worshipful nature of the author and influences external to the author, unintended meaning, and the reader co-creators of meaning. He argues that by writing the author voluntarily disappears into writing and he calls it ‘the death of the author.’ Barthes’ idea of the death is not literary and it supports the retention of the idea of the author while seemingly opposing it.

Foucault’s theory proposes that a work is studied not to understand the relationship between the author and their work, but through analysis of the work’s form and its content. He foresees the futility of textual analysis without the author to text. He questions the possibility of textual constitution with incorporation of all that writings of someone in their life even if someone is attributed as author. Foucauldian theory proposes that reader must be aware of the authorial context and that a work cannot be studied by discarding its author. He cautions that the space left behind by the authorial disappearance cannot be ignored, but it can present possibilities for the birth of the reader. Recognition of such spaces is fundamental to finding significance of work.

In fact, Foucault’s aim is to problematize the authorial identity in terms of post-structuralist textual and discursive politics. The post-structuralist position is to eclipse the subject of discourse by the order of discourse and it problematizes the modernist notion of author-god in terms of textuality. The text writes itself as the author stands castrated and re-activated. Foucault, in fact, thinks that author is just a mode of preventing the deconstructionist, infinite multiplication of meaning and is related to the kind of phobia with which the reader is anxious to stop meaning from becoming infinite.

It is pertinent to bear in mind that compared to the writer of a text, the author is more problematic since the latter is more of a voice within the textual discourse and becomes part of the discourse. The quote from Beckett is the example. Again, he writes a book and he does not make them the author of discourse. For instance, Mrs Radcliffe wrote **The Mysteries of Udolpho**, but not the author of the Gothic novel discourse.

At the end of the essay, Foucault argues that the author is not a source of infinite meaning as readers imagine often, but as part of a rather larger system of beliefs that serve to limit and restrict meaning. Dramatically, he returns to Barthes and agrees that the author function may soon “disappear.” But he does not suggest that the restrictive and limiting author function will have some kind of absolute freedom. Rather, he insists that one set of limitations and restrictions will give way to another set since there will and must be some system of “constraint” working upon readers.

CONCLUSIONS

Reading Barthes’ “The Death of the Author” helps one understand Foucault’s “What is an Author?” While Barthes kills the author, Foucault problematizes the notion of the author and the relationship between author and work. All stakeholders within the Indian Academia of English Studies cannot but invoke the spirit of the Author for wrong reasons. Perhaps, most of them are still firmly wedded to the Humanist theories that have become of part of the intellectual, academic, and mental structures through colonial educational inheritance!

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Promoting Learner's Autonomy through Music

JOHN VIJAYAN, C

ABSTRACT

This paper intends to analyse the possibilities of improving listening skills through songs. Listening is the activity of paying attention to and trying to get meaning from something one hears in order to speak properly. By hearing songs, students can easily learn new words and phrases and segments of the spoken utterance. A vast majority of student community is interested in listening to songs. Through students' interest, teachers can easily help them improve their listening skills. The aim of this paper is to give simple guidelines to English learning learners to enrich their listening skills in the classroom through listening to songs.

Keywords: listening, songs, enhancement, stimulus, English language classroom, vocabulary

INTRODUCTION

Improving listening skills of second language learners of English is an important task. Many students in schools are under the impression that learning English language is a difficult task. These students do not give any importance to listening at all. For them English sessions become a metaphor for bore, fear, hatred, and irritation. They cannot understand what English teachers say in the classroom. As a consequence, they exhibit no interest toward learning English. In such a hostile scenario, expecting them to improve listening skills is not an easy task to accomplish. Most of the school teachers fail to make students to enhance their listening skills though most of them are earnestly making attempts to improve their students' knowledge and skills. It is an institutional failure due to improper or unviable methods.

Most schools teachers are teaching subjects to their students only for the purpose of achieving results. To achieve this, memory comes quite handy to them.

Students are forced to learn (memorize) the lesson units of English which is treated like any other subject. So students fail to learn any of the four macro-skills. When they go for higher studies, they find it difficult to cope up with their major subjects for want of English language skills for communication. To follow the lectures, they ought to learn the micro-skills of listening first. This would make them to be conscious in classes. Once they become skilled in listening, they learn their subjects automatically, easily, and effortlessly. So listening is very important to learn a language as well as subjects.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The questions that generate discussion and reflection are as follows:

1. How can listening be promoted through music?
2. How could learner autonomy promote English language learning?

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Saricoban (1999) examines that listening activities can be done by activating prior knowledge, helping students organize their learning by thinking about their purpose for listening. **Sharpe (2001)** scrutinises songs provide an occasion for real language use in a fun and enjoyable situation. Young children readily imitate sounds and often pleasurably associate singing and playing with rhythms and rhymes from an early age.

DISCUSSION

In this modern world, learning a second language through listening to songs is not a difficult one. Wherever students go, they can easily listen to songs through ipod, mobile phone, radio, television, mp3 player and other such electronic devices. Students can analyse or understand the words and phrases or entire lyrics easily when they listen to the same song repeatedly. When this method is being implemented in classes, most of the students will understand the vocabulary easily and frame new sentence themselves. So this method would help them improve their listening skills in an easy way and would serve as the platform for learning English.

Listening to songs is more interesting than listening unsolicited lectures. So students become more interested in this kind of learning. Besides, they enjoy learning while hearing songs. This makes them more focussed on what they are supposed to learn as part of listening skills. This sustained interest ultimately leads them to improve their listening skills. When teachers play the song, they try to understand the words and phrases. And then, students discuss among themselves the words and phrases. If they cannot understand words, teachers again play the same song repeatedly. It continues until students have become familiar with the

song and its verbal components. Teachers clear doubts and confusion. This practice is repeated for some days when students easily grasp the words and phrases from the songs. Such activities consume only a few minutes everyday in the class. Students easily understand the lyrics from the songs at their levels. Whenever and wherever they hear any song, they should be in a position to easily understand words and phrase or lyrics without any help from teachers. Then, teachers can assess students' micro skills of listening how rapidly grasp the meaning of the song.

In this method teachers encourage students to listen to more songs in the classroom. Here teachers play the role of a sculptor. They guide students according to their listening or learning level. As facilitator, they should be clear about this method. They should create tasks related to listening skills. Teachers can arrange groups to discuss what students listened. Teachers should also be innovative in selecting songs to improving listening skills.

Here is an example song with words, phrases and grammatical features underlined. Once students feel that they can follow the song, teachers can put to them the questions as mentioned below:

I have a dream, a song to sing
 To help me cope with anything
 If you see the wonder of a fairy tale
 You can take the future even if you fail
 I believe in angels something good in everything I see
 I believe in angels when I know the time is right for me
 I'll cross the stream, I have a dream

I have a dream, a fantasy
 To help me through reality
 And my destination makes it worth the while
 Pushing through the darkness still another mile
 I believe in angels something good in everything I see
 I believe in angels when I know the time is right for me

I have a dream, a song to sing
 To help me cope with anything
 If you see the wonder of a fairy tale
 You can take the future even if you fail
 I believe in angels something good in everything I see
 I believe in angels when I know the time is right for me
 I'll cross the stream, I have a dream

QUESTIONS

1. List out the words that you learnt from listening to the song.
2. List out phrases that you noticed while listening to the song.
3. List out the words that you could not understand the meaning.
4. List out the words that you heard repeatedly.
5. List out the rhyming words that you noticed while listening to the song.
6. Write down three sentences that you heard from the song.

SUMMING UP

Nothing can be worse than non-understanding or misunderstanding a song. But it happens if the song is in English which is almost a foreign language to most Indian learners of English. Students learn more and more by hearing English even when they do not understand what is being said, and listening to songs greatly improves the ability to hear and even speak the language. Through this method students are able to develop listening skills on their own. In addition to the existing methods, the present method of improving listening skills through songs can be tried because it is more interesting and involving to students. This method would also make teachers co-learners. It could therefore be an effective method for improving students' listening skills. It promotes their confidence as well as learner autonomy.

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Metacognitive Awareness on Listening

KALAIMATHI, S

ABSTRACT

Listening is an invisible mental process and it is difficult to describe. As the word 'meta' means 'beyond,' listening is a skill that is something above all other skills. Metacognitive strategies are those involved in the analysis, synthesis, or transformation of learning materials. Listening is a language skill which most teachers take for granted and the skill that many students spend less time on actively developing. Listening is a complex, active process of interpretation in which listeners match what they hear with the knowledge of what they had already known. Thus, listening can always be considered as an active-autonomous learning process. Listening is where the students learn the form and function of the language. Learners employ learning strategies when they are facing some problem. There have been various attempts to discover which strategies are important for L2 acquisition. One way is to investigate how 'good language learners' try to learn. 'Good' language learners pay attention to both form and meaning and listening plays the vital role in developing students' cognitive ability. The present study assumes that listening as an academic skill can be improved with metacognitive awareness and strategies.

Key expressions: Metacognitive strategies, L2 acquisition, problem solving, planning, evaluation, directed attention, personal awareness, mental translation.

INTRODUCTION

Learning English can be accomplished effectively by learning its skills. Listening is an important skill which is abandoned by teachers with a conviction that it can be acquired in the course of learning English as a language. Another wrong assumption is that listening as a skill cannot and need not be taught. But listening is the primary skill to be learnt to acquire all the other skills. Without proper listening one cannot learn or acquire anything. Listening involves understanding new ideas and understanding what one understands. Understanding what strategies

learners are using and what difficulties they experience has become an integral part of research on listening. It is not surprising that learners perceive listening as a difficult skill as it includes complex processes like interpreting the incoming data. Therefore some extra effort should be taken to make students to listen in order to improve their understanding level and also to improve themselves by having a clear knowledge of knowing what they know.

DISCUSSION

Teaching and learning listening in the language classroom is not an easy task. Course books involve the teaching of listening strategies to facilitate listeners' understanding. In addition, this strategy instruction does not provide learners with adequate knowledge of L2 listening, its challenges, the cognitive and emotional factors involved. The complexity of listening problems makes learners feel difficult to have a clear understanding of how to listen and more importantly how to improve their performance of active listening. If learners are guided and provided with regular opportunities to find out and explore these aspects, then they will become capable of controlling and evaluating their own listening development.

Metacognition is defined as the learners' knowledge about learning. The term was first used by Flavell in 1979 when he identified the three types of metacognitive knowledge such as person, task and strategy. Personal knowledge refers to how different factors like age, aptitude, learning styles, and what learners know about themselves as learners in learning the language. Task knowledge refers to the level of learners' knowledge about the purpose, demands and the nature and their knowledge of the procedures that constitute of the learning tasks. Strategic knowledge refers to what is needed to listen effectively.

Metacognitive strategies are higher order skills that involve planning, monitoring and evaluating the success of the activity. There are two aspects of metacognitive ability, they are:

- i. Knowledge on cognition, which means knowing 'what'.
- ii. Regulation of cognition, which means knowing 'how'.

The first aspect is the conceptualization about learners' listening process on their awareness of what is needed to be listened effectively. The second deals with attaining control over distractions and improving concentration on what is being listened. Metacognitive listening strategies have five different strategies. They are, problem solving, planning and evaluation, mental translation, personal knowledge, and directed attention.

Cohen (2000) and many researchers in the field of second language listening agree that listeners often do not handle listening tasks in an effective way by

utilizing the strategies. Metacognitive strategies are considered as the most essential ones in developing learners' skills, says **Anderson (1991)**. Learners who have developed their metacognitive awareness are likely to become more autonomous language learners, says **Hauck (2005)**. **Goh (2002)** emphasizes the importance of metacognitive strategies by arguing that learners' metacognitive awareness is related to effective learning in all learning contexts. The following research questions helped the researcher during the course of investigation:

1. How do listeners feel about listening?
2. What is the role of metacognition in the learning process?
3. How does metacognitive awareness help the less-skilled listeners develop their listening capability?

The subjects taken for the study are 20 postgraduate students who learn English as a second language. The questionnaire was prepared according to the five strategies of metacognitive listening. The questionnaire consisted of 15 statements, which has three statements under each strategy. The questionnaire was constructed on a Likert five point scale from strongly agree, agree, no idea, disagree to strongly disagree with 5, 4, 3, 2&1 points respectively for all positively worded statements and it is reversed in case of the negatively worded statements.

Listening means concentrating actively to what is being heard. It is fully concentrating on what is being said rather than passively hearing the words of the speaker. Students are multi-taskers that they do a number of works simultaneously. But most of them are inattentive in the classes. Active listening can be acquired and developed by practice. Listening includes the development of all other skills as learning of anything involves active listening. The difficulties in listening such as less motivation and lack of interest, way of presentation, the speaker and issues relating to students themselves makes them unable to listen actively to what is being said. More than this, most of the listeners attribute their difficulties to their own low ability in the skill. To overcome these difficulties, various techniques to confront the problem of active listening can be thought of.

Listeners face a wide variety of problems which would distract them from listening effectively. External sources like noise, weather, sound quality and audibility of the speaker, inconvenient classroom environment, disturbance from the neighbour are some of this kind. Internal and personal turmoil like lack of interest on the subject, ignorance on the topic being discussed, physical weakness, personal mental problems, hatred for the speaker, and lack of text materials affect the listening ability of the listener. These distractions can be overcome by listeners when they have good concentration skill and with some modifications in the physical environment of the listener. Metacognitive awareness helps them overcome the personal difficulties in listening.

Enhancing the listening capacity of the learner is the task of the facilitator. Listening is the basic skill in the purpose of learning. Improving listening helps one get improvement in all the other skills. Many aids are introduced and used now-a-days to attract and hold the attention of the listener to have an active listening. Instead of oral lectures learners are introduced to audio and visual aids. Projectors, televisions, computers, mobile phones, LCD monitors are used to capture the attention of the learners. Language is taught through songs, commentaries, audio books, movies, advertisements to make learners listen to their favourite recreations. That could hold their attention for a long time compared to monotonous lectures. Learners are provided with language labs which help them in active listening. In the language labs students are made to learn as they wish. Therefore they learn the language in the way they like and there they could even assess their language ability and could improve that too.

The results from the questionnaire show students' metacognitive awareness on various listening strategies. The questions 1, 2 & 3 come under the strategy of problem solving, 4, 5 & 6 come under the strategy of planning and evaluation, 7, 8 & 9 come under the strategy of directed attention, 10, 11 & 12 come under the strategy of personal awareness and the last three questions 13, 14 & 15 come under the mental translation strategy. In the problem solving category the maximum of 95%, 95% and 85% positively agreed to the questions respectively. In the planning and evaluation category the maximum of 65%, 75% and 75% positively agreed to the questions respectively. In the directed attention category the maximum of 90% positively agreed, 55% disagreed and 65% agreed positively to the questions respectively. In the personal awareness category the maximum of 50% disagreed, 55% and 65% positively agreed to the questions respectively. Finally, in the mental translation category the maximum of 80%, 75% agreed negatively as it is a negatively worded statement respectively and the last question carries an average of 40% agreed and 45% disagreed.

This illustrates that students are good at problem solving category, planning and evaluation. They are average in the directed attention and personal awareness category but they are weak in the mental translation category. This helps in the study of the significance of metacognitive awareness in learning listening.

The evaluation from the questionnaire indicate that majority of the learners are aware of problem solving strategy in listening. In the process of understanding L2 majority of the learners are able to guess the meaning of the words which they do not understand by using the meaning of the words they understood. On the other hand, they are able to understand L2 with their own experience and knowledge in the field. Majority of the learners are able to change and rethink on their interpretations on something if they found them incorrect. Therefore, the problem

solving strategy has a positive result on their metacognitive awareness. This strategy must be developed so that one could improve active and effective listening skill.

According to the next strategy of planning and evaluation, students possess a high degree of awareness in knowing their level of listening skill so that they would be able to improve and feel satisfied when they need to. In the process of evaluating after listening, the learners have good awareness to think of how to improve their listening for the next time. The awareness of planning is at an average level as 30% of the learners do not think of the similar texts they have already listened to before listening. In total, planning and evaluating strategy also has a better level of awareness in learners.

The awareness on the directed attention strategy is excellent as the majority of learners are able to recover their attention as soon as they feel distracted and carried away from what they are listening. The study proves that most of the listeners would not give up listening when they feel difficult to understand as they are good at problem solving too. Another way they use to direct their attention to listening is by concentrating more on the text when they feel tough to understand. This shows that learners possess great control over their mind to direct their concentration towards the class.

The next strategy is personal awareness towards listening. The result according to the study is little surprising that the majority of 35% of listeners strongly disagreed for the statement which says listening as the difficult skill comparing to all the other three skills. Learners have varied responses on listening for an hour as a challenge such as 25% strongly agreed, 30% agreed, 15% had no idea and 30 percent of them disagreed and one learner made a comment that his listening span varies according to the subject he listens too. 65% of the L2 learners taken for research do not feel exhausted when they listen to English. This shows that learners are very much personally aware of effective listening of L2.

The final strategy, mental translation which has to be avoided is on the progress in learners as their reply for all the three statements is scattered between all the five levels. 80% of the listeners translate while they listen for better understanding. 75% of the learners translate important words. But such translations to mother tongue while they listen would not enable them to learn hard words and new vocabulary in L2. Translation of the whole thing that they listened is partially followed and partially rejected as 40% of them agree and 45% of them disagree on that practice. This shows that learner awareness on mental translation strategy should have to be improved to make them understand in the second language. Thus this study proves the need for metacognition in the improvement of listening skill.

SUMMATION

This paper discusses the various issues on listening which is the first skill of human development. It focuses on the metacognitive awareness about listening, difficulties in it and the strategy to use. That could rectify their problems and help in the enhancement of the skill. Awareness on listening and the ability to regulate learning through listening effectively help the learners develop the skills of self-directed language learning. Based on the findings, suggestions regarding the cultivation of metacognitive awareness should be given to the learners. Further research is required to evaluate the level of strategy awareness of the teachers.

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Language for Autistic Children

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ABSTRACT

A man could be identified by the language which he speaks. Language plays a crucial role in the life of human beings. Human beings express the thoughts and feelings with the help of language. The IQ levels of special children are below 90. Mentally challenged, physically challenged, and visually challenged, Down syndrome, Autism all comprise under the special children group. This paper deals with how the language is used as a communicative tool by autistic children.

Keywords: autism, language, communicative tool, Down syndrome, mentally challenged, special children

INTRODUCTION

Everyone in this world is special in the creation of God. Every parent has their own great, big dreams for their children. They wish that their child must be special and unique in the world. But what if the child is really a special child? Who could they blame? The normal IQ level of a person is 90. The IQ level of Special children is below 90. Special children are given special education by special educators in special schools. Mentally challenged, physically challenged, and visually challenged, Down syndrome, autism all comprises under the special children group.

Autism (Autism Spectrum Disorder) is of different development disorders in a person. Autism is a mental condition in which a child has communication difficulties (Oxford Dictionary). Causes for autism cannot be made specific. There are both genetic and parental causes. The growth rate of an autistic child is very slow compared to a normal child. Some children are socially impaired but some are intellectually gifted. Every autistic child is unique and different from the other. According to Dr Stephen Shore, "If you've met one person with Autism, You've met one person with autism."

Children with the autism disorder find hard to understand comprehend basic simple things which seem easy for others. These children are dependent on their parents. They are trained to gain all life skills, social skills, communication skills, language skills, vocational skills, and behavioral skills. They do understand but the process is very slow. Both parents and teachers need patience and perseverance.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following question served as sign posts during the course of the present investigation:

Can autistic children be taught language?

How can it be taught to them?

How do they use language as a communicative tool?

DISCUSSION

Communication is basically the easy step and the first step for any child to ask for something and express their needs. It starts with facial expressions, smile, crying, gestures, actions, sounds, one word, then words and sentences. In these sequences language communication skills gradually develop. For autistic children all these processes are slow and delayed. Most of them are unable to speak. Instead they just give sounds. Some children utter words. Social interaction is very low. There will be no eye contact and they will very silent. Some children would repeat the words said once. They are advised by the speech- language pathologist to improve their communication skills and language skills.

LANGUAGE FOR AUTISTIC CHILDREN

In any language oral communication is more important. Asperger's syndrome is a form of autism where these children are gifted with language skills. These children excel in vocabulary. For example, a boy is so much interested in learning new words from the dictionary. He always has a dictionary in his hands. He just keeps on learning words. He asks for other new dictionaries which he does not have. These children know many words but they are not able to make out proper sentences. Proper guidance would make the boy to excel in language skills. They must be identified in the beginning and proper training must be given according to their needs.

A language skill for these children is a big challenge as these children have no proper exposure. If they are taught words and sentences, they must be reminded of them again and again. They do not have a good memory. They tend to forget things easily. So repetition plays a major role. They are taught some words in the school

and they must be able to listen to the same words from their parents at home. If so they would be reminded of these expressions. It would ensure continuity. Their main problem is that they do not have adequate exposure to the things they learn. Normal children learn about so many things in school and come to know about those things when they experience them in their lives. But it is not so in the case of these children. Unless they are taken to a field trip to a particular place that is taught, they will not be able to understand the concept.

According to Rubin (1987: 7), “Learning is best achieved when students play an active role in the process.” Children in normal schools are provided with several activities in the class to explain the concept clearly. They are not able to just listen to the oral instruction or teaching of the concepts for any subjects. If this is the case of normal children, what about the special children? Should they not be given much care and attention? The children must be taught with much care and concern. Each child is unique. So it is the teachers and parents’ responsibility to analyze the child individually, their strengths and weakness. Accordingly, these children must be given Individualized Education Program (IEP) and educated.

Autistic children must be given more time to learn a particular concept. Teachers and parents must make sure that these children have learnt and understood a particular concept. Only then they must move to the next. Otherwise there would be no gain in teaching them. Step by step process is more important. Any activity done must be made into simpler steps. Teachers should be very specific and clear in their words. Simple sentences should be used to explain or give instructions. Children could be made to do a particular task by repeating the same question. Teachers could point out to an object and ask children to bring that here. Simple instructions are easy for children to follow.

Pictures can be used to teach them nouns and vocabularies. Two boxes must have the same kind of pictures. Children could be asked to match them up. Teachers must just say the word and children must pick up the correct picture. For example, a picture of a boy crying, dancing or laughing could be given to teach action words. Teachers must wait till children pay full attention. Visual medium will be useful in teaching language skills. Many children are good at memorizing the dialogues and songs from films. Whatever children learn must be implemented. The concept must be practically applied. For example, the teacher teaches children to say, “Thank you”, “Sorry”, and “Excuse me”. Children must be encouraged to use the expressions in the class with fellow students and at home. Thus children would slowly learn the language step by step. Reinforcement plays a major role. Children should be encouraged and motivated by providing them with positive feedback in the form of acknowledgement and appreciation for their work.

CONCLUSION

Any problem could be solved if it is noticed in the beginning. Early intervention with problems of these children would be good and helpful. The notion of special schools is to train all these children to be independent. Like other normal children, these children could also be taught language skills. They acquire language skills but at a slower pace. Their special needs are noticed and must be taught with a little more patience. If so, they could excel in language learning.

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Agonies of Wounded Self: A study of Krishna Datta's "A Fistful of Life"

MAHIBA, G

ABSTRACT

Female sufferings are described in the novel **A Fistful of Life** written by Krishna Datta. In this novel Suchi gets married at an early age and suffers by her husband who is a drunkard and impotent. Suchi is too young and she does not know that it is illegal and detrimental to her health. She suffers because of the selfish and brutally ambitious husband. Women are considered as sexual objects and are reduced to a source of sensual pleasure and an object of possession. The loveless married life is always unhappy. Surely there is no wickedness in her. She is defined as a victim of male violence. Society thinks that there is something wrong in a woman to invite violence and rape. Mother-in-law proves herself to be an enemy to woman and harasses and brutalises her. She feels deeply hurt when her husband does not seem to care for her at all. Life is hopeless and boredom for her husband is a drunkard. She is driven to commit suicide because of her husband's barbaric attitude towards her and that completely ruins her life.

Keywords: Women, Marriage, Depression, Female sufferings

INTRODUCTION

The traumatizing effect that violence leaves on a woman and her pitiable plight is portrayed through **A Fistful of Life**. It is a book written in a style that gives expression to the submerged agonies of a wounded self. It provides insight into the trials and tribulations of a woman who is dominated by male-oriented values. She gives the picture of how women are affected by their husbands' sexual harassment. Her novel focuses on women's issues like gender inequality, marriage, and superstitions of patriarchal society. She portrays woman and the exploration of her inner struggle. Women are afraid to come out from traditions for a better way of

life. They are silently suffering to lead a normal life. They are cursed to do all household work even when they have an unhappy married life.

For most women, marriage is not at all the life which is full of fun that they expect. It is pity on men for they think themselves as real heroes by beating and suppressing women to extreme ends. Here, sexual harassment is another disease that takes the life of a woman. It is only on movies that women enjoy the villain to be punished but not in reality. It is a pity to find that woman is not supposed to reveal their unhappy married life.

Men feel happy and contented to hurt their wives. It is painful to accept that women are expected to forget the cruelty that is shown to them by their husbands and to love them though they are disloyal. Women are inducted into household responsibility at a young age. For social security and support, they need the support of a man. They are supposed to be the only caterer to fulfil their husbands in spite of all the suppression and depression that happen to them. They are expected to uphold the good reputation of the family no matter how they are tortured by patriarchal society. The bitter truth is that they experience sexual harassment in society. They are usually seen as untouchables in the view of society if they do not live with their husbands no matter how painful their life is.

Man never tolerates any infidelity on the part of woman but for him the situation is otherwise. Women are supposed to bear the venomous looks and expressions of hatred by their husbands. In order to kill their boredom, men have chosen marriage as a sole target of their entertainment. Women have no liberty to voice their thoughts. The typical male mentality and their sole aim are to exploit women as depicted in the novel. Being women they suffer in their parents' house first and then in their in-law's house. Marriage is a feeling of incompleteness for most women in the Indian context. They are expected to be under the dominance of their husband. Here the fantasies of a woman get dissolved through her marriage. Marriage has become crueler for an uneducated woman. Most Indian women are married to the family of vultures. Due to sufferings in marriage they face psychic disorder, leading to her suicide.

Even in her death she is described as a worthless being and wild woman by the lie told by the fisherman in the novel. Depression is a serious mental ailment which leads her to commit suicide. Married women are far more depressed than married men. Marriage in the patriarchal society has served as a tool to oppress women. It appears that by spelling out the different roles that a woman is supposed to perform for a man, tradition has underlined woman's subordinate position in family and society.

Marriage occupies a significant place in our culture and tradition and is highly respected event in human life. But for Suchi her marriage is a carriage to death. It is a cage where she could not escape. Her life is nothing but a catalogue of disasters. Her husband has made her life full of tensions, with his reckless behaviour and irregular activities. He goes off anywhere without saying where he goes and comes back at odd time. So, women struggle with insecurity and find themselves vulnerable to all types of unhealthy situations.

Changing men's attitude and mentality towards women will take a long time at least a generation and perhaps longer. Nevertheless, raising awareness on the issue of violence against women, and educating boys and men to view women as valuable partners in life in the development of society and in the attainment of peace are just as important as taking legal steps to protect women's human rights. Neera Desai and Usha Thakkar observe:

Women's duties as good daughters, good wives and good mothers are well –defined in the Indian patriarchal society. Wifehood and motherhood are accepted as pivotal roles for women: by implication, these roles complete in themselves and women need not pursue any specialised discipline of knowledge, art or profession. The good woman is sweet, gentle, loving, caring and ever sacrificing. The main stream concept of the role of a woman seems to be best described in the anonymous Sanskrit couplet: she (in relation to her husband) is like a mother while cooking and serving, secretary while he is working, servant at his feet, courtesan in his bed and earth-like in forbearance. (246)

SUMMATION

A woman is the centre of home- the cook, nurse, doctor, guardian, policeman, advocate, judge and much more. It is very opt to say women are the builders of home and the nation. They are the ones who keep the stability of society who prevent the value system of the members of the family and the community from disintegrating. Whatever status or responsibility a woman may have, her nurturing quality remains as the very essence of her being. But very often men do not understand the potential that is hidden in women. She is not only man's helper but also his compliment and is most essential to the completion of his being. A man must owe great respect to a woman, for it is only through a woman that prosperity comes to man.

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Teacher Cognition and Integration of Language Skills

MALAR, V

ABSTRACT

The term 'Cognition' relates to the thought-process, the intellect and the cognitive domain of the human mind. Teachers are active, thinking decision-makers who play a central role in shaping classroom events. Teachers' goals, values and beliefs, their teaching experience and their teaching do indeed have a relationship and they are inter-linked. Hence, understanding teacher cognition is central to the process of understanding teaching. Language teacher cognition research draws on a tradition of educational research which stretches back over 40 years. From an initial concern with information-processing, decision-making and teacher effectiveness, the predominant focus today is on understanding teacher knowledge, its growth and use. Language is best acquired in a holistic context where a total text is at the centre of classroom activity. The whole English language programme should encourage the ability to speak effortlessly, listen and understand patiently, read with comprehension and sensitivity, write with confidence, clarity and precision, and learn to respect other languages. English language teachers know that the critical components of emergent literacy include the development of reading, writing, listening and speaking skills. Communicative competence depends on a balanced fusion of four language skills: understanding when listening, making oneself understood when speaking, understanding meaning when reading, and writing with purpose. They must first of all comprehend the fact that all language skills need to be taught in an integrated fashion and that if taught otherwise, they would remain a mere theory. Therefore, the teacher must perceive the concept very clearly that mere skills taught separately in classrooms without any link with one another would not serve the purpose of communication and therefore they need to be taught in unison.

Keywords: Teacher Cognition, Integration of Skills,

INTRODUCTION

The term 'cognition' relates to the thought-process, the intellect and the cognitive domain of the human mind. It is essential for all human beings in all walks of life so as to enable a smooth, more effective functioning of life, devoid of friction and communication gaps among individuals. It is all the more inevitable in the teaching process, where teachers need to primarily think of what they need to teach and what their students' capabilities are. In order to make teaching-learning effective and successful, teachers should, first of all, comprehend what needs to be taught and next, how it has to be taught considering all the factors concerning the subject and the taught. Hence the term 'teacher cognition' has gained tremendous significance in the twentieth century, and of course, the beginning of the twenty- first century. This Article would establish the relevance of Teacher Cognition in Integration of Language Skills in English language teaching classrooms.

TEACHER COGNITION

Teacher cognition is greatly related to the intellectual, psychological and the emotional domains of the teacher and his teaching process. A sound theoretical knowledge of the term would indeed help the entire teaching community, irrespective of the type of institution where teaching takes place. Teachers must bear in mind that they do not stop with the mere familiarisation and acquisition of the concept, but go ahead applying it in their classrooms at all times. If this is implemented by all teachers, teaching is sure to become not just a futile exercise of knowledge-transfer but would become a fruitful activity where every moment of teaching becomes meaningful, lively and inspirational.

TEACHERS AND TEACHER COGNITION

Teachers are active, thinking decision-makers who play a central role in shaping classroom events. Understanding teacher cognition is central to the process of understanding teaching. This perspective on teachers and teaching has provided insights into the processes of teacher education and the nature of teachers' instructional practices. It has also helped policy-makers become more sensitive to the key - role teachers and their cognitions play in the implementation of educational innovations.

LANGUAGE TEACHER COGNITION RESEARCH

Language teacher cognition research draws on a tradition of educational research which stretches back over 40 years. The development of teacher cognition research deals with changing orientations to both how teaching has been conceptualised and why teachers' mental lives are a valuable research focus. From an initial concern with information-processing, decision-making and teacher effectiveness,

the predominant focus today is on understanding teacher knowledge, its growth and use. Teacher cognition research today is aligned closely with work in teacher education. Teacher cognition research has affirmed the active role which teachers play in shaping classroom events and highlighted the complex nature of classroom decision-making.

TEACHER EDUCATION AND TEACHER COGNITION

Teachers' educational biographies generated by their vast experience as learners influence their initial thinking. Teacher education can promote change and can influence teachers' prior knowledge and beliefs. A concern for the role of teachers' subject-matter knowledge and how this is transformed in the act of teaching remains a key feature of teacher cognition research. The role of teachers' experience has also been highlighted in studies of teacher cognition. Classroom experience has been shown to have a powerful influence on teachers' practical knowledge and hence to shape teachers' actions. Comparisons of expert and novice teachers have also highlighted differences in their cognitions; experienced teachers have more fully developed schemata of teaching on which to base their instructional decisions; they also possess vast amounts of knowledge about typical classrooms and students to the extent that they often know a lot about their students even before they meet them. Such expert knowledge is not available to inexperienced teachers.

Teachers' goals, values and beliefs, their teaching experience and their teaching do indeed have a relationship and they are inter-linked. Contextual factors in the system can exert a powerful influence on what teachers do, thus creating a tension between their beliefs and actual practices. The notion of congruence among teachers' cognitions, students' cognitions and curricular principles is a useful one in analysing the coherence of educational systems.

TEACHER COGNITION AND CLASSROOM PRACTICE IN LANGUAGE TEACHING

What teachers do is underpinned and influenced by a range pre-active, interactive and post-active of cognitions which they have. However, the relationship between cognition and practice in language teaching is neither linear nor unidirectional. It is not linear because cognitions and practices may not always concur, due to the mediating influence of contextual factors and it is not unidirectional because teachers' cognitions themselves are shaped in response to what happens in the classroom. Language teaching, then, can be seen as a process which is defined by dynamic interactions among cognition, context and experience.

TEACHING ENGLISH AS A SKILL-BASED LANGUAGE

English cannot be taught like other subjects that are content or knowledge-based. It is skill-based. In teaching English as a second language, a good teacher should follow the skills approach. The teacher should help the students to acquire the four language skills namely Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing. These four language skills are classified into four categories, Productive and Receptive Skills, Aural-Oral and Graphic- Motor skills. Speaking and Writing are Productive skills, while Listening and Speaking are Receptive skills. Listening and Speaking are Aural-Oral skills while Reading and Writing are Graphic Motor skills. While engaged in a conversation we have to listen and speak at the same time. One can produce a sound only after hearing it and write a letter only after seeing it. The fact is that learning the 'Language Code' means the different systems of the language. When this is internalised, the exercise of one skill will facilitate the learning of the other skill. The Sensory-motor organs are involved in internalising the skills. But it varies from person to person.

SKILL-BASED APPROACH

Any skill needs practice. It is applicable to language learning too. So the four skills of the English language—LSRW—must be practised constantly to make the learning more personal. The English language teachers should help the learners to learn the skills by giving them pattern practice skills, writing and reading exercises. The communicative approach is gaining momentum in today's classroom teaching. Therefore, a lot of exercises and activities should be planned and practised to develop the communication skills. English teachers should follow the skill-based approach. They should keep themselves abreast of the latest developments in the field of English Language Teaching and must aim at self-improvement. An in-depth knowledge of the subject is also essential. The concept of classroom management should be followed by the English teachers.

THE FOUR SKILLS: LISTENING, SPEAKING, READING AND WRITING

The concept of language skills came into teaching more recently than the others through the audio-lingual method from the 1940s onwards. Language was thought to consist of four main skills: listening to spoken language, speaking, reading written language, and writing. Audio-lingualism itself combined the emphasis on spoken language with the concept of four skills to claim that spoken skills should come before written skills and that 'receptive' skills in which the learner has to produce no language themselves should come before 'productive' skills in which they do. The UK National Curriculum for modern languages recommends 'During key stage 3 pupils begin to understand, speak, read and write at least one modern foreign language'; that is to say, it mentions the four skills in the usual order.

Sometimes the skill sequence applies to the whole course so that students spend weeks or months listening before they speak. Sometimes the sequence is applied within a single classroom lesson; the students always hear a word before they see it written, and hear it or read it before they have to say it or write it.

INTEGRATION OF LANGUAGE SKILLS

The whole language approach adopts a holistic view of language, as against fragmenting it into skills. Children are expected to learn to read and write as naturally as they learn to speak. Literacy skills are developed in the context of whole and authentic literacy events; the whole language curriculum is permeated with real reading and writing experiences. Moreover, the attempt is to integrate learning within the classroom with the entire life of the child.

Language is not a set of skills. It is not a sum of LSRW (Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing). It is constitutive of us; it is at once an instrument and a product and it is difficult to conceptualise a disjunction between the two at any point. It needs to be seen as a system of unique knowledge. Language is best acquired in a holistic context where a total text is at the centre of classroom activity. The whole English language programme should encourage the ability to speak effortlessly, listen and understand patiently, read with comprehension and sensitivity, write with confidence, clarity and precision, and learn to respect other languages.

As language teachers, we all know that the critical components of emergent literacy include the development of reading, writing, listening and speaking skills. All these components need to be made meaningful if students are to become fully literate in a first or even second language. One way that teachers can ensure this is by incorporating a 'balanced literacy' approach to their instruction in class. As James Coleman points out, this simply means ensuring that effective components of oral communication, reading strategies and writing experiences are included daily in language classrooms.

Communicative competence depends on a balanced fusion of four language skills: understanding when listening, making oneself understood when speaking, understanding meaning when reading, and writing with purpose. In practical terms, a series of well-planned lesson assures a balanced and integrated package of skills development. Separation of the skills for examination and profiling purposes does not mean that lessons should be parcelled in that way.

The integrating of skills in the language classroom can be defined quite simply as a series of activities or tasks which use any combination of four skills — Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing — in a continuous and related sequence. Listening

and note-making, Dictation, Drama and Information gap activities are those that integrate all the skills.

Story boards, Story theatre, Puppet theatre, Discussion web, Book talk, Interviews, Writing to a character are some of the activities which could be organised in the classroom. These activities can be rotated among groups. This ensures that all the students get a chance to participate in each one, but that they are doing different things at different times. Alternatively, the teacher can pick and choose four or five activities which are suitable for the level of the class and the time available. The point is to provide activities that allow the students to practise all the literacy skills which are critical to their language development. Small group interaction, drama and art bring an element of fun to the learning process but, most importantly, by using literature, we are able to integrate and balance all the four essential language experiences that we need to bring to the language classroom.

CONCLUSIONS

This paper introduces the concept of teacher cognition, explains and expands on the term, and traces its origin, growth, development and implementation over the past years. As teachers, it is a need for us to comprehend the concept and implement it successfully in our everyday teaching, thereby making teaching-learning process more meaningful and constructive than ever. Any concept can be taught very effectively and can be made to register in the learners' minds, only if the teacher is convinced about it. When the teacher is very clear of the concept, he can extend it to his students all the more clearly and convincingly. The first step is Teacher Cognition followed by the next which is Learner Cognition. Any teaching demands Teacher Cognition to begin with, is followed by the actual teaching in the classrooms with the help of teaching aids, activities and exercises, and ends up in the successful learning of the concept by the students.

Integration of Language Skills is not an exception from this common rule. Language Skills – Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing are being taught in isolation in classrooms, always or mostly. Teachers must remember the fact that each language skill is inevitably linked with the other skills and that any one particular skill cannot be used independently without the aid of one or more skills. Speaking, for example, goes hand in hand with Listening; similarly, Writing is meant for Reading. Hence, the English language teacher must first of all comprehend the fact that all language skills need to be taught in an integrated fashion and that if taught otherwise, they would remain a mere theory. The teacher must perceive the concept very clearly that mere skills taught separately in classrooms without any link with one another would not serve the purpose of communication and therefore they need to be taught in unison.

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Improving Speaking Skills through Multimedia Strategy

MALINI, M

ABSTRACT

In today's scenario English language learning has become more important for young graduates who seek positions in the global environment. Using 'chalk and talk' method has lost its effect and new technologies are evolving to equip students with knowledge through English. Using multimedia as a tool to improve students' knowledge of speaking skills became quite popular at the end of the twentieth century. Speaking is one of the most demanding skills in daily life. Everyone needs to communicate with others through speaking. Speaking plays an important role in communication, social interaction, and information gathering. Multimedia can create a new impression on students and it can enable learners to learn English effectively and fruitfully. This paper is about using videos, texts animations pictures and audios to teach spoken English.

INTRODUCTION

English is used as a second language in India and also in many countries. With the wide spread and development of English around the world, it has become an important means of communication and correspondence. At present, the role and status of English in India is higher than ever as it is a medium of instruction and curriculum in educational institutions at all levels. As the number of English language learners is on increase, different teaching methods have been exploited for effective teaching. The use of technology in the form of films, radio, TV and tape recording has been there for a long time. Technology has turned as an important factor in teaching and learning activities. Technology plays a major role in second language teaching and learning and it also has successful impact on traditional teaching methods. English language teaching and learning has been attempted with many innovative techniques and technologies.

The term “multimedia” was first used in 1965 to describe the performance that combined music, lights, cinema and performance art. Multimedia can be termed as a “use of several different types of media to convey information.” Multimedia technology language teaching has become most remarkable and effective way of teaching English language in the present scenario. Multimedia technology in language teaching enhances students’ interest to learn English. The need for speaking in English is more important than writing and reading in English. Currently, graduating students find it extremely difficult to find suitable placement during on-campus and off-campus interviews since they realize that they lack required oral communication skills. Speaking is the process of orally expressing their thoughts and feelings and of sharing information. Speaking is considered as a complex process which involves thinking and language skills.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Michio Tsutui and **Masahi Kato** intended to design a multimedia feedback tool for the development of oral skills. Students find difficult to afford valuable feedback on their oral skills. The emergence of multimedia technologies have provided teachers with the possibility for developing improved feedback tools. The researchers used video as a feedback tool. They also quote **Garrison (1984)**; **Broady and Leu Du (1995)** that “Video is widely recognized as a highly effective means for language learning when it is used to review students’ oral performance.” Multimedia tool enables students to improve their language and pronunciation errors. Even though they are not able to correct themselves fully but they are successful in eliminating some of their errors. Teachers can use the tool effectively to improve the students’ oral competence.

DISCUSSION

Brussino (1996) asserts that “Language teachers have long been searching for effective and efficient ways to render the learning experience in class as true to life as possible and to assist students in developing the necessary independent study skills.” The following are the working definitions of multimedia that are used in the present article:

- i. **Multimedia** is the field concerned with the computer-controlled integration of text, graphics, drawings, still and moving images (Video), animation, audio, and any other media where every type of information can be represented, stored, transmitted and processed digitally.
- ii. A **Multimedia Application** is an Application which uses a collection of multiple media sources e. g. text, graphics, images, sound/audio, animation and/or video. (Wikipedia)

Yang and Fang (2008: 137) observe that Multimedia is a kind of technology that is used in multiple forms of media in presentation. It is less with text and it has more elements of moving pictures with or without audio. It enables students to learn the target language innovatively and understand quickly. It motivates them to learn through seeing and hearing. Many English teachers state that teaching English with multimedia makes an English class more active than in the teacher-centred model.

MULTIMEDIA ELEMENTS AND SPEAKING FLUENCY

Multimedia elements generally fall into one of five main categories and used varied techniques for digital formatting. They are used with the computer controlled integration.

The elements of multimedia are:

1. Text
2. Images/ Graphic
3. Audio
4. Video
5. Animation

Using these elements language classroom can be made more innovative and interactive.

1. Text involves sizes, colours, and background colour. The texts are used in the speaking class for students to interpret the text in their own way. They can be used in form of demonstration. The text may be two lines or a paragraph and the learners of speaking are asked to interpret the text with their knowledge of language. This instructional method fosters speaking skills among students.
2. Images or graphics make the multimedia application attractive. They help to illustrate ideas through still pictures. When pictures are used in classroom, learners are motivated to talk about these pictures on the screen and they also convey their ideas and suggestions about the images/ graphic present before them.
3. Audio files and streams play major role in the multimedia language teaching. Audio requires speech, music, and sound effects. Audios are used in language classroom to increase their listening capacity and it instils confidence in them to speak English as well. As second language learners, they are not aware of their pronunciation, accent and sentence construction. In order to speak English, it is necessary to listen to it.

After listening to the recorded audios, listeners are expected to give a talk on what they hear and their speech is recorded and it is played back to analyze their speaking.

4. Video teaching also plays major role in teaching speaking. It also provides a powerful impact on students. Videos provide wide recognition among them and it reaches them easily. This technique highlights visual content of the video recording and provides students with chance to concentrate on the language use of what they see on the screen. Several videos are available on the web for students to improve their speaking skills. These videos can be played and teachers can encourage students to speak about the video and video recordings. Videos can be present through CD-ROM, TV, Computers and Projectors.
5. Animation is a process of making a static image look like it is moving. Creating images speaking languages can be learn in the classroom. It can be done only by using the computers. These multimedia technologies make students participate freely inside the classroom and make them comfortable. Multimedia is communication service of the twenty first century. It is therefore called as communicative services, flexible communication, value added communication services and integrated communication services.

Multimedia learning is inclusive of, and is broadly synonymous with technology-enhanced learning (TEL), computer-based instruction (CBI), computer-based training (CBT), computer-assisted instruction or computer-aided instruction (CAI), internet-based training (IBT), web-based training (WBT), online education, virtual education, virtual learning environments (VLE) (which are also called learning platforms), m-learning, and digital educational collaboration. These alternative names emphasize a particular aspect, component or delivery method.

DEFINITION OF SPEAKING

Speaking is an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing *and* receiving and processing information (**Brown, 1994; Burns & Joyce, 1997**). Its form and meaning are dependent on the context in which it occurs, including the participants themselves, their collective experiences, the physical environment, and the purposes for speaking. It is often spontaneous, open-ended, and evolving. However, speech is not always unpredictable. Language functions (or patterns) that tend to recur in certain discourse situations (e. g. , declining an invitation or requesting time off from work), can be identified and charted (**Burns & Joyce, 1997**). The text is the basic element of multimedia, it can express specific information, or it can act as reinforcement for information. A speaker's skills and

speech habits have an impact on the success of any exchange (Van Duzer, 1997). Speakers must be able to **anticipate** and then produce the expected patterns of specific discourse situations. They must also manage discrete elements such as turn-taking, rephrasing, providing feedback, or redirecting (Burns & Joyce, 1997).

Learning to speak English is not equivalent to learning the grammar, punctuation and accent of the language. Speaking has its own skills, structures and conventions. Students find several barriers and difficulties in speaking in English rather than writing, listening and reading in English. Before speaking they must be aware of the questions ‘Why’, ‘What’, and ‘How.’ There are speaking strategies: 1) using minimal responses, 2) recognizing scripts, and 3) using language to talk about language—that they can use to help themselves expand their knowledge of the target language and their confidence in using it.

BENEFITS OF MULTIMEDIA BASED LEARNING

Multimedia simply means “more than one medium” but when it was in general it is a combination of text, images, sounds and movements. Present students become more advanced with the knowledge of technology and they are not interested to be idle inside the classrooms with their text books alone as a medium for their knowledge development. Recently in language teaching, technologies are implemented to make the language learning effectively. The implementation of technologies in the classroom, which is more popularly used inside the classroom, is multimedia. Multimedia based programs allow users to use instructional materials like videos and audios, recorded videos or record learners’ speech in a reasonably time. It transfers learners’ message in the learner’s way. It is believed to prosper with general human trend from “nice to have” to “value to have” to “essential to have”. It shall enable people to communicate and access at anytime and anywhere at reasonable costs with acceptable quality. Learning and teaching technologies with new technologies encourage students and teachers to attain their target using every available technique.

Technology does not necessarily drive education. That role belongs to students’ learning needs. With multimedia the process of learning can become more goals oriented, more participatory, flexibility in time and space increase collaboration between teachers and students. It enables students to learn with fun and friendly without fear and shyness. In language teaching, it is used to teach the language in enliven and also add insight in learning. The use of multimedia need not be seen as tool for classroom. For example, in an industry dealing with hazardous materials workers need to be trained. It could be risky to provide hands on training to all. In this case simulated learning can take the place of actual hands on training by using the features of multimedia.

Multimedia is becoming indispensable in the classrooms. It allows teachers to diversify their lectures, display more information, and enhance student learning. It helps them save time and energy; it allows for more attention to be paid to the course content. There are different multimedia tools available in the market. Audio streaming, PPT, animation, and video are quite familiar with the teachers and students. Pronunciation, accent, vocabulary building, note-taking or note-making skills, reading comprehension, writing skills, etc. are taught using the multimedia tools.

CONCLUSION

An important aspect of multimedia learning is interactivity. Interactive multimedia materials will bring better experiences, more active learning, enhanced interest and motivation. In the Multimedia teaching students can build on their knowledge and experience. Improved listening comprehension, acquisition of knowledge on globalization to be used in classroom discussions, familiarity with and use of various online resources and improvement of Internet skills will be better attained if the materials are motivating. Teachers find the use of multimedia during English lessons meaningful and they confirmed that students enjoy such lessons more. The purpose of multimedia use in integrating speaking skills is to make learners involve in the activities and enhance the skill effectively.

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Deciphering Western Hegemony of Knowledge and Power in “The Calcutta Chromosome”

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ABSTRACT

Amitav Ghosh in **The Calcutta Chromosome** reassesses the discovery of the British scientist Ronald Ross and endeavours to prove the superiority of Indian philosophy. Ghosh in this novel does the work of undoing the aura around Ross. The reader comes across many incidents that show incompetence of the Western intellectuals and the brilliance of Indians. Hence, in the light of scientific discovery of Ross, the novelist peeps into the oriental philosophy of transmigration of soul, rebirth and reincarnation. Through Mangala and Laakhan who are Indians, Ghosh stresses the point that non-Westerners too indulge in science in their own way and find their means to knowledge and thereby decipher the Western hegemony of knowledge and power.

Keywords: Hegemony, Knowledge, Power, Anti-colonial Discourse, Cultural Imperialism, Native Identity

INTRODUCTION

Most of the Third World countries emerged into politically independent countries after a long period of colonial servitude. In these countries, writing in the aftermath of political freedom reflects the problems of colonialism. Till now, many writers have been capturing the cultural, social and psychological impact of colonial rule on the natives. In one sense, Postcolonial novels can be described as the case studies of anti-colonial resistance, native identity and cultural imperialism. Anti-colonial writing of Asian and African writers is thus closely linked to the process of decolonization. Amitav Ghosh, a prominent voice in Indian writing in English, has authored novels that reflect his vehement resistance to colonialism and its destructive effect on the native's individuality. The article proposes to expose Ghosh's attempt at subaltern

subversion of Western hegemony of knowledge and power with special reference to his much-admired novel *The Calcutta Chromosome*.

Amitav Ghosh's *The Calcutta Chromosome* (1996) is a mystery thriller that won for him the prestigious Arthur C. Clarke Award, a British award given for the best science fiction. The novel has an apt subtitle 'A novel of Fevers, Delirium and Discovery' and it deals with the medical history of the Nobel Laureate Sir Ronald Ross's discovery of the malaria puzzle in Calcutta in 1898. A. G. Khan in his article "**The Calcutta Chromosome: A (Counter) Science Fantasy of Suspense, Tantra and Interpersonal Transference**" describes the novel as "... a detective-cum-[counter] science fantasy that delves into spiritualism of trances/seances, tantric rituals, soul entering/interpersonal transference" (184). He also adds "Amitav wants us to accept Coleridge's dictum – "willing suspension of disbelief that constitutes the poetic faith". Ghosh's fiction has given credibility to an implausible fantasy" (187).

The Calcutta Chromosome is a retelling of the story of the British bacteriologist Ronald Ross's discovery of the life-cycle of the malaria parasite. The story of Ronald Ross is available in medical history and in his own *Memoirs*. While Ross's *Memoirs* was written to support his claim of sole credit for the discovery of malaria parasite, Ghosh in this novel does the work of undoing the aura around Ross. Because even after having found out the root cause of the disease, it still preys over the lives of millions every year. According to the report of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Malaria remains a killer disease that "... continues to kill nearly one million people every year" (qtd. in Malaria-success).

Ross's achievement becomes the subject of interest of the lead character Murugan, an employee of Life Watch. Murugan finds out that the circumstances that led to Ross' discovery are incongruous. He believes in a hypothesis that the breakthrough was made possible or rather guided by a group of natives led by a woman, Mangala. Chambers also explains that "Ross exploited native workers in his quest to find the cause of malaria" (66). In order to investigate the relation between Ross's research and the working of the mysterious counter-scientists, Murugan goes to Calcutta where he puts bits and pieces together to uncover what has been left out by the official story of the malaria research.

Murugan believes that there was an 'other mind' behind the research career of Ronald Ross. Ross documented his research in his *Memoirs*, published more than twenty years after his achievement. Ross's *Memoirs* operates as a key inter text in the novel." Ross's memoirs project the heroic narrative of scientific discovery but *The Calcutta Chromosome* reads his narrative against the grain in order to deconstruct and displace it" (Mondal 55). Ross made his discovery in a surprisingly

short time if compared to the decades devoted to this study by different and better qualified bacteriologists. Moreover, his achievement sounds like a succession of odd coincidences. All these made Murugan think that Ronnie stumbled upon the discovery just like that.”He did it; he beat the Laverans and the Kochs and the Grassis and the whole Italian mob; he beat the governments of the US and France and Germany and Russia; he beat them all...young Ronnie, the lone genius, streaks across the field and runs away with the World Cup” (49).

Murugan’s theory is that “... some person or persons had systematically interfered with Ronald Ross’s experiments to push malaria research in certain directions” (31). He believes that Ross had been handed the information on a plate. For Ross “doesn’t know a goddam thing about mosquitoes: he’s never even heard the word anopheles” (66). He thinks that Ross succeeded because ‘they’ wanted him to. Murugan explains his theory of ‘other mind’:

If someone was watching, if someone was looking for a research scientist to do certain kinds of experiments, then this is when they would have picked up the buzz. So this someone, who’s watching carefully, maybe reading Ronnie’s lab notes and his letters to Doc Manson, this someone decides, okay, it’s time to get a new player in place. (63-64)

This ‘someone’ does not need to be a single person. It could be a team of secret members. Murugan suggests that they sent Abdul Kadir, a malaria patient, so that Ross could put two and two together. When Ross got sidetracked by Manson’s letter about mosquito-juice theory, they sent Lutchman who didn’t have any parasites in his blood.

According to Murugan, Lutchman helped Ross even in certain complex matters by giving suggestions to him. In April 1897, at Ootacamund, Lutchman succeeded “... in planting a crucially important idea in his head: that the malaria vector might be one particular species of mosquito” (65). Ross ended up chasing after some mosquito species like *Culex* and *Stegomyia*. Then Lutchman cut in once again. He and his crew decided that something had got to be done double quick. Lutchman then made available certain kind of mosquito i. e. anopheles to Ross. Murugan makes fun of Ross by saying that Ross did not know anything about mosquitoes: “Ron still doesn’t know they’re called anopheles: names them “dappled-wing mosquitoes” (66). Murugan also says that Ross was not aware of the purpose behind Lutchman’s parallel experimentation: “He thinks he’s doing experiments on the malaria parasite. And all the time it’s he who is the experiment on the malaria parasite. But Ronnie never gets it; not to the end of his life” (67). Ghosh’s own testimony to Paul Kincaid is that “Ross’s “real achievement... lay in translating folk knowledge into the language of science.... Ross made a breakthrough in science

based upon a very partial acquaintance with folk knowledge. It follows, surely, that someone who was better acquainted with that knowledge would do even better” – a folklorist/biologist or, even better, a subaltern scientist” (qtd. in Hawley 158).

Against the background of the historical facts of Ronald Ross’s discovery about malarial fever, Ghosh presents the supernatural power of Mangala who has found a so-called cure for syphilis and has also acquired the knowledge of transcending life beyond life.”The novel argues against the assumption that modern laboratories exist only in the “First World” and that only rich white men “do” science” (Nelson 254). As against the research conducted by the trained scientists like D. D. Cunningham, Elijah Monroe Farley and Dr. Ronald Ross, the counter-science group headed by Mangala and Laakhan worked towards a higher purpose of attaining immortality. The belief in immortality is promised by genetic engineering.”The use of reincarnation in *The Calcutta Chromosome* challenges the colonial devaluation of Hindu ‘superstition’ but it also calls into question – using the metaphor of the chromosome – some of the wilder fancies of contemporary genetics” (Mondal 61). The readers need not label Laakhan and Mangala as dangerous elements. Just because Farley and Griegson interfered with their mysterious life, they wanted to get rid of them.

Mangala, the upholder of the cult of secrecy used the malaria bug as a treatment for syphilis. She began to notice that her treatment often produced side effects that looked like strange personality disorders. She at last discovered that they were really transpositions, “...a cross-over of randomly assorted personality traits, from the malaria donor to the recipient” via the pigeon and “...she became more and more invested in isolating this aspect of the treatment, so that she could control the ways in which these cross-overs worked” (206). Murugan calls it the Calcutta Chromosome that suggests a transference of personality traits “... a biological expression of human traits that is neither inherited from the immediate gene pool, nor transmitted into it” (207).

What Mangala and her counter-science group had succeeded in doing was, ‘the ultimate transcendence of nature, in other words ‘immortality’, through a technique of inter-personal transference of human traits. Murugan claims that if information can be transmitted chromosomally from body to body, the spirit can also be transmitted from body to body. According to Hinduism the soul is immortal while the body is subject to birth and death. ‘Reincarnation’ is believed to occur when the soul or spirit, after the death of the body, comes back to Earth in a newborn body.” *The Bhagavad Gita* states: “Worn-out garments are shed by the body; Worn-out bodies are shed by the dweller within the body. New bodies are donned by the dweller, like garments” (2:22)” (Reincarnation). In Hindu concept, Siddhas are said to have mastered in many siddhis. A siddhi may be any unusual

skill or capability. One of the main siddhis is 'Parkaya Pravesh' which means one's soul-entering into the body of some other person or an animal or a bird. Through this knowledge even a dead body can be brought to life. This phenomenon is also known as transmigration of the soul.

Murugan states that the people who carry the 'Calcutta Chromosome' take more than a century to implant their spirit. Mangala and her assistant Lutchman alias Laakhan had succeeded in their quest for immortality as their presence in the present is suggested. Murugan indicates that Ross's discovery was only a small part of the overall project of Mangala to attain immortality through the Calcutta Chromosome. To Murugan, the subalterns are on the verge of an unimaginable discovery in the scientific field. She realised that her intuition needs official science to be fully grasped. That is why she needed Ross's help. She brought Ross into the research and made him to figure out the whole thing. She provided Ross with clues. Thus she expertly manipulated his research in the right direction. Ross was just a tool in the hands of Mangala. Ross's victory became her victory as she succeeded in attaining immortality through the transplantation of the 'Calcutta Chromosome'. Hence, they did not opt for the Nobel Prize and provided the whole credit to Ronald Ross. Mangala and her subordinate Laakhan's search for immortality is rewarded as its continuity is suggested. Madhumalati Adhikhari in her article "**The Continuity of Life, Mission and Mystery in *The Calcutta Chromosome***" writes, "Ghosh enigmatically suggests that the repositories of truth and higher knowledge can be a dhooley bearer and a sweeper woman" (232). In the novel, Laakhan is portrayed as a lantern bearer or metaphorically, a knowledge carrier.

The two worlds of science and counter-science, European rationality and Indian philosophy are brought together in this novel. For Babli Gupta, Ghosh seems to argue, "What if the conquered races were to draw a circle of silence around themselves impregnable to the rationalism and science of the west? Would they succeed in resisting and at times even overcoming the conquistador, to have the last laugh?" (207). It was science that was seen as the guarantor of the superiority of Western knowledge. Scientific progress and technological development is a feature of the popular discourse of science in the West. In the 'Third World', "... technology is presented in Eurocentric narratives and colonial narratives...as proof of the benefits of the 'civilising mission' – colonial societies have always seen technology for what it is: a sign of power" (Mondal 65).

The fact is that non-Westerners too indulge in science in their own way and find their means to knowledge. To Krishnakumar, in the clash between the western and the eastern civilization, Ghosh allots victory to the oppressed colonized:

Western knowledge and science had once conquered and colonized the East and they still have interest in the Indian spiritual quest as evinced by the non-Indian characters of the novel. But it culminates in an inevitable reversal of situation when the empire strikes back with the colonized asserting their superiority of intellect, which is their greatest pride and professed weapon over the colonizers (96).

CONCLUSION

The colonised Mangala is the upholder of the cult of secrecy and by this weapon she controls Ross, Farley, Griegson, Cunningham and all those so-called white male investigators of the malaria parasite. Those who come in her way like Farley are destroyed. The irony of the situation is that the western masters are mere puppets in the hands of this powerful woman. In this novel the reader comes across many incidents that show the incompetence of the Western intellectuals and the brilliance of the Indians. What is simply luck in Ross's eyes appears to be a well-planned schedule devised by the "other team." One who does the experiment becomes the experiment himself. While the colonizers were in search of the temporal truths, the colonized were motivated by the higher goal of eternity or immortality.

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Distortion of Identity in Arthur Miller's "All My Sons"

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ABSTRACT

In the later part of the twentieth century, Arthur Miller was studied from different perspectives—as a moralist, a social dramatist, a dramatist of ideas—and his contribution to American drama has been universally accepted and applauded. He has been considered as a tragedian. His plays have been studied under the thematic heading “tragedy” alone. So far no full length study has been done on Miller based on identity crisis. Since modern man is too much preoccupied with all the sophisticated material comforts offered by the sciences, he remains spiritually void. He deliberately avoids thinking about the futility of his life and withdraws into an illusionary world. He feels secure in the self-created idealistic world. When some internal/ external factors shatter his illusions, he is exposed to face the crude realities of life. He struggles pathetically and finally ends up as a ruined creature. In spite of his tragic downfall his struggle itself like that of Sisyphus’ provides meaning for his existence and valuable lessons for others. The existence of man is the basis of all ideas, ideologies and philosophies. Existence precedes essence. Sartre has explained this concept in **Existentialism and Humanism (28)**: “We mean that man first of all exists, encounters himself, surges up in the world - and defines himself afterwards. . . . Man simply is.” Existentialism has originally emerged as a revolt against materialism. Existential philosophers consider human beings as essentially evil and every individual carries within him/her the archetypal original sin. They strongly believe that evil is imprinted in their unconscious psyche and gets transferred from one generation to other as a ‘racial guilt.’ They blame the knowledge gained through the study of sciences as the sources of all evil. They urge man to liberate himself from these clutches so that he can comprehend the ultimate purpose of his existence. This paper attempts to study the quality of the identity crisis expressed in Miller’s **All My Sons** and to discuss at the same time the nature

of treatment given to individuals who suffer from identity crisis and the resultant desperation being a nowhere man and an anchorless individual.

Keywords: Identity crisis, Sisyphus, Sartre, Existentialism, original sin, racial guilt

INTRODUCTION

Miller's first really accomplished work is the play **All My Sons**, which is produced on January 24, 1947. The play establishes Miller as a dramatist of much promise and is given the 'Drama Critics Circle Award' as the best American play. It is a strong well-made play whose technique insists upon comparison with the realistic plays of Ibsen.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The structure of the play is identical with **Oedipus Rex**. Robert Hogan in **Arthur Miller** says: One may find precisely, the same structure in **Oedipus Rex**; in Sophocles' play, as in Miller's, the revelation of a criminal whose crime has occurred years earlier is the crux of the present action. However, in Miller's play the Oedipus character is split in two—one half being the father and criminal and the other half son and detective. (17)

In Dennis Welland's **Arthur Miller** he avers that "central theme has always been integrity—the integrity of the individual towards himself and towards his fellow beings—but the cost of the integrity for most of his characters has been life itself" (26). Hogan in his book **Arthur Miller** has touched upon the tragic issues. He points out that "An individual is pushed to definition, forced to irreclaimable and self-destructive action. The self-destruction is paradoxically an affirmation of self and its identity as an individual is forced to choose and his agony comes from his awareness of being" (30).

Benjamin Nelson's full-length study **Arthur Miller: the Portrait of a Playwright** traces Miller's early background and gives an account of the shaping influences on his young imagination. He has traced Miller's concern for themes like personal integrity and social responsibility. Nelson points out that Miller is a social dramatist, a dramatist with a purpose and a meticulous craftsman with an unerring sense of theatre (319).

Ronald Hayman in **Arthur Miller** has attempted to study his plays in the social perspective and tries to determine the role of society in them. Apart from these major studies, there are a number of articles that deal with Miller's plays. Mostly they deal with his concept of tragedy and social responsibility.

So, from this short review of the critical material, it is also evident that no serious attempt has been made so far to study man's consciousness related to his identity and to see how Miller has presented the very theme of identity crisis in his play. Seeking one's own identity is a kind of a struggle that the modern man faces during his existence. It involves an awareness of oneself in a conflict-ridden society.

DISCUSSION

Miller's **All My Sons** is based on a true story. Chris Keller, a returned army officer comes to know about his father Joe Keller's criminal irresponsibility. He doubts whether he is his father or not. The father shoots himself once the son knows the truth. He accepts his fate, but so does the son. In a position of wartime responsibility, Joe has allowed 120 cracked engine-heads to go from his factory into 40 aircrafts, directly causing their pilots' deaths, the slaughter of his own son's comrades in battle. He allows his subordinate and the next-door neighbour, Steve Deever, to be imprisoned and disgraced for his own criminality, but at the age of 61 he realizes that these pilots are "all my sons," and commits suicide—but with nothing to say about Deever. Joe's life is a waste; he has forfeited his son's love and his own good name for a public business ethic which is strictly unusable in private, family and neighbourhood life. The business ethic has made him put financial and social self-interest first, and social responsibility and purpose second. The war exposes the radical moral division. Joe's horror at his own crime is insignificant besides his larger irresponsibility to "a universe of people."

In **All My Sons**, what is still worse to Joe is that his hopes are frustrated by his own sons for whom he works. Larry, as a result of the ignominy, feels on the account of his father's culpability and kills himself. Chris turns violently against him when he discovers the reality. Joe is ironically destroyed by his own weapons. Both his sons, whom he loves more than the entire world, become the instruments of his punishment. Larry's deliberate suicide is a mode of revenge upon his father. In a frank confession before his death, Larry writes to Ann; "I can't express myself. I can't tell you how I feel – I can't bear to live any more. . . Every day three or four men never come back and he sits there doing business" (126). In the end, Joe goes inside and shoots himself. His ultimate suicide is an act of self-purification. It is a way of coming to terms with himself, his family and his society. He is not a victim of the society.

In **All My Sons**, the confrontation between the father and the son actually springs from Chris' awareness of responsibility to others and his father's lack of it. Chris' character is exactly an antithesis of his father's character. He is an idealist whose entire allegiance is to the society. He tells his father: "I don't know why it is, but every time I reach out for something I want, I have to pull back because

other people will suffer” (68). Chris’ concern for others has been polarized against the father’s lack of concern for others.”The business” he says, “the business doesn’t inspire me” (69). He stands in direct contrast to his father. Joe himself sums up Chris’ moral character in a moment of anger when he says: “Everything bothers him you make a deal, overcharge two cents, and his hair falls out. He don’t understand money?” (121). Thus, Chris virtually serves as a foil to his father. Set against Joe’s myopic vision is Chris’s egalitarian vision. He tells Ann that a realization has damned upon him when he is in command of a company during the war. He says:

It’d been raining several days and this kid came to me and gave me his last pair of dry socks. Put them in my pocket. That’s only a little thing – bal. . . that’s the kind of guys I had. They didn’t die; they killed themselves for each other. I mean that exactly; a little selfish and they’d’ve been here today. And I got an idea watching them go down. Everything was being destroyed, see, but it seemed to me that one new thing was made. A kind of responsibility, Man for man (85)

But afterwards when he comes home from the war, he finds it all different. He feels ashamed “to be alive, to open the bank book, to drive the new car, to see the new refrigerator” because he feels it is “really loot and there’s blood on it” (85). The revelation of his father’s guilt comes as a shock to him. He says: “I know you’re no worse than most men, but I thought you were better. I never saw you as a man. I saw you as my father (Almost breakingly); I can’t look at you this way, I can’t look at myself” (125). He lacerates his father. He suggests that human civilization is retreating into a jungle of existence. He says bitterly:

This is the land of the great big dogs. You don’t love a man here, you eat him! That’s the principle; the only one we live by – it just happened to kill a few people that time, that’s all. The world is that way, how can I take it out on him? What sense does that make? This is a zoo, a zoo! (124)

The identity crisis in **All My Sons** results in a conflict. The central conflict in the play is between familial and social obligations. It is as observed by Nelson in **Arthur Miller: The Portrait of a Playwright**:

The thematic image of **All My Sons** is a circle within a circle, the inner depicting the family and the outer representing society, and the movement of the drama is concentric with the two circles revolving in parallel orbits until they ultimately coalesce. (81)

The play depicts that man cannot disown his society for his family. Joe does that. He isolates himself from others and thinks that his family can prosper at the

expense of the society. He does not see beyond his sons and his own family. In **All My Sons**, what he says about his dead son, Larry, is actually true of himself. He says: “To him the world had a forty-foot front. It ended at the building line” (21). He is a dreamer. He identifies everything with a dream. He holds himself blindly to that dream. He fails to recognize his place in the society. He has no viable connection with his world, his universe or his society. He is neither malignant nor villainous. He is myopic. He is unable to forge the public consequences of a private act. He is a stolid and an unintellectual businessman. Joe is an unenlightened mind. He acts very selfishly without caring for the public consequences of his action. He also acts under a kind of fear-psychosis generated by the socio-economic pressures. The fear of losing his business and then becoming a failure looms large in his mind. It makes him feel an identity crisis. It is evident in his conversation with his son:

Joe: I’m in business, a man is in business a hundred and twenty cracked. You’re out of business; you got a process, the process don’t work you’re out of business : . . . they close you up, they tear up your contracts, what the hell’s it to them? You lay forty years into a business and they knock you out in five minutes, what could I do, let them take forty years, let them take my life away? (115)

Joe’s identity is thwarted under the heavy pressure of a success-oriented, cut-throat competitive society. He is afraid of reporting the defect or holding the supply of airplane engines because that will ruin his business and consequently the future of his son. He tells his son:

Chris, I did it for you, it was a chance and I took it for you. I’m sixty one years old, when would I have another chance to make something for you? (AMS : 115)

An excess of love for his son makes Joe succumb to the socio-economic pressures of the society. The only motive in him is to provide a substantial future to his son based on wealth. He tells Chris: “What the hell did I work for? That’s only for you, Chris, the whole shooting match is for you” (AMS : 69). Joe is called upon to identify himself as a father on the one hand and as a citizen on the other hand. But his one-sidedness and disproportionate allegiance to his family make him ignore his identity as a citizen. In fact, Joe is a father and a citizen. He cannot take the citizen side seriously. He becomes less of a father and is destroyed his own children. It shows that individual identity is not just a matter of personal relationships but it must also be extended to the world at large. Throughout the play, he cannot identify himself with any images other than filial or familial ones. It is evident in the following conversation:

- Mother : There's something bigger than the family to him (Chris)
- Joe : Nothing is bigger!
- Mother : There is to him.
- Joe : There's nothing he could do that I wouldn't forgive him. Because he is my son. Because I'm his father and he's my son. . . Nothing is bigger than that. . . I'm his father and he's my son, and if there's something bigger than that I'll put a bullet in my head (120)

In the end, when he is made to identify that there is something bigger than the family, that those who are killed "are all my sons," he puts a bullet in his head.

Miller's **All My Sons** is not a powerful tragedy of a man who identifies himself with society. Hence, it can be called a play of social responsibility; yet, Miller is able to transform it to a tragedy. The play has powerful scenes of confrontation and symbolic details. The emphasis is on social realism; yet it can be called a tragedy. M. W. Steinberg in **Arthur Miller and the idea of Modern Tragedy** points out that "It is most simply and clearly in the tradition of the social problem plays of Ibsen, Shaw and Galsworthy" (340). Steinberg assigns it as "a social allegory in which the characters are mere illustrations of the forces working in a selfish, materialistic society which respects economic success as it flaunts the underlying moral law" (340). It is a social play. **All My Sons** is not a play about war. It is much less an anti-war play. It is a play about social relationships and the myopic vision of a selfish businessman who fails to identify his social responsibility. It is not merely a tale of crime and punishment. It is a play about confrontation and commitment in the vein of resultant identity and its crisis.

In this play, Joe works his way to prosperity through unscrupulous and dishonest means. Although he lacks the sensitive consciousness, he does not suffer from the qualms of guilty conscience. He does recognize the full horror of his deed and cannot escape its tragic consequences. In **All My Sons**, the private guilt of the individual is matched against the larger social evil. Social pressures from the outside world work upon Joe and make him do what he does. To highlight the identity crisis, Miller strikes a subtle balance between individual responsibility and social pressures. In it, he shows the enormous pressure of circumstances and the individual act of choice. It is as Nelson in **Arthur Miller: The Portrait of a Playwright** says that in the whole process Keller "berates society for its stultification of the individual but he also scores the man who is a threat to the society" (116).

All My Sons is a distorted version of the tragedy of a man, Joe, due to identity crisis with society. Joe is not able to see beyond his family. He cannot see that a

larger world exists beyond his small family. He jeopardizes the safety and security of the society at large. The social aspect of the problem, the play **All My Sons** deals with has been more sharply defined than in other plays. The central event of the play is a businessman's evasion of responsibility during war time which leads to the death of twenty-one pilots. But the treatment of the social theme is not so naive. Its socialness does not reside in the play. It deals with the crime of selling defective materials to a nation at war. The crime is seen as having roots in a certain relationship of the individual to society. It can mean a jungle of existence. No man can be an island unto himself. In this sense, alienation can be meaningful – socially meaningful. It is his social problem that makes Miller not to concentrate heavily on the structure of the play. Commenting on the structure of **All My Sons**, Hogan in **Arthur Miller** says:

This structure is difficult to handle, for the playwright must explain rather than dramatize most of the action, and the great bulk of exposition always threatens to dissipate the dramatic impact of the play. There are probably three chief ways to combat this threat: by the evocative beauty of the dialogue, by irony, and by an adroit blending of current action with explanation of past action. In his **Oedipus Rex**, Sophocles superbly managed all three ways. In his social plays, Ibsen lacked poetry, but his permeating irony largely compensated for the realistic flatness of his style, and he did blend his past and present action with incomparable adroitness. In **All My Sons**, Miller handles his plot consummately, but he notably lacks both the poetry and the irony. Nevertheless, structure alone can carry a play very far, and Miller's play, because of its structure, remains absorbing theater. (17)

However, the irony of the situation is that when Joe feels happy while amassing wealth by selling defective engines, Chris feels guilty for his new happiness. In the war, he has led men to their deaths. He is a survivor or who feels the guilt of the survivor. Beyond that, he can see no connection between the sacrifices of war and the way of life it is supposed to preserve. Joe knows he is guilty. He has to preserve the idea of his innocence. Kate knows, on some level, that her son is dead. Kate has to sustain the idea that he has survived. Chris knows, or suspects on some level, that his father is suppressing the truth. He knows that he makes him deny it to others. This, then, is in part a play about repression. It is about the compromises effected by individuals. It is to negotiate between private needs and public obligations. Keller is not the only character to substitute the story of his life for his life. They all construct fictions that enable them to justify themselves.

CONCLUSION

Miller reverses the archetypal Edenic situation by focusing attention on the father, the mythical symbol of authority, by making him the source of guilt. In doing so, Miller depicts a modern attitude which regards the element of hereditary guilt—the guilt of being imperfect—as unjust. The father seeks in this play as the highest aim of his life, the affection and approval of his sons. It is the ultimate judgment of the sons, which becomes the touchstone of the father's life and experience. It is ironical that Joe has to make peace, with himself and his sons, through death which is a kind of spiritual and symbolic 'expulsion' from the self-appointed goals of ambition and self-righteousness.

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From Farms to Firms: A Study of Sharon Pollock's Generations

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ABSTRACT

Man's ever-growing needs and passion for comforts have made him become innovative, rapacious and materialistic. The advent of technological advancements in various fields have affected and altered the natural and social environment all over the globe. The Canadian society, with its social fabric of multi-cultural, multi-ethnic and multi-racial groups, has witnessed a perceptible and phenomenal shift in its social outlook and cultural moorings. The old and cherished values are at stake; Interpersonal relationship is not marked by finer feelings but by material gains. The tension and conflict between the old and the young, and the traditional and the modern are on the rise. Sharon Pollock's **Generations** focuses on the changing social scenario of the Canadian society. The play revolves around a pioneer farmer, Old Eddy and his family of three generations. The old generation remains unyielding to the ambitions and aspirations of the younger generation. This paper analyses the dissimilar attitudes of the conservative old generation and the modern, younger generation and the ensuing social tensions in the Canadian society.

Keywords: Canadian Society, dissimilar attitude, conservative old generation, modern, younger generation, social tensions

INTRODUCTION

Canadian Drama came into existence in the early 1970s. Sharon Pollock and her contemporaries like Carol Bolt, Margaret Hollingsworth, Erika Ritter and David French are considered the pioneers of the Canadian Drama. Among them Sharon Pollock has carved a niche for herself not only in the Canadian drama, but also in the World drama. Pollock began her career as an actress for the theatre New Brunswick and later served in several capacities in the field of play writing and

has had an exposure to all departments of theatre. Her close association with the theatre has made her emerge a playwright with extra-ordinary crafts- woman-ship.

Pollock's plays have heralded a new renaissance in Canadian Art and Literature. To use Michelin Wander's phrase, the plays of Sharon Pollock have helped create 'a positive space for Canadian Drama', which used to enjoy little attention till 1960s. Her family plays like **Blood Relations**, **Generations** and **Doc**. deal with the tensions and conflicts in familial bonds brought in by disillusionments as themes. The non-conformist attitude of the younger generations towards life and the deviation they take from the established social conventions and traditions lead to confrontations in the family front. Pollock analyzes through her characters and themes, the capriciousness of the human mind when there is a conflict between social and personal lives.

Pollock's **Generations** deals with the trepidation and tribulation that surface in the family of Nurlins headed by old Eddy, farming in Alberta for three generations. Old Eddy, who came from Europe, has worked tirelessly braving many odds and obstacles to create a place of lasting value. The death of his wife and the loss of a son deterred him least, in achieving his aim of establishing a farm of his own. Old Eddy is robust, rigid and rigorous. He often reprimands his family members who try to challenge his authority or question his passion for the land. His sense of discipline and devotion to work, which has enabled him to attain a position in life, are alive in him even in his old age. Though aged, he is not withered, he is the early riser and stirs into action before the dawn. He makes his own coffee, which he enjoys when it is strong. His preference for good rye to whisky speaks volumes about his dislike for anything that is weak and diluted. He remains a formidable, patriarchal figure. His passionate love for land, and his possessive attitude towards it estranges him from the other members of the family. As a self-made man, his sense of arrogance and pride about his status and position is quiet discernable in every deed he performs or word he utters."Old Eddy: I give my whole life to this place, built it out a nothin' ain't nothin' here I didn't give blood for". (154)

The sole aim of his life is to safeguard his land and to see it intact; he wants to bequeath it to the future generation of his family. As a pioneer farmer, who has led a self-imposed rigorous life, he is proud of his past.

Yuh know old Eddy Nurlin never asked nobody for nothing. Stand on your two feet, do what yuh got to survive, to live, to make somethin' grow, to build somethin'. (149)

Albert, old Eddy's son and his wife Margaret represent the second generation. Albert is not happy with his lot and feels caught between the two generations. Though he is in his fifty's he is not free from resentment or regret. He has accepted

his legacy reluctantly. His decision to become a farmer has made him sacrifice many of his dreams. Old Eddy is also aware of Alfred's attitude to farming."Old Eddy: I can remember, always at me he was, he was gonna do that - the only thing he was never gonna do was carry on what I started."(151)

Margaret: He's here. Isn't he?

Old Eddy: Not by choice.

Margaret: How can you say that?

Old Eddy: It was the war - it was the killing kept him here! (154)

According to Atwood, "Parents (the middle generation) try to escape. They move from farm to a town and from a town to a big city. But they have internalized the guilt foisted on them by the grandparents, and they do not often make a great success of their lives. They lack the will, the attachments to the land and the metallic strength of their parents but they have been unable to replace it with anything more positive and attractive. They are somehow crippled or they are vague, lacking in definition or they are just as work-driven as the Grand Parents, but without the compensation of being able to believe that they are fulfilling the will of God". (SATGCL 135-136)

Young Eddy and Bonnie are lured by the attractions of the city life, have their personal plans and resist the compulsions of conforming to the old set-up. Young Eddy, a budding lawyer has his own dreams of starting a law firm in the city. When he demands his share of land, his father appreciates his aspirations and approves of his plan. Alfred does not fail to see in Eddy's dreams, his own unfulfilled aspirations and yearnings. Alfred: "I see myself in Eddy, him doin' things I might a done...(191) Young Eddy's demand for the share of his land comes as a rude shock to old Eddy. However he remains firm and unyielding. To Bonnie's question on the same issue, he swears any sharing of his land could be possible only after his demise."Yuh mean when I'm dead (193)

Fearing Bonnie's possible bad influence on his pet grand son David, he warns her. Old Eddy's remark enumerates his strong convictions about farming.

"And I'll fell yuh somethin' else. To be a farmer yuh got to have a soft spot 'bout the size of a quarter in your brain, and yuh gotta have a strip 'bout this wide a iron in your soul. Yuh don't have that winnin' combination yuh gonna spend your whole life runnin' scared in this place."Yuh, don't have it, yuh keep away from my Davy". (194)

Bonnie represents the angry young generation, which is disillusioned with the empty words of their elders. Unlike Alfred, her father has already migrated to town after selling the land. She laughs at the vain efforts taken by young Eddy to raise

a loan. She disapproves the decision of David to stay back in the farm. Her views and convictions run counter to that of Old Eddy. She believes that the land and the farming pull them back from modernity and prosperity.

Why should Dave bother? Why should anyone bother? The land's worth a lot but you just lose money; go into debt when you work it. Why bust your heart it doesn't make sense? (Pause) Daddy sold out last year and moved to the Hat and plays Bingo.

I mean you got out and ..., Well Dave doesn't have to stay here and farm. (160)

She is a lib, who is not content with the space given to her. She wants to assert herself and has the audacity to argue her case with old Eddy, whom everybody fears to face. Bonnie makes a comparison between Young Eddy and David."Look at the two of you! Him looking like a bloody lawyer with the weekend off - and you looking like a dumb-father". (162) David coolly accepts his position that he will not look as neat and handsome as his brother, lawyer, who is refined and gentle; his hands will become calloused like Alfred's and old Eddy's. But he is happy about his choice.

David feels the double pull of his grandfather, back to the solid virtues of farming. He is fully convinced and doesn't consider the farm a trap. In his case the land ceases to be a trap but becomes a source of emancipation from the cobwebs of confusion and doubt that clogged his soul. He breaks off from Bonnie's prejudiced love and chooses a free life where he can be with the land, which he loves really. He categorically clarifies his stand, to his brother young Eddy.

I want you to listen and I want you to listen real good! See! I'm here! I stayin' here! And you can take your goddam law firm and shove it.(164)

David prevails on young Eddy, and keeps the firm with in his hold. Like old Eddy, he resolves to face any challenge, be it the disastrous drought or the problems propelled by the policies of the government. He positively responds to the demands of the prairies but not to the ultimatum issued by his love Bonnie.

The strong initiatives taken by the individuals to vindicate their stands and the surfacing survival instincts make **Generations** an interesting Play.

Robert C.Nunn opines about the play,

The play is about inheritance about how you can inherit an obligation that slowly ripens into vocation and about the family farm as not just a way of growing food but as a way of preserving a sense of life., spanning generations, indeed as a human construct, that is bigger than the individuals and so permits him to hold his own against the vastness of the prairie landscape. (SPP 82)

Denis Salter; writes on Pollock's genius as a play wright,

She is using the theatre, in other words, as an instrument of moral inquiry, to project (though seldom to achieve) a better world with a better set of values by which to live”..

This Theatre is not a class room, the playwright is not a teacher,” Pollock has explained, but a good play should provoke intelligent discussion about an issue or theme pertinent to our lives. (2)

SUMMATION

Sharon Pollock has struck a different note in her **Generations** by deviating from her Docu-Drama, where the prairie landscape is portrayed as an eternal brooding presence, not just influencing but in fact controlling the lives of Nurlin family. The play focuses on a changed social scenario, where the old generation remains blind and un-accommodative to the aspirations of the younger generation. It also portrays the emergent attitude of young women who demand more 'space' and autonomy.

Creating Metacognitive Awareness While Teaching Writing Skills in ESL Context

PARVATHAVARTHINI, S

ABSTRACT

Writing skill is a necessity that students rarely give importance. Though both teachers and learners know the importance of writing in English, not much importance is given for writing as a process. Mostly, writing is tested in examinations, but without explicitly teaching and practically learning what is expected in examination writing. The writing output on the examination answer scripts is a reproduction of memorized content by learners in the majority of the cases. This perhaps results from the non-problem-solving nature of the question paper irrespective of the discipline. This situation can be changed if more importance is given to the process of writing and attempts are made to master the process of writing. It can be achieved with metacognitive awareness as writing is identified as a cognitive process (Flower & Hayes 1981; Galbraith 2009).

INTRODUCTION

Priority is given to the end product most of the times as far as writing is concerned. This is the reason behind poor writing skills demonstrated by students. Especially for engineering students, writing in English is a major requirement as all the scientific facts and technical knowledge is generated and documented mainly in English all the world. A transformation can be brought about to improve students' writing skills if the process is given its due importance rather than the end product. This paper aims at employing metacognitive strategies to teach writing skills to engineering college students giving a special stress on the cognitive process of writing. Writing is Applied Metacognition according to **Hacker, D. J et al. , (2009)**. Moreover, many scholars are of the opinion that the process of writing itself involves cognition. Various cognitive models of writing have been proposed by scholars in the past few decades.

DISCUSSION

According to **Abdel (2009)**, there are three different cognitive models proposed. They are (i) Flower and Hayes (1981, 1996) model, which consists of planning, text generation and revision (the components were replaced by reflection, text production and text interpretation), (ii) Kellogg (1996) consists of formulation, execution and monitoring and finally (iii) Chenowath and Hayes (2001) consists of a proposer, translator, reviser and transcriber. The model proposed by Abdel Latif (2009) and Galbraith (1998, 2009) can be added to this list. Galbraith has classified writing as a dual-process model consisting of knowledge retrieval and knowledge constitution. Whereas Abdel Latif has designed a model that constitutes six components: planning, monitoring, retrieving, reviewing, text-changing and transcribing.

According to **Fogarty (1994)**, “Costa defines metacognition as our ability to know what we know and what we don’t know.” In learning any activity to know if learners are equipped with the required knowledge, they should have the necessary domain knowledge and metacognitive knowledge. For instance, if it is writing skill, for learners to be sure about their knowledge and efficacy in performing a writing activity, they should have the basic knowledge about the process of writing, the various components of a good paragraph, its form, content and language. If they have the basic subject knowledge, they can then say what they know and what they don’t know with respect to the task writing a paragraph successfully.

The present study aims at employing a writing model that can be exploited to make learners metacognitively aware of their writing skills. Successful writing is based on the presence of relevant content, appropriate language and a suitable format. Learners are taught to write a simple paragraph of about 150-200 words wherein they are helped to realize the processes that are involved in writing. Simultaneously, they come to know what they know and what they do not know (metacognitive awareness), so that they can take control of the learning process and regulate it.

The writing model that is adopted for the present study consists of four components. They are planning, performance, evaluation and rewriting or regulation. Planning involves generation of ideas for the content, selection of vocabulary (content words and connectives) related to the content and form and guessing their performance level. Performance stage consists of translating their ideas into appropriate text in L2 as they have planned. This consists of monitoring their writing process. Next is the evaluation process, wherein the learners are made to analyze and evaluate their own work. This evaluation is done based on their planning and their knowledge about how well a paragraph is to be written. Based

on their evaluation they are asked to rewrite or revise their work by repeating the entire process again from planning.

The model is put to use after the teacher imparts the domain knowledge to learners. The teacher also helps them develop an inquisitiveness to know their efficiency and limitations in implementing their acquired knowledge to practice. Hence, before the four component model is introduced, learners are taught the basic elements of paragraph writing. In this instance, the writing activity will involve a paragraph that runs for 150-200 words. This would require learners to know about topic sentences, coherence, appropriate vocabulary, and relevant content. Learners are first taught the domain knowledge that is required to involve in writing activity. It makes them realize that they have to know about the content, language, and format for writing a paragraph.

With regard to the content, it can be generated through a brain storming session. Learners can gather ideas that they have already learnt/known about a topic from their long-term memory. The collected ideas then can be organized into some order based on chronology or form. As **Galbraith (1998)** puts it, writing is "... not just a matter of translating preexisting content, but also involves working out new content when existing content does not satisfy goals, ..." Hence, learners do not know about the topic to be written, they can be advised to gather knowledge about the topic by doing some research either by browsing the internet or visiting the library.

Once they are ready with the content, the next aspect is language. Learners have to recall appropriate vocabulary needed to carry out the activity. Here they also need to consider the form of the paragraph. A paragraph has a topic sentence, coherence or continuity. In order to establish continuity or coherence learners can make use of relative pronouns, pronouns or connectives. Here again, they need to be aware of the various types of connectives like sequence connectives, cause and effect connectives, compare and contrast connectives.

While teaching the domain knowledge, part or majority of it would be there in learners' memory due to their previous exposure to English language during school days. The prior knowledge found in their long term memory can be revived during the session by performing group activities. The groups can be organized to find out the various aspects that are relevant to perform a writing activity. There is an added advantage of the retention power which is more if learners learn from their own contribution instead of the teacher telling them.

Once the content or domain knowledge is available to learners, learners are now asked to get engaged in the writing activity. Here they are taught to think constantly about what they know and what they need to learn in order to complete

writing a paragraph successfully. They are required to set a goal in the English classroom. Once they have a goal, they are asked to write down the required content and start writing a paragraph.

According to **Costa (1984)** has suggested the various strategies that could be adopted to teach metacognitive skills, they are: Planning strategy, generating questions, choosing consciously, evaluating with multiple criteria, taking credit, outlawing “I Can’t, ” paraphrasing or reflecting back students’ ideas, labeling students’ behaviors, clarifying students’ terminology, role playing and simulations, journal keeping and modeling. Similarly, **Fogarty (1994)** has listed 30 strategies to teach planning, monitoring and evaluation.

To enhance metacognitive awareness in students’ mind, some strategies suggested by Costa and a few other strategies by Robin Fogarty were employed in the teaching of writing skills to engineering college students. They are planning strategy, generating questions, evaluating with multiple criteria, stem statements, inking your thinking (learning logs) are employed in the present study. The current model of writing consists of four steps. First is that learners are given the necessary domain knowledge to plan their writing activity by setting goals, generating ideas and recording their self-efficacy beliefs on their writing competencies. The second step involves the writing process wherein learners involve in the process of monitoring by generating simple questions and answering them as and when they are involved in the process of writing. Once they finish the writing, they are asked to record their opinion about their performance and if they were able to go as they had planned (monitoring). The third step consists of the evaluation process wherein they are asked to evaluate their performance after reading the paragraph they have written. This process is done as a group activity if the class consists of more number of students. In the evaluation process learners evaluate their performance based on a four point measuring scale, like “good, very good, average, and below average.”

Evaluation is the crucial part as it throws light on learners’ metacognitive knowledge and awareness. They are encouraged to rate their performance after listening to all their group members’ written work. Once they evaluate their performance, learners are asked to say why they gave this rating. Here they come out with various answers that reflect their knowledge about the writing activity, the content and the format. They are also asked to tell about strategies to improve their writing. Here they give various inputs that form the planning for the next writing activity that they engage in to better their performance. This fourth part is the control element where learners consciously control their learning process. They engage in the writing activity with the clear idea of what is to be focused and how it has to be done. While engaging in the process the students realize that their judgements about their efficiency are sometimes faulty. They sometimes

underestimate or overestimate their performance. Maintaining logs helps them reassess their competency.

Initially, learners require a lot of help from teachers understand the writing model. Later after repeated writing activities are done in the classroom, they tend to follow the same methodology even when they are not asked to do so. This topic given for paragraph writing can be something simple like about an elephant, wild life, cricket and the like for slow learners who have difficulty in framing longer sentences in English correctly, simpler topics can be given to help them identify their originality and creativity. In engineering colleges, learners are more familiar with topics like global warming, pollution and water purification. But these topics do not demand original ideas since they have been with familiar with or memorized for many years. This spoils the creativity or the knowledge transformation (Galbraith, 1998) process of writing. The activity has to be repeated for at least three to five times in the classroom itself so that learners acquire the skills unconsciously. This helps in the transfer of metacognitive skills to other learning processes.

CONCLUSION

The research in the past four decades has proved that metacognitive awareness helps to improve the learning process. There has been difficulty in employing the various processes that are advocated by the researchers in the L2 classroom. The above procedure is a simple attempt at introducing the theoretical research to classroom teaching. It has concentrated more on the format of paragraph writing than the ideas or the content of a paragraph. As learners who come to engineering colleges are of mixed type in terms of their English language proficiency, simple concepts are introduced to involve all of them in the classroom. The above process has created awareness in them of their efficacy and limitations with regard to writing skills. On the whole, employing such methodologies in spite of their being time-consuming helps learners acquire skills and retain them for future use.

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Manawaka Women's Search for Identity: A Study of Margaret Laurence's Select Novels

DR. PAUL JAYAKAR, J

ABSTRACT

Among the Commonwealth nations, Canada has produced more women writers, championing the cause of women and has identified the main thrust of women's liberation as a struggle for equality and self-determination. The 'Manawaka cycle' completes with a set of five novels and a series of short stories which are centered on female characters and they proceed from their individual points of view. Together they form a brilliant sketch of women in general and Canadian women in particular. The Manawaka world of women also shares its predicament with women around the world, giving them a universal appeal. This paper attempts to explain how the Manawaka women ultimately find their true identity.

Keywords: Manawaka, liberation, identity, Commonwealth, predicament

INTRODUCTION

Margaret Laurence's Manawaka novels, **The Stone Angel**, **A Jest of God**, **The Fire Dwellers**, **A Bird in the House**, and **The Diviners** comprise a unified structure. The inter-relatedness of themes and issues and their evolution from one novel to the other create a sense of unity. 'Journey,' the central metaphor of Laurence's writings, plays a major role in shaping her literary vision. In the process of individuation, each woman marches one step forward till the end is achieved.

Manawaka, conceived on the imaginary lines of Faulkner's Yoknapatawpha serves as the setting for all the five novels. The central characters are women from Manawaka with a strong Scots-Presbyterian tradition and heritage, which they carry with them. The Manawaka world of women shares their predicament with women around the world giving them a universal appeal. The leitmotif of the five Manawaka novels is journey which is part and parcel of the lives of all these five

protagonists. They leave Manawaka at some point in their lives, but their departure is based on a common denominator. They are all preoccupied with a search for selfhood, and their journey is not only physical but mental and spiritual. This psychic exercise becomes a necessary counterpart in their lives even though they are rooted in their Scots Presbyterian tradition, which they carry wherever they go.

For this study, the researcher has chosen two novels from the Manawaka series of novels. They are **A Jest of God** and its sister novel **The Fire Dwellers**. First, **A Jest of God** is the story of a thirty-four-year-old spinster, Rachel Cameron who teaches children in a primary school in Manawaka. Rachel is bound by fear and this dominant force is an obstacle to her mobility in all ways. Citic Patricia Morley's observation on Rachel is a quintessential characteristic sketch of who and what Rachel is:

Rachel is afraid of what the town's people think; afraid of her mother's weak heart and subtle bullying, afraid of the authoritarian school principal; afraid in the essence of herself and life. (89)

Rachel's quest is a search for freedom and liberation from her self-inhibitive nature.

Protagonist Rachel Cameron, an oppressed individual, obsessed by her inhibitions and fears, tells her story of her struggle both physical and psychic to liberate herself from this bondage. She calls her life a jest made by God. She says, "If I believed, I would have to detest God for the brutal joker He would be if he existed" (42). Later, Rachel comes to understand that God appears a jester to those who are afraid of being taken for a fool.

Rachel Cameron is the daughter of Niall Cameron, the undertaker of Manawaka. After Niall Cameron's death, the responsibility of taking care of her mother falls on her. Her life is monotonous because of her responsibility and her own nature of being isolated. Rachel's filial piety prevents from moving out of Manawaka. So she stays there teaching and caring for her mother. The duty-bound Rachel isolates herself from other people and society. She has neither close friends nor close relations. The only person who Rachel seems to be involved is Lennox Cates. But she refuses to marry him because he is a farmer. It is below her dignity to be called the wife of a farmer. Lennox Cates gets married leaving Rachel to her loneliness.

Rachel meets Nick Kazlik, son of Nestor Kazlik a milkman in Manawaka. Nick has graduated from the Winnipeg University and teaches in a High School. Rachel happens to meet him when he has come for summer holidays to Manawaka to spend the time with his parents on the farm. After their meeting, Nick invites

Rachel for a movie. Rachel's mother is not satisfied with her relationship with Nick as he is the son of a milkman. She looks down upon Nick owing to his inferior status – “You mean the milkman's son?”(73) But Rachel thinks otherwise but does not have the courage to tell her mother what she feels: “The milkman's son. The undertaker's daughter (73) doesn't make any difference.”

The mother puts a very tough resistance to the affair and contrives to dissuade Rachel from proceeding further. Rachel very well knows her mother's intention and plans to thwart the relationship. She breaks her inhibitions and sheds her fear with very great difficulty, overcoming her emotional trap. She has to encounter her mother's disapproval. Having been liberated from her imposed trap, Rachel is now caught in her mother's trap. Overcoming all these obstacles is excruciatingly painful and Rachel feels dejected. But she gathers enough courage to tackle the situation and persuade her mother into approval.

Rachel prepares to go out with Nick but does not disclose it till she leaves. Once she tells her mother about it, the mother very cleverly manipulates the situation. Her seeming approval is not without displeasure. She connives to delay her by requesting her to get the medicines from the cabinet, suggesting that her heart may give her trouble anytime. It is a mild reminder to Rachel and a warning note of herself being alone in the house. Though her mother tells her to go superficially, Rachel gets the true meaning of her real intentions. Then she says that she would do the laundry in Rachel's absence to which Rachel protests. By now Rachel is almost on the verge of losing interest to go out and plans to be at home. But it is a moment of great trial for Rachel to decide. She realizes that her mother has deliberately chosen this particular time to speak of washing and throwing away at once her unnecessary fears and sentiments towards her mother.

Alright. Alright. Wash them of your like... I can't stop you, can I?
Going down the stairs, rapidly, my keeps clattering, I can see again the astonished disbelief on her face. I can't believe myself that I could have said what I did. (144)

Rachel feels relieved temporarily and is elated at the freedom she enjoys at that moment. She has overcome two difficult situations, one her own imposition the other her own mother's. Liberated from these bondages she enjoys the company of Nick at the Roxy theatre. When Nick drops her back at her house, their relationship appears to have become stronger. Rachel discovers her individuality and her freedom. It is at once an epiphany and liberation for Rachel. But when Rachel comes to know that Nick is not married, she is not disappointed and does not want him to come back to her.

Rachel resolves to leave Manawaka and take her mother along with her. Assuming the role of a mother and reversing her mother to be her 'child,' she decides to carry the responsibility of caring for her mother but now with freedom as a liberated mother herself. Rachel's mother initially protests the idea of getting out of Manawaka but Rachel prevails upon her decision and overcomes her.

Second, Margaret Laurence's **The Fire Dwellers**, the other sister-novel, deals with the struggle encountered by Stacey MacAindra, the narrator and protagonist, in provincial Canada. The entire novel is narrated from Stacey's point of view either through first person voice, third or interior monologues. She sees violence around her in several forms and the way she lives is marked by "brutality and deception" (*The Fire Dwellers* 52). The novel published in 1969 may be taken to be a sequel to **A Jest of God** though they were composed simultaneously. It is a sequel because protagonist Stacey Cameron who is Rachel's sister becomes Stacey MacAindra after her marriage to Clifford MacAindra while Rachel is aged thirty-four. Stacey is thirty-nine and the novel unfolds her experiences as she is closing in towards her fortieth birthday. These two novels then can be conveniently termed as sister novels. There are a number of coincidences reciprocating in these two novels. The letter that Mrs. Cameron reads to Rachel in **A Jest of God** is the letter that Stacey writes to her mother in **The Fire Dwellers**.

Stacey MacAindra is Clifford MacAindra's wife and mother of four children. While the other protagonists Hagar and Rachel have peculiarities in them, Stacey is a normal woman who struggles to liberate her individual self from the roles of daughter, wife and mother. A conscience-stricken lady Stacey can never afford to shirk her responsibilities as a daughter, wife and mother. Yet she constantly struggles in order to be liberated from these rules that stifle and bind her.

Stacey thirty-nine years old, married sixteen years ago to a hard-working husband and blessed with four children, looks at life—past, present and future—and finds herself alone, frightened, dependent deceived and deceiving. (Reddy 33)

The eve of the fortieth birthday assumes a lot of significance for Stacey. As she approaches this particular point in her life, she is poised to accept reality and come to terms with. She stops worrying about the children and fussing about trivialities. She is able to make a distinction between appearance and reality. Stacey is set to be liberated and in the final interior monologue, she says, "All right I know. It's not necessary to spell it out. I won't be twenty-one again ... Give me another forty years, Lord and I may mutate into a matriarch. (308)

Stacey has been struggling to relive this moment of self-awareness that leads to her true identity. She is now able to fully comprehend who she is now and what

she would be after another forty years—a matured matriarch having resolved all the conflicts. There have been innumerable fears that inhibited her progression. Now that all these obstacles have been removed, Stacey is ready to proceed as an independent woman and evolve into a ‘matriarch’ in another forty years. A liberated woman, and an individual not carrying the burden of being ‘Mac’s wife’ or ‘the kid’s mother ready to progress towards the singular goal of matriarchy, she goes to sleep peacefully with an assurance that she is now free to march ahead.

Stacey wishing to be an independent woman is always a distant dream. Whenever she indulges in such fantastic thoughts, something or other brings her back to reality. Her conversations with her adolescent daughter Katie is always punctuated with memories where Stacey always looks back to her adolescence. She knows very well that total liberation cannot be brought into effect unless she steps out of her stereotyped selves. She ruminates on this aspect of how women are carrying the burden of forged identities and she says, “This is what they mean by emancipation” (112). But belonging to the traditionalist category, Stacey does not break away from her roles. She corresponds with her mother as an affectionate daughter, lives with Mac as a loyal wife, fulfills the role of a dutiful daughter-in-law for her father-in-law Matthew and discharges her duties with utmost care to the children.

It is on the eve of her fortieth birthday when one of her sons is saved from drowning at the beach that Stacey’s epiphanic moment enables her to be liberated from the fear of death that has been haunting her and incidentally, her daughter Jen also starts speaking. Mac is also there to protect the children, coming to terms with reality is the liberation that Stacey achieves at the end and for some time, she is relieved from constant worry.

SUMMATION

Both the protagonists, Rachel Cameron and Stacey MacAindra, ultimately find their true identity only in relation to others. It is a psychic exercise that they undergo in order to determine who Rachel and Stacey are. They go in search of freedom, breaking away from Manawaka and from their male relations. Eventually, Rachel and Stacey attain their individuality on their own terms.

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Indeterminacy of Participant Role

PAVITHRA, A

ABSTRACT

Reading is a big challenge for many students of English literature at the beginning of the twenty-first century. Probably, all reading includes some sort of response “This is terrific, this is a bore, I don’t know what’s going on here” and almost all writing about literature begins with such response. This theory has mainly focused on how the reader responds to the text. Wolfgang Iser in this reader response theory has discussed the nature of the relationship which gets formed between the reader and the text. Instead of asking what the text means? Iser asks what the text does to the reader. The author leaves some interpretive “gaps” that are supposed to be filled by the reader. It is quite impossible for the text itself to fill the gaps. When the gaps are filled with the mirror- reflection of real situations, then it loses its literary quality in reflection. My paper focuses on this ‘ Indeterminacy or Gaps’ which should not be seen as a defect, rather they are the basic element for the aesthetic response because that is where the reader gets to work and becomes a partner in the process of creating meaning.

Keywords: Indeterminacy, terrific, gap, aesthetic, mirror- reflection, Reader response.

INTRODUCTION

Reader- response criticism is a school of literary theory that focuses on the reader’s role in interpreting texts and rejects the idea that there is a single, fixed meaning inherent in every literary work, in contrast to other schools. Modern reader-response criticism began in the 1960s and 70s, particularly in the US and Germany. It stresses the role of reader in meaning-making and experience of a literary work. It affirms that a text cannot exist without the reader. Some major proponents of this approach include:

Norman Halland - Psychological RR theory

Stanley fish – Social RR Theory

Wolfgang Iser – Transactional RR Theory

Louise Rosenblatt - Transactional RR Theory

David Bleich – Subjective RR Theory

DISCUSSION

Wolfgang Iser's "Indeterminacy and the reader's response in prose fiction" deals with the nature of the relationship formed between the reader and the literary text. Instead of asking what the text means, Iser asks what the text does to the reader. If the text conveys a particular meaning, the reader may or may not accept it or reject it. If a tree falls in the forest and no one is around to hear it, does it make a noise? If a text sits on a shelf and no one is around to read it, does the text have meaning? He points out that a text can only come to life when it is read and if it is to be examined, and it must be therefore be studied through the eyes of the reader. The following research questions were framed to focus the attention on the topic:

1. What are the different types of readers?
2. Can text and reader be compared and contrasted?
3. What's the role of indeterminacy in reading?
4. How do objects create indeterminacy?

Iser says that a reader should first identify the special qualities of a literary text and how far it is different from other kinds of text. When authors write, they often do so with certain readers in mind, believing that these implied readers would understand or at least appreciate. If the text conveys an object with equal determinacy, then the text is simply an public show there. The Reader can be called as an Implied Reader who finds out the determinate meaning of the text. In Austin's terms, it is a 'constative utterance' which is opposite of 'performative utterance.' Literary texts belong to the second category. Iser pays special attention to different degrees and he terms this as Indeterminacy in a text and the various ways in which it is brought about. Here the reader can be called as actual reader who brings their own experiences and preoccupations of the text. The actual reader would see things differently from the implied reader.

Text alone is nothing as a unit, but it is complete after the readers' interpretation. The author of well- known essay "The art of interpretation" believes that the meaning is concealed within a text itself, and one cannot answer why and how the text indulges in such a 'hide and seek' with their interpreters. Why the meaning once found changes when the reader reads it again even though the letters,

words and sentences of the text remain the same. Interpretation is not the art of construing but the art of constructing. Interpreters do not decode a text. Rather they make it. The author leaves interpretive “gaps” that are supposed to be filled by the reader. It is quite impossible for the text itself to fill in the gaps. When the gaps of indeterminacy are filled with mirror-reflection of real situations, then it loses its literary quality in reflection. Alternatively, the text establishes itself as being in competition with the familiar world. It is a competition which must inevitably have some repercussion on the familiar one. In this case the text may tend to function as a criticism of life.

Indeterminacy should not convey the real life situation. It should be different from the real world in one way or other. It can also be counter-balanced when the reader compares their own experiences with that of the text in order to get the specific meaning. This too is a counterbalancing of indeterminacy which disappears when the subjective norms of the reader guide him through the text. On the other hand, text leads to somewhat drastic reactions, such as throwing a book away and being compelled to read it again. This is also one of counter balancing of indeterminacy which always allows the possibility of connecting one’s own experience with what the text wants to convey. Whenever this situation happens, indeterminacy disappears. Communication has occurred at the end between the text and the reader.

So far literary text has been referred to as it were from outside. Secondly, there are certain important formal conditions which give rise to indeterminacy in the text itself. For Iser, meaning is not an object to be found within a text, but it is an event of construction that occurs somewhere between the text and reader. The author creates imaginative object through ‘schematized views’ coined by Polish philosopher Roman Ingarden. In this way the text acts as an object through this view. Here raises the problem. The author has a great challenge of making it determinant. The author does not know how to relate views with one another. A text is made up of many schematised views and therefore how can the reader understand it? The reader should infer the meaning from the gaps known as no-man’s land of indeterminacy. These gaps give the reader a chance to build their own bridges, free flow of imagination, and this creates indeterminacy which increases the reader’s responses, and their participation as a result of schematized views. These gaps cannot be filled by the text. In fact, the more a text tries to be precise, the greater will be the number of gaps between the views (for example the novels of James Joyce **Ulysses** and **Finnegans Wake**, where the over-precision leads to increase in indeterminacy) this tempts the reader’s imagination more. Indeterminacy or gaps should not be seen as a defect, they are a basic element for the aesthetic response. Until 19th century readers are not aware of such gaps in the literary text.

Text is connected with the schematized views so while reading the reader reformulates these views, according to their own experiences and then constructs meaning themselves. This is borne out by the fact when the reader reads it second time in a different situation the text produces a different impression from the first. Meaning does not solely reside in the text. Text does not have meaning apart from the reader. Meaning is partly the result of the reader's interaction with and interpretation of the text. If the reader either accepts or rejects the text, that will lessen the degree of participation of the reader. Texts with minimal indeterminacy tend to be tedious. Text is not just what it says, but also what it does not say because that is where the reader gets to work, becoming a partner in the process of creating meaning and so it can be said that indeterminacy is the fundamental precondition for reader participation.

SUMMATION

Indeterminacy is the switch that activates the reader in using his ideas in order to fulfill the intention of the text. This is the basic element in which the reader's role is embodied. Literary texts are different from other texts because of their unique structure which transcends time by allowing the reader to imagine but literature texts are those which formulate a concrete meaning or truth. Thus, with every text we learn not only what we are reading but also about ourselves. We try to compare our life situation and experiences with the text. This is more effective because meaning is not explicitly stated but has to be inferred by the reader. If one sees the mountain, one can no longer imagine it and so the act of picturing the mountain is presupposed. Similarly, the written part of the text gives us the knowledge but its unwritten part that gives us the opportunity to picture things.

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Voice of the Unheard in Manjula Padmanabhan's "Lights Out"

PRATHIBHA, D

ABSTRACT

Manjula Padmanabhan's play **Lights Out** been carefully woven to prove the pain of women. The characters are placed on a completely justified canvass with horrifying screams, unnoticed silence and palpable. A cosmetic group of urban middle class people observe women brutalized in front of their eyes in a neighbouring compound but fail to perform any meaningful action. The play focuses on the atrocities committed against women and also showcases the conflicts women faced in the modern society with complete negligence towards women's fright and sensitivity by her husband.

Keywords: Patriarchy, voyeurism, disintegration

INTRODUCTION

Lights Out asks for attention to the plight of women in this world in general, and in India in particular because they become victims of manoeuvres of male in an attempt to slight and subvert them. The play with clear stamp of gender-division makes a very powerful plea for understanding the feminine sensibility in a world which hardly allows woman to be independent, strong, organized and focused.

Human beings are the sum totals of the experiences they have in their life because their sensibilities are developed and shaped by what the individuals come across, observe, feel and think about the things happening in their life. So, it is but natural for artists to express their own perception of life in its varied colours through art. Theatre is one of the most powerful yet subtle forms to express to communities the incommunicable with audience and it is closest to the human being because no other form brings the individual so close to their interior self, asking questions about their own existence.

As life becomes meaningful only in its societal form, what its members-male and female-do in their life will invite responses and reactions from their surroundings. The most important aspect of any discourse is the relationship between the two inseparable entities of the social structure man and woman. There is a growing demand for looking at man-woman relationship from an objective, rather hitherto neglected, feminine point of view. The play deals with the voyeuristic reaction of the protagonists towards an incident which they are a witness to, but the audience is not.

Manjula Padmanabhan lays bare what lies hidden in the dark souls of humanity poking their nose into others affairs and even for helping somebody is like inviting problems. To the playwright's probing eyes, the lot of women in India has not changed for the better. They are still in the twenty-first century treated as playthings for the men folk as they were treated in the past. They are subjugated to innumerable physical, emotional and mental tortures at the hands of men. These men care a fig for the sentiments of women and remain insensitive to the feministic concerns of women at home or outside. Some like Frieda learn to bear the torture as is the case with the woman assaulted while others who are vocal and a little bit assertive or persuasive like Leela and Naina, are neglected and cornered and forced to accept the dicta of their husbands, fathers and brothers.

Throughout the play, the main characters belonging to two opposite camps based on their sex are involved in a heated argument whether the offence is a rape or not, where the males' ulterior motive is to while away the time and not to intervene in the crime and they are successful in their motive of bluffing the women to the end. The difference in approach is that a woman always has a feministic sense of belongingness and identifies herself with the victim while a male fails to understand the delicate mind and sensitivity of women.

The play is based on a real life incident of rape of a woman in open during night in 1980s in the Mumbai. The playwright segregates all her characters into two different sections on the rape incident and shows how their responses to the horrific crime are affected by their gender identity. Man represents power, authority and sense of security in society as well as home, someone who can give or provide while woman is the receptor of all these. Woman has been so conditioned socially as well as psychological that she cannot take any independent decision.

The conversation between Bhasker and his wife Leela who are later on joined by Bhasker's friend Mohan and the couple's neighbours Surinder and Naina, takes place in the backdrop of the crime committed by a group of offenders on a hapless woman every night under the street lights outside. From the very beginning, Leela, a housewife, appears very perturbed and disgusted over what happens outside their

flat. She is almost hysterical as in her sub-consciousness. She keeps on hearing the frightful voices of the victim when the latter is brutalized by the perpetrators of the crime or the horrible scenes of the crime that keep floating in front of her mental eyes. She wants her husband to act by calling the police or take some steps for stopping this dastardly act on a hapless woman.

As this crime is committed continuously for many days at the much appointed time and in a similar fashion, Leela, as the evening approaches, becomes alarmingly upset and acutely nervous. But Bhasker appears to be least bothered about the fate of the victim outside his flat as well as inside his flat. His weird logic for not calling up the police in the matter reveals his non-seriousness, a typical middle class matter-of-fact justification.

In **Lights Out**, Leela is shocked to see what is being done to a woman outside her home under the street light by a group of goons. She repeatedly urges her husband Bhasker to do something in this regard, to act or call the police, but her pleas fell on deaf ears of her husband:

Leela: (*wheedlingly*.) Can't you call the police? Just for me?

Bhasker: (*Drawing away*.) No.

Leela: But why not?

Bhasker: We've discussed this before--- (**Lights Out, 5-6**)

Leela is a traditional straight forward Indian woman who fails to understand how the police act. She thinks that the police can take perpetrators of the crime while her husband is aware of the police ways inaction, corruption, high-handedness and laziness:

Leela: I know, I know--- you've told me they're not interested in cases like this, they don't bother about minor little offenses, but I'm frightened! Can't you see that? Isn't that enough?

Bhasker: Go tell the police that you're frightened about noises in the next building! They'll laugh in your face. (**Lights Out, 6**)

The apathetic attitude of the police towards the victims of crime is revealed by Bhasker, and this is the main cause why people do not approach the police with social concern because the agency entrusted with the task of protecting its citizens is devoid of any humanity in general.

The playwright is dismayed to know about the inward hollowness of these so-called refined people who only think about their own well-being, nothing to do about the world around them. They are concerned about saving their own skin, they turn their back towards their own brethren oppressed, cornered and crushed,

because 'they don't want to stick their necks out' out of fear. Bhasker is reluctant to call the police despite the constant persuasions of Leela because he cowers at the sight of as what will happen to them when the goons come to know about the complaint. So, he, like his neighbours, plays it safe and becomes an escapist with the arguments that if others are not coming forward to complain, 'so why should we!' he is completely indifferent to the developments outside his home, but the irony is that he asserts, 'I'm not deaf and I'm not disturbed by them' (**Lights Out, 8**), and further gives logic in defence of his stand of not calling the police:

Bhasker: You never know with the police these days. They may say it's none of our business, what goes on in the next-door compound after all, there's the chowkidar... (**Lights Out, 9**)

The central point of the dining area is a large window, through which the audience has a distant view of the rooftop of a neighbouring building. From this window, there is a suggestion of the gang rape of some women on the rooftop of the neighbouring building, which has been going on since the previous week. The terrible cries of victim women have disturbed Bhasker and Leela's domestic life. 'I feel frightened. All through the day, I feel tense.' (**Lights Out, 5**) Some critics are of the view that Leela identifies herself with the women and feels helpless in not being able to do something about it. Neeta writes:

Her disturbed state of mind proves the fact that she has gradually started to identify herself with that woman. She feels the intensity of her pain in the horrifying situations of her life. Being a woman, she sympathizes with her and wishes to do something for her.

Leela does not want to investigate the cause of the ruckus. She does not want to peep out of the window. She does not even know it is a rape going on right outside her window until her friend Naina testifies it to be a brutal rape. Hers is the peculiar case of a person who is absolutely neither interested in the victimized women's fate, nor in the voyeuristic details of rape and torture. She is only paranoid about her own safety and security:

Leela: I don't know what they believe. The sounds torture me. Tell the police I can't sleep at nights... tell the police the goondas must go away and take their dirty whores somewhere else! I don't care what they do, or who they are, or what they are, I just want them far away, out of my hearing... out of my life. (**Lights Out, 44**)

Unlike Leela, Naina identifies herself with the woman being raped and wants to help her, but she keeps requesting the men in the group to act, rather than acting herself and even joins the discussion and analysis of the incident later.

Mohan and Bhasker discuss the details of the crime and try to analyse inanities like whether the screaming is high-pitched or hysterical, whether the screaming seems genuine or not, whether it is the same woman every night or different women on different nights, and other such absurd issues. They interpret the rape in different ways, remarking that it could be a family affair, a domestic fight, a religious ritual or exorcism:

Bhasker: After all, it may be something private, a domestic fight; how can we intervene... Well, then, unless it's a murder, I don't think anyone should come between the members of family. (**Lights Out, 20**)

It seems that they deliberately avoid considering it a rape in order not to obstruct the satiation of their voyeuristic curiosity. The rapists, on the other hand have kept the lights on for everyone to watch and they commit the act in full view of three buildings. They indirectly invite the people to watch and simultaneously challenge them to act. It is difficult to analyse their exhibitionistic behaviour especially because their actions are prosecutable law.

This assertion of power over the watchers as well as the law institutes them as subjects. In their display of power and their persecution of women, they subject themselves to the discourses of patriarchy and law. They admit their influence and revolt against the norms of decency instituted by both law and patriarchy. Patriarchy, on the one hand, inaugurates the notion of the woman as an instrument of power, while on the other hand it also nourishes the idea of decorum by exalting women to the level of a goddess in order to create a discourse of propriety. A voyeur is, thus as equally a subject of the discourse of patriarchy which institutes the woman as a sexual object. Violence has an intimate relation with religion, social norms, cultural constructions and undoubtedly direct manifestations of violence in physical and psychological signifiers.

Society is full of selfish cowards like Bhasker and Mohan, and to the playwright such Bhasker and Mohan are the main cause of unabated crimes in society and such people are more harmful than those involved in the gang-rape as they can give a bad name to anybody nonchalantly just to escape from their responsibilities towards the system of which they are part. That is why they never feel ashamed of calling the tortured woman a whore.

SUMMATION

The play probes deep into the human psyche and studies the complex human nature which shapes relationship in the world, and it is on account of these complexities, uncertainties and the working of human mind at conscious and subconscious levels that to come clean regarding transparency, truthfulness and uprightness in human

relations remains only a distant dream. The playwright affirms that everyone has a 'Bhasker' or 'Mohan' in them and nobody can raise an accusing finger at others because by becoming indifferent and unconcerned towards the defenceless and the vulnerable, they are siding with the oppressors, helping in their misdeeds, and the day is not far when the humanity will be in the clutches of such wolves who molest the woman.

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The Spicy Life of Indian Immigrants in Divakaruni's "The Mistress of Spices"

PRIYA, R

ABSTRACT

In this globalization age, immigration becomes an inevitable stage in human evolution. As immigrants are able to absorb both the native and the alien cultures, they grow into international citizens. Immigration takes place due to various reasons and in Indian context the migratory movements are governed by historical, political, economic reasons including higher education, better prospects and marriage. Though the Indian immigrants have shown greater sense of adjustments, and adaptability and accessibility, they also suffer a sense of homelessness and it is genuine and intense as a refuge. The immigrant seeks security and protection and as ambassadors project their own culture and help to enhance its comprehensibility. This paper mainly gives a telescopic insight into the life of Indian immigrants in America and the harsh reality of their lives there. It tries to expose the struggles and conflicts both at physical and psychological level of the immigrant life apart from their joys and happiness.

INTRODUCTION

Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni is a post-colonial writer who deals with the theme of immigration and focuses on the Indian immigrants' struggles and psychological conflicts. In her first full-length novel, **The Mistress of Spices** (1997), she adopts a more complex strategy for portraying diasporic identity. She makes use of fable in order to explore the various kinds of problems encountered by the Indian immigrants. The mistress of spices adopts a more nature structural configuration in order to discuss the diasporic and each chapter contains a vignette about an individual about a cultural encounter. Divakaruni herself states in an interview the reason for writing this novel:

I wrote in a spirit of play, collapsing the divisions between the realistic world of twentieth century America and the timeless one of myth and magic in an attempt to create a modern fable. [10]

The Mistress of Spices symbolically represents the Indian immigrants' struggles in America and is trying to come to terms with a new existence in an alien land. The protagonist Tilo owns a Spice Bazaar in Oakland, California and she tries to help the Indian immigrants there to re-establish their ties with India. She consoles them and solves their problems using various spices. These spices and their mystery is a unique link which make them reminiscence about their common past with nostalgia.

Divakaruni portrays the cultural diversity without bias and stereo types. Several subaltern voices emerge in the course of the narrative which is legitimized by the novelist. Indians residing in the hay area of Oakland exhibit their Indianness unconsciously in their dress food habits, values and ideology. Tilo herself would never step out of her Spice Bazaar to venture into American society as she has vowed abstinence from worldly desires. A string of mango leaves is hung across the entrance of her store to ward off evil. This Spice Bazaar is a microcosm of India with its sacred shelves and it functions as a geographical space that is the repository of a monolithic national identity. To the immigrants their Spice Bazaar is the reminiscent of their homeland (India) as "There no other place in the world quite likes this" (3). It is here where they feel mostly at home. The homely nostalgic and magical atmosphere of the spice bazaar makes the Indian immigrants confide in Tilo their problems and suffering. Tilo is the architect of the immigrants' dream in this story.

Tilo as the owner of the Spice Bazaar encounters different people every day. People with different ethnic and religious backgrounds visit the Spice Bazaar to fulfil their individual needs. The routine Indian immigrant customers are Lalita, Jagjit, Daksha, Haroun, Kwesi, Geeta, the Bovgain villa girls and Mrs. Kapadia. In the process of supplying groceries and other Indian commodities, Tilo gleans out their problems and tries to help them out by dispensing the appropriate spice.

Divakaruni adopts a complex strategy for unfolding the diasporic dilemma of the Indian immigrants. It is through the eyes of Tilo that Divakaruni takes the readers to the private realms of her customs to encounter their hardships and frustrations. All the Indian immigrants suffer from diasporic nostalgia. The wending of characters with the suitable spice is excellently done by Divakaruni. The rich snobbish type like Mrs. Kapadia would "Think they're still in India and order this, order that... and after you wear out your soles running around for them not even a nod in thanks" (28-29). Another character, Lalita who prefers to be called

Ahuja's wife faces a different problem. Daksh would not forget to buy ingredients for dalia pudding for her mother-in-law's ekadesi a typical Indian religious rite for a widow. Many characters like Geetha, her grandfather, Haroun, her parents, Ramu and Shiela, bougainvillea girls, Jagjit face many struggles as Indian immigrants in America.

Haroun is from Kashmir. He has settled in Oakland, America. He drives a cab. Whenever he visits Tilo's store, he calls her as 'Ladyjan.' Once during his visit Tilo's store, Haroun requests her to read his palm, but after looking at his lines rising dark and rigged, she refuses to do so. He narrates how the terrorists (rebels) assailed and assaulted his village and home. Then she foretells Haroun's life that he would have riches and happiness and a beautiful woman with dark lotus flower eyes. But she does not prognosticate that he may experience a tragedy close to death. She decides to protect him from that tragedy and suffering, but Tilo is too late to do so as she gets involved in her personal desires. Haroun is fatally wounded on his return to his house because of racial assaults and is nursed by Hameeda.

Hameeda is one of the favourite characters of Divakaruni. She is an intelligent, divorcee with doe eyes. She is forsaken and deserted by her husband in India after she has had no male children and after he has found a girl younger and prettier than Hameeda. She is deeply in love with her neighbour Haroun. But he is very shy with woman. He hardly talks to them. She is on temporary visa to meet her brother, Shamsur in Oakland, America. Hameeda secretly loves Haroun and so she is shocked to see his fatal wounds. She cleans all his wounds and nurses him along with Tilo. Tilo reveals Hameeda's love to Haroun. She flings glistening kalojire over him for his protection because Haroun feels so nostalgic after this tragic incident.

Geetha is an important character among the Indians immigrants who represents the modern generation in the present age. Though living in America, Geeta's parents, Ramu-Sheila and her grandfather have forgotten their culture, customs and traditions. They spurn, oppose and resist Geeta's choice of her partner. When she turns down the marriage proposal from India, they become furious for her disobedience, and they call it arrogance, thoughtlessness and impudence on her part to marry a wrong man

Geeta's grandfather is a regular customer at Tilo's store to buy mango pickles. She calls him 'Baba.' He comes with indignant tales that his grandfather is in love with a Chicano man. The whole family is totally disappointed with Geeta's decision to marry a non-Indian. They feel so shocked and are not able to accept her decision which is beyond the Indian culture and tradition. After noticing grandfather's indignance, Tilo offers him Brahma oil to cool his mind. By means of her assistance, he later on makes an attempt to reconcile and rebuild the relationship with his

family members. For the second generation Indians like Geeta, the questions about identity are poised. She challenges continuous identification with patriarchal traditions which she associates with her grandfather. Tilo emphasizes with Geeta's tries to tolerate their pain and finally Geeta restores harmony within the family.

Lalita is an immigrant and she is called as 'Mrs. Ahuja.' Hers' is a story of depression. Mrs. Ahuja leaves her comfortable life at her father's house, when she is married to a violent, alcoholic who abuses her."Unhappy in domestic life, she wants to starts in America, but she cannot drown out those voices of conditioning that outlined womanly duties our heads" (10). She cannot forget her country, India and suffers from the sense of nostalgia. Mrs. Ahuja becomes Lalita by overthrowing the tyrannical structures that have weighed her down, compelled her to be brutally raped night after night by her arrogant husband. Lalita leaves her husband and seeks refuge at Tilo's Spice Bazaar. Tilo mixes several ingredients like ginger for deep courage, fenugreek for healing breaks, and 'amchur' for deciding right thing for Lalita.

Racial tensions and conflicts surface at various points in the narrative. Divakaruni skilfully interweaves tolerance and cosmopolitanism with racialism and marginalization to reveal ambivalence and complexity in human relationships in a multi-ethnic and multi-racial society. The ten year old Sikh boy, Jagjit, is regularly bullied by white boys of his school. Since he knows no English, they make fun of him and try to pull his turban off his head and push him down."Talk English sonofabitch. Speak up nigger wetback asshole. (39)" Tilo offers him some remedies of spices to Jagjit as Cardamom-peace, Lavang -compassion, Cinnamon- friend-maker and Dalchini- happiness.

Misbehaviour and assault arising out of racism are uncommon among white population who regard the non-whites with contempt like Haroun, Mohan, the food vendor is beaten up and crippled for life. The note of contempt rings loud when they attack Mohan."Sonofabitch Indian should stay in your own god damn country." (170) This racist attitude of the dominant culture is a challenge to multicultural society which subverts the stability of the monolithic white structures.

SUMMATION

Thus Divakaruni depicts the harsh realities from the lives of Indian immigrants with the suitable remedy from Tilo's spices in the Spice Bazaar. These spices symbolically represent that an individual can feel comfortable and happy only in his homeland. The homeland will soothe the Indian immigrants in the form of Spice Bazaar which acts as a reminiscent of India. According to Divakaruni, the racial consciousness in the mind of Indian immigrants shakes the feeling of others. She echoes the Indian immigrants' voices and their diasporic experiences.

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A Parallel Study of Shenoy's "The Secret Wish List" and Spivak's "Feminism and Critical Theory"

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ABSTRACT

Gayatri Spivak in her essay 'Feminism and Critical Theory' discusses feminism with other critical theories like Marxism, Psychoanalysis and Deconstruction. Spivak speaks about the position of women in comparison with other theories to have a clear idea and better understanding of feminism. It shows that feminism cannot be discussed in general. In this essay, Spivak deconstructs the word 'women' to give her own definition and moves to the Marx's 'Theory of Textuality' to state the position of women in society and again moves to Freud's 'Concept of Consciousness' to redefine the nature of pain. Spivak quotes that reading literature would make one understand society well within its ideological framing. Women are glorified in literature as supernatural entities and not as human beings. It is said that "housework is beautiful" and then women are treated as slaves. To illuminate the point of Spivak, the work taken for study is Shenoy's **The Secret Wish List**. Diksha, Vibha and Tanu are all women characters in the novel and they state how they suffer in society in different positions. Diksha, the protagonist takes eighteen long years to come out to fulfill her own wishes. Thus, the paper discusses feminism with the protagonist Diksha to show the position of women in Indian society.

Keywords: Feminism, Women, Marxism, Psychoanalysis, Deconstruction.

INTRODUCTION

Feminism is a movement started in the late 80s and early 90s. The first wave feminism involves women's suffrage, second wave is associated with women's liberation movement, and third wave is a reaction to the perceived failures of second-wave feminism. The whole essay is about Spivak's speeches throughout her career. She divides her essay into four parts. The first section of the essay deals

with a version of talk she gave several years ago. The second section represents a reflection on that earlier work. The third section is an intermediate moment. The fourth section inhabits something like the present. The first and second sections are brief and clear while the third and fourth sections are not equal to the earlier sections. It lacks something from the earlier part. The study began its investigation with the following assumptions: Spivak's deconstructs the expression 'women' with the contemporary theories like Deconstruction, Marxism and Psychoanalysis to sketch out the existing position of women in the world and to raise an authentic voice of representation for the marginalized subaltern women in the south.

DISCUSSION

First, Spivak attempts to give her own definition of the word 'women.' She deconstructs the word 'woman' in very simple terms: it rests on the word 'man.' She determines that a solid definition of feminism cannot be constructed. She says,

No rigorous definition of anything is ultimately possible, so that if one wants to, one could go on deconstructing the opposition between man and woman, and finally show that it is a binary opposition that displaces itself.

In the second section she reflects her thoughts. Moving to Derrida's deconstruction, Spivak uses reversal-displacement morphology. In deconstruction, the concepts of gender, race and class rests on essentialism. This aspect of deconstruction would not allow the establishment of a hegemonic 'global theory' of feminism. Derrida supports feminism in earlier works but his later work becomes solipsistic and marginal. In third section, she refers to a novel of Margaret Drabble's **The Waterfall**. Drabble tries to show her protagonist Jane facing problems due to race, class and marginalized of sex. Drabble manipulates Jane only to examine the conditions of production and determination of micro structural heterosexual attitudes within her chosen enclosure. Jane's motto is 'I prefer to suffer, I think' and it would be a lesson to the third person that grounds Jane under their minds. In the fourth section, she asserts that the reality of the position of women is entirely different from the fiction world. Spivak quotes an example from Seoul, South Korea where women are beaten for standing up for their rights. It shows the complexity of feminism and the importance of avoiding essentialism in trying to solve some issues.

Marxism defines feminism with the theory of textuality. It discusses with the text of the forces of labor and production, circulation and distribution. Marx defines this theory as use-value, exchange-value and surplus-value. Spivak allegorizes the

relationship of woman within this particular triad. So, woman is a production of surpluses, for the man who owns her, or by the man for the capitalist who owns her labor power. The man retains legal property rights over the product of a woman's body. Later, she records her thought to determine historical antagonism between Marxism and Feminism. Woman is viewed just as Marx's idea of surplus-value. Though she compares with woman with the surplus-value, they are not seen as commodity. But they are acting as a labor force without any subsistence-wage.

Freud in relation to the concept of consciousness explains a notion—the nature of pain as the deferment of pleasure. The problem to identify of pleasure and unpleasure should not be operated through the logic of repression. Here, Freud introduces the concept of normality and productivity. Freud is clear with the idea—“the idea of the womb as place of production.” It refers to the child birth. But Spivak redefines the nature of pain.”Pain does not operate in the same way in men and in women.” Once again Spivak deconstructs the idea to declare womb-envy as something interacts with penis-envy to determine human sexuality and the production of society. Spivak analyzes it through ‘the discourse of the clitorises where Spivak says that woman is not a reproducing machine and such an attitude should be condemned. American Lesbian feminists give a response to this discourse: phallic is omnipotent and clitoris is the reproductive extension to the phallus.

Shenoy's feminine characters Diksha, Vibha and Tanu suffer in society in different atmospheres. Diksha, the protagonist of the novel gets married to Sandeep because of the mistake that she commits at the age of 16. It is not a mistake but it is all due to her love for Ankit. This love is seen as a mistake in the eyes of parents and society. Diksha suffers because of this. But Ankit, the one who loves her is free to move around with his studies. Is her gender the only reason to punish? After eighteen long years Diksha again has the choice of uniting with Ankit and starts to love him and have relationship with him. It may be her first love or the only love. But she has lived with Sandeep for eighteen long years and had child named Abhay. What does this part of the Diksha's life refer to? Was she really happy with Sandeep? No everything is made out of compulsion. She is unable to express her feelings to anyone. Her parents view her as a curse. Diksha has to suffer all the implications that made by society. It took eighteen long years for her to decide that she is still in love with Ankit and can no longer continue her married life with Sandeep. Women are still suppressed in society. They cannot express their views. Though women are educated and have a job, they do not have the choice of decision making, to interpret or to make a suggestion regarding their own life. Shenoy beautifully portrays this through the character Diksha.

SUMMATION

People's mindset can change because their minds are already ideologically loaded. The views on women should change. Spivak determines that one should not mistake the grounds on which the ideas of world and self are produced. Therefore, certain kinds of human thoughts are presupposed by the notions of world and consciousness. Spivak explains the presupposed notion, which is related to women through a slogan 'Housework is Beautiful.' Though women come out for education and job, still they are following this notion. In each and every family man acts as capitalist and women are treated as labor-force. If feminism is all about the freedom of women, then what is freedom? Freedom is about Liberty which allows people to do things that they want. But this society has not developed that much. Though there are several changes, some men still behave like animals. With this background, the concept 'feminism' cannot be discussed. To sum up, the ideological framing of mindset about society should change and then only the view about women would also change.

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Gregor Samsa: An Alienated Self in Franz Kafka's "The Metamorphosis"

RAMYA, R

ABSTRACT

The science and computer age has tilted the whole concept of reality upside down. The humanness that was supposed to be in women and men has evaporated and turned them into machines. They have started to act literally as robots with no emotions, feelings and concern for each other. The world has become too selfish and cruel. They see each other only as a profitable entity and when they do not have any crucial role to play in their life they trash them which sounds as easy as emptying the recycle bin in the computers. As a result they face the repercussions such as rejection, seclusion, alienation, isolation, dehumanization etc. The potential danger of alienation is uncovered in Franz Kafka's novella, **The Metamorphosis**.

Keywords: alienation, dehumanization, rejection, suicide.

INTRODUCTION

In today's context, the whole idea of survival has become a stressful and challenging concept in the minds of each and every individual. The human nature in man slowly and gradually degrades losing its essence, and everything has become absurd, having isolation, alienation as its remnants. The themes of isolation and alienation are detailed through Franz Kafka's character in **The Metamorphosis**. Gregor Samsa is a caricature of the isolated dehumanized people in contemporary society.

DISCUSSION

The transition period from a human to a beetle slowly occurs in series both in the mind and body of Gregor Samsa. Before the metamorphosis, Gregor Samsa is alienated from his job, family, society, emotions, feelings, and the ambiance where he had lived for nearly five years because of the lack of his psychological connections

with the members of the family and society. These lacks in communication finally draw him away from the human race, and finally from his own physical state—his body. Man as a social animal should have communion with others living around him. But because of the fast moving, competitive world it has become scarcely possible to pay any heed to others' cry and one's decent living sprouts placing others' lives at stake. It is not that people prefer to be evil, but the very question of survival gets the priority.

Dehumanization occurs for mainly two reasons: when the benefactor becomes impotent (in financial state), and when the benefactor becomes a threat to the others' lives. Gregor Samsa is only seen as an entity that supports the family like a chair supporting a person. He is isolated by his parents when his presence or even his existence itself is no longer a profit but a burden. Likewise, his sister Grete finds him a threat to her future. So she deliberately denies the fact that it is her brother, who has transformed into an insect,

“... I will not utter my brother's name in front of this monster, and thus I say only that we must try to get rid of it.” (84) Also she constantly insists her parents on getting rid of him,

“It must be gotten rid of,” cried the sister.”That is the only way, father. You must try to get rid of the idea that this is Gregor...” (86)

The alienation that occurs because of the transformation can be said to be a continuation of his previous life—the life that he lived as a human. Gregor Samsa had remained as an alienated self even before his transformation. According to the text, there is no clue for him to be a social being. His only concern is about his family. This can be seen when he says to his manager, “...on the other hand, I am concerned about my parents and my sister.”(25) He does not lead a normal life of his age, and also there is no reference to his friends in the text. He always prioritizes work and his mother even complains to the manager, regarding his obsessive thirst for work as,

The young man has nothing in his head except business. I'm almost angry that he never goes out at night. Right now he's been in the city eight days, but he's been at home every evening. He sits here with us at the table and reads the newspaper quietly or studies his travel schedules. (15)

His work as a travelling salesman isolates him from his family, as he has to travel to several places to increase the sale and only then the survival in the job lasts forever. Because of his work, he could hardly spend any value time with his family as most present youths working in IT sectors remain an alien to the

family. But at the same time he does not fail his duties. He has the updates of the situations of the family and handles it in a way that exceeds his capacity (which eventually transformed him into an insect). He intends to send his sister, Grete, to the conservatory, as he values her talents, when all the others, including the three lodgers, fail to value it. In spite of his critical state as an insect and the demeaning treatment of Grete, he creeps inside the room nostalgically to encourage his sister and appreciate her talents, as he has done before.

This shows that he does not voluntarily choose the path of alienation. It is indeed a curse bestowed upon him because of his family's position in the social ladder. It is an undeniable fact that the social stratification determines the living style of the people. Because of the business misfortune, it has been five years since his father worked. His mother suffers from asthma, and so she is incapable of working. His sister Grete is too young to work and face hardships. Like many of our teenage girls' expectation for life, Grete too has all rights to dream her life to be filled with bed of roses and not thorns. And so Gregor Samsa ends up being the only bread winner of the family. This very fate of his itself distinguishes him from his family and thus alienating him from the family.

Through his hard work he succeeds in fulfilling the needs of his family and he even takes pride for promoting his family into a better position, by making them live their life in a beautiful apartment, which would have been an unachieved dream in the absence of his hard work.

What a quiet life the family leads, ” said Gregor to himself and, as he stared fixedly out in front of him into the darkness, he felt a great pride that he had been able to provide such a life in a beautiful apartment like this for his parents and his sister. (34-35)

But his achievement is looked down upon by his parents as an unnecessary and impractical thing at the end of the novella, “Now they wanted to rent an apartment smaller and cheaper but better situated and generally more practical than the present one, which Gregor had found.” (96)

The line, “The dreary weather (the rain drops were falling audibly down on the metal window ledge) makes him quite melancholy” (3-4), foretells Gregor's alienation from the society that is supposedly to happen in the end, where his vision to broader outer society, through the window, is completely blocked. The places that he is well acquainted with including the hospital across the street become invisible to him, dragging him far away from the reality.

Gregor's change in food habit also alienates him from the human race. This can be either because he loses his appetite, “Gregor ate hardly any more. Only when

he chanced to move past the food which had been prepared did he, as a game, take a bit into his mouth, hold it there for hours, and generally spit it out again.”(75), or because of Grete’s superficial and transitory treatment as the density of his transformation into an insect gets intense. At first to test his taste she brings him a collection of half-rotten vegetables, remnants of bones, raisins, almonds, cheese, slices of dry and salted bread, all spread out on an old newspaper. But later a sense of anger and hatred is reflected in her treatment towards him.

...the sister now kicked some food or other very quickly into his room in the morning and at noon, before she ran off to her shop, and in the evening, quite indifferent to whether the food had perhaps only been tasted or, what happened most frequently, remained entirely undisturbed, she whisked it out with one sweep of her broom. (71-72)

Gregor further gets alienated when he loses his human identity as Gregor Samsa and transformed into an insect. The cleaning woman’s usual conversations such as “Come here for a bit, old dung beetle!” (74), “Hey, look at the old dung beetle!” (74) that she assumes to be friendly, dehumanizes Gregor and isolates him more from the human race.

Gregor at every plausible moment tries to retain his human identity but all his attempts are futile which dehumanizes him to an extreme level. He believes that he will get into the circle of humanity, when he hears about the arrival of the doctor and the locksmith, but even at last he remains in the periphery. Then he tries to convince the manager, but the manager leaves the apartment in haste which is metaphorically like burning the sole of his foot.

Then he takes steps to communicate with his family and ends up in failure as he is only seen as an unusual, irritating and, wretched being that needs to be tolerated just because it happens to be a member of the family.

Gregor was a member of the family, something one should not treat as an enemy, and that it was, on the contrary a requirement of family duty to suppress one’s aversion and to endure - nothing else, just endure. (66)

When the favorite things of Gregor as a human, like the sweetened milk, the furniture in his room that he cherishes the most become an alien to him, Gregor loses the last strand of his human phase. When the chest of the drawers is planned to remove by his mother and his sister, as an insect it makes him feel happy, for which he later wonders how the lack of communication turns him completely into an insect, dragging him from his real self. The slammed or the locked door also symbolizes his alienation, as it totally blocks his connection to reality with the outer real world.

Grete epitomizes the present generation especially the people who brand their humanity, which is supposed to be a selfless thing, for the sake of publicity and recognition as “humans, ” in society, preferably by the privileged lots. She does not actually empathize with her brother’s situation, rather she makes his situation more terrifying and hard, so that she could do more to him, and could display her humanity or he would be placed in a position to receive help from none others but Grete. In other words, she wants herself to be a demanding entity. This can be because of the enthusiastic sensibility of young women of her age, where the energy level and curious nature reach its zenith. In the present scenario there is no room for real love, care, sympathy, empathy, and compassion.

Humans are seen only as a profitable object. This is mainly applied to parents. Children suck their blood—their energy, money, and love and throw the hood with no compassion. But in the novella the situation is tilted. The Samsas and society alienate Gregor when he becomes a useless object. They do not just alienate him, but they also dehumanize him. The treatment by Mr. Samsa is the cruel of all, as he gives Gregor not only mental pain but also physical pain.

CONCLUSION

On the whole each and every bitter experience that he undergoes from his transformation that isolates him from the family and society forces him to choose the road to death—alienating him both psychologically and physically from the outer world. The filth in the room symbolizes his lost hope. Most people have a wrong notion that death is an ultimate solution for all problems. Like Gregor, as an insect, people shun themselves rather than facing the hurdles that block them from tasting the fruit of life. The common social issues, such as isolation, seclusion, alienation, dehumanization, rejection, suicide are all discussed in this paper with reference to Kafka’s **The Metamorphosis**, with alienation as its major theme. Thus Kafka makes each of his readers to feel a little of Gregor Samsa inside them.

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Man-Woman Relationship in Preethi Shenoy's "The Secret Wish List"

RATHIKA, B

ABSTRACT

Preethi Shenoy, a metropolitan writer, and an emerging Indian Best seller has written five novels to her credit. All the novels are women-centric. The women characters are designed as empowered women. Post-marriage blues lead to the break-up in the man-woman relationship. The women characters are domineering and resolve the problems by themselves. They have resumed the sprint after every fall. They are the epitome of strong will power and determination. They daringly opt for second choice; never feel ashamed of changing partners. But stick to morality and do not try to be submissive to their spouses when they try to subjugate them or discard their desires. It is evident that empowerment of women is possible only with the support of men. Success embraces the life of women in the novel and their life after marriage is complimented and complemented by their husbands for a story happily ever after. The paper attempts to critically analyze *The Secret Wish List* in terms of the man-woman relationship in the contemporary era which has brought the situation of the current status of women in metropolitan cities to lime light.

Keywords: Women-centric, Women empowerment, Career women, Post-marriage blues, New women

INTRODUCTION

Preeti Shenoy's novels entirely revolve around and deal with women characters. She concentrates mainly on the women who were born and brought up in urban areas, leading a posh life without being aware of the hardships that are a part and parcel in the life of rural uneducated women. The young adult themes touched upon by the three writers Preeti Shenoy, Chetan Bhagat and Ravinder Singh may be divided into the personal, social or cultural. The pervasion of the following themes is clearly

evident in all their works but the ranges or gradations vary. All the five novels of Shenoy are tinged with women centric themes.

The women whom readers come across in her works wish to be independent, daring and aspire to get what they wish and dream about. They find the way to empower themselves and attain success in their lives. The women characters are no exceptions to fall in line with the normal human beings by yielding themselves to the emotional and fantasy package called love. They all have ambitions to pursue. They are very determinate and have strong will power. They carve identity on their own. They are submissive but do not yield to anyone else though their positions are at stake.

Women characters create a mild tremor in readers' mind when they are for pre-marital sex. The impressive aspect which we can defend is that they marry men. They are not lustful (except one character in the novel *The One You Cannot Have*). And in the case of extra-marital affairs too they are very judicious. They divorce their husbands or get away from them before they marry the partners of their choice. This is evident in the novel *The Secret Wish List* and *Tea for Two and a Price of Cake*.

Love theme pervades all the novels of Shenoy. Love after marriage is also very essential. It is a binding force to lead a marriage life. Gone are the days when women endured and used to the indifferent or cruel attitude of their spouses. In this era every woman wants to lead a posh life with a loving and caring husband. There lies the problem. Men are mostly practical. It makes them appear rigid and there arises rift : "In relationships, people often get so busy trying to get their own needs met that they forget about the unique needs their partners have, too" says Dr. Seth, a licensed clinical psychologist, Los Angeles in one of his articles.

Diksha, the prime character in the novel, when doing her Standard XI in Chennai falls in love with Ankit, a son of a tycoon. Ankit too loves her immensely. He is Diksha's brother Rohan's friend senior to her by a year. There is a torpedo in their life when the two misbehave during their stay in a renowned school for a competition. Diksha is chucked out of the school and is sent to her grandmother's home in Kerala. Diksha is marginalized by her parents very badly. And out of contempt her parents wish to get her married to Sandeep, a normal guy when she is 19 years of age. She too has got a turning point in her life when she is 34. The life that she has chosen against the wish of her parents and her husband is wholeheartedly supported by her mother-in-law. She applies for divorce and marries her dream hero Ankit in the end.

Craving for identity and earning to do things on her own have become the tragic flaw of Diksha. If Vibha has not stayed in Diksha's home, her life would not

have taken a turn on seeing the dreary routine of Diksha's life. Vibha says: "Diksha which century are you living in, girl? Look at what you have turned into. You have totally metamorphosed into a maidservant and cook." (9)

Vibha is successful in her career. A woman can attain her success in her profession for two reasons: one being an unmarried with her support from her parents and if married, she needs entire co-operation of her spouse and mother-in-law. A successful man or woman has to sacrifice some of their basic wishes in order to cope with the magnitude of their career. In the life of Vipasha, her husband Mohan misses her a lot for she has failed in spending her time with her husband and son. She is very busy in her career. After the demise of Mohan she wishes to be a dutiful mother looking after her child, Monu. Behind every successful woman there is a man. And it can be reciprocated in the life of a woman too. When Sandeep, fails to complement Diksha it is Ankit and the salsa trainer Gaurav have given tremendous support to execute her dreams. Diksha's dreams take a shape because of these men in addition to her mother-in-law. The character of Diksha's mother-in-law is quite adorable."Will it happen in any woman's life?" is a million dollar question. Though a woman craves for her identity, the people live around her should provide her the stage to bring out her role. Diksha's success should be attributed to four: Vibha, Gaurav, Ankit and Sandeep's mother.

Samir in *Tea for Two and A Piece of Cake* and Sandeep in this novel sail in the same boat in showing their interests towards their career, but Samir is immensely attached to his wife. Just for his wife's love and affection he is ready to do anything relinquishing his duty as a father. Sandeep does not enjoy his marital bond. He toils for the welfare of his family but fails to show love, care and affection either towards his wife and son or towards his mother. He satisfies his carnal desire with his in a "functional and hurried way." Diksha dislikes her husband's approach. Apart from monetary benefits all the wives expect the affinity from their husbands. Love after marriage is the cementing force for a successful marriage. Diksha regrets to Sandeep that she has not chosen any career. Sandeep scowls at her saying:

Have I ever stopped you from doing what you want to do Diksha? Didn't you go for your interior design course after marriage? Did I ever stop you? Wasn't it you who decided not to have a career? In a perfect world, both partners in a relationship would share each important role in a relationship equally. But in reality, the chips rarely fall into such neat order. Typically, for example, one partner will be more of a nurturer, financial provider, or social organizer than the other — and the list goes on. (31)

For two people to feel happy in a relationship, each partner must feel needed. Each partner must trust that they have a purpose or function in the relationship that is necessary, acknowledged, and appreciated by the other partner. When men or women do not feel needed and do not have a clear sense of their role in the relationship, they will often start feeling unhappy, defeated, or even empty,” opines Dr. Seth. Even for a simple casual conversation Diksha has to ruminate a lot to approach Sandeep. He backslashes her saying: “How many couples do you know, married for as long as we have been, who have conversations? We aren’t dating or newlyweds for God’s sake.”(32) A woman at home needs someone to share her views. When Diksha chooses Sandeep, he scowls at her and cuts the conversation short by making Diksha repret from conversation with sobs. The negligence of Sandeep makes Diksha move towards Ankit to go to the extent of having an extra-marital affair with him.

Friendship plays a vital role throughout the novel. Initially, Diksha has maintained an intimacy with Tanu, her schoolmate. Until Diksha leaves for Kerala, she has maintained a fair binding of friendship with Tanu. Later when she ticks her wish list one by one, one of her wish lists ‘get drunk’ is made possible by Tanu. Keeping Tanu in the foreground Diksha finds way to meet Ankit often. It is evident that women take the privileges or opportunities to lead an independent life like Tanu. They will not endure anything which comes against their wishes. Tanu has four failed relationships. She has lost her virginity. She buries herself in her career “to get over the pain of breaking up with a guy who each time she thought was ‘the one.’ A woman with high profile like Tanu designs her life as per her wish. Though women like Diksha have many grudges, she maintains silence for she does not have any moral support if she quits Sandeep. Tanu liberates Diksha from her confinement and enables her to tick the wish list. Vibha initiates Diksha to take steps towards her wish list and Tanu complements it. The list goes like this:

1. Take a vacation alone, without family, but with a friend.
2. Go snorkeling.
3. Get drunk!
4. Learn salsa.
5. Wear a bikini.
6. Have a sex with a guy other than husband, just to know what it feels like!”(78-79)

The wife of a conventional man dares to write a wish list. Even Vibha is taken aback when she looks at the last wish. But for Tanu nothing astonishes, she neither reacts nor responds to the wish list of Diksha. She aids her silently to meet Ankit and enableS her to tick the last two wishes.

The empowerment of women makes them act boldly and react violently when they are not treated properly by their spouses. But it is a billion dollar question how many men in the contemporary era are like Ankit and Gaurav, the salsa trainer to understand and adore a woman to the greatest extent. Diksha joins salsa class. By chance Sandeep has visited the place and yells at Diksha rudely besides he treats her brutally before others. Gaurav and Ankit condemn the brutal attitude of Sandeep. Liberation of women or freedom for women can happen only by the support of men folks. Then only the liberty can be enjoyed by women to the fullest. In the case of Diksha, her mother-in-law renders a strong support to Diksha. She accepts the failure of Sandeep as a husband. How many mothers accept the flaws of their sons? When Diksha' parents, her brother and Sandeep look at her like a "convict" after she has returned from Maldives trip with Ankit, her mother-in-law is her aide to release the pressure pent up on her. She says:

I have been witness to all that she has done and I am sorry to say, my son too has been at fault here. Sandeep has indeed been totally absorbed in his work. So much so that Diksha has indeed raised Abhay almost single-handedly..... Perhaps, if he had paid a little attention to what Diksha had wanted and trust me, it was not much, this marriage could have been saved. But it is too late now..... if you all do not support her at least now, you risk alienating her forever." (253)

The world in which the bestsellers tell their stories is though not entirely a fantasy, the male characters in the novels are purely unbelievable in their attitude from protecting their lady love to caring them in the time of distress. They are as Vairamuthu said in one of his songs, "nee azhum podhu naan azha nerndhal thudaikindra viral vendum." They are not egoistic. They treat love and loved ones as dears. They are very successful in their career too and that makes young readers move towards the bestsellers. The prospects of the bestsellers are mainly because of female readers are equal to that of men. They cater to the tastes of both. What we need is that our people should cultivate reading habit. The emergence of technology has made the youngsters sit before T. V or video games which ultimately do not produce anything. By reading the bestsellers they are aware of the present social setup across the nation. They serve society through their writings by embracing simplicity as their tool. They are not trashes or pulp. They come down to the level of common man by paving the way for them to learn something new. Paperback edition of these writers is also one of the reasons for the attention of the public towards them for their works are available at a reasonable price. They drive away the inhibitions of the public in buying books. When the canonical writers demand much attention and money in reading and buying, bestsellers reach the stakeholders through their simplicity and economy in language. This simplification theory makes the bestsellers appealing to even a non-literature student. They tend to buy a copy

and feel proud to own it. The bestsellers have to vie with modern technology and have a tug of war with soaps on T. V. Passion for reading deteriorates. People have multiplied diversions especially youths. Youths are impatient to watch a particular programme on a channel for ten minutes continuously. They skip commercial ads in the break they wish to watch some other programmes.

The friendly advice of Q. D. Leavis for the successful writers of the American publications goes like this:

Avoid morbidity. The Americans don't want gloom, but something that will brighten life. The sun must always be shining. Treat sex reverently, and avoid its unsavory aspects. Don't be vulgar..... Don't discuss religious questions in a manner that would offend national sentiment, and leave evolution out of your writings." (25)

In the view of Dr. Seth,

Men and women often differ in the roles they take on in their relationships. Historically, men have identified more as financial providers and occasional home repairmen, as coaches for their kids' sports teams, and so forth. Women, on the other hand, often manage things at home, offer more emotional nurturance, and take on a role as the family planner by managing bills, planning events, and organizing the couple's or family's social life. Given these differences, it is critical for all men and women in relationships to understand their own unique purpose in the relationship, as well as to acknowledge the unique roles and purpose of their respective partners.

CONCLUSION

Ultimately, men and women have more similarities than differences. It is the exact reason for many relationships being happy ones and they last for years. When men and women become aware of what makes them gender unique, they can maintain male-female relationships better for the future. Hope is not lost altogether.

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The Powerful Conjure Woman: A Folk Heroine in Toni Cade Bambara's "The Salt Eaters"

DR. ROSELIN MARY, A

Where there are preachers, there are also Conjurers;
where there are conversions, there are dreams and visions.
And where there is faith, there is, and ever
continues to be, magic."—Yvonne Chireau

INTRODUCTION

There is a thin line between the religious fervor and the supernatural which speaks loudly about the permanence of folk magic among people of African descent in Chireau's statement. A conjurer incorporates, but is certainly not limited to root workers, fortune tellers, midwives, herbalists, hoodoo doctors, voodoo queens, spiritual mediums, persons born with a caul, or second sight, and others who are gifted with verbal or visual communication with the spirit world.

African-American women writers have shattered the negative stereotypes and created women of strength who mother and nurture each other. African American women with their close link with Nature sharpen their innate skills in healing. Toni Cade Bambara's **The Salt Eaters** unravel the rich storehouse of women's home remedies, nullifying the charge against them as witches. The protagonist Velma Henry's broken psyche is healed by the memories and becomes whole, as in quilting. The present study unfolds the metamorphosis of an African American woman from a witch into a powerful healer empowered to integrate the deteriorating society.

DISCUSSION

There is no static definition of a conjurer, male or female, but Alma Jean Billingslea Brown explains how conjurers are conceptualized. She opines that

the conjurer contains a sacred dimension, a transcendent sphere of awe and untouchability derived from the features of spirit possession, altered states of consciousness and spirit worship. Manifested practically in the acts of healing, divination, and the casting and uncrossing of spells, [a conjurer] works through the use of curative herbs, roots, rituals amulets, fetishes and oral and transcribed incantations. (34)

The term 'conjure,' then, works as an umbrella term for the various forms of healing and spiritual practices of African derivation that appear in African American literature. The conjurer in African American culture is referred to as a 'two-headed doctor,' a person of double wisdom who 'carries power' as a result of his or her initiation into the mysteries of the spirit. Such a person is a medium. The conjurer, as a historical figure, is an evolution and merger of the African medicine man and priest, or spiritual leader that survived the middle passage. This lineage is, as Houston Baker argues, one of the reasons the conjurer is such an esteemed figure in African American memory:

One reason the conjurer is held in such a powerful position in diasporic African communities was her direct descent from the African medicine man and her place in a religion that had definable African antecedents" (79).

The African American women writers' fiction depict the complexities of African American culture and history which reinforce their identity and ethnicity. They integrate "the traditional black female activities" to "express their own characters" employing the folk tradition or kitchen tradition. Gardening, quilting, conjuring, oral tradition and sense of community of their culture bring back the Africanness in them and sustain and give impetus to survive and rise above the adverse effects of slavery and later the segregation.

Toni Cade Bambara was born Milona Mirkin Cade on March 25, 1939, in New York City. After two decades, she earned a bachelor's degree in Theater Arts and English from Queen's College. She had already published her first story, "Sweet Town," in *Vendome* magazine. In the 1960s, Cade was active in both the Civil Rights movement and the feminist movement. In 1970, having taken the name Bambara (the name of a West African ethnic group Bambara), she edited **The Black Woman**, a collection of writings by some of the most well-known African American women of the day. **Tales and Stories for BlackFolks**, an anthology followed by two short story collections **Gorilla, My Love** and **The Sea Birds Are Still Alive** and a novel **These Bones Are Not My Child** proved her forte as a writer.

The Salt Eaters won the American Book Award in 1981. It is a 1980 novel, written in an experimental style and is explicitly political in tone, with several of the

characters being veterans of the civil rights, feminist and anti-war movements of the 1960s and 1970s. The novel is set in the fictional town of Claybourne, Georgia. In the narrative world of Bambara, the search for ancestry is the unconscious quest of the central characters, as it is for Velma in **The Salt Eaters**.

The novel opens in the Southwest Community Infirmary where Miz Minnie Ransom, community midwife and “fabled healer of the district” and Dr. Meadows, trained at Meharry medical school and practises traditional Western medicine, hold hands to heal Velma (SE, 4). With the maxim “HEALTH IS YOUR RIGHT” inscribed above its entrance, the Infirmary’s establishment represents the unified effort of the “Free Coloreds of Claybourne” (SE 120), underpinning the correlation between individual health and wholeness and the communal bonding. In the Infirmary “conventional medical treatments are integrated into the traditional healings” coexists (Hull 69).”Over the years, the spirit of the institution has been shaped and informed by grannies, midwives, root men, and conjure women” (SE 107).

Velma is brought after she attempts to commit suicide. The immediate source of Velma’s psychological insecurity is twofold: torment at home and at work. At home, she is subconsciously troubled by her husband’s past faithlessness; at work, as a computer programmer, she learns about a pending nuclear threat to Claybourne. Velma’s anxiety is personal as well as political. Unable to balance between the two Velma experiences a nervous breakdown during which she has recurring visions of “mud mothers” (SE 38).

Calabashes, yams, and tribal facial markings- West African cultural markers –suggest West African cultural connection. These mud mothers “reflect, on some level, [a] primordial women-centered world [. . .] originating in Africa” (Hull 64)

Velma is startled by them, considering them to be disturbing hallucinations which indicates her ignorance of the West African spiritual tradition. As she is culturally disconnected, she is psychologically fragmented, and to recover from cultural “amnesia.” (SE 258) She should explore new spiritual possibilities. Bambara brings together the Western medicine practitioner, community healer and ancient mud mothers to the healing session.

Old Wife is an ancestral spirit present at Velma’s healing. Old Wife, known as “Old Karen, the Old One, Wilder’s woman, Wilder’s Wife”, (SE 52) is present throughout the novel both as a living being and a spirit. Minnie recalls that Old Wife “had a way of teaching us kids things” (SE 57), and Old Wife serves as Minnie’s mentor “one way and then another” (SE 51). Old Wife “the teller of tales no one would sit still to hear anymore” (SE 52), continues to dispense wisdom, mainly through “messages” (SE 45) to Minnie and represents the trickster figure of

West Africa. Bambara intertwines ancient wisdom and African tradition to project a positive version of the witch image created by Whites.

Characterized as a witch or haint, Old Wife asserts herself “that’s how I chose to manifest myself this time”(295). She epitomizes the sense of freedom and self-determination the African American women had inherited from their African ancestry. She is powerful to decide how, when and where she wants to be present. In creating Old Wife, Bambara has destroyed the stereotypes which restricted the depiction of black women in literature and reaffirmed the presence of African American women with new dimensions. The writer also has set her as a model for the women suffering due to broken familial and social ties, to pursue the principle of self-empowerment. She also demonstrates how they too can consciously choose to “manifest” themselves.

Miz Ransom the healer, mothers ‘dis eased’ Velma Henry and rocks her like a babe. Ransom is a representative of the mothers and ancestors who have been healers.

Miz Ransom rocking that woman like the mothers of all times hold and rock however large the load, never asking whose baby or how old or is it deserving, only that it’s a baby and not a stone. But all that was changing. And that was the part that was really knocking Cora off her center these days. Cause she’d been there and she’d seen the little children brought into the place burned, beaten, stabbed, stomped, starved, drooped, flung, dumped in boiling water. It was a sign of the times. Too much to bear, but she held on and never fainted and never lost her faith. (SE 111)

The healing process takes place in the mindscape. The healer acts as a medium and unfolds the convolutions of Velma’s mind. The non-verbal communication between faith healer, old wife and Master mind strengthens not only their solidarity, but also their healing power. Ruth Elizabeth Burks writes in “From Baptism to Resurrection, ” “the characters speak little, because they have lost the desire to communicate through words. Their thoughts, as conveyed by Bambara, are more real to them than that that is real” (qtd. in **Butler-Evans 173**). For Bambara, this is purposeful; she looked for “a new kind of narrator—narrator as medium. . . a kind of magnet through which other people tell their stories.”

The image of the black woman, historically disparaged, is absolved and glorified in **The Salt Eaters**. The Infirmary is “the real place” and Minnie is “the real thing” (113). Her abilities seem boundless. She can calm fretful infants, treat nervous disorders, cure gynaecological ailments, and dissolve cancerous lumps (113). Her healing powers are far above the modern western medical methods, and her extraordinary capabilities elevate her from subhuman to superhuman level.

In the novel, both Minnie and Old Wife are reincarnated in flesh; thus, their cultural status is elevated beyond the characteristic reverence granted to the ancestors. Unlike ancestral spirits who are reincarnated in spirit only, Minnie and Old Wife are hallowed as physically immortal. Velma, “divinely healthy [and] whole” (148), ultimately earns a laudable status in the novel as Minnie’s successor. Claybourne has Velma Henry, healed and whole, qualified to take up the responsibility of reconstructing the Confirmary, Academy and the Society.

It is this spirit that drives and binds the African American women and enables them to ascertain their ethnicity in their writing. Using the folk tradition, Bambara empowers her women who emerge as distinct and authentic reservoirs of their ethnicity. They also annihilate all the remnants of negative image bestowed on them by the whites. They have chipped off the old block of poor dignity and self-worth from them.

During the process of Velma’s healing, she is not preserved and protected from the world. She is absorbed in it and it is engrossed in her. Her journey through and away from her pain is steered by the collective energy of the “Master Mind” encircling her in the infirmary and the hands of the healer, Minnie Ransom, on her shoulders. Like the tremors which shake the whole Earth, the energy behind her healing gets channelized to extend to the panorama of the community. It spills out over the Master mind and rocks the community with psychic vibration. The throbbing of Velma’s heart and mind back to life, strongly replicates the society’s regaining of life and wholeness.

The conjurer offered a model of behavior by which enslaved Africans could resist the dehumanizing effects of plantation life. Though not every person of African descent believed in the authenticity of their power, conjurers still proved to be a vital to the survival of life in the New World.”The religious specialist, ” as John Roberts calls the conjure figure, “was seen as a kind of generator of life-force and his or her presence in the community as essential to the maintenance of the quality of life that allowed individuals to attain the fullest ontological being” (80).

SUMMATION

The contemporary African American women writers resurrect the conjure woman by reinscribing the figure into their works in such a way that undermines the negative connotations that have been associated with conjuring and African-based religions. Rather than relegate such characters to preconceived categories that belie the diversity and multifaceted reality of African American women, the conjure woman offers an image that more truthfully exhibits the intricacies of black womanhood and folk culture in *The Salt Eaters*.

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Magical Realism and Isabel Allende

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INTRODUCTION

Latin America is believed to be an important location for Magical Realism. The term “Magical Realism” is used to refer to all narrative fictions which present the magical happenings in a realist tone of the narrative and this relates the term to literary realism though it differs from it in the perspective of presenting the fusion of two opposite aspects, the magical and the real thus forming a new outlook. This innovative stance is considered as its hallmark quality since the narrative mode attempts to break down the distinction between the opposite aspects. It enhances the acceptance level of the readers since it tries to provide equilibrium between the ethereal and the real. Magic in magical realism refers to any extraordinary occurrence, particularly to anything spiritual or inexplicable by rational science. It may include ghosts, miracles, odd talents or events, sudden appearances or disappearances, and bizarre atmosphere which go in line with the natural discourse of the story, never inducing rigorous excitement. The ordinariness of magic in magical realism relies on its capability of being accepted both in the supernatural and natural planes. It is understood that unless the magical aspects are accepted as a part of everyday reality throughout the discourse, the writing cannot be acknowledged as true magical realist contribution. Lois Zamora and Wendy B. Farris state in **Magical Realism: Theory, History, Community** that, “. . . the supernatural is not a simple or obvious matter, but it is an ordinary matter, and everyday occurrence - admitted, accepted, and integrated into the rationality and materiality of literary realism” (3).

DISCUSSION

The origin of the term has been variously interpreted by the critics. While Maggie Ann Bowers opines that magical realism is an outcome of the combined influence of Magic Realism which originated in the 1920s and Marvellous Realism which

originated in the 1940s, critic Angel Flores traces its origin to Spanish literature. His essay "Magical Realism in Spanish American Fiction," published in 1955, paved the way for the critical argument on magical realism. He argues in the essay that magical realism is a continuation of the romantic realist tradition in Spanish literature and in its European counterparts (Flores, 109-118). Miguel de Saavedra Cervantes' novel **Don Quixote** is praised as the precursor to magical realism. Regarding this novel, Maggie Ann Bowers observes in **Magic(al) Realism** thus:

Most famously the knight battles with the windmills believing them to be knights he must fight. For his version of magical realism, Flores drew on the interpretation that Don Quixote's belief in what he perceives is absolute but can be seen by his companion, the squire Sancho Panza, and the reader differently. (17)

Jorge Luis Borges is considered as the Father of Modern Latin American Literature and a forerunner to magical realism. Angel Flores considers him to be a true magical realist and claims his collection of short fiction **A Universal History of Infamy** (1935) as the first example of Latin American magical realist writing (Bowers, 38). The fact that Franz Roh, a German critic, is the predecessor of current day magical realists cannot be denied. He has drawn influences from European and Latin American cultural movements. Magical realism can be influenced by European Christianity as much as by, for instance, Native American indigenous beliefs.

Alejo Carpentier's prologue to his novel **El reino de este mundo** (1949; **The Kingdom of This World**, 1975) may be considered as a significant contribution to the evolution of magical realism because the term has become specific with reference to Latin American context since then. Though the term is undeniably influenced by European models the significance of Carpentier's presentation lies in his precise use of cultural beliefs. In his novel, he incorporates voodoo beliefs and practices of African American culture. Latin America is a perfect platform for cross-cultural influences which are best expressed through the magical realist fictions. While Carpentier has presented the pied beauty of cultural concepts, Gabriel Garcia Marquez handles the term to express the violence and confusion of Latin American politics and to create the atmosphere of nostalgia. It is an undeniable fact that Gabriel Garcia Marquez has epitomized the image of magical realism thus reinforcing the connection between Latin America and magical realism. He has influenced many writers to adopt the mode and of them, Isabel Allende is one who is known for her innovative use of the technique. Allende is one among the successful followers whose works, though not all, carry the strong aroma of magical realism. Her debut novel **The House of the spirits** is a popularization of Marquez's style of magical realism and it is a perfect magical realist seat with

occasional nostalgia, expressing individual influences and national tragedy. Laura Esquivel's **Como afua para Chocolate** (1989; **Like Water for Chocolate**, 1993) is a novel which overflows with Allende's favourite obsession – voice for the unvoiced. The narration is through female voice and perspective that it sketches the domestic lives of women with magical realism. As Zamora and Farris notice, magical realism is also used to question the notions of dominant culture. Angela Carter is adept in such exposure, and her novel **Wise Children** subverts the authority of the patriarchal upper class (Bowers, 90-110). The multihued aspects of magical realism as handled by such authors referred to affirm the term's comprehensive use of various religious ideologies, cultural beliefs, cross-cultural influences, voodoo principles, superstitious beliefs, and similar other aspects including current problems. It is noteworthy that Allende does not confine herself in any one of the beliefs; she exploits almost every reigning principles of magical realism.

Allende's novels which stand exemplary of this style reflect her as a faithful adherent to this literary tradition. The realistic tales entwined with supernatural intervention are narrated coherently and the extraordinary aspects neither deviate nor hang on loosely from the main stream of the novels. Allende employs the magical realist technique to mirror various cultural perspectives and individual influences. Allende's sense of attributing magical realism as a normal occurrence exclusive to the Third World nations finds an echo in William A. Davis' article on "The Magic Realism of Isabel Allende" which quotes Isabel Allende thus:

Isabel Allende, a leading practitioner of the literary art of magic realism, thinks that we should perceive with more than our eyes.

"Magic realism is a term used to describe Latin American writers," she said, "but it is really a way of accepting the world that the Third World has always had but that the United States and Europe have lost. It means using instinct and intuition, having a sense of myth and recognizing the tremendous power of nature." (1991)

Allende's usage of magical realist episodes in her novel **Daughter of Fortune** puts forth her universal acceptance of religious ideologies since she gives equal importance to Christian belief, Native Indian belief, and Chinese religious principles. Mama Friesa, the Indian cook of the Sommers family, influences Eliza Sommers since her childhood. Mama Friesa moulds Eliza's life style in such a way that she becomes aware of all that Mama Friesa knows. She has the habit of following her as a shadow, and Mama Friesa's leisure hours afford Eliza with innumerable Indian myths and legends. In addition to the art of cooking, she learns how to read the signs of animals and the sea, to decode the messages in dreams, and to recognize the habit of spirits. While her hands are busy in assisting Mama in the

kitchen, her mind would be filled in by the cruel Indian legends and saint stories. Magical happenings are never thought of as a separate entity in her life but they are recognized as ordinary events of life. The way Mama treats Jacob Todd's illness is neither magical nor extraordinary for Eliza but it appears very ordinary and casual. The occasion illustrates that more than a few teaspoons of honey-sweetened bitter herb tea, there is something which has changed the drastic condition of Todd. He begins to feel a strange type of drowsiness when she passes her hands over Todd's torso and chants incantations closing her eyes. Even before she could finish, he is fast asleep that prolonged for eighteen hours after which he comes to normal position, though not completely recovered.

The year of Todd's visit to Chile is immortalized in the school textbooks and in the memories of grandparents owing to great storms. A series of minor temblors cropped up resulting in the complete collapse of regular life. Processions could be seen on streets praying for God's mercy. One column of faithful followers bears *Cristo de Mayo*, the May Christ, which has been brought from Santiago especially for the procession. It is considered to be the most miraculous image in the world since it is the only one capable of changing the weather. The miracle is explained to Todd thus:

Two hundred years before, a devastating earthquake had leveled the capital, completely destroying the church of San Agustin except for the altar that held this Christ. His crown had slipped from his head to around his neck, where it stayed because every time they tried to put it back where it belonged the earth began to tremble. (Allende, 33)

The magical quality of the statue seems to be very normal that people believe that it has the power to change even the weather.

If magical things are perceived with an ordinary outlook, ordinary things may possess magical powers unperceivable at the outer layer. The author beautifully substantiates this with Eliza's love mania. The magical influence of love is best experimented with Eliza. When Eliza is completely overcome by the strong passion of love, it affects her to the core causing her physical and mental damage. Though Rosa has noted the change in Eliza, it is Mama who takes the effort to free her from the strange net. She approaches a famous *machi*, an ancient *Mapuche* Indian witch, to help Eliza get released from the entanglement. To Mama's dismay, she tells that she could be of little help in this matter since there is no cure for this as everyone knows. In response to the fear of Mama if she would die, she adds that she could not tell anything on this matter and one thing that is very sure is that she is going to suffer a lot in the near future. The root cause for that illness is identified as a strong trouble which has arisen from the fixation of love. She personifies love and

attributes to it the quality of a spirit which completely rules over one's body and soul. She declares that the girl has left her windows open on a clear night and it has crawled into her body when she was asleep. According to her, no spell can cure this. Mama leaves the place disheartened since she knows that if a *machi* cannot change the fate of Eliza, then all other means, including pious ones, will be hopeless. As she has predicted Eliza suffers in the ensuing years and it needs another healer to relieve her from the strange and strong obsession. Allende wants to emphasize the magical quality of love whose fatal touch has spared not everybody.

Tao Chi'en's life style is basically accelerated by magical realist aspects. As a trained acupuncture physician from China, he travels to various places though his anguished soul lingers on his motherland. The episodes concerning his wife Lin are coloured by this technique which is deliberately handled by the author to demonstrate Chinese beliefs and customs. Tao Chi'en, whose beliefs are deep rooted in the Chinese ideologies, serves as a medium of exposing the magical as real. He has rendered his helping hand to Eliza by boarding her secretly in the ship. He is not committed to her in any way, and his attitude is largely that of a third person in the beginning. When her pregnancy is revealed to him at the time of her lethal suffering, he curses himself for having taken risk needlessly. He even thinks of getting rid of her along with the garbage as soon as she dies. Centring on his safety, his mind refuses to accept the dictates of the heart. The sooner she dies, he could get rid of the problem of hiding her. When his mind is relentlessly wandering over this issue, the shift of his standpoint from mind to heart is initiated by Lin's presence. Lin is his adored, deceased wife who died due to lung disease. The presence of Lin diminishes his material safety promoting human safety. When Tao is about to leave Eliza to her fate, he feels a strange presence on his skin. He is scared at first but when he lifts the lamp, with absolute clarity, he can see his beloved wife Lin standing at a short distance from him. It is his first encounter with a spirit that he loses his nerve and trembles. He even goes to the extent of attempting a prayer to exorcise the spirit since he is confused if it is really Lin or a devil which has taken Lin's form to confuse him. But when he senses the nearness of Lin he loses verbal expression:

Then Lin bent down to him with her unforgettable delicacy, so close that he dared he could have kissed her, and whispered that she had not come so far to frighten him but to remind him of the duties of an honorable physician. She herself had nearly bled to death after the birth of her daughter, and he had been able to save her. Why did he not do the same for this young woman? . . . If a woman is prepared to travel the world buried in a nightmarish hole in order to find her man, it is because she has much *qi*. (Allende, 203)

Tao has so many times felt the presence of Lin during meditation but not so close and clear as in the sea voyage. During meditation, he could not distinguish between the real spirit and the illusion of his love stricken soul. But his experience on board is peculiar and concrete when compared to his previous ones. Lin brings out the conscience of Tao to surface. The seeds of serving the sufferers have been deeply sowed in his heart starting with Eliza. Years later, Tao's helping tendency reaches out to all the suffering prostitutes in and around Santiago. He buys the prostitute girls abandoned by their bosses and tries to redesign their destinies after saving them from tragic ends. His success is very rare in this case but he does not yield to the obstacles and difficulties.

Tao's view that he has learnt a lot about women through Lin and Eliza gives equal emphasis to a spirit and a living human being. A complete balance between the two in the life of Tao is explicit since he accepts that the idea of helping the girls is not his but Lin's and the acupuncture master's. On the day he meets the Chinese prostitute girls in China town, his heart melts brooding over their fates. Those Chinese girls remind him of his lost sister and so, he avoids visiting the Chinese whores. When he beholds the fate of the prostitutes who die uncared for, there comes a turning point in his mission. His material outlook is replaced by humane outlook and it shoots up higher with the inspiration of Lin and the acupuncture master. A permanent contact is made between Tao and Lin during the night he has visited the brothel house to gather information about the brothels. As on board, he has not seen her right in front of him but feels her presence in the core of his heart which signifies a change in his stance. Lin stays with him till morning and leaves saying goodbye. The episode gets completed with the visit of the acupuncture master. Till sunrise the question answer session follows and by the time sun rises, he feels rejuvenated by their visits. He no longer sees the prostitutes with indifference but strives to safeguard them thereafter.

On many occasions, he calls Lin and she descends with a smiling face he had been seeing for years. When he starts rescuing the prostitutes, their contact becomes closer than before. Lin is the first to realize the strong bond of love between Tao and Eliza. Without Eliza's knowledge Lin has become her ally, far from being her rival. She even talks with Tao the perfect pair they would make even though Tao is worried about their position in China. During all his critical situations and mental agonies, Lin is the one who consoles him and gives him the right suggestion boosting up his waning spirit. Lin's part is essential in Tao's life since she tunes his mental condition to suit the codes of human values. Her nearness and advice bring back his original self to surface. Ted Andrews elaborates in **How to Meet and Work with Spirit Guides** on the temperament of the spirits as follows:

In fact, spirit beings are often as interested in establishing relationships with us as we are with them. They can serve many functions and take many forms. They can inspire creativity, help us to open to abundance, provide insight and information, and protect or simply serve as companions. We can all benefit from contact with them and often do so without even realizing it. (5-6)

Thus, the episodes concerning magical realism play a pivotal role in deciding the mission of an individual and in giving asylum to a forsaken community.

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Conflict and Cultural Affirmation in Margaret Laurence's "The Fire Dwellers"

SHEILA, J

ABSTRACT

Literature is a mirror; it is also a map and geography of the mind. Canadian writers have produced a variety of genres and the country's literature has been strongly influenced by international immigration. In Canada, the dominant cultures were originally British and French and also aboriginal. The Whiteman's intrusion in to the land of the natives and their contacts with the native women by force or chance, contribute to the misfortunes that engulf the aborigines. The anti-white bias which is used as a literary device sheds unusual lights on what it is to be a dominated minority. In general, Canadian Literature focuses on the survival strategies of the aborigines during the crisis period. The wide variety of literature, both in Canada and India fosters to the growth of a unique, composite identity in each case.

INTRODUCTION

In fact the dual nature of Canadian Literature—French and English and the multiculturalists' Canadian context generate a conflict or interaction which is well articulated in art and literature. The literature of the native people of Canada, for a long time has been neglected and ignored. Late in 1930s it was assumed that Canada's India would become extinct. In his "Indians of Canada" (1932), Diamond Jenness wrote, "doubtless all the tribes will disappear." The Culture theory of the nineteenth century had the belief that the race would disappear, die out or become assimilated which prevailed until the middle of the twentieth century. However instead of disappearing, Canada's natives are increasing at a faster rate.

The Literature thus emanates from oral tradition to the present state of independent aesthetic sublimity, maturity, and standard expression.

Noted for numerous writings, Margaret Laurence is one among the Canada's finest female authors. Her first novel, **This Side Jordan** (1960), is set in Ghana, and **The Prophet's Camel Bell** (1963), is a retrospective account of her experiences in Somaliland. She was praised by Chinua Achebe, a senior Nigerian novelist, for her portrayal of Africans and their dilemmas. Later the Five works set in the Canadian prairie town of Manawaka constitute the major body of Laurence's fiction: **The Stone Angel** (1964), **A Jest of God** (1966), **The Fire-Dwellers** (1969), **A Bird in the House** (1970), and **The Diviners** (1974). In them, through the voices of five memorable women, she has created a multi-faceted Canadian experience through four generations. Throughout her life, Laurence had been lionized by the public and revered by many as a predominant shaper of Canadian literature, setting the pace for other Canadian women like Margaret Atwood and Alice Munro.

DISCUSSION

Stacey MacAindra, the protagonist of *The Fire-Dwellers*, lives in Vancouver with her four children and husband, a struggling salesman. She is battered from all the sides by an urban environment that seems monstrously threatening and also by multiple demands on her life as a wife, mother, and friend. Though she faces much conflict, she is indeed strong, a doer and an activator. In the weeks before her 40th birthday she lives through a series of shocks that brings her an increased acceptance of herself and of the irreversible process of life.

The opening pages of **The Fire-Dwellers** reflect Stacey MacAindra under conflict and tension, carrying out a running conversation with God. She sees God as a judge, and as an anchor of hope. God asks her question - At the Day of Judgment, to what she's done with her life and she gives a reply:

Well, let's see, Sir, I think I loved my kids.
And He'll say, Are you certain about that?
And I'll say, God, I'm not certain about anything anymore.
So He'll say, To hell with you, then.
We're all positive thinkers up here.
Then again, maybe He wouldn't. Maybe He'd say,
Don't worry Stacey (14).

The narrative of **The Fire-Dwellers** incorporates elements of memory and fantasy which are used as a medium to analyze the pressures experienced by a woman in her maternal role. In fact, Stacey tries to pose herself as a good mother and a strict disciplinarian. When the two boys Ian and Duncan start to fight, she tries to control them by telling, "Cain and his brother must have started their

hatred like this.” (19) When Ian gives a testimony on his father: “Dad never makes mistakes” (138) she examines herself and finds to be unreasonably getting angry even for trivial matters.

The problems created between husband and wife is due to lack of communication. Her husband’s work as a travelling salesman means that he spends his time separated from her, and when he is at home he avoids speaking to her. She makes a remark on the attitude of Mac’s as “icy calm of his is worse” (20). This lack of communication between them is displayed in an acute form. When Stacey receives the Paper which had a few questions, “My Relationships With My Family Are: (a) richly rewarding, (b) satisfactory, (c) Less than satisfactory” (61), she is bewildered, feels troubled and does not want to fill it.

The attachment between mother and daughter, Stacey and Katie present a threat to the mother’s sense of her own identity. The daughter’s adolescence is inevitably accompanied by the mother’s ageing, and as Stacey recognizes painfully the approach of her fortieth birthday, she remembers the ways in which her own mother treated her as an adolescent. Stacey’s comparison leads her to recognize that Katie, as she matures, is capable of greater wisdom than her. She is conscious of the headline, ‘Nine Ways The Modern Mum May Be Ruining Her Daughter’ (10-11). This has created awareness that she is doing things wrong, and is falling short in the activity which is central to her existence. Further, Stacey has to recognize that her first child is now a grownup woman and must be aware that—children are not her possessions: they belong to themselves (81). This leads to an inevitable cause of conflict and friction between the generations who get adapted to the multicultural environment.

Stacey’s conversation with her little daughter, Jennifer, and the absence of any reply further emphasizes Stacey’s isolation. This produces in her a crisis of identity pointed out in one of her fantasy conversations in which God says, “Sometimes I wonder if I even exist” and she retorts, “I know what you mean, Lord, I have the same trouble with myself” (14). Talk with her neighbours’ is superficial. Her interior monologue reveals a sense of herself which is affected by the absence of any support or rewarding relationship with other adults. Her closest contact is with Tess Vogler, whose conversation, she feels is preoccupied to the point of absurdity until an overdose reveals her hidden despair.

Stacey suffers greatly from the psychological, if not physical, isolation which is one of the conditions of motherhood in the second half of the twentieth century. She is conscious that she lives “alone in a house full of people” and this psychological state is treated in terms of her confinement and liberty. The effect on Stacey is seen at first in her wish to be “more free” (2). Her longing for freedom

is expressed initially by her indulgence in a walk through the waterfront, a part of the city she hardly knows. Later when she leaves her marital home in anger after a quarrel with her husband, the intensity of her emotional conflict about 'home' is expressed. Later she urges herself to go home, and simultaneously recognizes that "I don't want to go home. I want to go away." (149)

The theme of confinement is reflected and the novel shows Stacey escaping briefly from the home to gratify her own wishes, has taken trouble to arrange care for her family. On each occasion of returning late, she is usually tormented with guilt and anxiety about her children, and always faces the reproaches from her husband or her elder daughter. The conflict between her wish for freedom and her worry about her family are summed up by the presence of Stacey's mind at the beginning, near the end, and at the critical point in the middle of the narrative where she refuses Luke's invitation, of the rhyme:

Ladybird, ladybird,
Fly away home;
Your house is on fire,
Your children are gone (1, 195, 263)

Stacey's dealings with Luke Venturi may appear insignificant. The visits to his timber house in a setting of trees and water are crucial events in Stacey's psychological life. For her, Luke acts as a therapist. He invites her to express her problems; he listens; he reassures her that the fact that she 'took off' is all right; he allows her to cry; he assures her that she is not alone; and above all he makes her the focus of attention, thus addressing the problem that her preoccupation with her family has submerged her own identity:

'Come out. From wherever you're hiding yourself.
See - if I look very hard, I can just about make you out in there,
but miniature, like looking through the wrong end of a telescope' (155).

Luke does further important things for Stacey. By inviting her to come away with him, he forces her to make a choice—to go back to her children—and thus to recognize where her priorities lie. Convinced that life has more to offer than the tedious routine of her days, Stacey MacAindra yearns to recover some of the passion of her early romance.

The Fire Dwellers helps us to rediscover all the richness of the commonplace and ends with hope. The two-year old Jen who didn't speak at all begins with a caring sentence, "Hi, Mum. Want tea?" In bed, Stacey and Mac talk to each other.

She moves towards him and he holds her.
Then they make love after all, but gently, as though
consoling one another for everything that
neither of them can help nor alter (279).

At the end Stacey is identified as a victor and emerges as a doer and an activator. The news presented through the media reaches the consciousness of Stacey. Every information, advertising, and entertainment draws her attention. She has a natural anxiety to preserve her children from harms like road accidents but the 'Ever Open Eye' of television, brings into her home an awareness of the horrors of the war in Vietnam, exacerbates her worries about the possibility of war and nuclear attack. Magazines and journals, directed towards women, have demoralizing effects which exacerbate Stacey's difficulties. Her mind returns repeatedly, in the earlier part of the novel, to titles of the articles she has read. These titles convey a relentless message to wives and mothers about the need for self-improvement. Through **The Fire-dwellers**, Margaret Laurence echoes more of the time, the temptation close to our hearts and minds to the terror of the world we live in. Stacey knows that the world may end in flames- set off with bombs; and she cares for others.

CONCLUSION

It is understood through the writings of Margret Laurence that the native settlers of the world are under pressure in terms of their survival. Modern civilization has created a conflict in their lives. Margaret Laurence and others like her are informing to their people on survival strategies. The white Europeans are alien to the land of aborigines. They conquer and pollute it, bringing in trouble to the native people who are tied to the land and who have a harmonious relationship with the land for centuries. The truth is visible with the plight of all aboriginal people all over the world. They are facing a great cultural conflict in terms of their identity and survival, and the solution is only what Laurence suggests so powerfully in her writings. The whites require to be "rooted" just like the natives. Reconciliation between the two communities is necessary to achieve a harmonious existence.

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Received Pronunciation vs. Tamilized English: A Study in Contrastive Phonetics

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ABSTRACT

There is something strange about the way English pronunciation skills are taught and learnt in India. English is learnt as a second language by almost all Indians except a tiny minority of Anglo-Indians. Naturally, L1 influence (if not interference) on the learning of English in Indian context is inevitable. Consequently, Indian accent has become marked. Deviations can be assessed only in relation to some native variety like RP that is used as a pedagogical framework in India. A study and knowledge of the phonological system of both English and Indian languages is useful to teachers and students of English alike from the pedagogical point of view. This paper makes an attempt to contrast RP and the Tamilized English and thereby foreground the deviations. Such a contrast might perhaps motivate students and help teachers of English in Tamil society to evolve strategies to approximate their pronunciation skills to the Received Pronunciation.

Keywords: Contrastive Analysis, Received Pronunciation, Tamilized English, Second Language Acquisition.

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Neither much research nor thoughtful reflection is necessary to notice the 'strange' Indian accent when educated Indians speak English. It is far away from the Received Pronunciation of British English that has some historically conditioned pedagogic advantage over other national dialects like American English or Australian English. 'Indian English' is an umbrella term used to refer to the speech of educated Indians and it has a pan-Indian intelligibility with marked and describable influences of regional languages of the country. Naturally and logically, Indian English is closer to Indian languages than to the native variety that is taught within the

Indian academia. If the input is the Received Pronunciation of Standard British English, then the output ought to be the same, but it is not so! Without consciously teaching/learning Indian English, it is being learnt. It leads to communication breaks and un-intelligibility sometimes. Particularly, when Indian students try for higher studies abroad, they have to clear the International English proficiency tests like GRE, TOEFL, or IELTS and they face several problems in the listening and speaking sections of these tests. They arise out of the accent with which they are unfamiliar. They have neither receptive nor productive capacity. It is presumed that if teachers of English know the 'blind spots' in advance, they can plan their teaching strategies for effective teaching of English pronunciation skills.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions were framed to focus the researcher's attention on the issue:

1. Why does Indian English sound different from a native variety?
2. Can knowledge of Contrastive Analysis help teachers devise effective strategies of teaching English pronunciation?
3. How does the English phonological system differ from that of Tamil?

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

There are a few research works and research papers published related to pronunciation. **S. Upendran (1980)** attempts a study to measure the intelligibility of English spoken by educated Tamils. He has tested it with 10 native Tamil speakers and 100 listeners from India, America, British and Nepal. The speakers influenced by Tamil phonology were found to be the most intelligible by both Indian and Non-Indian listeners. **V. M Sundar's** dissertation (1993) examines the vowel length in Tamil using instruments and compares with English. The findings prove that the contrast between short and long vowels is phonetic and phonological in both English and Tamil. The ratio of length varies between Tamil and English. Open vowel is longer than close vowel in both languages. The duration of the vowel in Tamil is affected by the adjacent sounds as in English. **Thayal Nayak (2001)** attempted an analysis on the syntax sensitive phonological rules of Tamil and English. She has traced some differences and negative transfer or interference in terms of phonological rules such as tonicity, tonality and re-syllabification. **J. John Sekar (2014)** examines the phonemic structures of English and Tamil in order to locate the 'blind spot' in the teaching and learning of English pronunciation. He has listed some differences of phonemic structures of English and Tamil, which will be useful for the learners. **Duli Babi (2015)** attempts a study among five native Tamil

learners to identify whether they are able to pronounce all fricatives in English and found that Tamilians are not able to produce all the fricatives of English.

DISCUSSION

English used/spoken by educated Indians is called 'Indian English.' Spoken English in India has more glaring deviations than written English from the Standard English that is pedagogically promoted through textbooks and other reference sources. With advances in communication technologies, the deviations from and differences between Indian English and British or American English are seen glaringly. A kind of desire and motivation is also created in the minds of college students to approximate their accent to a particular native variety. But this desire goes unnoticed in the language curriculum that innocuously and innocently stresses the importance of Received Pronunciation. They have twin needs: to improve their spoken English and to approximate and align their accent with the native, national variety.

Contrastive Analysis is an approach to the study of Second Language Acquisition. It involves predicting and explaining learner problems on the basis of a comparison of L1 and L2 to determine similarities and differences. Its goal is primarily pedagogical in nature: to increase efficiency in L2 teaching and testing. Robert Lado (1957) states this clearly in an introduction to his book. There are five assumptions of Contrastive Analysis:

1. An L2 learner has already learnt a set of habits and the rules of the system of his L1.
2. When the learner comes to L2, he has to learn a new set of habits and the rules of another system.
3. Wherever there are dissimilarities in the system of L1 and L2, the learner would face difficulties.
4. The difficulties would arise primarily because of the interference of the habits and rules of the first language in the learning process and the learner would tend to transfer features of his L1 into L2.
5. By preparing a systematic contrastive description of the two languages, it would be possible to predict all the problems that the learner would face in learning the new language.

Contrastive analysis thus, not only claims to offer a complete explanation of the causes of the learner's faults in terms of interference and transfer of features of L1 into L2, it also claims to be able to predict the errors that the learner would most likely commit. These differences or dissimilarities would constitute the problem areas or '**blind spots**' for L2 learners.

The phonemic structures of English and Tamil are different and this differing structures act as barriers to approximating or acquiring the accent proper. Two, the character of English pronunciation is highly complicated and chaotic though it is neatly studied and presented by scholars in the West. On the one hand, English has 44 speech sounds: 12 monophthongs, 8 diphthongs, 22 consonants, and 2 semivowels. They are well-researched and well-defined. It is characterized by word-stress and sentence-stress in the sense that it is not associated with a particular syllable of a word. Word stress is both fixed and free. Moreover, it is a stress-timed language in the sense that the stressed syllables tend to occur at the regular intervals of time in an utterance and that the time that is taken to produce one stressed syllable is the same as is taken for production of any number of unstressed syllables that occur in between two stressed syllables. It is also a poly-tone language in the sense that there is a minimum of four basic tones in utterances. They are fall, rise, fall-rise, and rise-fall. They have both grammatical and attitudinal functions.

On the other hand, Tamil vowels are classified into 5 short, 5 long and 2 diphthongs. Consonants are classified into three categories: hard, soft, and medium of 6 each. The 12 vowels and 18 consonants combine to form 215 compound characters (consonant vowels) by placing a vowel after a consonant. It does not have aspiration-unaspiration distinction. Tamil is a syllable-timed language meaning that all syllables are given equal weight. Consequently, it has no primary or secondary stress system on words. It is also a mono-tone language and therefore it does not recognize sentence stress either.

Tamil is a phonetic language and therefore there is one to one correspondence between sounds and letters; whereas English is an unphonetic language in the sense that there is no one-on-one correspondence between sounds and letter. It is not spoken the way it is written and conversely, it is not written the way it is spoken. One letter represents more than one sound and conversely, one is represented by a combination of letters. The phonology of Tamil and English is different from each other. For instance, English permits words end in voiceless plosives whereas Tamil doesn't. Naturally, Tamils add a vowel to such English words that end in voiceless plosives as in 'shirt' instead of 'shirtu.' Moreover, the palato-alveolar constant represented by 'sh' is not available in Tamil and as a result, /s/, an alveolar fricative, is substituted.

CONCLUSIONS

Contrastive Analysis of Tamil and English provides Indian teachers of English with a list of inventory of phonological features of L1 and L2 so that they can foresee the problem areas from the point of view of learners of English and they can prepare appropriate strategies to teach English accent right from the beginning. Otherwise,

a mere teaching of English sounds and accent will not yield any tangible fruits, as it has not done so far. Teachers can attend a short course on Contrastive Analysis or take diploma courses like PGDTE from EFLU or IGNOU.

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Social Media: A gamble with the English Language

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ABSTRACT

Language is an essential tool for communication and without language this process never takes place. We live in a world ruled by technology which has brought about an enormous change in society and it has had huge impact on the English language as well. This technology has given birth to a new platform called social media. It is a place where personal, political, cultural and all other kinds of communication merge on a large scale. The rigid structure of written English is now being replaced by emerging (written) varieties of the language which are exclusively the products of social media. This paper attempts to throw light on how technology has influenced the English language with the advent of social media such as Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp and the like. It also focuses on the pros and cons of the impact that it has exerted on the English language.

Keywords: Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, Emoticons, Acronyms, Texting speed, Urban dictionary.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

With Social media coming into action there have been various arguments on the effect that it has had on the English Language. Some consider the change in the language as positive but some are totally against it. Some say it is killing the language and some argue that it is time saver. A linguist **John McWhorter** studied the language of texting and he argued that this form of texting can be applied to social media because abbreviations, emoticons and idioms are the main component of social media messages. Another critic **Kate Wilson** argues that Social media encourages people to communicate with each other.

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

India was colonized by the British for almost three hundred and fifty years as they exploited it for various natural and mineral resources, but Indians cannot deny that in return they have inherited something much more important than they could have ever imagined: The global English language. The English language has been accepted as official language in many countries. It helps people in every aspect whether it is trade, commerce or communication. It has brought many cultures together, people from different countries or cultural background could easily communicate with each other. Everyone knows that change is really important to survive in this world, but what if the change itself leads to annihilation? Technology is a rapid growing phenomenon which has influenced almost everything for example manual labor turned into machine work, landline phones turned into mobiles and tablets, letters turned into E-mails, cartoons turned into animations and many more. But all these things have had no effect on the English language until the advent of a new platform commonly known as social media. Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, and the like that are social networking platforms have had a great influence on the English language. Some consider this change in the usage of English as good whereas some are against it. Some people say that social media is not ruining the language but some say that it is changing the way people express themselves.

AIM OF THE STUDY

This research paper aims to investigate whether the English language is really getting affected by the use of social media or it is developing into a better form of communication.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research questions that acted as signposts in the present study are:

1. Is Social media affecting the usage of the English Language?
2. Is it necessary to worry about the changes taking place in the usage of language?

DISCUSSION

Human interaction with technology has influenced the English language to a great extent. The formal way of writing has turned into informal because the language that they use for communication in social networking platforms are modifiable than formal writing. Social media has played a great role in introducing new words and new meanings for old words. Facebook has had an upper hand in offering new meanings for the words like page, troll, profile, wall, like and the like. People have

reduced their sentences into short phrases and acronyms, which are considered as time saver. For example:

- a) Normal sentence: Hey, What are you doing
Social Media: **Hey wazzup?**
- b) Normal sentence: Shall we go out for dinner?
Social Media: **Diner 2nyt?**

One reason for this kind of language use could be the inconvenience which is caused due to the small keyboard on mobile phones, which in real sense, saves time and at the same time the message is also conveyed. Twitter, another social networking platform, restricts its users to express themselves in 140 letters. Another important component of twitter is the hash tag (#) which people use very often that it has also been used in other social networking platforms. People have even started to use it in everyday texting.

The language of social media has given birth to two very important things without which a conversation never ends and they are: Emoticons and Acronyms. Emoticons and acronyms are used so often that the Oxford dictionaries have declared an emoticon which is “Tears of joy” as the word of the year. We tend to use these emoticons every now and then whenever a joke or any troll images on WhatsApp, Facebook or Twitter is received. To some extent social media has helped people to bring in notice of new coinages that one has made. People need not use the old publication method to announce to the world that something new has been found. People just update it on social media and within a fraction of second it reaches the vast audience. Social media has been successful in modifying our vocabulary, making us an addict of texting and also has increased the speed at which message is texted. New acronyms have come into existence because of the social media such as “LOL- Laugh out loud”, “ROFL- Rolling on the floor laughing”, “TTYL- Text to you later”, “BTW- By the way”, “GTG- Got to go”, “OMG- Oh my God”, “AMA- Ask me anything”, “TKS- Thank you so much”, et al.

The shortening up of words and sentences into emoticons, acronyms have increased the speed of typing. Earlier people took more time to reply to a text message or Email but nowadays that burden is gone and people reply instantly to text messages because the content of the text mostly consist of emoticons or acronyms which are quite easier to type than typing a full sentence. Though this type of texting is considered informal but still people tend to use it as it is a time saver. Most of the people in this world use social networking platforms for communication so it has become an important part of their lives to use such shortened language which they can understand easily. Though much positive remarks have been made on the

changes that take place with the English language but still the fact cannot be denied that it has very much affected the rigid structure of the English language which is on verge of getting shattered because of the continual exploitation in the field of the social media. The English language stands tall because of the grammatical rules that form the core of the language but with the advent of this social media many young people write incomplete or grammatically wrong sentences or they use such slang words which are not present in the English dictionaries. On the one hand social media encourages people to communicate with each other but at the same time it creates such a new set of vocabularies which many users find it difficult to understand.

Urban dictionary is a phenomenon which came into existence because of the effect of social media on the English language. It is totally different from regular dictionaries. It consists of words with secondary meaning that are the results of social media. Meanings of all the acronyms can be found here and it is hard to admit but the younger generation use urban dictionaries more than they use the normal ones. One just cannot access the meaning in normal dictionaries of the examples of the acronyms that has been cited earlier in this paper. They have to use the urban dictionary or take the help of the internet. Urban dictionary has a wider reach because acronyms are being used in daily verbal communication nowadays.

SUMMING UP

Social media has become an important part of everyone's life and it is impossible to separate them. It is clear that social media has changed the way people speak and express themselves. The English language has undergone a tremendous change which is accepted and rejected simultaneously by several people. The younger generation has become an addict of this social media language that they tend to forget the real spellings of words in the English language. In this scenario social media has played a vital role in spoiling the knowledge of youngsters who use Facebook, Twitter and WhatsApp and the like. All the positive and negative remarks on social media are correct but still it is a kind of exploitation of the English Language. It will not be of much surprise to see the continuous usage of such slang words getting reflected in academic writings if the present status of the English language continues to be the same. The gamble of social media which people have taken with the language has put it at stake.

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From Suffering to Self-actualization: A Study of Patrick White's "Voss"

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ABSTRACT

Patrick White, the Australian writer and the recipient of the Noble prize for Literature regards suffering as an integral part of the progress toward the redemptive vision. He insists the value of suffering in almost all his novels that finally turns to be the knowledge of the self. This article attempts to explore how actualization of self takes place through the experience of love in Patrick White's novel *Voss*. It stresses on the need for simplicity, humility and suffering as the essential conditions for self-realization. Voss, the German explorer, finally embodies the belief that simplicity and suffering are the conditions for the re-making of man.

INTRODUCTION

Sufferings are the occasions of growing closer to God. It is only through sufferings that an awareness of physical, intellectual and spiritual strengths are created and the personality is built. Suffering is not only an excruciatingly painful physical experience, but also a mentally benefiting spiritual experience and it is by suffering that an interior journey towards self-actualization takes place. Self-actualization is the process of complete realization of one's own potential and of one's true self. Self-actualization involves assessing one's life, one's motives, accepting one's own fallibility, willingness to change, learning from good things, assessing one's own progress and realizing one's own dreams. After enduring many sufferings, self-actualizers feel calm, safe, accepted, loved, loving and alive. Since actualization of self through suffering is a universal experience, it is at the heart of all literatures.

DISCUSSION

Patrick White's *Voss* is the product of the common experience of human suffering and isolation. Adrian Mitchell considers *Voss* as White's "crowning achievement" (61) and as Xavier Pons remarks:

Voss is the story of a man who thinks he is God and who sets out to cross the Australian desert in order to prove, both to himself and to other people, that he is not subject to the limitations and weaknesses inherent in human nature. (7)

Patrick White here presents the quest for illumination and the search for knowledge of the true nature of mankind. The setting of the novel, Colonial Australia is used as the climatic metaphor of the human psyche. It is the launching ground for a mythical voyage of exploration into the vast space of the human self. In the novel, Johann Ulrich Voss, a German explorer goes through a process of self-realization, and in the end experiences illumination, realizing his own true nature.

Johann Ulrich Voss, a German, sets out on an expedition in 1845, to explore the uncharted territories of the Northwest of Australia, "He was an uncouth, to some he was a nasty man". (V 26) Voss is sponsored by Mr. Bonner, Mr. Sanderson and Mr. Boyle. He is accompanied by Palfreyman- an ornithologist, Frank Le Mesurier- a young man who is looking for the purpose of life, Harry Robarts, a physically strong simple English boy, Turner, a drunkard, Judd, an ex-convict, Ralph Angus, a landowner, Dugald, the old man and Jackie, the younger one. Voss has met Mr. Bonner's niece, Laura Trevelyan and he has developed a strange friendship with her. During his expedition, Voss writes to Laura, proposing marriage, and she replies with a letter of acceptance.

After travelling for a few days, Dugald complains against his old age and decides to return to Jildra. Frank Le Mesurier, one of the members in the expedition thinks deeply about life and writes poetry secretly in a notebook. Everyone in the expedition is sick and weak and the compulsory rest during the rain returns some of their strength. After the rain, the party emerges from the cave in spring. They encounter a group of aboriginals who might have stolen their equipment. As Palfreyman goes across to them to ask about the equipment, they stab him. After Palfreyman's funeral, Judd announces his decision to break away from the party and return. Turner and Angus join him.

Voss moves ahead with Harry Robarts, Le Mesurier and Jackie. He has a vision of Laura with her hair shove off. In Sydney, Laura falls ill. She keeps constantly thinking about Voss. Jackie has disappeared. When Le Mesurier finds that Voss cannot do anything for him, he cuts his own throat though Voss trusted in God. Harry dies of exhaustion in the hut of twigs. Voss grows closer to Laura in his mind.

As the aborigines compel Jackie, he kills Voss with the very knife Voss has given him. In Sydney, Laura's fever breaks and simultaneously she cries, "O God, cried the girl, at last, tearing it out. 'It is over. It is over'". (395) Because Laura guesses that something must have happened to Voss. At Potts Point, Colonel Hebden who helps Laura in finding Voss introduces to Judd that Laura is Voss' friend. Judd tells Laura that Voss has "... left his mark on the country" (443). The blacks talk about him everyday. Judd finally concludes that, in the honest opinion of many of them, Voss "... is there in the country, and always will be" (443).

Voss, the hero, a half-crazed German explorer is aggressively romantic and unrealistic about human limitations in the world. He is possessed with too noble a conception of himself, resisting even a momentary lapse into normal humanity. He has rejected the choices of salvation and fulfilment offered by religion and society to every human being. He bluntly rejects the healing forces of love and faith in realities of life and weakness. He is ambitious of achieving the Absolute. He considers himself to be God. In the words of Judd:

He was never God, though he liked to think that he was. Sometimes, when he forgot, he was a man. He hesitated, and fumbled. 'He was more than a man, ' Judd continued, with the gratified air of one who had found that for which he had been looking. 'He was a Christian, such as I understand it'. (443)

Though he does not have much spiritual faith, Laura offers to pray for him at all times. He worships with pride more than with God. He himself agrees, "... I worship with pride". (89) To him exploration is inevitable. He wishes to endure everything that comes across in his life. By his endurance he thinks that he can assert his ambition throughout the torturous journey in the desert. For Voss, the long journey in the desert is a "...search of human status" (393).

Voss has admiration for the Australian desert which also conjures up the German nostalgic feelings of his childhood. He feels the inevitability about his exploration. Replying to Frank Le Mesurier, a companion in the expedition, Voss states, "'Yes', answered Voss, without hesitation. 'I will cross the continent from one end to the other. I have every intention to know it with my heart.'" (33) Thus Voss is so faithful and honest. His shocking immersion in his private world brings him daemonic powers towards self-humiliation and the humiliation of their relations.

Voss assumes superhuman qualities and expect others to admire him in the process of realizing his ambitions. For Voss, humility is detestable, repentance, a weakness. He himself says, "Ah, the humility, the humility! This is what I find so particularly loathsome". (89- 90) He claims that one's will is his destiny. He asserts himself in his reply to Laura, on an occasion, "Your future is what you will make it. Future", said Voss, "is will." (68)

Voss' inner exploration is metaphorically represented by the terrific journey through the desert. The influencing relationship between the protagonist and the other characters, especially the love-link between Voss and Laura acts on the rapidly shrinking self of Voss and leads him through a series of epiphanies to the final denouement. The love relationship between Voss and Laura brings a gradual change in the life of Voss. Voss chooses to be the leader of an expedition financed by Mr. Bonner, a rich business man. It is at this time he happens to meet Laura Trevelyan, cousin of Mrs. Bonner and falls in love with her. Voss initially does not see any physical beauty in Laura. Nor she is attracted to him physically. On the contrary, she is rather detested by his physical ugliness like thin body, ugly hairs and beard and even awkward gait in peculiar trousers. But the most important irony is that both of them are awakened to each other's spiritual beauty though rather slowly. They meet only four times and for very short periods, hardly enough to establish the kind of bond that they seem to share. Yet they feel married to one another. The communication between them is founded on a fine blending of telepathic awareness and dream sequences.

All four meetings take place within the first quarter of the novel. Laura recognizes Voss' exceptional gift at their very first meeting. While the Bonners discuss the expedition, voicing their doubts about his knowledge of the terrain, Laura states emphatically, "It is his by right of vision". (29) This prophetic voice that Laura has in the first part of the novel is borne out by later events. During their second meeting at a picnic, while Voss talks of his expedition, she tells him that she has realized that his expedition is a 'pure will.' Their third meeting takes place during the party which the Bonners give for the members of the expedition. When Voss and Laura attend the meeting arranged by the Bonners, they happen to meet each other privately on the terrace in the dark. It is exactly there when they try to understand each other's deeper problems and emotions. Laura tells him, "You are so vast and ugly...; I can imagine some desert with rocks, rocks of prejudice, and yes, even hatred. You are isolated. That is why you are fascinated by the prospect of desert places..." (87-88). But at the same time she says, "I am fascinated by you... You are my desert." (88) Likewise Voss senses in her a deep spiritual passion in spite of her apparent atheism, "You are an Apostle of Love masquerading as an atheist for some inquisitorial purpose of your own" (90). Thus both of them feel a spiritual attraction for each other which is confirmed by physical intimacy. They have understood and sympathized with each other. Their wavelengths have been almost the same although Voss has not declared his love for her yet. Voss reads aloud from the book of German poems that Mrs. Bonner gives him and though she does not understand the language, Laura feels she has united with him.

Voss wishes to know what her imagination would make of him. She describes his character to him with remarkable accuracy: his isolation, his predilection for selfishness, even hatred. There is no doubt that she catches him on the raw: “Do you hate me, perhaps? asked Voss, in darkness.” (88) Laura’s answer describes the precise nature of her role, both with regard to Voss himself, and with regard to the action of the novel:

I am fascinated by you, ’ laughed Laura Trevelyan with such candour that her admission did not seem immodest. ‘You are my desert.’ Once or twice their arms brushed, and he was conscious of some extreme agitation or exhilaration in her.
‘I am glad that I do not need your good opinion’, he said.
‘No, ’ she said. ‘Nobody’s opinion! (88)

This metaphor of the desert that Laura imposes on Voss lies at the heart of her double vision. While she explores her personal desert, which is the spirit of Voss, he traverses the physical desert, taking her with him into its harsh interior. She is thus able to share his journey and its sufferings. He does not know this yet, but she seems to be aware of it. Significantly, in his evocations of her presence in the desert, there are often water images: rain and river. She is ultimately his life-giving oasis.

During one of his conversations with Laura, Voss admits, “... the humility, the humility: this is what I find so particularly loathsome. My God, besides, is above humility.” (90) His declaration is a turning point for Laura, for Voss’ overweening pride awakens her pity and love and she realizes the overwhelming need to save him. Her faith, which had been wavering, returns to her, secure now in having a positive goal towards which it must function. She tells him, “... I will learn to pray for you.” (90) They meet one last time, the morning when he leaves for the expedition. They do not speak to each other but there is an instant of wordless communication.

... For an instant their minds were again wrestling together and he experienced the melancholy pleasure of rejecting her offered prayers.

Laura Trevelyan was sitting her horse with a hard pride, it seemed, rather than with that humility which she had desired to achieve.

She is a cold, hard girl, he decided, I could almost love her. (112)

These prayers are a significant leitmotif in the novel. Moments before his death at the hands of the aboriginal boy, Jackie, Voss is to ‘taste’ these very prayers, and the nourishment they give him till the end.

At the very start of the expedition, while Voss is in a jubilant mood, singing aloud, the thought of Laura's prayers haunts him. As the expedition gets under way, Voss and Laura establish a communication of which the tangible links seem tenuous, but it is unmistakably powerful in essence. The nature of this communication is beautifully conveyed through the image of the butterflies which Voss sees, while camping in the desert. Voss and Laura communicate in many ways. They write letters; the fact that these letters do not, all of them, reach their destination that does not affect the course of action. This is because other avenues of communication are open to them. They share dreams and because of their telepathic dimension, these dreams ultimately take on the force and clarity of visions, and intersect reality. Their love in separation grows more and more intense than it is in union. Voss begins to dream about Laura when he reaches Newcastle:

... The woman with the thumping breasts, who had almost got trampled, and whose teeth had been currying black horsehair, began to shout: Laura, Laura. For assistance, All that happens, happens in spite of the horsehair woman, who is, in fact, stuffed. Laura is smiling. They are sharing this knowledge. (140)

As Voss seems to be obsessed with Laura, his desire to communicate with her becomes irresistible. He therefore writes a letter to her: "... Dear Miss Trevelyan, do not pray for me, but I would ask you to join me in thought, and exercise of will, daily, hourly, until I may return to you, the victor." (153) He expects from her intellectual and spiritual companionship. In that letter, Voss asks Laura to get permission from her uncle for her hand in marriage. Its tone is flattering, it describes her as "... a companion of strength and judgement" (153), but she is not easily swayed. Her reply is honest and sincere. She feels that they owe their mutual recognition of each other to the fact that they are both arrogant. Her condition for acceptance is unequivocal: "Only on this level, let it be understood, that we may pray together for salvation, shall you ask my Uncle to accept your intentions, that is, if you still intend." (186) Voss is gladdened by the word "together" (186). His first two dreams of Laura have been vague and inconclusive, but this time, after he receives her letter, he has a dream which has explicit sexual connotations:

... Now they were swimming so close they were joined together at the waist, and were the same flesh of lilies, their mouths, together, were drowning in the same love-stream. I do not wish this yet, or nie nie nie, niemals. Nein. You will, she said, if you will cut and examine the word. Together is filled with little cells. And cuts open with a knife. It is a see seed. But I do not. All human obligations are painful, Mr. Johann Ulrich, until they are learnt, variety by variety. (187)

He tells her, in this dream: “I do accept the terms” (188), but she is stronger than him: “You are in no position to accept. It is the woman who unmakes men, to make saints”. (188) Voss feels very happy. His second letter, which is a reply to hers as well as to this dream, tells her that he has acquired some degree of humility. He calls her “my dearest wife” (216) and is confident that she is with him, sharing his dream life: “You see that separation has brought us far, far closer” (216). But Laura never reads this letter, since the old black, Dugald, who carries it, tears it up on the way. Laura continues to bear him company through his journey, reassuring and protective, a guardian spirit. He feels her with him all the time.

Voss has one last dream of her before the final section opens. In this section, real life and dream are so closely interwoven that they flow smoothly into each other. The last dream is also the last evidence of separateness. It occurs after he has read Le Mesurier’s poems and is exhausted:

Once during the night she came to him, and held his head in her hands,
but he would not look at her, although he was calling: Laura, Laura.

So a mother holds against her breast the head of a child that has been
dreaming, but fails to take the dream to herself; this must remain with
the child, and will recur for ever.

So Laura remained powerless in the man’s dream (297-298)

The mutual understanding between Voss and Laura involves as much critical evaluation as self-scrutiny. Both of them are aware of their own arrogance and hatefulness, which together helps them achieve a sympathetic rapprochement and kinship. That is why Laura in her reply to Voss’ letter says:

Arrogance is surely the quality that caused us to recognize each other.
Nobody within memory, I have realized since, dared so much as to
disturb my pride, except in puppyish ways... So, Mr. Voss, we have
reached a stage where I am called upon to consider my destroyer as my
saviour! (185).

The letter shows the arrogance of Voss, which shocks Laura into an awareness of her own frailty. That is why the destroyer of her egotism happens to be an evangelist as it were for her. Her respect for his spiritual superiority slowly matures into love for him over a long stretch of time. The emotion of love at once helps Voss to tone down his arrogance and Laura to bolster up her diffident self.

Laura who is not able to meet Voss physically, tries to seek some consolation by taking care of Rose Portion’s illegal child Mercy on humanitarian ground. For a while she enjoys the pleasure of vicarious motherhood in the company of the child.

But she is not allowed by the circumstances to continue to have that pleasure. Her need for the emotion of love makes her confess it in her letter to Voss, which she could not send at all to him. She suffers from a brain fever. She enters into a state of delirium. Her intense love and commitment to Voss express themselves in her delirious talk, “You need not fear. I shall not fail you. Even if there are times when you wish me to, I shall not fail you.” (358) It is indeed interesting to know that what Laura promises to Voss seems to be telepathically heard by him in spite of a great geographical distance between the two.

When Voss is riding with the members of the expedition, he happens to have a telepathic vision in which he sees Laura riding a horse along with him: ‘I shall not fail you,’ said Laura Trevelyan, ‘Even if there are times when you wish me to, I shall not fail you.’ (363) A little later he asks her, “You will not leave me then?” (V 366) to which she answers, “Not for a moment... Never, never.” (367) The communication between the two lovers takes place spiritually and telepathically which perhaps offer them a new strength to bear the pain of physical separation.

Laura’s love for Voss is also clearly seen at the time when Laura at her sick bed says, “... that man is so shoddy, so contemptible, greedy, jealous, stubborn, and ignorant. Who will love him when I am gone? I only pray that God will” (386). It is this relationship that saves Voss from losing his human identity. Laura is intellectual and is provided with a rare insight into life. She realizes the rocklike ambitions of her counterpart and prepares herself to save him even risking her own identity. She senses the arrogance of Voss who is a step closer than her towards damnation through intellectuality. She converts herself into a love-force to heal him and redeem his soul from the fires of hell.

In Sydney, Laura performs the rituals of spiritual union between herself and Voss, away in the desert towards harmony and fulfilment. This she does through the restoration of love, humility and faith in Voss. Ironically enough, though Voss rejects love in the beginning, it is the visions of love in which Laura participates as a faithful companion. That brings him closer to realization and thus nearer to salvation. Peter H. Knox-Shaw glorifies Laura who provides a “... valuable guide to the text itself” (204).

Towards the end of the novel, Judd praises Voss to Laura that Voss is more than a man because he helps to reduce the sufferings of men in the expedition:

He would wash the sores of the men. He would sit all night with them when they were sick, and clean up their filth with his own hands. I cried, I tell you, after he was dead. There was none of us could believe it when we saw the spear, hanging from his side and shaking. (443-444)

Even after twenty years, when people erect a statue of Voss in memory of his sacrifice, Laura refuses to believe in his death. She says, "... I am convinced that Voss had in him a little of Christ like other men. If he was composed of evil along with the good, he struggled with that evil. And failed." (445) She further believes that Voss is not dead. But "... he is there still, it is said, in the country, and always will be. His legend will be written down, eventually, by those who have been troubled by it." (448). As James Mc Auley has rightly pointed out, "Voss has made himself High priest of a sacrifice, the aim of which is self-identification with the Godhead." (36) Laura's love for Voss is truly sublime, as it has transcended the physical and geographical barriers.

In the beginning, Voss considers himself to be divine, but towards the end, he feels that "... he was ready to meet the supreme emergency with strength and resignation" (393). When all the members of the expedition leave except Harry Robarts, Le Mesurier and Voss, Le Mesurier asks Voss about his plan. Voss replies, "I have no plan, replied Voss, but will trust to God". (379) Voss is a man who firmly believes that "to make yourself, it is also necessary to destroy yourself" (34). He stands and sticks firmly to his words till the end.

Through suffering and his love for Laura, Voss intends to reveal his true nature. Achieving knowledge through suffering is emphasized by Laura at the end of the novel: "Knowledge was never a matter of geography. Quite the reverse, it overflows all maps that exist. Perhaps true knowledge only comes of death by torture in the country of the mind". (446) Voss, the German explorer suffers humiliation in the desert before he is illuminated. He finally exemplifies the statement: "When man is truly humbled, when has learnt that he is not God, then he is nearest to becoming so. In the end, he may ascend." (387) Dorothy Jones comments, "In the end, however, Voss himself becomes the sacrifice, his slaughter linked, ..., to the sacrificial death of Christ" (79). K. R. Srinivasa Iyengar pays a tribute to Patrick White's *Voss*:

... there is no doubt that this Australian novelist has created in Voss a character endowed with elemental human dignity, and with powers of leadership and endurance quite out of the common. In this novel, both eternities- the immensity without and the immensity within- are fully explored and are finely fused into a reality that we experience everyday as life and love and suffering and death- and life's renewal and life everlasting. (43)

CONCLUSION

The article thus stresses on the need for simplicity, humility and suffering as the essential conditions for self-realization. Voss ends in a positive note as Voss almost becomes a martyr. Voss' salvation could not have happened without Laura. Patrick

White uses the psychology of the explorer as a metaphor of man. Voss embodies the belief that simplicity and suffering are the conditions for the re-making of man. Voss' expedition across the continent is indeed a torturous journey into the mindscape.

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New Historicism: Literature as an Interweaving of Sorts

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ABSTRACT

In the late 1970s and early 1980s literary critics seemed to concentrate much on the relationship between literature and history. There was a growing interest in how literature shaped and represented history. Texts were beginning to be viewed as products of a particular historical setting, rather than as universal. There was a notion that literature is able to influence history, and the social and political ideas of its time. Louis Montrose uses the terms ‘historicity of texts’ and ‘textuality of history’ to describe the chief concern of new historicists. These terms explained how texts are embedded in history and how history is only available in the form of texts in which it is captured. This paper focuses its attention on how new historicism views literature as interwoven with history, power, politics and culture.

Keywords: New historicism, history, power, politics, culture.

INTRODUCTION

The usage of the term ‘new historicism’ began with American critic and Harvard English Professor Stephen Greenblatt. Catherine Gallagher has analysed the origins of new historicism. John Brannigan has put forth how literary texts are a site of power relations. Aram Veesser, English Professor at the City College of New York, has postulated the common assumptions of new historicist critics. American Literary Theorist Louis Montrose has given the essence of new historicism using two terms ‘historicity of texts’ and ‘textuality of history’. American literary critic D. A. Miller has used new historicism for the individual study of Charles Dickens’ *Bleak House*. Carolyn Porter has studied how new historicism is often caught in the practices it opposes.

DISCUSSION

American theorist Stephen Greenblatt's book *Renaissance Self Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare* is usually considered as the origin of the current usage of the term. New Historicism makes a parallel study of literary and non-literary texts without foregrounding the literary and backgrounding the historical. New Historicism focusses its attention on the text (literature) and the co-text (history), rather than treating history as the context. Therein both literature and history inform and interrogate each other, and they are read in the light of each other. It is a paradoxical approach to literature, wherein there is no privileging of the literary. It is an attempt to defamiliarise the canonical literary texts. John Brannigan defines new historicism as "a mode of critical interpretation which privileges power relations as the most important context for texts of all kinds' and treats literary texts as 'a space where power relations are made visible.'" Catherine Gallagher puts forward that left wing politics eventually paved the way for new historicism. She argues that historicism is not an accomplice of power relations because it introduces a wide range of political compelling issues and non canonical texts into the educational system.

Literature can be used in various ways in maintaining and disrupting power relations. It can serve to promote a budding cause or to defend a dominant idea. For example, in Shakespeare's time literature sustained and had as its part the predominant belief that the ruling order was sanctioned by religious providentialism. Power polices itself and so it does not always have to be repressive. Power is maintained not only by the physical or military apparatus of the state, but more so by representations and discourses which operate by hegemony. This was a digression from the humanist notion that literature was a teacher of moral lessons to human beings, to the notion that it was a guardian of the state by maintaining social order. They turned to Shakespeare to prove that he was indeed defending the church ideologies and notions, thereby being a watchdog to the state. Even in the noblest of literature there was the presence of power relations and state ideology.

There are variations even among new historicist critics on how they view literature and its attitude towards and within the social order. Although there are variations, they are united in their methodology and in their view of the nature of power relations. They together succeeded in drawing attention to history in literary studies. The common assumptions of new historicist critics according to H. Aram Veeseer are as follows:

1. Every act of expression is linked to material practices.
2. Every opposition is at the risk of falling prey to the practice it tries to expose.

3. The literary and non-literary texts are inseparable.
4. No discourse gives access to unchanging truths or unchanging human nature.
5. Critical methods and languages participate in the economy they describe.

John Brannigan cites examples to show how the new historicist reading practices work in the essays of new historicists. Montrose argues in his **Shaping Fantasies** that the narratives of the time created and assigned a powerful mythical identity to Elizabeth I, rather than discovering the identity that is already present. He uses medical, colonial, and travel narratives to show how the persona of Elizabeth I was constructed and disseminated. Montrose shows how Elizabeth was dangerously placed as a woman at the top of the patriarchal society. We see how media shaped the reign of the queen. Unlike Montrose who takes up various texts and shows the genealogy of power, Miller uses Foucault's idea of carceral and applies it to Charles Dickens's *Bleak House*. He too treats literary texts as inseparable from their contexts. According to Miller, the novel seeks to comfort those outside the penal or institutional space as free, private and safe. He says that the novel is for institutions to reform themselves and portrays all kinds of texts as vehicles of power.

The main criticism that arose against new historicists is that they often reduced all texts to a mere examination of power relations and a superficial analysis of texts. Carolyn Porter in her article, "Are we being historical yet?" argues that new historicism has only replaced the grand narrative of progress with that of power. Frank Lentricchia argues that this obsession with power came with Foucault's message of power and how it operates in all conflicts and social relations. Power is everywhere, and no one is sure where it is located or what is outside power. The second major objection might possibly be an opposition based on interest in ahistorical practical criticism.

From Foucault, new historicists have learnt how not to look at the interpretability of the text but to look at its function. Therefore it seems to be insensitive to the different kinds of texts. Foucault has also affected literature in a positive manner, because new historicists show how literature constructs a society's sense of itself. The focus of all new historicists is the same: the relation between literature and power relations in the past. New historicist essays enable us to see how literary texts which are usually read for entertainment, character studies and so on, can also be a study of cultural practices, and mediation of power and political control. It helps us construct alternate political and historical stories from literature, to represent oppression and power.

There is no such thing as individual subjectivity of the author that is reflected in the text because all texts are the product of social, cultural and political forces

of that time. The critics compare literary texts of a particular period with a wide range of other texts to bring out alternative histories. Here the play **The Tempest** by Shakespeare is taken up for such consideration to show how it was involved in the values and the politics of the day. For example, the shipwreck in the play was actually an event that Shakespeare might have read of a wreck in Bermuda on the way to an English colony. The relationship between Caliban and Prospero is central to this reading of the play. While Prospero is the magical master of the island, Caliban is a foul smelling, and violent being who claims that the island is his. This automatically portrays Prospero as the colonial usurper. **The Tempest** is thus seen to represent and reflect the ideologies of colonialism when it is compared with various other texts of its time. All those texts together form a discourse according to new historicists. Prospero says that he is nothing at all without books. This portrays how language and textuality were used to create subjectivity and power. Caliban also knows that in order to subvert Prospero's power over him he needs to learn the language.

New historicist texts may not always be the comparative study of a wide range of texts. It may also be the analysis of how a specific literary text represents or negotiates power. The best example is Tennyson's "In Memoriam" which serves as a landmark of the prestige of Victorian society and became popular with the Victorian reading public and the queen herself, who had lost her husband Prince Albert. The poem which was written for Tennyson's friend Hallam seems to project them both as lovers. This served to subvert the moral and sexual order of the Victorian culture. Although it suggests subversion, it also represses itself by ending with a strong image of heterosexual love. It opens up the possibility of sexual subversion only to enforce strongly the heterosexual morality.

SUMMING UP

New historicists bring out the political, social and cultural forces which form an essential part of the text, by either comparing it with other non literary texts of the time or by separate analysis, and thereby bring out how the text interacts and negotiates with history, power and politics. Literature is a space where power relations are made visible. New historicism brings out how literature is interwoven in history, power, politics and culture.

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Is Language the Realization of the Unconscious? A study of Lacan's "The Insistence of the Letter in the Unconscious"

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ABSTRACT

French Psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan was much influenced by Sigmund Freud and Ferdinand de Saussure. He imbibes the essence of their works on post-structuralist theories and psychoanalysis in his essay "The Insistence of the Letter in the Unconscious", in which he expounds on the working of the human mind by comparing it with something that exists at the same level: the structure of language. According to Freud, language is something which can be acquired by humans innately. Lacan adds that acquiring a language takes place in the unconscious level because it has a structure. In this theory Lacan gives utmost importance to acquisition of language. Lacan divides his essay into three parts. They are: "The meaning of the Letter", "The Letter in the Unconscious" and "Being the Letter and the Other." This paper is intended to be analytical of Lacan's essay.

Keywords: unconscious, signifier, signified, metaphor, metonymy

INTRODUCTION

In the first phase of his essay Lacan treats the unconscious as a language. By 'Letter' readers come to know that speech borrows from language. The human condition is bound by threefold conception namely nature, society, and culture. Culture and tradition can also be changed through language. Communication takes place right from the moment one is born. From this statement one would clearly know that language and the unconscious are related to each other. Lacan formulates a formula of linguistic science: S/s (signifier over the signified). This formula of sign was given by Saussure in his **A Course in General Linguistics**. Lacan questions this formula of S/s. He wants to find out the 'meaning of meaning.' Saussure uses a 'tree' as an

example of this formula. He draws a 'tree' which functions as a signified and as a concept image. But Lacan replaces the 'tree' with the two doors; one is labelled with 'ladies' and the other is 'gentlemen.' These two doors (signifiers) denote one signified or concept of water closet. This shows that the same signifiers (doors) have different signifieds and only the correlations between the signifier and the signified supply "meanings" to us. There is no single entity called meaning. Hence, we are forced to accept the signified under the signifier. A signifier only leads to another signifier but not to any signified. For instance, if one has to paint the image of a man, they need to state it by adding signifiers like mustache, boy-cut, and so on. Lacan claims that the signifier is more important than the signified. Signifiers are like the words in a dictionary, in which we can understand the signifiers but never take it to the ultimate meaning that is to be signified.

Next, Lacan makes a distinction between metonymy and metaphor. He provides a wonderful example for metonymy, "thirty sails." From this readers can understand that sails actually do not refer to sails but to boats. Here, a part of the boat (the sail), stands for the whole. But in contrast, metaphor is one word which stands in place of another. For example, poets replace words that are more powerful according to their mood, and the words which come to them in a continuous stream. In metaphor, one thing stands for the other or one word replaces another word.

In the second phase of his essay, Lacan rewrites Freud's work **The Interpretation of Dreams**. In the very first sentence Freud opens by stating that the dream is a 'rebus,' which means that our dreams decode a message from the pictures: what we dreamt represents syllables and words. And thus, it comes with unnatural images such as a boat on the roof, or a man with a comma for a head which are mentioned in Freud's **Interpretation of Dreams**. From this, Lacan states that the structure of language, which enables us to read dreams, is the very principle of the "meaning of dreams." So, the structure of the unconscious and the structure of a dream can be related.

In "*Enstellung*", ('distortion') Freud shows the functioning of dreams as the sliding of the signified under the signifier which is always active in speech. Dream is just a signifier. Here Lacan explains how he re-reads the text of Freud. Imagination is used in the interpretation of dreams and a kind of relationship is established between the object and the subject element (the unconscious dreamer). The "*Verdichtung*" ('condensation') is the structure of the superimposition of signifiers in the field of metaphor.

Lacan gives more importance to metaphor than metonymy. One signifier, occupying the place of a signified, leads to a kind of signifying chain. Only the

thought that a man has existence, makes him a man. Here Lacan cites Descartes' view "Cogito ergo sum"—"I think therefore I am" and it is not merely the formula which constitutes the historical apogee of reflection on the conditions of knowledge, the link between the transparency of the transcendental subject and his existential affirmation.

It is also to deny oneself access to what we may call the Freudian universe- in the way that we speak of the Copernican universe. Where does anyone stand if they are the subjects: concentric or ex-centric? It is cogito which is at the centre of the human mind that decides whether to stand in or out. I think of what I am whereas I don't think I am thinking. In this he tries to reveal that he is thinking of what he is and not of what the process called thinking is. He talks about "being" in which he tells that "to be" and it poses a question to the subject. It does not pose it before the subject, since the subject cannot come to the place where it is posed. And also he speaks about truth: one is never happy making way for a new truth, for it always means making our way into it. We cannot even manage to get used to the idea most of the time. We get used to reality. But the truth, we repress. Lacan re-reads Freud's sexuality and comments on it.

In the last section, Lacan explains the evolution of the human psyche. The end that Freud's discovery proposes for man was defined by him at the apex of his thought in these moving terms: "we es war, soll Ich warden." Es refers to the id or the unconscious so this means "where the unconscious was, consciousness shall go." One must come to the place where the unconscious was. The realization of the unconscious must not be reduced to a mere 'awareness of the other.' Heideggerianism states the human existence in the world of objects.

SUMMATION

According to Freudianism, everything includes not only just the human sciences but the destiny of man, politics, metaphysics literature, art, advertising, propaganda, and through these everything including has been affected. Lacan comes to a conclusion that language is indeed the product of the realization of the unconscious.

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Deep Ecology: An Exploitation of Nature in David Klass' "Firestorm"

SURESH RAJAN, R

ABSTRACT

Environmental issues and concerns have been emerging since the late nineties but not yet achieved its purpose. Hence enumerable writers, social activists, botanists and theorists imbued the environmental crisis through various forms to safeguard the nature for future generation as well as its importance. The world of literature throngs with works, beauty, and power of nature. However, the concern for ecology and continuous misuses of the environment has only recently caught the attention of the writers. It is this sense of concern and reflection in literature that has given rise to branch of literary theory called Eco-criticism. It has got few epistemological theoretical fields of studies, which critically approach a work. In which *Deep ecology* is one such field.

Keywords: eco-criticism, **deep ecology**, ecocentrism, anthropocentrism

INTRODUCTION

Deep ecologists see the need for a radical re-conceptualization of humanity's place on the planet. They adopt a bio-centric/eco-centric perspective that proposes "biospherical-egalitarianism" (Naess, 95) in which the interest of the biosphere overrides the interests of individual species, including the human. They believe in raising ecological awareness through an individual adjustment of values, suggesting that a change in our relationship with the environment can only come about through first "grounding ourselves in the dark of our deepest selves" in order to rediscover our profound connection with the 'more-than-human' world. *Deep ecology* challenges the anthropocentrism at the heart of modern society and the kind of 'shallow ecological' standpoints that see the natural world as merely a resource for humanity and that presuppose that human needs and demands override other

considerations. And, put simply, “it asserts that if we first address our hierarchical attitudes towards the natural world and identify ourselves within a broader circle of living things,” then our societal problems may also find resolution.

DISCUSSION

A countless changes have been happening due to deforestation, industrial wastage, chemical wastes and humans’ effluents in ecosystem. Greg Gerard in his work **Ecocriticism** feels sorry for the loss of pastoral care and ocean resources:

Then blight crept over the area and everything began to change. Some evil spell had settled on the community: mysterious maladies swept the flocks of chickens the cattle and sheep sickened and died. Creatures come as carcass every day morning on shore, the beauty is no more, and it seems much like artificial. Everywhere was a shadow of death. (1)

David Klass is one such writer whose writings outwardly analyse teenagers’ psyche, problems faced by adults but often implicitly promulgate consequences of deforestation, relationship between human beings and nature. Besides, as a deep ecologist, Klass continuously strives to create firm relationship between nature and human and his protagonists see themselves one with nature. His writings serve as final warning and request to call people back to their natural living and preserve the ecological equilibrium. In his **Firestorm** he provides readers a clear picture of the ocean and how it is overridden. His unconditional concern for nature is reflected in the work. Gerd Leopold aptly says **Firestorm** is a gripping tale of the relentless and unnecessary harm the humans have done to their planet and each person should stand up and acts in its defence before it is too late. His infinite love for nature starts from creating the first chapter to till end.

Klass consciously has shaped each chapter into natural atmosphere, each character starts realizing themselves only when they feel one with nature as the novel progress. Paradoxically he has delineated the worse climate conditions of States:

Locked sleeper compartment. Man and dog rolling through wastelands of New Jersey. Chemical plants. Oil and gas refineries. Befouled meadows and polluted swaps. (47)

These lines suggest to the readers the worse condition of States as well as the cause for climate change, indifferent attitudes of humans toward nature are vividly shown. This novel reflects both positive and negative behaviours of humans done to nature and it is the compendium of unconcerned approaches to it. He balanced both good and bad. **Greg Gerard** has anticipated the futuristic atmosphere in his

Ecocriticism that: A child born now will never know a natural summer, natural autumn, winter, or spring.

We have changed the atmosphere, and thus we are changing the weather. By changing the weather, we make every spot on earth man made and artificial. We have deprived nature of its independence, and that is fatal to its meaning. Nature's independence is its meaning. Without it there is nothing but us. (70)

The novel is one such work which reverberates the Gerard' ideas and also discusses Jack's journey of past and present to save nature. Novel begins with realization of himself when he comes to know that his father is not his father, mother is not his mother; his friends are not his friends. Then with help of dog (Gisco) goes in search of Firestorm. Klass sumptuously uses the heading **Firestorm** as key to save the earth from destruction and destructors. The ostensible meaning is conveyed in the chapter forty: Firestorm is a weapon, a mysterious force."Everything about it is shrouded in legend years from now we documented that it really existed, and that it could have been used to halt the destruction of the earth". (166). As he makes his adventure in the course of time, he happens to encounter continuous dangers in addition to that group of people called Dark Army who make all the ways possible to prevent his mission. Jack actually belongs to people of Dann who fight against Dark Army for ages. These two fight each other for a long time. Dark Army tries to destroy nature for their sake and other group tries to prevent them in which Jack belongs to, these cats and dogs' game goes up to three books. Dark Army sends people to stop Jack's journey.

The main argument of the Deep ecologist is that to be one with nature humans have to have a change in their relationship with the environment and then it can only help them rediscover their profound connection with the 'more-than-human' world. In the course of time a beautiful canning girl namely Eko who belongs to People of Dann, gets trained by Jack's father. He was asked to look after and train Jack for his mission. Eko is talented at martial arts. They go to an island to make practice for the mission. With assistance of Eko he learns possible arts in Outer Bank. Klass has chosen this place not to project its beauty but rather to describe how this place is exploited. Eko takes him to a shore at seven in the morning to give swimming exercise both dive in water. Eko summons him telepathically. Jack is now very much feels heavenly happy, he feels secured and on cloud nine when he sees the beauty of ocean. So far Klass has delineated the exploitation in an ostensible ways, now, the tone of his writing changes in to sad downhearted. When they go much deeper Jack feels sorry:

Ruined everything how? What did we do, and who was responsible? But she's not answering. She dives deeper. Loggerhead turtle swims away, long tail trailing behind. Sorry to see it go. Enormous shadow poking up at us from the black depths! Looks like a submerged redwood. Doesn't fit into this soft underwear playground. Too straight. Too hard. Made of dark iron. What is it, Eko? *Anti-aircraft gun. Welcome to the Graveyard of the Atlantic.* (115)

This miserable situation projects how humans exploit natural resources more than need. As swim deeper they feel that nothing is retrieved. They witnessed wrecked tanker, seems to be cold skeleton of iron wreck flames with white, orange, gutted machines, heap of skulls around the abandoned places. Out of the blue Jack questions for resolving the problem Eko:

No opportunity, we ruined it, Nothing left like this. The beauty. The diversity. All gone. Nothing wild. Nothing free. Everything farmed. I'm not talking about on land. I'm talking about deep beneath the oceans. (117)

Eko constantly feels dishearten because of humans' attitudes. As she goes, she shows damaged parts which can't be recovered. Klass unambiguously shows how human make use of resources and also he is not totally against sea trading but against over exploitation and mistreatments. She enjoys nature and feels one with natural world. She goes without any hesitation, goes ride on shark for which humans often fear of, eats unbaked small fish, play with dolphin, doesn't scared of anything in ocean whereas Jack is completely opposite of Eko but he repeatedly wants to be with natural world.

Klass makes an attempt to project how the world is. Through Eko, he makes him understand the present condition of world and outrageous done to world. Eko laments how the world remains calm despite all the immeasurable damages done by humans to nature. She proclaims generations by generations pass, each one puts maximum efforts to utilize nature but innocent remains calm and doesn't react, with all its sources it servers people down the ages. She explicates in apple pie order how the consequences out, destruction of ozone layer, deforestation, and daring act of water resources. Finally coral reefs. And how all these caused climate change and problem for the all living beings including animals and ecology. She admits that over centuries the movements merged into one coalition, one- she searches for a world-global effort to save the earth. But at same time there are few people frequently use and treat as neither mere object nor friendly. Klass brilliantly refers to the people who have much concern on nature and symbolically he obliquely

named then People of Dann. Then ironically he makes an allusion that even the purest part which is known for water becomes filthy because of humans.

Day after day, day after day,
Water, water everywhere,
And all the boards did shrink;
Water, water; everywhere,
Nor any drop to drink.

Though there are many organizations were formed to prevent the exploitation like ICCAF (International committee to control Atlantic Fisheries) it was a group formed right before the turning point, chartered by the United Nations. It's crucial mission was to protect all the remaining undestroyed reefs outside territorial waters. Those unprotected reefs lay in what was called the global common, meaning they were not close enough to any single country to be protected by that country. So they were supposed to be protected by all countries, working together but indeed bombed. This chapter mainly concerns with reefs and how it is exploited. Klass' influences of his voyage and infinite love of over sea clearly delineated.

Deep ecologists articulate that an *ecocentric* attitude is more consistent with the truth about the nature of life on Earth. Instead of regarding humans as something completely unique or chosen by God, they see us as integral threads in the fabric of life. They believe we need to develop a less dominating and aggressive posture towards the Earth if we and the planet are to survive. But Klass in this novel states imbalanced hierarchy between nature and humans. Instead of treating nature as equal as humans, nature is dominated by people. This is highly criticized. There is a constant override of over the other being which is one of the paramount statements of deep ecologist.

Through the novel one could see Dragon tries to use the maximum resources but whereas Jack, who tries to save the nature as well makes an attempt so as to nurture the nature, so that we can better future. Jack warns him that: what we are doing to the sea of the world is but a mirror reflection of what we are doing to ourselves and ton to one another said by **Chris Maser**. **Firestorm** is one of the novels which clearly delineates about the environmental crisis. In addition to that it is fully packed with humans' domination over the nature. Klass implicitly conveys that "nature does not exist to serve humans, rather humans are a part of a nature, and all species have the right to exist for their own sake, regardless of their usefulness to humans." According **Naess** founding father of *Deep ecology* which has eight major components in which one of the paramount points is often strongly emphasized in this novel that is "humans have rights to reduce richness and diversity of life except to satisfy the vital needs" besides stresses unresponsive attitudes of human towards nature.

SUMMATION

When resources are exploited much more than needs, Deep ecologists question and criticize. In this novel *Dragon*, who persistently sells and exploits the natural resources and it is against to Deep ecologists' ideology. It is crucial and important to remind ourselves at outset that we must not exploit nature, that we should have concern for nature, and that we should deconstruct the hierarchy between nature and human that one has power to exploit over the other.

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Rewriting History: Salman Rushdie's "Midnight Children"

SURYA, G

ABSTRACT

The present paper focuses on Rushdie's work from the literary perspective. It argues that Rushdie's novel **Midnight's Children** is considered as a subversive text that problematizes the boundary between history and fiction and the claim to objectivity of historical representation. The postmodernist text **Midnight's Children** is analysed with respect to the use of different voices and alternative histories, through the emphasis on how history is a human construct. The inclusion of history in recent postmodern fiction of Salman Rushdie has been reshaped by the postmodernist theory of history. By means of his overt metafictionality, this postmodernist text challenges the capacity of history to represent reality outside the text and defy the truth-value of historical knowledge as well. The fact that it is highly self-reflexive novel points to the process of constructing, ordering and selecting, which presupposes that history is a human construct as is literature.

INTRODUCTION

Postmodernist historical novels attempt to insert history into fiction to subvert historical "facts" and rewrite them from a perspective different from accepted interpretation. In such postmodernist texts, which question the problematized relations between history and fiction, the hitherto silenced histories of marginalized groups are sometimes foregrounded through this rewriting and subverting of historical material. Salman Rushdie is the valuable representation of recent achievement in postmodern historical writing and the novel **Midnight's Children** is significant example from full spectrum of postmodern historical fiction. Postmodern historical novels insert historical documents, events and historical personages into the fictional worlds of their works. McHale's label for historical novels written in the postmodern era is "the postmodernist revisionist

historical novel, ” revisionist because it revises the content of the historical record, reinterpreting the historical record, often demystifying or debunking the orthodox version of the past and it revises, indeed transforms, the conventions and norms of the historical fiction itself (McHale 90).

DISCUSSION

The paper considers **Midnight’s Children** as an experimental work that shows how episodes from Indian history are ingeniously linked to Saleem Sinai’s autobiographical story which is presented in the mode of postmodernist historical narration. It offers its central figure Saleem’s “his/story” as an individual mode of history writing that depends on and elevates individual experience as opposed to conventional scientific historiography which attempts to totalize individual experience. This consists of personal historical accounts of Saleem which are mingled with magic realism and the self-reflexive, non-linear and unreliable narration of the text.

Midnight’s Children is about its central figure’s struggle to write his autobiography in personal as opposed to the objectivity of history writing, the novel is by its very nature about fiction writing itself. Saleem is the narrator in the novel but at the same time a writer of his autobiography, and throughout his narration he reminds the reader continually of the fictional nature of the story, he is telling by means of his self-reflexive remarks. Above all, Rushdie is there as the writer of the novel and “we” as the readers. This quality of the novel makes **Midnight’s Children** a novel about fiction writing and draws attention to its status as an artifact, and the inclusion of historical events and personages in the novel’s metafictional context implies their fictionality and problematizes them as well.

Saleem is highly self-conscious as the narrator/writer of the novel, which makes it possible for him to reflect his writing process throughout the novel. In the course of his narration, Saleem comments on his writing process, particularly on the digressive nature of his narrative and the errors he has made. These comments make explicit Saleem’s consciousness of his position as a writer and of his writing process. Saleem directly refers to his writing as a piece of literature, an autobiography composed of fictional elements along with what he actually lived. Saleem shows his reader how he tries hard to follow the order in which he wants to narrate his story. Saleem also comments on his choice of a title for the chapter he is writing and tries to justify it as suitable when the title and the contents of the chapter are taken together. Saleem tells his life story to his future wife, Padma. She is illiterate so she has to be satisfied with the amount Saleem consents to give out; even though she serves as Saleem’s listener, she is at the same time his critical reader/listener

who comments on his narrative. The presence of Padma as his listener gives Saleem opportunities to make humorous commentary on his own writing process.

The role of the reader of a metafictional text is no longer that of a passive receiver, but that of an active participant in the writing process. Accordingly, **Midnight's Children** as a metafictional novel, with parodic and ironic intentions, demands of the reader to be an active participant in the creation of the text as the narrator wants the reader to fill in certain gaps in the novel. Saleem points out his inefficiency as a writer, so he makes it clear, in a humorous way of course, that there are points in his narrative which the reader must complete on his own. The metafictional implications where the narrator is self-conscious are used to parody the realistic and historical representation of autobiography, historical novels, or history writing because these are imitated with a critical distance and are in conflict with the context of the novel. The distance and incongruity between the expected representation of the past events, maybe in an objective way, and Saleem's fictitious accounts with self-reflexive comments are conveyed to the reader by the use of irony in **Midnight's Children**. Rushdie creates an irony between the conventions of autobiography, historical novel, and history writing and those of Saleem's autobiography. This parodic intention of the writer serves as a tool to prove that historical accounts are artifacts.

Parody in **Midnight's Children** not only ridicules and pinpoints the process through which Saleem's autobiography is constructed but it also makes it possible to yield new ways of representing reality. Thus, it enables Rushdie to interrogate the discourse of traditional historiography on the one hand, and historical novel on the other. It offers new grounds for Rushdie to represent the voice of the individual. The metafictional strategies exploited in **Midnight's Children** highlight its status as an artifact and, by means of metafiction, Rushdie's novel is able to show historical "reality" as constructed and problematizes its objectivity. When the novel inserts real historical events into the metafictional context of the novel, it questions the boundary between so-called fact and fiction. Metafiction as a literary technique and Rushdie's parody are there to show that there is no absolute truth or objectivity in the representation of the past.

The alternative that **Midnight's Children** offers in place of the traditional mode of historiography is an individual mode of history writing that interprets the past events from below and elevates individual experience. This consists of personal historical accounts of Saleem combined with his self-reflexive narration. Rushdie avoids the historical approach that focuses on "great figures" that are of national importance so he creates an individual mode of history writing through Saleem's autobiography that focuses on the lives and experiences of the people who constitute the nation. The argument that Rushdie poses in **Midnight's Children** is

that “individual recollections and assessments of history or reality as a whole are ultimately self-validating” as Catherine Cundy asserts in her analysis of the novel (34). Therefore, the individual’s versions of historical reality provide his version of truth. An attempt as such can be regarded as making the individual silenced by the metanarrative of history speak, in that the individual becomes the centre, and his voice is in conflict with that of the dominant, opening it to multiplicity. Saleem, through the mingling of and correspondences between important political events and his particular life, depicts the unimportant individual and his experience in the face of historical events. This shifts the focus from the historical figures and events Rushdie deals with in the novel to Saleem, who experiences these historical events, and to his thoughts. For Saleem, his is an attempt to “revert from the general to the particular” in his account of his/story through his autobiography (MC 334). He informs the reader about the different ways he is connected to the history of India, grouping these ways under “modes of connection.”

In the process of constructing the individual mode of historiography, Saleem struggles to “place himself at the centre of a history that he himself creates, carving out an individual identity in a manner that has national implications” (Reder 225-226). In order to reach such an aim, to operate active literally, he appropriates the historical facts, alters them and gives new meanings to these events so as to prove his central position. Therefore, the history writing which foregrounds the individual experience rather than totalizing individuals to whom things happen makes it possible to dethrone the central as it is clear from Saleem’s endeavour. Through composing his autobiography, Saleem fights with Indira Gandhi for centrality. He says: “We were competitors for centrality” (MC 420). In order to question the monolithic discourse of history and to claim his place in the construction of history, Saleem asks:

Indira is India and India is Indira ... but might she not have read her own father’s letter to a midnight child, in which her own, sloganized centrality was denied; in which the role of mirror-of-the-nation was bestowed upon me? (MC 427)

In *Midnight’s Children*, the individual is portrayed as the victim of totalizing conventional historical discourse. The historical and political events in the novel are not necessarily of topical value all the time, as is clear in Gandhi’s assassination. Rushdie exploits the events as a political satire but Saleem believes that the significance of the historical events is that they have direct effects on individuals. Saleem can be regarded as the victim of history, as an individual “to whom things have been done” (MC 232), for past events befall him and change the course of his life. Therefore, Rushdie’s handling of such political and historical events as

Partition, the Freedom Movement, and the declaration of Emergency and so forth is a means to show individuals as victims of history.

The mode of individual historical discourse Rushdie proposes as an alternative gives the individual the opportunity to create personal meaning from history by highlighting some events and overshadowing others according to his personal view, which emerges as a threat to the objectivity of totalitarian history. Accordingly, Saleem creates personal and fictional explanations and makes up fictitious causes and effects for the already known supposedly historical facts. This means the blend of fact and fiction in his account, a quality which, as the readers have seen, subverts the official version of history. For example, Saleem assumes that he initiates by his own action the historical events documented in the novel. He claims he is responsible “active-literally” for the language riots that occurred in the 1950s. Language marchers demand “the partition of the state of Bombay along linguistic boundaries” (MC 167). In addition to the mingling of fact and fiction, Saleem gives wrong dates to the events in actual Indian history and confuses their causes to secure his place at the centre. As a result, it becomes impossible to reach any correct accounts of events. The reader is exposed to Saleem’s unreliable narration and cannot know what is “real” and what fiction is. One striking example to these errors is that Saleem places Gandhi’s death in a wrong part in the chronology of his narrative because, as he claims, he made an error in the date. The reason behind the errors in Saleem’s account of the historical facts is that it is “memory’s truth” (Rushdie 1991: 211), subjective and altered.

In *Midnight’s Children*, memory takes the place of the so-called scientific and objective documentation exploited in the conventional historiography. The fact that the historical truthfulness is conveyed through Saleem’s memories, almost always unreliable, shows historical truth and reality in general as constructs. It enables Saleem to alter reality by depicting the events as he remembers. Therefore, the role of memory in Saleem’s narrative is said to be subverting the claim of the traditional history writing to objectivity since the focus is on memory’s ability to create subjective and multiple realities. Saleem draws attention to the role of memory in the process of constructing reality by pointing to memory’s selecting certain events.

The novel can produce multiple versions of reality by means of constructing the narrative of facts out of Saleem’s memory. By means of resting Saleem’s narrative on memory only and giving wrong dates for historical facts as a result, Rushdie questions the objectivity of history in the novel. The objectivity of Saleem’s narrative is paradoxically challenged by the errors he makes in his own narrative and by ironically highlighting these errors by admitting them. The fact that Saleem’s account in the novel resembles the way memory operates gives the novel its

fragmentary style. What constitute Saleem's account of Indian history as portrayed in the novel are fragments of memory. Although Saleem endeavours to reflect the whole of India, its past and culture, he is able to reflect it only in fragments. This fragmented vision is conveyed through the perforated sheet in the novel. When Aadam Aziz returns from Europe, he is immediately asked to treat his future wife. However, he is allowed to examine her body only through a "perforated sheet." During the examination of the different parts of the body each time through the hole in the sheet without seeing her body in its entirety, Aziz tries to guess what the whole of the body is like. The image of a perforated sheet is all pervasive in the novel to emphasize the diversity and the process of seeing the whole through pieces. The idea that reality can be reached only through fragments becomes the leitmotif in the novel. In the same manner, the reader is offered the Indian past through a perforated sheet in fragments. The theme of fragmentation is a tool in the hands of Rushdie to challenge absolutes in the representation of reality. This indicates that Rushdie rejects objectivity that legitimizes totality and homogeneity.

In narrating the historical past, Rushdie blends fact with fantastic elements and fairy stories. By means of including fantastic elements in depicting historical events through magic realism in the novel, Rushdie attempts to question the possibility of objective historical reality. Saleem as a midnight's child is gifted with extraordinary talents. He can communicate with the other midnight's children through his gift of telepathy which enables the communication between them. The other midnight's children are gifted like Saleem with various extraordinary talents according to their time of birth. Real events and people from Indian history are inserted into this miraculous world of the novel and mingled with fantastic elements. The magicians' ghetto where Saleem begins to live when he loses his family in the war provides this juxtaposition of the real and the fantastic. There live jugglers who can keep one thousand and one balls in the air at a time, fakirs who can stray on to a bed of hot coals, the pullers of rabbits from hats, ventriloquists, beggars and so forth. One of the midnight's children, Parvati the- witch, who can make people disappear, lives together with Saleem in this ghetto. Saleem discusses the effects of the Emergency declared by Indira Gandhi on these ghetto people and midnight's children who are excluded from the history of India. Magic-realism in the novel provides the reader a chance to observe the problems of the Communist movement in India and how such individuals as the poor and freaks in the society experience them by rewriting this historical moment from their eyes (MC 399).

The form of the novel, along with its themes, helps Rushdie subvert the historical discourse of the West. Though Saleem writes his autobiography and the narrative seems to be moving chronologically from Saleem's birth to his adulthood as expected in autobiographies, the novel is marked with its nonlinear

narrative style through Saleem's digressions. In the process of composing his life story, Saleem presents flashbacks to past events, or foreshadows events to come, or he narrates other stories and uses digressions within digressions. This hinders Saleem from constructing his autobiography as well because, like Laurence Stern's **Tristram Shandy**, Saleem starts narrating the time long before his birth, and as in Stern's narrative, the relation between time inside and time outside the narrative is a cause of tension. In order to complete his story despite the digressions, Saleem must "work fast, faster than Scheherazade, if I am to end up meaning – yes, meaning – something. I admit it: above all things, I fear absurdity" (MC 9). When Saleem digresses and is late to narrate his birth, he is immediately urged by Padma. She is annoyed with Saleem's non-linear narrative because she is after "what-happened-nextism" (MC 39), reflecting thereby the desire for a continual chronological view in narration. The non-linear narrative of the novel serves to undermine linearity and cause-and-effect relationship that is characteristic of historical narrative. They once more remind the reader that texts reproduce only a version of events and not the "whole story." "As he writes the novel, Saleem wrestles with a chronological view of history" and he aims at showing the discursive function of this "chronological, British-born(e) manipulation of history" (Srivastava 66). He tries to show chronological history is inadequate to represent the diversity of the Indian past by means of his resistance to linear narrative.

The novel is a parody of a form of discourse. It parodies the historical discourse which claims to create a single and unchangeable truth, through Saleem offering his readers accounts of events different from the officially accepted versions. The target of Rushdie's parody at this point is not history writing in the period of colonization only but also after colonization, since Rushdie shows that history in the hands of recent Indian politicians, is just as monologic. He particularly attacks Indira Gandhi and her politics on the grounds that she uses force to deflect multiplicity, hence the aforementioned slogan, "India is Indira, Indira is India".

The novel exploits historical and political figures and mocks them as well as exposing the version of history that they impose on people. The novel opens their discourse to dialogism by writing different historical accounts of the events that are experienced by individuals which clash with the officially known versions. Rushdie's use of parody is a means of depicting the heteroglossic nature of the world as well. In Linda Hutcheon's view, Rushdie uses parody in the novel not only to mock and challenge institutional powers and their efforts to write a monologic, unified history but also to intimate the heteroglossic nature of the world as well. Historical reality, in conclusion, is reflected in the novel as the process of discerning meaning, not as absolute and objective but constructed, for as Saleem puts forward "reality is a question of perspective," and thus multiple (MC 165).

CONCLUSION

It has been argued and exemplified in the text analyzed in this paper that historical fictions written in the postmodern era problematize any clear-cut division between fact and fiction and question the objectivity of historical representation. This study has attempted to show that postmodernist historical fictions can offer to contemporary novelists a liberating and revisionist realm where they can rewrite history and create alternative histories of them. Rushdie's **Midnight's Children** as postmodern historical novel, include the history of the subcontinent with a satirical eye and ironically through the self-conscious and unreliable narrators of the novels.

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Creativity in a Classroom

TITUS RICHARD

ABSTRACT

This paper attempts to bring out the challenges faced by both students and teachers as a community in bringing out their innovative techniques and academic potentials. In creating a healthy and encouraging home-like ambiance for interaction in the formal classroom setting, creative thinking skills play a vital role in making the subject and the syllabus easy to teach and learn. This helps students overcome certain social-psychological problems like subconscious language behavior, low level of competence, communicative inability and even generation gaps. Creativity transforms all these negative factors into positive and efficient ones. Every small change effected by teachers in the classroom to make their students understand the given syllabus can be considered creativity. For instance, the use of mother tongue in a second language classroom to give a clear understanding of the subject is what is called code switching/-mixing. This is a simple technique and a spark of creativity on the part of teachers to convey the knowledge simple and easy. It is considered a great sin in the traditional classroom. This little spark of change is the creativity must be encouraged in all academic disciplines.

Keywords: Innovative techniques, academic potentials, home-like ambiance, interaction, creative thinking, creativity, spark of change

INTRODUCTION

Creativity is often considered the privilege of a few chosen individuals. But the reality is very far from that of this assumption. Every individual has this creativity though they do not detect it or sometimes fail to use it. No teacher in the classroom is going to teach something that does not exist in the universe. The issue is how to convey or present the given or known information to students. Creativity has several definitions according to the area in which it is employed. The common idea of what creativity is the ability to make new things or to think of new ideas. Usually

in classrooms students feel boredom due to long, monotonous lectures as a routine in their academic career. Here is where creativity is required in bringing out what is present in them but in a new, unusual way that would automatically kindle them to learn something. Without new ideas and innovative techniques, classes are unlikely to achieve the breakthrough in generating real success. Mere score is the notion of most of the educational institutions in the current scenario which ends up in failure in knowledge production. This sparks one to write on creativity and to work on bringing out the blocks and barriers among the people in developing an ability to make new things or think of new ideas.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

As Andrew Burn indicates, fostering creativity is fundamentally important because creativity brings with it the ability to question, make connections, innovate, problem solve, communicate, collaborate and to reflect critically. Paul Kristeller notes that the term “creative” was applied not only to God but also to the human artist, and a whole new vocabulary was developed to characterize the artist and his activity although there were some partial or scattered precedents to be found in ancient and Renaissance thought. Paul Willis mentions that the institutions and practices on education have no connection with most young people and their lives. They may encourage some artistic specializations but they certainly discourage much wider and more symbolic creativity. In terms of the teacher’s role, creativity is not a 1960s stereotype – someone who provides a lot of materials and shouts ‘have fun, enjoy, create’ but then leaves the class to their own devices, without directing or evaluating, making suggestions or placing limits. Creativity in learning, for Beetlestone, is conceptualized as arising out of holistic teaching practices that value all aspects of a child’s experience and personality.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions framed at the beginning of the study helped to focus the researcher’s attention and to avoid diversion or meandering into other areas:

1. What is creativity? Is there a conceivable kind of pedagogy for creativity?
2. Is my classroom having a creative space to bring out creativity?
3. How did the majority of the uneducated community succeed in innovations?

DISCUSSION

The concepts “creativity and innovation” are used in the media and in everyday conversation to refer to both a product of human creativity and to the processes

involved in development of a product. Creativity is commonly defined as the ability to make new things or to think of new ideas. Creativity in the language platform means as a novel and personally meaningful interpretation of experiences, actions, and events. Creativity in the science platform means something that leads to innovation. Creativity is not limited to arts and music but actually extends to almost any area of human experience. Literary, artistic and musical critics have their own criteria for evaluating a work of human intellect. Scientists know how to distinguish a creative solution to a scientific problem from a less creative one (or one which lacks creativity entirely). Designers and architects speak of creative works, or works that are academic or traditional in nature. Technologists occasionally make recourse to creativity in order to evaluate manufactured industrial products.

Student in their early life encounter this creativity in a little level that can be nurtured by teachers, parents and other mentors. When learners encounter activities that encourage their curiosity and exploration that let them make decisions, their creativity develops. Encouraging learners to think creatively can play a creative role in the academic perspective so as to sustain knowledge and growth. The right and left brain work together in these tasks and will take them to the higher levels of creativity.

In a classroom scenario, creative thinking is a responsibility in which all the members should participate. Every role performed by learners should be analyzed to bring out the best academic potential. Many teachers and learners get locked into patterns of thinking drawn from their own experience and personalities. This is a great hindrance which blocks one's creativity, which includes the pre-consumed ideas and values preventing them from 'thinking out of box.' To unlock their creativity, go for interactions and look for the good points in one's idea rather than criticizing the ideas in public. Critical thinking leads to creativity, creativity with action begets innovation. Innovation keeps changing for years together, framing up new concepts and ideas for the upcoming generation.

Teaching involves hard work in which knowledge is imparted from two different persons (teacher and student). In the case of learning process, success is attained when teachers persistently exert themselves with some innovativeness in making their learners involve in the process of learning. Only a few people realize that there is a need of new thought and energy for teaching a subject. Teaching becomes a difficult task when it comes to the teaching of language. For example, while teaching language as a subject, text, vocabulary, grammar and exercises become the language in print through which one has to build language stability. Thus, language learning has to be efficiently practiced to attain the purpose of teaching. The silent inactive array of printed symbols into living speech is the real task of teacher. Here is where creativity starts operating for a teacher.

In the current era, as discussed earlier in the introduction, no teacher in the classroom is going to teach something that does not already exist in the universe. Teaching is not just reading out the text and explaining as we all know. Teaching is not teaching the subject, it is making the students understand the base concepts. The teacher acts as a miner who digs to find and take away coal, gold, diamonds, and the like. They should invent 'situational techniques' to handle the classes efficiently and to bring out the treasure of knowledge not from the book but from the learner. The real task is, to efficiently convey the given or known information to the students. Boden agrees that the outcomes of creative endeavor must be 'unpredictable' and does not put them beyond the realms of understanding.

The classrooms today are packed with routine teaching materials where the students would predict the class for the day. The reason behind this is the education policy which has not changed since the day of independence making the classes become boring and thus there is a lack of learning process. This paves way for creativity which leads to innovative techniques to be handled in classes so as to draw attention and make the silent words into living speech, thus attaining a victory in the learning process. Teachers should ensure that the subject being learnt by their students is in a living classroom.

This realistic living classroom needs efficient teaching processes that make the classroom lively creating a home-like ambient learning environment. Creativity involves both the ability of the teacher and the student to indulge in their voice, mind and action and serves as an instrument through which the notation on the book or played. The words of the printed medium would be given out as sounds, tones and rhythms making the class intellectual, emotional and purposeful.

The process of learning cannot be achieved only through books. If the routine classes take place only with the aim of scoring, there ends the ability of creativity in a student which he/she has been practicing since his/her childhood. The method of teaching should also involve the interest of the student, giving space for his creativity. Thus, the method of teaching can be articulated through a puzzle, riddle, proverbs, music, games, and the like. The involvement of students yields them knowledge as it ploughs them in the field of learning. This proves that there cannot be any substitute for creativity in the process of learning.

Brainstorming sessions would contribute much to this process of creativity. Such sessions aim to generate as many ideas as possible, no matter how far-fetched. They can be used for many purposes in a classroom where one can contribute ideas regarding listening, speaking, reading, writing, memorizing and even teaching. Brainstorming needs a leader who can regulate the group or class so that he/she would call a halt when it starts to run out of steam. All ideas should be recorded

on a paper or black board so that everyone can see. Later, feasible ideas can be shortlisted giving positive comments, later discussing and agreeing upon the best idea and making it into action which can generate creativity leading to great innovations. Never dismiss a brainstormed idea out of hand, those dishearten and stops the flow of creativity.

SUMMATION

In Bentley and Seltzer's view, creativity is learned, not innate; collective, not individual. But creativity is something that is present in an individual. Every human being born on earth has his own creativity working somewhere on something else. Using it efficiently would lead to successful innovations. Many seemingly foolish ideas can lead to sensible solutions. All ideas should be recorded – no matter how conventional they appear to be. Criticism kills creativity. Ideas should never be scorned during the flow of creativity. 'Creativity is a component existing in every individual, and the present day need is to identify and enhance it'.

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Cultural Conflict in Bharati Mukherjee's "The Tiger's Daughter"

MRS. UMA DEVI, A

ABSTRACT

When a person visits an unknown land, he is an outsider in a no man's land and there he has to struggle a lot for his survival, conquering these new feelings of nostalgia. He craves out a new territory and threads himself totally with the lure of the West. He recreates himself into a new personality and forms emotional ties with the place he lives in. This discovery of a new self slowly makes him forget his own native culture. When he returns to his native land, he finds that his native taste and touch have turned alien to him. His mind is again torn apart between the cultural clashes of two environments. This is the condition of Tara in Mukherjee's **The Tiger's Daughters**.

INTRODUCTION

The term 'Diaspora' comes from the Greek word 'diaspeirein' that means 'to disperse or scatter.' The term was assimilated from Greek into English in the 20th Century. It refers to the Jewish diaspora, and in the present day scenario it may refer to populations of other ethnicities also. Diaspora studies is an academic field which was established in the late twentieth century to study dispersed ethnic populations which are often termed diaspora people.

Diaspora evolving into a universal phenomenon, encompassing the sensibility and experiences of expatriates and immigrants, assumes greater significance in literature almost to that of a separate genre, termed variously as Expatriate Sensibility or Diasporic Imagination in the post-colonial context and social milieu. This significant but not yet a major genre which demands to be a part of the study of aesthetics as Diasporic Imagination is complex and involves multifarious experiences with different dimensions like physical, mental, psychological,

emotional, social and also geographical planes. It moulds and shapes the creative process of the expatriate writer that leads to the exploration of the dichotomy of two very different cultures.

Diasporic literature deals with the most contemporary issues such as modern man's perennial problems like alienation, the quest for freedom and the existential crisis. Restlessness, rootlessness and the nature of unsettled become the common aspects of any diaspora representation in literature. The main theme of diasporic literature is the search of peace, comfort and shelter. Among other issues, identity crisis is one of the first things that an immigrant faces on landing in a new land. Living in an alienated country always proves really troubling for the marginalized strata of the diasporas. The process of settling people to the new adopted lands leads them to mental, psychological and spiritual struggles. During the process of searching their roots, they move towards the relocation of their identities.

The Indian Diaspora in Indian English Literature provides a vivid history of Indian immigration, and draws a current demographic profile of their Diaspora its identity, dynamics and place in the context of globalization. The parade of fine Indian Writers who were sensitive to the subtleties of the lives of immigrant is long and lengthening which includes Vikram Chandra, Salman Rushdie, Bharati Mukherjee, Anita Desai, Kiran Desai, Arundhati Roy, Amitav Ghosh, Jhumpa Lahiri and Chitra Banerjee Divakarani. Among them many Indian women writers write about their situation in cross cultural contexts and states of "in-betweens." Through their writing, they express their longing for their motherland as well as portray an objective picture of Indian Society. They mostly endeavour to define the experience of immigrants and look for some "Indian-ness" in the write-ups.

Bharati Mukherjee, an expatriate of the Indian Origin in the United States of America, is one of the remarkable women writers of Post-Modernist literature. Like many other post-modern writers, Bharati Mukherjee too has taken up the problems and experiences faced by the Indian immigrants in the US or the western world. The most important concern of post colonial literature is related to locate, dislocation and relocation. Displacement or dislocation often leads to a sense of nowhere and identity crisis.

Cultural dislocation has tremendous impact on the immigrants psyche. Culture comprises a prescribed value system or behaviour pattern including rituals and customs. A person's cultural base becomes virtually a second nature to them. It bestows on them an identity. Identity is defined by Richard W. Brislin and Kenneth Kushner as "a quality that is partly given to us by others, through their affection, respect and feedback concerning the behaviour in which we engage." (22) Culture is taken for granted until a confrontation with another social more. The compulsion

to assimilate into an alien culture sharpens one's hitherto dormant attitude to his own culture and it stands as a hindrance to his assimilation. When the new milieu fails to recognize him, an individual becomes deindividualized.

Mukherjee's **The Tiger's Daughter** deals with the problems of cultural clashes. It illustrates the uprooted condition of Tara, the protagonist of the novel. Born in the family of Banerjees in Calcutta, Tara Banerjee Cartwright goes to the United States for higher Studies. She marries David, an American and settles down in New York. After seven years she returns to Calcutta to locate her 'home,' to trace her cultural roots and to reclaim her inherited identity as the daughter of the Bengal Tiger and as the great granddaughter of Hari Lal Banerjee of Pachapara. She shunts between Calcutta and New York straddling Indian and American Cultures. In this process she is caught between two worlds, two ideologies, two ways of life and two ways of encountering reality. She realizes that she is now neither an Indian nor truly an American. She is totally confused and lost. This expatriate sensibility has been intertwined in this novel from the beginning to the end.

The Tiger's Daughter is a very fine manifestation of an upper cultural conflict. This is an interesting study of an upper class Bengali Brahmin girl who goes to America for higher studies. Though afraid of the unknown ways of America in the beginning, she tries to adjust herself to it by entering into the wedlock with an American. She returns to India after seven years only to find herself a total stranger in the inherited milieu. She realizes that she is now neither an Indian nor truly an American. This kind of uprootedness has been intertwined in this novel from the beginning till the end.

The novel is divided into four parts. Part I deals with the past of Tara, her family background, the process of her settlement at New York and her settlement from her native soil of Calcutta. Part II deals with Tara's arrival at Bombay, her journey to Calcutta and her reaction to India. Part III concentrates on Tara's life at Calcutta with her Catelli Continental friends. Part IV deals with her visit to Darjeeling with her friends to spend summer vacation, her coming back to Calcutta, her boredom and alienation, her victimization in a mob and her tragic end which remains mysterious.

The novel begins with Tara, a young Indian born woman who comes back to Calcutta after having spent seven years in the United States to visit her family. However, her visit makes her aware of the wide gulf between two nations and two cultures. Socio-cultural mores and values of her native land miserably fail to enthuse her. Tara, a victim of immigration is torn between mutually contradictory emotions. Her efforts to adapt to American society are known by her rejection and revulsion of Indian modes of life. The antithetical feelings beset her. She is caught

in this antithetical tension. She seems to be troubled and also unable to balance the two worlds known to her. This antithetical feeling is widespread throughout the novel.

Tara's husband David is a westerner and she is always aware of this fact. As a result, she cannot communicate with him the finer nuances of her family background and life in Calcutta. Her failure to do so is rooted in her cultural differences. The concept of marriage in India is entirely different from American concept of marriage. In India, marriage is not only a complete union of two individuals and also a coming together of two families as well. Marriage is considered to be an extremely important Samsakar which enjoys a particular and peculiar sanctity. It is not only a union of two bodies but a fusion of two souls into one. However, the western view is entirely different because marriage is considered to be simply a social contract between two individuals in the west.

Tara returns to India as a confused person with a depressed state of mind. She wants to belong to her family, relatives, friends, caste, creed and class and to Calcutta, the city of her birth. But she is assailed by a series of shocks and disappointments. Her efforts to retrieve the losing cultural roots and familial ties are in vain. Her desire to enjoy the comfort zones offered by her class and caste are also frustrated.

Caught in this gulf between the two contrasting worlds, Tara feels that she has forgotten many of her Hindu rituals of worshipping icons which she had seen her mother performing since her childhood. The following incident throws light on this aspect:

When the sandalwood paste had been ground Tara scraped it off the slimy stone tablet with her fingers and poured it into a small silver bowl. But she could not remember the next step of the ritual. It was not a simple loss, Tara feared, this forgetting of prescribed actions; it was a little death, a hardening actions; it was a little death, a hardening of the heart, a cracking of axis and center. But her mother came quickly with the relief of words. (51)

Religion plays a central role in any culture. So, she is very much upset when she forgets rituals in prayer. This cultural disorientation is the result of what America has done to her. Now she has become "foreign" to her native values. In fact all the cherished values in India have been lost. It fills her with a sense of rootlessness. She starts questioning the validity of her own identity. Tara's confusion results from her own unstable self as she remains constantly nervous regarding her role as a Bengali wife of an American man. When she fails to get an approval for her decision of breaking the social taboos, she becomes incapable to hold fast her judgement. She

also does not realise that it is her decisions which have made her an outsider in India. It is hard for bicultural individuals to decide where they belong to. Jasbir Jain suggests that “the emigrants’ judgement of their homeland results in a kind of vacuum surrounding the protagonists. They belong nowhere.” (qtd in **Sharma 10**)

Tara’s effort to adapt to American society is measured by her rejection and revulsion of Indian modes of life. After living seven years abroad, and journeying in buses and airplanes, Tara felt that she would be thrilled to travel in Indian trains, but the ride only depresses her. Her trip to India shatters all her illusions about India. Even her journey in the train gives her only pain.

There is a strange fusion of the Americanness and Indianness in the psyche of Tara and they are always at a note of confrontation with each other. Sometime she makes futile effort to establish her American self. But it clashes with the pulse of Indian life on her visit to Calcutta. Neither can she take refuge in her old Indian self nor in her newly discovered American self. The outcome of this confrontation is her split-up psyche. The protagonist being depressed and disgusted with the deteriorating situation of India and her new personality finds herself difficult to adjust with the situation and finally wishes to go back to the USA to her husband. Tara encounters a double culture shock—the first in the US and then in India.

The cultural shock to Tara is too big for her to bear. She has returned from America with high hopes of a fond reunion with parents, relations and friends of yore. She is eager to revisit her former jaunts, familiar streets and the convent. But, at the end of the novel, she leaves for America in a hurry, almost surreptitiously, without taking leave of all her friends, suddenly informing her helpless parents about her decision “to return to David and the United States” (209).

CONCLUSION

Thus caught between two contrasting cultures and realizing that reconciliation is impossible, the protagonist decides to go back to her husband, David, by accepting her life in New York rather than in Calcutta. By choosing assimilation with foreign culture, Tara has slipped outside the parameters of a world to which she belongs by birth and, after living seven years outside it, re-entry is barred. Tara’s decision to return and to reside permanently in America is definitely a step forward in finding her identity.

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Phases and Problems of Human Sexuality in Mahesh Elkunchwar's Flower of Blood

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ABSTRACT

Human sexuality is a multidimensional and lifelong experience involving various aspects of human behaviors. Humans manifest their sexuality through multidimensional layers. These layers can be biological, cultural, economical, physical, political, psychological, sociological and spiritual. Both biological and non-biological factors influence understanding of sex and sensual drives of males and females. Aging affects human sexuality within the dynamics of transition from infancy to the childhood, childhood to adolescence, adolescence to adulthood, and adulthood to grave. Between these transitions several manifestations occur, namely: puberty, menopause, manopause. These transitions may seem simple but actually they create complicated problems in the lives of individuals. Individuals must have prior knowledge about these to avoid disturbances in their sex lives.

Keywords: Human Sexuality, sexual phases, sexual transitions, menopause, Jocasta Complex

INTRODUCTION

Menopause in middle-aged women is a significant transition. It represents the end of menstruation. While technically it refers to the final period, it is not an abrupt event, but a gradual process. It is a natural life-stage transition and not a disease. But it creates both physiological and psychological problems in aging women. One such complication is dealt in the play, **Flower of Blood** by Mahesh Elkunchwar. The entire setting of the play is a domestic Indian household. Padma, the protagonist, is in her early 50s and is undergoing peri-menopause, a period of a woman's life shortly before the occurrence of the menopause. At the opening of the play, Padma is undergoing some kind of depression. She is under medication. Padma's

depression may be because of the death of her son Shashi. Padma is the one who was proud once to send her son to the army. Soon after his death she realizes that sending her son is a wrong choice. She really does not like the idea of sending her son. But now she wants him by her side like anything. She seems to be dejected from other family members because she thinks that no one other than her in the family feels for Shashi's death. She hates the company of Bhau and Leelu but likes the company of Raja, the paying guest whom she personifies as Shashi.

On the whole Padma tries to create a made-up reality that she is unhappy just because of her son's death. She showcases her grief in front of the family members. She creates her own vicious circle within which she does not allow anyone to enter. It is Leelu who openly attacks Padma that she acts clumsy all because of her delayed periods. This is a big blow for Padma as it rips off her mask. The reality is that Padma is growing old and is afraid that she is losing her youth. She is losing her fertility and the very aspect terrifies her. As people age there is a steady decrease in their sex hormones which reduces the libido. Man's craving for sex is high during two stages: during adolescence and when their fertility fades away from them naturally. But during the latter, sex becomes physically more difficult for men and women.

Padma shows all the symptoms of menopause. Throughout the play, Padma is restless and in a constant state of panic. Often she loses her temper for trivial matters. She does not want to start a conversation with Bhau and Leelu. She also gets mood swings. She yells at Bhau; especially at Leelu. But she regrets for what she did and apologizes to Bhau that these days she is not at all taking care of the family. She also tries to be a better mother to Leelu.

Padma faces more psychological problems than physiological. All her attempts to assert her role in the family end in vain. Her deliberate flaring at Bhau and Leelu is nothing but an attention gathering attempt where she wants other members of the family to know that she is not at ease. She is already cut away from the family and her husband. Bhau too hesitates to approach her for physical relationship because he thinks that it may complicate the situation. He spends most of the time out of the house in clubs. All his attempts to take her out go waste since Padma is already sinking in self pity. She presumes that Bhau hates her because she is no more young, beautiful and fertile. She longs for her lost youth. The same makes her feel embarrassed and guilty as she could not suppress her desires and longing for her lost fertility. At the same time she finds her lost fertility and youth in Leelu. This thought makes her think that Leelu is her rival who stands in between her and Bhau. Padma is jealous of Leelu for the same reason. Padma is not even in a position to think that Leelu is her own daughter. Only during this kind of situation she longs for the presence of her dead son Shashi. Even though she has maternal love towards her son, it is not up to the levels that she tries to showcase when Bhau

and Leelu discuss the silk saris. This becomes evident when Bhau points out that she has never fed him even a rotli when he is around. So Padma is actually trying to cover her problems by showcasing her maternal love for Shashi. As he is not around all her finer feelings turn towards Raja, the paying guest. She personifies Raja as her own son Shashi thinking that he could relieve her from her turmoil. She tries to treat Raja as her own son but her suppressed sexual desires force her to treat him as a substitute husband.

Padma's situation can be closely related with Jocasta complex where a mother has sexual drives towards her son. Even though Raja has a soft corner for her, he finds it hard to gratify her needs. When all her expectations collapse, she falls into her vicious circle. She is afraid of the relationship between Leelu and Raja. She strangles between the two poles; being a woman and being a mother. Padma could not fit herself in any of the two categories. Also she does not have a vent for releasing all suppressed emotions. When she realizes that she could not find any fulfillment in being a mother and as a wife she sinks into absurdity. She grows cynical.

There are so many other factors which drive her mad. She must have been made to express her suppressed grief for her son's loss. Padma feels her meaningless presence inside the house. She feels alone because Bhau keeps himself out all the time in clubs and Leelu goes out to play. All these small things sum up to her mental break down. But the role of her husband is crucial. He loves her. Even when Padma is cynical and cold towards him and Leelu he tolerates her clumsiness patiently. When Leelu, as an adolescent youth, attacks her mother for her "mischief," he stands by Padma's side and consoles her. This understanding between the partners is necessary. This kind of bond is the only thing a partner would expect from his/her partner. Bhau too gets mad on Padma twice in the play. But inside he really cares for her. When they attempt for a physical relationship, Padma pushes him aside because she could not tolerate his old man's smell (kareishu) because he too is undergoing aging. But he isn't angry at her for ignoring him. But he bottles up everything for the good of the family.

The most severe psychological and physiological symptoms of menopause are transitory. It can be hellish while women go through it, but afterwards it is often remembered as a "non-event." But Padma is forced to fulfill the expectations of society. Most societies celebrate motherhood. But they forget the very fact there is a woman inside each mother. Leelu comes as a miniature representation of society where she expects Padma as a canonical mother. Leelu thinks that way because that is what society expects from a woman.

CONCLUSION

Society is a group of individuals. Change must occur within each of them. Both men and women are vulnerable to these sexual phases and transitions. To tackle the problems because of these, they must talk openly about these problems rather than circumventing them as taboo. Human sexuality, unlike animals, does not mean mere physical relationship. Its meaning can be explained only in relation with various factors. It acquires different forms during different phases. These changes may produce disturbances. But they can be tackled easily if society has the prior knowledge about them.

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Blurred Sexuality in a Hybrid Culture in Manju Kapur's "The Immigrant"

VIDHYA, M

ABSTRACT

Culture is a man-made structure. Man and culture are interlinked and are inseparable. Culture, by its essence, is an unstable phenomenon and changes within it are inevitable. Its structure is altered by various factors. Sometimes a particular culture may become a factor for the changes brought in another. Blending of cultures creates hybrid cultures which is unique even though it is related to its root cultures. Even though it has its own value system, it is still inconsistent. Because of this inconsistency, it is forced to undergo transformations. The disturbances produced during these transformations are echoed in society and in individuals. The immigrant is one such novel which focuses on such turbulences.

Keywords: Hybrid culture, Westernization, Blending of culture, Assimilation, Hybrid identity.

INTRODUCTION

Can Indians still rely upon the belief that they have a unique culture, unaltered and rich in its values? Can they be still proud of the Indian culture that their ancestors passed on to them? What did their culture fade into? Or are these questions on cultural degradation really necessary? Is it really possible to preserve the so-called treasured values our culture? Before seeking answers to these questions, it becomes important to study the circumstances under which we are forced to raise such questions.

Indians are passionate about Western culture. They adapt themselves to the West by changing their way of living. They assimilate themselves with the customs and practices of the West even though they have their own set of beliefs, values and behaviors which constitutes their way of life. Though Western culture is less

rigid and celebrates self-independence, Indians cannot forget their culture and blindly following it. The defining feature of Indian culture is its values. So it is their responsibility to preserve their own ethnicity. Westernization plays a vital role in impacting our Indian culture through numerous direct or indirect influences. Non-residential Indians, who live in Western countries, like to see themselves as a part of the West since it assures them a less rigid society with individual's liberty as its key aspect. They slowly make a shift to Western culture knowingly and unknowingly. On the other hand, native Indians too feel the Western presence in all spheres of life. This paper focuses on how Indian sexual ethics are transformed by the influence of Westernization.

DICUSSION

Indians live in a globalized world where hybrid culture is prevalent. They are struck in between their mother culture and the influences from the West. They feel inferior while following their culture in the presence of the Western culture and in the end they embrace the latter. But still they remain half baked. In Western countries children are brought up very independently right from their childhood. Every child has a say in the issues related to them. They are allowed to involve in the family matters. They become capable of managing things in an earlier age than compared to any Indian child.

But in India, children always depend on their parents. All their activities are controlled and decided by their parents. Indian parents never allow their children to involve in the family matters. So maturity takes place late in the case of Indian children. These restrictions that are prevalent in Indian culture are always seen as guidance that stops us from going off the right track. Freedom without responsibility can ruin the good of any individual.

Manju Kapur's **The Immigrant** is a novel about love, marriage, sex life, multiculturalism, isolation and absurdity of life. The hero of the novel Ananda is a typical Indian middle class boy. His focuses are on studies, job, marriage and family. But once he loses his parents, he wants to move to Canada for his higher studies and find a job with a help of his uncle, who is a settler in Canada already. Ananda's character undergoes change because of Westernization. He is under the pressure of adapting himself to their culture. Circumstances push him to do so. He finds it hard to fit in there. The changes are evident when he finds new food habits and dressing style and they do not make any big problem in his life abroad. In fact they transform him. But when changes take place in his sexual relationship, he loses his cultural values and behaviors.

The problem in Ananda's sense of sexual inadequacy starts with his relationship with a White woman called Sue. He tries to have sexual relationship

with her and there he finds that he is an impotent. After knowing this fact that he is an impotent, he thinks that an understanding and loyal Indian bride will be a cure to his problem. Because he thinks that the Indian women would not pay more attention to sexual relationship, he accepts Nina's alliance when her sister Alka approaches him.

Nina is the protagonist of the novel. She is in her thirties. She loses her father in an accident. So the responsibility of taking care of her widowed mother and herself is on her. She loses her father when his presence is needed the most. But she manages to grow bold and self-conscious. She loves Rahul who works as a professor in Delhi University where she studies. She has a pre-marital affair with him. It shows the impact of Westernization on Indian society. Both lose their cultural values and sexual ethics. They do not even feel that what they do is wrong or is something against their social customs and practices, which show how westernization is gradually wiping out Indian values.

Nina's relationship with Rahul however ends in failure and disappointment. She dedicates herself to Rahul physically like any other Indian woman and emotionally but depression is all what she gets finally. Though she has dejection in moving on in life, she accepts Ananda's alliance just for her mother's happiness. Nina leaves her home and country to build a new life with her husband. Both struggle to adapt to a new life. She is thrown into a world of questions. Her new life in Canada begins to unravel.

She is very sincere and loyal to Ananda at the beginning of their marriage. She loves and cares for Ananda and wishes to have a sexual relationship with him but Ananda hesitates. He is an impotent who suffers from premature ejaculation. When Nina understands his problem, she is confused. Ananda decides to get his problem cured in California without informing it to Nina. Nina can not adjust in Canada so easily without Ananda's love and care which leave Nina as a forsaken figure. Ananda's sexual dysfunction leaves a bad impression on her. The important thing of dissatisfaction in their marital life is just focused on sex and everything else is secondary.

Nina seems to be more selfish and fetish to have a baby rather than exploring into Ananda's problems to understand his predicament. Ananda is keen only on improvising his sexual performance rather than in loving his wife and giving her the comfort she needs. When Ananda solves all his sexual inadequacy problems, Nina is not ready to have a mechanical physical relationship with him. Both are frustrated in their lives. It leads them into extra-marital relationship with Mandy and Anton. They think that it is a time for them to enjoy their extra-marital life. Nina and Ananda carry on with their relationships with Anton and Mandy respectively

without the knowledge of one's deception of the other and each feels liberated because such relationships are not healthy relationships but merely meeting of the bodies, a healthy give and take. Both believe in "Nobody owns anybody" which is a typical Western thought.

Nina is a girl of imaginative world rather than that of real one and all her thoughts and ideologies are influenced by literature. After having sex with Anton, Nina feels liberated. Extra-marital affair is not a big issue in the West. But in Indian culture it is totally different. Sex does not mean commitment. Sex does not make her feel guilty, not beyond the initial shock. She breaks the taboo and both experience liberation when they adapt to Western culture. Nina and Ananda betray each other and they are solely responsible for their extra-marital relationships which lead to a breakup.

CONCLUSION

In marriage, the sexual aspect and the emotional aspect are important. But here sexual aspect dominates the emotional aspect. This leads them into pre-marital and extra-marital relationships. These kinds of relationships are possible only in Western culture. Whereas in Indian culture, sexual relationship is legal only within marriage, pre-marital and extra-marital sex are taboo and it is illegal in Indian culture.

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Science Fiction Elements in Salman Rushdie's *Grimus*

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ABSTRACT

Salman Rushdie is an important British contemporary author and critic. He belongs to the group of British authors with foreign (and mostly commonwealth) origin with British education. The two worlds, British and Indian, intermingle in his writing and he is said to occupy a culturally intermediary position together (Connor 104). Thus the paper explores the science fiction elements in the novel *Grimus* which is written for a competition purpose but contains elements fantastic and fictional.

INTRODUCTION

Speculative fiction based on science is motivated by people's desire to explore their life experiences at boundary conditions, and hopefully, to adjust our skewed perspectives. Unlike traditional literature which keeps humans at the center of the literary universe,

Science fiction allows us to displace humans from the pedestal. It helps us to feel the pulse of our existence more intimately, gives us the freedom to imagine worlds we would never be able to feel and touch and sets us on the stage where we can feel – however fleeting the feeling may be – the grandest and most primal of our fears, hopes, joys, despair and the wonders of our world. (Genesan 1)

To exist in the past, present or the future is to be part of a story. Narrative is universal; they are decreed by the unseen hand, they are woven into the fabric of the universe. As humans talk in the dark, stories are their torches. Stranded amidst the darkness that gnaws incessantly at the edge of our illuminated spheres, humans seek solace in stories, in the flickering lights of their fellow travelers separated by time, space, culture and ideology. In telling stories, they momentarily forget the

fact that they do not know their bearings, their destination or the reason why they travel (Ganesan 2).

Salman Rushdie is one such a person who travels in the timeless world exploring the human mind beyond time, space, culture and ideology. Walsh comments that combining the elements of magic and fantasy, the grimmest realism, extravagant farce, multi-mirrored analogy and a potent symbolic structure, Salman Rushdie has captured the astonishing energy of novel unprecedented in scope, manner and achievement in the hundred and fifty year old tradition of the Indian novel in English (258).

Science fiction is generally considered as a literature of ideas. It is also called prognostic. Science fiction is one of the three subdivisions of fantastic literature, the other two being fantasy fiction and supernatural horror. As Ursula K. LeGuin writes in her book **The Language of the Night**, “The science fiction writer is supposed to take a trend or phenomenon of the here and now, purify and intensify it for dramatic effect, and extend it into the future” (150). Brooks Landon, in his book **Science Fiction After 1900**, says, “Science fiction is the kind of literature that most explicitly and self-consciously takes change as its subject and its teleology.” As Norman Spinrad writes, the “central thematic core” of SF is “the philosophical relationship of the human spirit to science and technology” (57).

DISCUSSION

Grimus (1975) is Salman Rushdie’s debut novel, but it has not received the same kind of attention as **Midnight’s Children** (1981) and **Shame** (1983). **Grimus** is a strange a blend of mythical or allegorical narrative, fantasy, science fiction.

Science fiction is basically devised to provide an alternative version of reality and thus to create a possible way of looking to reality from different angles and dimensions. It is a mixed world of the real and the hyper-real and the events in this world move from temporality to timelessness, from spatiality to formlessness, crossing the borders of the actual and the mythical, the real and the hyper-real. On this basis, Rushdie’s **Grimus** is considered as a science fiction because it makes use of these elements, and its themes have been conveyed within the frame of this genre. **Grimus** tells the tale of an immortal American Indian who embarks upon an odyssey as in Tennyson’s *Ulysses*—“To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield”—to find the meaning of life beyond boundaries.

A WORLD BEYOND AGE

The dimensions come in several varieties. . . . There are a million possible Earths with a million possible histories, all of which actually exist simultaneously. In the

course of one's daily life, one weaves a course between them, if you like, but that does not destroy the existence of pasts or futures we choose not to enter. What has happened to you is that you have fallen into a different historical continuum, in which Calf Island, and all of us, have our being. The place you came from knows nothing, of us. (53)

Because of the existence of an infinity of potential fictional spaces, the fictional universe of **Grimus** stands between potentiality and actualisation and this makes it highly unstable. And from time to time it is subjected to what is referred to as "blinks" during which Calf Island momentarily returns to non-being, to chaos: "sort of blink. As though for a moment one wasn't there. . . . It was like a hiatus. . . a break in time." (44)

BEINGS BEYOND AGE

In the past Flapping Eagle had wandered the face of the earth for over several centuries."He fell from his yacht, Deggle's yacht, into the angry sea. . . . A few seconds later he fell through a hole in the Mediterranean into that other sea, that not-quite-Mediterranean, and was carried towards the misty beach in the first light of dawn" (34) and was washed ashore on Calf Island.

Dilip Fernandez rightly explains, "Grimus is an anagram of Simurg, in Persian mythology the bird with reasoning power" (104). As Reddy explored that the very title of the novel is an anagram of Simurg, "a monstrous bird of Persian legend, imagined as rational, having the power of speech and great age. The Mountain Calf is named after the Arabic letter 'Kaf' which has esoteric connotations. The very word 'Gorfs' is an inversion of frogs. 'Nus' is an inverted form of Sun. the Galaxy 'YAWIKILM' is an anagram of Milky Way" (8).

FANTASY BEYOND

Grimus is a powerful fantasy dealing with the vagaries of various characters. Uma Parameswaran in her article "Salman Rushdie in Indo-English Literature" says, "It is an epic fantasy of vaulting imagination, full of strangely echoing, mysterious and extraordinary adventure" (17). There are Gorfs who live on the planet there lit by Nus. They are an ingenious race who feels they need no science or art, no job or interest in the Divine Game of Order (64-65). Brigg observes that **Grimus** is wholly fantastic, detached from the real world and ahistorical as the works of Samuel Beckett. The subject of **Midnight's Children** is the real world as it follows the history and geography of the sub-continent (123).

MYSTERIOUS AND MIRACULOUS WORLD

The characters in the novel are all fanciful figures. Flapping Eagle, the protagonist of the novel, falls through a hole in the sea after making gyrations on the earth for over seven centuries. He becomes an enquirer of reality. He withstands the inner turmoil which almost batters the Calf Island. His contacts with the people of K violate the order of the town. Naturally, he incurs their wrath and leaves for the abode of Grimus. Flapping Eagle meets a similar fate in Axona because of his confused sex. Moreover his whiteness was a thing of contempt in the land inhabited by a dark skinned race. So he was an exile in an isolated community.

The inhabitants of Calf Island are mysterious persons who we do not come across in day-to-day life. Awards and incentives do not have any place in the town K; even the distribution of the land is need-based. They render service freely.

From Dolores, he (Flapping Eagle) learned that K was a town of reprobates and degraded types; selfish, decadent people that no decent woman would want to be near; but then Flapping Eagle was no decent woman" (40). They are all "immortals who had found their longevity too burdensome in the outside world, yet had been, unwilling to give it up; with Sispy's guidance they had come to Calf Mountain to be with their own kind" (40).

In **Grimus** a series of miracles take place: a man (Grimus) finds the Elixir of Life and afterwards he creates an enchanted island inhabited by human immortals (the Island of Calf). All these magical feats come to nothing when Flapping Eagle, the hero of the novel, finally brings about the extermination of the island, "its molecules and atoms breaking, dissolving, quietly vanishing into primal, unmade energy" (314).

TIME TRAVEL

The blurring of the "real" and the "fantastic," and the past and present is a dominant feature of the novel. From the beginning of the novel, one reads about the "elixir" which transforms the hero into an immortal and time-traveler being who breaks the boundaries between time and space. In his fantastic voyage, the Flapping Eagle explores and experiences many versions of life in the past and present. The multi-experiences of his journey enable him to predict and plan the shape of the realistic state of future. For this, we see him in the end of the novel giving his resolution to the conflicting views of the solid and stagnant state and the absolute liberal one.

ALTERNATIVE VERSION OF HISTORY

To Rushdie, history is made of many voices and spoken by many languages. The alternative version of reality in the novel takes three forms in Eagle's thoughts. First, the level of science with which he works to change the conditions and reality of the island governed by the tyrannical ruler, Grimus. The second is the level of politics in which he decides to go back to Phoenix to liberate it from repression. The third one is the level of fiction as a tool to create new realities (Kuortti 34). **Grimus** undermines the concept of a pure culture by demonstrating the impossibility of any culture, philosophy or weltanschauung (a comprehensive view of the world and human life) existing in sterile isolation."Any intellect which confines itself to mere structuralism is bound to rest trapped in its own webs. Your words serve only to spin cocoons around your own irrelevance." (91)

CONCLUSION

A science-fiction based hybrid of religious myth and literary pastiche, Grimus blends the simplicity of folktale with the complexity of a questioning philosophical novel. Thus the novel Grimus explores the notions of mysterious parentage, displacement and exile, unstable personal and national identity, the colonial legacy, a preview of Rushdie's precarious attitude towards female sexuality, cultural Hybridity, alternative history, fictional world called 'K' or Calf Island, Persian mythology of bird with reasoning power, mysterious and miraculous world, time travel and spatial exploration.

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Redefining Gender Stereotypes in Shashi Deshpande's "Small Remedies"

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ABSTRACT

This paper focuses on Redefining gender stereotypes in Shashi Deshpande's **Small Remedies**. It highlights the psychological sufferings of Indian women being the homemakers. It showcases how women in society are trapped by the gender roles in marriage. This paper depicts the dashing action of the women who take their liberation in their hands.

Keywords: Gender stereotypes, patriarchal society, Indian tradition

INTRODUCTION

Indian women writing in English is being recognized as the major contribution in literature. Many Indian women novelists have explored female subjectivity in order to establish an identity that is not imposed by patriarchal society. The work of Indian women writers is significant in making society aware of the women's needs and demands in providing a medium for self-expression and assertion. Gender is an important area of study in many disciplines, such as literary theory and drama studies. In the context of postmodernism, gender theorists led by the work of Judith Butler initially viewed the category of "gender" as a human construct enacted by a vast repetition of social performance. The biological distinction between man and women eventually came under the same scrutiny by theorists who reached a similar conclusion that the sexual categories are products of culture and as such help create social reality rather than simply reflect it.

DISCUSSION

A gender role is a set of social behavioral norms that, within a specific culture, are widely considered to be socially appropriate for individuals of a specific

sex. The perception of gender roles includes attitudes, actions, and personality traits associated with a particular gender within that culture. Gender roles are predominantly considered within a family context as well as within society in general and may collectively be referred to as gender stereotypes.

Shashi Deshpande as a prominent writer on Indian literary horizon has the closely study on the feminism which links with the real life situation. She expresses the position of women in a patriarchal society, someone without a clear sense of purpose society, someone without a firm sense of her own identity. Her women characters do not place themselves in the center of a universe of their own making, but rather are always painfully aware of the demands and needs of others. In **Small Remedies**, Madhu the protagonist tries to escape from her own grief by observing the lives of Savitribai and other people around her. She has narrated the tragic tale of Savitribai, doyen of the Gwalior Gharma. She leads the most unconventional of lives, but undergoes great mental trauma because of the double standards practiced in society. Right from the childhood she had sensed the gross discrimination in society that has one set of laws for men and another for women.

The game Madhu plays in her childhood days shows the stereotype of women in society. The game house-house is a very real in the Indian context. The author informs about the traditional concept of Indian family. The relational term used for family members and their duties towards other members of the family and predetermined. This is one of the very strong examples where individual reality and social reality go in opposite directions. Madhu finds the whole net of relationships complex and incomprehensive.

This is Baba. He is the father. He goes out to work. This is Aai. She is the mother. She looks after the home and children. This is Dada, the oldest brother. He helps his father. This is Akka, the oldest sister. And so on. Each one is paying out his or her allotted role to perfection. The dignified father, and nurturing mother, the serious and the responsible oldest brother. The eldest sister... (133)

The family described above is reflected in the game of the children as well. Even the games are manipulated with the abstract ideals of society where everything is predetermined. The very idea of the traditional family does not fit in Madhu's frame. Madhu, who has grown up in the family where the mother is absent, reacts against the family system reflected in the game. The game which is perfect in the eyes of society is rejected by Madhu as 'always boring.' The writer relates the idea of family through the game.

Savitribai the Brahmin woman marries Muslim musician who accompanies her on drums. As Savitribai ascends to the heights of fame, she gives up her husband

too and devotes herself to music. When Madhu attends an all women festivity for the first time after her marriage, she is astonished at how they seem to break free of the moulds of aunts, mothers, daughters and the like. That they have been squeezed into “women without men” I realized then, they are totally different creatures” (137). It depicts how women are facing their stereotypes in society.

CONCLUSION

Both Madhu and Savitribai get the freedom they wanted, and live their life in their own terms. But this unconventionality, this breaking out of stereotypical moulds, this assertion of identity and individuality does not come without a price. In *Small Remedies*, women voice out the gender stereotype in society, and these women redefine gender stereotype and live their own life. Thus this paper brings out the stereotypical life of women in Indian society.

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