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# Assonance

A Journal of Russian & Comparative Literary Studies

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**DEPARTMENT OF RUSSIAN & COMPARATIVE LITERATURE**  
**UNIVERSITY OF CALICUT**  
**KERALA, INDIA – 673635**

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3. **Abstract & Keywords:** Abstract (in about 150 words) of the article and keywords to be provided at the beginning of the text (after Title and author's info) in italics. For articles in non-English languages, abstract and keywords to be provided in English as well.
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## **From the Editors**

The Department of Russian and Comparative Literature humbly present before you the 22nd issue of our departmental research journal *Assonance – A Journal of Russian and Comparative Literary Studies*. It is indeed a matter of pride for us to share that our journal has received tremendous support from different universities and has been widely read by the scholars from the fields of Russian studies and comparative literary studies. We are grateful to each and every contributor for contributing their valuable research articles for this issue.

The current issue has total fifty-five articles in Russian, English, Malayalam contributed by scholars of eminence as well as emerging scholars on various issues of Russian studies, comparative literature, comparative study, genre study, thematic study of different authors and their texts, translation studies, linguistics, culture studies, travelogue, folklore, et al.

We express our deepest sense of gratitude towards the administration of the University of Calicut for their continual financial support and patronage in our endeavour of publishing this journal. We as well appreciate the timely input provided by the Board of Referees with respect to quality of the articles and publication of the journal. Last but not the least, we are thankful to all those who rendered their support towards bringing out this issue successfully.

The Editors



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# ЭВОЛЮЦИЯ И РАЗВИТИЕ ЛИТЕРАТУРНЫХ ЖАНРОВ «УТОПИИ» И «АНТИУТОПИИ»

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## EVOLUTION AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE LITERARY GENRES OF “UTOPIA” AND “ANTI-UTOPIA”

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***Аннотация:** в настоящей статье речь идёт об эволюции и развитии литературных жанров «утопии» и «антиутопии» с ходом времени. Вспоминая прошлое и думая о будущем, писатели и мыслители в своих художественных работах по-разному изображают картину общества, т.е. иногда идеальную а иногда апокалиптическую. Можно сказать, что в утопии выдвигаются идеи человеческого оптимизма о жизни и подтверждение веры человека во все общем благе, а в антиутопии выражаются предупреждения и сомнения в таких идеальных положениях и состояниях человека и общества. С помощью изучения общих и специфических черт этих литературных жанров, мы можем лучше понимать государственное устройство, состояния человека в обществе и отношения между людьми в тех или иных условиях.*

***Ключевые слова:** литературный жанр, утопия, антиутопия, дистопия, общество, человек*

***Abstract:** This article deals with the evolution and development of the literary genres “utopia” and “anti-utopia” with the passage of time. While remembering the past and thinking about the future, writers and thinkers in their works portray the picture of society in different manners, i.e. sometimes perfect and sometimes apocalyptic. We can say that in utopia ideas of human optimism about life and confirmation of a person's faith in collective welfare are put forward, and in dystopia warnings and doubts about such ideal positions and states of a person and society are expressed. By studying the general and specific features of these literary genres, we can better understand the structure of statecraft, the condition of a person in society and the relationship between people in a particular situation.*

***Key words:** literary genre, utopia, anti-utopia, dystopia, society, individual*

Через историю литературных произведений были выражены надежды или страха человечества и общества. Писатели с древних времён старались рисовать разные картины общества (настоящего или желаемого). Они изображали общества, в которых жили люди либо в состоянии покоя, гармонии, процветании и счастья либо наоборот в состоянии дисгармонии. Такие изображения разных обществ зависит от того, что как писатель видит настоящее общество и как он мечтает о будущем. При этом у него обычно бывает элементы оптимизма или пессимизма. По-разному писатели показывают судьбу общества и человечества. Некоторые писатели изображают идеальный мир, в котором есть всё прекрасно. Это самое желаемое общество, где можно жить, где нет никакой недостатка. А с другой стороны, есть писатели, которые разоблачают ложные обещания этого идеального общества. Они отрицают этот идеальный мир и выражают свои сомнения. Через изображение того же общества писатели показывают недостатки и негативные стороны этого общества. А некоторые писатели рисуют общество совсем в противоположность этому идеальному обществу. Они показывают всю безнадежность и страха человечества.

С незапамятных времен во многих культурах, религиях и обществах существует мифы или память об отдаленном прошлом, когда человечество жило в примитивном и простом состоянии, но в то же время одним из прекрасного счастья и выполнения. Сегодня мы называем это представление также как логическую протяженность желания быть счастливыми. В те дни различные мифы говорят нам, была инстинктивная гармония между человечеством и природой. Народные потребности были немногими и их ограниченными желаниями. Оба были легко удовлетворены изобилием, обеспеченным по своей природе. Соответственно, не было никаких побуждений вообще для войны или притеснения. И при этом не было никакой потребности в трудной и болезненной работе. Люди были простыми и набожными, и чувствовали себя близко к своему Богу или богам и к природе. Согласно одной антропологической теории, охотники-собиратели были оригинальным богатым обществом. Эти мифические или религиозные образцы надписаны во многих культурах и возрождаются со специальной живучестью, когда люди находятся в трудные и критические времена. Эти мифы ранней стадии человечества были упомянуты различными культурами, обществами и религиями.

Само слово «утопия» означало - прекрасное, но также невыполнимое, на фоне которого лежит социальная мифология. Утопия трактовалась как страна, которая была совершенной. Эта страна мечты о всеобщем счастье, где существует совершенный общественный строй. «Своими корнями утопическая литература уходит в архаические мифы о посещении подземного царства и в жанр народной сказки, в образно-композиционной системе которой важное место зачастую занимают некие блаженные волшебные страны, где добро окончательно побеждает зло, текут «молочные реки с кисельными берегами» и т.д.». (Полонский)

Утопия - это результат осознания и рефлексия кризисных ситуаций общества. Она действует как особая форма поиска умственного решения с целью устранения общественных конфликтов. При этом утопия указывает на идеальную модели общества в будущем. Термин «Утопия» впервые был использован Платоном в своём произведении «Государство». Но, в 1516 году, когда известный английский писатель и общественный деятель Томас Мор написал свою книгу «Золотая книжечка, столь же полезная, сколь и забавная о наилучшем устройстве государства и о новом острове Утопия», начал развиваться этот жанр. Образуется это слово из двух корней «и» и «topos» (то есть место, которого нигде нет), а, возможно, из других корней - «иен» - «благо» и «topos» - место (то есть, блаженное место). Можно сказать, что родоначальником жанра утопии является Томас Мор «Утопия» (1516).

Утопия, являющаяся одной из форм критического сознания имеет следующие характерные признаки:

- осмысление коллективного идеала;
- понимание критики окружающего строя;
- желание избегать не по душе уродливой жизни;
- попытку предсказать будущее общества.

В Философской энциклопедии так объясняется об этом: «Утопия в литературе (от греч. ou - не, нет и topos - место, т.е. место, которого нет; иное объяснение: eu - благо и topos - место, т.е. благословенное место) - литературно-художественное произведение, содержащее картину идеального общества, населенного абсолютно счастливыми людьми, живущими в условиях совершенного государственного устройства». (Философская Энциклопедия)

Общепризнанное определение утопии - «это описание или изображение идеального общества, альтернативного своим совершенством существующему (и когда-либо

существовавшему). Принципы и нормы человеческого общежития, организация труда и досуга, социально-политическое устройство и т.д. - все это в утопии лучше, гармоничнее, привлекательнее, нежели в том обществе, в котором живет ее автор. Утопическое общество свободно от нужды и эксплуатации, насилия и войн, лжи и обмана». (Гречко)

В протяжении веков, утопическая литература преобразовала, расширяла и развивала свои жанры. Так, например, «Государство» Платона и «Утопия» Т. Мора в форме научного трактата, «Робинзон Крузо» Д. Дефа и «Путешествия Гулливера» Дж. Свифта в форме художественного произведения, «Буря» В. Шекспира в форме драмы и т.д.

Следует различать термины «утопия», «утопическое сознание» и «утопизм». По С. Л. Франку «утопизм» как явление объясняется так, «под утопизмом мы разумеем, - писал он, - не общую мечту об осуществлении совершенной жизни на земле, свободной от зла и страданий, а более специфический замысел, согласно которому совершенство жизни может - а потому и должно быть - как бы автоматически обеспечено неким общественным порядком или организационным устройством...». (Петрова) Так, в утопизме присутствует уверенность в материализации совершенной среды. Дальше критик доказывает, что утопическое сознание составляет определённый способ восприятия - «Под утопическим сознанием понимается определённый способ восприятия, подхода к исторической реальности, соответствующего пониманию утопического». (Петрова)

Критик добавляет, что «само слово «утопия» в переводе с греческого означает несуществующее, небывалое место. Существуют различные, порой взаимоисключающие оценки и выводы относительно определения утопии. Одни видят в утопии извечную, никогда не достижимую мечту человечества о «золотом веке», другие истолковывают ее в качестве реального принципа, который осуществляется в ходе духовного и практического развития человечества. Некоторые видят в ней донаучную форму мышления, нечто среднее между религией и наукой, другие связывают ее с развитием современного научного знания». (Петрова)

Таким образом, утопия является и всегда с незапамятных времен была неотделимой частью коллективных надежд человечества и ключевым моментом их сознания. В социальном пространстве утопия в основе своей содержит идеал человечества во времени. Утопии порождаются конкретно-исторической реальностью, определённой социально-исторической обстановкой и моделируют определённую структуру общественных отношений, систему ценностей и тип человеческой деятельности.

Можно разделить историю утопии на три этапа - древний, классический и современный: древняя утопия - мечты о «золотом веке» («островов блаженства» - Платона), различные религиозные образы и верования (спасение человечества, представление о рае в Христианстве). Греческий поэт Гесиод (8-го века до н.э.) в своей компиляции мифологической традиции объяснил, что до существующей эры было четыре других прогрессивно более прекрасных, самым старым, из которых был Золотой Век; классическая утопия - представления о фантастических обществах и странах («Утопия» Мора, «Город Солнца» Кампанеллы, «Христианополис» И. В. Андрея, «Новая Атлантида» Френсиса Бэкона). Утопии, которые возникли во время Ренессанса, свидетельствовали о новом мышлении. Новое мышление было против христианского сознания и поддерживало языческое сознание; современная утопия - время зарождения современных утопии является конец XIX и начала XX века. В этих утопиях речь идет об новом переменном будущем человечества. Необходимо подчеркнуть, что кроме положительных утопий и существует и отрицательные утопии.

Известно, что утопия выдвигала определенные аспекты гуманизма и человеческого оптимизма о жизни. Утопия и еще является подтверждением веры человека во всеобщем



благе. Конечно, это не значит, что в определенный момент истории человечество не имело пессимистические мнения о создании идеального общества. «В противоположность утопии с ее гуманизмом, оптимизмом и социальным воодушевлением антиутопия намеренно пессимистична. Ее жанровое предназначение - высмеивать, сатирически пародировать, ставить в неловкое положение саму идею совершенства, показывать тщетность и бесплодность всех человеческих усилий хотя бы приблизиться к совершенству, испытать в полной мере чувство физической и духовной удовлетворенности жизнью». (Гречко) Антиутопия в отличие от утопии отрицает возможность построения идеального общества. Это исходит из убеждения, что любые старания сконструировать «справедливый» общественный уклад приводят к ужасным последствиям.

Литературный жанр антиутопии стал своеобразной летописью трагедии, предупреждением обществу об опасности духовной деградации и насилия. Антиутопия - это спутник утопии. «Антиутопия зародилась как антитеза мифу, утопии, поэтому она всегда оспаривает миф о построении совершенного общества, созданный утопистами без оглядки на реальность. Этот жанр стал своеобразным откликом человека на давление нового порядка. Антиутопия, как правило, становится ведущим жанром именно на сломе времен, в переходную эпоху». (Чарняк) В отличие от положительной классической утопии, антиутопия не имеет единое название. Разные термины используются для обозначения антиутопии, например «какотопия», «отрицательная утопия», «контрутопия», «дистопия», «квазиутопия» и другие.

Антиутопия сопровождала утопию как философско-художественное сознание с самого возникновения. Антиутопия появилась в отрицательных общественных состояниях, когда государство не благоприятствовало сохранению человечества. Антиутопия всегда в сопротивлении абсурдным социальным устройствам, бесправным положениям людей и насилию. Писатели антиутопий анализировали реальные общественные процессы и через фантастику старались предсказать об отрицательных и опасных следствиях утопического устройства общества.

История антиутопии, как и утопии, начинается с античных времен. Можно увидеть ее истоки в работах Аристотеля и Аврелия. Джон Стюарт Милль - британский философ, впервые в парламентской речи в 1868 году произнес этот термин. Однако, можно сказать, что литературная антиутопия дала о себе знать еще в книге «Путешествий Гулливера» (1727) Джонатана Свифта, где речь идет о летающей острове «Лапута». Дальше книги Ж. Верна «Пятьсот миллионов бегумы», Г. Уэллса «Когда спящий проснётся», «Первые люди на Луне», «Машина времени» также содержит элементы антиутопии. Хронология антиутопии показывает, что произведения «Мы» Замятина, «1984» Д. Оруэлла, «О дивный новый мир» О. Хаксли, «Москва 2042» В. Войновича, «Невозвращенец» А. Кабакова, «Кысь» Т. Толстой являются плодом критического периода в истории XX-XXI веков.

Антиутопия в словаре литературных терминов объясняется как «жанр, представляющий собой критическое описание общества утопического типа - своеобразную антитезу социальной утопии. Антиутопия оспаривает миф, созданный утопистами без оглядки на реальность, подвергает сомнению саму идею идеального социума. При этом, если в жанре традиционной утопии происходит воображаемое обращение авторов в прошлое и настоящее, то в Антиутопии всегда обращена в будущее. В Антиутопии мир, выстроенный на тех же началах, что и мир утопии, дан изнутри, через чувства его единичного обитателя, испытывающего на себе, своей частной судьбе законы идеального общества». (терминов.) Общепринятыми категориями антиутопии являются следующие:

антиутопия, основанная на описании негативных черт реального общества; антиутопия, основанная на негативных последствий новых научных изменений; антиутопия, основанная на альтернативных реальностях; антиутопия, основанная на идее апокалипсиса.

Элементы антиутопии можно наблюдать в разных произведениях писателей, которые не входят в жанр «антиутопия». Комедия Аристофана была сатирой на «государство» Платона, разные произведения писателей XVII и XVIII веков являются своеобразными поправками в реальность к утопическим произведениям Т. Мора, Т. Кампанеллы и т.д. В XIX веке в фантастиках С. Батлера «Эдин», Г. Уэллса «Машина времени» и других писателей элементы антиутопии ярко видны. XX век стал самым важным периодом для развития и распространения жанра «антиутопия». Роман «Мы» Евгения Замятина, написанный в 1921 году, считается вехой антиутопической литературой.

В начале XX века Первая мировая война и параллельные революционные движения оказались плодотворными силами для расцвета жанра «антиутопия». Это была время, когда некоторые страны начали свои попытки воплотить в жизнь утопические идеалы, в том числе большевистская Россия. Как считает Новиков, что, «антиутопия является логическим развитием утопии. В противоположность последней, антиутопия ставит под сомнение возможность достижения социальных идеалов и установления справедливого общественного строя. Расцвет антиутопий приходится на XX век, век бурных социально-политических и культурных событий, двух мировых войн и революций, интенсивного развития науки и создания тоталитарных режимов. На смену романам-мечтаниям проходят романы-предупреждения, писатели выносят на суд читателя своё видение дальнейшего развития человеческой цивилизации, обусловленное разочарованием в утопических идеалах прошлого и неуверенностью в завтрашнем дне. Угроза потери нравственности подкреплена научно-техническим прогрессом, делающим возможным духовное и физическое порабощение человечества. Идеи и цели писателей-антиутопистов мало отличаются друг от друга, средства же их выражения дают простор для осмысления как учёным-литературоведам, так и многочисленной читательской аудитории». (Новиков)

Антиутопия в самом смысле - это критическое изображение государственной модели, противостоящая принципам подлинного гуманизма. Важным признаком утопии и антиутопии стал ее прогнозирующий характер. Они нацелены на реальность, которую нужно изменить, указали, как надо проводить эти изменения. Здесь было бы целесообразно приостановить на тему определения различных терминов т.е. Утопия, Антиутопия и Дистопия.

Существует очень тонкая линия между английским понятием *anti-utopia* и *dystopia* так, как все они очень близко связаны друг с другом. Дистопия (*dys + topos* - плохо место) - это противоположность утопии и здесь изображаются вымышленные общества, в которых жизнь является плохой и несовершенной вызванным человеческим страданием, бедностью, тиранией и терроризмом. Создатели «Дистопии» показывают смысл страха, чтобы показать, что идеальное общество не возможно. В «антиутопии», общество начинается от «утопии», но становится ей полной противоположностью. В этом контексте, «Дистопия» описывает общество, в котором существует все негативные тенденции развития. Так, произведение в жанре «дистопии» может показать ситуацию полного коллапса. Произведение же «антиутопии» существует в дискуссии с «утопией». Таким образом, утопия и антиутопия имеют многое общее, прежде всего, в своем происхождении, их объединяло ряд социально-политических вопросов, например личность и общество, гражданин и государство, свобода и счастье и т.д. Обе, и утопия и антиутопия, показывают определенные типы государственного устройства по-контрастному.

Антиутопия является логическим развитием утопии. Показываемое в антиутопии общество в большинстве случаев напоминает утопическое т.е. закрытое и оторвано от реальности. Но, Индивидуалы в антиутопиях не мифические как в утопиях. Изображение общества в утопии обычно бывает безликое, но в антиутопии затрагиваются вопросы отдельной личности. Конфликт между личностью и государственной системы ярко выражается в антиутопиях, который сам рождается от обещания утопии построить идеальный мир. И так, можно сказать, что утопия как литературный жанр развивался в XVI веке и пытался изобразить идеальное общество, где есть абсолютное равенство и всеобщее счастье. В XX веке, когда осуществлялись утопические идеи, жанр антиутопии достиг свой расцвет. Писатели антиутопии ярко показывали недостатки неудачной попытки сотворения рая на земле и предупреждали о пагубных последствиях тоталитарного государства.

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## ДРЕВНЕГРЕЧЕСКАЯ КОНЦЕПЦИЯ ПРОСТРАНСТВА

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### ANCIENT GREEK CONCEPTS OF SPACE

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***Аннотация:** Эта статья посвящена изучению пространства с точки зрения литературы и других наук. Она обсуждает определения и знания, идеи и представления пространства, начиная с античности, т.е. с греческой мифологии, показывает разные этапы в эволюции и развитии пространства. С радостью и гордостью отмечу здесь, что эта статья является частью моей кандидатской диссертации. В этой статье я буду обсуждать основные темы, связанные с определением и уточнением концепции пространства и дифференциации пространства от концепций времени и материи, а также отслеживание влияния концепции математики в отличие от физических пространств.*

***Ключевые слова:** пространство, мифология, философия, литература*

***Abstract:** This article is devoted to the study of space from the point of view of literature and other sciences. It discusses definitions and knowledge, ideas and representations of space, starting with antiquity, i.e. from Greek mythology, showing different stages of the evolution and development of space. It is with pleasure and pride to note here that this article is part of my PhD thesis. In this article, I will be exploring the main topics related to defining and refining the concept of space and differentiating space from the concepts of time and matter, as well as tracing the influence of the concept of mathematics as opposed to physical spaces.*

***Keywords:** Space, ancient-Greek, mythology, philosophy and literature*

Чтобы понять развитие концепции пространства в древнегреческой истории, обзор основных философов и их философии был обсужден в начале этой статьи. По словам Джеймса Бихлера, на основе исторических и философских разработок можно наблюдать четыре основных периода: изменения во взглядах греческих философов в целом на роль пространства в физической реальности. В каждом из этих периодов обсуждаются мифопоэтический, материальный, неопределенный и определенный, те философы, которые внесли вклад в общее развитие концепции пространства. Одно из самых легких и плодотворных определений пространства для понимания развития было дано Смартым.

«When we naively begin to think about space we most naturally think of it as though it were either some all-pervading stuff or some sort of receptacle.» (J. Smart 5)

По словам Корнфорда «эволюция первой абстрактной концепции пространства происходила в период от 600 до 300 лет до нашей эры» (Cornford 4). Процесс эволюции показывает много сдвигов и множество идей, каждая из которых определяется своими собственными терминами, такими как *хаос*, *изменение*, *небытие* и *место* и т. д. «Абстракция и концентрация идеи чистого расширения» (Cornford 4) была проблемой для греков, которые представляют пространство как фундаментальную сущность в физической реальности. Греческие философы все еще нуждались в уточнении различия и разграничения понятий пространства, времени и материи, которые смутно назывались единой сущностью с самых ранних мыслей человечества. По словам Байклера развитие концепции пространства было эволюционным процессом в ранней греческой истории.

Греческие философы разделили роль пространства в физической реальности на четыре широких периода: «Мифопоэтические концепции пространства, Материальные понятия пространства, Неопределенные концепции пространства и Определенные понятия пространства» (Beichler 2). В мифопоэтический период пространство характеризовалось как антропоморфное или смешивание пространства, времени и материи, делая его чрезвычайно расплывчатым и рудиментарным по своей природе. В материальный период началось смутное и чуть менее рудиментарное понятие пространства, и время стало отделяться от пространства и материи. Мониеты считали весь мир состоящим из единого универсального вещества. До сих пор концепция математического пространства не была сформулирована, хотя была разработана рудиментарная геометрия для основных измерений и разбиения земли. По словам Корнфорда, эти два периода также называют пред-евклидовым здравым смыслом. В неопределенных понятиях пространства абстрактное математическое пространство стало важным, арифметический взгляд смещается в геометрический вид пространства, было определено, что пространство окончательно отделено от материи и времени. Понятие абстрактного математического пространства только начинало формироваться в течение неопределенного периода.

Изменение в перфективе произошло в результате растущего евклидова здравого смысла, а также из-за развития дихотомии между дискретным и непрерывным взглядом на пространство идилеммой, представленной открытием иррациональных чисел в пифагореизме.. Поскольку атомы были исчисляемыми «вещами», арифметика могла использоваться для их моделирования или дискретных кусочков материи.

Согласно Бейхлеру, «а именно три философа: *Парминиды* из *Элеа* (начало 5 века до н.э.), *Зенон* из *Элеа* (490-430 гг. До н. Э.) И *Мелисс* из *Самоса* (5 век до н. Э.),» (Beichler 3) смешивали понятия пространства и времени в своих аргументах об изменении. В определенный период пространство было отделено от материи и времени до такой степени, что мы можем начать понимать ее как индивидуальную физическую величину или качество. Этот период также характеризовался евклидовым здравым смыслом и четким геометрическим взглядом. Бейхлер также предполагает, что в предэвклидовом смысле пространство было антропоморфным по отношению к любому данному человеку и имело отношение к богам, поскольку у богов были человеческие натуры, так же как у пространства. Например, по словам *Джаммера*, идея «хаос», *Хесиода* представляла собой «самое большое поэтическое выражение идеи универсального пространства» (Jammer 8), но смешивалась с человеческими эмоциями. *Гесиод* написал, что

«First of all chaos was born;  
Then, after him, wide-bosomed Earth,  
a sure, eternal dwelling-place  
for all the deathless gods who rule  
Olympus' snowy peaks» (J.M.Robinson 4)

*Хаос* существовал до появления мирового порядка и поэтому был более фундаментальным, чем небеса и земля. Существует ассоциация бога с *хаосом* и человеческой природой, таких как бессмертные боги. Это одна из самых ранних идей пространства как вечного места обитания или контейнера для всех вещей. *Фалес* (с 624 г. до н. Э. До 546 г. до н. Э.) был монистом и считался «водой» как единым фундаментальным элементом вселенной. Другие Мониеты, *Анаксимандер* с неопределенным или аперироном, *Анаксимен* с воздухом и *Гераклит* с огнем, также способствовали уточнению концепции пространства. По словам *Джаммера*, «пифагорейцы определенно идентифицировали «воздух» с пустотой, которая является началом концепции абстрактного пространства или расширения» (Jammer 9), но

концепция воздуха *Анаксименса* также была важна и ее нельзя избегать. По словам *Робинсона*, «*Анаксименс* был привязан к воздуху, просто не имевший никакого характера, особенно когда он наиболее распространен» (J.M.Robinson 90). Для *Гераклита* огонь был основным принципом, потому что он принципиально отличался от других элементов и находился в постоянном движении. По словам *Канеку* в своей статье «Изменение», «*Гераклит*, настаивая на текучести всего, фактически отверг существование какой-либо неизменной субстанции или движущей силы движения» (М. Сарек 96). *Перменейды* придерживались противоположной точки зрения и отрицали роль изменений. Пространство смешивалось с понятиями материи и времени для *Перменейды* и *Гераклита*, до тех пор, пока понятие времени не было дифференцировано из пространства. *Фалес* и *Анаксимен* смешивали понятия пространства и материи и не занимались концепцией изменений, а также не определяли «*изменение*» как фундаментальное.

*Анаксимандр* ввел новую и важную концепцию неопределенного, он считал, что всякая материя возникла из неопределенности, которая сама по себе не могла быть ничем, что можно было бы испытать. По словам *Робинсона*, «Он говорит, что это ни вода, ни кто-либо, ни так называемые «элементы», а другая бесконечная природа, из которой возникают все небеса и мировые заказы в мире» (J.M.Robinson 24). Следует также отметить, что на протяжении всей предыстории предшественники понятия пространства были качественными. Количество в любой из его арифметических (счетных) или геометрических (измерительных) форм еще не было связано с понятием пространства, хотя оба они существовали как далеко не формальная система математики. По словам *Байхлеру*, «*Пифагорейцы* ввели пустоту в виде абстрактного вида пространства, характеризующегося натуральными числами.

*Пифагорейская* ассоциация пространства с натуральными числами в конечном итоге привела к критическому парадоксу в отношении немислимых или нерациональных чисел, таких как радикальные два (квадратный корень из двух), и начался спор, в результате чего греческое принятие геометрии, в отличие от арифметики, описать природу» (Weichler 8). *Пифагорейцы* сыграли очень важную роль в развитии концепции пространства. Совместно с концепцией пустоты впервые математика, которая стала важной в отношении физической реальности. Числа были фундаментальным материалом пифагорейцев.

Как заметил Аристотель в *Робинсоне*, «*пифагорейцы* тоже говорили, что существует пустота, и что она входит во вселенную из бесконечного дыхания, как если бы она вдыхалась. Это пустота, которая держит вещи отчетливыми, будучи своего рода разделением и разделением вещей, которые находятся рядом друг с другом. Это истинно первое и формовое число, поскольку пустота сохраняет их отчетливо» (J.M.Robinson). *Джаммер* отдает «предпочтение пифагорейским архитам за то, что они различают место (топос), пространство или материю» (Jammer). *Парменид* утверждал, что *небытие* невозможно - Быть было единственной возможностью. Он рассуждал о том, что конечная реальность неизменна, и эта точка зрения диаметрально противоположна *Гераклиту* поскольку *небытие* и *пустота* не могут существовать, и каждый объем пространства может содержать только то, что есть или существует. Для *Парменида* вселенная была компактной пленкой недифференцированной и полностью гомогенной, и поэтому движение в форме изменений было невозможно. Он не учитывал связь между временем и пространством. Философские аргументы *Парменида* были доведены до следующего уровня его парадоксами ученика *Зенона*, которые пытаются доказать, что движение и изменение невозможно, применяя концепцию к более реалистичным ситуациям. *Парменид* не только верил, но и утверждал, что движение, пустота и изменение были невозможны, но он далее утверждал, что вселенная была сферической и твердой. *Мелисс*,

который был учеником *Парменида*, «который мог тогда конкурировать с атомщиками за открытие пространственной бесконечности».

Как реакция на *Парменида* и его философские аргументы была основана атомистическая школа мыслей. Ранние атомисты *Льюкитта* (первая половина 5-го века до н. Э.), который был основателем атомизма, и *Демокрита* (460 - 370 гг. До н. Э.), отвергли аргумент *Парменида* о том, что ничто не было ничем, признав, что Небытие было или существует в определенном смысле, и что ничто не было пустотой, в которой двигались атомы. Они также утверждали, что конечная реальность не одна, а множество в форме твердых атомов, поэтому вселенная не может быть единственным пленумом. Как заметил *Корнфорд*, атомисты сначала разрушили «древние границы вселенной и впервые предстали перед человечеством, отвратительной и действительно невообразимой картиной безграничной пустоты» (Cornford). Однако есть множество доказательств того, что ранние Атомисты, *Демокрит*, *Левкипп* и *Эпикур* считали пространство (пустоту) концом на границах атома. Другими словами, атомы были противоположны пространству (пустоте) и все же перемещались в пространстве (пустоте), но они не занимали пространство (пустоту), чьи доказательства можно было найти, когда *Лейцитт* использовал термин «манон» (пористый) для описания структуры пространства.

Ранняя атомистическая идея пространства, хотя и бесконечная и бесконечная емкость всех атомов, не распространялась через тела атомов и не может быть воспринята как пространство в ее более позднем смысле как содержащееся и все пронизывающее, как фон для движения во вселенной. Эта концепция пустоты вместо этого развилась из понятий *пифагорейцев* и *парменидов*. По словам *Бернета*, «пифагорейцы говорили о пустоте, которая разделяла единицы, но они не отличали ее от атмосферного воздуха ... *Парменид*, действительно, сформировал более четкое представление о пространстве, но только отрицал его реальность. *Левкипп* начал с этого.» (Burnet). Ранние атомисты принадлежали к неопределенному периоду. В то время как *Демокрит* не находился под влиянием пред-евклидова здравого смысла. Более поздние атомисты, *Лукреций* и *Эпикур*, были евклидовыми в обычном смысле и принадлежали к определенному периоду. Для *Лукретита* пространство стало бесконечным сосудом атомов, и оно было столь же реальным, как и атомы и материя. Поскольку пространство было бесконечным, у него не было центра и, следовательно, не было никакого обхода. Только в этот последний период греки абстрагировали свое понятие пространства до такой степени, что смогли начать анализировать пространство. Оба Платона и Аристотеля принадлежали к определенному периоду. Для Платона идея «агора», как пространство или форма, соответствует нашим современным требованиям простого понятия пространства. С другой стороны, Аристотель похоже уклонился от проблемы пустого пространства, определив свое понятие пространства в терминах топоса или места.

Платон уменьшал материю в пространстве, а не наоборот, в своем абстрактном анализе физической реальности. Он не отождествлял и не смешивал их, как это делали раньше философы. У Платона были четкие представления о них и эти понятия последовательно сохранялись в его произведениях. И он не держал их вместе как единый фундаментальный «материал», а просто использовал пространство для толкования или объяснения материи. Все для Платона существовало в трех категориях: бытие, пространство и становление. Царство *бытия* состояло из совершенных форм, а царство становления состояло из несовершенных копий формы, которые *Демург* (нерелигиозная философская богоподобная фигура) сделал из сосуда. Платон приравнивается к тому, чтобы стать в мире ощущения или что мы будем называть физической реальностью, но для Платона конечная реальность существовала только в царстве *бытия*. Эта картина была неполной, поэтому возникла необходимость выдвигать гипотезу «агоры» как пространства или формы.

Как бы он ни называл это, пространство для Платона было евклидовым. *Демийург* создал мир сенсации, сферу становления, при помощи сосуда, чтобы скопировать формы. По словам *Джона К. Грэйвса*, «пространства Платона или 'Хоры' изотопическое, конечный, но неограниченный и негомогенный.» (Graves) Платон сделал два важных шага, которые влияли на полное понятие пространства в получении его понятия. Он попытался решить проблему места, и он был первым, чтобы спросить, почему было необходимо даже сформулировать понятие пространства. По словам *Пьера Дюхама*, о Платоне, «почему необходимо допустить существование этого пространства? поскольку независимо от того, что подвергается поколению и коррупция 'находятся все время в местном движении; это возникает в определенном месте и затем исчезает от этого того же самого места'.» (Duhem)

С другой стороны, два различного хода мыслей характеризовал идеи Аристотеля о пространстве – пустота была невозможна, в то время как понятие места использовалось, чтобы определить пространство. Аристотель был наблюдателем, не был геометром, и как таковой, он мог только прийти к заключениям относительно природы пространства через то, что он наблюдал. Вселенная Аристотеля была сферическим непрерывным пленумом. Все материальные объекты во вселенной заняли место, которое было определено относительно всего остального во вселенной, и природа каждого объекта должна была бороться за его естественное место его собственной воли, если бы это уже не заняло то место. Чтобы определить пространства, Аристотель перечислил следующие качества, необходимые для концепции пространства: «... место окружает то, в чем месте оно находится, место не является частью того, что оно окружает, а основное место не имеет ни меньше, чем оно, место может быть оставлено позади и отделено от него, а каждое место - вверх или вниз, так как каждое из простых тел движется вверх или вниз, чтобы отдохнуть в своем месте жительства» (Aristotle - Book IV).

За исключением поздних неоплатоновских ревизий, большинство философов на протяжении всего средневековья придерживались концепций Аристотеля как истины. Платон связал совершенное круговое движение с движением небесных тел, и Аристотель разработал это понятие. В конце концов, этот космологический взгляд был усовершенствован и геометризирован *Клавдием Птолемеем* (с.90СЕ до с.168СЕ). *Птолемеяевская* геометрическая система вычислительной астрономии была связана с космологией и физикой Аристотеля и господствовала над естественной философией и наукой до семнадцатого века. Католическая церковь официально приняла систему Аристотеля / *Птолемея* как часть своих религиозных учений в тринадцатом веке, что значительно усилило ее влияние и удерживало всю науку. Даже *Коперник* в своем изложении гелиоцентрической космологии, в отличие от Аристотелевская / *Птолемеяевская* геоцентрическая космология утверждала, что он только пытался вернуться к платоновской доктрине, что все небесные движения были совершенно круговыми. Эти концепции не были полностью заменены до научной революции XVII века, когда были разработаны более точные понятия пространства, времени и материи. Атомизм также возродился во время научной революции Ньютона, Роберта Бойля (1627-1691) и других.

С самого начала концепция пространства возникла постепенно, которая достигла своего пика в древней Греции с помощью различных идей греческих философов, таких как *Лукреций*, *Платон*, Аристотель и другие. Все греческие философы имели разные представления о пространстве и, соответственно, они интерпретировали пространство в физической реальности. Кроме того, роль геометрии и математики можно увидеть в развитии абстрактного понятия пространства. Развитие концепции пространства было эволюционным процессом в ранней греческой истории, которая помогла понять



постоянный фон, по которому можно определить движение, изменение, Бытие, Небытие, дискретность, непрерывность и т. Д.

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**ВЗГЛЯД НА ПРОБЛЕМУ КЛАССОВОГО НЕРАВЕНСТВА В  
СТИХОТВОРЕНИЯХ НЕКРАСОВА «ВОР», «РАЗМЫШЛЕНИЕ У  
ПАРАДНОГО ПОДЪЕЗДА», «ЖЕЛЕЗНАЯ ДОРОГА» И В ФИЛЬМЕ  
КУЛИДЖАНОВА ПО РОМАНУ ДОСТОЕВСКОГО «ПРЕСТУПЛЕНИЕ И  
НАКАЗАНИЕ»**

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**A PERSPECTIVE AT THE PROBLEM OF CLASS INEQUALITY IN  
NEKRASOV'S POEMS *THE THIEF*, *REFLECTION AT THE FRONT DOOR*,  
*THE RAILWAY* AND KULIDZHANOV'S FILM BASED ON DOSTOEVSKY'S  
*CRIME AND PUNISHMENT***

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*Абстракт:* Оппозиция бедных и богатых слоев населения - одна из ведущих тем в творчестве русского поэта Николая Алексеевича Некрасова и в экранизации романа Достоевского "Преступление и наказание" снятого советским режиссером Львом Александровичем Кулиджановым. Достоевский и Некрасов застали век крепостного права в России и первые годы индустриальной революции, появление заводов, фабрик, начало строения железных дорог и увеличение числа городских жителей. Лев Кулиджанов экранизирует роман "Преступление и наказание" и по-особенному передает атмосферу жизни бедных слоев населения в Петербурге девятнадцатого века. Он подходит к изображению событий романа с новизной взгляда человека, живущего в советский период русской истории, в который социальное неравенство считалось одним из самых ужасных черт капиталистического общества. К сожалению, вопрос оппозиции бедных и богатых слоев населения не терял актуальности как два столетия назад, так и в прошлом веке.

**Ключевые слова:** Неравенство, Класс, Некрасов, Кулиджанов, Достоевский

*Abstract:* The opposition of the poor and the rich is one of the leading themes in the work of the Russian poet Nikolai Alekseevich Nekrasov and in the film adaptation of Dostoevsky's novel *Crime and Punishment* directed by the Soviet director Lev Aleksandrovich Kulidzhanov. Dostoevsky and Nekrasov found the age of serfdom in Russia and the first years of the industrial revolution, the emergence of factories, the beginning of the construction of railways and the increase in the number of urban residents. Lev Kulidzhanov makes a film adaptation of the novel "Crime and Punishment" and in a special way displays the atmosphere of life of the poor strata of the population in Petersburg in the nineteenth century. He approaches the portrayal of the events of the novel with the novelty of a person living in the Soviet period of Russian history, in which social inequality was considered one of the most terrible features of capitalist society. Unfortunately, the issue of opposition between the poor and the rich strata of the population did not lose its relevance both two centuries ago and in the last century.

**Keywords:** Inequality, Class, Nekrasov, Kulidzhanov, Dostoevsky

Оппозиция бедных и богатых слоев населения - одна из ведущих тем в творчестве русского поэта Николая Алексеевича Некрасова и советского режиссера Льва Александровича Кулиджанова. Их взгляды на проблему классового неравенства имеют общие черты, несмотря на принадлежность этих художников к разным периодам истории России.

Для сравнения выбрана экранизация романа Достоевского «Преступление и наказание», снятая советским режиссером Львом Александровичем Кулиджановым. Эта картина, как фильм, снятый в Советском Союзе, представляет оригинальный взгляд на проблему классового неравенства, существовавшего в имперскую эпоху. В творчестве Кулиджанова заметен взгляд художника эпохи социалистического реализма, который критически относился к прошлому своей страны. Изображая мир «Преступления и наказания», режиссер старается показать, что общество прошлого было испорчено из-за тотального неравенства людей. Он подходит к постановке событий романа с новизной взгляда человека, живущего в советский период русской истории, в который социальное неравенство считалось одним из самых ужасных черт капиталистического общества. Кулиджанов оглядывается на историю своей страны и осмысливает ее с постреволюционной точки зрения.

Похожее отношение к реалиям имперской эпохи имел и поэт Николай Алексеевич Некрасов. Он застал век крепостного права в России и первые годы индустриальной революции, появление заводов, фабрик, начало строения железных дорог и увеличение числа городских жителей. К изображению действительности поэт подходил критически, стараясь подчеркнуть недостатки установившегося режима и открыть на них глаза современному ему обществу.

Рассуждая о главных темах произведений Николая Алексеевича Некрасова, исследователь Г.В. Краснов отмечал: «В центре его творчества – народ, страдания народа под властью помещиков, самодержавия»(ст.179). В соответствии с его анализом мысли лирического героя поэта почти всегда обращены к судьбе народа. Об этом Г.В. Краснов пишет: «Некрасов показал трагедию народа в его рабской психологии»(ст.179). Действительно, в некрасовских произведениях особенно подчеркиваются черты характера и особенности поведения простого русского крестьянина, изнуренного своей крепостной повинностью и страдающего под властью помещика.

Важно учитывать, что лирические герои Некрасова часто отражают его личные идеалы. Об этом писал другой исследователь его творчества, Николай Николаевич Скатов, в своей монографии ««Я лиру посвятил народу своему»: О творчестве Некрасова», отмечая, что произведения поэта несут особые духовные ценности «на которых воспитывались целые поколения русского общества в самой лучшей его части»(ст.3).

Поэтому можно провести параллели между произведениями Н.А. Некрасова «Железная дорога», «Размышления у парадного подъезда» и «Вор» и фильмом Льва Кулиджанова «Преступление и наказание». Авторы изображают жизнь обычных бедняков, страдающих от жадности и бездушности представителей аристократии, для которых они – всего лишь винтики в гигантской буржуазной машине, конвейере, созданном для производства новых денег.

Лирика Николая Некрасова особая, несущая в себе мощный трагедийный заряд: муза поэта страдает вместе с русским народом, вынужденным выживать под гнетом и бичами и вечно стонать из-за своей тяжелой судьбы. Об этом поэт пишет в своем стихотворении «Размышления у парадного подъезда»:

Где народ, там и стон... Эх, сердечный!

Что же значит твой стон бесконечный?(ст. 47)

Автор видит несправедливость общественного устройства и указывает на это. Он не может остаться равнодушным к судьбе народа.

Важно в произведении акцент на том, что простые мужики, так и не принятые богатым господином, которому безразлична их судьба, «с непокрытыми шли головами»(ст.47). Эти люди, даже несправедливо обиженные, сохраняют уважение и рабское благоговение

перед высшими слоями общества, они будто не способны на ответный удар, бунт и готовы принять свою тяжелую и горькую судьбу.

Читатель так и не сможет узнать, почему они приходили к парадному подъезду, какая нужда привела их в это место. Мужики смиренно соглашались со своей судьбой и понимают, что надеяться они могут только на божественное правосудие:

И пошли они, солнцем палимы,

Повторяя: «Суди его бог!»(ст.47)

Сцена оставляет в сердцах читателей печаль и вскипающую ярость. Лирический герой обращается к таким же богатым персонам, которые не прислушиваются к нужде народа, просит ее одуматься: «Пробудись! Есть еще наслаждение: ворота их! В тебе их спасение!»(ст.48). Но он понимает, что тот не внемлет этим мольбам «Что тебе эта скорбь вопиющая, что тебе этот бедный народ?»(ст.48). Богатый человек, который закончит свою жизнь «под пленительным небом Сицилии»(ст.48), никогда не поймет обычного бедняка, всю жизнь прожившего в грязи. И все же его судьба тоже незавидна. Предаваясь лишь удовольствиям и порокам, такой богач, по мнению Некрасова, упускает важные духовные ценности, которые могли бы привнести в его жизнь смысл.

Большой капитал и привилегированное положение в обществе заработаны им незаслуженно. Их появлению способствовало установление крепостного права, которое позволило помещикам обращаться скрестьянами, как с частью своей собственности. Такое отношение к людям как к объектам, у которых отсутствует душа, в первую очередь сильнее всего отразилось на самой аристократии. Вместе с жалостью и сочувствием она утратила свою человечность.

Дворяне понимают тяжесть положения крестьян, но предпочитают не замечать его. Богатый господин в стихотворении «Размышление у парадного подъезда» по словам его слуги «не любит оборванной черни»(ст.47). Он даже не участвует в сцене, развернувшейся у его парадного подъезда. Дворянин спит в своем богатом дворце, игнорируя проблемы простого народа. Он предпочитает отвернуться от них, не видеть, буквально закрывает глаза на их существование. Спокойный сон для аристократа важнее благополучия крестьян, обеспечение которого является одной из его обязанностей, как государственного служителя.

Кто знает, сколько еще «парадный подъезд» повидал простых людей, обиженных жизненной несправедливостью? Социальное неравенство делает общество порочным. Оно пробуждает худшие качества в чертах всех его представителей.

Возможно, у одного из домов с такими же красивыми дверями размышляет о своей теории новый Раскольников, которого крайняя нужда заставляет пойти на преступление. Может быть, он лишь думает о своем желании преступить земной закон, украв какую-либо вещь или калач, как бедняк в другом стихотворении Николая Алексеевича Некрасова «Вор». Но в худшем случае, голодный и загнанный в угол собственной бедностью, не возлагающий надежд на справедливость и помощь со стороны общества, представитель низшего класса решается на преступление закона божественного. Ведь почему бы ему этого не сделать, раз представители аристократии уже давно нарушают библейские заповеди. Например, ту, которую Иисус Христос считал одной из самых важных в божественном законе: «Возлюби ближнего своего, как самого себя»(ст.1043).

Социальное неравенство способствует формированию общества без любви, а следовательно, и без Бога. Существование в таком мире похоже на ад, иллюстрацией которого может служить пространство в фильме Льва Александровича Кулиджанова.

В экранизации романа Федора Михайловича Достоевского «Преступление и наказание» намерено использована черно-белая картинка. В мире Раскольников, Петербурге страдающих бедняков, нет места ярким цветам. В нем не может быть золотого солнца, изумрудной травы, синих волн Невы, которая блестит и переливается под дневным светом. Из-за светового приема, используемого Кулиджановым, река в фильме кажется нефтяной лужей, в черноте которой отражаются улицы, дома, церкви и парки лишь на первый взгляд пригожего и благополучного «града Перова». Над ее водами переносят жизненные потрясения угнетаемые нуждой и тяжестью своей судьбы люди: Родион Раскольников, Сонечка Мармеладова, Семен Захарович и Катерина Ивановна.

В стихотворении Некрасова «Размышления у парадного подъезда» также упоминается другая значимая для России река – Волга. Она также становится свидетельницей страдания простого народа. Над спокойным течением ее вод лирический герой различает многоголосный стон:

«Выдь на Волгу: чей стон раздается  
Над великою русской рекой?» (ст.49)

Так печально звучит песня бурлаков, что ее можно перепутать с возгласом страдания. На плач также похожи некоторые звуковые эффекты в фильме Кулиджанова. Показывая размышления Раскольникова в начале картины, изображая его сны и передвижение по Санкт-Петербургу режиссер часто применял необычный аудио-прием. Кулиджанов сопровождал некоторые сцены протяжным звуком, похожим на плач, скрежет железа или жалостливый скулеж раненой собаки.

Усилению эффекта, создаваемого им, способствует отсутствие в фильме музыкального сопровождения. Единственная мелодия, которая может звучать в сером мире жестокого Петербурга – это протяжное скрежетание уличной шарманки, хозяин которой побирается в надежде получить от прохожих гроши на пропитание себя и своей семьи.

Отсутствие музыки помогает Кулиджанову воссоздать атмосферу безнадежности, царящую в городе Достоевского. Он намеренно использует кинематографические и сценические приемы, чтобы изобразить в высшей степени неприятное пространство эпохи имперской России.

К видению Достоевского режиссер добавляет авторское изображение прошлого своей страны. В соответствии с подходом Льва Александровича Кулиджанова, его нельзя изобразить иным способом, кроме как в черно-белом цвете. Это помогает передать суровость нравов и социальной атмосферы, которая окружает героев Достоевского.

Так же удручающую картину состояния российской действительности изображает в своих стихотворениях Николай Алексеевич Некрасов. Например, в стихотворении «Размышления у парадного подъезда» лирический герой обращается к силам стихии и сетует на то, что горе заливают русскую землю как весеннее половодье. В его мире без любви дворянское сословие не способно проявить участие по отношению к простому народу, бедность которого является следствием их жадности. Они сами лишили себя сердца, а потому никогда не будут любимы.

Лирический герой стихотворения предрекает тяжелую участь для тех представителей аристократии, кто не успеет задуматься при жизни о своих поступках. Им не будет доступно семейное счастье и признание среди своих соотечественников. Они останутся «втихомолку проклятыми отчизною»(ст.49). Именно так наказывается паразитирование на беззащитных людях.

В романе Достоевского душегубец Свидригайлов также наказывается жизнью без любви. Получавший ранее все желанные блага в жизни с легкостью, в итоге он сталкивается с

непреодолимой преградой. По роковому стечению обстоятельств, самое необходимое на этой земле так и не покорится ему. Свидригайлов не может получить сердца Дуни и завоевать ее любовь. Чистая и невинная душа девушки просто не может покориться такому порочному существу. Эту трагическую закономерность искусно подчеркивает Кулиджанов.

После эпизода бегства девушки из квартиры Свидригайлова, перспектива постановки кадра подчеркивает пустоту его богато обставленного интерьера. Тем не менее зрителю это жилище кажется большим и пустым. Свидригайлов выглядит маленьким и одиноким на фоне богатой мебели и больших окон. Режиссер не оставляет герою даже «улыбки полной отчаяния», прописанной в тексте Достоевского. Судьба Свидригайлова и подобных ему – одиночество и пустота.

Завершается стихотворение Некрасова «Размышления у парадного подъезда» вопросом:

«Ты проснешься ль, исполненный сил  
Иль, судеб повинясь закону,  
Все, что мог, ты уже совершил, -  
Создал песню, подобную стону,  
И духовно навеки почил?.. » (ст.49)

На это восклицание нельзя найти ответа. В сердце автора еще существует надежда на то, что народ сможет отстоять свои права и добиться достойных условий жизни. Он хочет верить в возможность процветания простого труженика. Гражданственность и высокий гуманизм – отличительная черта творчества поэта.

Финал фильма Кулиджанова также оставляет за собой вопросы: Что случилось после признания Раскольникова? Отказался ли он от своей теории? Смог ли найти покой?

Режиссер предпочитает не давать на них ответа. Финал картины заставляет задуматься: есть ли возможность избавления в несправедливом мире Достоевского, в котором классовое неравенство извратило общество, сделало его порочным и таким образом глубоко пустило свои корни в имперской действительности. Фильм не дает решения социальных проблем, потому что удерживается от согласия с формулой Достоевского.

В романе сон о «моровой язве» и неотступная верность Сонечки, читающей Раскольникову Евангелие, помогает герою наконец-то освободиться от своей теории. Обрывая повествование на признании преступника, Кулиджанов не дает ему возможности к избавлению, ведь осознание евангельских истин одним человеком не сможет разрешить нараставший в конце девятнадцатого века социальный конфликт. Это по силам только новому политическому строю, который должен прийти еще через несколько десятилетий с установлением советской власти.

Кулиджанов оглядывается на историю своей страны и старается выразительно воплотить реалии, окружающие героев Достоевского с точностью и детальностью, при этом уделив достаточно внимания личной трагедии каждого человека, живущего в буржуазном обществе с классовой системой. С другой стороны, стихотворения Некрасова выступают предвестниками последующей отмены в России крепостного права, которое писатель считал абсолютным злом, мешающим развитию и процветанию его страны.

Социальные изменения действительно должны произойти. Некрасов надеется на скорое улучшение народной жизни и предчувствует перемены. Фильм Кулиджанова, рисуя напряженную общественную атмосферу в русском обществе конца девятнадцатого века, показывает, что их не могло не случиться.

Но, к сожалению, многие представители простого народа не смогут застать эти изменения. Так лирический герой стихотворения Некрасова «Железная дорога» в разговоре с маленьким Ваней утверждает:

«Жаль только – жить в эту пору прекрасную  
Уж не придется – ни мне, ни тебе.» (ст.170)

Писателю не хочется верить, что простому народу еще долгие годы предстоит также страдать на тяжелой работе за постройкой железных дорог, пользоваться которыми в те времена могли себе позволить лишь представители высшего класса.

Поэтому «толпе мертвецов»(ст.171), так и не дождавшейся счастливых времен, остается только смотреть вдаль проезжающим мимо составам. Они поют о своей тяжелой судьбе и о несправедливости, с которой им пришлось столкнуться при жизни. Лирический герой стихотворения просит Ванечку, олицетворяющего молодое поколение русских людей, не робеть перед призраками, не «закрывать перчаткою»(ст.170). Он называет мужиков его братьями. Так Некрасов напоминает соотечественникам, что представители крестьянства такие же русские люди, которым нужно сочувствовать. Он надеется, что последующие поколения смогут заглядеть перед народом вину своих отцов.

Умирать при строительстве железной дороги мужиков обрек голод, который стал настоящим правителем русского крестьянства:

«В мире есть царь: этот царь беспощаден,  
Голод названье ему.» (ст.169)

Он же толкает вора, героя стихотворения Николая Алексеевича Некрасова «Вор», пойти преступление. Но крадет он не украшения или деньги, а простой калач. Все, о чем этот бедняк может думать – это съедающее его заживо чувство голода. Лирический герой стихотворения, наблюдая за этой картиной, думает лишь о том, как ему повезло иметь богатое наследство.

Голод преследовал и Раскольников. Бедная студенческая жизнь, отсутствие стабильной работы, постоянное болезненное состояние из-за тяжелых жизненных условий негативно повлияли на его психику. Он часто падает в обмороки, страдает от кошмаров и видений.

Под властью голода находятся и члены семьи Мармеладовых. В своей экранизации Кулиджанов старается сделать акцент на худых лицах детей Катерины Ивановны, их плохой одежде и бедной квартире. Беспощадный царь властвует именно в таких бедных домах Петербурга, жители которых каждый день пытаются заработать себе кусок хлеба любыми способами.

Раскольникову хочется спасти их, но это желание затем оказывается ложным. На самом деле он мечтает оказаться право имеющим. Герой жаждет ощутить себя великим и значимым. Этого его лишило общество, обречшее представителей низших классов на существование в крайней степени бедности.

Таким образом, в творчестве Николая Алексеевича Некрасова и Льва Александровича Кулиджанова изображается суровый мир русского общества восемнадцатого века, в котором простой народ вынужден страдать из-за своего положения в социальной системе. Классовое неравенство способствовало созданию мира, в котором нет места любви. Бедняки в нем каждый день противостоят голоду и лишениям, привилегированные же слои общества страдают из-за недоступности для них счастья, которое невозможно купить за деньги. Изображая этот мир в своем творчестве, художники стремились доказать необходимость перемен, на которые должна решиться Россия, чтобы достигнуть процветания.

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## РАЗВИТИЕ ПЕРЕВОДЧЕСКОЙ ДЕЯТЕЛЬНОСТИ В РОССИИ

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## DEVELOPMENT OF TRANSLATION ACTIVITIES IN RUSSIA

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***Аннотация:** Перевод играет существенную роль во всех сферах нашей жизни, следовательно, он стал самой популярной дисциплиной в академических кругах России, так и во всем мире. В данной статье освещаются основные периоды и важные события истории перевода России, в которых перевод получил признание и внимание со стороны выдающихся исследователей и авторов.*

***Ключевые слова:** перевод, переводческая деятельность в России*

***Annotation:** Translation plays an essential role in all spheres of our life; therefore, it has become the most popular discipline in academic circles of Russia as well as all over the world. This article highlights the main periods and important events in the history of Russian translation, in which the translation received recognition and attention from prominent researchers and authors.*

***Key words:** Translation, Translation activities in Russia*

Трудно представить, что любая страна может развивать культурные, политические, торговые отношения с другими странами, не зная и не понимая, их языков. Следовательно, в эпоху глобализации важность перевода признается всеми.

Прослеживая раннюю переводческую деятельность в России, можно сделать вывод, что русские следовали язычеству до IX века, но в X веке они обратились в христианство. Как известно, ответственность за распространение и проповедь христианства среди славян была возложена византийским императором на монахов - Кирилла и Мефодия. Во времена Киевской Руси можно проследить переводческую деятельность, и в конце 10 века появились переводы религиозных текстов, таких как Библия и новые заветы, чтобы славяне могли познакомиться с христианством. Важно отметить, что перевод этих религиозных текстов был дословным. Большинство переводов было сделано с греческого языка.

Замечательный интерес к переводческой деятельности проявился во время Князь Василий III, который пригласил Максима Грека для перевода религиозных и литературных произведений. Максим Грек оказал видимое влияние на русскую культуру. Говорят, что он перевел с греческого на латынь, а затем с помощью ученых перевод был сделан на славянский. Он обсуждал различные теологические трудности перевода. Однако его обвинили в еретических ошибках перевода и посадили в тюрьму, но его вклад неизгладим.

Перевод нашел новое направление и поворот во времена Петра Великого. Царь Петр Великий начал коренные реформы в России. Он путешествовал по Европе, чтобы понять их политическую и экономическую структуру, и провел множество реформ, чтобы открыть окно своей страны в Европу, которые были необходимы России для того, чтобы стать державой в различных областях, таких как торговля, производство и т.д.

Петр знал, что невозможно развивать контакты с этими странами, не зная их языков, и сосредоточился на переводческой деятельности. Подчёркивая важность перевода, Петр-I говорит, что перевод сыграл важную роль в обогащении русского языка и в развитии интереса к зарубежной литературе (Перевод в период реформ Петра I, 2021).

Фактически, в 1724 году Петр I, понимая необходимости перевода и иностранных языков, приказал создать академию, которая будет заниматься вопросами, связанными с этим. В приказе сказано, что «Учинить академию, в которой бы учились языкам, а также прочим наукам и знатым художествам и переводили бы книги» (Семенец & Панаев, 1991). В 1735 году, после смерти Петра, была создана первая профессиональная организация переводчиков «Русская ассамблея». Основная цель этой заключалась в создании правил для переводчиков, отбор книг для перевода, рецензировании переводов и т.д.

Это был период, когда не только в России, но и в других странах широко обсуждались подходы к вольному и дословному переводу. Религиозные тексты переводились буквально, считая, что это слова Бога и любое добавление к ним - грех. Однако при Петровских правилах делались и вольные переводы. Например, О способах перевода текста известный переводчик Симон Кохановский писал, что «Увещения и приклады политические» писал: «Я в переводе сем не порабощен был помянутого автора штилю, но едино служил истине, чтоб ниже мало была изменена сила и истина истории, того ради сие предвозвещаю в преддверии последующих повестей, дабы кому не дивно было, что не слово в слово переведены, но смотрил бы, что самая истинная сила истории не изменена есть» (Сдобников & Петрова, 2007, стр. 15).

Хотя специалисты, как М.В. Ломоносов, В. Тредиаковский, Ю.А. Кармазин, А.П. Сумароков и др. не предложили какой-либо конкретной теории для решения этих проблем и трудностей, возникших при переводе, они обсудили проблемы перевода, с которыми они столкнулись, и как они преодолели эти трудности? Анализируя их работы, мы также узнаем, какими способами они использовали при переводе. В 18-ом веке уже существуют многочисленные переводы, в которых иностранные имена, родные ситуации и бытовые детали оригиналов были заменены в соответствии с русской действительностью. Такой перевод назывался «склонение на наши нравы» (Сдобников & Петрова, 2007). Основная цель этих вольных переводов заключалась в том, чтобы, читая эти тексты, читатель не ощутил, что он читает иноземный текст. Иными словами, перевод должен быть выполнен таким образом, чтобы читатели испытывали, что они читают текст на своем родном языке.

Перевод индийских классических текстов также был выполнен на русский язык. Известно, что большую часть информации об Индии Россия получила от Ост-Индской компании. Однако следует также отметить, что путешествия Афанасия Никитина в Индию в конце 15 века помогли вызвать огромный интерес в Индии.

Интересно, что первый перевод Бхагавад-гиты был сделан Новиковым в 1788 году названием «Багуат-гета или Беседы Кришны с Арджуном», однако неизвестно, почему и как он задумал перевести этот текст? Согласно информации, представленной во введении к переводу, совершенно очевидно, что Новикову удалось получить копию Бхагавад-Гиты, или Диалоги Кришны и Арджуна, которая была переведена Чарльзом Уилкинсом и впервые опубликована в Лондоне в 1785 году. Следовательно, он перевел его с английского языка на русский язык. Однако первый перевод Бхагавад-Гиты непосредственно с санскрита на русский язык был сделан в 1956 году известным санскритологом Б.Л. Смирновым.

Девятнадцатый век считается «золотым веком» русского художественного перевода. Это было время романтизма, который уделял большое внимания передаче местного колорита

подлинника при переводе. Некоторые выдающиеся литераторы были и переводчиками, как П. Вяземский, А. Фет, Н. Гнедич, В. А. Жуковский, А. Кармазин, А.С. Пушкин и др.

Один из основоположников романтизма в русской поэзии, выдающийся переводчик В.А. Жуковский поддерживает метод вольного перевода, сохраняя естественный и оригинальный вкус исходного текста. Поскольку в процессе перевода не только язык, но и культура двух или более групп и стран взаимодействуют друг с другом. У них могут быть общие черты в некоторых языковых или культурных особенностях, но не во всех, поскольку у них есть свои особые ценности, привычки, традиции, то есть образ жизни.

А.С. Пушкин, который считается основоположником современной русской литературы, комментируя методы перевода и их недостатки, писал «Ныне (пример неслыханный!) первый из французских писателей переводит Мильтона слово в слово и объявляет, что подстрочный перевод был бы верхом искусства, если б только оный был возможен!» (А.С.Пушкин). Кроме того, понимая проблемы перевода, он отметил, что «Нет сомнения, что, стараясь передать Мильтона слово в слово, Шатобриан, однако, не смог соблюсти в своем переложении верности смысла и выражения. Подстрочный перевод никогда не может быть верен. Каждый язык имеет свои обороты, свои условленные риторические фигуры, свои усвоенные выражения, которые не могут быть переведены на другой язык соответствующими словами» (А.С.Пушкин).

Во мнениях Н.В. Гоголя «иногда нужно отдаляться от слов подлинника нарочно для того, чтобы быть к нему ближе. Есть пропасть таких фраз, выражений оборотов, которые нам, малороссиянам, кажутся очень будут понятны для русских, если мы переведем их слово в слово, но которые иногда уничтожают половину силы подлинника... В переводе более всего нужно привязываться к мысли, и менее всего к словам, хотя последние чрезвычайно соблазнительны.....Помни, что твой перевод для русских, и потому малороссийские обороты речи и конструкцию прочь!» (П.М.Топер, 2000).

Несомненно, что Пушкин, Гоголь и Белинский В.Г. предпочитали свободный перевод, поскольку любой язык имеет свои обороты, структуры и т.д., поэтому следует помнить о том, что идея и содержание исходного текста должны быть правильно переданы при переводе.

В то же время такие выдающиеся ученые, как А. Фет, выбирают дословный перевод. Он говорит, что «Не моё дело думать и чувствовать, моё дело - переводить слово в слово, не заботясь ни о смысле, ни о красоте, ни о стиле» (К.И.Чуковский, 1998).

Если говорить о состоянии переводческой деятельности с индийских языков, то мы видим, что один из выдающихся ученых и первый русский индолог - Ивана Павловича Минаева побывал в Индии в 1874-75 годах, а также перевел тексты с санскрита и пали на русский язык.

Обсуждались навыки, параметры и способы перевода. Некоторые из них считали, что перевод - это пересказ текста на родном языке, другие считали, что форма, стиль и идея должны быть близки к исходному тексту.

Термин «перевод», особенно с 20 века, широко обсуждается и соображается специалистами неодинаково. Ряд выдающихся русских литераторов, мыслителей, переводчиков уделили особое внимание переводу и его способам, например, А.В. Федоров пишет «Перевод, как вид духовной деятельности человека, восходит к глубокой древности. Он всегда играл существенную роль в истории культуры отдельных народов и мировой культуры в целом» (Гарифовна, 2006). Выдающийся ученый А.В. Федоров считал перевод лингвистической деятельностью и в своей книге «Введение в теорию перевода» подчеркивал необходимость лингвистической теории перевода.

Описывая термин «перевод» И.С. Алексеева написала «это деятельность, которая заключается в вариативном перевыражении, перекодировании текста, порождённого на одном языке, в текст на другом языке, осуществляемая переводчиком, который творчески выбирает вариант в зависимости от вариативных ресурсов языка, вида перевода, задач перевода, типа текста и под воздействием собственной индивидуальности; перевод - это также и результат описанной выше деятельности» (И.С.Алексеева, 2004).

Я.И. Рецкер был сторонником лингвистического подхода к переводу. В его словах: «Задача переводчика - передать средствами другого языка целостно и точно содержание подлинника, сохранив его стилистические и экспрессивные особенности. Под 'целостностью' перевода надо понимать единство формы и содержания на новой языковой основе. Если критерием точности перевода является тождество информации, сообщаемой на разных языках, то целостным (полноценным или адекватным) можно признать, лишь такой перевод, который передает эту информацию равноценными средствами. Иначе говоря, в отличие от пересказа перевод должен передавать не только то, что выражено подлинником, но и так, как это выражено в нем. Это требование относится как ко всему переводу данного текста в целом, так и к отдельным его частям» (Л.Г.Петрова & А.Г.Мартirosян).

Следует заметить, что немаловажный поворот в переводческом процессе в России внесло издательство «Всемирная литература», основанное в 1919 году усилиями известного писателя Максима Горького. В этом издательстве были переведены на русский язык классические литературные произведения зарубежной литературы. Они следовали определенным параметрам для достижения и поддержания литературного доверия. В связи с растущей потребностью в переводе несколько университетов ввели переводческие дисциплины. Кроме того, многие исследовательские журналы публикуют зарубежную литературу и критический анализ переведенного текста с разных точек зрения.

Известные индийские авторы теперь переведены на русский язык либо российскими учеными, либо индийскими учеными. Важно отметить, что теперь многие индийские университеты имеют кафедры русского языка, и в российских университетах есть также факультеты языка хинди, поэтому многие переводы выполняются непосредственно с оригинальных языков. Теперь, в эпоху глобализации, перевод стал необходимостью, и много переводов осуществляется с разных языков на русском языке. Почти все крупные университеты также имеют кафедры переводоведения.

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## АВТОР И ЕГО ТВОРЕНИЕ: ГОЛОС АВТОРА В РАССКАЗАХ ЧЕХОВА

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## AUTHOR AND HIS CREATION: AUTHOR'S VOICE IN CHEKHOV'S SHORT-STORIES

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*Аннотация:* Среди повествовательных жанров рассказ занимает особое место. Играв роль первооткрывателя, рассказ разведёт новые темы, образы и проблемы. Характерные черты рассказа – это лаконичность, одновременность, эстетического взаимодействия на читателя, и целеустремленная сосредоточенность на решение конкретной задачи. В данной статье рассматриваются особенности рассказов молодого и зрелого Чехова с точки зрения установление авторского голоса или же понимание что автор хотел передать через своих произведений.

*Ключевые слова:* Рассказ, Чехов, Авторский голос

Искусство и литература являются отражением духовной жизни страны, изменения в которой влияют не только на литературное содержание и искусство, но и на их формы. Рассказ является известной формой и широко распространен в мировой литературе. Он развивается по своей собственной линии в каждой стране. Подчеркнув самую важную особенность, которая отличает рассказ от другого литературного жанра, Белинский отметил, что «рассказы имеют возможность объяснить основное развитие общества через одно событие, один факт или одного персонажа». Суть художественного достоинства рассказа заключается в том, чтобы выбрать из множества событий, именно тот, который отражает то, что является наиболее важной характеристикой для данного периода развития общества.

Выявление авторского голоса является одной из самых интригующих проблем в изучении рассказов Чехова. Чехов не дает своим читателям готового решения поднятых им проблем. Как отметил Чехов в своем письме Суворину: «Кража лошади – это зло, но это давно известно без моего показа». Персонаж Чехова перестает быть носителем писательской концепции и рупором запрограммированных идей.

Чехов ограничился описанием любви, брака, смерти и речи своего героя. Его герои ведут свою собственную независимую жизнь, и поэтому стало довольно трудно определить точку зрения автора. Очень часто критики Чехова принимают голос героя или любую положительную личность в истории как голос автора. Суворин, редактор известного журнала "Новые времена", и близкий друг Чехова пытались идентифицировать автора с героем - "Скудной истории". Это значительно раздражало Чехова, и в ответ он пишет: «Если вам подадут кофе, не ищите в нем вкус пива. Если я представляю перед вами идею профессора, то вы должны верить мне и не идти на идею Чехова». Чехов изображает жизнь как бесстрастный наблюдатель и избегает какого-либо эмоционального участия. Это явное безразличие было условием одержимости автора объективностью. В письме Плещееву Чехов выразил желание быть свободным писателем и отрицал, что достиг какого-либо политического, религиозного или философского мировоззрения. Роналд Хингле поэтому прокомментировал: "Как он мог выразить какие-либо определенные сообщения в своей работе, еще не достигли поселились взгляд на жизнь?" (Хингле 1976)

Но авторский голос, безусловно, присутствует в рассказах Чехова, и было бы неправильно думать, что у автора не было никакой симпатии или антипатии по отношению к его герою, так называемое безразличие было тщательно отработано литературной техникой с намерением, чтобы скрыть точку зрения автора. Таким образом, вновь возникает вопрос о том, как определить голос автора в рассказах, где отсутствуют обычные средства выражения отношения автора или определения голоса автора? Что касается рассказов, мы знаем, что писатель должен проследить в глубину и художественно интерпретировать это событие или тот символ, который помогает читателю добраться до сердца событий вокруг него. Чехов оставляет читателю возможность делать собственные отчисления и обобщения.

Обычные средства, которые использовались до сих пор для определения авторской точки зрения, следующие:

1. Через любимого героя автора: следуют ли герои, самостоятельно, каким-то конкретным идеям или принципам. Мы всегда смотрим на героя, которого можно подчинить
2. Через прямую речь автора
3. Морализаторские тенденции:

В своем творчестве Антон Павлович Чехов противопоставлял бессмысленную жизнь, недостатков людей гуманистическим идеалом – человека, и ясно сознательной цели. Но это путь не прямо выражен в его произведениях. Это как бы осложняет нашу задачу определение авторского голоса. В рассказах Чехова отсутствует традиционный метод выражения авторского голоса, такие как любимый герой автора, высказывание с помощью повествователя и так далее. Постоянно сохраняется дистанция между автором и действующим лицам. Но интересно заметить, сохраняется ли эта дистанция между автором и его героем до конца творческой жизни Чехова или всё же можно понять главную мысль автора понимая весь творческий период Чехова.

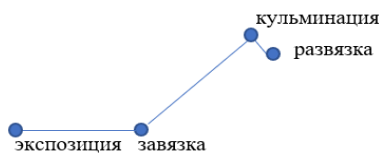
Изображение не заметных, ничем не отличающих ситуаций жизни содержит в себе скрытый крик писателя, и при этом автор хочет привлечь внимание читателя на не здоровое состояние нашего общества. Чтобы определить авторскую позицию, читателю нужно проникнуть вслед за автором в самую сущность явлений, чтобы прийти к тем самым выводам, к которым пришел автор этого произведения. Somerset Mougham “we know very little even of the persons we know most intimately; we do not know them enough to transfer them to the pages of a book and make human beings of them. People are too elusive, too shadowy, to be copied; and they are also incoherent and contradictory. The writer does not copy his originals; he takes what he wants from them, a few traits that have caught his attention, a turn of mind that has fired his imagination, and not concerned whether it is truthful lightness, he is concerned only to create a plausible harmony convenient for his own purposes” (Шарма 1981: 85)

Следовательно, в любом тексте есть какое-то сообщение. Борис Эйхенбаум пишет в своей статье “важно ещё и другая черта чеховского метода, тоже новая в литературе, Чехов до предела сжимал авторский текст доводя его иногда значения цинических ремарок. Его персонажи говорят иной раз очень много, он сам очень мало. Тема и положение рассказываются они его обычно не автором, а самим действующим (часто именно недействующими, а только разговаривающими) лицам. Автор как бы отходит в сторону, предоставляя своим персонажам говорить и делать то самое, что они привыкли и считают нужным (Эйхенбаум 1986: 223). Чехов избегает описывать душевное состояние героев, но старается чтобы оно было понятно из действий героев. Чехов писал – вы браните меня за объективность, называя её равнодушие к добру и злу, отсутствием идеалов и идей и прочее. Вы хотите, чтобы я, изображая конокрадов, говорили бы: кража

лошадей есть зло. Ну ведь это и без меня давно уже известно. Пусть судят их присяжные заседатели, а моё дело показать только какие они есть. Я пишу: вы имеете дело с конокрадами, так знаете же, что это не нищие, а сытые люди, что это люди культа и что конокрадства есть не просто кража, а страсть. ... когда я пишу, я вполне рассчитывая, на читателя, полагая, что недостающие в рассказе субъективные элементы он подавить сам (Письма том – 4: 54).

Если изучить эволюцию творческого пути Чехова, то можно заметить, что начальный период творчества Чехова носит традиционный характер. Под выражением традиционный характер мы имеем в виду передача предвзятого заранее эффекта, единство впечатления. Иллюстративный подход к действительности социально психологических произведений авторского периода 19-го века во многом повлияло на Антоша Чехонте в начальных произведениях. Даже такой распространённый художественный принцип передачи авторской позиции как прямое высказывание в тексте со стороны автора можно увидеть в некоторых рассказах молодого Чехова. Например, такие рассказы как «За яблочки» 1880-й год – «если бы сей свет не был сим светом, а называл бы вещи настоящим их именем, то Трифона Семёновича звали бы не Трифоном Семёновичем, а иначе: звали бы его так, как зовут вообще лошадей да коров». Такие же прямые высказывания можно найти и в рассказах «За двумя зайцами погонишия», «Дачники» и другие.

Краткость и событийность тоже являются отличительными чертами ранних рассказов Чехова, что в свою очередь помогает понять авторский голос. Очень часто мы находим присутствию неожиданного финала, например смерть чиновника, драма, Ванька и тому подобное. В начальных рассказах Чехова также наблюдается знаменитые три единства малого эпического жанра, о которых говорил ещё Эдгар Алан По, то есть единство явления, единство действия, и фабулы. Ранние рассказы довольно маленького объема. Специфической чертой этих рассказов является хорошо выдуманная кульминация. Если графически показать структурные особенности рассказов молодого Чехова как – «Смерть Чиновника» то картина будет такова:



Первая точка показывает экспозиционное начало, что сидеть во втором ряду кресел Червяков. Вторая точка определяет завязку рассказа, что выражена чиханием Червякова. Самая высокая точка указывает на кульминацию: «пошёл вон гаркнул Генерал» и сразу же дается резкий, неожиданный конец. Такую же схему, более-менее, мы наблюдаем и в других рассказах этого периода. Данная схема ещё говорит нам, что в событийных рассказах дистанция между завязкой и кульминацией длиннее, чем дистанция между кульминацией и развязкой. Обычно сразу же после кульминации наступает финал. Иногда даже они (кульминация и развязка) совпадают.

Сочетание трагического и комического является ещё другой важной чертой рассказов этого периода. Несмотря на присутствие трагического в начальных рассказах, комическое и смешное преобладает в начальных рассказах. Безусловно эти рассказы носят смешной характер, хотя нельзя не замечать скрытую трагедию.

Хотя в рассказах молодого Чехова линия голоса повествователя и голоса автора идут почти параллельно, иногда очень близко, все же можно почувствовать неохоту автора



выражать свое отношение прямо. Михаил М. Бахтин сказал: «автор рефлекирует эмоционально-волевою позицию героя, но не свою позицию по отношению к герою; эту последнюю он осуществляет, она предметно, но сама не становится предметом рассмотрения и рефлексирующего переживания (Бахтин 1986: 11). Однако авторское отношение выясняется, в ранних рассказах Чехова при помощи некоторых символов таких как «червяк», «маска», «хамелеон» и другие. Это и символы ярко показывают позицию автора по отношению к герою. В отличие от рассказов зрелого Чехова, в рассказах молодого Чехова двигающей силой фабулы являются герои. По своему характеру эти герои не сложные, а наоборот, самые простые и обыкновенные люди: Ванька, Червяков, Володя, Филипп, и другие.

Другой фактор, который облегчает нашу задачу установить авторский голос в ранних чеховских рассказах, это присутствие в них явной социальной критики. Разумеется, автор не поддержит самоунижение и оскорбление, с одной стороны, и эксплуатацию, и пошлость, с другой.

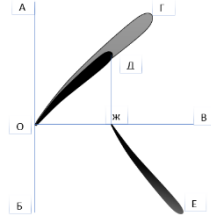
В письме к Суворину Чехов пишет: «Хорош божий свет. Одно только нехорошо: ... Как дурно понимаем мы патриотизм! Пьяный, истасканные заблудыга муж любит свою жену и детей, но что только от этой любви? Мы, говорят в газетах, любим нашу великую родину, но в чем выражается эта любовь? Вместо знаний -нахальство и самомнение паче меры, вместо труда – лень и свинство, справедливости нет, понятие о чести не идёт дальше «чести мундира, Мундира, который служит обыденным украшением наших скамей для подсудимых. Работать надо, а всё остальное к черту. Главное – надо быть справедливым, а остальное всё приложится» (Письма том – 15: 131)

Как раз, углублённый и иронический смех в поздних рассказах Чехова призывает читателей к чести и справедливости. Очень трудно определить авторский голос этого периода, так как в них отсутствуют традиционные средства установления авторского голоса такие как любимый герой автора, подчинение определённой идеологии, прямое авторское высказывание и другие. Именно поэтому мы должны надеяться на повествовательной манере автора, на принципы изображение действительности.

В отличие от ранних рассказах, рассказы зрелого Чехова носят бессобытийный характер. Развязка или финал как структурный элемент очень часто отсутствует. Главная задача Чехова было создать определённое настроение, описывая духовную сторону героя. Заметно, что в этих рассказах, Чехов сильно отличается от традиционных писателей таких как Эдгар Алан По, Мопассана, Сомерсет Моудхам и других. В чеховских рассказах ничего не происходит. В отличие от ранних рассказов, где сюжет развивается вокруг события, в этих рассказах настроение героя или определённая атмосфера двигает фабулу вперёд. Например: «На подводе», «Поцелуй», «Дама с собачкой» и другие.

Если смех преобладает в ранних рассказах, то смерть господствует в поздних рассказах. Это не только физическая смерть, но и духовная гибель. Анализ ниже начерченного графа рассказа «Ионыч», ясно показывает что так называемой человеческое счастье носит временный и ложный характер. Счастье – это иллюзия и как раз в этом вы скрывается реальная несчастная жизнь героя. Ширина этой кривизны показывает, что все растущая печаль окружает человека со всех сторон. До определённой точки (О-Д) печаль и счастье вместе развиваются; печаль в скрытом виде счастья виде иллюзии. Но как только (д-ж) иллюзия или ложный характер счастья разоблачает герой становится жертвой окружающей средой и (ж - е) печаль полностью охватывает его жизни (О - Г). Этим и Чехов показывает духовное падение образа Старцева.

О - Д = Счастье в виде иллюзии
О - Г = Печаль
Ж - Е = внутреннее состояние \ Характер Человека
А - Б = Выражает духовное состояние
О - В = Выражает время



Горький писал слова Толстого: для Толстого, Достоевского существует некая единая философия «жизнесмерти». Они всегда стремятся заглянуть за грань, попытаться поверить в другую жизнь, чем-то не похожую на эту (Чудаков 1986). Но для Чехова нет такой жизни. Профессор «Скучной истории» видит, во мыслях ту же самую жизнь после своей смерти какая есть сейчас.

Хотя для Чехова неравенство среди людей является естественным законом мира, но тем не менее мы должны стараться, чтобы оно перестало быть заметным. В записной книжке он пишет: «вследствие разницы климатов, умов, энергий, вкусов, возвратов, зрений равенство среди людей никогда невозможно. Неравенство поэтому следует считать непреложным законом природы. Но мы можем сделать неравенство незаметным, ...». С этой целью Чехов в своих рассказах, и в ранних, и в поздних, беспощадно разоблачает недостатки общественной жизни, выступает против всякой несправедливости, зла, насилия и лицемерия. Этим, также выражается гуманизм великого писателя, его бесконечная любовь к человеку и боль за человеческого страдания.

Анализируя рассказы из всего творчества Чехова, мы нашли следующие важные черты чеховских рассказов. Во-первых, в рассказах мы наблюдаем беззаботный смех автора, повествователя. Пример этому служат рассказы - ушла, толстый и тонкий, хамелеон, и многие другие. Во-вторых, можно почувствовать смех с болью. Например, за яблочки Ванька. В-третьих, показывается несознательность героя, но волнение читателя от предстоящего трагизма. Автор как бы уходит на задний план. Пример этому служат произведения - Спать хочется, В овраге. В-четвёртых, заметно что сознание у героев приходит, но они становится жертвой среды. У них нет выхода, они бессильны перед средой. Автор полностью изолирует себя от действующих лиц и событий. Например - Палата № 6, В Родном Углу, Бабы. В-пятых, герой осознаются пошлость существующего положения, они хотят вырваться оттуда, ну рассказ вдруг заканчивается. У читателей, как бы, появляется надежда, быть может герой найдёт выход из невыносимой ситуации и обстоятельства. Автор полностью устраняет своего повествователя. Повествователь или рассказчик сам является одним из главных действующих лиц рассказа. Герои выговариваются свободно и открыто. Примером таких рассказов могут служить рассказы как крыжовник, человек во футляре. В конце герой уже принимает предварительное решение чтобы перевернуть существующую жизнь. Но, о характере этой новой жизни Чехов ничего не говорит. Примером этому служит рассказ «Невеста».

Борис Эйхенбаум даже заметил в своей статье «О чехове»: «...и можно сказать, что мы сейчас больше вспоминаем о Чехове чем думаем о нём. Больше и лучше пишут не о творчестве Чехова, не о искусстве его, а о его письмах (Эйхенбаум 1987: 313). По нашему взгляду это потому что, там дух Чехова приближается. М. М. Бахтин писал: «автор творит, но видит свое творение только в предмете, который он оформляет, ... они переживают свои предметы в себя в предмете ... творческая работа переживается, но переживающие не слышат и не видят себя ... поэтому художнику ничего не сказать о процессе своего творчества – он весь в это созданном продукте, и ему остается только указать нам на свое произведение и действительно, мы только в нём и будем его искать»

(Бахтин 1986: 11). Эти слова Бахтина мастерские рассказывают суть чеховского творчества.

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# МЕТАФОРЫ СЧАСТЬЯ И ПЕЧАЛИ В РУССКОМ ЯЗЫКЕ

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## METAPHORS OF HAPPINESS AND SADNESS IN RUSSIAN

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**Аннотация:** Тема эмоций в связи с концептуальными метафорами в рамках теории концептуальных метафор является широко популярной и весьма популярной областью для лингвистов. У каждого человека есть эмоции, и он выражает их буквально или образно, и это отличает его от неживых существ. В данной статье обсуждаются эмоции счастья и печали, используя концептуальную область, введенную Лакоффом и Джонсоном и Ковечешем. В этой статье мы пытаемся проанализировать концептуальные области эмоций счастья и печали. Также мы увидим сходства и различия между концептуальными областями, а также между выражениями счастья и печали на русском языке. Данные были собраны из Национального корпуса русского языка, а также из художественных произведений, статей и газет.

**Ключевые слова:** когнция; концептуализация; концептуальная метафора; эмоция; конкретное; абстрактное; область-источник; область-цель; концепт «счастье»; концепт «печаль».

**Abstract:** The subject of emotion in relation to conceptual metaphors under the framework of conceptual metaphor theory is a widely popular and well-researched area for linguists. Every individual has emotions and expresses it literally or figuratively, distinguishes him from the non-living beings. The present paper discusses the emotion of happiness and sadness using the conceptual domain introduced by Lakoff & Johnson and Zoltan Kövecses. In this article, I try to analyse the conceptual domains of emotions of happiness and sadness. Also, we will see the similarities and differences between the conceptual domains as well as the expressions of happiness and sadness in Russian. The data has been collected from the Russian national corpus as well as from the literary texts, articles, and newspapers.

**Keywords:** cognition; conceptualization; conceptual metaphor; emotion; concrete; abstract; source domain; target domain; the concept of "happiness"; the concept of "sadness".

### Эмоции и Язык:

Наша жизнь неполна без эмоций. Эмоции непосредственно оказывают влияние на наши действия. Язык является важной частью общения между людьми, а эмоция является неотъемлемой частью этого общения. «Эмоции — это субъективные реакции человека и животных на воздействие внутренних и внешних раздражителей, проявляющихся в виде радости, страха, удовольствия или неудовольствия» (Кузнецов, 951). Это эмоции, которые отличают человека от неживых существ. Эмоции и язык тесно взаимосвязаны. Наши мысли — это результат эмоциональных изменений. Эмоции и язык тесно взаимосвязаны. Наши мысли — это результат эмоциональных изменений. Наши мысли непосредственно влияют на наш язык, и наши мысли состоят из окружающей среды, в которой мы живем. Носители языка строят свои выражения на основе того, что они видят или слышат. И поэтому, когда человек испытывает какую-то эмоцию, он говорит, используя свои мысли, которые являются влиянием окружающей среды. Вот почему

эмоции и их выражения является особенно популярным, и многозначным объектом для изучения.

Согласно Полу Экману существуют шесть базовых эмоций, то есть гнев, отвращение, страх, счастье, печаль и удивление. Он их назвал универсальными эмоциями. Эти универсальные эмоции можно отличить по выражениям лица и физиологическим реакциям.

Цель в данной статье - изложить некоторые из наиболее значительных и важных результатов исследования эмоций счастья и печали, анализировать, какое значение они имеют для лингвистического изучения эмоций, и рассматривать универсальности базовой эмоции «счастья» и «печаль» в русском языке, а также сопоставлять метафоры и их категории, какие сходства и различия они имеют в лингвистических выражениях этих двух видов эмоции.

Мы используем теорию концептуальных метафор, предложенную Лакоффом и Джонсоном в своей книге «Метафоры, которыми мы живем». Также для категоризации этих двух видов эмоций мы используем основу Ковечеша, которую он описал в своей книге «Metaphor and Emotion: Language, Culture, and Body in Human Feeling».

По мнению В. Н. Телия, когнитивная метафора является призмой, через которую носители языка совершают акт мировидения. Метафора не только является средством выражения, но одно из значительных орудий познания. «Метафору в современной когнитивистике принято определять как ментальную операцию, как способ познания, категоризации, концептуализации, оценки и объяснения мира» (Будаев, 20).

Когда мы испытываем эмоции, мы не только испытываем физиологические и поведенческие изменения, но и говорим о том, что чувствуем. Поэтому интересно изучать и язык эмоций.

Слова, как «счастливый» и «сердитый», имеют буквальное значение. Но такие фразы, как «быть на вершине мира» и «буря гнева», образно относятся к счастью и гневу соответственно. Можно отметить, что образные выражения обычно не выражают и не называют эмоции и её степени, а описывают определенные аспекты различных эмоциональных состояний. Эту группу лексики, связанной с эмоциями, можно разделить на две группы, одна из которых концептуальные метафоры, а другая - концептуальные метонимии.

### **Концептуальная метафора**

Джордж Лакофф и Марк Джонсон впервые представили теорию концептуальных метафор (ТКМ) в книге «Метафоры, которыми мы живем». По Лакоффу, метафора представляет собой «когнитивный инструмент для понимания абстрактных понятий и абстрактного мышления» (Лакофф, 2004, 244).

Лакофф и Джонсон в книге «Метафоры, которыми мы живем» пишут, что «Метафора широко распространена в повседневной жизни и появляется не только в языке, но и в мыслях и действиях. Наша концептуальная система, в рамках которой мы думаем и действуем, носит принципиально метафорический характер» (Лакофф, Джонсон, 25). По мнению Лакоффа и Джонсона, лингвистические выражения, которые употребляются в повседневной жизни разрешают сделать вывод о том, что познание имеет метафорический характер. Метафора является частью повседневного языка и люди обычно и бессознательно используют метафоры в своей речи. Эти метафоры очень интересовали лингвистов и назывались концептуальными метафорами.

Теория концептуальных метафор возникла в 1980-х годах, и с тех пор метафоры эмоций широко изучаются лингвистами, занимающимися когнитивной лингвистикой.

Концептуальные метафоры распределяют всю систему концептов в отношении друг к другу. Концептуальные метафоры имеют две структуры понимания: структура источника и структура цели. Источник является конкретным и цель является абстрактной. Концептуальная метафора носит концептуальное сопоставление из области источника в области цели. Эти сопоставления часто имеют разные понятия, например, ДУША — ЭТО ХРУПКИЙ ОБЪЕКТ, ПЕЧАЛЬ – ЭТО ЖИВОТНОЕ, ВРЕМЯ — ЭТО ДЕНЬГИ и т.д. В этих примерах область источника — хрупкий объект, животное и деньги, а область цели — душа, печаль и время. «Концептуальная область, из которой мы рисуем метафорические выражения для понимания другой концептуальной области, называется исходной областью, а концептуальная область, которая понимается подобным образом, является целевой областью. Целевой домен — это домен, который мы пытаемся понять с помощью исходного домена» (Kövecses, 2010, 4, перевод наш).

Лакофф и Джонсон заявляют, что кроме концептуальных метафор существует еще один когнитивный механизм, который играет важную роль – это концептуальная метонимия. В последнее время уделяется большое внимание изучению метонимии.

Метонимия – это тоже когнитивное явление, но с другой основой, чем метафора. В концептуальной метонимии две области связываются так, что одна заменяет другую. Например, в концептуальной метонимии ПРОИЗВОДИТЕЛЬ ВМЕСТО ПРОДУКТА (У меня на стене висит Пикассо). В концептуальной метонимии одно понятие замещает другое, а в концептуальной метафоре одно понятие понимается как другое.

Когда мы говорим об эмоциях, Ковечеш в своей книге «Emotion Concepts» пишет, что «под концептуальными метонимиями подразумеваются поведенческие и физиологические реакции и изменения в физическом облике. В предыдущих моделях предполагалось, что эти реакции сопровождаются какой-нибудь эмоцией. Таким образом, соответствующие языковые выражения могут обозначать эмоцию. Физиологические эффекты эмоции выражают эмоцию» (Kövecses, 40, перевод наш).

**Концептуальные метафоры и когнитивная лингвистика взаимосвязаны.** Человек понимает и выражает абстрактную целевую область, используя более простую, известную и конкретную исходную область. Сложные идеи, такие как жизнь, любовь, счастье, печаль, гнев, время, понимаются человеком с помощью конкретных идей как путешествия, птицы, света, тьмы, враг, денег. Такие сравнения человек делает подсознательно, которые его научили свой опыт, культура и традиции. В нашем познании опыты постепенно складываются, и человек связывает и понимает одно понятие с помощью другого. Поэтому, можно сказать, что концептуальная метафора — это часть человеческого опыта, и мы используем ее каждый день в речи.

### **Эмоции счастья и печали:**

В этой статье, проанализируются русские выражения счастья и печали, чтобы ответить на вопрос, можно ли классифицировать эти русские выражения счастья и печали в соответствии с теорией концептуальных метафор, предложенной Лакоффом и Джонсоном, и следовать классификации метафор, перечисленной в работе Ковечеша «Метафора и эмоции, 2000».

### **Выражения счастья в русском языке:**

Согласно Экману на эмоции, ученые соглашаются с тем, что счастье — это основная эмоция. Если мы посмотрим на синонимы слова «счастье», то найдем радость вместе с утешением, удовольствием, утеха. Из этих слов счастье является лучшим вариантом для классификации, и остальные варианты принадлежат к эмоциональной семье счастья. Словарь русского языка Ожегова (1988) определяет слово «счастье» как:

счастье: чувство и состояние полного, высшего удовлетворения.

Определение предполагает, что счастье относится к очень особым и интенсивным эмоциональным состояниям, которые трудно достичь. Теперь посмотрим, как счастье выражается в русском языке.

## I. СЧАСТЬЕ — ЭТО ВЕРХ

Эта классификация показывает ориентационные метафоры. Ориентационные метафоры — это те метафоры, которые имеют пространственные отношения (вверх-вниз, вперед-назад). Это одна из трех категорий концептуальных метафор, которые описывают Лакофф и Джонсон в своей книге «Метафоры, которыми мы живем» (1980). Остальные две категории — это структурная метафора и онтологическая метафора. «Ориентация вверх имеет тенденцию сочетаться с положительной оценкой, а ориентация вниз - с отрицательной». (Kövecses, 2010, 40)

- Я была **на верху блаженства**, но ведь и на краю бездны стояла тоже. [Галина Щербакова. Lovестория (1996)] (Национальный корпус русского языка)
- Ральф стоит на верхней ступеньке пьедестала, словно **на вершине мира**, и смотрит вниз на приветствующих его людей. [Александр Кабановский. Воспитание чувств // «Формула», 2001.09.15] (Национальный корпус русского языка)
- Он бежал по трапам и отсекам, напевая что-то веселое и радостное, **не чувствуя ног под собой**. [Григорий Адамов. Тайна двух океанов (1939)] (Национальный корпус русского языка)
- Жена **земли под собой не слышит от радости**. [А. А. Яблоновский. Египет (1920- 1921). Гости английского короля (1920-1921)] (Национальный корпус русского языка)
- Я был **на седьмом небе** от счастья, исполнилась моя мечта и, если надо ждать, буду ждать. [Анатолий Рыбаков. Тяжелый песок (1975-1977)] (Национальный корпус русского языка)

Все эти выражения показывают, что, когда человек счастлив, он может выражать свое счастье с помощью ориентации «вверх», и это его положительное состояние.

## II. СЧАСТЬЕ – ЭТО СВЕТ

- Маркиз же **сияет от радости**. [Т. Троицкая. Театр, которого не было // «Огонек». № 31, 1959] (Национальный корпус русского языка)
- Человек так счастлив, что его **глаза светятся** (Национальный корпус русского языка)
- Фенечка вбежала к нему **с сияющими глазами** и объявила о приезде «молодых господ». [Тургенев, Отцы и дети] (Национальный корпус русского языка)
- Его усы дрожали, выдавая улыбку, а **глаза искрились радостью** от встречи с товарищем. [М. Мели, Лабаста, 2020] (Национальный корпус русского языка)

В приведенных выше примерах глаголы, такие как «сиять», «светиться», «искриться» показывают, что, когда человек счастлив, его счастье можно описать с метафорой света. Также в примерах, глаза используются как контейнерные метафоры.

Есть еще два примера, которые показывают, что свет счастья можно затемнить, а выражение безоблачное счастье выражает совершенное счастье.

- Олеша был мягким и деликатным человеком, ему казалось неуместным **омрачать радость** своего друга. [Аркадий Белинков. Сдача и гибель советского

интеллекта. Юрий Олеша / Цветок, садовник, узник и каменщик (1958-1968)] (Национальный корпус русского языка)

- Единый дом, единый дружный пир, Единое **безоблачное счастье!** [М. М. Морозов. Вильям Шекспир (1951)] (Национальный корпус русского языка)

### III. СЧАСТЬЕ – ЭТО ЖИДКОСТЬ ВНУТРИ СОСУДА

- Вечный, как небо, белый кристалльный город заискрился на лазурной высоте. **Сердце переполнилось счастьем.** [Б. А. Садовской. Карл Вебер (1923)] (Национальный корпус русского языка)
- Предчувствую, что ты приедешь, и эта мысль **преисполняет меня радостью.** [Лев Каневский, Несравненная Жозефина, 2003] (Национальный корпус русского языка)
- **Радость переливалась из сердца** гончара в душу Тарена, и тот понял, что видит перед собой величайшего мастера, какого ему доводилось видеть. [Ллойд Александер, Леонид Яхнин, Хроники Придайна. Кн. 4. Тарен-Странник, (2018)] (Национальный корпус русского языка)

В этих примерах радость выражается как жидкость в значении концептуальных метафор. В первых двух примерах глагол «переполниться» и «преисполнять» указывает на жидкое состояние радости. Сердце или тело человека вообще действует как метафора контейнера. Последнее выражение показывает ситуацию, в которой радость у человека так много, что это переливается из контейнера.

### IV. СЧАСТЬЕ КАК ЯВЛЕНИЕ ПРИРОДЫ

- Катя встретила его с такой **бурной радостью**, с какой моряков встречают из дальнего плавания верные жены. [Елена Белкина. От любви до ненависти (2002)] (Национальный корпус русского языка)
- **Буря счастья в душе** медленно утихала, и мокрые полосы слез приятно охладили щеки. [Виктор Пелевин. Любовь к трем цукербринам (2014)] (Национальный корпус русского языка)
- **Волна счастья** залила ее, и глаза наполнились слезами. [Маргарет Митчелл. Унесенные ветром (2003)]
- У Привалова потемнело **в глазах от прилива счастья**, и он готов был расцеловать даже Агрипшину Филипьевну. [Д. Н. Мамин-Сибиряк. Приваловские миллионы (1883)] (Национальный корпус русского языка)

Эмоции счастья, радости обычно рассматриваются как явления природы. Эти эмоции употребляются так, чтобы показывать интенсивности этих эмоций. Сравнение счастья с бурей, волной и прилива показывают сильное чувство радости. Такие выражения находят своё место и в категории «СЧАСТЬЕ КАК ЯВЛЕНИЕ ПРИРОДЫ» и в категории «СЧАСТЬЕ – ЭТО ЖИДКОСТЬ ВНУТРИ СОСУДА».

### V. СЧАСТЬЕ ТРУДНО ИЗМЕРИТЬ

- Она бросилась ко мне в объятия, и **несказанная радость** пришла к нам обоим одновременно. [Юрий Азаров. Подозреваемый (2002)] (Национальный корпус русского языка)
- Не может **неописанная радость** наша в тесных пределах сердца ныне удержаться, но на лице и на язык изливается. (Национальный корпус русского языка)



- — и в голове говорившего чувствовался страх и **скрытая радость** избавления от ответственности. [А. П. Платонов. Город Градов (1926)] (Национальный корпус русского языка)

В этих примерах прилагательные как «несказанный», «неописанный» и «скрытый» изображают радость как объект, который трудно измерить. Это изображает широкий и обширный характер эмоции радости.

## VI. СЧАСТЬЕ — ЭТО ЖИВОЕ СУЩЕСТВО

«Олицетворение — это литературный прием, заключающийся в том, что неодушевленным предметам приписываются свойства одушевленных» (Толковый словарь Ефремовой. Т. Ф. Ефремова. 2000). Ниже представлены примеры олицетворяются эмоции гнева.

- Я подумал: «Вот когда мне **счастье** пришло». [Б. С. Житков. Что бывало (1934)] (Национальный корпус русского языка)
- Он бежит, я слезы лью, **Счастье убежало**. [Н. С. Лесков. Некуда (1864)] (Национальный корпус русского языка)
- Родилось **новое счастье** в многодетной семье.

Глаголы как «прийти», «убежать», и «родиться» часто используются для олицетворения счастья. Такие выражения помогают нам лучше воспринимать эмоции и их характеристики.

«Прийти» показывает, что счастье начинается, «убежать» показывает, что счастье закончился. А последний пример с глаголом «родиться» объясняет, что счастье умеет рождаться и указывает на возникновение этой эмоции в человеке.

## VII. СЧАСТЬЕ — ЭТО БЕЗУМИЕ

- Я была **без ума от радости**, что мальчик нашёлся. [Б. Л. Пастернак. Воздушные пути (1924)] (Национальный корпус русского языка)
- При допущении, что он еще раз увидит Антипову, Юрий Андреевич **обезумел от радости**. [Б. Л. Пастернак. Доктор Живаго (1945-1955)] (Национальный корпус русского языка)
- Она **потеряла голову от радости**, такой он красавчик. [Эмили Бронте. Грозовой перевал. (2014)]
- Он будет несказанно, несказанно богат, почти **сойдёт с ума от счастья**, и тогда скажет Алёне: бросай театр. [Н. Б. Черных. Слабые, сильные. Часть первая // «Волга», 2015] (Национальный корпус русского языка)

Все эти примеры показывают, что, когда человек чрезвычайно счастлив, он теряет контроль над своим разумом. Типичные лингвистические примеры этих метафор предполагают, что человек, который очень счастлив, скорее всего, потеряет контроль над собой (Ковчеш, 2008).

## Выражения печали в русском языке:

По мнению Экмана печаль является одной из шести базовых эмоций, которые он назвал универсальными эмоциями. Из синонимических рядов слова печаль встречаются такие слова как грусть, горе, тоска, уныние, страдание и скорбь. В этой статье слово «печаль» употребляется для классификации, и другие слова входят в семью печали. Печали — это широкая область эмоциональных состояний, которые человек может испытывать. Существует несколько разных видов печали: от легкой неприятности до чрезвычайного отчаяния и горя. Теперь рассмотрим, как печаль выражается в русском языке.

### I. ПЕЧАЛЬ — ЭТО ВНИЗ

- Я изобразил **глубокую печаль**. [Ф. В. Гладков. Повесть о детстве (1948)] (Национальный корпус русского языка)
- На минуту она повеселела, а затем впала в еще более **глубокую тоску**. [Стросс, Чарльз / Семейное дело] (Национальный корпус русского языка)
- У меня **душа ушла в пятки**, когда показался он на пороге. [Елена Хаецкая. Мракобес/ Свора пропащих (1997)] (Национальный корпус русского языка)

В первых двух примерах печаль и тоска считаются глубокими. Глубоко значит вниз. Поэтому, можно сказать, что ПЕЧАЛЬ — ЭТО ВНИЗ. А последний пример является фразеологизмом, который тоже указывает на пониженное настроение человека, когда он испытывает эмоцию печали.

### II. ПЕЧАЛЬ – ЭТО ЖИДКОСТЬ ВНУТРИ СОСУДА

- Татьяна Ивановна во всю свою бедную жизнь **испила полную до краёв чашу горя**.
- Будете пить, говорит, тьму, а посмотрите свет; будете **пить печаль**, а найдете веселие. [С. Д Ростовский, Поучения и проповеди] (Национальный корпус русского языка)

В этом примере горе и печаль сравниваются с жидкостью, в первом примере горе находится внутри чашки и наполнена до краев. Глаголы как «пить» и «испить» означают, что печаль имеет жидкий характер.

- В эти моменты создатели картины подхватывают **волну печали** и принимают решение ударится в сантименты.

В этом примере печаль сравнивается с волной, что подразумевает концептуальную категорию «ПЕЧАЛЬ – ЭТО ЖИДКОСТЬ ВНУТРИ СОСУДА». Этот пример также принадлежит концептуальной категории «ПЕЧАЛЬ КАК ЯВЛЕНИЕ ПРИРОДЫ».

### III. ПРОСТРАНСТВЕННОЕ ЗНАЧЕНИЕ, ВЫРАЖАЮЩЕЕ ПЕЧАЛЬ

- Пой, даже если **в душе поселилась печаль**, пой.

Этот пример показывает, что печаль поселилась в душе, как будто печаль — это объект, и поселилась в каком-то пространстве.

- Если **грусть подкатила к сердцу** и замучила суета, если мир показался серым - подарите себе кота.

В этом примере движение печали к сердцу показывает, что действие происходит в пространстве. Здесь пространство — это человеческое тело, которое действует как контейнер метафора.

#### IV. ПЕЧАЛЬ КАК ЯВЛЕНИЕ ПРИРОДЫ

- Ааай, море тоску мою забирай, Ааай, пускай несет **волна печаль** в синюю даль.

Здесь печаль сравнивается с волной. Морские волны — это постоянные природные явления, которые являются сильными, а также и слабыми в своей форме в зависимости от их интенсивности. Сравнение тоски с морем показывает большой объем печали, которая никогда не закончится. Эти примеры доказывают, что печаль также можно сравнить с природой и ее свойствами.

- Такая **буря** мыслей, воспоминаний и **печали** вдруг поднялась в его душе, что он не мог спать. [Л. Н. Толстой. Война и мир. Том второй (1867-1869)] (Национальный корпус русского языка)

Здесь печаль сравнивается с бурей. Буря является сильной в своей природе. Интенсивное чувство печали имеет широкие последствия как буря. Это динамическое природное явление, которое создает большую неприятность. Когда человек в горе, он не только создает беспокойство для себя, но и для других. Также здесь душа используется как контейнер метафора.

#### V. ПЕЧАЛЬ ИМЕЕТ ЦВЕТ

- И что же будет? **Тоска зелёная!** Едут, едут, едут... [Василий Шукшин. Печки-лавочки (1970-1972)] (Национальный корпус русского языка)
- **Чёрная тоска** как-то сразу подкатила к сердцу Маргариты. [М. А. Булгаков. Мастер и Маргарита, часть 2 (1929-1940)] (Национальный корпус русского языка)

Вышеуказанные примеры показывают, что эмоция тоски имеет краску и бывает зеленым и черным.

#### VI. ПЕЧАЛЬ — ЭТО ЖИВОЕ СУЩЕСТВО

- **Тоска меня загрызла**, места не найду. [А. Н. Островский. Правда — хорошо, а счастье лучше (1876)] (Национальный корпус русского языка)
- Опять была весна, но уже не было Паши Афанасьева, и когда Лиза в первый же вечер пошла в сад и стала у забора, тихая **грусть охватила** ее. [М. П. Арцыбашев. Тени утра (1905)] (Национальный корпус русского языка)

В этих примерах олицетворяется печаль. Глаголы, как «загрызть» и «охватить» изображают печаль как живое существо. Печаль — это эмоция, которая развивается внутри человека, и глаголы «загрызть» и «охватить» в этих двух примерах указывают на живой характер печали, так как печаль не может загрызть или охватить кого-либо, или что-либо буквально. Эти выражения показывают, что печаль можно заслонять другие эмоции.

## VII. ПЕЧАЛЬ КАК ИЗМЕНЕНИЕ В ФИЗИЧЕСКОМ ОБЛИКЕ

Это концептуальная категория метонимий и объясняется, что эмоции, в данном случае печаль, оказывают определенное влияние на части тела. Эмоции особенно влияют на тела человека, они могут увеличивать или уменьшать частоту сердечных сокращений, дыхания, в результате этого тело может испытывать дрожание и может стать красным или бледным.

- Налей вина, саки! **Тоска стесняет грудь**
- **С тяжелым сердцем** оставил я его там у родственников, но через год он вернулся, якобы погостить. [М. Б. Салимов. Сказка о последнем хане // «Бельские Просторы», 2010] (Национальный корпус русского языка)

В первом примере изображено, что печаль стесняет груди. А во втором примере показано, что грусть может отягощать сердце. Сердце обычно используется как метафора контейнера при изображении печали.

## VIII. ПЕЧАЛЬ — ЭТО БОЛЕЗНЬ

- Когда он вспоминал её глаза, её голос, **невыносимая тоска** охватывала его. [Василий Гроссман. Жизнь и судьба, часть 3 (1960)] (Национальный корпус русского языка)

Приведенное выше выражение объясняет, что печаль невыносима, как будто кто-то испытывает боль.

- Я работала, и на меня нападала **жгучая тоска**. [Лидия Смирнова. Моя любовь (1997)] (Национальный корпус русского языка)

В данном примере речь идет об острой депрессии. Депрессия — это форма заболевания, которая приводит к постоянной печали.

### Заключение:

Счастье и печаль являются двумя из шести базовых эмоций. Воспринимание и выражение этих эмоций зависят от культуры и существования разных понятий в народе. В русском языке широко используются различные выражения счастья и печали. Счастье и печаль имеют противоположную категорию «СЧАСТЬЕ — ЭТО ВЕРХ» и «ПЕЧАЛЬ — ЭТО ВНИЗ». Это показывает, что эти эмоции противоположны по своей природе. Встречается ряд выражений для выражения жидкости и внутри сосуда в обеих эмоциях. Тело человека играет роль метафоры контейнера. Глаза, сердце и душа также выступают в роли метафоры контейнера. Существуют выражения радости и печали, сравнимые с разными явлениями природы. В концептуализации счастья и печали явления природы как буря, прилив, волна, море сравниваются с этими эмоциями. Концептуальные метонимия, которые указывают на изменение в физическом облике встречаются при выражении эмоции печали. Эмоции радости и печали влияют на человека не только внешне, но и внутренне. В то время как в случае печали эмоция считается острой в отрицательном смысле, в случае счастья, она влияет на мозг, но безвреден для человека. Мы отметили, что изображение эмоции печали с помощью цвета выражают интенсивность печали. Широко используются олицетворения в обеих эмоциях и это доказывает, что язык является по своему характеру антропоцентричным. Итак, обе эти эмоции очень базовые по своей природе, и анализ этих эмоций с помощью когнитивной модели не только дает

возможность увидеть, как эти эмоции изображаются в повседневной жизни, но и почему они изображаются определенным образом. И, наконец, можно сказать, что мы используем образные выражения гораздо чаще, чем буквальные, в нашей жизни.

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## ТАКАЖИ - ФИКЦИОНИСТ В ЛИТЕРАТУРЕ «МАЛАЯЛАМ»

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## THAKAZHI - THE FICTIONIST IN MALAYALAM LITERATURE

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**Аннотация:** «Такажи» Шивацанкара Пиллай, (которого просто назвали как «Такажи» от имени своей родной деревни), является одним из современными писателями-беллетристами, особенно в штате 'Керала' в южной части Индии. Он имеет более чем пятидесятилетний опыт творческой работы в литературе малайялам, и за его творчеством, рисуемыми бедных и обездоленных в период характеризующийся кастовой системой в феодальном устройстве, следует социальная трансформация общества в своём родном штате. Его сорок романов и более шестисот рассказов описывают великолепные человеческие отношения своей деревни «Такажи». Его короткий роман «Чеммин» (Шримп/Криветка) получил международное признание. Его романы и рассказы обращаются к различным слоям общества середины двадцатого века штата Кералы. Его роман «Тоттиюде Макан» (Сын Мусорщика, 1948) считается лучшим воплощением изображения реальных жизненных ситуаций в художественной литературе. В романе изображены три поколения семьи рабочего класса района 'Алаппужа', которые занимаются мусорщиками. Роман бросает вызов неблагоприятности кастовой системы, в которой профессия зависит от родословной. Настоящая статья представляет собой попытку проанализировать идеи, идеологии и творческие таланты писателя «Такажи» как писателя-фикционалиста в литературе малайялам.

**Ключевые слова:** Такажи Шивацанкара Пиллай., Художественная литература, Социалистический реализм, литература «Малайялам»

**Abstract:** "Thakazhi" Sivasankara Pillai, who is popularly known as "Thakazhi" (named after his native village), is one of the contemporary fictionist writers in India, especially in the State of Kerala situated in Southern India. He has literary experience of more than fifty years in Malayalam Literature and his literary creations, portraying the lower poor and the downtrodden in the period characterised by the caste system in a feudal set-up, are followed by a social transformation of society in his home state of Kerala. All his forty novels and over six hundred short stories portray magnificent human relations of his own native village of 'Thakazhi'. His short novel 'Chemmem' (Shrimp/Prawn) received international acclaim. His short stories and novels address different faces of society in the mid - twentieth century in Kerala. His novel 'Thottiyude Makan' (Son of the Scavenger, 1948) is considered the best epitome of the portrayal of real-life situations in fiction. The novel exposes three generations of a labour family in Alappuzha District, who engages themselves as scavengers. The novel questions the imprudence of the caste system on which one person's occupation depends on lineage. The present article is an attempt to analyse Thakazhi's ideas, ideologies and creative talents as a narrative fiction writer in Malayalam Literature.

**Key words:** Thakazhi Sivasankara Pillai, Fiction, Socialist realism, Malayalam literature

После обретения независимости, малайялам литература стабильно развивалась почти во всех отраслях литературной деятельности. Влияние поэтической троицы, такие как Кумаранашан, Уллоор и Валлатол, пошло на убыль, и новые тенденции начали укореняться ещё до прихода свободы. В этот период продолжился нео-романтизм, смешанный с оттенком реализма; прогрессивное движение с его приверженностью к

реализму и даже натурализму рассеялось с конференцией, которую произошла в городе Коллам из-за споров между сторонниками жесткой линии коммунистической партии, такими как И.М.С. Намбудурипад и писатели как Кешава Дев, Такажи Шивацанкара Пиллай и Джозеф Мундассери. Среди писателей, которые поддерживали левую идеологию, перепутались за короткий период, но художественная литература, поэзия и драма, казались вскоре преодолели эти идеологические контузии и вступили в новую фазу, отбросив избитые озабоченности и формы выражения.

Таким образом, вторую половину XX века в малаяламской литературе можно назвать пост-прогрессивной, пост-романтической или модернистской. Как и во многих других индийских языках, в малаялам продолжали происходить изменения наравне с тем, что происходило в большинстве литератур мира. Современный период в литературе малаялам можно разделить на три фазы: (1) период Возрождения (1880-1930 – неоклассицизм и романтизм), (2) период Социалистического реализма (1930-1947) и (3) Свободный период. Трудно точно определить, когда началась новая тенденция после 1947г. Тенденция отхода от социалистического реализма, интерпретируемого в узком смысле, привела к развитию жанра романа малаялам в период после обретения независимости. Феноменальный успех «Чеммина» как роман и как фильм заставил Такажи начинать писать на большом мере рассказы о людях вокруг него. Зрелые произведения Эс.Кэ.Поттекатта, В.М.Башира, Кешав Дева, Такажи и Уруба привратили третью четверть XX века одним из самых ярких периодов романа в Малаялам литератере. (Чайтания, Кришна, стр.14)

Особенности Такажи как писатель-беллетрист или фикционист проанализировали подробно ниже раскрывая содержания, идеи и мысли в некоторых его произведениях и так же выявляя его жизненные обстоятельства.

Такажи Шивацанкара Пиллай известен в литературе малаялам как писатель-беллетрист, который особенно следовал реалистические тенденции в своих произведениях. Его имя «Такажи» известно как псевдоним, которое он принял от имени своей родной деревни, где он родился в 1912 году в средней крестьянской семье. Во многих его работах можно видеть картины своей слаборазвитой деревни «Такажи» полны с рисовыми полями, омываемой Аравийским морем. Так же можно видеть красивые картины самой его деревни, очаровательными праздниками урожая, народными песнями и танцами, и с суевериями неграмотного большинства и их эксплуататоров. В детстве, Такажи познакомился с литературой от своего отца, который ежедневно после ужина читал своей семье великие индийские эпосы «Рамаяна» и «Махабхарата». Это оставило неизгладимое впечатление в сознании Пиллай. И позднее, в его произведениях нашли отражение разновидности этих эпосов по форме и по структуре. (Паикер, Айяппа, Др.К, стр.92)

Влияние западной литературы на Такажи: Такажи был очень увлекся творчеством западных писателей, особенно творчеством Толстого и Мопассанта, Например, один из его популярных рассказов был «Веллаппоккатиль», (Vellappokkathil / In the flood) (Паикер, Айяппа, Др.К, стр.87).

Как и другие его современники- Кешава Дэв, В.М.Башир, Муттату Варки и С.К. Поттекад, Такажи тоже верил в революционные идеи и социалистический реализм благодаря влиянию западной литературы. Влияние западных писателей Чехова, М.Горького, Ибсена и Диккенса можно видеть в рассказах и романах Такажи тоже. Например, новые тенденции в литературе Такажи экспериментировал в его рассказах и романах «Сын Мусорщика, 1948 (Son of the Scavenger), и «Тэндиваргам, «Нищие», 1950 (The Beggar Class). Известный литературовед и критик того времени К.М.Джордж писал о главной литературной теме многих западных писателей, таких как Такажи, так:



*«В новой фантастике был пролетарский акцент; простой человек стал героем. В то же время жизнь на более низких уровнях считалась не только подходящим предметом для творческого письма, но и наиболее актуальным в меняющемся мире, где рабочий класс был в центре внимания». (Джордж, К.М, стр.104).*

На самом деле, Чехов повлиял на Такажи в его первые дни. По словам другого критика М.П.Пола, «Такажи показывает влияние Джеймс Джойса в его ранних романах, таких как «Пратыбхалам», но меняется на Эмили Зола в его романе «Ранджидангажи». (Джордж, К.М., стр.105). Потребности рабочего и причина аутсайдера были впечатляюще темы Thakazhi в его романе Ранджидангажи. В целом, мы можем понять, что на Такажи оказали влияние западные идеи, такие как социализм, тоталитаризм, демократия и либерализм.

Такажи Шиващанкара Пиллай не получил формальное образование. В его деревне была только начальная школа. Окончив начальный курс, он поступил в английскую школу в Амбалапуже, окончил среднюю школу в штате Траванкоре. Потом, Такажи поступил в юридический колледж в столице штата Тыруванантапурам и сдал экзамен на профессиональную грамотность по юристу. В 1939 году он начал свою практику как адвокат в небольшом городке Амбалапужа. Но по сердцу он больше был заинтересован не в законе, и поэтому, несколько времени занимался журналистической работы, а наконец на полную ставку занялся писательской деятельностью. Его контакт с великим ученым и литературным критиком А.Балакришнапиллай, стал поворотным моментом в жизни Такажи. Такажи обрадовался быть принятым как ученик Балакришнпиллай. Он работал редактором журнала «Кесари». Несколько выдающихся писателей и общественных деятелей сформировались из круга Кесари. Когда Такажи работал в журнале Кесари, он успел познакомиться с произведениями великих русских писателей как Чехов, Толстой, Горький и другие. Ему даже удалось побывать в иностранных странах – в Америке, Европе, Японии и России.( Паикер, Айяппа,Др.К, стр.90)

По словам известного критика и поэта Айяппа Паникера, Такажи был художником, который постепенно созревал и он был летописцем Куттанада, местности вокруг своей деревни. Многообразие жизни в этой области наглядно представлено в его рассказах. Такажи выступает в роли чемпиона среди аутсайдеров. Он нарисовал жизненные картины более истинным и интересным, когда он изображал жестокую сексуальную эксплуатацию женщин. (Джордж, К.М-(1), стр.29) Например, можно посмотрим как Такажи изображает жизнь женщин, которые живут в более низком положении в обществе в своём районе, через образ 'Каляны' в своем рассказе о «Каляны». В рассказе «Калианы» Такажи представил жизнь женщин из своей деревни в Алаппужу. Каляны приезжает в Алаппужу с несколькими намерениями. Она хочет остаться где-нибудь на земле Муталали. Она мечтает о лучшей жизни с помощью Муталали, и чтобы осуществить свои амбиции, она однажды даже подарила свое тело Муталали с помощью Паппу Пиллай, зрителя Муталали. Зритель на самом деле эксплуатирует Кальяны. Когда она спрашивает зрителя о Муталали, он отвечает так:

*“O Mutalali didn't like you. Kalyani is shocked. The promises Mutalali made stuck out their tongues at her. Mutalali had told her that he had never experienced such pleasure; that Annakkutti and Meenakshi were old prunes! Kalyani decides that this traitor is lying. He wants more money to be the go-between! She suppresses her anger and asks: 'If so, why did he ask me to come again the next day?' Pappu Pillai cannot help laughing. 'My dear Kalyani, did you believe those words? Was he conscious then? He may say so many things at such times... to put other people in difficulty. 'That was true. Mutalali was quite drunk. What should she believe? Kalyani says again: 'No, Chetta, that won't do. That day I was a bit bewildered. Give me one more opportunity:*

*'Let me see. Maybe, the day, after tomorrow. Tomorrow I shall come to your house.'*  
(Джордж.К.М-(2), стр.78)

Как сторонник Социалистического реализма, Такажи был против всякого зла, порожденного капиталистическим обществом. Там, где феодальный помещик всемогущ, крепостные соперничают друг с другом за его благосклонность. Одним из пороков такого социального устройства будет рост проституции. Рассказ о Каляны посвящена этой теме. Здесь писатель показывает реалистичное представление о женщинах-работницах, которые соревнуются между собой, чтобы угодить землевладельцу, а также о том, что между ними выгодно с обеих сторон.

Подобное изображение проблемы женщин можно видеть в работе «Рассказ Кеттутали». «Содержание рассказа сосредоточено вокруг вдовы, которая, вынужденная обстоятельствами, приветствует других мужчин, чтобы зарабатывать себе на жизнь. Символическое значение 'кеттутали' «цепи или нити, обвязанной женихом на шею невесты на свадьбе» проходит через историю, как священная нить. Такажи побуждает задуматься об альтернативах, доступных несчастной вдове. На протяжении всей истории мы пребываем в беспокойном уме женщины, некоторые из вопросов которой могут принадлежать автору. Ее трагедия в том, что мужчины, которым она доверяет после смерти мужа, оказываются предателями. И она оказывается уличной блудницей. Предполагается, что женщина, которая действительно привязана к кеттутали, была вынуждена пожертвовать нитью бесчувственным обществом. Его изображение разочарования женщины действительно впечатляет.» (Джордж.К.М-(1), стр.30)

В рассказе *Кеттутали* Такажи написал:

*"To obey one's husband was what the Kettuthali dictated. That meant she wore besides the Kettuthali another chain of idealism. Could she defy that chain of idealism? Even then she might have asked the deceased husband what she was to do. But the soul has already left the place, and it could not give her a reply then. One who had learned the message of the bridal chain, she could not disobey the 'order'. That too might be part of serving one's husband"*

Рассказ заканчивается следующими словами:

*"True, once a man lovingly fondled that body. The Kettuthali is a token of that deep love and affection- a token indicating that woman can have only one vocation; to be the wife of a man. Did she show disrespect to her kettuthali? Who knows? Decide for yourself."* (Джордж, К.М, (2), стр.127)

Романы Такажи в основном изображает жизнь угнетенных классов. Его любовный эпос «Чеммин» «Креветки,1956» является одним из немногих произведений на индийском языке, получивших всемирное признание. Роман раскрывает тяжёлую жизнь рыбаков, которые борются за жизнь в море. Позже мировую известность принесла экранизация романа, также названная «Чеммин - 1965». «Чеммин» был переведен на девятнадцать языков мира и адаптирован как фильм в пятнадцати странах.

Вначале Такажи написал много стихов, но никогда их не публиковал. Он написал около шестисот рассказов в 21 сборнике рассказов, сорока романах и одну драму. Автобиографические отчеты были также написаны Такажи, один из которых был посвящен его детству *Энте Баалякала Кадха (My Childhood Story)*, а другой о его первой работе *Энте Вакил дживитам (Моя жизнь как юрист /My Life as a Lawyer)*.

С детства ему всегда было интересно слушать и рассказывать истории. Он с любовью вспоминает о некоторых любимых учителях, которые поощряли его талант к рассказыванию историй. И среди них был известный драматург и критик Кайниккара Кумара Пиллай, который тогда был учителем в Н.С.С.Средней школе в Каруватте

(родной край). Примером его поощрения является рассказ «Садхуккал» (Бедные), опубликованный в периодическом издании «Сарвис». Искреннее негодование и сочувствие своего учителя нашло отражение в его произведениях. В его рассказах был пафос и пылкий призыв к переменам общесива. Точно сказать, что простая творческая техника и творческий талант Такажи способствовали улучшению жанра малайяламского романа в новом мере. Чётким примером стал его самый первый сборник рассказов «Пулхумакар» (Новые Цветы). Затем вышли в свет его другие успешные романы «Пратыфалам» (Награда / The Reward), «Тоттиуде Макан» (Сын Мусорщика), «Патытапанкаджам» (Падший Лотос/ The Fallen Lotus) и «Рандидангжи» (Две меры падди) и другие. Такажи написал все свои произведения на своём родном языке Малайялам.» (Джордж, К.М(2), стр.3)

Такажи был писателем шестьдесят пять лет и первоначально пользовался популярностью в его собственном регионе. До 1940 года он был признан одним из ведущих беллетристов своего языка. Он был особенно хорош в выявлении сил, формирующих общество и умел вплетать романтический любовный эпизод в социальный контекст, который он изображал. Любовь к женщине, жажда власти и богатства непостижимо движут людьми, и богатое воображение Такажи умело использовать эти человеческие слабости. Эти замечания относятся к подавляющему большинству его рассказов и его романов. Поколение Такажи сделало литературу малайялам поистине демократичной. Это обозначает, что литература не была монополией определенного каста или класса, которые доминировали на социальной сцене. Великолепное расцветание рассказа в разнообразных красках заставило людей осознать, что литература не является прерогативой ограниченных групп.

«Такажи был лауреатом многих наград и почестей, наиболее престижными из которых являются Премия Бхаратия Джнанпитх (1984), Премия Советской Земли имени Неру (1974), Премия Сахитя Академи (1957) и Премия Ваялара Рамы Вармы (1980). Центральная Сахитя Академи Индии и Керальская Сахитя Академи Штата удостоили его высший наград, а именно своего Членства в обоих Академиях. Он был удостоен почетного звания Д.Литга. Дипломы Университета Кералы, Университета Каликута и Университета Махатма Ганди. Страна с большим уважением чествовала Такажи во время его *щатабишекам* (традиционное празднование восемьдесят четвертого дня рождения, совпадавшего с тысячей появлению полнолуния в одной жизни человека). Его участие считалось престижным для любого культурного мероприятия в Керале.» (Джордж, К.М(2), стр.1)

Знаменитый роман написан Такажи называется «Каяр». Этот эпический роман рассказывает жизнь людей в коммуналке-сообществе, разворачивающиеся на протяжении шести поколений и двух веков, с более чем тысячей персонажей, проживающих свою разнообразную жизнь, изображенную на 1028 страницах. Такажи пишет без заметок и соисем не торопится когда он пишет. Фактически, его великий опус «Каяр» был завершен за двадцать лет, прежде чем он был наконец опубликован в 1980 году. Такажи говорит: «У меня есть конкретное представление о жизни, которую я хочу изобразить. Но я сам не знаю, как будет конец Романа." Он прибавляет, что он предан простому человеку а именно его проблемы хочет изобразить.

«Как фермер, я знаю о трудностях крестьян», говорит Такажи. Даже его реальная жизнь отражает такое установление личности с его обычными повседневными персонажами. Он признаёт, что в первые годы своей жизни Такажи находился под влиянием Карла Маркса, но постепенно марксизм уступил место Гандизму. Он говорит, что хотя он перерос идеологические убеждения, но по-прежнему мыслит о философии Махатма Ганди.» ([http://self.gutenberg.org/articles/eng/Thakazhi\\_Sivasankara\\_Pillai](http://self.gutenberg.org/articles/eng/Thakazhi_Sivasankara_Pillai))

В предисловии к книге. Нараян Менон, В.К, английский переводчик романа Такажи пишет: «Я не заметил до сих пор другой индийский роман с таким масштабом как роман *Каяр*, с его широтой видения и глубоким пониманием жизни людей, которые поднимаются с достоинством даже после того, как попали в ловушку колеса времени и перемены. Фактически, именно «Каяр» побудил жюри Джнанпитха выбрать Такажи для присуждения награды.Его так же был награжден орденом «ПадмаБхушан» индийским государством» ([http://self.gutenberg.org/articles/eng/Thakazhi\\_Sivasankara\\_Pillai](http://self.gutenberg.org/articles/eng/Thakazhi_Sivasankara_Pillai))

**Заключение:** Такажи Шивашанкара Пиллай был истинным сторонником социализма. В конце своих работ он энергично изображает эксплуатацию бедных и обездоленных, именно фермеров, рабочих и женщин. На самом деле. этот писатель хочет уничтожить всю злую силу в стране, которая парализовала общую жизнь в экономическом, социальном и культурном плане. В своих работах он подчеркивает ужасные условия жизни престарелых, долгое время подвергавшихся пыткам, слоев индийского общества. И через свои работы, он призывает к протесту против бесчеловечных правил и обычаев, преобладающих в то время. Такажи надеется, что средства массовой информации будет распространять его взгляды и мысли о свободе для социальной реформы страны. Реалистичное изображение, сделанное Такажи, сильно повлияло на его современников и во многом связано с экономической, социальной и политической средой его времени. Для него реализм - видимое явление объективного мира. Он объясняет человеческое поведение с точки зрения действий и ситуаций. Он недвусмысленно выражает свое глубокое сочувствие угнетенным и эксплуатируемым, включая не только рабочих и крестьян, но также учителей, писателей, журналистов и прежде всего, женщин, которые являются жертвами порочной социальной системы.

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## «КВИР-СЕСУАЛЬНОСТИ» В ПРОИЗВЕДЕНИИ «ТРИДЦАТЬ ТРИ УРОДА» ЛИДИИ ЗИНОВЬЕВОЙ-АННИБАЛ

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## “QUEER SEXUALITY” IN THE WORK OF “THIRTY-THREE FREAKS” BY LIDIA ZINOVIEVA ANNIBAL

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**Аннотация:** Данная статья является попыткой исследовать «Квир-сексуальности» в произведении «Тридцать Три Урода» Л.З. Аннибал. Квир — Это означает люди, которые принадлежат к роду «ЛГБТ», то есть люди, которые имеют другой род, ни мужской, ни женский, а другой род. Это становится интересным проектом, поскольку мы имеем дело с работой писательницы, которая откровенно изобразила лесбийское отношение впервые в русской литературе. Она, пожалуй, самая скандальная женская художественная личность «Серебряного века». Произведение «Тридцать три урода» стало скандальным не только потому, что оно было впервые написано на эту тему, но и потому, что оно было так романтично написано о лесбийских отношениях с первого абзаца повести и продолжалось до конца, благодаря чему это произведение и писатель стали скандальными. Здесь, в этой повести, мы видим, как лесбийские отношения представлены и почему они были разрушены.

**Ключевые слова:** квир-сексуальность, лесбийская любовь, 33 художники, жертва, искусство, красота, вина.

**Annotation:** This article attempts to explore “Queer-sexuality” in the work “Thirty-three freaks” by L.Z. Annibal. Queer - This means people who belong to genus “LGBT,” that is, people of different gender, neither masculine nor feminine, but a different gender. This becomes an interesting project as we are dealing with a female author who frankly portrayed lesbian relationships for the first time in Russian literature. She is perhaps the most controversial female artistic personality of the Silver Age. This work “Thirty-three freaks” became scandalous not only because it was first written on this topic, but also because it was so romantically written about lesbian relations from the first paragraph of the story and continued until the end, made this work and the writer scandalous. Here in this story, we see how lesbian relationship is represented and why it is ruined.

**Key words:** queer-sexuality, lesbian love, 33 artists, victim, art, beauty, guilt, suicide.

Сегодняшний мир состоит не только из женщин или мужчин. Бывают люди, имеющие разные нравы, разных социальных принадлежностей. Могут быть люди разных сексуальных предпочтений. Такие люди были определены как «квир», и общество не всегда достаточно открыто, чтобы принять их. В этом обществе всегда говорили о человеке с другими сексуальными предпочтениями: что касается России, можно сказать, что молчание о людях с «квир-сексуальностью» было нарушено только в начале XX века.

Считается, что люди с «квир сексуальностью» имеют разную сексуальность, некоторые могут считать, что у них «ненормальные» сексуальные ориентация и соответствующие предпочтения. Обсуждение их проблем часто является табу в обществе. Мы используем слово «квир» (Collins) как основное слово, потому что оно более воспринимается квир-людьми, то есть Лесбиянки, Геи, Бисексуалы и Транссексуалы (ЛГБТ) (Евгений and Александр), чем другие слова, чтобы представить их.

Лидия Зиновьева-Аннибал (1866-1907) – еще назвалась «диотимой» (Диотима-божественная по красоте и мудрости женщина из знаменитого диалога Платона «Пир»). Лидия Зиновьева-Аннибал была одаренным поэтом, талантливым писателем, оригинальным драматургом и литературным критиком, не говоря уже о ее важной роли в литературном мире 1900-х годов.

Она была первой женой Вячеслова Иванова. Для Лидии, это был второй брак. Лидия Зиновьева-Аннибал была необыкновенной женщиной: «Появлялась среди гостей в необычном одеянии — ярко-белом или красном хитоне, поверх него — тога. Такую одежду она носила и в обычной жизни. Принимая гостей, она любила сидеть не в кресле или на диване, которых в квартире было предостаточно, а на ковре посреди комнаты, окруженная подушками. Вокруг нее располагались гости. Если представить себе полумрак, мерцающие в канделябрах свечи, колеблющиеся по стенам тени, может показаться, что находишься в каком-то нереальном мире, в атмосфере игры, театра, мистификации. Мистификация продолжилась и после смерти Зиновьевой-Аннибал в 1907 году: Иванов уверял всех, что в однажды во сне к нему явилась Лидия и благословила его будущий брак с Верой Шварсалон.» (Чабан Александра)

Жизнь Л. Д. Зиновьевой-Аннибал была тесно связана с «Башней» (Чабан Александра) Вячеслава Иванова. Она принимала гостей в этом литературном салоне "Башня" вместе с мужем. Ее муж был известный поэт Вячеслав Иванов. Ей пришла в голову идея написать «Тридцать три уroda» в Ивановской башне, где собрались все 33 человека, чтобы прочитать их произведения.

Мы читали только одну книгу об этом важном явлении «лесбиянства», изданную в 1906 году, т.е. работу «Тридцать три уroda». Лидия Зиновьева-Аннибал специализировалась на теме лесбийской любви. Она написала еще одно произведение «Трагический Зверинец» на лесбийскую тему, получившее не меньшую известность в дореволюционной России. «Трагический Зверинец» и «Тридцать Три Урода», впервые оба были изданы в России в 1907 году, в год ее смерти. Обе эти работы обсуждались в прессе и сделали лесбийскую любовь более известным явлением. Творчество Зиновьевой-Аннибал высоко ценилось современниками. После ее смерти поэт Александр Блок сказал: «Того, что она могла дать русской литературе, мы и вообразить не можем.» (Михайлова)

Лидия Зиновьева-Аннибал начала публиковать художественную литературу в 1889 году, и с первых же рассказов ее художественная литература была наполнена состраданием к бедным людям. Зиновьева-Аннибал была бунтаркой и диссиденткой на протяжении всей своей жизни и в своей работе. Она была известна своей напряженностью и эксцентричностью. В разных жанрах, она создала пьесы-символисты, такие как «Кольца» (1904) и «Певчий осел», повесть «Тридцать Три Урода» (1907), «Трагический Зверинец» (1907) и другие рассказы, многие из которых были опубликованы только посмертно в сборнике «Нет!» (1918). Зиновьева-Аннибал, пожалуй, наиболее известна благодаря «Тридцати Три Уродам», которая является первой работой русской литературы, в которой открыто изображается тема лесбиянства, трагическом свете.

Зиновьева Аннивал писала в этой повести о необычной любви женщин, где одна известная сильная женщина, как мужчина, а другая послушная женщина, как женщина, влюблялись друг в друга. Эта повесть была настолько насыщенной и романтической, что писательница, Зиновьева-Аннибал сама была уверена, что это произведение будет скандальным.

Не известно точно, почему Зиновьева-Аннибал была уверена, что её повесть будет скандальной, дело в том, что это случилось лишь после публикации повести. Так, произведение оскорбляет общественную нравственность и развращает нравы, поэтому

«Тридцать Три Урода», были фактически арестованы. Перед тем, как выпустить их типография послала в цензуру и получила разрешение, а через четыре дня после опубликования получила срочный приказ задержать все печатание. (Leyden)

Если говорится, что арест произведения играет важную роль в приобретении известности этой повести — это не гипербола. Как только стало известно, что повесть была арестована, информация об этом была тотчас распространена среди общественности. Об этом журналисты писали практически во всех журналах и газетах. Таким образом, можно смело утверждать, что эта скандальная история в значительной степени способствовала реализации книги. (Leyden)

Это скандал тоже дал критиками подавать отзывы о книге, на котором они все были на единодушном отрицательном отзыве.

Вышедшая в свет в 1907 году, повесть (в форме дневника) была встречена резкой критикой со стороны символистов, которые нашли в ней отражение моды на острую тему вместе с отсутствием самостоятельного художественного значения. Острота темы была замечена также цензурой, арестовавшей первое издание. Хотя критики оценили произведения отрицательно, оно выдержало три издания в течение 1907 года, что говорит о популярности среди читателей. Популярность вызвана прежде всего сенсационным сюжетом: повесть является первым произведением на тему лесбийской любви в русской литературе.

О повести многие критики, историки, писатели, высказали свое мнение. Писатель и историк, Г. Новополин, ««Специализировавшийся на изучении «Порнографического элемента в русской литературе», утверждал, что ни одна писательница до Зиновьевой-Аннибал не падала так низко, «Смакуя половую извращенность», провозглашая «Культ лесбосской любви», проповедуя «Утонченный разврат.»» (Михайлова)

Эта повесть повествует о романтических отношениях двух женщин, которые были влюблены и жили вместе. Повесть «Тридцать Три Урода» Лидии Зиновьевой-Аннибал представляет собой дневниковые записи рассказчицы, которая не раскрывает свое имя в целой повести (начинающей актрисы). Главным содержанием «Повести» является изображение любовной интриги двух женщин — рассказчицы и известной актрисы, которую зовут Вера. Спокойная рассказчица стала любовницей Веры за несколько дней до свадьбы рассказчицы с бывшим любовником Веры. Большинство эпизодов этой повести произошли в пространстве квартиры героини Веры, которая жила в ней с новой любовницей, рассказчицей. Они стремились жить счастливо с неуверенностями Веры. Самовлюбленность и неуверенность Веры разрушает их отношение.

В кульминации повести Вера позволила тридцати трем художникам нарисовать рассказчицу. Приготовленные картины (Уроды) приносят разочарование всем, так как не соответствуют оригиналу. Каждая из женщин делает свой вывод: рассказчица отреагировала на ситуацию и покинула Веру. В конце концов, рассказчица стала любовницей одного из художников. Вера покончила жизнь самоубийством.

В этой повести тесно переплелись темы красоты, любви, вины, творчества, искупления, и жертвенности.

Вера - одна из главных героинь повести. Она вышла замуж по настаиванию матери. Ее муж был хорош, но он умер после двух лет их совместной жизни, а ее девочка, дочь тоже умерла вскоре после смерти мужа. Она оплакивала мужа и ребенка.

*«Она имела ребенка и мужа.....Осталась дочь двух месяцев и умерла вскоре». (Зиновьева-Аннибал)*

И она была в горе, что ее семья прекратила своё существование. У Веры была материнская привязанность, которую мать обычно испытывает к своим детям. В этот момент своей жизни она познакомилась со старой актрисой. Старушка помогла Вере в кризисе ее жизни и подтолкнула ее стать актрисой. Другими словами, мы согласны со Светланой Сомовой в том, что «Веру привела в театр одна старая актриса, давшая, таким образом, ее безумному, безутешному горю матери маску и иступление. Источник великого искусства Веры – безумное горе, в театре обретшее форму-маску, позволившую Вере поднять свое горе до иступления, т.е. именно до выхода за пределы границ сознания индивидуального я. С этим связан и мотив безусловных глаз Веры: безусловное – само бытие, то, что не нуждается в объяснениях и конкретных жизненных обоснованиях. Таким образом, в трагической маске Вера живет в совершенно ином масштабе и иной интенсивности чувства и мысли, – в состоянии, в котором высказывает себя уже сама трагическая природа бытия человека.» (Сомова)

Вера прославилась с помощью старой актрисы. По сюжету она вскоре стала самой популярной актрисой, так как никто никогда не достиг такой популярности.

*«Она удивительная актриса. Она такая, каких не было, нет и не будет».*  
(Зиновьева-Аннибал)

Впоследствии Вера встречается с начинающей актрисой, рассказчицей повести. Она самая красивая, моложе Веры. Вера сделала рассказчицу своей любовницей перед ее свадьбой. Жених рассказчицы был бывшим любовником Веры. Рассказчица пошла в квартиру Веры. Где Вера всю ночь говорила о своих беспокойстве, одиночестве и грусти. Утром рассказчица раскаивалась, что почему она пошла к Вере и в то же время утверждала, что она скучает по Вере. Думая о своём предстоящем браке, она сожалела. Но хотела выполнять свои желания и настоящего счастья, которые она нашла только с Верой. Тем не менее Вера сказала рассказчицу, чтобы оставить всех, и она должна думать о себе. Вера обещала научить ее всему, потому что она сама красива, пообещала, что побыть с Верой рассказчицей тоже будет красиво. Можно сказать, что Вера сказала это все, потому что, она чувствовала себя одинокой и эти выражения тревоги и одиночества Веры отразились на ее лице. Это было ясно видно, как сильно она ее хочет.

*«Говорила голосом неприятным в комнате, не на сцене, глухим и неровным, некрасивым: - Ты должна их покинуть. Ты не их Я тебя научу самой себе. Я тебя сделаю прекрасной, потому что я прекрасна. Со мною ты будешь богиней...Она сжимала мою руку жестко, и я не знала: прекрасно ли ее много страдавшее лицо, заплаканное и со злым огнем? й.....заплаканное и со злым огнем?»*  
(Зиновьева-Аннибал)

Рассказчица тоже главная героиня повести. В повести она все рассказывает от первого лица. Нигде в своих дневниках она не раскрывает своё имя читателям. Мать и отец рассказчицы (начинающей актрисы) умерли. Ее мать умерла при ее рождении, так же она никогда не встречалась со своим отцом, потому что он оставил ее мать после беременности. Ее отец не мог быть ни ее отцом, и ни мужем ее матери.

Она жила со своей бабушкой. Бабушка считала, что перед браком рассказчица должна знать о своих родителях. Она также боялась, перед тем как сказать ей правду о родителях, но рассказчица, узнав правду, нисколько не удивилась, ничего не изменилось в ней и теперь это не имеет никакого значения для нее. Вообще, иногда в повести она вспоминала свою мать, но не могла вспомнить ее, потому что она никогда не видела свою мать, у нее в голове нет образа матери.

Она считает, что ее отец был слабохарактерным и поэтому оставил ее мать одну, чтобы страдать с ее не рожденным ребенком. Все, что он сделал с ее матерью, было



несправедливым и трагичным. Он убежал от своих обязанностей. Он был слабохарактерным человеком, который не мог взять на себя ответственность семьи.

*«Теперь, вот сегодня утром, я больше думала, чем тогда ночью. И не понимала: зачем этот расслабленный женился на моей матери, зачем искусно развращал ее (так сказала мне бабушка), свел с другим в каком-то ресторане, отослал потом к бабушке беременную и развелся на основании своей расслабленности?»* (Зиновьева-Аннибал)

Она считала своего отца бесполезным и говорит:

*«Скоро все же надоело думать об этом неразумном человеке». (Зиновьева-Аннибал)*

Когда она встретила известную актрису Верой, она была очарована её красотой и влюбилась в Веру. Она оставила своего жениха ради неё, и они начали жить вместе.

### **Отношения между рассказчицей и Верой**

Отношения между этими двумя женщинами совершенно не счастливые с самого начала. Эти необычные и уникальные отношения не длились долго. В повести рассказчица послушна и имеет типичные ориентированные женские черты. В качестве примера, на место свадьбы Вера что-то шептала на ухо жениху рассказчицы (Бывшей любовник Веры), он внезапно оттолкнул рассказчицу рукой. А затем Вера привела рассказчицу в ее квартиру, и в этой полной сцене рассказчица не просила Веру ни о чем. Далее в повести, Вера любит рассказчицу всю ночь и просит, чтобы рассказчица вернулась к ней снова.

*«Она сказала ему какие-то быстрые слова. Он дрожал весь и выронил из-под локтя мою руку. Вера схватила мою руку жестко и повела... никогда не думала». (Зиновьева-Аннибал)*

В комнате Веры не было мебели, потому что Вера сказала: *«Дикие сидят только лежать красиво и достойно тела. Она постлала ковры на матрацы вдоль стен, забросала их подушками...»* (Аннибал З.) Можно сказать, что Вера хотела, чтобы она всегда лежала на кровати. И доминировала как мужчина. Вера имеет типичные ориентированные мужские черты, она ведет себя как традиционные мужчины. Она хочет, чтобы рассказчица была рабыней, традиционной женщиной и ребенком, как показывает характеристика Веры. И сама рассказчица приняла в повести, как здесь:

*«Я ребенок полумальчик, полудевочка в начинающихся округлениях и забытых ещедетством, вытянутых, худощавых линиях ног и рук. Вера не устаёт это повторять. Вера смешна и великолепна». (Зиновьева-Аннибал)*

Практически, рассказчица, она пассивная женщина в своих отношениях, она в любой ситуации не противостоит Вере во всей повести. В другом примере, ей совсем не нравился цветок розы, но, когда Вера подарила ей розу, она принимала цветок, ничего не говоря Вере о своём собственном желании. Она просто повиновалась ей и всегда делала то, что Вера хотела. У рассказчицы были только те вещи, которые подарила ей Вера. Она ничего не требовала, хотя она была не довольна ими. Она находилась в кадре полностью идеальной женщины, которая ничего не отвергает для своей партнерши Веры, даже когда речь идет о гордости, самоуважении или независимости.

*«В моей комнате во все окно стоит камелия... Или просто те восковые кусты мои — были камелии?»* (Зиновьева-Аннибал)

### **Причины разрушения отношений Веры и рассказчицы**

(А) Страх Веры потерять свою любовь т. е. рассказчицу:

В повести Вера боялась от того факта, что рассказчица может оставить ее, она боялась потерять рассказчицу. Рассказчица понимает эту неуверенность, но не могла разрешить эту проблему. Кроме того, как во многих случаях этой повести продолжается ее страх, чтобы потерять рассказчицу. В качестве примера, однажды мужчина Собуров (Друг Веры) пришел в ее квартиру, и он просил у рассказчицы камелию. Она дала ему цветок камелии. Она рассказала Вере о приезде Сурова в ее отсутствие и о том, что, по его просьбе, она дала Собурову цветок камелии, и вдруг Вера сердилась на рассказчицу. Вера била ее. Она сильно ранила себя тоже. Рассказчица чувствовала отвращение и жалость к ней. Более того в полночь Вера сидела в прозрачной рубашке и в нелепой позе, наклонив голову. Рассказчица плакала, но Вере не было жалко. Рассказчица грустила и считала, что Вера любит ее? почему бы не попросить прощения? Она волнуется, уйти ли рассказчица от нее?

*«Сегодня приходил Сабуров без Веры. Просил у меня камелию... Так разве я уйду? Пусть она бьет. Я же ее люблю».* (Зиновьева-Аннибал)

В течение повести, Вера иногда вела себя странно, грустно. Такое поведение Веры заставило осознать, рассказчицы что их отношение стало тюрьмой и пришло к концу. Ей казалось, что весь мир счастлив, кроме ее. Положение своего отношения она объясняет такими словами:

*«Но все изменяется, и ты состаришься. Сначала лицо состарится. Дальше будет жить тело. Старое лицо будет издевательством над молодым телом. Потом завялое тело над ядущими еланиями.*

*Это как мертвый свет уже закатившегося солнца, который с высоких облаков отражается в воде... бессильный, обманный».* (Зиновьева-Аннибал)

(Б) Поведение рассказчицы до писаний портрета:

Рассказчица согласна, чтобы рисовали ее картину ради Веры, даже она не готова, вот затем чувствовала себя неловко. Это мы понимаем от ее поведения, когда она перемеряла платья одно за другим, потому что она видит себя глазами художников-мужчин:

*«Как я кокетничала дома вчера утром! Я долго стояла перед зеркалом (Мы объяснили зеркала, как представлено в работе: зеркало творческого субъекта, обладающего атрибутами физической красоты и определенными психическими качествами, неудовлетворенность и беспокойство стоять голым перед мужчиной-художником.) и примеряла один цвет за другим. Скалывала складки с учеными причудами. Вера сначала глядела, потом ушла, вдруг рассердившись».* (Зиновьева-Аннибал) Но Вера говорила шепотом: *«Ты глупа и не понимаешь, что этого всего не нужно».* (Зиновьева-Аннибал)

(В) Поведение рассказчицы за писанием портрета:

Так, когда тридцать три художника по требованию Веры рисовали рассказчицу на холстах, она видела себя уродливой в глазах мужчин, потому что художники-мужчины не могли точно передать ее образ. Они подготовили тридцать три уродливые картинки в соответствии с рассказчиком. Каждый художник относился к ней, как она к Вере, но по-своему, каждый из тридцати трех рисовал свою любовницу или свою королеву, и девушке трудно различить их - где любовницы, где королева? (Зиновьева-Аннибал) Относительно, рассказчица воспринимала эти картины как чувство потери идентичности, из-за этого она не ценила искусство, а считала себя жертвой. Для нее, наверное, духовные ценности важнее картинок. Таким образом, для нее искусство может быть частью жизни, но жизнь не может быть жертвой ради искусства. Она сказала, смотря на такие же свои картины:

*«Я? Это я? Это я? Которую мы с ней любили?*

*Эта? Эта? Эта?..*

*Я перебежала от одного холста к другому по всей мастерской.*

*Со всех сторон, как сидели вокруг меня они, писавшие, я видела ту себя. Или я не знала себя сзади? Сбоку? В три четверти? В четверть? И прямо в лицо... тоже не знала?*

*Это другие.*

*Не наши.*

*Их. Их. Их.*

*Просто их. Не наша красота, не Верина.*

*Тридцать три уroda. Тридцать три уroda.*

*И все я. И все не я». (Зиновьева-Аннибал)*

Итак, Художники сделали то, чего боялась Вера, – пустили девушку в жизнь, – с чем Вера не хотела мириться. Вера преследовала ее в течении повести, все же она вышла из своих лесбиянских отношений с Верой, как традиционных, но сильных женщин и вступила в гетеросексуальные отношения, приняв предложение одного из художников мужского пола. Она стала его любовницей. После прочтения книги кажется, что Вера не знала, что ее поступок, чтобы сделать своей любовницей знаменитым, был актом предательства и вины для нее. В конце повести, рассказчица покинула любовницу Веру. Вера не смогла принять эту перемену и покончила жизнь самоубийством, приняв яд:

*«Вера отравилась.*

*Что сделать мне? Как убить себя? Или не убит П ь?*

*Может быть, привыкну и к этому?*

*Вера боялась привычки и измены». (Зиновьева-Аннибал)*

(Г) Любовник Веры и жених рассказчицы:

Рассказчица оставила своего жениха, потому что она каким-то образом поняла, что она любит Веру и вместе с Верой она будет счастлива. Оставляя своего жениха, она была уверена, что никогда не пожалет о своем решении быть с Верой.

*«утром знала, что никогда не пожалею, что отказала жениху.....Бабушка оказалась гордою...» (Зиновьева-Аннибал)*

Относительно, в ходе повести один раз приходил бывший жених рассказчицы, и бывший любовник Веры в квартиру. Он снова вернулся к Вере ради любви. Он плакал и сказал, что забудет рассказчицу. Вера отказалась от его предложения. На следующий день, когда она добралась до места, где покончил жизнь самоубийством ее бывший возлюбленный. Она приняла его смерть на себя. *«А сегодня мы узнали, что он застрелился. Вера поражена и говорит, что на ней его смерть.» (Зиновьева-Аннибал)* Она чувствовала себя виноватой. Доброта ее бывшего парня заставляет ее вспомнить хорошее время с ним, хотя она в однополых отношениях.

По сути, говоря о нем, Вера на мгновение забыла, что она разговаривает с рассказчицей, которая так же любит ее, как тот покойник. Она сжалась, почему вчера она не приняла его предложение, поэтому она говорит:

*«А он был ужасно искренен и беспомощен вчера. Впрочем, и раньше всегда. Я за то его любила. И с ним чувствовала себя доброй, сильной и большой. Он такой*

*хорошенький, круглолицый и розовенький. Но у него, при каждом моем взгляде на него, начинали биться веки по слишком ярким глазкам — как бабочки.»*  
(Зиновьева-Аннибал)

Таким образом, рассказчица согласилась с Верой и поняла, почему ее бабушка хотела, чтобы рассказчица вышла замуж за другого. Она тоже думала о том, что как он был смелым, кто решил жениться на женщине, которая отличается от других. Она поняла, что

*«Он был смелый, он был настоящий, почти как Вера, хотя не умен, как она, и без таланта. Но тогда мне казалось, что пришла моя пора испытать жизнь женщины... Теперь же не ищущи иной жизни, кроме этой. Вера дала мне больше, нежели я надеялась получить, и жду будущего без нетерпения...»* (Зиновьева-Аннибал)

Иногда в повести, Вера так или иначе связана с телесной красотой рассказчицы - страстью, а не духовностью, из-за которой рассказчица чувствовала себя обманутой в конце дневника.

**Вывод:** благодаря пародийным бракам и разорванным отношениям, а также качествам отца рассказчицы, с обеих женских сторон мужчины показаны как субъекты слабой личности. И параллельно показано, патриархальное поведение мужчины к женщинам через лицо Веры.

Обе женщины и Вера, и рассказчица в повести кажутся неидеальной парой с самого начала дневника. У них были грустные и позорные отношения. Молчание рассказчицы тоже было одной из разных причин разрушения их отношений. Она всегда молчала в любой ситуации. Она никогда не реагировала против Веры. Она даже не отказала Вере в ее ненужных и нелогичных требованиях. Это указывает на неравные и нездоровые отношения между ними, потому что для здоровых отношений оба партнера должны иметь равные права и уважение друг к другу.

В большинстве случаев о лесбийских парах рассказывают настолько негативно, что невозможно найти в ней подтверждение идей о том, что любовь к своему полу могла бы решить проблемы гендерного порядка. Кроме того, любовные отношения между героями содержат слишком много негатива (Подчинение, опосредованные, эгоизм веры против послушной любовницы).

Как известно, что «Красота спасает мир» как в романе «Идиот» Достоевский написал. Это не всегда бывает, так мы видим в повести. Красота стала причиной уничтожения жизни обеих женщин. Вера любит красоту рассказчицы, поэтому хотела нарисовать ее картину на холсте, чтобы сделать ее известной. Но получается по-другому это не только делает рассказчицу известной, как показано в повести, а разрушает ее жизнь. В повести для Веры искусство важнее жизни, а рассказчица не считала так, поэтому она ушла от Веры. В конце, Вера чувствовала себя виновной и за рассказчицу, и за смерть своего любовника, поэтому кончает свою жизнь самоубийством.

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# СРАВНИТЕЛЬНОЕ ИЗУЧЕНИЕ РАССКАЗОВ ГОРЬКОГО И ПРЕМЧАНДА

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## COMPARATIVE STUDY OF SHORT STORIES OF GORKY AND PREMCHAND

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***Аннотация:** Речь в этой статье пойдет о рассказах Горького и Премчанда. Хотя Мунши Премчанд и Максим Горький принадлежат разным культурам, в их творчестве есть элементы родства. И их рассказах появляются одни и те же мотивы, у них общая тематика и проблематика. Иногда двух писателей объединяет метод изображения жизни. Данная статья анализирует рассказы двух писателей с точки зрения их художественных особенностей.*

***Ключевые слова:** Рассказ, Премчанд, Горький, художественные особенности*

***Abstract:** The present article deals with the short-stories of Premchand and Gorky. Though the two authors belong to two different cultures, there are a number of similar elements in their works. Their short-stories have similar motifs and themes. Sometimes the artistic methods used by the two authors to portray life also coincide. This article is a comparative study of the short-stories of Premchand and Gorky from the point of view of their art and craft.*

***Keywords:** Short-stories, Premchand, Gorky, artistic peculiarities*

Мунши Премчанд и Максим Горький являются двумя крупнейшими литераторами двух различных культур. Общественно политическое положение Горьковской России и Индии Премчанда носят сходные элементы. Следовательно, произведения Премчанда и Горького отражает аналогичную тематику и проблематику. Хотя между ними не существовало непосредственного общения, Премчанд был хорошо знаком с художественным методом Горького, с его творческой манерой.

Это было время, когда в России готовили строить социализм под руководством рабочего класса. Социалистическая идея, Октябрьская Революция, идея равенство людей сильно повлияли на индийского народа, который тогда еще боролся против колониальной власти, боролся за освобождение страны, за ее независимость. Премчанд как прогрессивный писатель своей эпохи не смог стоять в стороне. Так как Горький был символом Октябрьской Революции, так как в его произведениях была выражена эта новая идея, открывшая качественно новую дорогу для человека, многие индийские писатели в том числе и Премчанд испытывал влияние Горького.

Премчанд в начале своей литературной жизни писал фантастические произведения на языке Урду. На языке Хинди его первые рассказы из сборника «*Созе Ватан*» («Любовь к родине») включают в себе рассказы как «*Панч Пармешвар*», которые являются событийными произведениями. В этих рассказах прямые авторские слова очень часто вмешивают в движение сюжетного действия. Автор сам объясняет характер своих героев, дает свою оценку и объясняет, почему возник данный конфликт. Герои этих рассказов хотя типичные, но их поступки очень часто выступают исключительно и воплощают в себе высшие нравственно- эстетические идеалы. Рассказы кончаются нравоучением; и кажется, что автор хотя ставит реальные проблемы из жизни, но предлагает нереальные

решения этих вопросов. Автор заставляет читателя смотреть на жизнь глазами повествователя. Герои в рассказах представляют себе перед читателями как проповедниками авторского идеала, т.е. они выражают голос автора. Таким образом, эти рассказы часто носят субъективный характер, и нарушают принцип объективного изображения жизни в реалистической литературе.

И так, в начале своей творческой жизни, Горький писал романтические или революционно-романтические произведения как «Макар Чудра», «Старуха Изергиль», в которых описание картин, пейзажа и портрета персонажа не только очень длинное и монотонное, но и носит романтический оттенок. Хотя автор поражает читателя своими языковыми особенностями (употреблением метафора, сравнений, олицетворения, пословиц и поговорок, фразеологизмов, диалектов, жаргонов и богатым словарным запасом), но, присутствие метафор, сравнений и широкое употребление очень много определений нарушает закон краткости малого эпического жанра. Обычно в этих произведениях отсутствуют три единства малого эпического жанра – единство времени, единство места и единство действия.

Позиция персонажей в ранних романтических рассказах Горького совпадает с позицией персонажей в ранних рассказах Премчанда тем, что герои проповедают авторские идеалы своими высказываниями и поступками. Речь повествователя является главным средством раскрытия характера персонажи в ранних рассказах обоих писателей. В рассказах раннего Премчанда (как «*Намак ка дорога*», «*Панч Пармешвар*», «*Баре гхар ки бетти*» и т.д.) и в романтических рассказах Горького изображается проблематика человеческой психологии. Однако, эти писатели отличаются друг от друга тем, что в рассказах Премчанда вопрос о психологии носит моралистическую окраску, когда у Горького он приобретает революционно-романтический оттенок.

Рассказы Премчанда двадцатых годов свидетельствуют о дальнейшем развитии мировоззрения и творческих исканий писателя. В рассказах этого периода рисуется широкая картина индийской народной жизни, картина жизни и борьбы простых людей в колониальной стране. Если в ранних рассказах, авторский идеал занимает центральное место, то теперь актуальная социальная проблема, волнующая писателя находится в центре внимания. Рассказы двадцатых годов изображают страдания простых людей, горе, печаль, их беспомощность в феодально-буржуазном обществе колониальной Индии. Для Премчанда воспитательная роль литературы и литератора имеет большое значение. Вера Премчанда в улучшение жизни своих людей была так сильна, что даже при отражении реальной жизни он не смог остаться от выражения своего идеала, от своей мечты. Следовательно, в этих рассказах (как «*Будхи каки*», «*Атмарам*», «*Алгежа*» и т.д.) часто наблюдается смещение реализма и проповедничества. В результате этого смещения возникает новый художественный метод – идеалистический реализм.

В этот же период Премчанд параллельно пишет некоторые рассказы, в которых отсутствует авторский идеализм, например :- «*Сава сер генху*», «*Муктимарг*», «*Пус ки рат*» и т.д. Таким образом, Рассказы Премчанда двадцатых годов имеют переходный характер - переход Премчанда от идеалистического реализма к критическому реализму. Это было время когда Премчанд познакомился с произведениями Толстого, Чехова, Горького и других реалистических писателей Европы, которые влияли на его мировоззрение и художественный метод изображения реальной жизни. Среди этих писателей творчество Горького особо привлекало Премчанда, как раз в его рассказах Премчанд увидел присутствие тех вопросов и конфликтов, которые волновали его. Близкое знакомство Премчанда с произведениями Горького повлияло на художественный метод и стиль зрелого Премчанда. Рассказы Премчанда тридцатых годов утверждают это влияние.

Если рассказы Премчанда свидетельствуют о переходе автора от романтизма к идеалистическому реализму и потом от идеалистического реализма к критическому реализму, то рассказы Горького показывают переход автора от революционного романтизма к критическому реализму и от критического реализма к социалистическому реализму, который он создал сам.

В рассказах Премчанда и Горького субъективная идея автора и объективная идея произведения часто совпадают то есть нет противоречия между ними. Даже, когда нет совпадения авторской идеи и идеи главного героя, автор в конце текста добавляет свою идею и выражает свою позицию иногда прямо, иногда косвенно. Легко определить авторскую позицию если в произведении существует идеологический герой т.е. тот персонаж, который выражает авторскую идеологию. Герой, в данном случае, произносит авторские слова. Существуют некоторые рассказы Премчанда, в которых есть положительные или идеологические герои, например: - «Мэку», «Джулули», «До бэло ки катха», и т.д. У Горького также есть идеологические герои как Ларра, Данко, Радда и т.д.

Сюжеты рассказов зрелого Премчанда, и их персонажи являются типичными. Они эффективно выражают стремление простого народа, показывают его роль и также роль интеллигенции и буржуазии в индийском национальном освободительном движении, в борьбе индийского народа за социальное равенство и человеческие права. Премчанд также ищет те события, которые являются типичными и представительными в индийском феодально-буржуазном обществе и помогли бы ему в анализе психологии разных действующих лиц различных классов разоблачая то зло и недостатки общества, которые являются причиной эксплуатации и мучения бедных людей простого индийского народа. С другой стороны Горький бродил по своей стране и встречался с разными людьми рабочего класса. Горький был хорошо знаком с жизнью рабочих людей, так как он сам работал в качестве простого рабочего человека на различных местах России. Это дало ему резкую возможность близко увидеть жизнь своего народа. Этот богатый опыт нашел прекрасное отражение в произведениях Горького. В них были изображены жизнь этих людей, их страдание и горе в буржуазном устрое. Не удивительно, что его рассказы часто занимают психологическим анализом простого рабочего класса. Рассказы как «Челкаш», «Малва», «Коновалов», «Мой спутник», «Болесь», «Супруги орловы» и другие также в основном опираются на анализ внутреннего мира персонажей. Отсутствие положительных героев является характеристикой чертой этих рассказов (исключая «Мой спутник», где повествователь является положительным персонажем). Отсутствие положительных мотивов и персонажей в этих произведениях реализма объясняется тем, что жизнь простых людей (или жизнь рабочего класса) в капиталистическом обществе такая сложная, что все положительные качества исчезают из них. Один из персонажей в рассказе «На соли» Матвей объясняет это явление такими словами: - «... мы что ж? Мы ведь, коли по совести говорит, ничего такого... мы, брат, понимаем что обидели тебя; но только разве это верно, коли рассудить правильно? Совсем, брат наверно. Поэтому главная причина – жизнь! Какая жизнь наша? Каторжная! Тачка – шестнадцать пуд, рапа, а день – полтина! Али этого мало, чтобы озвереть? Работаешь, работаешь, заработок пропьешь – опять работаешь! Вот и все и как готов с пять проживаешь этим манером, так и того....облик человеческий и утратишь, - зверюга, дай шабаш! Мы, брат, самый себя еще больней обижаем, чем тебя, а мы все же ведь друг друга знаем, ты же чужой человек.... Чего тебя жалеть – то?.....» (Горький, 104)

У Горького авторская идея часто выражается при помощи идеологического героя как в рассказе «Песня о Соколе», «Песня о Буревестнике», «Человек», «Рождение человека» и в других рассказах социалистического реализма. Авторская идея также выражается в его реалистических рассказах через критику, через разоблачение существующего порядка, из-за которого страдает и мучится бедный человек в капиталистическом строе.



Отсутствие положительного начала в характере действующих лиц, их дегуманизация являются еще одним приемом, который применяется писателем для выражения авторской идеи. Например «Двадцать шесть и одна», «На соли», «Вывод» и т.д.

Такой художественный прием отрицания отрицания для раскрытия авторской идеи и главной идеи мы также наблюдаем в рассказах Премчанда. Главная идея и авторская идея в его рассказах идеалистического реализма отличаются друг от друга. Если главная идея в таких рассказах выражается критикой существующего, то авторская идея – через авторский идеал. Но, такая разница между авторской идеей и главной идеей рассказа отсутствуют в его идеалистических произведениях (как «*Ланч пармешвар*», «*Дхоха*» и т.д.). Если в идеалистических рассказах идея автора и идея текста раскрываются через утверждение, то в реалистических рассказах это делается через отрицание.

Структура рассказов Премчанда, созданных в тридцатые годы (и также в конце двадцатых годов), постепенно усложняется. В это время, Премчанд выработал свой метод изображения действительности в критическом духе. Он нашел метод бессюжетного изображения действительного мира. Впервые в истории литературы на языке Хинди Безфабульные рассказы появляются в творчестве Премчанда. В этом отношении Премчанд является новатором. Многие писатели Хинди и Урду потом шагали по этой дорожке применяя метод Премчанда. Теперь, Премчанд не останавливается на поверхностной описании внешних фактов реальной жизни, а пытается найти причины и их появления в взаимоотношениях людей и классов, глубоко анализируя психологию типичных образов из реальной жизни. Сюжетное действие, сохраняя реалистическую основу рассказа служит средством раскрытия психологии персонажей. Автор мастерски применяет все свои художественные приемы и средства для раскрытия внутреннего мира действующих лиц. В рассказах тридцатых годов Премчанд не только проводит психологический анализ своих героев, но и косвенно указывает на то зло, которое является причиной дегуманизации, страдания и эксплуатации простых людей. Эти качества также присутствуют в реалистических рассказах Горького.

В центре композиции реалистических рассказов молодого Горького и зрелого Премчанда лежит определенное настроение, которое возникает из-за противоречия человеческой души. В них отражается субъективный мир героев их переживания, чувства, желания, стремления и т.д. Тот и другой писатель, через эти противоречия, часто указывает на горькую жизненную правду. Отличительными чертами рассказов зрелого Премчанда (как «*Наша*», «*Кафан*», «*Мантра*», «*Вешя*», «*Мановритти*», «*Гулли-Данда*», «*Кусум*», «*Идгах*» и т.д.) являются глубокий анализ взаимоотношений, показ классового антагонизма индийского общества, смелая и беспощадная критика всех видов эксплуатации и угнетения. Этот метод изображения реальности также широко применяется в рассказах Горького реалистического направления.

Развитие сюжетного действия в рассказах зрелого Премчанда и в реалистических рассказах молодого Горького всегда помогают нам в психологическом анализе героев, и нигде не кажется, что автор не разрешает своим персонажам выступать свободно. Персонажи в рассказах самостоятельно действуют, и их поступки, поведения, высказывания раскрывают их характер без вмешательства со стороны писателя или повествователя. Другими словами, автор дает большую свободу своим персонажам. Прямое указание на историю проблематики и причину его возникновения также отсутствует.

Однако, в рассказах Горького повествователь очень часто сам описывает внешний вид своих героев, хотя персонажи сами раскрывают свой внутренний мир своими поступками, поведением, монологом, диалогом и т.д. Детальное описание внешних черт лиц также присутствует в ранних рассказах Премчанда и в некоторых его рассказах

двадцатых годов. Повествователь в рассказах Горького и Премчанда играет значительную роль в развитии сюжетного действия. Повествование в произведениях обоих писателей, хотя реалистическое, но не очень объективное. Авторский голос в рассказах того и другого автора легко определяется. Авторская позиция также откровенно выражается в них. Однако, авторский голос в реалистических рассказах Премчанда реже слышится чем в его других рассказах.

Обычно сюжетные элементы в рассказах обоих писателей находятся на хронологическом порядке. Развязка в ранних рассказах Премчанда является искусственной, так как автор в конце рассказов пытается решить проблематику на основе своего идеала. Очень часто рассказы зрелого Премчанда («*Кафан*» (1935), «*Дух ка дам*» (1934), «*Тхакур ка куан*» (1932), «*Садгати*» (1931), «*Муфт ка йаши*» (1934) и т.д.) носят открытый финал. Развязка в реалистических рассказах Горького также неискusstvenная. Кажется, что оба писатели верят, что дело писателя – это правдивое изображение реальной жизни, жизнь, как она есть.

Описание природы в произведениях Премчанда и Горького занимает очень важное место. Оно как художественное средство применяется по разным причинам - иногда для выражения настроения героев (например - «*Идгах*»), иногда для отражения напряженной борьбы между природой и человеком (например – «*Старуха Изергиль*», «*На соли*», «*Пус ки рат*»), иногда как способ соединения разных эпизодов рассказа (например: «*Старуха Изергиль*»). Художественная деталь в произведениях Горького и зрелого Премчанда также занимает весьма важное место в композиции рассказов, раскрытии тематики и идеи произведения и в усилении художественного эффекта. Например, каждая деталь в рассказе «*Вывод*» Горького является художественно целесообразной и увеличивает эффект повествования. Подробные описания отца и сына в рассказе «*Кафан*» Премчанда также поражают читателя своей выразительностью, и создает базу для возникновения главного конфликта.

Так же, как у Горького, для Премчанда литература является важным средством пробуждения народной массы. Горький выбирает своих героев из рабочего класса, класс, который играет решающую роль в борьбе против буржуазного строя. А, герои Премчанда в основном являются бедными крестьянами. Премчанд как настоящий реалист заметил и прекрасно показал движение деревенского населения в город. Он мастерски описывает, каким образом крестьяне стали рабочими и как они расширяли состав рабочего класса («*Муктимарг*», «*Пус ки рат*», «*Сава сер генху*» и т.д.).

Хотя, Премчанд и Горький принадлежат к двум различным культурам, их творчество, их рассказы выражают одинаковые мотивы и одинаковые проблемы и тематики. Их иногда объединяют аналогичный метод изображения жизни. Как мы знаем Горький был певцом Октябрьской Революции, все идеи Социалистической Революции нашли отражение в творчестве Горького, в том числе и в его рассказах. Идея равенства людей, протест против всякой эксплуатации, против антигуманного отношения к маленькому человеку и также сочувствие к этому угнетенному и оскорбленному существу в рассказах Горького особо привлекали Премчанда и сблизили его с Горьким, который бесспорно является основоположником социалистического реализма. Оба писатели, как будто в поисках наилучшего художественного метода изображения действительности, метод, который показал бы жизнь простых, угнетенных и оскорбленных людей, показал бы реальные причины их страдания и беспомощного положения в капиталистическом обществе. Горький и Премчанд не только это показали, но и пошли еще дальше, они объяснили и причины их страдания и мучений, и призывали их к борьбе против эксплуатации человека человеком, против всякой несправедливости и зла, вызвали к построению нового общества более гуманного, более человеческого. В этом отношении оба писатели являются новаторами. Оценивая новаторство Премчанда известный русский писатель XX

века Илья Эренбург писал: «Писатель Премчанд на десять с лишним лет был моложе Максима Горького, которого он ценил и любил. Новеллы Премчанда правдивы, порой трогательны, порой жестоки и всегда человечны. Этот писатель и по своим политическим убеждениям и по своей художественной манере – подлинный новатор». (Эренбург, 39)

Лучшие рассказы и того и другого писателя (как «Кафан» Премчанда, «Двадцать шесть и одна» Горького) являются бессюжетными рассказами, где анализируются даже мельчайшие психологические детали в качестве художественного средства разоблачения общественных пороков, которые заставляют человека мучиться в своей враждебной среде. В этом отношении и Горький и Премчанд являются крупными мастерами психологического анализа своих персонажей и показывают динамичность их душевного состояния.

Авторский голос в рассказах обеих писателей звучит очень громко и четко, поэтому не трудно определить авторскую позицию в их произведениях. В результате этого, их рассказы часто носят проповедческий характер. Однако, рассказы Премчанда отличаются от Горьковских рассказов своим отсутствием лирического героя. У Горького лирический герой часто занимает видное место (как «Однажды Осенью»). Интересно заметить, что в отличие от рассказов Премчанда, в горьковских произведениях чаще всего повествование идет от первого лица, как будто писатель, повествователь и герой тесно связаны друг с другом и являются единомысликами.

Отношение Премчанда к своему герою, его манера изложения своего персонажа приобретает качественно другой оттенок в его рассказах. В рассказах Премчанда неоднократно слышится эхо авторских слов в словах повествователя. Однако, повествование очень редко идет от первого лица. Кажется, что автор хочет не наблюдать жизнь персонажей со стороны. Но, вера Премчанда в воспитательной роли литературы была такая сильная, что он не смог отказаться от прямого выражения своего личного мнения.

Портрет действующих лиц в рассказах Горького является более подробным. Применение детали как художественный прием у Горького более живописное. Это объясняется тем, что Горький не только тщательно наблюдал жизнь своих героев, но и вел такой же образ жизни на протяжении многих лет на многих местах России.

Рассказы и Премчанда и Горького применяют живой народный язык. Они применяют очень много пословиц и поговорок, метафор, сравнений, и т.п., употребляемые скромными людьми в их каждодневном быте и разговоре. Благодаря таким речевым особенностям их рассказы стали так широко популярными среди читателей разных сфер общества. Горьковский язык отличается от языка Премчанда поэтизацией предложений и ритмичным употреблением слов и слово-сочетаний. Однако, благодаря однозвучающим словам и слово-сочетаниям текст Премчанда более музыкальный.

Сюжетные элементы рассказа у того и другого писателя обычно находится в хронологическом порядке. Характер действующих лиц раскрывается при помощи речи повествователя и также через их поступки и поведения. Интересно заметить, что в лучших рассказах обоих писателей сюжет играет второстепенную роль. Он присутствует только формально. Вместо сюжетного действия возникновение и развитие конфликта обусловлены психологическими мотивами, и они двигают сюжет вперед.

Оба писатели мастерски используют образы животных и картины природы как художественный прием для выражения главной идеи рассказа. Эти образы и картины являются неотделимой частью произведения. Описание природы как художественный прием применяется, чтобы показать равнодушие окружающего мира к герою и показать трудную жизнь простых людей в антагонистическом обществе. В горьковском рассказе иногда картины природы используются как средства для соединения разных эпизодов

(«Старуха Изергиль»), которые совместно усиливают художественный эффект произведения.

В области малого эпического жанра художественное достоинство Горького и Премчанда заключается в том, что они каждый по своему приобрели новый художественный метод, и создали качественно новый литературный стиль малого эпического жанра. Благодаря Горькому и Премчанду люди, которые стояли на дне общества, не только занимались центральное место в литературе, но пробудили борются против угнетателя за человеческие права, человеческое достоинство и равенство. Художественная заслуга рассказов Горького и рассказов Премчанда состоит в том, что оба рассказчики применяли такой метод представления реальной действительности, который обнаруживал бы жизнь угнетенных и оскорбленных людей, раскрыл бы их борьбу за существование, борьбу за человеческие права и равенство. Сравнительное изучение рассказов этих двух писателей доказывает, что рок простодушных людей в антагонистическом мире является универсальной. Эти люди хотя маленькие и часто униженные, но они в состоянии вести борьбу против общественного зла, против несправедливости общественного порядка. Рассказы Горького и Премчанда как раз проникнуты со этим оптимистическим пафосом, пафосом побуждения угнетенной и оскорбленной массы людей.

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## WHAT IS TO BE DONE: TO HAVE A ROOM OF ONE'S OWN

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**Abstract:** *Nikolai Chernyshevsky's 'What is to be done?' (1863) is a landmark work in Russian literature of the 19<sup>th</sup> century that introduced to its readers, an empowered and emancipated subaltern woman protagonist. Vera Pavlovna fights multiple odds and seeks refuge in industry, not only empowering herself, but other women too. She establishes herself as an independent woman who makes her own choices, both in terms of her personal and social life. Almost six decades after this work was published Virginia Woolf's 'A Room of One's Own' in 1929. Her essay discusses the need for physical space and financial independence for a woman to achieve equality in a patriarchal society. This paper intends to read both these texts parallelly and draw similarities in the backdrop of feminism and the need for gender equality in the society.*

**Key words:** *Russian literature, women, feminism.*

Virginia Woolf, in the year 1928, delivered two lectures at Newnham College and Girton College respectively. These lectures were developed into a work and published in 1929 as *A Room of One's Own*. This essay discusses in detail with numerous illustrations about both the physical and mental space women scholars are provided within the University system and the society. It also elaborates the space women have in the literary tradition and world dominated by men. She locates social conditioning and societal norms as one of the fundamental causes for the oppression of women. And this has a direct impact on her thinking process and her lack of expression. According to Woolf, a woman must have both physical space and financial independence for her to develop and establish herself as a writer or an artist. In simple terms, a woman needed money and a room of her own for her to express with freedom. A woman's thinking process is curtailed at its root in a patriarchal society. To illustrate this, she uses the example of a woman taking a walk along the banks of a river on the campus and as she begins to think and strays into the grass nearby, a guard stops her and tells her that women were not allowed to walk on the grass. She uses a similar example while discussing the access to library. Women did not enjoy the same liberty in accessing libraries like that of men as for a woman to use a library, she had to go through an arduous process. She was made dependent of a man by the society and traditions. The role of a woman was limited to the household where her responsibilities were to bear children and serve her family. According to Woolf, the lack of fiction from women is due to the lack of opportunity. In this further increases the inequality in the society.

Woolf argues that in a patriarchal society, women is rendered insignificant and this tradition is carried forwards in the literature produced from such a society. They were denied education, basic rights and freedom and their world revolved within what was given to them by the man. Through years of conditioning, she was made dependent. And this was not a reality that had to accepted, but challenged rather. Woolf herself was denied formal school education while her brothers had access to it. In her essay, she continues to discuss and examine the existing writings by women. But in brief, the

fundamental crux of her essay lies in her demand for social space and financial independence for the empowerment of women in general. This idea was appreciated greatly among the feminists of all times. But it is interesting to observe that a similar idea of the importance of space (a room of her own) and financial independence (money) in the emancipation and empowerment of women is seen in a literary work that shattered the then tradition and created a stir among its readers about six decades before Virginia Woolf first discussed it in her lectures. This paper would now introduce and discuss Nikolai Chernyshevsky's *What is to be Done?* (1863) as the above-mentioned work.

“True liberation does not stop at escaping one’s parents and founding a family of one’s own. Women must also gain financial independence. Such was the inspiration behind the atelier. In the process of liberating herself, Vera is thus able to help her freedom-hungry sisters, and thereby do her civic duty.” (Chernyshevsky: 15-16)

Nikolai Gavrilovich Chernyshevsky (1828-1889) was a Russian journalist and critic, whose free-spirited and revolutionary writings in *The Contemporary* landed him in prison in July, 1862. It was during his days of imprisonment, at the Peter-and-Paul Fortress, that he wrote, in parts, one of the most progressive texts of all times, *What is to be Done?* The literary text created quite the stir among its readers and left many a great mind inspired. In fact, this text had a very important role to play in the future of the nation as it prophesizes many principles for the social and political development of Russia. Vladimir Lenin was very much influenced by this text, so much so, that he named his famous 1902 text the same. Though Lenin felt Chernyshevsky’s idea of socialism was utopian, it was his firm view that there was a lot to learn from it. Chernyshevsky proposed a transition from the current state of the Russian society to that of a semi-feudal peasant commune which would then lead to socialism. In Lenin’s words:

“Chernyshevsky’s novel is too complicated, too full of ideas, to understand and evaluate at an early age...But after the execution of my brother, knowing that Chernyshevsky’s novel was one of his favourite books, I set about reading it properly and sat over it not just a few days but whole weeks. It was only then I understood its depth. It’s a thing that can fire one’s energies for a lifetime.” (Joe: 155)

This seminal text by Chernyshevsky, was written around the times when the ‘woman question’ was beginning to be raised and discussed. *What is to be Done?* contributed immensely to the ongoing debates around the ‘woman question’. Though the text speaks of a political reality that would in real emancipate the peasants and help everyone live happily in a commune, this paper will focus on the question of female emancipation and the very plot of the novel emancipates and frees the woman from traditional structures and accepted norms. A woman’s role in the development of the plot of the novel goes beyond just love and marriage. She not only emancipates herself but also frees her sisters and they emancipate each other towards an equal, happy future.

An interesting aspect about Chernyshevsky’s characters is that they are very much picked from the society and are relatable too. They make mistakes, they are hurt in the

process and learn from it. They develop along with the plot, continuously learning and exploring the world around them. They are in no way perfect or flawless, which makes them even more real.

“As we have seen, Vera Pavlovna is deliberately characterised by the narrator as ‘ordinary’. That is, she is not help up as an unobtainable image of perfection, but a normal young woman who is capable of growth and development. So, too, the other important female characters either change for the better or else their vice and evil are seen to caused by their social circumstances.” (Ibid: 166)

For instance, Vera’s mother, Marya Alexevna, is portrayed as this evil woman who is trying to get her daughter married off to rich Storeshnikov, their landlady’s son. She is always rough and rude with Vera and is the dominant, authoritative figure of the household. She does all to get her married into a richer household so that she can enjoy that status, ignoring all the while, her daughter’s wishes and desires. But the narrator takes time to explain to the reader about the harsh reality of poverty that had turned Marya into this mean, manipulative woman. Marya too is very much a part of the society and it is the society that was responsible for her actions. Similarly, Julie, is portrayed as the fallen woman, who lives with Serge. She lives rich and is surrounded by all wealth, but her status in the society is that of a fallen woman, and she continues to live with that. She warns Vera about Storeshnikov’s plan to attain her by any means; hook or crook. There is a sense of sisterhood that develops between Julie and Vera. Later in the plot, Julie and Vera become very good friends and she always remains helpful to Vera until she fades away from the novel. Chernyshevsky thus, creates his average, relatable, new-generation characters who were the future of Russia.

### **Vera Pavlovna’s Freedom**

“Mr. Storeshnikov, I’ll come straight to the point. You took a box at the opera last night in order to present me to your friends as your mistress. I won’t say that was dishonest of you; were you capable of understanding as much you would never have done what you did in the first place. But I’m warning you, if ever you dare approach me again, at the theatre, on the street, wherever, you’ll get a slap in the face.” (Chernyshevsky: 59)

Vera Pavlovna was born into a not very comfortable family. Her father was a clerk and the caretaker at the Storeshnikov residence. Her mother, Marya Alexevna constantly tried to deck Vera up in the most beautiful manner for her to find a rich guy to marry; elevating their social status. Mikhail Ivanich Storeshnikov, the son of the landlady, was one such man whom Marya was courting for her daughter. Marya made sure she didn’t miss any opportunity to present her daughter to young Storeshnikov. And in a few days’ time, her plot fell into place. Storeshnikov was now interested in Vera, but she despised him. But soon, seeing that Storeshnikov is desperately in love with her, she stops being harsh to him. Marya takes advantage of this situation and soon Storeshnikov is engaged to Vera, though she never approves of him.

In fact, even Julie, who had initially warned Vera against Storeshnikov, approaches Vera with regard to the same matter and advices her that marrying Storeshnikov would provide her with many comforts and a status that was not attainable otherwise. But Vera tells Julie that she was neither interested in power and servitude, nor money. She



didn't want to pursue something just because the society demanded her. The society had certain expectations of a woman and her roles were well defined thus for her to lead a happy life. But Vera didn't believe in these accepted norms and didn't desire to sacrifice her freedom in order to attain something that didn't mean anything to her. She didn't want to bow to any man and definitely didn't wish to become an object for an act of charity. She desires to be free, without any obligations to any man or anyone. She wants to make her choice for herself and she values her freedom above all.

The plot develops as the young couple are to be married off. Vera was now Storeshnikov's fiancé. Though Storeshnikov's mother was very angry with him for choosing a girl below their social stature, Storeshnikov doesn't budge to his mother's demands; he, in turn takes over all the family business, which was under his mother's control all the while. And he keeps gifting Vera various precious gifts through Marya; though these gifts never reach Vera. She is, in fact, unaware of these happenings. In reality, it is poverty that pushes the Rozalsky (Vera's) family to give up on a sense of self and dignity and give in to Storeshnikov. Both Vera's mother and father make the best of the situation and profit in their own respective ways; Marya from Storeshnikov's gifts, Rozalsky from the landlady's bribe to stop the alliance. It is interesting to note that, usually a girl born into a poor family dreams of her prince charming to rescue her from poverty and looks at marriage as her source of freedom, whereas it is in reality just a change of ownership. From the control of her family, she is transferred to the control of a man, unknown. But Vera seems to be the first heroine who is attempting to arrange her life herself.

It was during such a situation that a young man Lopukhov begins tutoring Vera's brother, Fedya. On Vera's birthday, Lopukhov and Vera become very attached as they exchange a conversation about the importance of the freedom in a woman's life and her independence. Dmitri Sergeich Lopukhov is a student of medicine who tutors to make his ends meet. His presence had brought about a ray of hope in Vera's life as he belonged to the category of 'new men' who had progressive thoughts about the status of women in the society. In comparison to their fellow sisters in France and America, Russian women were still oppressed and controlled to a large extent. An independent woman was no lesser to her brothers and she first had to acknowledge this fact. She is equal to any man. When Lopukhov asks Vera about Storeshnikov and what she would do if things were in her control, she simply says she would walk away towards her independence.

“But the chief thing is the independence. To do just what I please, to live a life of my own choosing, asking nothing of no one, wanting nothing of no one, looking to no man, not a soul but me! Oh how I long to live!” (Ibid: 105)

After their long conversation, it is decided that Lopukhov shall find her a job somewhere and she will then be able to leave her home and lead an independent life. Vera and Lopukhov connect at an intellectual level and have various discussions and this in turn brings them closer. Lopukhov urges her to think well about her decisions and not to adhere to social pressure.

It was in times of such great hope that Vera has her first dream. In her first dream, Vera finds herself locked in a dungeon in a crippled state. Then she is suddenly freed and enters a green meadow where she begins to run as her cripple disappears. The image

(an image of herself) that appears in her dream tells her about many more women who are locked up in similar dungeons. The dream ends with Vera freeing many more crippled sisters and leading them to the meadows, towards freedom. This dream kindles her spirit to be independent and when the search for a job leads a dead end, Lopukhov expresses his love for Vera, and this Vera reciprocates. They decide to elope and get married and thus begin a new life; a life of freedom, where Vera does as she desires and is about to discover and experience life on her terms. The dream comes true as Lopukhov marries Vera and she escapes from her dungeon. They find themselves an apartment and move in together. And Vera insists that she doesn't want to live at his expense as she desires economic independence. Lopukhov is very supportive of this and acknowledges her demands. She doesn't want him to play despot to her being a slave, as was the norm of relationships then.

“Dmitri! Dear! What do you mean by ‘the feminine’? I’m aware the female voice is contralto, the male-baritone; is it really that important? Must we be told to pitch our voices high? Must we be badgered into it? Why is everyone so concerned we keep our femininity? Don’t you see it’s absurd, my dear?” (Ibid: 153)

Vera proposes three rules for their marriage. She demands they maintain separate rooms and consider this space very important; neither of them is to enter the other's space without consent. She also doesn't want him to question her actions, thereby respecting each other's privacy. And they decide to meet in the common space at times of meals and to receive guests together. Vera very clearly emphasizes the importance of both physical and mental space in their relationship. She says that it is important to treat one's partner just like one would treat a friend or an acquaintance, for the relationship to thrive. She also acknowledges Lopukhov's progressive attitude in him accepting and respecting all her choices. And Lopukhov, in turn, wants her to empower herself and is more than happy to adhere to her terms. Thus, the married couple begin to live their lives, against the will of Vera's parents and against the odds of the society. Vera has found her social independence and it was now time for her to seek financial independence as she desired.

### **The Atelier: Seeking Refuge in the Industry**

Five months into their marriage, Vera announces that she had decided to open an atelier. She starts off small, gaining dressmaking orders from close ones, beginning with Julie. But soon she realizes the importance of not just empowering herself, but her duty to empower her fellow sisters too. Vera employs four women to start with and at the end of the first month, she distributes the profit equally among all the workers, including herself. As they had enough to live on, Vera was never money-minded, and moreover, she was now on a mission.

She introduces a new order in the workshop that is completely transparent and democratic. She saw meaning in empowering her sisters by getting them to be responsible for the atelier; the growth of the atelier meant their own independent growth. Vera soon hands over the accounts to one of the girls, for them to manage it. The more they took over the responsibilities, the closer they were towards a state of freedom and happiness. Soon, the number of workers grew. It kept growing until the time when they moved into a bigger space, forming a commune. The workers who

were in complete control now, decided to pay Vera one-third of the net return and she too joined them as one of the employees at the atelier. According to the new system, profits were equally shared among all the workers, irrespective of any kind of hierarchy. This in turn increases a sense of belonging and increased productivity. A collective will was born that led to collective investment and resulted in a collective commitment. The profits soon began increasing and a part of it was set aside and an interest-free loan was kept aside for the poor people.

This new system brought them all together, irrespective of which category of the society they belonged to. They now lived in one enormous flat, not just sharing the profits and expenses, but the responsibilities of living too. Vera, instead of holding her sisters' hands all the way towards empowering them, creates an idea and a space where her sisters can empower themselves by gaining both social and economic independence. Vera also takes the initiative of introducing books to the women at the atelier. Soon, this develops into the inclusion of a study hour in their schedule. Finally, the day had come when the atelier had reached a stage where it could function by itself, without the supervision or guidance of Vera.

### **Vera's Dreams: An insight into her thoughts, and the society around her.**

As discussed above, Vera's dream has a lot of significance in her own development and the development of the plot. In her second dream Vera is visited by her mother. Marya shows her that the independent Vera she is today, was a result in which she too had immense contribution. Had Marya been a docile and submissive woman (similar to the marginalized, stereotypical mother, she wouldn't have been able to provide Vera with the strength she possessed. In brief, Marya was responsible enough in creating the independent Vera. It was her corrupt and mean nature that created an educated and independent Vera. Vera had turned out into an individual rather than a 'doll-girl'. The dream ends with a hope of the day when girls are brought up and taught to be individuals and not dolls.

Her third dream is a dream that turns her life around the most. Vera was now independent, happy and living her life the way she desired. But her third dream shook this state of harmony. In the dream, she happens to read her own diary in which words seem to appear from nowhere. Her words tell her how boring and lonely she had become over the past years, though being married to Lopukhov. The diary tells her that she actually doesn't love Lopukhov.

“He's a noble man and he did save me. But nobility inspires respect, trust, friendship and common cause; a saviour reaps his reward in gratitude and devotion. He is a more ardent person, perhaps, than I. When his blood is on fire, his touch burns. There is another kind of need, though, the need for a soft and constant touch, for the sweet repose of tenderness. Does he know it? Are we matched in temperament, in terms of needs? He'd lay down his life for me, as I would mine for him. But is that enough? Is his every waking thought of me? Or mine for him? Do I love him as I need to love? I didn't used to want that soft tender feeling-no, what I feel for him is not...” (Ibid: 267)

Vera was developing as a person and with time, her needs and desires too developed. She now began seeking more attention and a different form of love which was not met

by Lopukhov. Instead, she found this in Kirsanov, Lopukhov's close friend and a student of medicine. She soon shares her disturbing dream with Lopukhov. Though her mind is in a state of turmoil, she assures Lopukhov that she only desires to love him. But with time, she is not able to suppress her emotions. A few days pass, and Lopukhov finally addresses the issue telling Vera that freedom was the most important element and the source of happiness. He insisted that she must never compromise on her freedom and asks her to give her thoughts some time.

In the meanwhile, on the pretext of visiting his parents, Lopukhov leaves on the promise that he would soon write to Vera. Instead, she receives a letter that informs her regarding his suicide. Vera is left devastated and she decides to leave Petersburg. She blames Kirsanov initially, and then herself for Lopukhov's death. But before leaving, she begins to make arrangements for the atelier to be taken care of. Though it was self-sufficient by now, she doesn't want to orphan it. Vera reflects the quality of responsibility here.

Meanwhile, Rakhmetov, an acquaintance of Lopukhov's, brings her a message from Lopukhov according to which Lopukhov states that it was his decision to leave Vera and she was in no manner responsible for the act. Rakhmetov goes further in reasoning with Vera for abandoning her venture, more in the terms of abandoning her cause. Rakhmetov also blames Lopukhov for leaving Vera in such a state and rationally argues his thoughts. The day passes and so do few more days. Vera moves on and marries Kirsanov. They begin their life in the other part of the town where Vera sets up another atelier as a sister-concern of the first one. She once again goes through the arduous task of setting-up a self-sufficient commune. In the meanwhile, she receives a letter from an acquaintance of Lopukhov that explains his decision. According to the letter, it was his selfish interest that led Lopukhov to his decision. He was not used to the infringement into his private space, and with Vera's demands changing, he wished to get out of it. And also, that he didn't desire to stand in the path of her freedom and wanted to relieve her from her state of turmoil. Vera responds to this letter saying that all his decisions were based on his assumptions and his actions had left her in despair, making her the victim. Vera, above all, didn't desire to live at the mercy of another human being.

### **Vera and Kirsanov**

Vera and Kirsanov live happily indulging in various debates and discussions about anything they could think of. They respected each other's space, both physical and emotional, but here, Kirsanov pushed her to do more, challenging her and not just acknowledging her. Vera lives as his equal as they do not share just interests in each other's lives, but in the work they do too. She had achieved both freedom and equality in her relationship with Kirsanov. In a discussion they have about the female sex and their position in the social hierarchy, Vera states, "If woman has played an insignificant role in intellectual life to date, it is because the might-makes-right principle denied her both the means and the incentive for self-development." (Ibid: 373)

The discussion continues as Kirsanov agrees and observes,

"One factor stands out, inclusive of all conditions past and present. It is the force of bias, habitual false expectations and even falser fear. To tell oneself 'I can't'

is to be quite genuinely incapable. Women have been told they're weak so often that they feel and are, quite genuinely, weak." (Ibid: 375)

Their discussion on the impact of social conditioning on woman in the society continues and Vera finally observes the issue in limited to career opportunities for women. A woman, in general, is expected to be a governess or a tutor, nothing beyond that. She realizes the importance of more space in the working world for more women to strive to become independent. At the end of the discussion, Vera decides to take up the study of medicine for she imagines the contribution women doctors can make to both their own sex and the society. Vera reflects that it was traditional norms that held women back from being independent.

Another discussion between the couple is about the need to respect one's companion's freedom for a healthy marriage. It was important for either of the partners not to take the other or the relationship for granted. Individual space and freedom should be respected at all times. Many such discussions happen between the couple, who live happily as the second atelier does well as Vera begins preparing for her exams.

### **The Fourth Dream**

In her fourth and final dream Vera is presented with an ideal commune in which she sees everyone contributing and living happily. The standards of living are very much better and she is surprised at this reality in her dream. The dream draws a trail through different lands and times and how gradually woman establishes her independence and achieves equality in terms of space, power and roles in the society. The women in her dreams live with respect, freedom, dignity and acknowledgement. In the dream she realizes the importance of equality in any relationship and its relation to freedom. They visit a palace where everyone is happy, equal and content. The dream is basically an encouragement for Vera on her efforts and a boost for her hope for a better tomorrow.

"The future is splendid, bright, and you must tell all you meet, urge them to love and work towards it, to hasten its coming and take from tomorrow as much as they can today- on that depends the quality of life, its sunshine and contentment." (Ibid: 408-9)

Days pass and Vera, along with Natasha (who is now taking care of the old atelier), open a shop on Nevsky Prospect. Vera's mission doesn't end there. Katerina Vasilyevna Polozov, the daughter of a man of great fortune, visits Vera's atelier and is thoroughly impressed by its functioning that she too wishes to open up a similar venture. She closely studies and understands the functioning of Vera's atelier. She observes that when the women work for themselves, as their own proprietors, the profit is more than their wages. This in turn, increases the efficiency of work. And by staying together under the same roof as a commune, they share both the responsibilities as well as the expenses. This reduces the cost of living by a huge margin. And alongside such a contented living, the atelier also provided as an avenue for learning, enlightening and empowering themselves. Vera had made sure that all her acquaintances took turn to come and lecture at the atelier. And they also discovered that since the efficiency of labour had increased, every worker was left with enough time for leisure too. Vera at the end of the novel, had not just empowered herself, but had taken her sisters arm-in-

arm towards a free, independent, happy and content life. For instance, she had inspired Katerina so much, that she had discovered a path in life and a cause to fight for.

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# PRESTIGE, CULTURE, IDENTITY: RETRACING RUSSIAN FRANCOPHONY

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**Abstract:** *That languages interact, meet, clash and play a major role in identities is an established fact. Associations between languages and cultures are not new. However, Russia and French language make an unusual and often less quoted match, which also interestingly, developed in a non-colonial perspective unlike other language-culture interrelationships. This article, which is an attempt to study this curious partnership, is motivated by two main reasons. First, the author's personal interest in Russian literature in her early years, which revealed a significant influence of French language and culture. Second, the author's professional involvement with French language. In a globalized world where borders fade, even if symbolically, languages and their trajectories play a consequential role. This study situates itself in that perspective and offers an insight into a subject that is germane to specialists of sociolinguistics, history, language and culture studies.*

**Keywords:** *French, Russia, bilingualism, history, literature, identity*

## Introduction

Many commonly known language-culture associations exist- India and English language, Senegal and French language, Brazil and Portuguese for example. However, Russia and French language make an unusual language-culture partnership. It is no doubt that historical, sociopolitical and sociocultural elements have played a major part in the creation and fostering of this cultural-linguistic relationship that flourished in imperial, pre-Soviet Russia before gradually declining. The corpus for this article is drawn from primary and secondary sources that highlight the presence of French in Russia from a historical, political and social perspective. Literary texts provide a primary source that support the article's central interest. All translations from French into English in this article are provided by the author.

## The evolution of French in Russia: a historical perspective

One of main features of Russian royalty and nobility in the 18<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the nineteenth century was bilingualism or even multilingualism. For many among them, the dominant language was French, which curiously became the language of the aristocracy, symbolising status, education and power. This evolution has its roots in history through political developments that transferred into social and educational developments which we shall review in the paragraphs to come.

## The Czars, Czarinas, kings and the language

The connection between the Russian state and French language dates to the 11<sup>th</sup> century when Henri the 1<sup>st</sup>, King of France, seeks the hand of Princess Anna, daughter of Emperor Iroslav the Wise of Kiev (Bogomoletz). The marriage is solemnized and thus began the first ties that bound Russia and France. In the 16<sup>th</sup> century, Czar Boris Goudounov, with a cosmopolitan approach, opens French schools and sends young Russians to France to study. However, it is during the time of Peter the Great (reign between 1682-1725) that French influence truly begins to make itself stronger and more visible. The Emperor wanted to transform Russia into a modern state. The palace of Versailles in France, home to the illustrious Louis XIV in France, captured the

imagination of Peter the Great, with its architectural beauty, its magnificent gardens and its breathtaking opulence. He arrived in France in 1717 for personal and political reasons. Peter the Great or Peter the First was then already familiar with French language.

Elizabeth I (reigned between 1741-1762) was francophile to the core. During her regency, nobility and French language went hand in hand. It was also directly associated with social pastimes such as music, ball rooms, salons etc. (Offord et al.). The court saw many French speaking individuals of importance. French presence was also strong like the important Hermann Lestocq, personal physician of the empress, other physicians like Foussadier and Guyon and French diplomats like d'Allion and La Chetardie. People of nobility were encouraged to study in Europe and undertake learning in language and the arts (Riasanovsky & Steinberg). Catherine the Great of Russia who ruled from 1762–96 encouraged French further. She was fascinated with the French Enlightenment period, its philosophers and the socio-political ideals it represented (Gorbatov). She not just propagated French language learning, but also sought to improve the educational system. It is perhaps under her that French language and culture flourished to the hilt.

The revocation of the Edict of Nantes (1685), saw protestants or the Huguenots fleeing France and settling elsewhere in order to avoid persecution. The eighteenth-century period of Enlightenment had already caught on the intellectual world everywhere. Further the French revolution of 1789 also saw royalists settling in Russia. This emigration and that which ensued post-Revolution in France, saw the spread of French language in Netherlands, Germany and England as well.

France and French language emerged as major players in the Enlightenment period with stalwarts as Voltaire, La Rochefoucauld and Descartes and other Encyclopedists influenced the world. Russia was slowly but surely opening up to the Western intellectual and literary world. It was only a matter of time before it saw firm moorings in Russia. French was steadily gaining currency as the language of the elite, language of the civilised world, a sort of universal language was being propagated, an idea which also served colonial interests. By and by, fuelled by the Enlightenment period, French language and culture charmed a lot of nations. Amongst other happenings, Voltaire wrote *Histoire de l'empire de Russie sous Pierre le Grand* (History of the Russian empire under Peter the Great), Diderot visited Russia, Catherine the Great acquired Voltaire's library, which still today stands testimony to Franco-Russian relations. In the eyes of Russia, Europe was first and always about France (Carrière) and it is "in the mirror of Russia held by Catherine (the Great) that the Enlightenment period shone in its full splendour", describes Gonneau (14).

### **Growth of French as language of status, refinement**

The Academy of Sciences (1724) had begun teaching French. The Institut Smolny (1764) followed, by introducing French for young girls of the aristocracy. Figes (103), describing Russian bilingualism between Russian and French languages of the time, says that the aristocracy had imbibed French to such an extent that they could "easily and imperceptibly from Russian into French and back again". French became the language of official correspondence to the royals and to high positions. Russian language was even looked down upon, seemed inadequate for expression and French



was encouraged in the higher echelons of society. Girls of aristocracy who went to the reputed school Girls' Gymnasium, were punished if they spoke in Russian by being "made to wear a red tin bell all day and stand like dunces, stripped of their white aprons, in the corner of the class; they were forced to remain standing even during meals, and received their food last" (Lelong quoted by Figes 74). This is a clear example of how languages assume positions of prestige or rejection in social hierarchy impacting everyday life.

French was used as language of written communication between high government officials, personal correspondence of the aristocracy. Slowly but surely, during this period, knowledge of French language assumed an important and overarching role as agent of social change and prestige for Russians. French became the language of communication and mediation between the nobility of the Russian empire and the Western world. It became the language of the aristocracy, language that signified class, power, authority, refinement in society. Political, official discourse, social skills, affective discourse, culinary terms, all found their place in French expressions of the day, the language of polish. Evidently these socio-historical-political developments affecting language spilled onto society, the arts and literature especially that we shall consider in the following paragraphs. Travel in the nineteenth century towards France also reconnected and kept alive ties with the language and the culture.

### **Arts and the letters**

In 1742, a play by the famed French theatre Comédie Française was staged in Russia. Earlier, French plays though staged, were translated into Russian. But now, the locals could appreciate it in the source language to a large extent. Russian diplomats were posted abroad, like in the Versailles court of Louis XIV and elsewhere. These foreign-bred diplomats, who acquired knowledge of French, paved the way for the first literary writings in French by Russians -Trediakovskij, A. Cantemir, G. Ghennadi and a host of other writers. French writers, thinkers, artistes progressively settle in Russia in the second half of 1750 and the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Charon et al). Artistes such as J-P Le Prince, Gillet, the Lagrenée, the Tocqué brothers and journalists such as Gallien de Salmorenc, de Mainvilliers came to Russia. An 1874 edition (Ghennady) documented a list of Franco-Russian writing by Russian authors. Russian ballet was inspired and developed by French ballet teachers like Marius Petipa who worked in the Imperial court from 1847 until 1910 and choreographed many important pieces including the immortal Swan Lake (Homans).

### **Press in French**

Very interestingly, during the mid-eighteenth century, French language press burgeoned in Russia. Papers such as *The Caméleon Littéraire* (The Literary Chameleon, 1755) edited by the Baron of Tschudi and *Le Mercure de Russie*, a periodical in French brought out by Catherine the Great are some interesting examples.

The use of French in press indigenously published in Russia, was not just a marker of status but also positioned Russia as a multicultural, multilingual society with forward ideas. Rejoutski and Speranskaia delineate the trajectory of French press in Russia and highlight the complex political underpinnings in this movement as well as the cultural elements. French press in Russia clearly served as a bridge for transfer of cultural

elements from the West to Russia and finally served political interests as well. Some publications were also bilingual, with French inserts in Russian periodicals.

### **French in literary sources: some examples**

Many Russian authors of the 19<sup>th</sup> century were drawn by French language and this interest found its way into their writings both as a literary device and as a reflection of their times. They often use a liberal smattering of French in their works novels. Characters are comfortably bilingual and take pride in it, reflecting the sociolinguistic practices of the period. The use of French is a determinant of their social status and adds to their symbolic capital to borrow from Bourdieu. We shall examine some examples from Dostoevsky, Pushkin and Tolstoy.

### **Dostoevsky: the symbolism of French**

Dostoevsky like many Russian writers of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, was at ease with French and so were many of his characters.

In *The Devils*, the character punctuates his syntax with French in mid-sentence. Stefan Trofimovich uses French liberally mixing it with his Russian.

*“Enfin, un ami. Cher, I sent for you alone (At last, a friend! My dear one, I sent for you alone) (484).*

*“Blum, that's precisely the name. Vous le connaissez (you know him?) Quelque chose d'hébété et de très content dans la figure, pourtant très sévère, roide et sérieux. (Something dazed and very happy about the face, yet very stern, stiff and serious) A sort of policeman, a submissive subordinate, je m'y connais. » (I know those types) (485).*

Trofimovich makes use of odd sentence structures and gives the impression that he wishes to impress with his flamboyant use of French. In the process, he even appears caricatural. Perhaps it was Dostoevsky's strategy of satire towards the aristocratic intellectuals of the time. Whether perturbed or calm, Stefan Trofimovich, the refined intellectual that he is, resorts to French, which comes to him naturally. He represents the Western influenced generation of his time that is unable to come to terms with their ideals being dissipated in the chaos around.

Varvara Petrovna who fusses around Stefan Trofimovich, understands French but does not use it much herself, except to repeat phrases uttered by Trofimovich.

*Je vous aimais” (I loved you), he sais, folding his hands again (736)*

*Why do you keep on with aimais(loved) and aimais (loved)? Stop it! she cried, jumping up again.*

*Mon père, je vous remercie, vous êtes bien bon, mais (Stefan Trofimovich) (My father, I thank you, you are very kind, but)*

*There's no mais (but) about it, no mais (but) at all, cried Varvara Petrovna, jumping up from her chair (740).*

Varvara understands French clearly and even knows to speak it, but it is Stefan Trofimovich who is very attached to the language.

In *The Brothers Karamazov*, Dostoevsky's use of French is revelatory. Karamazov, the father of Dmitri, Ivan and Alyosha is an unscrupulous, disorderly rogue par excellence. An interesting conversation in the book is that of Karamazov the senior speaking to Alyosha who is about to join a monastery.

*Surely it's impossible, I think, that the devils will forget to drag me down to their place with their hooks when I die. (...) Because if there is no ceiling, then there are no hooks. And if there are no hooks, the whole thing falls apart, which, again, is unlikely, because then who will drag me down with hooks, because if they don't drag me down, what then, and where is there any justice in the world? Il faudrait les inventer, (they need to be invented) those hooks, just for me, for me alone. (24).*

While his characters who represent the intelligentsia speak French, Dostoevsky himself had only disregard for such adaptations and borrowings. He calls them "retrograde", those who have "renounced" Russia and have become "Frenchified". (Dostoevsky, *Complete Letters*, 3 27). And maybe even estranged from their own (Dostoevsky, *Diary* 5) and "slaves to French thought" (Dostoevsky, *Diary*, 1 398).

Yet he generously recognises the liberalism and idealism that fuelled them to move towards extreme ideologies. (Dostoevsky, *Diary*, 1147). It is his characters' access to education, to refinement, to language of aesthetics and social symbolism that is manifested in their familiarity and use of French language. In *The Brothers Karamazov*, all the major characters speak French- Karamazov, his son Ivan, Dmitri and Alyosha. The more they express themselves in French, higher is the degree of corruption. Ivan borrows from Voltaire- "s'il n'existait pas Dieu, il faudrait l'inventer" (311) (If God did not exist, he would have to be invented". Smerdyakov is but of a rustic peasant background with illicit mixed origins and not expected to speak French as he has had little access to it. But he does reveal his allegiance towards the "clever" French (298). Smerdyakov also attempts to learn French by memorising words written out in Russian. To Smerdyakov, French might serve as the escape route into France or the West, from his murderous crimes. Hall refers to Dostoevsky's use of French "as the language of corruption" (173).

Let us look at Ivan's dialogue with the devil in the chapter Nightmare with the Devil. When Ivan has an imagined dialogue with the devil, the devil that speaks to him in French. As Hall (171) explains about the use of French by these characters, "it's realistic function is small; its symbolic function is great."

The aristocracy adopting French language, leaned towards a desired Europeanisation of themselves, so much so that they began not just to speak in French but also "think" in French (Billington). This also set the aristocracy apart and French as a language became another element of class distinction in society.

### **Pushkin: the French-drawn true Russian**

Pushkin was an exemplary bilingual, fluent in Russian and French, using both with ease, the former being the home language, language of comfort and the latter being the language of social standing used in public conversations and government communication. Pushkin enjoyed an intimacy with French language and culture, despite never having visited France. From the age of seventeen, he signed his letters

“Poushkin” adopting the French spelling and called himself Pushkin, the Frenchman (Druzhnikov).

In Pushkin’s, *Eugene Onegin*, the protagonist is perfectly at ease in French and takes pride in it. His personality is determined by his knowledge of this language of refinement and power. In *Eugene Onegin*, the use of French is not a linguistic variation but is an integral part of the aesthetic construct of this novel in verse. The epigraph which follows the title of *Eugene Onegin* is in French, probably written by Pushkin himself or taken from another letter as the Epigraph mentions, and is often attributed to a description of the eponymous hero.

*Pétri de vanité il avait encore plus de cette espèce d’orgueil qui fait avouer avec la même indifférence les bonnes comme les mauvaises actions, suite d’un sentiment de supériorité, peut-être imaginaire.*

*Tiré d’une lettre particulière (2)*

*Plunged in vanity, he had that kind of pride which acknowledges both good and bad actions with the same indifference, with a feeling of superiority, perhaps an imaginary one.*

*Taken from a private letter.*

In fact, Pushkin takes a meticulous approach to the use of foreign words in this work. For example, he uses ‘bolivar’ in Russian and provides an explanation by way of notes that the word ‘bolivar’ originates from ‘a la bolivar’ in French. Interestingly, Tatiana’s letter in French, the original of which is only alluded to but not presented in the text; the reader only reads the Russian translation of the same, from prose to poetry. Pushkin successfully mediates his bilingualism and his bold experimentation with words.

Pushkin’s contribution to the epistolary genre in French are also noteworthy. In a letter which is half French, half Russian to Vera Vyazemski, he uses simple language “votre dernière lettre est charmante” 13, 113 (your last letter was charming”) or un sort aussi triste (such a sad fate), to poetic expressions in French “je crois qu’un beau ciel me ferait pleurer de rage” (I am convinced that a bright sky would make me cry with rage) (13, 114). He also expressed love in his letters, and these emotions are attributed to the influence of French literature (Dmitrieva).

Pushkin is also conscious of the use of ‘vous’ the polite second person plural of ‘you’ in French, common in the French epistolary genre of the day. Pushkin in his story *The Peasant Girl* uses the French word – *individualité* (*individuality*), in his running text to clarify or better express what he wanted to convey, suggesting thereby the richness of French language to express certain things that Russian language failed to. Speaking about provincial girls and their qualities, he says (69):

*Of course, everybody is at liberty to laugh at some of their peculiarities, but the jokes of some of a superficial observer cannot nullify their essential merits, the chief of which is their personality of character, that individualité (...).*

Fortunately, a large number of Pushkin's letters (more than 780 of them) have come down to us, about one fifth of which (163) were written in French. Despite this closeness and intimacy to French language and literature, Pushkin, notably for his progressive anti-totalitarian, pro-people views, was hailed as very Russian and as a

“fitting symbol of a modern, culturally and politically respectable, Russia” (Martin 510).

Figs (51) argues that “basic literary concepts, most of them to do with the private world of the individual, had never been developed in the Russian tongue: ‘gesture,’ ‘sympathy,’ ‘privacy,’ ‘impulsion,’ and ‘imagination’— none could be expressed without the use of French... Hence Russian writers were obliged to adapt or borrow words from the French to express the sentiments and represent the world of their readers in high society... This ‘salon style’ derived a certain lightness and refinement from its Gallicized syntax and phraseology. But its excessive use of French loan words and neologisms also made it clumsy and verbose”.

### **Lev Tolstoy: uniquely bilingual**

Tolstoy’s closeness to French language is unique. He liberally uses both the language and its cultural presence in *Anna Karenina*. Starting with the French governess in the Oblonsky family to Levin’s stylish suit which supposedly is made by a French tailor, to Vronsky’s appetite for French theatre, to references to French illustrations of the Bible, to Zola and Daudet. It is the French culture, refinement and literature that adds to the “mystery of accomplishment” that Levin admires at the Scherbatskys, where the girls had to “speak French one day and English the next” (24) and took lessons in French literature amongst other learning.

“The Tatar, remembering Stepan Arkadyevitch’s caprice of not calling the dishes by their French names (36) gave himself the pleasure of repeating the order according to the bill of fare: potage printanière, turbot sauce Beaumarchais, macedoine de fruits”. The Tatar wants to exercise his knowledge of French, to establish his position in the refined social order. French once again, functions as an element of symbolic capital.

Anna is fluent in use of French, code switching with ease like many characters.

“Yes, yes I could never do it. Je n’ai pas le coeur assez large to love a whole orphanage full of unpleasant little girls. Cela ne m’a jamais réussi.” (p.637).

I am not as large-hearted to be able to love a whole orphanage... I have never managed that.

*War and Peace* epitomises the synergy of French and Russian as represented in Russian literature. The novel could be called “bilingual” for its constant interweaving of French with Russian. Characters in *War and Peace* representing aristocracy use French liberally. Tolstoy (3) begins his historical novel with French, dousing it with some Russian, foregrounding the novel in the spirit of his times.

*Eh bien, mon prince. Gènes et Lucques ne sont plus que des apanages, des поместья, de la famille Buonaparte. Non, je vous prévient que si vous ne me dites pas que nous avons la guerre, si vous vous permettez encore de pallier toutes les infamies, toutes les atrocités de cet Antichrist (ma parole, j’y crois) — je ne vous connais plus, vous n’êtes plus mon ami, vous n’êtes plus my faithful slave, comme vous dites. Well, how do you do? How do you do? Je vois que je vous fais peur- sit down and tell me all the news.*

Well, my prince. Genes and Lucques are but estates of the Buonaparte family. Non, I am warning you that if you do not tell me that this means war, if you

continue to support the infamous activities, all these atrocities of this Antichrist person (and I do believe he is one)- I will disown you, you are not my friend anymore and you are no longer my faithful slave, as you call yourself. (...). I see that I have scared you- sit down (...).

His masterly code switching is present throughout the book. Here is another example.

They say old maids *ont la manie des mariages* (are obsessed with marriage) and though I don't feel that weakness in myself as yet, I know une *petite personne* (a little person) who is very unhappy with her father. *Une parente à nous, une princesse* Bolkonskaya (a relative of ours, a Bolkonskaya princess) (7).

Use of French in Russian literature fulfils two functions. It recreates on the one hand, the social reality of the time and on the other, mirrors the world of hypocrisy, falsehood and ego that the aristocrats had taken on during the time. The unnatural use of French, is perhaps an object of satire for Tolstoy. Tolstoy recognises that in attempting to portray the deep French influence on society of his time, he himself leans towards French in his language and his thoughts. Describing Vassili Kuragin, right at the beginning of the novel itself, Tolstoy describes him thus (3): “He spoke in that refined French in which our grandfathers not only spoke but thought (...). A significant description of Kuragin, which reveals language and culture as a marker of identity, of high society and also a strong demarcating factor between aristocracy and common citizens or the peasants, creating two radically different worlds (Figes). Bezukhov, raised in Paris, speaks and only thinks in French. Kutuzov, though seeking the destruction of the French, reads *Les Chevaliers du Cygne*, corresponds with the French lady of letters Madame de Staël. Bolkonsky uses French as if “strengthening his views by this French sentence” (135) and spoke Russian with a French accent. Bilibin always speaks in French and when he uses Russian, it is to mark his disapproval. Bilibin, clearly would rather be French than Russian. The Rustovs on the contrary, spoke Russian amongst themselves and used French to communicate outside of the family. Mary Bolkonskaya speaks French all the time but uses Russian with pleasure during her acts of social service while caring for the poor.

Like with Pushkin, in *War and Peace* too, French emerges gradually, in the course of the novel, as “the language of artifice and insincerity, the language of the theater and deceit; Russian as the language of sincerity, honesty, and seriousness” (Figes). Needless to say, within this aristocracy too, there are the positive characters like Pushkin's Tatiana and Tolstoy's Rustovs and the far less likeable Kuragins and Drubetskoy's. Tolstoy's frequent use of code switching and multilingualism were reflection of bicultural Russia of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

### **The decline of francophony, a partial revival and French in Russia today**

The popularity of French language and culture began to wane with the Napoleonic wars that put Russia and France in conflict. The charm had begun to fade off. The French Revolution, the subsequent formation of the Soviet Union all had an impact on nationalistic fervor and French fell slowly out of favour. There was little encouragement to learn and to teach and Russian. “High society” as such was more or less eliminated but nevertheless French continued to remain culturally strong. Many

generations of Russians grew up reading Jean de la Fontaine, Dumas, Hugo, Maupassant and other iconic French authors. Travel to France as a destination was always in vogue. French cinema enjoyed a pride of place in Russia in the seventies, and Louis de Funès, Gerard Dépardieu and other great French actors were household names in the Soviet Union. Despite the cold war, Russia and France maintained a friendly relationship. That a bust of Victor Hugo stands in St Petersburg is no chance. After the dismantling of the Soviet Union, there was a renewed interest in Russian history and culture, which included the role of foreign influences including French. In 2003, an exhibition on French presence in Russia was organised in St Petersburg at the Russian Museum and this is one such example amongst many others.

Loan words from French like *манто* (manteau), and *одэкалон* (eau de cologne), are part of Russian contemporary lexicon. A Russian dictionary edited in 2007 reveals upto 1883 words of French origin making French the single largest contributor of loanwords into Russian language (Coker). There exist today, specialized schools like the Collège Universitaire de Moscou and the one at St Petersburg, dispensing training by teachers from France in specialized domains, all in French language. French language is today the third most learnt and taught foreign language in Russia, after English and Russian.

### **Conclusion: a multidimensional bilingualism**

There is no denying that historical and sociopolitical factors favoured the rise of French language in Russia. French language served many purposes – on the one hand as a positive image of Russia to the outside world as a progressive, cosmopolitan nation, and on the other as divisive and hierarchy based between “them and the other”. A diglossia of power and prestige played out as the aristocracy made French their *lingua franca*, creating social and intellectual barriers. Nevertheless, the French-Russian bilingualism also had its favourable impact. It produced immortal literature that showcased Russian language as well as a refined bilingualism of aesthetic value. It can also be perceived as Offord et al. explain: “the achievement of some new synthesis of cultural leanings and linguistic competencies may even produce a strong sense of self...a productive outcome of Russia’s engagement with the world beyond its western borders.” (588). Russian language per se did not decline to any lower position, though French did attain high grounds during the imperialistic rule and later, marking its presence as symbolic capital. A perspective of autonomously “coming into their own” also applies when the French connection is analysed. As Beaurepaire (116) posits, one has to leave aside the ‘influence’ theory and “take into account the emergence of a European space of information, of circulation of works, of people’s mobility, into which Russia was progressively getting integrated.”

While French enjoyed the position of the *lingua franca* of the enlightened and the refined, Russian still remained the language of intimacy, of home, of personal relationships, notwithstanding that French could penetrate these areas as well. French language developed in Russia as a byproduct of the sociocultural, politico-historical phenomena of its times and progressed in its context, serving specific interests. Nevertheless, this situation, both diglossic and bilingual at the same time, makes for interesting inquiry and establishes the undeniable role of languages in societal construction, progress and identity. Languages travel, meet other languages, adapt, settle, migrate again and cross fertilise for many varied reasons creating a

multilingualism that is both fascinating and intriguing. Bilingualism and multilingualism carry tales far beyond their face value. Russian francophony stands as one interesting and everlasting example of the same.

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# DEPICTION OF ANTI-SEMITISM AND PHILO-SEMITISM IN RUSSIAN EMIGRANT WRITINGS OF GARY SHTEYNGART AND ELLEN LITMAN

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**Abstract:** *Gary Shteyngart and Ellen Litman are two of the prominent writers of the fourth wave of Russian emigration that occurred after the fall of the USSR in 1991. Shteyngart and Litman are the Soviet-born writers who made the USA to be their second home. At the second home, Shteyngart wrote four novels - The Russian Debutants Handbook (2002), Absurdistan (2006), Super Sad True Love Story (2014) and Lake Success (2018) as well as a memoir entitled Little Failure (2014). Ellen Litman is also a very prominent woman novelist of the fourth wave who has written two novels -The Last Chicken in America (2007) and Mannequin Girl (2014). These two writers are Jewish by religion. There are some similarities as well as some major difference between these two writers. This paper discusses how Shteyngart and Litman depict anti-Semitism and philo-Semitism and what is their stand vis-à-vis anti-Semitism and philo-Semitism. This paper focuses on how these two writers depict Jewish religion, its rites and rituals. This paper also focuses on whether these two writers embrace or discard Jewish religion and religious identity. This paper compares their depiction of anti-Semitism, philo-Semitism, their identification with Jewish religion, their approach towards rites and rituals of Judaism. The paper takes into account particular causes behind such depiction.*

**Key Words:** *Anti-Semitism, Philo-Semitism, Jewish Religion, the USSR, the USA.*

Gary Shteyngart and Ellen Litman are two of the prominent writers of the fourth wave of the Russian emigration that occurred 1991 onwards after the breakoff of the former Soviet Union. For many of the Jewish writers of the fourth wave, the USA, Germany, France, Canada and Israel became the final destinations. These post-Soviet Jewish writers of the fourth wave fascinated the reading world through their Russian credentials and Jewish themes. In the USA, Gary Shteyngart, Ellen Litman and others are much admired by the American Jewish critics. As quoted by Adrian Wanner, Donald Weber observes that the Russian emigrant writers of the fourth wave have created a new chapter in the tradition of Jewish immigrant writing and their writing has refuted the so called "Howe doctrine" that the Jewish American literature will decline. According to Andrew Furman, Shteyngart and his peers have successfully brought the Jewish voice at the centre of American literary culture.

Gary Shteyngart is the trailblazer of the fourth wave of Russian emigrant writing. Ellen Litman is also a prominent writer of the fourth wave. Both share some common elements. Jewish by birth, they were born in the same period in the Soviet Union but in different cities: Shteyngart was born in Leningrad in 1972 whereas Litman was born in Moscow in 1973. Their parental status and their parents' professional positions were the same: Shteyngart's father was a mechanical engineer whereas his mother was a piano teacher; Litman's father was a chemical engineer whereas her mother was a teacher of mathematics. Both were affected physically in childhood: Shteyngart was an asthmatic child whereas Litman has curvature in spinal cords. Both the writers claim childhood

fascination for creative writing: Shteyngart's literary taste was inspired by his grandmother whereas Litman too claims inclination for writing in childhood. Their talent and inclination for creative writing got boost only on arriving in the USA. Shteyngart did his Masters of Fine Arts from the University of Iowa whereas Litman did her Masters of Fine Arts in Creative Writing from Syracuse University, New York. Only after the formal education in creative writing, these two writers embarked upon writing as their profession. Currently, they hold similar professional positions besides being writers: Shteyngart is an Associate Professor of the Creative Writing Program at the Columbia University whereas Litman is an Assistant Professor and Associate Director of the Creative Writing Program at the University of Connecticut. Both the writers avoided conventional marriage and married outside the Jewish religion: Shteyngart married a lady of Korean descent named Esther Won whereas Litman married a playwright of African descent named Ian Fraser.

There are also some major differences between Shteyngart and Litman apart from the most obvious one of gender. The first major difference is the time they got to spend in the Soviet Union and their age at the time of departure. Shteyngart was just seven years old when his parents left the Soviet Union in 1978 whereas Litman was nineteen years old when her family quit the homeland in 1992. As a result, Shteyngart encounter 'authenticity crises'. His short story entitled 'Three Views from the Avenue of Karl Mark' written as homage to his uncle Aaron, a victim of the Soviet labour camp, had invited objections on the part of Shteyngart's own mother regarding certain details being wrong. In his autobiography, Shteyngart expresses his response to his mother's objections. He writes:

"I am heartbroken. Oddly enough, the pain feels similar to being called a Red Gerbil in Hebrew school. There, I was ridiculed for being an inauthentic American, and now I am being charged with being an inauthentic Russian. I do not yet understand that this very paradox is the true subject of so-called immigrant fiction. When the inevitable rejection slip comes from *The New Yorker*, I decide I have to go back to Russia to get the details right" (2014 280).

Shteyngart repatriated to Russia in 1999 for the first time and continues to visit every year as he falls short of authentic details. Litman never encountered this issue as she spent nineteen years in the Soviet Union before making the USA as her second home.

The second major difference is the education they took. In the USA, Shteyngart went to the Solomon Schechter School of Queens (the SSSQ) in the USA. The references to his bitter experiences of the school can be found in his autobiography and interviews. In his autobiography, he labels the SSSQ as a conservative Hebrew school and describes it as a frightening institution. At the school, he didn't understand prayers uttered in Hebrew language. His teachers at the SSSQ disallowed him to speak Russian language and his schoolmates mocked his poor English. He earned the title 'a stinky Russian bear' due to his fur overcoat. Due to his Russian origin, he was disallowed near the native born Jewish girls. At the school, he felt like being a dalit or an outcast. Retrospectively, he regards his eight years' existence at the SSSQ as subhuman. Unlike Shteyngart, Litman did not attend the Hebrew School in the USA but she had the firsthand knowledge of anti-Semitism practiced during her years in the USSR. After the discussion of some common similarities and major differences between the two, the researchers intend to

discuss how these two writers depict anti-Semitism and philo-Semitism in the works and how these writers respond to the Jewish religion, its rites and rituals and Jewish identity.

Anti-Semitism is hostility towards, prejudices about and discrimination of Jewish people by the gentile. Shteyngart and Litman deeply detest anti-Semitism practiced in the Soviet Union but differ regarding how they treat it and how far they go. Shteyngart depicts anti-Semitism as one of the major issues encountered by the Soviet Jews besides many others. He writes about the issue of anti-Semitism in his second novel *Absurdistan* specifically. He draws the attention of the readers towards prejudices and misconception associated with Soviet Jews developed by the non-Jewish Soviet citizens out of anti-Semitic hatred. Shteyngart denies the charge imposed on the Soviet Jews that they did not take part in a war against Hitler. Shteyngart's protagonist of *Absurdistan* draws attention towards his childhood memories associated with anti-Semitism: the school teachers and factory directors used to threaten him of stapling his penis to wall; his schoolmates did misdeeds with him and made slanderous remarks like 'dandruffy Yid'; imposition of censorship of Jewish rites and rituals like circumcision, destruction of Jewish graveyards by the local hooligans, plunder of gold and covering of the Jewish graves with a swastika, the politicization of the Holocaust figures, etc. Thus, Shteyngart critically deals with anti-Semitism in his novel that appears to be one of the major issues that the Soviet Jews encountered besides other issues like economic backwardness, prostitution, cultural loss, criminality and corruption, etc.

Litman too deeply detests anti-Semitism and this forms a key part of her fictional works. She draws the attention of the readers towards anti-Semitic practices like discrimination witnessed by the Jewish teachers and students in the Soviet educational set up, misconception that the Jewish people do not appreciate inclusiveness of the country, belief that Jews are ungrateful and unpatriotic people, and so on. Moreover, Litman draws the attention of the readers towards the creation of negative image of the Soviet Jews as unclean and vermins out of Semitic hatred. The Soviet Jews are held accountable for causing alcoholism, drug addiction and for spreading AIDS among the Soviet Kids. Litman depicts how the constant fear of pogrom horrified the lives of the Soviet Jews and compelled them to quit the Soviet Union. Litman portrays that anti-Semitism, the economic backwardness and the constant fear of pogrom are the major driving forces that compelled the Soviet Jews to quit the country. Besides, Litman depicts that the Jewish youth are excluded from taking valuable education and are also kept away from important job positions. Litman draws the conclusion that the Soviet Union is a hostile place and a futureless society for the Soviet Jews and the only way of survival is emigration and relocation in another country. Like Litman, Shteyngart's protagonist of *Absurdistan* Misha Vainberg arrives at the conclusion drawn by Litman. Thus, both Shteyngart and Litman depict anti-Semitism in their fictional works but these two writers vary in the scope and treatment of anti-Semitism. The horrible nature of anti-Semitism depicted by Ellen Litman is missing in the work of Shteyngart. This is on account of the time these two writers spent in the Soviet Union: Shteyngart left the Soviet Union at the age of seven whereas Litman experienced anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union for a longer time - till the age of seventeen.

Shteyngart and Litman respond to philo-Semitism differently. Philo-Semitism is an interest in, honour for, and appreciation of Jews, their history and their religion, Judaism, on the behalf of the gentile. Shteyngart expresses his derision towards pseudo philo-

Semitism concern through his protagonist Misha Vainberg in *Absurdistan*. Upon his arrival in the state of Absurdistan, Misha encounters philo-Semitic concerns from many inhabitants of the state including a photographer who exclaims:

“I am very honored. The Jewish people have a long and peaceful history in our land. They are our brothers, and whoever is their enemy is our enemy also. When you are in Absurdsvani, my mother will be your mother, and my wife your sister, and you will always find water in my well to drink.” (2006 114)

Shteyngart exposes how this philo-Semitism is pretentious. Shteyngart presents the state of Absurdistan as populated by the Christian people with a major split into Sevo and Svani fractions caused by the ruling class. During his transient stay of two months in the state of Absurdistan, Misha Vainberg, the protagonist of the novel, is warmly received by the Sevo leader Mr. Nanabragov who is in antagonism with the Svani people. Mr. Nanabragov pretends to be a friend of Misha, the Jewish people and the state of Israel. Inwardly, he expects financial assistance from Israel through Misha’s intervention and with this desire Misha is appointed as the Minister for Sevo-Israeli Affairs by the State Committee for the Restoration of Order and Democracy (the SCROD) headed by Mr. Nanabragov.

In fact, Mr. Nanabragov is the real warlord in the state of Absurdistan who is very much aware of the financially awkward position of the state. He has initiated seemingly real but fictional civil war in the state of Absurdistan so that he could attract the attention of the world powers towards the state. Misha realizes that Mr. Nanabragov’s philo-Semitic concern towards himself, the Jewish people and the state of Israel is false when he arrives in Davidovo, a small hamlet where Mountain Jews live. Misha realizes the Sevo leader Mr. Nanabragov’s philo-Semitic concern is pretentious through the old Rabbi of a village called Davidovo. He confesses that “the Sevo had him sent to a labor camp in Kamchatka when he was twenty. Seven of his eight sons were shot” (2006 328). Avram, Misha’s driver further adds “...After the war, the Sevo tried to have all of our men sent to the gulags so they could take over our villages” (2006 328-329). Misha expresses his aversion for the local dictator of the state of Absurdistan Georgi Kanuk as ‘the murderer’. Misha expresses his gratitude towards the inhabitants of the small village for exchanging the truth about the Sevo. Thus, Shteyngart exposes how philo-Semitic concern is pretentious.

Litman does not respond to philo-Semitic concern in her works. In fact, only her first work entitled *The Last Chicken in America* is set in Squirrel Hill, Pittsburgh that depicts existential dilemma of the Soviet Jews at their adopted second home—the USA. As this fictional work is an outcome of the author’s early three years’ experience of living in America, the author does not touch upon the issue of philo-Semitism. Instead, she depicts how the post-Soviet Jewish emigrants respond to the charitable work undertaken by the American Jews through the Jewish Community Centre (the JCC) that provides financial assistance to the newly arrived Jews from the Soviet Union. The JCC also provides free accommodation, lunch, trips for senior citizens, and computer and English language classes to newly arrived Soviet Jews. Even though some of the Soviet Jews express mild distaste for the charitable activities undertaken by the JCC, Litman personally acknowledges in her interview with Margarita Levantovskaya that these activities are essential in the early phase of life of the Soviet Jews in America.

Litman neither addresses the issue of philo-Semitism in America nor makes any statement about the same explicitly. The way Litman depicts painful efforts of the Soviet engineers and teachers in order to survive in the complex socio-economic structure of the USA, it raises certain doubts about philo-Semitic concern in America. Litman depicts that the Soviet teachers and engineers are forced to undertake low paid and menial jobs in the capitalistic structure of America. Their struggle and efforts of the Soviet Jews in America as depicted by the author raises certain doubts about the policy of America vis-à-vis the Soviet Jews. This doubt is consolidated by the critical remark of Andrew Foreman, the American Jewish critic who blames the American capitalistic system that exploits the Soviet doctors, teachers and engineers by forcing to undertake janitorial and financially less paid jobs. Litman seems to be doubtful of philo-Semitism in America. Thus, Shteyngart and Litman deal with the issue of philo-Semitism differently: Shteyngart deals with the issue of philo-Semitism with derision. This attitude is missing in the work of Litman. This could be the result of time the two writers spent in the USA before writing the works discussed above. Shteyngart's *Absurdistan* is the outcome of his stay in the USA of nearly twenty-five years whereas Litman's *The Last Chicken in America* is the product of her first three years in the USA. Litman seems to have had and have observed a greater struggle on the part of the Russian Jews after migrating to America which may have led to this kind of depiction in her first work.

Jewish religion, its rites and rituals are at the core of Shteyngart and Litman's writing. The Jewish emigrant writers from the former Soviet Union are warmly welcomed and appreciated by the Jewish American critics. Hence, it is very essential to analyse how Shteyngart and Litman depict and deal with the rites and rituals of Judaism. It is also essential to analyse how they depict image of Hasid and Jewish people. It is also important to analyse how these writers depict Jewish religion and whether they embrace Jewish identity or discard the same.

The Soviet Jews were prohibited to practice religious rites and rituals of Judaism in the Soviet Union during the Soviet period. Hence, the reference to the Soviet Jews visiting synagogue in the Soviet Union itself is missing in the works of Shteyngart and Litman. They refer to the elderly Soviet Jews visiting synagogue in America. In his memoir (and not in his fictional works), Shteyngart alludes to his father visiting synagogue in America. He recalls his father visiting an Orthodox synagogue with a multi-coloured baseball cap instead of a proper yarmulke. At first, his father was identified as Spanish drunkard from the street by the worshippers at the synagogue. When they realized that he is their long lost co-religionist, they showed a lot of love towards the author's father. Shteyngart's short account clarifies his father's long lost religious and spiritual consciousness due to their captivity and certain restrictions on following religious rites and rituals in the Soviet Union.

Litman provides more detailed and penetrating account of elderly Russians visiting the synagogue in America than her compatriot. Masha, Litman's alter ego and mouthpiece in *The Last Chicken in America* visits synagogue along with her parents in order to affirm their faith for Judaism on the occasion of Yom Kippur (a particular Jewish holiday). Litman's alter ego observes:

“... The entrance was crowded. My father was handed a spare yarmulke and something that looked like a towel. Inside, the synagogue was big like a theatre,

with tiers of upholstered seating, stained-glass windows, and bright round lights embedded in the ceiling. The service had already started. It was mostly in Hebrew, which neither of us knew. I had a hard time concentrating. I waited for it to feel meaningful. When the cantor started singing, I felt sad. He had a luminous voice that went up to the skies and made my inside clench with loneliness. I glanced at my parents. My mother picked at the prayer book. My father sat shriveled under an unfamiliar shawl. They were filled with stifling discomfort.” (2007 60-61).

Litman’s account clarifies the awkward position of the Soviet Jews during their visit to a synagogue. This visit is remarkable due to their surprise at the giant structure of the synagogue which they have not seen in the Soviet Union. The visit is marked by their lack of knowledge about customs of Judaism and Hebrew language. They experience discomfort and loneliness during the prayer in the synagogue. Thus, Shteyngart and Litman’s account of visit to synagogue by the Soviet Jews in America is itself evident of the lost religious and spiritual consciousness in the Soviet Jews due to certain restriction imposed upon them in their first home.

Shteyngart and Litman respond differently to the rites and rituals of Judaism. Circumcision is held as a pivotal process in Judaism. The father of the protagonist in *Absurdistan* is an ardent Jew who believes that circumcision makes one a Jew. Shteyngart himself underwent the ritual of circumcision at the age of eight in America. In his memoir, he regards circumcision as a stamp and a seal on the body of a Jew. Shteyngart in *Absurdistan* responds negatively to the ritual of circumcision. Although it is done in childhood of a male person, Misha Borisovich Vainberg, the protagonist of *Absurdistan* did not undergo this ritual in his childhood as his mother was afraid of the district committee that will blame the family for Zionist behavior. At eighteen, Misha is sent by his father to America to become a Jew by undergoing the process of circumcision. Against his wish and due to the strong will of his ardent Jewish father, Hasids in America performed the process of circumcision. Shteyngart and Misha perceive circumcision as their great loss and mourn it continuously in the novel. This has much affected their perceptions of Hasids, Jewish religion and Jewish identity. While Shteyngart negatively deals with the religious process of circumcision, neither Litman nor her male characters talk about it at all. Instead, Litman talks about other rites and rituals of Judaism.

Litman expresses her fascination for Jewish culture and its rites and rituals like Sabbath Day and the Passover through her autobiographical figure Masha. Masha has got a job of babysitter for an American Jewish lady named Pamela who prepares the kosher meal on the occasion of ‘Sabbath Day’. On this occasion, Pamela offers blessing to her husband. Masha is greatly impressed by this religious practice but has never seen her mother celebrating the same either in the Soviet Union or the USA. The Soviet Jews in America are ignorant of the Jewish culture because of the restrictions imposed on following the rites and rituals of Judaism in USSR. In this context, Masha remarks, “...The holidays we were accustomed to were secular and sharply marked: November 7- Great October Revolution; March 8-International Women’s Day. Passover wasn’t in our calendars” (2007 67). Although Litman’s alter ego is greatly impressed by the cultural rites and rituals of Judaism practiced by the American Jews, neither she, nor her parents or any of the other Soviet Jewish characters in USA are seen following the rites and rituals of

Judaism in *The Last Chicken in America*. In this way, Litman maintains distance from Jewish cultural rites and rituals.

Shteyngart and Litman commonly depict the image of Hasid but their approach towards the Hasid is different. Hasid is an ardent Jew who is a staunch believer in Judaism and its preaching. Shteyngart often expresses his strong hatred for Hasids and his protagonist Misha feels offended at the sight of Hasids in *Absurdistan*. On his plane journey from St. Petersburg to the state of Absurdistan, Misha encounters a Hasid whom he describes as ‘scraggy- bearded and pimped’. Misha is certain that the Hasid has not purchased first class ticket. Misha is greatly infuriated by Hasid’s quarrel with the stewardess over the issue of the kosher meal provided on the plane that is not certified by a Rabbi. Misha strongly wants to kill the Hasid but he is aware of the fact that they share the same DNA. He wants the stewardess to remove the food brought by the Hasid in the plane that seems to him a sign of barbarity. He considers his fight with the Hasid as a fight between a good Jew and a bad Jew. When the plane officials fail to remove the Hasid from the first class, Misha leaves his first class seat for the economy class. Misha staunchly denounces the Hasid because Misha feels the Hasids took the best part of him in the process of circumcision. Thus, Shteyngart’s protagonist deeply detests the Hasids for circumcision.

Litman also presents the persona of the Hasid with whom her protagonist is unhappy. Litman’s protagonist in the first titular story named Alick who works at Rosenthal’s Pizza (a kosher restaurant) complains about the Hasids. He complains that the Hasids visiting the place for kosher pizza are unclean and are sweating in their jacket. He also complains about the miserable tips or no tips the Hasids handover. Alick detests the American Hasids. Thus, Litman’s protagonist too expresses his aversion for the Hasids but is much mild than that of Shteyngart. Shteyngart’s aversion towards Hasids expressed through his protagonist of the *Absurdistan* is on account of the ritual of circumcision performed by the Hasid.

Shteyngart and Litman widely differ in their depiction of Jewish people, Jewish religion, and their Jewish identity. Shteyngart is highly critical of Jewish people whom he denounces very much. In his memoir, he talks about perceptions of his father and mother about their kith and kin. Shteyngart summarizes it in very lucid manner: “To my mother, my father’s kin are savage and provincial. To my father, hers are pretentious and false. Neither of them is entirely wrong” (2014 21). In *Absurdistan*, Misha Vainberg encounters his pretentious and mean Jewish relatives at the funeral of his father. He is infuriated with them and comments: “...During the thirties and forties, Stalin had killed half my family. Arguably the wrong half” (2006 45). Shteyngart’s protagonist Misha perceives the Jewish religion in negative light. Misha’s gentile step-mother named Lyuba wants Misha to help her in converting into Judaism. Misha doesn’t want her convert to Judaism and regards her wish of conversion as a bad idea. He further passes negative comment about Judaism and says “... it’s just a codified system of anxieties. It’s a way to keep nervous and maligned people in check. It’s a losing proposition for everyone involved, the Jew, his friends, even his enemy in the end” (2006 88). Shteyngart denies the Jewish identity in his interview with Natasha Grinberg and expresses his pride over being a secular Jew. In similar manner, Misha denies his Jewish identity and proclaims that “I’m a deeply secular Jew who finds no comfort in either nationalism or religion” (2006 viii). Thus, Shteyngart is critical of Jewish people, of his race, Jewish religion and denies his Jewish identity vehemently. His anti-Jewish stance is a result of his eight



years' experience at the SSSQ. About this bad experience at the conservative Hebrew school, he says in his interview with Natasha Grinberg "I was always taught to be proud to be Jewish, but some of the worst experiences in my life were the eight years I spent at Hebrew school. As a result, I'm not religious at all. I'm proud to be a secular Jew". Thus, Shteyngart depicts the Jewish people, Jewish religion negatively and rejects his Jewish identity.

Litman depicts Jewish people, Jewish religion and Jewish identity positively and with full sympathy. Litman does not feel disrespect for Jewish people either in the Soviet Union or the USA. On the contrary, she is a strong supporter of the Soviet Jews and sympathizes with them for their pathetic state in the complex socio-economic structure of America. She also depicts painful and pathetic state of the Soviet Jews in the Soviet Union on account of anti-Semitism. Her fictional works delineates existential dilemma of the Jewish people in both the Soviet Union and the USA. Litman is not deeply religious although her female protagonist and mouthpiece named Masha in *The Last Chicken in America* is greatly impressed by the celebration of the Jewish holidays by the American Jews. Litman and her characters in her fictional works never appear to be celebrating Jewish holidays. Yet, she does not deny her Jewish identity. In her interview with Margarita Levantovskaya, Litman explicitly acknowledges that "to me, being Jewish is cultural. It has nothing really to do with religion" (2016 450). Hence, she is Jewish culturally and not religiously. She does not glorify Jewish religion, its rites and rituals in her fictional works. Thus, Shteyngart and Litman widely differ in their depiction of the Jewish people, Jewish religion and Jewish identity. Let's compare how Shteyngart and Litman depict anti-Semitism and philo-Semitism.

Shteyngart and Litman depict the issue of anti-Semitism in their fictional works critically but differ in its scope and treatment. Firstly, for Shteyngart, anti-Semitism, economic backwardness, loss of culture and morality in the post-Soviet citizenry, harlotry, criminality and bribery are key issues that inspire love for America and hatred for Russia in the mind of the protagonist in *Absurdistan*. All these issues want him to leave the country and relocate in America; however, this remains unaccomplished even at the end of the work. Litman too depicts anti-Semitism critically and is the major preoccupation in her fictional works. Secondly, anti-Semitism does not appear as serious and horrible issue in Shteyngart as in Litman. Litman draws the conclusion that the Soviet Union is not a hospitable, comfortable home for the Soviet Jews. For the Soviet Jews, according to Litman, self-exile and relocation in another country is the only way of survival. Thirdly, anti-Semitism is both an individual as well as a communal experience in Litman's works which is not so in Shteyngart. Lastly, Litman depicts the sufferings of the Jews in the Soviet Union on account of anti-Semitism as well as their inability to adjust with capitalism in America. This doesn't happen in Shteyngart's *Absurdistan*. The reason could be the very less time Shteyngart got to spend in the Soviet Union.

Shteyngart and Litman respond differently to the issue of philo-Semitism in their works. Shteyngart critically exposes the issues of philo-Semitism whereas the same is missing in Litman's work. The researchers believe that this is the outcome of their experiences of the second home. Shteyngart wrote *Absurdistan* in 2006 which is the outcome of his wide experience of nearly twenty-five years of staying in the USA. Litman's only work to be set in the USA is *The Last Chicken in America* that depicts sufferings of the Soviet

Jews under capitalism and is based on three years' experiences of the Soviet Jews in the USA.

Shteyngart and Litman respond differently to Jewish religion, its rites and rituals and the Jewish identity. Both the writers depict elderly Soviet Jews visiting the synagogue in the USA and the lack of awareness and proper knowledge of rites and rituals done in the synagogue. It is the natural result of certain restrictions and strict control imposed on the Jews in the Soviet captivity. Shteyngart and his protagonist of the novel negatively talk about the ritual of circumcision. About this ritual, neither Litman nor any male characters in her novels talk about. Instead, Litman shows immense fascination for other rites and rituals of Judaism like the Passover and the Sabbath Day. Hasid is a very important person in Jewish religion who performs various religious activities. Both Shteyngart and Litman provide an account of the Hasid but their depiction and approach towards the Hasid varies vastly. Litman provides short account of the Hasid about whom her male character expresses mild distaste due to their uncleanliness and shabbiness. Shteyngart in *Absurdistan* provides detailed account of the Hasid. His protagonist Misha expresses deep hatred for the Hasid due to the forced circumcision that went wrong. His protagonist maintains long-lasting hatred for the Hasid because he believes that he lost his masculinity due to the Hasid. Shteyngart deeply hates the Jewish people whereas Litman is sympathetic towards the Jewish people due to their suffering in the Soviet Union due to anti-Semitism and their exploitation in the USA under capitalism. Shteyngart goes on to discard his Jewish identity. He projects himself as a progressive or a secular Jew. On the other hand, Litman does not talk much about the Jewish religion but has positive views about it. Moreover, she accepts her Jewish identity as a cultural but not a religious matter.

Thus, Shteyngart and Litman widely differ in their dealing with and depiction of anti-Semitism, philo-Semitism, the Jewish religion, its rites and rituals, the Jewish people, the Hasids, their Jewish identity etc. Shteyngart's deep hatred for the Jewish religion and his discard of the Jewish identity is the outcome of his bad experience at the SSSQ. Though Shteyngart detests the issue of anti-Semitism and philo-Semitism, he appears to be anti-Semitic due to his deep hatred of the Hasid, negative portrayal of the Jewish people, adverse remarks about the Jewish religion and denial of the Jewish identity. On the contrary, Litman maintains proper balance in her depiction of rites and rituals of Judaism, Jewish people and Jewish religion.

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# AGONY OF DESOLATION IN CHEKHOV'S "THE MISERY" AND ITS HINDI ADAPTATION, *Vishad* : A CONTRASTIVE ANALYSIS OF CULTURAL CONTEXTS

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**Abstract:** Anton Chekhov is renowned for his secretive narration and subtle language portraying miserable human existence. He is a playwright at par in his short stories too. His characters grapple with insurmountable agony that is often brought home to us in a biting objectivity of narration. 'The Misery' (1886) is one of the author's finest achievements into the exploration of the world of affliction and indifference that characterizes much of the modern world. This paper makes a comparative reading of Chekhov's original story and one of its recent Hindi adaptations by author Ravindra Pratap Singh as *विषाद*, with the objective of identifying how the differences in the cultural milieu and the popular sensibilities of the two settings transform the narrative technique in the original yet managing to retain the impact.

**Keywords:** Chekhov, *The Misery*, desolation, adaptation, indifference, isolation, dramatic, objective, sorrow.

Chekhov's story 'The Misery', originally titled, "Tocka" and first published in 1886, reflects his characteristic narrative tendency to depict the bitter truths of life in its stark realities. The suffocating pain of a father who lost his young son is touched with such fine skill that the chilling inconsiderate reactions of the other characters makes any empathetic reader want to share a ride on his horse-driven cab and along with it the loss that lies heavy upon his grieving heart desperately yearning for an outlet. But what is even more representative than this tendency is the objectivity of narration and the heartless Chekhovian language in which the story is worded because the callousness of a selfish and inconsiderate world makes the suffering of a troubled existence snowball and the gloom of despair much darker. Right at the onset of the story the twilight and drizzling snow that shrouds the surroundings set the mood for the cold narrative where every ounce of sympathy and fellow feeling seems to have frozen in tandem with the external atmosphere. To further intensify this lack of warmth, the protagonist, Iona Potapov is described as "quite white and looks like a phantom". The introduction crafts an impression that is so specific to Chekhov's narrative style – that of inactivity and inertia. In a recent adaptation of the story as a short play titled *विषाद*, by Ravindra Pratap Singh, the essence of the story is kept intact but the cultural differences between the two settings and the differing narrative techniques highlight how the same insufferable nature of human existence could be rendered in a motionless and objective narrative at one place and in moving verses and emotive dialogues at the other. Singh's adaptation describes a warm evening in the life of a cabdriver by the name Fazal, who has just lost his son a few days back and is overwhelmed with grief. The stark difference in the setting of the two narratives itself establishes a contrast in the points of view with which the same incident is pictured. Unlike the cold and snowy twilight of the original story, the adapted narrative is set on a summer evening and even the poetic language and the dialogic structure gear the reader for a deeply subjective dramatization of the grief of a man whose world has just turned for the worst. However, even though the means to depict the tragedy that has befallen a lonely man are diametrically different,

the crushing weight of it on a lonely soul remains quite the same and chilling inhumanity of the other characters in the story who come across it is found almost similar despite the separate cultural contexts of the two texts.

Desolation and suffering are major themes in Russian literature. Writers of nineteenth century Russian literature, such as Fyodor Dostoyevsky and Leo Tolstoy, explored the themes of desolation and despair in works such as *Crime and Punishment* and *War and Peace*, respectively. In the twentieth century, writers like Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn discuss a completely different aspect of human suffering in Soviet forced labour camps. Though the deftness with which Chekhov addresses the inhumanity of the times is unparalleled even by his contemporaries. Harold Bloom observes in his essay on Chekhov's art that his narrative style causes us to come to terms with the genuine horror of our existence which could otherwise make us mad and violent. (Bloom, 3) This horror is reflected in the world of the story where an aggrieved consciousness is unable to find a single soul to share on real terms the trauma of such a debilitating tragedy as the demise of one's son in the prime of youth. This is deftly represented by the inability for movement – both physical and mental – that is characteristic of both the original text and its adaptation which, according to Bloom, is the stuff of actual action of much of Chekhov's narratives.

The charge of restraint that Chekhovian prose is often levelled with has roots in the temperaments and attitudes not only towards literature and performing arts such as the theatre, but also in the state sanctioned forms of behaviour which restricted 'all forms of histrionic pleasure.' (Burgess, 160) Russian audiences of the 18<sup>th</sup> and the early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries were accustomed to such repression and even when certain liberties were afforded to engage in theatrical performances as a way of pastime, they exhibited a restraint that reflects on the kind of reserve the writers of the day evinced in their works because to involve in amusements such as a play was still an indiscreet act worthy of suspicion as it had been something foreign and not inherently Russian.(161) It is also quite pertinent to consider the history of Russian theatre before jumping to any conclusions regarding the suitability of Chekhov's technique of objectivity to generate the desired effect. During the imperial times and all through the nineteenth century, stringent censorship was applicable to much of Russian theatre and it was more or less under great governmental prohibitions. In the mid-twentieth century, Chekhov's work also came to be impacted by revisions and omissions undertaken as a project of Communist censorship which was promoted as the publication of the complete works of the author in a 'new and better edition' that included his 'vast epistolary legacy.' (Struve, 328-329) Such acts of revisionist nature aimed at extracting Chekhov's criticism of the Russian Communist regime and as such many select passages of his letters have either been removed from newer editions or they have been destroyed altogether. In one of his letters written to his sister in the Spring of 1891 which was later numbered 887, he records his praise for the Italian actress Eleonora Duse whose performance in an enactment of Shakespeare's *Anthony and Cleopatra* was so remarkable that Chekhov charged the Russian theatre actors as 'wooden' in comparison and the Russian theatre as boring and inferior compared to the English: "It was all right for him to go into raptures over Duse, but his Soviet readers apparently must not know that he also spoke disparagingly of the Russian theatre and Russian actresses." (Struve, 331) As such the lines referring to this comparison were removed from the edition of

his works published in 1949 even though they had been quoted in full in the one published in 1939, an edition itself edited by an original editor of the new Soviet edition.

Even the Russian theatre audience grew complacent with time which John Carr finds is quite opposite to the lively and interactive audience of the English stage. (Burgess, 183) According to Gary Thurston in his research, theatre and several other arts flourished in Russia in its Silver age which is the period beginning near about the last decade of the nineteenth century to the early decades of the twentieth century. (Thurston, 237) Even though the renowned The Moscow Art Theatre introduced many novel tastes and the access to rich European literature was available to a select few elite and the sophisticated classes, they were still under some sort of censorship of subject matter and representation of classes and their concerns. Thurston also finds that the essential problem in interpretation of a work of literature is an epistemological one concerned with one's perspective and worldview which makes them analyze what they see in a specific way. He even quotes the Russian critic Vissarion Belinsky to argue that the way of seeing is connected with the concept of nationality and the nationality and culture are influenced more by "manner of perceiving" than by things such as the local cuisine or the way of dressing. (237) Therefore, to write subjective and overtly emotional narratives exposing the harsh facets of humanity at a time when censorship was closely knitted to the concept of a nation would be to provoke a sense of guilt and challenge the modes of restraint mandated by legal means. For a long period of time the government resisted any attempts at introduction of literary culture of the West to the uncivilized people, (Thurston, 239) Scholars like Gleb Struve even find instances in which select passages critical of Russian exploitation of its subjects were carefully left out from many of his thousands of letters written unabashedly as they were personal correspondences. This is why Chekhov chooses to cut down on an expressive tendency that was viewed at the time as a human weakness and to write works in all their brutal truths so as to amaze and terrify the audiences with how strange the reality actually is.

Indian culture has been quite nourishing and freely explorative towards all the liberal arts since the ancient times, achieving such pinnacles of perfection as the *Natyashastra*, and owing to the quintessential democratic nature of the culture, the readers and audiences are accustomed to accepting highly expressive forms of representation and to visualize what is implied. It offers the elaborate theory of *rasas* - literally meaning juices - which is a concept expressing the essence or the aesthetic flavour of any literary, artistic, visual or musical work that generates an emotional appeal in the reader or the audience but is not easily described in words. The goal of theatre is to allow a feeling heart to connect with the rhythms propelled by the actor on stage and the work being performed and emotions and subjective expression are innate features of achieving that goal. As a result, Indian audiences are quite used to delving deep into the world of emotions and exploration of the inner states of being and reticence is not really a feature encouraged in excess except when the artistic requirements necessitate it. Chekhov too has admitted in his letters to having viewed highly emotive performances by several English actors during many of his visits which made the Russian theatre performances pale in comparison and the reason he cites for this in one of his letters is the power of expression that is quite characteristic of the English stage. Therefore, the adaptation centres on glowing verses elaborating the grief of the

protagonist and draws on dramatic liberties to contrast the indifference of the modern world. Elisa Ganser observes in her essay that during the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries, modes of expression in theatre evolved greatly and there has been a 're-discovery and re-evaluation of the emotional sphere' owing to developments of fields such as psychoanalysis which have afforded 'new understandings of subjectivity and expressivity in the arts': "Since their first codification in the *Natyashastra*, the performing arts of India have strongly emphasized the role of emotions in the composition of a dramatic text, in the staging process, as well as in the theoretical discussions centered around the aesthetic experience of the spectator." (Ganser, 64) The short-play adaptation functions on this technique to give an elaborately expressive and dramatic form to the grief of the protagonist complimenting it by moving versification to appeal to the senses of the spectators.

The inactivity in the world of Chekhov's story is jolted with the appearance of an officer in a greatcoat who is extremely impatient and he channels hurried movement into otherwise still world of Iona and his horse. The horse shrugs off the snow and even the lethargic usage of the whip to encourage movement signals the compulsion of earning food for himself and the horse. Even in the short play the similar scene is reenacted with an employee of some company impatiently hovering over Fazal to take him to the *Imambara*. The passengers in both the case seem much pressurized by the desire to reach a destination and they abuse the old man to push beyond his limits. Even the other characters who remain nameless such as a carriage driver who swears at him, or a passerby who is furious for just escaping being hit by an inch indicate a similar lack of empathy, if not for the plight that has befallen the poor driver for he could not have known of it, then at least for his miserable condition and his exhaustive efforts at outdoing himself just to be able to earn a meal for himself and his horse. Russian critics have acknowledged how Chekhov found sources of creativity in the most commonplace, everyday incidents. Leonid Obolensky in his critical review of the Russian version of the story commends Chekhov's extraordinary ability to find the hidden drama behind simple everyday occurrences such as the callousness of the characters in the story towards the protagonist's plight. (Obolensky, 178) In his essay on Vasilii Rozanov regarding his assessment of Chekhov, Vladimir B. Kataev observes how this "problem of understanding" is one of the central concerns of Chekhov's writing: "In '*Toska*' ('Misery', 1886), no one can understand the true reason for the angst of the drayman Iona, including himself. (Kataev, 4) He even observes that in Chekhov's stories where the protagonist is an ordinary person unable to muster the strength to find his way through life, there is always a central theme of non-understanding. When Iona dares to mention the death of his son Barin to the officer, the very matter of fact reaction and the query "what did he die of" make the pain of losing his son multiple times harder, for the officer could not care enough to listen or begin to understand the story of how his son was reportedly suffering from high fever and was three days in the hospital without proper attention. The officer has no reaction at all this time but only curses and goads him to hurry towards their destination. Even in the adaptation, when Fazal tries to narrate about what happened to his sick son named Badal, the passenger is least bothered, similarly curses the humble driver. The realism of such an incident is unmistakable and attests to Chekhov's own vision of reality. Some critics have claimed that he had a pessimistic and absurdist view of reality while

others find optimism in the resoluteness of his characters but what Chekhov really seems to hold is that change is possible only if human beings are willing to make it happen. He saw both the most pitiable and the greatest of man's conditions and maintained a dualistic balance between representing both. (Borny, 50-51)

The second set of passengers in the original tale are a group of three drunkard friends who freely use foul language and mock Iona for his shabby appearance and a tattered hat. They even harass him physically and threaten to hit him if he keeps a slow pace. Not only do they advocate using the whip hard on the poor animal but their response to Iona's statement of his son's death is cruel and inhuman to the point of revulsion: "We must all die, ...now hurry up!" This is quite similar to the way in which the group of young men in the adaptation frisk and abuse Fazal even though he makes repeated futile attempts to appeal to their humanity by sharing the debilitating news of the demise of his only son. This blatancy of expression and inhuman coldness to another's grief and feelings is a representative technique of Chekhov's short stories and he confesses that this is a deliberate device: "When you depict sad or unlucky people, and want to touch the reader's heart, try to be colder — it gives their grief as it were a background, against which it stands out in greater relief" (Friedland, 97). To consider an example, his story "Trifle of Life" shows a similar episode of blunt betrayal of a young boy's trust when the protagonist Nikolay reveals to his mother that their servant takes her children to see their father even after their separation, even though the adolescent boy in his tender beliefs had received a promise from the man that it would not happen that way. When the little boy attempts to highlight the betrayal, he is brushed off with absolute disregard for his feelings or his loss of innocence at an age so young. This specific incident in the life of a young boy that is referred to a trifle is chosen by the author to close the story with an abrupt open-ending indicating that it may not be a trifling matter in the developmental stage of a blameless boy after all. This "sparser, more objective, dramatically focused narrative" as critic R. L. Johnson calls it, lends the plot an offensive appeal that intensifies the desired effect. (Bloom, 33)

The adaptation introduces another element into the plot which is distinctively characteristic of cultural context in which the story is set. Addressing the local colour, Singh's adaptation introduces an array of characters beside the ones in the original story to interject the dialogue to present a choral mirroring of the predicament in which the protagonist is caught up. Even before the first passenger is brought in, the plot begins by an ascetic, referred to in Hindi as *fakir* and his three followers, who pass by playing a *sarangi* or a short-necked fiddle, engrossed in a melodious versification illustrating the indifferent ways of the contemporary times in which the world keeps on its dynamic pace and people seldom have time to do so much as just listen and share the sorrow of others:

भगदड़ - भगदड़ - उठा - पटक,  
कौन सुनेगा,  
कौन सुने है,  
औरों की सिसकारी,  
भाई औरों की सिसकारी,  
रे, औरों की सिसकारी। (विषाद, २०१८, ६)



This poetic verse is a direct commentary on the terrible isolation faced by the protagonist while the world around him is all hustle and bustle with maddening rush. The second scene of the short play begins with a clown and his follower who voice their melancholic verse stating that the world is too in rush in the modern times and people have enough chaos within themselves to be able to focus on the sorrow of fellow human beings. Like the previous choral interjection, this too serves to attest to the tastes of the local setting and to make the grief of the protagonist more relatable to a reader accustomed to such dramatic representations. Not just this, there are also instances in the text where lyrical verses are introduced as a set of dramatic devices separately in the form of songs playing in the backdrop such as the song playing on the radio contrasting the desperation of Fazal while the first passenger angrily commands it to be stopped. These songs serve a twofold function of which the first is evident that they become a tool for the author to allow the audience to relate with the pathetic state of the protagonist. Secondly, and more importantly they serve to perform a subjective mode of expression in stark contrast to the restrained and economical expressions of the original text thus highlighting a fundamental difference in the outlooks of both the cultures regarding a similar tragic portrayal of human existence, one being that of reticence while another theatrical and reaction-provoking.

Literary scholarship has had differing takes on the evident objectivity of Chekhov's prose, some early reviewers, such as Williamson even holding disparaging views on the matter claiming that Chekhov did not aim for morality and always attempted to remain impersonal and cold even to the point of depiction of a hopeless reality with no probable absolution. However recent critics like John Hagan find that it is a mistake to relate Chekhov's work to the straitjacketed restrictions of nineteenth century Naturalism in literature as if it only promoted objectivism, detachment and a social commentary and had no moral leanings or saw the world as doomed and irredeemable. (Hagan, 415) Even though in some of his earlier works he leans towards a naturalist stance of life, it was more an ornamentation than the spring of his creativity and his work remained thoroughly realistic. (Moravcevic, 224) Chekhov's impersonality with which he often describes the desolate human condition from which there seems to be no escape is a well-crafted schematic ploy as he himself reiterates time and again in many of his letters to his family and as noted by many scholars over the years. It is also sometimes pointed out by scholars such as H.E. Bates that even if objectivity is used as a tool by the writer, he never condemns, "had no judgement to pass, through either humour or tragedy, on the ridiculous or the most depraved of his fellow-men." (Hagan, 409) According to scholars like Hagan, this too is an unwise view since right from his early years Chekhov has portrayed evil and condemnable characters such as tyrants and parasites, towards whom he expressed obvious contempt and ridicule. Even in the "A Trifle of Life", the way he presents Nikolay's blunt disruption of Alyosha's trust and the sobbing of the poor child, it is incontestable that he feels vexed at the act that has a ruinous impact on the formative years of the young boy. Similarly, the way he presents cold way in which the first passenger rebuffs to listen to the cabdriver's grieving heart or the inhuman manner in which the three drunkards humiliate and mock at his sorrow, or even the disinterest with which one of his own fellow beings treats him, all intends to evoke the shocking indifference and ruthlessness of a materialistic and self-centred modern society that is always a little too consumed to pay any heed to the pain of other

human beings. The meanings and implications conveyed in the inter-cultural communication of the adaptation also serve to evoke the inhumanity and coldness of the human society that is engrossed in its own preoccupations to be able to focus on what pain and suffering lies all around them. It is important, however, to note here that the method employed in the adaptation is anything but purely objective which is even specified by its length since it develops the short story into a short-play running several pages.

In both, the original story and the adaptation, the indifference goes beyond the divisions of class as even the third attempt of Iona and Fazal dooms in a similar manner when they try to approach a fellow driver back at the stables with their “immense, illimitable grief”, but the young driver drinks the water and falls fast asleep without reacting. The only companion that they find in the outright cruel and indifferent world is their horses, who are one in their hunger and their loneliness. A particular Chekhovian technique with regard to development of character by elaborating on the collective pathos against an ‘oppressive inevitability’ is quite evident here. (Moravcevic, 226) It is significant to consider the findings of the biographers who have paid attention to the context of Chekhov’s writing pointing out how he wrote at a time of layered censorship by the state and editorial compulsions to ensure the security of his family that became reasons for his outstanding objective descriptions. It was a tactical device in order to bring home the deepest possible impact without causing the seriousness to be diluted by melodrama and emotional appeal. It is also consequential to note that the shadow of death is reflected everywhere in and it is difficult imagine Chekhov’s work without that common running theme and that itself drawn from the experiences in his life with himself and his friends and family. (Malcolm, 138) The adaptation, both due to its liberties of length and the alternate setting of free circulation of emotive depictions and scenes, is apt in dramatizing the grief of the protagonist for the reader and the audience to be able to relate to and empathize with. The charge against Chekhov’s impersonality is diluted when one reads a particular passage at the end of the story where the narrative voice almost attends to the pain of the protagonist in a subjective and revelatory tone:

His son will soon have been dead a week, and he has not really talked to anybody yet.... He wants to talk of it properly, with deliberation.... He wants to tell how his son was taken ill, how he suffered, what he said before he died, how he died.... He wants to describe the funeral, and how he went to the hospital to get his son's clothes...His listener ought to sigh and exclaim and lament. (“The Misery”, 1886; Norton, 1979)

This expression is anything but objective and it clearly appeals to the empathy of the reader to realize how the mundane, everyday existence has rendered the society inert to the pain that throbs throughout the driver’s being. The similar expression is found even in the expressive lines of the adaptation with an added technique of verse lines that actually dramatize the sorrow to evoke the desired emotion of pity and grief. It is equally significant that the horse not only becomes a companion as a listener to their grief but it even breathes over their hand as if expressing compassion in the only way it can. Its reaction is a crucial instance at the climax because it defies the charge of objectivity levelled against Chekhov for he shows that he is of course moved by the pathos suffered by the helpless man and introduces the strain in the form of a reaction

by the mute animal but to intensify the effect on the readers, he consciously chooses to render an objective take throughout the story. Chekhov's stories are about the horror of everyday existence that is inescapable and unbearable at the same time. To conclude in the words of Stein, his works "portrayed the life of society in a way that left no doubt in the reader's mind that such a life had to be changed." (381) Both from the remarkable story and its adaptation as a short play, a common implication appears that human existence itself is desolate but that it has a potential for change. Everyone has to realize that "only he himself was capable of changing his own life." (Stein, 381) The cross-cultural distinctions and the modes of expression aside, the fate of the protagonists is equally dependent on their persistence in the face of sapping grief and cruel inhumanity of the world.

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# RETHINKING TOLSTOY: INDIGENEITY AND RESILIENCE AS A MODE OF EXISTENCE

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**Abstract:** *A long tradition of peasant economy and peasantry have focused on indigenous modes of existence. The prehistoric ties to place, nature, tradition and cultural memory illustrates the relationship of human being with nature as a vital proponent of sustainability. The agrarian literary tradition focused on inner organic form and rural life as self-sufficient, sustainable and resilient. Resilience is the capacity to deal with shocks analytically explaining how ecological systems respond to change. Tolstoy's Anna Karenina replicates the Russian indigenous systems and represents the mixed modern-ancient expression of culture and identity. His text articulates rural sustainability and cultural resilience interrogates human construction of modernity with an emphasis on transformation, destruction, reorganization reoccurring at micro and macro level. Tolstoy's narrative notifies collective cultural schema and change. The paper will focus on 'dying consciousness' as well as the notion of resilience and sustainability as method of survival illustrated through contrasting pictures given in Tolstoy's Anna Karenina.*

**Keywords:** *Resilience, Leo Tolstoy, Sustainability, Culture, Russian Literature*

The paper theorizes on four terms or concepts: Resilience, sustainability, literature and narrativity and examines Tolstoy's view of agrarian and cultural life. His leaning towards agrarian view, community solidarity in *Anna Karenina* stands in opposition to the new technologies, industries, social differentiation, growth of a working class, transformation in country side. Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina* has been taken as a referential work to understand and evaluate these concepts. The advent of new technologies, industries, social differentiation, growth of a working class and changes in country side emphasized on the essentiality of community cohesion, solidarity and inseparability. The Russian literary narratives focused on agrarian, inner organic form as self-sufficient and resilient. Before defining narrativity in Literature, the concept of resilience needs to be understood. The term Resilience originally developed in the field of ecology and Cicero in 106 BC used the term *resilio* meaning rebound. Resilience which is said to be the ability to deal with shocks, has connections with ecology, further pinpointing how ecological systems respond to changes. Crane articulates the 'resilience of culture' extending beyond ecological boundaries i.e., the ability to maintain livelihood satisfying material and moral needs due to shocks (Temple and Stojanowski 254). Walker and Salt gave three broad concepts and framework for developing an understanding of Resilience approach: (1) Humans live and function in deep rooted social organizations that are closely associated to the organic structures. (2) Socio-ecological structures are complex adaptive systems that do not change in an anticipated, direct method (3) Resilience framework examines a social-ecological system as singular whole that is operational in several scales of time and space. The focus is on changing system and its coping with disorder (qtd in Pisano 10). History, Literature and scientific methods has to keep in mind the development discourse

interconnecting the spheres or domains of ecological and sustainable concerns. Narratives actually brings forth the history, culture and social dimensions of a region / country.

Nash defines narratives as the recollection of life events in historical documents and textbooks, in scientific explanations, in political speeches, in day-to-day conversations. On the other hand, Ryan explains the relationship between narrativity and narrative defining narrative as a semiotic object whereas narrativity as able to inspire a narrative response (qtd in Amerian and Jofi 187). The personal and social can be imagined through a fictional narrative enters history. Tolstoy's *War and Peace* or *Anna Karenina* are the imaginary narratives and a note on historical digressions with extensive theoretical essays/ passages. The critic Boris Eikhenbaum called Tolstoy a historical chronicler (McPeak and Orwin 3) who objectively and accurately discuss the nuances of political consciousness, records of past, time and accounts in fictious form. The author's shaping of Russian culture objectively describes the disorder and upheaval. *Anna Karenina* is often credited as laying bare the picture of Russian society. The aristocratic society deserting the peasants, made Tolstoy draw a model of subjectivities, construction of narratives, historical memory and collective identity where tradition remained the generative principle. The dislocation and deterritorialization was questioned and portrayed by him regarding Russian rustic life. Agrarian life is a part of world history of almost all societies whose identities are tied to their farmland. Tolstoy's village seems to function on an organic model of resilience and the ecological system positively responds to human culture. His texts explore the multidimensional fall of humanity from instinct to reason to technology.

The Decembrist myth influenced the literary representations and the canonical texts lead in Russia during 19<sup>th</sup> century. The turning point in literary history came in 1812-1917 when writers like Pushkin, Tolstoy, Pasternak, Gogol, Dostoevsky Chekov, Gorkhy developed great tradition of Russian, literature. Tolstoy, the social reformer and Tolstoy, the novelist as he is known wrote masterpieces like *War and Peace*, *Anna Karenina* and *Resurrection* that defines and brings forth his philosophy and concept about life placing *Anna Karenina* at the centre. Written between 1873 and 1877, the work has autobiographical features and is acclaimed as psychological text. The plot of *Anna Karenina* place Anna's life in contrast to Levin's life that appreciates the ecological resilience in the times of crisis. Tolstoy tries to understand peasant mode of appropriation of nature reemphasizing that humans are a part of and subject to nature which might contribute to larger goal of fostering feasible and sustainable rural communities. The human and non-human world of Tolstoy premised on a recognition of the fundamental incompatibility between ecological longevity and humanity that has now become the subject of global capitalism. The idea of sustainable development visualizes community with the resilience factors. The Russian literary agrarian neo-populism has explicitly discoursed on resilience principles. Esteva (1983) Warman (1980) remarked that the "moral economy" defends small-scale, self-sufficient, household or community enterprises in the face of large-scale production. A collective, solidarity orientation is inherent to indigenous and peasant identity, enduring in spite of the imposition of individualistic values by society at large (qtd in Carruthers 358). The piece of production is a farmer that harvests things for individual use and exchange promoting biodiversity and sustainability. Tolstoy in his literature gave the notion of

resilience, traditional pastoralism and transformation of Russia into capitalist Russia while illustrating social and natural environmental degradation that led to the tragic end of Anna Karenina. The reasons for disaster are due to human culture, opportunities, individualism. Tolstoy provided the answer through he contrasting character of Levin and Anna, how Levin's quest for identity lead to his survival whereas Anna moved to destructive path due to her separation from socio-ecological system.

Tolstoy described the inhuman encryption of urban life examining the individual and natural human experience. His concerns centers around the primordial earth, the dream of pastoral. Tolstoy lived for 24 years at his native village, Yasnaya Polyana, wanting to reform the miseries of peasants. Through his writings the appearance of organic change in his ideas about men and world exemplified the socio-ecological system as integrated and interdependent unit. Tolstoy's disapproval of capitalism, is indicative that human progress without considering the natural world is condemned in toto. People -place connection, values, beliefs identify the adaptive system developing community strengths.

Tolstoy's love for peasant life made him one of the world's exemplary creators of literature of reliance, sustainability and farmland. The book on exterior level discusses about Anna, her aristocratic life, extra martial affair and ultimate ending of life giving a landscape view of Russian settings and structure of society. The undertones of identity are prominent in the novel and it is through Levin's search of self, Tolstoy discovers the real Russia. As an intrusive writer, he searched for the answers to the complexities of life and why they existed. He was able to picture out two diverse notions prevalent – the clash of traditional/ modern, urban/rural, artificial / natural. The cities like Petersburg and Moscow characterizes New Russia formed by European impacts and whereas Old Russia finds dwelling in peasant culture. Levin's estate at Pokrovskoye is Tolstoy's own native village Yasnaya Polyana i.e. Old Russia. The close proximity with peasants, Levin's bond with Kitty, the management of the farm and the haymaking process are formations indicative of how deeply Tolstoy was embedded in natural space and time. In *War and Peace*, Bezukhof learns the mysteries of survival from Karataeff, a farmer whereas Theodore in *Anna Karenina*, opens up to Levin the mode of living and existence. Thus, Tolstoy articulates on forgotten nature in Russian culture, on life sustaining futures. Anna on the other hand is a combination of English and Russian culture giving an authentic vision of how narratives elucidate cultural change.

“Levin in his heart despised the town mode of life of his friend... regarded as trifling” (Tolstoy 40). Levin abides by the capacity to learn and adapt, the regional framework let him navigate through socio-ecological transformations occurring in the town. The town life with new evolved structures, trajectories and renewal of system has weak interconnections among the community. It reinforces the great divide which Levin experiences in Moscow.

“Levin had begun that winter a work on agriculture, the plan of which turned on taking into account the character of the laborer on the land as one of the unalterable data of the question, like the climate and the soil ... Thus, in spite of his solitude...his life was exceedingly full” (Tolstoy 333). Tolstoy renders the epistemological process through the eyes of Levin by unfolding the disorder in city life, the possibility of self-

correction, the farmers confronting the natural world, adaption, reconciliation. Levin's ecological epistemology and ethics allows a more resilient and pragmatic approach making him an ecological agent. "Perhaps because I rejoice in what I have, and don't fret for what I haven't," said Levin, thinking of Kitty (335). What is important is that Tolstoy is interested in sustainability amidst chaos and destruction? Infact, the structure of his works offers a model that traces the local geographies. The epical framework constructed by the Russian writer creates the inter involvement of non-human world in contrast to humanity's relationship with this inanimate world.

The deliberate transformation of Levin and his lack of interest is a transformative behaviour as he feels disconnect towards his land. Although he later on becomes a creator and promoter of sustainability, Levin's lack of interest ascended and pertains due to his visit to Moscow, the materialistic world. "The farming of the land, as he was managing it, had become not merely unattractive but revolting to him, and he could take no further interest in it" (Tolstoy 705).

"It was only in the third month of their married life, after their return from Moscow, where they had been staying for a month, that their life began to go more smoothly" (Tolstoy 1049). In this context, Tolstoy's philosophy and resilient literature more so focus on the capacity to return to a normal stable state after disruption where individuals interact with the environment - promotes well-being and nurture relations in nature.

"Instead of promoting agriculture, as was expected of them, they were competing with agriculture and promoting the development of manufactures and credit, and so arresting its progress" (Tolstoy 1052). Tolstoy offers a model that intercedes between the local and the global representing the modernist ventures which makes resilience and survival possible in the increasingly destructive human cycle. The geological patterns enhance longevity, timelessness and stability following a cyclic form in which adaptive capacity develops out of destruction. Tolstoy appreciates history, nature and Russian culture expanding the narrative of sin, adultery to national epic of Russian life expecting structural changes in countryside. The Anna chronicle defines the history and culture revealed through the conversation of Levin and Steve, the collective loss of people due to advent of capitalism points towards the resilience through construction of indigenous temporality.

Anna is closely aligned with Levin in the pursuit for happiness, Levin withdraws from society when rejected by Kitty whereas Anna is vetoed by Moscow aristocracy because of adultery which is an outcome of modern society. Levin's visit to the local elections and his meeting with Sergey and Vronsky playing a game are different as the entire atmosphere has no connection with the countryside life but a world of avarice. This world moves him desperately on the verge to commit suicide when one of his fellow farmworkers makes it clear to him that his way of life is a fruitful one. Sergey his half-brother's interest in the pan-Slavic cause is his replacement of actual emotion and communication.

The serfs moved to the cities thus becoming a part of industrialization or non-resilient culture. Oblonsky, Anna's brother, an example of fragmented aristocratic class does not have enough money and is ready to sell his wife's forest, his only wealth. Tolstoy's clarity of vision of belief and contentment, seeking mind dreams of pastoral utopia. He

disliked modernity that was overshadowing traditional values, nature getting destroyed. His predictive awareness of damaging consequences, the communal upheaval, individual losing a sense of community and identity focused on the 'dying consciousness'. Resilience is said to be "the ability of a system to absorb disturbances and is still able to preserve its basic function and structure" (Walker and Salt 1) in order to maintain, economic social and ecological systems (Folke et al. 1). The capacity to adapt, alter and adjust is sustainability. Tolstoy's philosophy of sustainment through pastoral life validates his notion of resilience and is found extensively in Russian literature. Levin in *Anna Karenina* and Tom Brangwen in *The Rainbow* are the peasants happy in the environs of their farms: the therapeutic effect of Levin's visit to "warm, steamy cowshed resembles that of Tom Brangwen's visit to cowshed with Anna Lensky... Both men resist the ruthless modernization" (Brown 29).

The concepts like adaptive cycle, Panarchy, resilience, and transformability form a part of Tolstoy's text. Panarchy is the coupled human environment system divided into resilience and adaptive cycle metaphor. Holling's adaptive cycle model suggests four phases-exploitation, conservation, release and reorganization and is symbol for describing transformation in ecological system. The resilience of ancient society is due to social memory or memory of past. Resilience which is vital to sustainability and the adaptive cycle, echoes the actual link between ecological system and human beings. The natural and social system are integrated systems and cannot be separated from each other. Life in the Russian rural community made relationships grow in a natural, organic, spontaneous and original manner, the modern society brought artificiality, making it mechanical. People were uprooted from the old organic order when separated from the old inarticulate traditional world as happens with Anna or her Brother, Vronsky, Karenin. The destruction of Anna Karenina in *Anna Karenina* is followed by rebuilding and reconstructing of relationship with nature through Levin and Kitty.

Resilience is said to be the ability to deal with shocks and has connections with ecology, pinpointing towards the response of ecological systems to change. Tolstoy's is one of the world's exemplary creators of literature of reliance, sustainability and farmland. Despite belonging to high nobility of Russia he spent maximum time in his native village which becomes the essential feature of his notion of contented life. He gives a pseudohistorical version of crumbling of Russian society due to industrialization and individualism and the 'instinct of community' formed the basis of his concept of living together, the concept of resilience. Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina* presents life of the landed gentry, the predominance of capitalism, the crisis in Russian agriculture, crumbled upper-class family structure. Levin association with countryside – the country embodies traditional Russian values like purity, hard work, and religiosity, the virtue of quietness and peace in solitude. While life in the Russian rural community made relationships grow in a natural, organic, spontaneous and original manner, the modern society brought artificiality, making it mechanical. People were uprooted from the old organic order when separated from the old inarticulate traditional world. Anna, a modern woman commits suicide because of her inability to sustain in modernity. Life of Vronsky, Anna, Karenin is full of complexities whereas Levin's life is simple. "To Konstantin Levin the country was the background of life, that is of pleasures, endeavors and labors. To Sergey Ivanovitch the country meant... a valuable antidote to the corrupt influences of town..." (Tolstoy 518).



The concept of self-continuity in Levin is a kind of identity formation process and the failure to do so can lead to annihilation as it happens when Levin is on the verge of committing suicide. Natural and social systems “act in nonlinear ways, exhibiting marked thresholds in their dynamics, and (...) social-ecological organizations act as complicated and growing unified systems” (Pisano 10). Sustainable development and cultural resilience include economic, social and environmental fields and its investigation in Russian literature again becomes a referential point to understand the importance of literature and its constructive purpose. Tolstoy creates a landscape of imagination and develops collective emotional experiences that are constructive, transformative and healing. Tolstoy reflected both the systems, natural and non-natural in his text. While understanding human beings and biophysical domain, it is imperative to look upon the system as a whole because both are interdependent (Walker and Salt 38). Tolstoy’s *Anna Karenina* sketches sustainable development, indigenous systems and resilience found in Russian literature and draws upon Levin’s resilience as the ability to endure shock without causing distortion or rupture, either to easily adjust or recover after a big destructive change.

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# FAIRYTALE-PLAY & INTERTEXTUALITY: THE PLAY OF EVGENY SCHWARTZ *THE SHADOW*

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*Abstract-* The genre of fairy tale is usually dealt from the narrative point of view. Since its beginning it was preserved in oral traditions and it kept transcending through time, culture, religion and socio-historical aspects of society and mankind. The transition and manifestation of fairy tales in different forms of literary text sometimes does not possess similarity but, they do possess moral lessons for the society and individuals. Fairy tales play an extremely important role in depicting the societal expectations, human behaviours and ideas, chaos of human lives and their problems, but at the same time it gives remedies to the same and it also promotes ideal life structure and conveys expectations of the society from individuals at the same time. Therefore, it receives overwhelming response from the society. Fairy-tale plays are altogether a complex structure of story-telling, where there could be monologues, dialogues and polyphones, as it has come across many paradigmatic shifts in linguistic discourse. This paper will throw a light on the depiction of “the genre of fairy-tales” through the eyes of the play of Evgeny Schwartz ‘The Shadow’ and how it differs from another literary genre. The paper will also try to identify the expressive potential of the language and its meaning making process. This article is a fraction of my Ph.D. thesis (currently pursuing) under the supervision of Dr. Arunim Bandhyopadhyay.

**Keywords:** Fairy tales, Play, Intertextuality, Stylistics.

It is nearly impossible to meet a person who has not heard of the ever-present characters of fairy tales: the evil witch, the cruel stepmother, the path of breadcrumbs, the wolf on the way to Grandmother’s, and much more. These stories have drawn both child and adult from the progression of everyday reality into the world of story-telling and the possibilities that exist within a genre that has no limits, no restrictions, and no target audience: fairy tales.<sup>1</sup> As it goes beyond ages, places, cultures and traditions.(Lester, A. J. 2015)

Fairytales are one of the oldest forms of literature. It plays special roles in folklore literature and often written in the form of short stories and referred as moral compass for children and adults. It has a moral value which further bypasses to a sense of fear owing to the religious barriers and teachings (mostly for children).

In a contemporary world, where values are rapidly changing and society advancing, these tales too have changed their course and approach and at times retelling and rewriting of these tales have been exhausted, as many versions have been developed by now. In these circumstances many authors interestingly have started writing parody of fairytales, depicting satire or spoof of the same story portraying the existing issues of the society.

As Arthur Frank mentions “Stories animate human life; that is their work. Stories work with people, for people, and always stories work on people, affecting what people are able to see as real, as possible, and as worth doing or best avoided. What is it about stories - what are their particularities - that enables them to work as they do? More than

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mere curiosity is at stake in this question, because human life depends on the stories we tell". (Frank, Arthur W. 2010).

Stories are mostly born out of stories and events which take place in our society and sometimes born out of imagination of storyteller, so there may be mythical element and fantasy, but no to forget that the clashes, story shows are real and existing in our contemporary world.

Plays are mostly written for stage performance and visual experience. Acts and dialogues of a play need certain tools and techniques to be studied. This particular genre is intricate in terms of writing, reading and comprehension. It involves a lot of literary and linguistic tools.

Boulton makes a bold attempt to distinguish drama from other forms of literature in his insightful argument that "There is an enormous difference between a play and any other form of literature. A play is not really a piece of literature. A true play is three-dimensional; it is literature that walks and talks before our eyes. It is not intended that the eye shall perceive marks on paper and the imagination turn them into sights, sounds and actions; the text of the play is meant to be translated into sights, sounds and actions which occur literally and physically on stage" (Boulton, M. 2014).

Though in fact plays are often read in silence, if we are to study a play at all intelligently, we must keep this in mind. Plays are created and shaped by many elements such as characters & their relationships, voices, metaphors, styles, plots, time, space and so on, and at the same time, Director also plays an important role, as his point of views matters on the stage.

When fairy tale and play come together, the intricacies are born. Plays are best suited for the theatres and the cinema, however when fairy tales are written in the form of a play, every character is given space, time and importance, and readers could actually understand the significance and presence of each character, unlike other literary styles. Moreover, these questions can also be answered and studied meticulously.

- i) How characters communicate and interact with each other?
- ii) How their relationships develop and advance together parallelly to the story?
- iii) What kind of languages being used by the characters?

Usually, fairy-tale stories are often written in short form as it should be conclusive and implicit (many-meaning) and easy to read and remember. It is refined well in terms of the languages used as they have a target audience; children of different age groups. This genre uses many linguistic tools in order to have a long-term effect on the minds of an individual, such as, Allegory (where complex and abstract emotions are depicted in animated form), personifications (personification of inanimate things), metaphors (where two different things are compared and replaced for new meaning), anaphors (repetition of alphabets, words or whole sentences in a text),

E. L. Schwartz was a versatile author extraordinaire in Russian Literature. He was born in 1896 in Kazan to a Jew father and Russian Mother. He started his literary career in 1920 and started writing poems and stories for children. He wrote a number of plays after getting inspired from well-known Danish playwright Hans Christen Anderson and French author Charles Perrault: The Snow Queen, The little Red Riding Hood,

Cinderella and political satires like *The Naked King* and *The Shadow*. His famous work “*The Dragon*”, a satire on the Soviet regime is known as his masterpiece. Interestingly most of these tales are dark at its inception. Although he adapted these works adding his personal flavor of contemporary problems, he stressed upon ‘the happy ending’ just to avoid leaving it dark and gloomy and having negative impact on readers.

E. Schwarz tactfully converted these famous fairy-tale stories from cultural play into an adult fairy-tale drama. His play is understood to be highly subversive and acts as a satire or parody on social and political practices. The black humour, covertly depicted in the play needs certain level of understanding and logic, which mostly children do not possess. Therefore, these are also known as adult fairy-tale.

Although Schwartz has written a number of plays; ‘*The Dragon*’ is understood to be one of his best dramatic works and best examples of adaption of fairytales and traditional legends, while putting inside his own culture and tradition and restructuring the text in an entirely different manner, teaching moral lessons to reader and communicating deep political message.

‘*The Shadow*’ is a three-act play written by the Russian writer Evgeny Schwartz in 1940, the plot of story was adapted from a famous play of Danish author Hans Christian Anderson ‘*The Shadow*’ which was written in 1847. The original play was a dark fairy-tale with tragic ending. A learned man who was always submerged in reading, writing and philosophical work visits a warm country in the south story to gather knowledge. It was warm country with hot climate and people did not venture out in daytime. In the evening the country looked like a bride; beautiful, colorful and mesmerizing. The learned man saw a beautiful woman on the balcony of other house and when she vanished, he told his shadow to go and know about her. Eventually his shadow went and never came back. Learned man returned to his country and forgot about this incident. Many years later he was visited by his shadow, who told him that he has become rich, famous and wise and going to marry the princess owing to his learnings & wisdom. Shadow invited him to suitably reward and to be grateful of him. Upon reaching his palace he told learned man to become his shadow as he did not want to remain a shadow and sideshow anymore. The learned man denied doing so, this enraged his shadow. He subsequently framed him and at end was beheaded by The Palace on the orders of the Princess.

Evgeny Schwartz’s story borrowed similar plots and twists. But his protagonist Christian Theodore never left the country after losing his shadow in the warm country and wanted to fight back for his identity as he knew the famous story of ‘a man without a shadow’. He also was framed by the politicians and the shadow himself, was manipulated by almost everyone. At the end he too meets same fate, gets beheaded by the shadow and princess Lisa. But surprisingly shadow also loses his head as he was a part of ‘Christian Theodore’ and in order to resurrect ‘Theodore Christian’ (*The Shadow*), the scholar was resurrected. After regaining his life, Shadow begged him to stay in the palace as he came to know that his existence is dependent on him. Christian Theodore confronts them and leaves the town with Annunciata. Later Shadow escaped the palace as everyone knew his little secret.

Both the tales are highly philosophical in nature and talks about many aspects of human’s behavior and psychology. Schwartz’s ‘*The Shadow*’ was more deliberate and

catchier, owing to the style of dramatic writing. 'The shadow' shows both; good and bad sides of a man. He is none other than the other half of learned man having all bad qualities; conspirator, manipulator, liar, corrupt and many more which a person could possibly be.

Schwartz's writing accounts for each character's narration, history and development, for example; Annunciata- one of the leading ladies of the play has a name inspired from 'The Bible' "Annunciata's name obviously refers allegorically to the beginnings of the parallel stories of John the Baptist and Jesus in the Gospels. These stories begin with two annunciations-Gabriel announces to John's father, Zechariah, that his wife Elizabeth will give birth to John, the fore-runner of Jesus, and later Gabriel announces to Mary that she will give birth to Jesus. John stirs in his mother's womb when she is visited by Mary, mother of Jesus. This in utero greeting and exchange of the Holy Spirit marks the beginning of the special, joyous relationship between John and Jesus-a relationship unencumbered by their arduous roles as martyr- saviors of stubbornly sinful humanity" (White, Duffield, 1994; 650)

Annunciata symbolizes pure love and compassion and as we know, hero of our play is known as Christian Theodore, so it portrays beautiful relationship between the two like Jesus and John from Bible. Christian's beheading and his resurrection can be associated with Jesus's resurrection, linking him with the moral emancipation and getting wisdom in the culmination of the play.

Shadows on the other hand can be referred to the satanic & animal instincts of human being, present in unison and separated by the choices made by them. Shadow was named 'Theodore Christian' just opposite to our protagonist 'Christian Theodore', this little detail itself was significant and symbolic in terms of their character analysis, they both were completely opposite to each other. Shadow was everything which Christian Theodore was not. As stated by Swiss psychiatrist Carl Gustav Jung "The shadow personifies everything that the subject refuses to acknowledge about himself" (Jung, C. G., 1996, p-286).

- Doctor- Oh, dreams and shadows in close relationship. They seem to be cousins. (Schwartz, 2012)

Many psychiatrists have already been trying to unearth symbolic meaning of 'shadows' and establish a connection between real and reel. As stated by Carl Gustav Jung "The dissolution of the persona and the launch of the individuation process also brings with it "the danger of falling victim to the shadow ... the black shadow which everybody carries with him, the inferior and therefore hidden aspect of the personality" (Jung, C. G., 1954, p-219). For reference, the developments of his character through his statements have been mentioned below.

- Shadow- I assure you. I followed you relentlessly, but you only occasionally looked down on me carelessly. And I was often taller than you, climbing to the rooftops of the tallest houses. It usually happened in the moonlit nights. (Schwartz, 2012)
- Shadow- (extending his hands to Christian). Thank you. I remained your shadow, that's what I've been doing all these days. (Schwartz, 2012)

- Shadow- Listen, you miserable man. Tomorrow I'll give a series of orders and you'll be alone against the world. Friends will turn their backs on you with disgust. The enemy will laugh at you. And you will come crawling back to me and ask for mercy. (Schwartz, 2012)

Christian Theodore's beheading also costs Shadow his head and it was a shock to his quest for independence and individuality. Subsequently he realizes that shadow can not exist without its master.

- Shadow- Don't. No! Stay with me, Christian. Live in the palace. No one will touch you. Would you like me to appoint you First Minister? (Schwartz, 2012)
- Shadow- Do you want me to send them all away, Christian? I'll let you run the state - within reasonable limits, of course. I'll help you make some people happy. You don't want to answer me? Liza! Order him. (Schwartz, 2012)

Talking about Christian Theodore (Protagonist), Schwartz calls him 'Ученый' which means a learned man, scholar, scientist or academician.

- Scholar- Please! Teach me! I'm a scholar and scholar studies all their lives. (Schwartz, 2012)

His character has been shown in constant learning process. Although he is a scholar, yet he is naive and daydreams and do not listen to the warnings carefully. He falls prey to manipulative ministers and shadow. Nevertheless, he was decisive, determined, honest and brave. He was a believer, who believed in good and bad, living and dead.

- Scholar- You can explain anything to a man. Because he understands the alphabets, and this is even easier than the alphabets, and, above all, everyone can relate to this! (Schwartz, 2012)

The significance of resurrection is huge; it signifies rebirth or life after death, it is also a symbol for divinity and eternity. Philosophically, resurrection could be associated with enlightenment; free from ignorance and misinformation.

"The belief in the resurrection of the body is usually associated with Christianity, because of the doctrine of the Resurrection of Christ, but it also is associated with later Judaism, which provided basic ideas that were expanded in Christianity and Islam. The Resurrection of Christ, a central doctrine of Christianity, is based on the belief that Jesus Christ was raised from the dead on the third day after his Crucifixion and that through his conquering of death all believers will subsequently share in his victory over "sin, death, and the Devil." (Britannica, The Editors of Encyclopaedia, 2020.)

Resurrection of Christian Theodore can be associated with the process of metamorphosis. He became mature and wiser than what he used to be. It also was a revelation to him; listen to the well-wishers and do not trust everyone. This also signifies victory over "sin, death and the Devil".

- Scholar- Shut up. But I almost died, Annunciata. After all, in order to win, one must go to death. And so I won. Let's get out of here, Annunciata. (Schwartz, 2012)

**Conclusion:** The role of intertextuality is enchanting and the scope it delivers is limitless. Intertextual analysis has been used artistically and aesthetically in this play.

Fairy-tale play, all together is a different linguo-stylistic piece with many layers of meanings and styles. These types of works unveil a completely new horizon for linguistic discourse. The play 'Shadow' as stated earlier is a complex linguistic fusion, nevertheless, it was able to pursue 'what is said & what is meant' using philosophical and rhetoric elements. The battle (verbal & psychological) between 'Christian Theodore' and his shadow 'Theodore Christian' is new and fresh to watch. Moreover, stories and developments of other characters like Annunciata, princess Liza, minister of Finance, the first minister are beautifully incorporated which further creates multiple elements of tragedy, comedy and satire. This play is one of the finest compositions of Evgeny Schwartz and it definitely facilitates construction of deconstruction linguistics.

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## EXPRESSING 'SELF': POETRY OF KAMALA DAS

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**Abstract:** *Kamala Das, one of the most outstanding women writers in India deals with her personal experiences which are finely expressed in her poetry. She used her poetry as a tool of self-analysis and self-expression, through which expressed her inner most emotions, feelings and desires. The poems of Kamala Das express various strains of emotions. She explores the territory of inner yearnings and longings. 'I' or the study of 'self' is the prominent factor in Kamala Das's poetry. Her poetry projects her intense carving for love. It seems that she has an intense desire to love and be loved. The paper examines how the poet explores her personal feelings and emotions in the medium poetry and how it throws light on the life of suppressed women who are mere toys in the hands of patriarchy and how those poems breaks the conventions of mainstream writings.*

**Keywords:** *self, identity, women, conventions, society.*

Few women writers in India used their creativity as a tool of introspection, of self-analysis, of self-explanation and of self-revelation. They expressed their emotions, feelings, desires and longings through creativity by shedding all their inhibitions in words and without any conflict taking their readers into confidence. Through any literary piece of art, whether it is poem or short story or fiction, they could do it in the most candid manner conceivable. Fearless and outspoken nature of their creativity always registered an objection to the traditional society and it helped to break the restrictions and restraints of the so-called social norms and conventions imposed upon them and every woman as well by the society. Such writings gave new hope and aspiration to the suppressed and marginalised women who are mere toys in the power agencies of patriarchy. And those writings pushed them to think beyond the barriers of everyday household chores. Above all, those writings and such women writers served as a way for them to make their feelings tangible and real. The name Kamala Das, one of the outstanding writers of India, writing in English and Malayalam is one among them.

The fearless poet Kamala Das was called Madhavikutty and Kamala Suraiyya. Each name represented a body of her work, a phase of her life or an aspect of her personality. Kamala Das enjoyed the status of being one of the first poets writing in English from Kerala to be recognized nationally and internationally. An iconoclast of her generation who very frankly and unabashedly spoke about the Indian women's sexual desires and a maverick who courted controversies infused the complexities and innocence of the heart and the ineffable allure of simplicity into Malayalam literature through a series of delicately nuanced and daintily sensitive writings. The transformation from Amy to Kamala Das, to Madhavikutty and Kamala Suraiyya were not an accidental. On the other hand, Amy's growth was entwined with the social changes that came up around her, with the perspective of the people – educated ones, elite groups, and the poor working class men and women who moved like satellites around her maternal ancestral house called *Nalapatt Tharavattu* and also the servants in the Calcutta house all with observer of man and matters. Kamala Das, very sensitive girl, held a very lofty view of the concept of 'love'. She found 'lack of love' to be the root cause of all evils of life and advocated the practice of love as a panacea for all ills.

Kamala Das is a writer who can't be tied down to a particular place or class



easily. She started writing under the pen name Madhavikutty and the reason she ascribed to the selection of this name is that she never wanted to hurt the sentiments of her grandmother whom she loved and respected more than ever her father and mother. She believed that her grandmother whom she fondly called as *Ammamma*, never even discussion or reading of these kinds of books she wrote because the moral code she had imbibed never permitted her to discuss suppressed desires or matter related to the needs of the body. Kamala Das was a person who ventured out into the world of creativity at the very young phase of life and wrote with vigour even in her seventies. In one of her poems, *An Introduction* (1965), she writes of her choice to write in English and Malayalam. She writes:

“...Why not leave  
Me alone, critics, friends, visiting cousins,  
Every one of you? Why not let me speak in  
Any language I like? The language I speak  
Becomes mine, its distortions its queerness  
All mine, mine alone. (p. 7)

Kamala Das reply to her chose to write in English or her selection of English language as a medium of her expression in a way that English being the tongue most familiar to her and she used it to express herself. Her choice of English language for her creativity was by no means a deliberate attempt. In other words, she recognized the immense possibilities of English and the various nuances of feelings that the language can convey and its vast storehouse of emotional analogues. She transferred her joys, longings, desires and hopes into the sensitive, flexible and plastic mould of English.

Through her poetry, Kamala Das essentially spoke about womanhood, even when it seemed purely personal. Musing lonely heart which seeks love with never ending passion, is a common theme in her poems. She is perhaps the first brave Indian poet who wrote naturally in Indian English and expressed herself fully without worrying about British English. Her poems are questions rather than answers, her questions about life, love expectations from life. Kamala Das’ poetry has been an influence to her contemporary and there is no doubt her impact on next generation of writers as well. Being a pioneer among Indian woman poets who expressed a profound dissatisfaction with their situation as women, Kamala Das fearlessly raised her voice to deconstruct the position of women in a so called traditional household and society as well. First book *Summer in Calcutta* (1965) gave a promising start to her. Expressing herself, she wrote primarily about love, its pain, its disappointment, its betrayal, and its consequent anguish, and Indian readers in 1965 responded sympathetically to her guileless, guiltless frankness with regard to sexual matters. Kamala Das abandoned the certainties offered by an archaic and somewhat sterile, wrote for freedom of mind and body at a time when most of the Indian women poets were writing about teenage girlie fantasies of eternal, bloodless, unrequited love. With publication of *Summer in Calcutta* Kamala Das’ became a celebrated writer in the mid 1960’s, even she was noticed by *Time* magazine, as an Indian women writer who is fearlessly writing openly about her love life and desires beyond her marriage.

The poems of Kamala Das express various strains of emotions. She explores the territory of inner yearnings and longings. Indeed, with her audacious portrayal of man-woman relationship in terms of love and sex, she had added a new dimension to the Indian poetry in English. Her poems *An Introduction*, *My Grandmother's House* and *The Sunshine Cat* enable the readers to arrive at the total personality of Kamala Das. The poem *An Introduction* is a projection of her emotional personality and shocks the readers by realism. She portrays herself as liberated modern woman. She resents the fact that society was trying to fit her into their way of thinking. Her childhood memories, Nalapatt house, granny and great grandmother appears in a number of poems such as *The Suicide*, *An Introduction*, *My Grandmother's House*, *Blood*, *The Swamp*, etc. In the poem *My Grandmother's House*, she projects the woman persona in the past and the present. The spoke of her loveless marital life, helplessness before male dominance fills her with anguish and agony. Such themes find its expression in some of her powerful poems like *The freaks*, *Maggots*, *The Sunshine Cat* and *Stone Age*. In the poem *The Sunshine Cat*, she describes a specific case of the abuse of woman. The woman loved her husband, but that husband did not reciprocate her love. Instead, he imprisoned her during the day and had no courage to love or sexually exploit her. The title *Sunshine Cat* suggests a yellow cat. It is not really the cat that gave her company when she was imprisoned but a mere streak of sunshine that spilled into the room when her husband wanted her confined. He could keep her body behind a locked door but could not stop the spirit's flight from her body.

*The Descendant* (1967) is the second volume by Kamala Das. *The Invitation*, *The Compositions* and *The Descendant*, are some of the best poems in this anthology. This anthology has many poems which are death-conscious, death obsessed. *The Old Playhouse and Other Poems* (1973) is another collection of poems. The title poem *The Old Playhouse* tells that love is perhaps no more than a way of learning about one's self of the completion of one's own personality. It is one of the finest lyrics of Kamala Das. The female protagonist tries to explore the nature of true love and express a protest against male chauvinism. Another poem 'Blood' is the most renowned and longest poem in the collection. It is autobiographical, revealing the poetess's nostalgia for the old house and for the great grandmother who lived in it. All these poems are recollections; recollection of both sweet and bitter memories of her life and a true search for an identity. Kamala Das always moves between a nostalgic past and nightmarish present. According to her, past symbolises security, love, freedom and on the other hand present stands for insecurity, betrayal, dualism and the bondages of the society.

'I' or the study of 'self' is the prominent factor and recurrent theme as well in Kamala Das's poetry. Her poetry projects her intense craving for love. It seems that she has an intense desire to love and be loved. For Kamala, love means not only physical union of bodies but also of the minds and the souls. Without emotional and spiritual fulfilment, love is merely a "skin-communicated thing" (p.89) Kamala Das did not ignore the physical aspects of love. Sex remains an outer grab for her inner world of emotions and feelings. She did not enjoy eternal bliss in marital relationship. That disappointed her; but she continued her search for true love. She begins to identify her relationship with the love-lore of Radha-Krishna, and seeks the image of Krishna in her lovers. At times, she imagines herself to be Radha who is waiting for her lover,

Krishna. Kamala Das tried to justify her illicit love affairs by giving mythological frame to love. In the poem *Radha*, Kamala Das depicts emotional and spiritual facets of love with the feelings and ecstasy of Radha:

“The long waiting  
Had made their bound so chaste,  
and all the doubting  
And the reasoning  
So that in his first true embrace, she was girl  
And virgin crying  
Everything in me Is melting in me  
Is melting, even the hardness at the core  
O Krishna, I am melting, melting melting,  
Nothing remains but  
You”(p.63)

Kamala Das was very unhappy when she could not find solace in her husband's arms. Lack of emotional fulfilment in her marital relationship leaves her depressed and dejected, and eventually she turned to other man for gratification. Soon she realized that ultimate happiness and tranquillity lie in being united with Krishna. The theme of love is further discussed in the poem *Radha-Krishna*. In this poem, poet celebrates the freedom of two lovers. Once free from the human bondages, the two souls can be united easily. Nobody can stop them from meeting with one another. In another poem titled *Ghanashyam* describes the poet's strong love for Krishna. The persona of the poem addresses Krishna with great joy and excitement.

“Ghanashyam  
you have like a koel bait your  
Next in the harbour of my life.  
My life,until now, a sleeping jungle  
Is at last astir with music.”(p. 94)

Kamala Das begins to love Krishna emotionally and spiritually. Their love becomes an ideal relationship and this relationship is a good example for Kamala Das theory of love. It is significant here that Lord Krishna is ultimate lover to most the Nair women as per the legend. The poet was in fact, nurtured in a family environment fragment with devotion to Lord Krishna, especially at Guruvayoor (famous Krishna temple in Kerala). She once said: “Love is the only ritual I believe in, it makes everything legitimate.”<sup>2</sup> She felt that ultimate bliss and love can be achieved only in emotional and spiritual union. A.N Dwivedi comments on these aspects of love: “It is this framework (Radha-Krishna love-lore) that saves her, in some degree, from the charges of obscenity and promiscuity; otherwise her poetry is replete with shocking and unorthodox details about love, marriage and sex.” (Dwivedi, P. 37)

Love and sexual carvings are the persistent themes of Indian women writers since the time of the Vedas. But Kamala Das has surpassed her predecessors in the treatment of these themes. Her greatness as a love poet emerged from the fact that her

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<sup>2</sup> Priya Pathiyan, *love is the only ritual I believe in* an article on Kamala Das, The Sunday Review – The Times of India, 21/04/2001

love poetry is truly rooted in her personal experience. It is an outpouring expression of emotions from her loneliness, disillusionment and sense of frustration. Since she could never find emotional fulfilment within her loveless marriage, always a deep feeling of insecurity grips her. Hence, her sexual wanderings are a mask for her wounded soul.

“I am a freak. It’s only  
To save my face. I flaunt at  
Times, a grand, flamboyant lust.” (p. 78)

It is the sexual frankness and the boldness Kamala Das showed in her writings always created a sense of shocking and at the same time it amused them as well. She believed and wandered for a kind of love which was based on unconditional trust and honesty. In some of her poems she reveals a deep disgust for her own body with which she sought love, but it proved to be a great impediment that she could not transcend. She always averred the “silly female shape intervened to ruin a beautiful relationship, the clumsy gadgetry that always, always damaged bonds.” (Das, Pp 4-5) Though nearly all her poems are about love however, the poem *Jayasurya* is not a love poem, it is about her child’s birth. Considered to be one of the best poems, she depicts the primal hunger of her/woman’s womb. In this poem, she recalls the birth of her last son named Jayasurya and those recollections became the source of this amazing poem.

In *The Anamalai Poems* (1984), Kamala Das depicts about the cultural history and her familial past as well. Therefore, one can find the vigorous presence of the cultural history of India in these poems. She wrote these poems during her temporary stay at the hills of Anamalai in Tamil Nadu after her defeat at the Parliamentary election in 1984. History operates both on the visible, and on the invisible levels in *The Anamalai Poems*. In these poems, her ‘self’ has given historical and political implications:

There were nights when I heard  
my own voice call me out  
of dreams, gifting such rude  
awakenings, and then  
expelling me from warm human  
love, unaccustomed  
fare for one such as I  
a misfit when awake” (P. 130)

*The Anamalai Poems* are different from the other poems she has written earlier because one can notice that how the poet now overcomes her anxieties, and allow herself to luxuriate, even amid a crisis. At the same time the poems have a deep undertone of nostalgia for her entire life. Hence these poems are an analysis of her life.

Most of the cases, the poetry of Kamala Das is controversial and at the same time it is spiritual as well. She is considered as the pioneer in Indian feminist poetry because of her nature of being open and honest in dealing with women’s needs and desires. But she herself refused to be called a feminist and had never actively involved or identified with any particular fundamental ideology of feminist activity. Instead of being direct voice of feminist ideology, her poems have plentiful reference to her early life, to herself, and to womanhood in general. The works got lyrical intensity and

strong aesthetic strength under her touch. Received only informal education, without having any university degree, still almost instinctively, Kamala Das is aware of the value and significance of words, and recognises fine tunes and shades of meaning of one word and another. Along with aesthetic qualities of her poetry earnestness, sincerity, frankness and a deep love of the past are evident in it with a conventional tone; bold and defiant attitude, clear and direct voice. She experiments in her poetry with a feminine sensibility that demands equality with man and she examines love and life from a women's perspective.

Very openly Kamala Das criticised religious practices and blind faith followed and practiced by people. Like many European women authors, Kamala Das seized control of the society's own cultural codes, particularly those formed by dominant religious ideologies. She wrote, for example, the terrifying religious image of Kaali, the Goddess of war, in her defiant reaction: "I hung a picture of Kali on the wall of my balcony and adorned it daily with long string of red flowers, resembling the intestines of a disemboweled human being. Anyone walking along the edge of my paddy field a fur long away could see the Goddess and the macabre splash of red. This gave the villagers a fright."(P. 201) Words and expressions tabooed by the Kerala community and considered as "unladylike" are frequently noticed in Kamala Das's writing. This is one of the reasons why she has become the target of incessant stone-throwing by the society. But despite all odds, Kamala Das's courage and enthusiasm remains unmitigated because she wrote out of honesty and she believed that taboos are not just to be observed but also to be broken. She was able to make open statements about the evil practices found in religions; because she believed that God dwells outside institutionalized religions. She equated God with the ultimate good in man, with the positive spirit omnipresent in the universe and willing to bow before it but not before pseudo Gods or ritualized religions that have lost God in its essence. She did not consider it as blasphemy or taboo to write about the rotten practices of religions because she believed that the ultimate truth, 'God' remains outside religion and unscathed by criticism.

One of the reasons why Kamala Das is severely criticized by the society is due to her boldness in using certain 'taboo' words and expressions, which most other writers especially women writer dare to write. This prolific writer wrote about the life around and within her, bubbles with her unabated enthusiasm and zest for life. Kamala Das's progress as a writer may be visualised through several stages – struggle for love and security in the face of neglect, agony and frustration, emotional refuge in others and return to her past, search for the ideal lover, realization of the futility of such a search in the world of sense perception, discovery of the possibility of spiritual peace in Lord Krishna, philosophical detachment and love for all, meditation on death and readiness to face it.

Kolankodu Vasudevan Nair, who has done an in-depth study of Kamala Das's stories, classifies them into four stages. He like many others is of the view that most of her very fine stories were composed during the first stage. Kamala Das differing from many of her contemporaries, opted to study each individual, his/her stream of thoughts, uniqueness and very minute emotional shades. In many of them, she resorts to the technique of the limited omniscient point of view. In Kamala Das, we see an essential simplicity of language and direct mode of expression. She had a limited vocabulary but

made an effective use of it in her writings. She made profuse use of the North Malabar dialect, which lends local colours to her writings in Malayalam. She had an objective, dramatic method of presentation. Her stories are fine examples of brevity in expression. She created an unrealistic atmosphere which is bewildering to the readers. She used a lot of images and symbols; her prose is very poetic. Kamala Das used a lot of despair symbols like 'sterile wombs', 'ragdoll limbs', 'sleeping soul' and death symbols like 'hospitals', 'operations', 'aimless journeys' of the characters. She used expressive symbols like 'house', 'window', 'toys' and 'puppets' to stand for different stages in life. She made use of colour imagery like yellow, red and green colours to denote different moods of the characters. One can find same classification in her poetry which deal with her personal experiences, are expressed through powerful symbols.

The asset of Kamala Das' poetry is her transparent language, which has the touch of love and beauty. Some of the problems that have touched her sensibility are the sterility that has touched upon the emotions, morality and the essence of man in the present day, the conflict between the mind and the language etc. A casual survey of the writings of Kamala Das disclose the fact that almost all the writings she wrote as a very young woman have the imprint of the rich craftsmanship of a mature author. They are mostly poems with fine external form and thematic perfection. The unique quality of Kamala Das' writing technique is the intertwining of reality and imagination. This kind of mystification according to her is essential to sustain the interest of the readers and she is never willing to reveal the borderline between the two and her writings celebrated love and womanhood. Scanning the literary career of Kamala Das spread over a period of five decades, honesty of expression, emotional depth, crisp narration and deception and deceptive casualness mark her as the best known writer in Indo-Anglo literary circle.

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# THE REPERCUSSION OF SOCIO-CULTURAL STRUCTURES TO ACQUIRE A BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT IN RUSSIAN SOCIETY: A SHORT ANALYSIS OF MAXIM GORKY'S NOVEL *THE ARTAMONOV BUSINESS*

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***Abstract:** The article analyses and indebted the repercussion of socio-cultural structures of the novel Artamonov's Business written by Maxim Gorky. Through Artamonov's family saga, the story of Russia stretches from the Bolshevik Revolution to the end of Russia's Industrial Revolution. Artamonov is a category of Russian merchants born from the end of the slave system announced by Tsar Alexander. Artamonov arrives at the sleeping village of Dromov to build a linen factory. Ilya Artamonov enters the city, which disrupts life because civilians previously inhabited it. The story takes us to the third generation, and as usual, the business turns around when we cross its roots.*

***Key Words:** Business in Russia, bourgeois family, capitalist development, Maxim Gorky, business development*

## **1. Introduction**

The most significant name in the virtual renaissance belongs to Maxim Gorky. After Tolstoy, the only Russian writer of modern times became world-famous and, like Chekhov, was not limited to intellectuals from different world countries. Gorky's career was truly fantastic; Growing up from the shallow depths of the local workforce, he was less than thirty years old when he became the most famous writer and most talked about man in Russia. After a period of celebrity fame, he now fell in love with Tolstoy, and Chekhov, his reputation was tarnished, and Russian academics almost forgot about him. But his fame remained in the lower classes overseas and at home, and after 1917 his general fame and his encounter with the new Russian emperors made him a clear champion in Russian literature. However, this new situation was due to his suitability rather than learning.

The Novel "The Artamonovs Business", is the life story of three generations of a merchant family familiar to Maxim Gorky, the author. Without hiding anything, with clarity and depth of historical thinking, the author examined the Artamonovs as representatives of a class, their attitude to "business" relying on a deep understanding of the forces that govern the life of society. In the plot of the story, Gorky was interested not in questions of human sinfulness, but in the ruthless action of the "law of degeneration," the theme of the disintegration and degradation of a bourgeois family, not religious and moralistic, but social problems in the development of capitalist society. The history of the rise of the capitalist family under the conditions of capitalist development was better understood after the "reality" itself closed the cycle of capitalist development. In "Artamonov's Business", of course, the motive of the moral condemnation of the evil of capitalism, Artamonov's business remains in full force. But the decision turns out to be another verdict which is a historical pronouncement.

## **2. Influences of Gorky and "Artamonov's Business."**

From 1901 onwards, Gorky began to think about his new work and basement created for the novel. Maxim Gorky recognized and closely observed numerous generations of

the Russian capitalist families for the reflective social writing; this leads him to think about writing the novel. It took more than twenty years to write and publish this work. After 1916, when the book was published, Gorky postponed his writing after the October Revolution. Until 1925, though Gorky stayed in Italy, Gorky did not write the novel but marked the Russian industrial development beginning in his mind, with its brief reflections and failure by the shocks of the Bolshevik Revolution (Fitzpatrick 133). These things were the initial mind setup of Gorky to write the book.

In his novel *The Artamonov Business*, Ilya Artamonov, a former family founder, generally represented the Russian business class. This writing reveals the antagonism and anxiety of the urban people in the Russian community. Ilya had a great vision and mission and shaped a linen-making factory in the remote and unimportant regional city of Dromov. Prevailing and assured, he never looks backward towards anything, but he uses his time cleverly. He moved ahead with brave-minded, destroyed all difficulties to attain his vision, and became one of his city's wealthiest and successful linens-making factory owners and even his district. After Ilya Artamonov dies, his family, especially his sons, takes over the responsibilities and plans to develop the factory and business. Eventually, though, the outline is weakening, partially due to the lack of revelation of his sons, but mainly the coming revolution. As Porter's primogenital son, who leads the factory, he has no passion for his father Ilya's business or other work. He ensures business and works as a complex, heavy-duty, and he does not comprehend the persistence of his challenging work. By way of the linen, factory grew, Pyotr's alienation from his spouse, offspring, and colleagues continued to grow. Stuck in the routine of life and impotent to understand the socio, economic and political movements around him, he finds solace in alcohol and prostitution. One of his brothers Nikita devotes the maximum time of his life to the convent, declared elegant deceptions to get advice for devoted pilgrims. Once he realizes that there is no spirituality or sacredness in the convent life, he returns home and decides to die.

Alexei, the successor of Ilya Artamonov, is full of vigor and great ideas, unlike his brothers. He was very much concerned with the nation's political life and social life, art, and education. He was constantly on the run to achieve success; he was an honest industrial capitalist, an owner who is strongly thought in the influence of masses of Russian people and finds the opportunity to create a new-fangled capitalist economy in Russia. One of his sons, Miran was too wholly immersed in political and social problems. After he became the business owner, he too plans to perform a vital political role in the new Russian bourgeois. Similar to some other bourgeois liberals in Russia, he seeks to steer the history of Russia in a different and new direction towards progress, industrialization, and culture. Symbols of the new Russian geniuses are father and son. They held in reserve the Russian future in their hands but were very weedy and self-centered to save the nation from the new socialist revolution.

The linen factory business was spontaneous at the initial part of the novel; the Artamonov business expires with the advent of a new period. The book's latter parts appear like the Destruction of Artamonovs and his sons' linen factory business, concluding all open-minded business openings. The ending is appalling. The new owner, Pyotr is starving in his well-designed house, and Red Army soldiers of the nation are guarding his household. Since their eldest son is Ilya Bolshevik, Pyotr is still alive. With a revolution that brings neither achievement nor pleasure, but only



resentment and suffering, Gorky concludes his novel writing. With an unusually concise but surprisingly complete depth, the novel fills every detail with significance. Gorky lovingly and meticulously describes ancient Russian wedding ceremonies with their traditions and customs, wonderfully portrays the many holiday celebrations and festivities at the annual trade carnivals, and scatterings throughout Russian sayings, proverbs, and folk poetry. The novel's action creates various realms of Russian society and culture.

### **3. Themes related to Russian society in “The Artamonov Business.”**

Gorky also described the different characteristics of this weakening and paid close contemplation to the various ways in which hereditary family traits developed. But he shows more clearly and richly his powerful connection with the overall development of society in times of revolutionary crisis than all the works of his great contemporaries. Since Gorky always saw the end of the road, his novels, despite their austerity in the genre, achieving a much more general uniqueness and incomparable epic monument. The novel “The Artamonov Business” narrates the history of Russian capitalism, the story of a dying family, showing how the position of the “masters of life” disfigures and spiritually destroys people, transforming them from the masters of the “business” into its slaves (Frierson 27). The plot of the novel is based on the development of the Artamonov business.

Ilya Artamonov is the founder of the business. He is energetic, business like, knows the joy of work. His son Peter has neither strong will, assertiveness, nor labour enthusiasm distinguished by his father. He didn't like “Business” not only disobeys his father but trying to become his master. This caused Peter's fears, and he began to hate the workers; Tikhon, who frenziedly seizes on Ilya the Younger, seeks oblivion in drunkenness, scandals and surrounds himself with comforts. In the final stage, in the great Artamonov's “business,” turned out to be almost redundant, as it were a spectator. Artamonov's “middle generation” is Alexei. Unlike Peter, he is business like and energetic. But history inexorably tends Artamon's “business”, like all capitalism, to decline, and its insatiable greed for playing with deeds, “unpleasant rushiness” (Горький 63), could not break the historical developments. One of the brother of Peter Artamonov, Nikita, is trying to escape from social reality.

When Gorky deals with the idea of the novel to Leo Tolstoy, he saw in Artamonov, who had gone to a monastery to atone for the sins of his relatives, the embodiment of moral greatness. But in the novel, Nikita Artamonov is not majestic but unhappy. He does not believe in his preaching and cannot catch anyone in the net of comforting illusions, distract from the struggle to change a life, because “everyone is tired of enduring,” because the people are going to revolution, and not to religious consolation (Fitzpatrick 114).

The novel describes an exceptional condensation of life impressions, events, actions, psychology. The experience gained by Gorky in work on previous books made it possible to create a pervasive work. It seized the novelist not more than two hundred and fifty pages of standard format to express about fifty-four years of Russian life. The author is laconic in the characters' in describing their appearance, avoiding a detailed commentary. The novel amazes the richness of the folklore used in it: lyrics, songs,

proverbs, sayings; at the beginning of the story, an almost complete description of Russian wedding ceremonies is given.

Along with many traditional methods and forms of artistic creation, the Artamonovs' business also uses new ones. In the first part, the author narrates on his own behalf, emphasizing that there is no distinct difference in the vision of the world between him and his heroes. In the second part, the world is increasingly shown through the intersection of the author's points of view and Peter Artamonov, and in the third - Peter, Yakov. The author's characteristics are replaced by internal monologues and dialogues, ending with the character's speech, a scene after Peter's explanation with his son under an oak tree describing the business revelry at the fair, just like the last period of life Peter Artamonov. Gorky resorted to what in literary criticism is sometimes called psychological when some impressions seem to stretch in time. In contrast, others seem to disappear with time in some failures, as if they did not exist. Such are, for example, the three weeks Peter spent at the fair. In the main part of the novel reveals one character – the character of Pyotr Artamonov. It is in the foreground precisely because the “master” is losing power over the “business” (Горький 77).

#### **4. Business issues related with family and society**

Gorky encourages a way of delivering ideologies to the highest level in lively dialogue with the personal lives of his characters during the class struggle. An exceptional proposition is required to do justice to the infiltration of Marxist thoughts as bourgeois and bourgeois genius and distort and misinterpret these ideas by representatives of various bourgeois pseudo-Marxists. Gorky in the Artamonov business provided a historical representation of the development of pre-revolutionary bourgeois intellectuals; He later shows the decisive propensities for the expansion of intelligentsias and their attitude in the direction of the workers' dictatorship.

Another issue to be discussed in relation to Artamonov is the issue of personality. Gorky mostly portrayed a strong character of personality in his previous novels, and old-fashioned Russian facts crushed this source. In “The Artamonov Business”, Gorky describes the problem of personality as the inner emptiness of modern personality bourgeois intellectuals from a different angle. Although this subject is naturally mentioned in Gorky's other earlier works, it only focuses on a comprehensive and systematic commentary. In the “Artamonovs Business”, of course, the motive of moral condemnation of the evil of capitalism, Artamonov's “Business” retains its full force. Nevertheless, the critical one turns out to be another judgement as the verdict of history. The extremely developed impression of the lawfulness, the historical inevitability of the death of capitalism with all its life-devastating predation, comes to the fore. The bourgeois theme is presented in a different aspect: the sterility of the social practice of the bourgeoisie, the exhaustion of its historical forces is the central thesis of the novel.

Naturally, this kind of idea could not be revealed in the plot about the revolt of the “lost children” of the class against its environment. It demanded a supplementary widespread conflict. Such a struggle was the conflict amongst the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, their competition in the historical arena. The decision of who is the real master of life, its natural organizer and organizer organizes the novel's action. In three generations of the Artamonov family, Maxim Gorky contributed with extraordinary

gaudiness the artistic history of the Russian bourgeoisie, its belated but stormy appearance, its short triumph, and death. Gorky was able, with exceptional skill, to connect the deeply individual portrait characteristics of his heroes with a vast socio-political generalization (Kaun 233). The author managed to saturate every movement of his heroes with the fullness of the historical meaning.

The understanding of history that is revealed in the novel is based on the recognition of labour as the only source of values developed by humanity, the only engine of history forward, the decisive force of cultural development. Only those social forces that actively participate in creative, creative labour activities can develop effectively. The curse that gravitates over the Artamonovs, draining their strength from generation to generation, is in the parasitism of the exploiters, in the detachment of the proprietary classes from the life-giving force and the element of labour.

The death of Ilya, the initiator of the “business”, draws a kind of fatal line in the life of the Artamonovs, after which decline and fading begin. Let his “business” grow and expand, but the Artamonov’s rattletrap has gone askew, has lost the wheel: from generation to generation it becomes scarce, the strength of the family degenerates, the characters lose their brightness and integrity, become impoverished, discoloured. The activity of the successors of Ilya Artamonov is aimed at power; the pathos of creation does not inspire acquisition; therefore, all these applicants for the role of leaders of the capitalist era look small and insignificant. Gorky leads his heroes through similar situations. On parallels and analogies, the “lowering of the type” in the development of bourgeois society is revealed with particular convincingness. Only one Ilya-grandson in new conditions retained his grandfather’s energy and strength, directness, and independence. Still, to preserve these features, he leaves his father’s house, ceases to be Artamonov so that, in the end, together with the revolutionary proletariat, he returns and destroys Artamonov’s domination.

### **5. Influence of capitalism and democratic in “Artamonov Business”**

Immigrants from its bowels are destroying Russia’s capitalist system. Ilya Artamonov, a grandson and son of factory owners, does not want to do “business.” She goes head to head in her studies, reading books. Alexei’s son Miron says of his brother: “Ilya is one of those people who look at life in a book and don’t know how to distinguish a cow from a horse” (Горький 72). But this is just my brother’s guess. Ilya is closer to real-life than Artamonov wants to admit. He is a socialist. One of them actively and consistently shook the foundations of the system in Russia, which led to his revolt. Miron Artamonov is a Western deputy. He dreams that Russia will prosper on the west road, and his opponent Goritsvetov “represents” an independent, certain path of development. There is no consensus in the new generation. They are very different from their predecessors, fathers. Yakov, Peter Artamonov’s youngest son, condemns everyone. His brother Miron’s political claims are ridiculous; he does not accept Ilya. They are funny and incomprehensible to him. “It’s best not to dwell on negative things,” says his philosophy. It seems to him that, “the owner, he sits at a party with the people who work for him, he stays for a long time and he is tired of them, they, quietly angry, look at him as if they want to say:” Why don’t you go? Time. “It seems to me that this is almost figurative. He was not thrown out of the train but was thrown into a fast-moving life, as if Yakov was unnecessary, “unnecessary.” Gorky points out that

the sharp, weak, and lazy democrats are opposed to the united, orderly forces in Russia. So, in the first attack, the existing system collapsed.

From the words of Tikhon Vyalov, it is clear that Ilya is among the strange destroyers of the system. To Peter Artamonov, when asked about Ilya, the former security guard replied: “You have heard - of these. It must be because he is alive. After all, you have them; otherwise ...” (94) But Peter can no longer comprehend this horrible figure when his son, his hope and favorite, squanders his father’s “life’s work”. Gorky, therefore, demonstrated the familiarity and certainty of the collapse of the capitalist system based on exploitation and humiliation. He estimated the probability that the system picks up its passengers if it lives on its own.

## 6. Conclusion

Alexei Maksimovich Gorky, in his book “The Artamonovs Business,” showed the growth of democracy in Russia. Using the example of the Artamonov family, the author showed how intelligence agents are formed in capitalism’s depths, which will lead to workers fighting for their rights. In the conflict between Miron Artamonov and Goritsvetov, two political lines are shown in which the opposition forces wanted to position Russia: The Western way of development and its diversity, unlike anyone else, which ultimately succeeded. Explaining the history of businessman Artamonov, Gorky explores the cause of the collapse of capitalism in Russia. Using the example of three generations of Artamonov, the author shows the birth and death of “crime.” Gorky saw and cleverly managed to show that, in a short time, through the efforts of enthusiastic and aspiring people. Luck was built, the industry was strengthened, and how easy it was to ruin it, to take it into weak and powerless hands, to do work without love and love. “Everyone lives for work, but we can’t see if men live for anything beyond their work.” This contempt contributes to the Bolsheviks’ success, as seen in the author’s long association with Lenin. However, as long as the intelligent reader continues the healthy scepticism, the novel is a good picture of Russia before the arrival of the Soviets.

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## **CRIES UNHEARD: TRAUMA OF DISENFRANCHISED GRIEF IN ANTON CHEKHOV'S MISERY**

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***Abstract:** Being a social animal, man cannot live in isolation. There has to be a good connect between people by becoming constant support systems to one another. In today's world, mental health is a very serious concern. The growing number of psychological clinics or counseling centers foregrounds the need to have a listener to listener to make ourselves sane. By attempting textual analysis of Anton Chekhov's short story, 'Misery', this paper analyses the cavernous breach between individuals and their unsympathetic reciprocation to one's bereavement. It tries to unravel the dehumanized and indifferent attitude of modern society towards human sufferings. It also highlights how pathetic is the trauma of disenfranchised grief as it leaves the victim isolated, with no possible ways to vent out their emotions. The study aims to bring forth the need to have a humanitarian concern and empathy towards fellow beings.*

***Keywords:** trauma, isolation, unsympathetic society, suffering, grief*

The theme of human suffering is prevalent in literature across ages. From ancient epics to modern fictions, we have stories which are instinct with death of loved ones, grief, loss and trauma. Many authors have reflected in their works the inner turmoil of individuals which needs to be properly addressed and resolved. Anton Chekhov is one such writer who is highly sympathetic to the sentiments of people, particularly the downtrodden. He is a preeminent literary figure of Russia, who has popularized the modern short story. Chekhov has also helped to revolutionize the modern theatre. In many of his stories, he identifies himself with the marginalized sections of the society. He subtly reflects in his works the very ordinary yet inevitable chapters of one's life – death, unhappiness, regret, suffering, so on and so forth. Chekhov's works are more or less directed to the vices and pitfalls of the society, often sympathizing with the privileged classes.

Chekhov's *Misery* revolves around Iona Potapov, a sledge driver. The story opens with the description of a cold evening, where in everything is covered by snow. The evening twilight, the lazily whirling snow and Iona, who "is all white like a ghost", bring in a bleak ambience justifying the title. The mare is also in the same emotional zone as that of her master: "she is probably lost in thought. Anyone who has been torn away from the plough, from the familiar gray landscapes, and cast into this slough, full of monstrous lights, of unceasing uproar and hurrying people, is bound to think" (609). Iona is traumatized by the death of his son. Sigmund Freud, in "Mourning and Melancholia" defines trauma as "any excitation from outside which are powerful enough to break the [mind's] protective shield" (Freud, 23). The protagonist of the story is so much into his grief that he doesn't find it necessary to even shake off the snow that has fallen on his body. The following conversation from the story foregrounds how Iona is preoccupied with thoughts of his son's death:

"Where are you shoving, you devil?" Iona immediately hears shouts from the dark mass shifting to and fro before him. "Where the devil are you going? Keep to the r-right!"

"You don't know how to drive! Keep to the right," says the officer angrily.

A coachman driving a carriage swears at him; a pedestrian crossing the road and brushing the horse's nose with his shoulder looks at him angrily and shakes the snow off his sleeve. Iona fidgets on the box as though he were sitting on thorns, jerks his elbows, and turns his eyes about like one possessed as though he did not know where he was or why he was there.(610)

Here, the memory of Iona's son's death acts as a foreign body which is still at work, making him unreceptive to the outer world. In *Studies on Hysteria*, Joseph Breuer and Sigmund Freud discuss the connection between hysteria and psychological trauma. According to them, for a victim to work out his/her trauma, there is a need to relive the memory of the event by describing it in the best possible way. Thus, recovery from a traumatic state is possible only when the memories that correspond to the event have been properly abreacted. After a traumatic event, recovery is only possible if the victim accepts the reality and manages to move on. Otherwise, trauma continues to haunt the survivor in the worst possible way. Addressing one's trauma is the first step to come out of it. And often, it needs a listener. In the story, Iona tries to share his grief with the passenger:

Iona gives a wry smile, and straining his throat, brings out huskily: "My son... er... my son died this week, sir."

"H'm! What did he die of?"

Iona turns his whole body round to his fare, and says:

"Who can tell! It must have been from fever.... He lay three days in the hospital and then he died.... God's will."

"Turn round, you devil!" comes out of the darkness. "Have you gone cracked, you old dog? Look where you are going!"

"Drive on! drive on!..." says the officer. "We shan't get there till to-morrow going on like this. Hurry up!"

The sledge-driver cranes his neck again, rises in his seat, and with heavy grace swings his whip. Several times he looks round at the officer, but the latter keeps his eyes shut and is apparently disinclined to listen. (610)

From the conversation, the passenger is clearly apathetic to Iona's grief. This makes Iona lonelier and more disappointed as his trauma remains unshared. Then, he gets three passengers to Police Brigade. They hire him for twenty kopecks. Though the fare is not at all reasonable, Iona never complains. His loss has made him out of place. He cannot accept his son's death and is constantly haunted by his memories. Chekhov portrays Iona as one who is desperate to have a listener to share his grief: "He hears abuse addressed to him, he sees people, and the feeling of loneliness begins little by little to be less heavy on heart" (611). It is true that when we are haunted by a loss, the more we try to be active, the lesser will be our pain. To redress trauma, it is important to be in the company of people with whom we can share our anxieties and grief. To unburden his agonized mind, he again tries to communicate with his passengers:

"This week... er... my... er... son died!"

"We shall all die..." says the hunchback with a sigh, wiping his lips after coughing. "Come, drive on! drive on! My friends, I simply cannot stand crawling like this! When will he get us there?"

"Well, you give him a little encouragement... one in the neck!"

"Do you hear, you old plague? I'll make you smart. If one stands on ceremony with fellows like you one may as well walk. Do you hear, you old dragon? Or don't you care a hang what we say?" (611)

Chekhov clearly displays how people often lead materialistic lives being aloof to the sufferings of their fellow beings. He discusses the need to socialize with the world around for a greater cause of humanity. Iona, unable to find a single listener to unweigh the burden of his grief, is entangled in the web of anguish and loneliness:

Again he is alone and again there is silence for him.... The misery which has been for a brief space eased comes back again and tears his heart more cruelly than ever. With a look of anxiety and suffering Iona's eyes stray restlessly among the crowds moving to and fro on both sides of the street: can he not find among those thousands someone who will listen to him? But the crowds flit by heedless of him and his misery.... His misery is immense, beyond all bounds. If Iona's heart were to burst and his misery to flow out, it would flood the whole world, it seems, but yet it is not seen. It has found a hiding-place in such an insignificant shell that one would not have found it with a candle by daylight... (611)

After returning to the yard, Iona sees a young cabman who makes for the water bucket. With much hope, he tries to initiate a conversation but soon realizes that the cabman is already asleep. The unshared agony and pent up emotions torments Iona:

Just as the young man had been thirsty for water, he thirsts for speech. His son will soon have been dead a week, and he has not really talked to anybody yet.... He wants to talk of it properly, with deliberation.... He wants to tell how his son was taken ill, how he suffered, what he said before he died, how he died.... He wants to describe the funeral, and how he went to the hospital to get his son's clothes. He still has his daughter Anisya in the country.... And he wants to talk about her too.... Yes, he has plenty to talk about now. (612)

Deeply frustrated with the fellow human beings who turned out to be indifferent to his pain, Iona finds solace in his mare. It is highly disturbing even to think about the state of Iona who is devoid of a human company. He has no other way than to vent out his feelings and frustrations to his mare. Chekhov warns the readers with the shocking reality that in life we might be left all alone with no comforting words. Iona gets no response from his mare but still he is relieved that he could at least speak out his mind to someone. What is more agonizing than having no one to lean on during the days of distress? The helplessness of the protagonist along with the utter disappointment of the writer towards the hostile society is well reflected in the last conversation of Iona with his mare:

I have grown too old to drive.... My son ought to be driving, not I.... He was a real cabman.... He ought to have lived...."

Iona is silent for a while, and then he goes on:

"That's how it is, old girl.... Kuzma Ionitch is gone.... He said good-by to me.... He went and died for no reason.... Now, suppose you had a little colt, and you were own mother to that little colt. ... And all at once that same little colt went and died.... You'd be sorry, wouldn't you?..."

The little mare munches, listens, and breathes on her master's hands. Iona is carried away and tells her all about it. (613)

Men are social beings. In modern world, it is very difficult to live in a self-made cocoon, completely isolated from the rest of the world. The rapid growth of counseling centers informs us about the deteriorating mental health of people. The increase in the number of suicides makes us aware of the need to socialize with people. We often feel a peace of mind when we share our insecurities or anxieties to our fellow beings. It is true that sharing our grief unburdens us. But unfortunately, our society has become more or less resistant to the sufferings of people. Failures, loss and disappointments are part and parcel of our lives. Individuals get traumatized due to various reasons, most importantly when they incur a loss. In "Mourning and Melancholia", Freud describes one's reactions to his/her loss. They are mainly of two types, mourning and melancholia. In the former, the victim identifies with the loss whereas in the latter, the grief remains a foreign body and destroys the well-being of the individual. Iona suffers from the trauma of disenfranchised grief as he finds none to share his state of mind. Loss of loved ones can bring about an unbearable pain in the minds of people. Only when the trauma is meaningfully shared in words, will the victim be able to get solace to go through his/her agonizing situation. "When the event is over, the post traumatic period becomes relatively distorted with the backdrop of the trauma continuously looming into the present. When the survivors of trauma come in and tell their stories they are in the process of creating wholeness from the destruction they have experienced (Wall, 109). In the story *Misery*, Iona Potapov is agonized by his son's death. He has no wife and all he seeks in life is a person to share his pain. Chekhov has clearly portrayed the helpless nature of Iona throughout the story especially in his conversation with the passengers. The unsympathetic reaction of the society makes him more vulnerable. Anton Chekhov has clearly raised his disappointment with the world which is emotionally resistant to the pain of its fellow beings.

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# BAD BLOOD AND SWEET TALK: MENSTRUATION, TABOO AND EUPHEMISM

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**Abstract:** *Menstruation is considered as a taboo in many cultural communities around the world. Human ancestors' purity/pollution beliefs and their sense of danger imprinted menstruation as a taboo along with other bodily effluences. But, unlike other taboos, menstrual taboos are deep-rooted and resistant to change. These cultural taboos on menstruation paved way for the creation of linguistic taboos too. Direct discussions on menstruation are strictly proscribed in civic spaces and public discourses. These cultural and linguistic taboos led to the formation of innumerable menstrual euphemisms globally. These euphemisms are cloaked in colourful linguistic features and may sound funny and entertaining. But, they propagate and reinforce menstrual negativity and the culture of shame. This Paper attempts to study the interconnection between menstrual taboos and menstrual euphemisms by focusing on the meanings and themes of various menstrual euphemisms of different languages.*

**Key Words:** *menstruation, taboo, euphemism, menstrual culture, patriarchy.*

The term 'euphemism' is derived from the Greek word "eupheme", which means "auspicious". In Greek, the meaning of the prefix "eu" is "well" and of "pheme" is "speech". Thus, "euphemism" stands for good speech or sweet talk. *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary* defines euphemism as "the substitution of an agreeable or inoffensive expression for one that may offend or suggest something unpleasant" (428). *Concise Oxford English Dictionary* refers euphemism "as a mild or less direct word substituted for one that is harsh or blunt when referring to something unpleasant or embarrassing" (492). Euphemisms are used in order to replace something unpleasant, offensive, embarrassing, forbidden, or impolite. For example, since death is unpleasant and fearful, it is often replaced with the euphemistic expression "pass away". The term "porcelain throne" or "potty" is used to denote toilet. Similarly, "cancer" is indicated by using the phrase "that disease" in many regions. Thus, euphemisms offer linguistic politeness or sweet talking.

Euphemism maintains a close relationship with taboo. Taboo is an implicit social or religious prohibition of particular person, place, thing, utterance or behaviour. Taboo is inherently connected with culture, religion and morality. Philipp Stranzky points out that it is the cultural norms of a given society which decide the taboo and its operation in that particular society (1073). If an object, utterance or behaviour is a taboo in one society, it does not have to be a taboo in another society. From time immemorial, societies considered anything/anyone that may cause danger, discomfort or injury to their members as taboo. Sweat, urine, saliva, vomit, excreta, flatulence, sexual fluids, sex organs, disease, death, murder, abortion, adultery, incest, bestiality, necrophilia, paedophilia, masturbation, pornography, matricide and patricide are some of the universal examples for taboo. Sometimes, speaking or uttering about these things itself is a taboo in a society. In such case, members of that society prohibit themselves from talking about it or, instead, they use euphemisms to refer them. For example, in Burma,

there is no particular word for “vagina”. Tabooed objects, acts, people or situations which are considered as offensive, unpleasant or harmful are denoted and described with the help of euphemisms. Thus, taboos contribute significantly to language. Taboo motivates language change by “promoting the creation of highly inventive and often playful new expressions, or new meanings for old expressions, causing existing vocabulary to be forgone”, observes Allan and Burridge (162).

Menstruation is considered as a taboo in almost all cultures. Laura A. Walker remarks in one of her articles, “one taboo that crosses many cultures all over the world is the menstruation taboo” (1). Attributing multiple complex meanings to the process, different cultures interpreted menstruation differently. Some cultures celebrate menstruation as a sign of womanhood and fertility. Some others denigrate it as a form of impurity, sin and danger. Some others celebrate and denigrate menstruation simultaneously. Cultures and religions which perceive menstruation as a taboo imposed several restrictions for menstruating women. They were secluded in menstrual huts. They were not allowed to enter religious places and perform religious functions. They were not allowed to touch food or water, to cook food or to enter kitchen. These restrictions were observed unquestioningly by many cultural communities even in this twenty-first century. Anthropologists like Buckley and Gottlieb have interpreted these taboos differently and favourably by considering them in their cultural contexts and critiqued the Western tendency to imprint other cultures and their traditions as something inferior. However, menstrual restrictions and taboos should be confronted and contested when they violate the fundamental rights of people and their dignity. Undoubtedly, there is a dominant menstrual culture which is propagated by not only by culture and religion but also by science and industry. Scientific discourses define menstruation as a pathological condition. Industry, with the help of multinational sanitary product making firms, pharmaceutical companies and advertisements, defines menstruation as something to be hidden. They undoubtedly maintain menstruation as a taboo.

Due to this taboo status attributed to menstruation, people rarely talk about menstruation in public. This taboo status of menstruation demanded or promoted the use of euphemisms to refer this biological process. Without any spatial and temporal differences, people employed various euphemisms to mention menarche, menstruation and menopause. Being an unmentionable subject, in almost all around the world, menstruation has been uttered implicitly with the help of various euphemisms and slangs. Using the linguistic techniques such as metaphors, circumlocutions, loanwords and figurative speeches, euphemisms are made enormously. These are used mostly by women among women. However, it is also used in the discussions between lovers and partners, among peer group adolescents. Generally, girls learn and begin to use menstrual euphemisms when they attain menarche as secrete codes being in company of people in whose presence the direct reference to menstruation is deemed unpleasant and embarrassing. Even in this twenty-first century, there are thousands of secret codes to refer menstruation and to cover it from the everyday public discourses. V. L. Larsen remarked that “special words and expressions as well as verbal taboos are used in most cultures to refer to menstruation” (874-5).

The number of euphemisms in a society varies according to the cultural differences. Cultures with strong menstrual taboos rarely mention the process and therefore the

number of euphemisms and slangs in that culture are very limited. On contrary to this, cultures with moderate menstrual restrictions exploit more terms to refer the process implicitly. For example, the number of menstrual euphemisms is greater in Western societies compared to many African and Asian societies

A period tracking application Clue conducted a survey involving around 90,000 people from 190 countries. It could compile around 5000 menstrual euphemisms. In olden days, people used the terms like “them”, “these days” or “those days” to describe menstruation. Ever since, plenty of words and phrases were added and used as secret codes to refer menstruation. There are several funny and wired euphemisms for menstruation all around the world. For example, in Germany, *alarmstufe rot* (“code red alarm”) and *auf der roten welle surfen* (“riding the red wave”) are widely used. Similarly, in France, the phrases *la semaine ketchup* (“ketchup week”) and *c’est une scène de crime dans ma culotte* (“it’s a crime scene in my panty”) are used to denote menstruation. In Italy, phrases such as *Le mie cose* (“I have my thing”) and *palloncino rosso* (“red rebellion”) are employed to refer period. In China, the most popular euphemisms are 大姨妈 (“eldest aunt”) and 例假 (“regular holiday”). Similarly, in Japan, the terms like 血祭 (“blood festival”) and ペリ一來航 (“arrival of Matthew Perry”) are recurrently used to refer menstruation. There are very interesting euphemisms in Russia for menstruation. Эти дни (“these days”), Критические дни (“critical days”), Дела (“business”), Красная армия (“red army”), Красный день календаря (“red day / days of the calendar”), Гости из Краснодара (“guests from Krasnodar”), and Праздники (“holidays”) are some among them. In India, there are multiple regional languages and, in each language, there are multiple euphemisms to signify menstruation. For example, in Malayalam, words like *theendari*, *purathakuka*, *vayassariyikkuka* and *maasamura* are used instead of the Malayalam clinical term *aarthavam*.

It has been found that these euphemistic terms are derived on the basis of particular themes in almost all cultures. It was Natalie F. Joffe who examined menstrual terminology for the first time in 1948 and she classified her findings using the categories ‘time’, ‘colour’, visitors, ‘persons’, and disability’ (135). Later, Victoria Newton had conducted an extensive research on menstrual euphemisms that are prevalent in north Derbyshire region of Britain and included her findings in her work *Everyday Discourses of Menstruation*. She remarks that there is a “stability of themes” within cultures and this “suggests that menstrual slang and euphemisms can be described as a shared cultural discourse about menstruation” (137). Similarly, with an intention to decode the terminologies which are used to describe female body process, another scholar, Sara Read identified the well-known menstrual expressions of early modern England. Read found that the terms such as ‘courses’, ‘custom of women’, ‘flowers’, ‘gift’ or ‘benefit of nature’, ‘months’, ‘monthly sickness’, ‘ordinaries’, ‘terms’, ‘time common to women’, ‘those’ and ‘visits’ are frequently adopted to communicate the process of menstruation (Read 24). A close analysis of these menstrual euphemisms shows that there are terms which give negative as well as positive connotations for menstruation. Negative euphemisms give the impression that menstruation is filthy, debilitating, impure and toxic. On the contrary, the euphemisms which give positive connotations for menstruation connect menstruation with

womanhood, fertility, and reproduction. In addition, there are terms which are neutral and very much interesting.

Almost all around the world, there are terms which give reference to the time and frequency of menstruation. For example, euphemisms like ‘period’ ‘time of month’ and ‘monthly’ are used in England. The famous English diarist Samuel Pepys noted in his diary on 24 December 1662 that “so home to supper and to bed, my wife not being well, she having her months upon her” (qtd. in Read 100). In India, euphemisms like *masika dharma* (मासिक धर्म) and *mahavari* (माहवारी) in Hindi, and *maasamura* in Malayalam are all mean and signify the monthly occurrence of menstruation. Some other euphemisms connect menstruation with nature and seasons. For instance, the euphemisms like *rtu* (ऋतु- ‘season’) in Tamil, *la luna* (“the moon”) in Spanish, *ho le inondazioni* (“I have a flood”) in Italy, and *les chuts du Niagara* (“Niagara Falls”) in French are all derived from this connection.

Some other terms reflect the pollution or the impurity concept and the outside status of menstruation inherent in many cultures. For example, the kannada phrase *horage antu* (“outside”) and Malayalam terms like *theendari* (“untouchable”) and *purathaavuka* (“to be outside”) indicate this purity/pollution or inside/outside aspect of menstruation. This shows how women are forced to stay away from home, kitchen and from the cultural and religious spaces. Several cultural communities associated menstruating women with unfavourable images like witches, devils and monsters. These cultural references became verbal taboos immediately. Occasionally, Spanish people mention bleeding woman as *el diablo* (“the devil”) and *el vampiro* (“the vampire”). Russians refer menstruating women as *монстры* (“monsters”) and Portuguese also labels them as *monstra* (“female monster”). Other frequent themes are ‘illness’, ‘indisposition’ and ‘discomfort’. The Spanish euphemism *estar sonada* (“being broken”), Chinese term *倒霉* (“bad luck”) and Italian phrase *sono indisposta* (“I feel sick”) echo this theme. The earliest known diary was written by an English Lady Margaret and she wrote in her diary on 26 Jan 1600 that “I, being not well, praied and reed in mine owne chamber...” [Sic] (qtd. in Read 87). Another theme is danger. There is also a tendency to imply menstruation as a form of danger using euphemisms. For example, the German euphemism *die rote pest* (“the red plague”) and the Italian euphemism *semaforo rosso* (“red light”) suggests this danger attributed to menstruation.

Colour of the blood motivated the creation of a great number of menstrual euphemisms. Red is a word that recurrently appears in menstrual euphemisms across the globe. Usually, the colour red is directly applied in Euphemisms. However, sometimes, Fruits, vehicles and flowers, having red colour, are often used as metaphors to signify this. Walker notes that “some euphemisms for menstruation are based on colour associations. Different groups of people will use colour metaphors that are significant to that specific culture”(27). Most of the German euphemisms are closely connected with the colour red. For example, German menstrual euphemisms such as *erdbeerwoche* (“strawberry week”), *besuch von tante Rosa* (“Aunt Rose is visiting”), *rote tante* (“red aunt”), *rote armee* (“red army”), *rote welle* (“red wave”) and *rote woche* (“red week”) are derived out of the redness of menstrual blood. French euphemism *la semaine ketchup* (“ketchup week”), Italian euphemism *semaforo rosso* (“red light”), Danish euphemism *kommunister i lysthuset* (“communists in the gazebo”)

and Russian euphemism *красные Жигули* (“red zhiguli”, Russian car brand) are all directly or indirectly connected with the colour red. Thus, a large number of menstrual euphemisms are evolved from the red colour of blood.

Similarly, the entrance of a visitor is a recurrent image in menstrual euphemisms. These kinds of euphemisms echo the connotation that a visitor is a nuisance or annoyance for the host. Thus, these terms also implicitly echo the meaning that menstruation is an unwanted thing. In England, the visitors are “Aunt Flo” and “Miss Dot”. In Germany, “Red aunt is visiting” (*Besuch der roten Tante*). For the people of Denmark, there are the “visitors from Rødby” (*Besøg fra Rødby*). “Blood Mary” (血腥瑪麗) visits Chinese women. “Mathew Perry” (ペリー来航) arrives in Japan. In Spain, it is “Andrew who comes once in a month” (*Andres, el que viene una vez por mes*). There is no direct link between the name of the visitor and the process of menstruation. Except in the case of Aunt Flo whose name is associated with the word “flow, it has been found that other names are randomly picked.

References to sanitary protection are also evident in menstrual euphemisms. The word ‘sanitary’ itself is a euphemism which gives the notion that menstruation is ‘unclean’. Euphemistic term ‘on the rag’ is associated with reusable cloth pads which was highly popular before the entrance of modern menstrual management methods. Commonly used English euphemisms such as ‘riding the cotton pony’, ‘plugged up’ and ‘covering the water front’ are connected to menstrual products and their use. Another euphemism ‘I’m on my surfers’ is originated due to the surfboard shape of sanitary pads of the 1970s.

Similarly, there are several magnificent funny euphemisms too. The French women declare that *les Anglais ont débarqué*, a wartime expression that implies ‘the English have landed’. Some other euphemisms like ‘on the blob’ (combination of the words bleed and blood), ‘painters’, ‘decorators’, and ‘girl’s thing’ are prevalent in European societies. There are also personified terms like ‘Aunt Flo’ and ‘Grandma’. The English term “the curse” is also popular. Popular culture also contributed terms like ‘crimson wave’ which is adopted from the film *Clueless* and ‘gone with the wind’ from *Miss Scarlet*. There are some creative descriptions like ‘riding the red dragon’, ‘up on the blocks’, ‘to have the painters in’ and ‘Liverpool are playing at home’ to describe menstruation. Euphemisms using a number of linguistic techniques like alliteration (‘flying the flag’, ‘blood bum’, ‘blood bath’), assonance (‘leaky week’, ‘jam-rag’) or acronyms (PMT, PMS) are also enormous in European languages (Newton 135-140).

Menstrual euphemisms and slangs are not innocent. They are the carriers of patriarchal assumptions about women and their bodies. They reinforce age old stereotypical images and models of women in general and the menstruation in particular. Cultural and religious doctrines often prohibit sexual intercourse with menstruating women. These doctrines implicitly exerted their influence on the language surrounding menstruation, particularly on euphemisms. English euphemism “closed for repairs/maintenance” and French euphemism *Être en travaux* (“to be under construction / a work in progress”) demonstrate this aspect of menstrual culture. To talk about sexual intercourse during menstruation men use terms like ‘mucky jump week’, ‘blood sports week’, and ‘bleeding love’, whereas women use terms like ‘out of

order’, and ‘out of action’(Newton 137). After analysing these words Newton comments:

There is a clear gender divide: all the terms used by the males refer to having menstrual sex, whereas the references given by females mostly allude to the undesirability of having sex during the menstrual period. Some of the men’s terms (‘blood sport’, ‘mucky jump week’) define women as sexual objects, and confessing to having had menstrual sex in direct breach of that ‘taboo’ serves only to reinforce the masculinity of the man who has said such a thing. With regard to the terms used by women, these reinforce the menstrual-sex ‘taboo’, but also give the woman a measure of control over her sexuality. Stating that she is on her period is an acceptable way for her to refuse sex.” (137-8).

Menstrual euphemisms, circulated from generations to generations, not only propagate archetypes of gender but also the negativity surrounding menstruation and menstruating bodies. Menstrual expressions both reflect and reinforce the cultural attitude towards menstruation as something impure, pollutant and unclean. Several terms give the impression that female body is leaky and out of control. Larsen writes that “special words and expressions as well as verbal taboos are used in most cultures to refer to menstruation. Frequently these expressions are synonymous with ‘danger’, ‘unclean’, or ‘beware’” (874-5).

Even though several euphemisms have changed or perished on the course of time, most of the euphemisms and slangs remain constant with a hesitation to change. For example, reusable menstrual cloths have been replaced by sanitary napkins, tampons and menstrual cups. However, the euphemistic term ‘on the rag’ still prevalent in European societies to indicate menstruation. Moreover, several neutral terms like ‘menstruation’, ‘menses’, and ‘period’ are unsusceptible to change and getting standardised.

Thus, the intertwining of social norms and verbal taboos is most evident in the case of menstrual euphemisms. Unlike other biological processes, menstruation is considered as a socio-cultural event. Cultural and religious discourses interpreted menstruation according to their rules and norms. Taboos were also imposed upon menstruation and menstruating people. These cultural taboos on menstruation also instigated verbal taboos which, in turn, led to the creation of alternative verbal expressions. Thousands of menstrual euphemisms were used across the globe to refer a single biological process. This demonstrates the intensity of menstrual taboos. There are very transparent similarities among menstrual euphemisms, particularly in their themes. These apparent similarities show that the notion of menstrual taboo is universal. Even though they contribute to the vocabulary of a language, and there are several positive and interesting menstrual euphemisms, some others are the manifestations of a dominant, retrogressive menstrual culture. They not only reflect but also reinforce a patriarchal, gendered social order.

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# A GARDEN OF HER OWN: WOMEN, SPACE AND GARDEN IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY NOVEL

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**Abstract:** *This paper aims at examining the garden- as an idea and space- in three nineteenth century British novels- Jane Austen's Pride and Prejudice (1813), Emily Bronte's Wuthering Heights (1847) and Charlotte Bronte's Jane Eyre (1847). It seeks to show how the heroines in these novels come to terms with their own selves and the world outside while frequenting gardens or when thinking about them. These gardens function variously as hortus conclusus (an enclosed garden) setting boundaries for women and as spaces pushing the boundaries of home. Attempts at negotiating the paradoxical nature of the garden space lead to stirrings of freedom and transgression, ownership and property rights, and philosophical musings in the women characters of these novels. At a time when women did not have rooms of their own, stepping out of the patriarchal garden bounds or into the open garden spaces allowed women the space to escape claustrophobia or to realize their claustrophobic condition.*

**Key words:** garden, women, nineteenth century novel, space, freedom

## 1. Women, nineteenth century, garden

The nineteenth century saw women making forays into the public sphere and expressing themselves mainly through writings. The first wave feminist movement in the nineteenth century was hugely influenced by Mary Wollstonecraft who in her *A Vindication of the Rights of Women* critiques the idea of women as the weaker sex. Wollstonecraft stresses on the need for education for women which would enable them for nobler intellectual pursuits. This period also saw the growth of female novelists like Jane Austen, the Bronte sisters, George Eliot etc. Apart from being a pastime and way of self expression, writing also helped these women earn some financial benefits. This period also saw the rise of the gardening advice text written by women like Gertrude Jekyll and Jane Loudon and directed at women creating their own suburban gardens. Wollstonecraft herself talked about the importance of "Gardening, experimental philosophy, and literature" which would provide the women folk with "subjects to think of and matter for conversation that in some degree would exercise their understandings" (147). Writing about gardening in advice texts, novels and journals thus gave women access to both financial and creative freedom.

In the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth century, however, not many ladies were hands on gardeners. Landscape gardens in countryside mansions would be designed by landscape architects like Capability Brown, Humphrey Repton etc, most of whom were men. (Bell 472). Women were mainly engaged in creating flowers gardens where men were creating landscape gardens. (Bell 479). Also "...the flowers gardens of the women of the eighteenth century live mostly in their letters, in their garden notebooks, in their botanical paintings, and in their embroideries." (Bell 481). To this, we may add the early nineteenth century novel where women writers make their heroines express themselves by inhabiting or creating gardens.

Again, the horticultural gardens would be taken care of by the male gardeners, though they would often be supervised by the ladies of the house. Hands-on-gardening for the noble women was still disgraceful as can be understood from the writings like



Elizabeth Von Arnim's *Elizabeth and her German Garden*. Here she describes her love for gardens and gardening which she can engage with only indirectly through her gardener who would also not care to listen to her.

## 2. Eden and gender

The Edenic myth of the garden is highly imbued with gendered overtones. Adam is given supremacy over all the objects in the garden including plants, animals and Eve. However, even before consuming the fruit of knowledge, Eve is a woman who speaks her mind. Her argument with Adam about working alone by herself in the garden is the first instance of Eve claiming her space in a patriarchal garden. However, it is the same space where she is tempted into sinning. This is the same instance that Von Arnim refers to while making a statement on women and gardens:

“It is not graceful, and it makes one hot; but it is a blessed sort of work and If Eve had had spade in Paradise and known what to do with it, we should not have had all that sad business of the apple” (25-26)

The tasting of the apple, however, had paved the way for Eve discovering knowledge of the patriarchal world. Also, we would not have had the tale of Fall and of Eden altogether. While gardening with a spade would have made Elizabeth ecstatic, the unfulfillment of these desires left the scope for her to write a treatise on women and gardens. Thus women, both with and without a spade, are seen to produce stories and make sense of discourses of the male world, while in presence of or while thinking about gardens.

## 3. Space, gender, nineteenth century

Armstrong refers to the inseparability of the spatiality and the nineteenth century novel when he says that “if we subtract the element of space from the nineteenth century novel, it would be hard to say what is left” (2). While the domestic interior space is often dealt with in nineteenth century fiction, not much attention has been paid to the domestic exterior which is highly gendered. Most of the spaces in which the action of the nineteenth century novel plays out are owned by men. However, it is the women characters who occupy most of these spaces both physically and on page.

Lefebvre talks about how ideology both produces and works in relation to social spaces (44). The garden is similarly produced by the anthropological and patriarchal ideologies which tame both women and nature. The notion of the garden as hortus conclusus or an enclosed space comes from the notion of the protected virgin woman's body. From this body/space all outside pleasures are violently excluded by a wall just the way women's mobility in the nineteenth century was highly restricted to the garden bounds of the house. Doreen Massey's description of a gendered space resembles this hortus conclusus:

From the symbolic meaning of spaces/places and the clearly gendered messages which they transmit, to straightforward exclusion by violence, spaces and places are not only themselves gendered, but in their being so, they both reflect and affect the ways in which gender is constructed and understood. The limitation of women's mobility, in terms both of identity and space, has been in some cultural contexts a crucial means of subordination. Moreover the two things – the

limitation of mobility in space, the attempted consignment/confinement to particular places on the other- have been crucially related. (Massey 179)

It is these restrictions or mobility and limited space that made women in nineteenth century novels claustrophobic (Shands 73). In her essay *A Room of One's Own*, Virginia Woolf had famously talked about how in order to exert creative freedom a woman needed money and a room of her own (7). In the nineteenth century women lacked such privacy and would often find themselves in the drawing room near the fireplace stealing off moments from the surrounding crowd either to sew or to write. Woolf connects the unavailability of wealth to the limited creative space for women in the nineteenth century. At a time when they did not have access to either money or a room of their own, they frequently turned to nature to exercise their minds and bodies in gardens.

In the first place, to have a room of her own, let alone a quiet room or a sound proof room, was out of the question, unless her parents were exceptionally rich or very noble, even upto the beginning of the nineteenth century. Since her pin money, which depended on the will of her father, was only enough to keep her clothed, she was debarred from such alleviations as came even to Keats or Tennyson or Carlyle, all poor men, from a walking tour, a little journey to France, from the separate lodging which, even if it were miserable enough, sheltered them from the claims and tyrannies of their families. (Woolf 58-59)

In order to escape this claustrophobia, the women would escape to gardens which would offer them some mental and physical freedom, if not all. The paper looks at how women evade attempts at the regulation of their bodies and minds by escaping to free spaces and by creating their own spaces in gardens.

#### **4. Garden, Spatiality and the Nineteenth Century Novel**

##### **4.1 Pride and Prejudice:**

Although Austen's narrative space is compared to two inches of ivory, her heroines, especially Elizabeth Bennet constantly push the gendered boundaries of space and mobility by moving outdoors to the garden or walking on foot to Netherfield or running errands for the family (Langland 53). Through Elizabeth's escape to the gardens Austen wants to draw attention to the individuality of her heroine who finds mundane social conversations insipid and prefers escaping to the garden to her own company. For example, at Rosings Park, she sneaks out to the gardens to avoid the dullness of Lady Catherine de Bourgh's conversations:

“Her favourite walk and where she frequently went while others were calling on Lady Catherine, was along the open grove which edged that side of the park where there was a nice sheltered path, which no one seemed to value but herself, and where she felt beyond the reach of Lady Catherine's curiosity.” (Austen 191)

The eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century were dominated by the discourse of taste in clothing, architecture, mannerisms and garden design. Wealthy landowners with huge estates liked to “improve” them through landscape architects. In the eighteenth and the early nineteenth centuries, the English landscape garden style attributed to Lancelot Capability Brown with wide views and meadows merging into the countryside were the dominant style. Landscape improvement was a male domain

since women neither had property rights nor did they supervise such improvements. Again, most of the landscape architects around this time were males. Women, however exhibited a great deal of understanding of such improvements. These often formed the basis on which they formed judgements of people. Elizabeth's reactions to the various landscape gardens in the novel show the heroine's keen sense of taste. While at Rosings, Elizabeth cannot bring herself to a strong liking of the park:

Every park has its beauty and prospects; and Elizabeth saw much to be pleased with, though she could not be in such raptures as Mr. Collins expected the scene to inspire, and but was slightly affected by his enumeration of the windows in front of the house, and his relation of what the glazing altogether had originally cost sir Lewis de Bourgh. (Austen 182)

In comparison, the grounds at the Pemberley estate, apparently set in good taste in reigning fashion of the natural looking prospects:

The park was very large and contained a variety of ground...It's banks were neither formal nor falsely adorned. Elizabeth was delighted. She had never seen a place for which nature had done more, or where natural beauty had been so little counteracted by an awkward taste. They were all of them warm in their admiration; and at that moment she felt that to be the mistress of Pemberley might be something! (Austen 271)

The landscape set in good taste also reflects the taste of the owner Darcy which causes Elizabeth change of mind towards him. This understanding of the garden and the discourse of taste in landscape thus secures her future prospects. She eventually marries Darcy and comes to be the mistress of the Pemberley estate according to her wish.

#### **4.2. Jane Eyre**

In Charlotte Bronte's *Jane Eyre*, spaces-houses, gardens, schools- and places-Gateshead Hall, Lowood School, Thornfield Hall, Marsh-End, Ferndean- figure prominently and have a bearing on the characters psyche and the plot. The protagonist, Jane, is seen to move out of one of these spaces to the other, finally settling in Ferndean. In her decision to settle in or move out of these spaces the garden- variously acting as hortus conclusus and an Eden of freedom- holds significance. At Lowood school the girls are made to compulsorily go and play in the garden. While the aim of this training is to train the kids in discipline and physical fitness, it eventually turns out be a torture, especially in winter. The garden can be seen as an example of hortus conclusus guarded on all sides by towering walls, which sends across a prohibitory message against transgression:

The garden was a wide inclosure, surrounded walls so high so as to exclude every glimpse of prospect. A covered verandah ran down on one side, and broad walks bordered a middle space, divided into scores of little beds. These beds were assigned for the pupils to cultivate, and each bed had an owner. When full of flowers, they would doubtless look pretty; but now, at the latter end of January, all was wintry and brown decay. I shuddered as I stood and looked around me (Bronte 47).

Further, she finds the garden "convent-like" guarded by "high spiked" walls which produces the image of a prison (Haggan 355). This very claustrophobia causes in her a

strong desire for transgression and looking over the walls for freedom. She happens to encounter the world beyond these walls in spring:

“I discovered, too, that a great pleasure- an enjoyment which the horizon only bounded- lay all outside the high and spiked guarded walls of the garden. This pleasure consisted in a prospect of noble summits girding a great hill- hollow, rich in verdure and shadow; in a bright peck full of dark stones and sparkling eddies” (77).

The prison garden of Lowood is thus seen against the hills of desire viewed on the horizon:

“I went to my window, opened it, and looked out. There were the two wings of the building; there was the garden; there were the skirts of Lowood; there was the hilly horizon. My eye passed all other objects, to rest on those most remote, the blue peaks; it was those I longed to surmount; all within their boundary of rock and heath seemed prison ground, exile limits. I traced the white road winding the base of one mountain and vanishing in a gorge between the two; how I longed to follow it further.” (87)

She crosses the threshold of Lowood to the promising garden of Thornfield which held prospects of economic freedom for her. Like Elizabeth in *Pride and Prejudice*, Jane Eyre escapes to the garden in Thornfield for solitude and quiet time with herself when she needs a break from her duties. She refers to her time in the garden “the sweetest hour of the twenty four.” (261)

The gardens of Lowood, Thornfield and later Marsh End, however reveal themselves to be patriarchal traps trying to tame her free spirit by either disciplining her or tying her to undesirable marriages. When she finally inherits a huge fortune, she sets out to the wilderness of Ferndean in order to create a garden of her own, after the hortus conclusus of Thornfield is ruined. Her experiences in the garden space bring about wisdom, a sense of self and wealth to her which leads her to creating her dream garden space of freedom, divorced of past influences.

### **4.3. Wuthering Heights**

In Emily Bronte’s *Wuthering Heights*, the mansion of Wuthering Heights is said to be a wild moor while Thrushcross Grange is compared to a well-cultivated garden. These women negotiate their freedom in trying to get out of or get into gardens and by implication, getting in and out of either of these two spaces. Both Catherine and Cathy are free spirited women who love to transgress and are often seen to ramble out of the bounds of their homes to explore the outside world. During one such exploration, Catherine and Heathcliff stumble upon the mansion of Thrushcross Grange and its well kempt garden. Catherine, a spirit of the moors, enters this garden and emerges out of this to be a well-cultured lady married to Linton. However, she feels herself to be a misfit in the garden of Thrushcross Grange as her spirit and heart lies in Wuthering Heights where her lover Heathcliff resides. This control of her true spirit works towards her detriment- she feels claustrophobic and falls sick. The garden to which she came seeking freedom entraps her and leads to her end.

While Catherine had come to the garden of Thrushcross Grange looking for freedom, Cathy escapes the garden of Thrushcross Grange to the moors of Wuthering Heights. In her case too, the destination reveals itself to be a trap. In order to avenge Linton and to acquire Thrushcross Grange for himself, the younger Cathy is forcefully made to marry

the sickly younger Linton whose property was to pass over to Heathcliff's after his and his uncle Linton's death. As a woman in the Victorian period who does not have property rights, the younger Cathy is dispossessed and has to bear the brunt of Heathcliff's maniacal behavior. She longs to return to Thrushcross Grange and its garden, which now represent freedom for her. She makes attempts to plant some of the peace and freedom of Thrushcross Grange at the Heights by planting trees. When Cathy is seen to cultivate plants brought from the Grange at Wuthering Heights, Heathcliff is enraged and yells at Cathy, while she retorts by claiming her right on the land which had been taken away from her:

"You shouldn't grudge a few yards of earth for me to ornament, when you've taken away all my land!" (284)

Cathy's assertion of her rights is thus important not only because it defies the patriarchal dominion of Heathcliff but also because it challenges the traditional understandings of property and belongingness. At a time when women lacked property rights, Cathy lays claim to space not through legal ownership of land but through gardening and nurturing a part of her own from Thrushcross Grange on Heathcliff's land. Thus, while the garden space of Thrushcross Grange acted as hortus conclusus for Catherine, the younger Cathy uses the garden to the effect of her freedom.

## 5. Eden in the nineteenth Century Novel

### 5.1 Jane Eyre

The Edenic garden along with the insinuations of Fall and redemption is a recurring metaphor in the nineteenth century British fiction (Finney 22-23). The spaces and images in *Jane Eyre* hint at a Biblical world of deception and punishment at work. At the garden in Thornfield, Jane sneaks off to a corner in order to escape the glances of Rochester, who she felt was looking at her through the windows. She compares this sheltered corner to Eden:

"No nook in the grounds more sheltered and more Eden-like. It was full of trees, it bloomed with flowers." (262)

Jane's view of Eden is thus one where can be by herself without any companion. This Eden, however, faces the threat of interruption. Bronte creates a sense of foreboding of the trouble, the serpent, soon to visit Jane's Eden in the following lines:

"But in threading the flower and fruit parterres at the upper part of the inclosure, enticed there by the light the now rising moon casts on this more open quarter, my step is stayed- not by sound, nor by sight; but once more by a warning fragrance." (262)

This is caused by Mr. Rochester, whose entrance interrupts the bliss that Jane had been enjoying. Like Satan, he would tempt Jane into an apparently better but a bigamous relationship in reality. (Haggan 66). At another place Rochester's talk with Jane in the garden alludes to Eve being created out of Adam's ribs:

"I sometimes have queer feeling with regard to you, especially when you are near me, as now; it is as if I had a string somewhere under my left ribs, tightly an inextricably knotted to a similar string situated in the corresponding quarter of your little frame. And if that boisterous channel, and two hundred miles or so of land, come broad between us, I am afraid that cord of communion will be snapped;

and then I've a nervous notion I should take to bleeding inwardly. As for you, you'd forget me" (266)

Both these cases present an image of a man trying to persuade a woman to comply in the garden. Jane gives in to the temptation and accepts the marriage proposal which brings doom to her blissful paradise. This doom is signaled by the storm at Thornfield right after the proposal, in the manner of heavens clattering after Eve's eating of the forbidden fruit (Hagan 367). When Jane comes to know of Rochester as an already married man, the Edenic promise of the Thornfield garden is shattered and it reveals itself to be yet another hortus conclusus meant to trap her into an immoral life. Like the postlapsarian Eve, Jane comes out of closed heaven, leaving this hortus conclusus now to enter into another one, that of Marsh End. The house described as "well-built though small house" in "the middle of a garden" (327) likens it to an earthly garden and a life of toil as against the garden of pleasures in Thornfield. The following description which highlights the modesty of the house further enhances the image the earthly garden after Fall:

"I, too, in the gray, small, antique structure, with its low roof, its latticed casements, its mouldering walls, its avenue of aged firs- all grow aslant under the stress of the mountain winds; its garden, dark with yew and holly- and where no flowers but of the hardiest species would bloom- found a charm, both potent and permanent." (371).

It is at this garden that Jane inherits a fortune which empowers her to reject any more prospect of marital eden with St John Rivers. In full control of her life, Jane sets out to look for Rochester at Thornfield which she finds in ruins. She then arrives at Ferndean which presents a picture of wilderness "a building of considerable antiquity, moderate size, and no architectural pretensions, deep buried in a wood" (458) as opposed to the well-kempt old Eden. This is a place with "no flowers, no garden-beds; only a broad gravel walk girdling a grass-plot, and this set in the heavy frame of the forest." (459) Here Jane finds a "sightless Samson" (460) instead of the brooding old Rochester. All traces of the corrupt old garden are thus removed with its owner duly punished. With her new found economic independence, Jane now sets out to create the blissful Eden of her desire with Rochester at Ferndean. Jane thus evades all Edens restricting her freedom of body and mind to create an Eden of her own.

## 5.2 Wuthering Heights

Emily Bronte's *Wuthering Heights* is replete with Biblical metaphors. Susan Gubar's "Emily Bronte's Bible of Hell" talks about how the images and perceptions of heaven and hell frequently merge into one another and are extremely subjective, as each character perceives these two differently (385). The ideas of the garden and the moor are central to Catherine and the younger Cathy's understandings of Heaven or Eden and Hell. Catherine enters the parks of Thrushcross Grange and the interiors of Thrushcross Grange present to her and Heathcliff a picture of Heaven:

We ran from the top of the Heights to the park... We crept through a broken hedge, grope our way up the path, and planted ourselves on a flower-pot under the drawing-room window... and we saw, ah! it was beautiful- a splendid place carpeted with crimson, and crimson covered chairs and tables... We should have thought ourselves in heaven! (41)

Catherine comes to reside in this Heaven of beautiful parks and well furnished home only to end up miserable. She tells Nelly of her misery and how she pictures Heaven in her dreams as the moor of Wuthering Heights:

“I was only going to say that Heaven did not seem to be my home; and broke my heart with weeping to come back to earth; and the angels were so angry that they flung me out into the middle of the heath on the top of Wuthering Heights; where I woke sobbing for joy.” (71)

Emily Bronte thus presents here her version of the Fall where what seems to be a Fall for the angels is actually a joyful heaven for Catherine. Again, the younger Cathy’s heaven, as opposed to her mother is closer to the idea of Thrushcross Grange. When she tells Nelly of her idea of heaven, it resembles a garden as opposed to Linton’s idea of Heaven which is a moor:

He said the pleasantest manner of spending a hot July day was lying from morning till evening on a bank of a heath in the middle of the moors... That was his perfect idea of heaven’s happiness: mine was rocking in a rustling green tree, with a west wind blowin...and the moors seen at a distance, broken into cool dusky dells; but close by great swells of long grass undulating in waves to the breeze; and woods and sounding water, and the whole world awake and wild with joy. (

This becomes clear later when she identifies her Heaven with Thrushcross Grange:

“This is something like your paradise ...Next week, if you can, we’ll ride down to the Grange Park, and try mine.” (231)

When her Heaven is taken away from her through her imprisonment in Wuthering Heights, she tries to plant some of it in the hellish atmosphere of wuthering heights. When faced with threats to this Heaven from Heathcliff, she fights back and lays a claim to her heavenly garden space which Heathcliff had taken away from her.

## **6. Conclusion**

In the nineteenth century patriarchal setup of which the garden is a part, women manage to carve out their own spaces and overturn authority, even if temporarily. The garden as a space both within and outside the home allowed women to taste freedom and have moments of self reflection while avoiding the danger of transgression. The garden thus emerges as a site of contradiction nevertheless crucial to the consciousness of female liberty. Just like Milton’s Eve asserting her freedom in the garden, these nineteenth century Eves use the garden as a tool to reason against patriarchy and for their right to space. In trying to escape the hortus conclusus of patriarchy or in creating gardens of their own, these fictional women herald the “New Woman” of the nineteenth century. In these gardens, “the sterile space of men, founded on violence and misery, give way to a women’s space” and go beyond “the inability of male or manly designs to embrace anything but joyless domination, renunciation and death.” (Lefebvre 380). The twentieth century women novelists would use the garden space to delve into deeper issues of subconscious, sexuality and creativity and signal second wave feminism through their writings.

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# UNMAPPING THE BURMA: TRACING COLONIAL ENCOUNTERS IN THE NARRATIVES OF BENGALI TRAVELLERS

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***Abstract:** This article seeks to intervene in Bengali travel writings about Burma that narrate the history of the connection between Bengal and Burma during the colonial period. Migration from Burma to Bengal has increased since the end of the nineteenth century. The British took a large number of Bengali coolies to Burma to strengthen their position in Southeast Asia and to develop infrastructure. The present is an attempt of looking at the Bengal's growing contact and interactions with Burma that developed during colonial rule. The paper concentrates on the cross-border migration of Bengali workers and further examines Burmese culture and customs, etc. This paper will focus on several selected travel narratives of Bengalis visiting Burma in the early twentieth century and it will attempt to bring to the fore the history of Burmese and Bengali exchanges during the colonial period.*

***Keywords:** Travel Writings, Labour Migration, Colony, Southeast Asia, Slavery*

Burma and Bengal have a long history of social, political, and cultural relation. Located at both ends of the Bay of Bengal, these two lands have been connected by water and land since ancient times. As the Bengali historian Niharanjan Ray has pointed out, in ancient times horses and cloth were exported from the Ganges port of Bengal to Mandalay. In ancient times, this region of Southeast Asia was called Subarnabhumi. Subarnabhumi is mentioned in various narratives of Indian literature, which were the countries of Burma, Thailand, etc. in Southeast Asia. In particular, the tales of Jataka, which is based on the life of Buddha, directly mentions Bengalis trade relation with the countries of Southeast Asia. The descriptions of the sea voyage from the Tamralipta port of Bengal are found in the tales of Jataka, which establishes Burma's connection with the Bengalis. In this context historian, Dilip Kumar has pointed out that the earliest trace of Indo-Burmese relations is found in Buddhist texts and manuscripts of the fifth and sixth centuries. According to his findings, the Indian influence came to Lower Burma by sea and the communication between Bengal and Burma through both the sea and land is evident in these manuscripts. (Kumar 2)

This connection reached a new dimension in the late nineteenth century. After the defeat in the Third Anglo-Burmese War in 1886, Burma was annexed to the British Empire in India. After the end of this war, the interest of the Bengalis in Burma has increased which accelerated the Bengali migration to Burma. However, it would not be fair to claim that the connection with Burma was established during British rule. Evidence of Burmese contact with Bengalis in the Middle Ages is found in the writings of different Bengali scholars. But the journey was not merely for travel. Since the late nineteenth century, Burma has provided countless opportunities for migrant workers to make a living, or for middle-class Bengalis to find employment. In the nineteenth century, Burma not only opened the door to endless possibilities for the Bengalis but also became a haven for many people. Umaprasad Mukhopadhyay in his travel writing *Barma Muluke* describes the possible reason for such a voyage to Burma. According to him due to its proximity to eastern India, a large number of Bengali migrant people went for work in Burma. In addition, as Burma became a new British

colony, the potential for income and the demand for labour were much higher. Umprasad attempts to draw attention to the Bengali settlements in Burma along with Madrasi businessmen and labours in his travel writings. (Mukhopadhyay 387)

Apart from it, Bengali revolutionaries as well as criminals, used to hide in Burma to avoid arrest during British rule. Prior to that, until 1848, convicted prisoners were also deported to Burma. In colonial time Burma becomes a space for Bengali people to roam and avoid the rules and prohibitions by shrinking the boundaries of Indian value which increased Bengali footfall in Burma the nineteenth century. This is demonstrated by the number of Bengali travel writings who had travelled to Burma on different occasions from 1850 to 1931. In this context, the contribution of Bengali travelogues about Burma is quite significant. Travelogues emerged in Bengal as a distinct literary genre in the nineteenth century. From initial day travel writing was quite popular among Bengal reader. Travel has always been an integral part of Bengali culture. There are numerous references to travel in ancient charyapadas, from mangalkavya to medieval charita kavya. According to Professor Biren Saha, those references and descriptions of verse-laden Bengali literature cannot be called proper travel writings. He writes that modern Bengali travel literature originated in Bangadarshan through Sanjeev Chandra Chattopadhyay. (Saha 15) However, there is considerable disagreement on this point. Around the same time, various Bengali travelogues about Burma began to appear in various periodicals and books. These travelogues were a conscious effort by the Bengali travellers to disseminate knowledge about neighbouring countries. Initially, these travelogues were an attempt to map a Greater India. These travelogues cover a wide range of topics. In addition to coolie immigration, Indian settlement, Burma's own culture and social structure were a major part of these travel writings.

The writings of Bengali travellers in Burma have attracted limited scholarly attention. Numerous Bengali travelogues have been written about Burma from the nineteenth century to the present day. Debendranath Tagore, Rabindranath Tagore, Umprasad Mukherjee and Indumadhab Mallick were among those who wrote about Burma in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Each of them travelled to Burma for different reasons and although they have different experiences, one thing they have in common. An intense desire to know the unknown and explore the other apart from self, forced Bengali travellers to embark on this journey to Burma. In her essay, historian Sanjukta Das Gupta mentions that these travel writings on Burma

“..... reveal a range of often-contradictory influences: Orientalist assumptions, together with concepts of anti-colonial universalism, cosmopolitanism and internationalism and the notion of ‘Greater India’, which stressed India’s civilizational influence and colonizing presence in other Asian lands in the ‘golden’ days of the past.” (Das Gupta)

The first travelogue written in Bengali about Burma is Maharshi Debendranath Tagore's *Moulmein Bhraman*. The desire to spread the Brahmo faith led Debendranath to travel to different places. He traveled to Burma in the mid-nineteenth century. *Moulmein Bhraman* records his experience of traveling to Burma in 1850. Burma was a land of wonder in Debendranath's description. Besides, his sojourn to Burma also bears testimony of the shared cultural history between Bengal and Burma. He was

particularly amazed to see Durga Pujo in Burma and was very happy to find the footprints of Bengali culture there. Apart from it Debendranath's travelogue offers a fleeting glance of the city Moulmein. Debendranath's account gives an account of South Indians working in Burma, and it brings to the fore the issue of Indian migration to Southeast Asia. The migration of Indian labours to Burma began with the support of the British and this migration and labour recruitment introduced a new mechanism by which the unorganised workers were chained in slavery through contracts. During his visit Debendranath witnessed various aspects of Burmese culture. What impressed him most was the dominance of girls in Burmese society and the tendency of men to be subjugated and followed. The inherent nature of Burmese society was matriarchal, where men were primarily controlled by women. At the end of the nineteenth century, when the wave of women's education in Bengal had just reached, such power and dignity of women in Burma naturally attracted the attention of Bengalis. Debendranath was no exception. On his way back to Moulmein after a picnic, Debendranath was astonished to witness the protest of a Burmese woman. Debendranath presented a detailed experience of this event. During a performance, a Burmese woman faced humiliation from white people. She immediately stopped her performance in response to their mockery and her male companions followed her too. This incident may seem insignificant on the surface, but it was significant enough for Debendranath at that time. In the 19th century, it was extraordinary for a woman to resist and protest then if it is again directly against his ruler. Women's empowerment or freedom of speech was abhorrent in Bengali society at this time. In that context, such a woman's protest made a deep impression on Debendranath's mind as he faced a similar experience while singing in Bengali on his journey and refrained himself from protesting. This incident was an eye-opener to Debendranath largely to the people of an amnesiac nation that tends to forget to protest against various injustices. In this context Debendranath's brief travel account has significant relevance to aware nation's submerged consciousness.

Along with it, the free-spiritedness of Burmese culture caught the reader's attention in Bengali travel writings. Rabindranath Tagore in his travel writing *Japan Jatri* presented a detailed account of the Burmese So of Burmese people. Rabindranath's long experience of traveling to Japan in 1916 is recorded in this travelogue. He stayed in Rangoon for a few days in the middle of his voyage and recorded the experience of that time. Somdatta Mondal has pointed out that Tagore's *Japan Jatri* provides a pan Asiatic vision in the 20<sup>th</sup> century as well as it was Tagore's attempt to strengthen the relation between South and Southeast Asia. (Mondal 243)

To introduce the Bengali reader to Burma, Tagore gave some interesting information about the society and culture of Burma in his travelogue. One of the things that came to the fore in his description of Rangoon was their liberal views on religion. There were no strict rules and regulations. Rabindranath writes that everyone had access to the temple. There were no strict rules regarding the sanctity and purity of the temple. He describes that various types of meat were sold in the temple premises without any hindrance. (Tagore 27) Rabindranath was surprised to see the presence of meat in the temple premises at a time when the Hindu society of the nineteenth-century Bengal was embroiled in various conflicts over meat-eating. Being a close neighbour of Burma, Rabindranath also had a keen interest in Burmese Society. In this context, he describes his own experience in *Japan Jatri*, and the one thing that comes out to the forefront

was the position of women in Burmese society. Like his father Debendranath, he was surprised to see the dominance of Burmese women in society. Rabindranath travels across the streets of Rangoon with the intention of revealing the true nature of Burmese Society. He informs in his travelogue that that men in Burmese society are lazy in nature. As a result, the work and roles of men in Burma are performed by girls and according to Rabindranath, they enjoy their work enough, instead of thinking of it as a burden. (Tagore 28) In this context, Rabindranath reminded us that the real freedom is the power to choose the job of one's choice and according to him this emancipation of women and their empowerment in Burma are instructive.

Umaprasad Mukhopadhyay's travelogue *Burma Muluke* is considered to be one of the essential travelogues on Burma. This travelogue was not as brief as Debendranath or Rabindranath. Umaprasad wrote about the experience of traveling to Burma in 1929 and gave a long account ranging from the ancient history of Burma to British occupation. Umaprasad described the Bengali settlement in Burma and also presented a complete picture of the city of Rangoon. His description was the exact opposite of that of his predecessors. He muses in detail about the arrival of Buddhism in Burma from India and writes about the ancient dynasties of Burma and their current situation. The most interesting thing mentioned in Umaprasad's writings is the description of a South Indians living in Burma. They have been referred to as Madrasi in travel writing written by Both Debendranath and Rabindranath. Initially, the people of the Chettiar group lived in this region and according to Umaprasad, their occupation was trade and commerce. He wrote that they traded like the Marwaris of our country and they were wealthy. Usury was their primary business. (Mukhopadhyay 397)

Along with the Madrasis, his travelogue also deals with Bengali immigrants living in Burma. He gave a long analysis of the reasons for the predominance of Bengalis in Burma and explained the penchant of Bengali migration in nineteenth-century Burma. Hinting towards the possible reasons he writes that after the successful conquest of Burma, the British followed the same pattern as India. They occupied all the administrative posts and started ruling, and subordinate clerks have assisted them. But the Burmese men were not interested in these jobs. Hence, the workers were brought from India. (Mukhopadhyay 398) Due to Calcutta being the capital of India at that time, many Bengalis came to work in Burma at that time. According to Umaprasad, many Bengalis were working in Burma at that time in every department of railways, post offices, PWD. Also, there were doctors, engineers and professors with them in large numbers. But not all Bengalis who came to Burma were engaged in this kind of profession. The British needed working-class people to extract the vast natural resources that Burma had. In particular, Umaprasad's description shows that Burma had huge teak wood, which the British exported to other countries for luxury. Extracting these natural resources from the dense jungle required a lot of labour and it was supplied from various regions, including Bengal and Orissa. The writer met several such young men on his way back to Mandalay.

In his travel account, Umaprasad takes his readers to the different places of Burma. He describes in detail his interactions with Indians, especially Bengalis, in each region as he travelled to other parts of Burma. He also writes about the renowned places of Burma. According to Sucheta Sankar V., "these interactions create the impression of open space without borders, which facilitates unmediated travels." (Sankar V. 273)

Another important point to note in this travelogue is that Burmese society did not have many restrictions, and for this liberal attitude, things like caste issues or untouchability could not take place there. The Burmese culture was free from rigidity and therefore, it sparks interest among Bengalis. Umaprasad conveys that people from the vegetarian Iyer group also ate meat in Burma, which was unimaginable in India. From Umaprasad to Rabindranath, everyone pointed out the good aspects of Burmese society to the reader and tried to sow the seeds of this free thought and freedom in Bengali society. Apart from informing them about the history of Burma, the purpose of their travels and writings was to build a Bengali perception of the Oriental country and its people. The primary purpose of this travelogue was to capture the virtues of Burmese culture that the Bengalis had kept away from them for so long due to ignorance. In the nineteenth century, the advancement of Burmese society in the protection of women's rights and empowerment was beyond the imagination of the Bengalis. Therefore, references to Burmese girls can be found in almost all Bengali travelogues in Burma.

However, not all Bengalis praised Burmese generously. Instead some orthodox Bengalis called them vicious and profane. Prominent philosopher and social reformer Indumadhab Mallick stayed in Rangoon for some time during his visit to China. His account echoed the voices of British anthropologists - that Burmese men were not reluctant to work. They were immersed in primitive entertainment and leisure, and they were happy to survive the labour of their female partner. Hence, women had an “extremely influential” role in society. (Mallick 31) Apart from presenting a detailed history of Rangoon, he criticizes the role of women in Burmese society. In the following chapter, He ridiculed Burmese women for their conduct and for working along with men. Indumadhab also spoke at length about the various vices of Burmese men and women. In particular, he highlighted the smoking habits of women and thus sought to downplay the contribution of Burmese women (Mallick 29). He writes – “Burmese people drink alcohol and get drunk. But I have not seen such in China. The people of Burma have imitated the bad habits of all countries.” (Mallick 30)

Debendranath, Rabindranath, Umaprasad and Indumadhab each had their perceptions of Burma derived from their specific social and political positions. Their response to Burma was drawn mainly from western travellers. Despite being neighbours, their ignorance of Burma was substantial, and their trip was not just to discover the nearest neighbour. Their primary purpose was also to create an idea about this vast territory of Asia. This journey was in fact a conscious attempt to know oneself by going beyond one's own boundaries. In colonial times, there was a particular need for this self-realisation and discovery to strengthen the bond between themselves. In this context, these travel narratives have considerable significance to bring to the fore the Bengal-Burma encounters during colonial rule.

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# THE PAIN OF UNBELONGING: A LITERARY-THEORETICAL STUDY OF ALIENATION, UNHOMELINESS AND THE SEARCH FOR ONTOLOGICAL SECURITY IN ANNIE ZADIE'S *NAME, PLACE, ANIMAL, THING*

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**Abstract:** *This research attempts to examine the theme of alienation, unhomeliness and existential rootlessness as experienced by a domestic worker trapped in an urban protracted displacement setting. Annie Zaidie's first full-length play in English, Name, Place, Animal, Thing revolves around the incessant struggle of Nancy, a young girl who was brutally uprooted from her happy and simple life in her beloved hometown and placed with a middle-class family in an urban setting. She was forcibly separated from her parents at a young age, and employed as a domestic help by an affluent family. To her utter shock and dismay, she discovered that she was nothing but an alternate source of income for her family, and for the Maliks, she was only a slave, who lacked any agency over her own life. The novel emphasizes the multitude of challenges faced by the migrant domestic workers like Nancy, trapped in an urban protracted displacement. In this paper, I examine how Annie Zaidie's Name, Place, Animal, Thing depict the diasporic subjects' experience of fragmentation and insecurity, and their incessant struggle to create a sense of 'homeliness' in a foreign land. This study attempts to elucidate reasons for the feelings of displacement experienced by the domestic workers of our country, and to discover the extent to which the protracted displacement contributes to the oppression imposed on Nancy by her own family and her affluent employers.*

**Keywords:** *Alienation, Displacement, Unhomeliness, Oppression.*

**Introduction:** Annie Zaidi is a luminary among the contemporary Indian women writers, who has effectively used drama as a powerful medium to address the contemporary social and political issues of the country, such as gender inequality, casteism, racial discrimination, poverty and homelessness. Annie Zaidi is a freelance writer and journalist who has demonstrated a firm grasp on different genres of literature. Her work includes – novels, short stories, plays, poetry, reportage and several play scripts. Anna Zaidi has used drama as an effective instrument for social mobilization and political conscientization of the common oblivious masses of the country. Her works document the pangs and sufferings of the downtrodden, marginalized groups in Indian society, who have been subjected to discrimination and severe forms of oppression by the social hegemony of the dominant castes and classes. In her critically acclaimed play, *Name, Place, Animal, Thing*, Annie Zaidi has tried to unveil the ugly realities of gender bigotry, racism and inequality lurking behind the gaudy veneer of a progressive society. Director Atri Banerjee, who brought the drama to life on stage, has commented in this context:

When I first came across the work of the formidable journalist, essayist and creative writer Annie Zaidi, I was immediately struck by the way she marries searing political insight with human, truthful stories. *Name, Place, Animal, Thing*, Zaidi's first play, is one such story: I was totally gripped when I first read it. When I learned it has never before been staged, I leaped at the chance to bring it to life as part of this season. The story of Nancy and the Maliks is one I see echoed in aspects of my own life both in the UK and in India. While the family and class dynamics described within the play are specific to

contemporary Indian life, they resonate universally. I was particularly drawn to its themes of loss; of belonging; of home. (Banerjee)

Zaidi's play, *Name, Place, Animal, Thing* brings forth India's hidden apartheid, the archaic ritual system of caste and its stubborn persistence in modern Indian homes. The story centers on Nancy, a house help in a typical upper-middle class apartment. Nancy is a young girl who was brutally uprooted from her happy and simple life in her beloved hometown and placed with a middle-class family in an urban setting. She was forcibly separated from her parents at a young age, and employed as a domestic help by an affluent family. Since her arrival in the crowded city, she was fed, housed, nurtured, clothed and educated by the Maliks. Although she was led to believe that she was a part of the Maliks family, but her rigid, class-conscious, hypocritical employers always treated her like a servant. Nancy has always suffered from a profound identity crisis at the Malik's household because she was forced to adopt an identity which failed to reflect her true nature. K. Mercer has elaborately explained in this context, "identity only becomes an issue when it is in crisis, when something assumed to be fixed, coherent and stable is displaced by the experience of doubt and uncertainty" (Mercer) Nancy was being raised in a safe, stable and nurturing environment created by her parents, back in her homeland. Unfortunately, she was ripped away from her mother's warm embrace, like a plant uprooted from the soil where it flourished and then abruptly displaced. Nancy's incessant struggle to forge out new identities for herself is a coping mechanism to deal with the psychological trauma of displacement. She was not satisfied with the identity that society assigned to her, neither with the name that her parents gave her. She refused to accept the unjust status quo. Despite hopeless odds, she strived to develop a strong self-identity. She constantly grappled with different identities in order to understand her true value and worth. She went on changing her names to learn who she really is and how she fit into the larger world.

Annie Zaidi's perceptive, finely-wrought drama, *Name, Place, Animal, Thing* traces a housemaid's quest to discover her own true identity. The playwright has candidly laid bare the caste-based discrimination, exploitation, risks of violence and harassment without any legal protection faced by the domestic workers at the hands of their affluent employers. The appalling condition of the domestic workers is hardly ever discussed or given priority in Indian society. This vulnerable section of the working class is often exploited and treated so poorly by their affluent employers that they feel like running away from everything. Domestic servitude is nothing but a form of modern slavery, and young migrant workers like Nancy often find themselves trapped in this domestic nightmare. Annie Zaidi has argued in this context –

I feel very strongly about the way we treat domestic workers in India... We do not think of them as people who perform such vital functions for us. There are a lot of people who prevent their domestic help from getting an education and prefer to keep them in their situations. (Zaidi)

Zaidi's play is about the journey of a young, sensitive, ambitious housemaid who embarks on a journey of self-realization to find happiness.

This research paper aims to study how a person's first name plays a significant role in constructing identity in a modern, progressive society. The play, *Name, Place, Animal, Thing* by Annie Zaidi has tried to redefine the identity crisis, alienation, rootlessness,



displacement and cultural crisis experienced by migrant domestic workers, who struggle really hard to adapt to their new lives in an alien land.

**The Burden of the Name** - Identity is a fluid concept, not a fixed essence, which makes it really difficult to explain the complexity of identity in precise terms. The acclaimed Social Psychologist, Peter Weinreich defines identity in the following manner –

A person's identity is defined as the totality of one's self-construal, in which how one construes oneself in the present expresses the continuity between how one construes oneself as one was in the past and how one construes oneself as one aspires to be in the future. One's ethnic identity is defined as that part of the totality of one's self-construal made up of those dimensions that express the continuity between one's construal of past ancestry and one's future aspirations in relation to ethnicity. (Weinreich 151)

Schlenker has defined identity as “a theory about the self that is formed or maintained through actual or imagined interpersonal agreement about what the self is like” (1986:23). Ting-Toomey argues that identity is “the reflective self-conception or self-image that we each derive from our cultural, ethnic, and gender socialisation processes. It is acquired via our interaction with others in particular situations.” (Ting-Toomey 28). Identity is not a static concept, rather it is of a dynamic nature. In earlier times, when social stability reigned, identity was something society assigned to individuals. There was hardly any scope for adaptation or selection based on individual preference. However, cultures and societies have developed over time, and in the present scenario, identity is continuously developing, changing and evolving according to location, time, individual preference and social context.

Nancy, the protagonist of the play, is burdened with feelings of insecurity caused by her failure to integrate herself in an alien land. In a desperate attempt to fit in, she keeps assuming new identities, only to find her true self and establish a genuine sense of belonging. When she was born, her parents named her, ‘kalua’. Nancy was pretty unhappy with that birth name, because she felt that the name didn’t suit her personality:

Nancy: Your family gave you something special, they gave you their dreams. What did I get? Kalua! We were poor, but not so poor that they could not afford to give me a name better than Kalua. Something like Puja. Or even Mahua. When other people’s babies are born dark, they get names like Nisha. Or Madhu. Or Kari. Or Krishna. Maybe my father thought, why burden the girl with hope? Let her be free of all hope, all illusions. (Zaidi 126)

Nancy puts a lot of value in her name. As Dale Carnegie once stated, “A person’s name is to him or her the sweetest and most important sound in any language.” Nancy believed that a person’s name plays a crucial role in constructing identity and developing a strong sense of self. She strived to find a fitting name for herself that would accurately represent her true self. Nancy strongly believes that the personal names bestowed on individuals have an ontological and psychological effect on the bearers. The name of a person often acts as a social stimulus, significantly influencing the bearer’s self-perception, life and personality. Names, to a great extent, shape how others perceive us as individuals in a society. Although names do not define people, but

it's definitely a core part our identity. Nancy believed that her parents didn't want to burden her with false hopes and unrealistic expectations by giving her a fancy name. They prepared her for a bleak, dystopian future without a shard of hope, that awaits her. But Nancy was determined to carve a path to the future of her dreams, by breaking the vicious cycle of poverty. This vaulting ambition persuaded her to keep changing her name at different junctures of life. She felt the acute need of adopting a new name that accurately represented her true nature, her individuality and her true personality. She failed to see or even realize the family legacy of her given name, and when the opportunity presented itself, she forged a new life path for herself by adopting a new name. When her family got converted to Christianity, she decided to take on a new name, Nancy, which provided her with an opportunity to create a new persona for herself. However, Nancy soon grew disillusioned with this newly forged name, as it only denoted her ethno-religious identity, not her true personality.

Nancy's affluent employers, the Maliks renamed her as 'Puja', when she came to live with them. And then again, when she got married, her husband gave her a new name, Sanskaaraa. Nancy felt elated at the new identity and finally plucked up the courage to develop new personality traits and carve out a path for her dreams to take off. The name made her feel better about herself and dramatically increased her self-confidence:

Nancy - My husband wanted to give me many things. But he had nothing. No house, no kitchen, no bed. So, he gave me a new name. He gave me new meaning. Made me feel like I also meant something. (Zaidi 111)

A person's name is a fundamental part of his/her identity. Name has strong affective value and is a crucial factor in developing a person's sense of self. Name is the unique identification marker that distinguishes a person from others. It is the most important connection that every person has with his/her identity and individuality. And essentially, in this play, we find the protagonist constantly trying out different names. Her incessant struggle to forge out new identities for herself perfectly mirrors her inner turmoil, her inability to build a sense of belonging. According to Pratyusha Tummala-Narra, an analytic psychologist, "In the context of migration, names and changes in names across time and generations implicate cultural adjustment, ethnic identity, transition from 'foreigner' and 'other' to 'American', loss of heritage culture, and the hope of re-making identity" (Pratyusha 2016). We all hold certain implicit racial biases about some social groups, even though we really don't mean to. And that's why, even the very name of a person can trigger stereotypes. Personal names can shape a person's identity in multiple ways, because names are "indicators of internal, affective experiences, interpersonal relationships, acculturation, and identity" (Tummala-Narra, 152). Trapped in a vortex of ascribed identities, Nancy, the protagonist of Annie Zaidi's intriguing drama, *Name, Place, Animal, Thing*, persistently strive to construct a personal identity and individuality in society. Through Nancy's struggle with identity dilemma, Annie Zaidi has attempted to unearth the different facets of social and cultural identities.

Nancy is incessantly striving to establish a more concrete, independent identity for herself, but her endeavors remain largely unrecognized and unappreciated in the foreign land. It is evident the Maliks refuse to call her by her new name, Sanskara:

Nancy: Sanskaaraa. My name.

Malik stares at her.

Malik: Nancy, I c–

Nancy: Girls change their names after marriage. Rehana aunty also changed her name. She was Guncha before. But her husband named her Rehana.

Malik: This is ridiculous. From Puja to Nancy, now this. There is a limit.

Nancy: That was different. My family became Christian. So, I got a new name.

Malik: Who asked you to become Christian? You were in a good house; we were teaching you everything. You were even doing puja here. Didn't Mrs. Malik teach you? But still, you wanted to become Nancy!

....

Malik: This is the last time I am telling you, Nancy.

Nancy: Sanskaaraa, Uncle.

Malik: Okay. Not that it matters. A name doesn't change a person. But if that is what you want. (Zaidi 100)

Mr. Malik refuses to acknowledge the significance of name as a sign of personal identity. He clearly asserts that Nancy cannot become a different person, simply by changing her name. He disapproves of her marrying and getting a new identity. As Charles Taylor has argued, "our identity is partly shaped by recognition or its absence, often by the misrecognition of others, and so a person or group of people can suffer real damage, real distortion, if the people or society around them mirror back a confining or demeaning or contemptible picture of themselves. Nonrecognition or misrecognition can inflict harm, can be a form of oppression, imprisoning someone in a false, distorted and reduced mode of being." (Taylor 98). Mr. Malik's reluctance to understand and respect Nancy's identity, delineate the disinclination on the part of the Maliks to support her professional advancement and personal growth.

Nancy not only acknowledges the grave significance of a person's name, but also strives to live up to her name at every step of her life, "Names should not be lies. Rajkumar. That name is the truth – your family, their hopes for you. A name is what you were meant to be. Not what the world thinks of you." (Zaidi 125) She strongly believed that it is the name of a person that gives meaning to his life, it's not just a name but it signifies the aims, aspirations and dreams of a person. Time and again, she kept insisting that she should be called by her new fancy name – Sanskaara, because her parents gave her the name 'Kalua'. She refused to be called by that name, because the name signified nothing substantial. She had bigger dreams, aspirations, and the name just didn't suit her personality. But when her dream of building a strong sense of self got shattered, she became disheartened and exclaimed in pain – "Sanskaara does not suit me. Foolish name. Foolish dreams. I thought I could be... But you are right. Aunty, I will stick with what I have. I will stick to Kalua." (Zaidi 112).

It is also noticeable that both Mr. and Mrs. Malik always used formal salutations to address each other. This rather uncustomary behavior on the part of the Maliks insinuated the lack of affection in their relationship. Mrs. Malik has grown quite fond of Nancy, likened her to her own daughter, while Mr. Malik has been portrayed as an

emotionally detached husband and father. He is the very embodiment of the traditional conservative values of Indian upper middle class. Zaidi has blatantly exposed the sadism, hypocrisy, greed, immorality and dubious double standards latent in urban middle-class men. Through the character of Mr. Malik, Zaidi has revealed the true face of a traditional patriarchal society, degenerating under the veneer of modernity. His ethics, values and principles are his most cherished possessions and he prepared to sacrifice everything for their sake. He never forgave his own daughter for flouting his rules. She suffered greatly because of her hasty emotional decision. And her cold-hearted father, instead of offering compassion to his broken-hearted daughter, refused to give her shelter at a moment when she had nowhere else to go. Monali suffered a setback that was emotionally devastating, and on top of it, the crass insensitivity and extremely callous behavior of her father further added to her misery. She felt so lonely and helpless that she took the drastic decision of ending her life. However, he never felt an ounce of sympathy for her daughter. And, when Nancy's father came searching for his daughter, he unabashedly professed -

Mr. Malik: Batua, this is my house, not a brothel. If she was my daughter, I would have strangled her with my own hands. The reason I did not lay a hand on her was because she was not my own.

....

You think I am a harsh man? Yes. I am. A man of principles. There is something called character, Batua. Values! I gave her my own values... What should a father do when his child turns out to be a liar, a weak thing? Morally weak. Then she tried to blackmail me into accepting her decision. Getting up there on the windowsill, crying, saying, I will die, Daddy I will die. But I didn't give in, Batua. I stood by my values. Forget it. Forget her. (Zaidi 131)

Mr. Malik's mask of civility falls off the moment he confronts Nancy's father, and his true savage nature is revealed. It was his brazen hypocrisy and sham moral standards that caused unbearable pain and suffering to his family members. His deep-seated boorishness importuned Monali to commit suicide. And his wife descended into a kind of frantic madness. However, Mr. Malik has made it crystal clear in this context that he is prepared to sacrifice everything to safeguard his personal values and to uphold the ancient traditions of his country. He strictly adheres to his traditional beliefs and practices and condemns the nonconformists as vicious. Because of Mr. Malik's uncompromising adherence to ideological orthodoxy and deep-seated loutishness, Nancy found the atmosphere of the Maliks' household to be suffocating and utterly intolerable. She ran away twice to escape from the 'toxic' atmosphere at her employers' home, and their utterly nonchalant behavior further exacerbated her feeling of being an outsider.

Mr. Malik did bear the education expenses of Nancy and allowed her to appear in the examination, but they neither encouraged nor endorsed her educational pursuits. The day Nancy received her 12<sup>th</sup> result, she walked into the room and announced that she does not want to be a maid servant any longer, she wants to pursue a different career path. Instead of helping her achieve her wider career aspirations, Mrs. Malik bluntly criticized her independent views and her determination to pursue seemingly impossible and unrealistic goals:

Shalu: I don't know. Maybe she thinks you can become the chief minister or a collector or something, just because you pass your 12th exam. I would not be surprised if she wants to become a film star. Maybe she thinks she can enter a beauty contest. Miss India! (Zaidi 97)

Nancy's aspirations to grow out of the identity that society assigned her and establish her separate self-identity, surfaced again when she attempted to adopt a bold persona of a well-educated, smart, progressive, independent woman. Unlike other housemaids, she started wearing western clothes to get a suitable job. But, again her honest endeavors to build a better life for herself are overlooked by the Maliks, who take all the measures in their power to downgrade her to the status of a helpless dependent:

Rehana: Tsk! Already what all people used to say. Jeans! Ever heard of a maidservant wearing jeans? This is the only one in the whole colony, maybe in the whole city. And these fancy, frilly skirts. If she wears Monali's clothes and she studies Monali's books, she will get ideas, no? You also should think.

....

First thing, stop her jeans-sheans. Tell her, not allowed. Anyway, now she is married. Give her your old sarees. Or I will bring my salwars. It is best for her. You have to teach these things, Shalu. Young girls have to be taught how to behave, how to dress. And keep her on a tight leash now. First thing – cut her salary for eighteen days. For every wrong decision, there is a price to pay. Let her learn that lesson. (Zaidi 97)

Nancy's persistence and determination to carve out a bright future for herself were strongly articulated when she insisted vehemently to go to a proper school when she was only twelve years old. When Mrs. Malik refused to comply with her demands, Nancy stuffed her mouth with red chili powder.

Imitation is one of the sincerest forms of a profound identity crisis. Since her childhood days, Nancy has idolized Monali, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Malik, and has blindly followed her, throwing caution to the wind and ignoring all warnings. From wearing her clothes to going to the same school as Monali, Nancy grew up emulating Monali's style, confidence and strength of character. Her depleted self-esteem and insecurities pertaining to her own sense of identity came to the fore when she started blindly mimicking the people around her. Studies have shown that people who lack a strong sense of individuality, are prone to imitate the people around them. According to a survey conducted on why people try to imitate others, 35% of the respondents asserted that people with insecure self-esteem tend to imitate others, in order to gain social acceptance. (Abraham et al., 373). The same applies to Nancy, who has suffered from an identity crisis since a very long time.

Nancy's intention and deep desire to develop a sense of belonging, and if nothing, her willingness to stay connected with her own roots, is expressed when she insisted on holding onto her name, the only thing that her parents gave her:

Nancy: You have given me everything I have. But I should be allowed to keep something that is my own. When I came to this house, I was wearing a frock which you gave. You gave me my first pair of shoes. You cut my hair. My

family gave me nothing. But they sent me here with a name. I should keep that at least. (Zaidi 112)

**Significance of Home:** Annie Zaidi's play, *Name, Place, Animal, Thing* projects Nancy's feelings of alienation and homelessness. After her abrupt displacement, Nancy was placed with the Maliks and since, her very arrival in the city, she has struggled to find a home for herself, find security. It is the common perception that people develop very strong attachments to the specific places where they live. And the lack of a home creates a sense of rootlessness and restlessness among the dispossessed migrant workers. John Mcleod has argued in this context –

For migrant and diasporic peoples in particular, 'home' is a particularly complex idea which impacts in central ways on their existence. The concept of 'home' often performs an important function in our lives. It can act as a valuable means of orientation by giving us a sense of our place in the world. It tells us where we originated from and where we belong. (Mcleod 142)

For migrant domestic workers, home stands for 'shelter, stability, security and comfort' (Mcleod 142). Nancy's constant search for a home that she could call her own, reflects her deep yearning for freedom, love, warmth and a wholeness. Driven by this strong desire, she runs away from home and ends up getting married to a sweeper, Kunal. At the Maliks' household, she never felt like it was her own home, where she belonged. Although they provided her with almost everything, food, clothes and education and pretended that she was a part of their family. They failed to develop a familial bond with Nancy, which left her feeling like an outsider the whole time. Time after time, Mr. Malik has professed, "She (Nancy) is not our girl. She is our maid." (Zaidi 114). Nancy too slowly and gradually came to terms with the fact that she was only a maid, deprived of basic human rights. Her affluent employers didn't care one iota about her feelings or career aspirations. Even when she ran away from home, they didn't even bother to look for her or make an effort to bring her home.

Perplexed by a growing sense of alienation and rootlessness, Nancy took a drastic step. In pursuit of a happy family life and ontological security, she eloped with a sweeper, Kunal. She left the malik's residence in the middle of the night, and landed at a roadside slum. She wanted to become independent, fierce and in control of her life, but Kunal miserably failed to provide her with anything, not even a proper home. She dreamt of getting a good job which will propel her life forward and help her in obtaining a worthy, respectable position in society. At the Malik's, she tried to adapt to her new world, but soon she realized that she didn't belong there. She left the place in search of a proper home -

Nancy - But nobody can love a girl called Kalua. Not even my parents. They sent me here, never took me back. I want to go home. I want a home of my own. (Zaidi 126)

Nancy failed to find a home or a job, and finally returned to her cold and distant employers. However, she was still suffering from a profound identity crisis and when the opportunity presented itself, she again bugged out in search of security, freedom, love, warmth and belonging. The need to belong was such a strong psychological motivation for her, that she ran away from home twice

with strangers, without considering the consequences. She even wrote a passionate letter to her father, imploring him to take her home. She signed the letter 'Kalua', which reflects her deepest longing to go back to her roots and develop a sense of belonging. Instead of feeling like an isolated disconnected being, she wanted to become a part of a larger consciousness.

**Caste, Class and Gendered Discrimination:** Zaidi has unveiled the different shades of casteism and classicism deeply ingrained in the mindset of the Indian middleclass society, which becomes evident in their boorish behaviour. The domestic employers keep separate utensils for their house helps, and are made to sit on the floor. Even separate entrances and elevators have been built for these workers. This discriminatory attitude of the affluent domestic employers towards their maids has been brought to the fore by Zaidi, in this play. When Kapdu came to the Malik's household to sell sarees, Nancy made it crystal clear to him that if she buys anything from him, then the mistress of the house would never even consider to buy clothes from that same bundle. These affluent employers have created and maintained a great divide between them their household maids, because these people want to preserve and maintain their status quo. The Maliks are traditional people who still retain traces of feudalism and strongly believe in traditional hierarchical layers. The culture of servitude was constantly lurking beneath the veneer of progress, civility and sophistication. This barbarism led to her feeling alienated, displaced, rootless and abandoned in an alien land. As this feeling was growing intense, she became desperate to find a secure home for herself where she could feel safe and loved.

**Significance of the Title** - Zaidi has used the literary device of soliloquy to great effect in order to express the psychological turmoil and inner conflicts of Nancy. These soliloquys reveal her innermost thoughts to the audience. In one such soliloquy, Nancy mentions that she used to play the game of name, place, animal, thing with Monali. The iconic game plays a crucial role in this drama. The grave symbolic significance of the game has been heightened time and again by Zaidi in this play. Trapped in urban protracted displacement, away from her parents, she found herself constantly pondering her personal identity, questioning her existence and place in the world. At the Malik's household, she felt that she was a mere animal, but not of a worse kind. When she lived with Kunal, she felt like she was a slum, living under the open sky. Nancy's conflicting thoughts and perceptions regarding who she truly is and what she is capable of, convey the dilemma of her variable identity.

**Conclusion** - Annie Zaidi's first play, *Name, Place, animal, thing* is a beautiful journey through the trials and tribulations of an ambitious maidservant trapped in an urban protracted displacement. The story centers around the character of Nancy, a sensitive young domestic servant. She is suffering from an identity dilemma, caused by an abrupt displacement. She was uprooted from her motherland and forced to live an alienated life in a foreign land. Her desperate struggle to find a home of her own is symbolic of her craving desire to develop a strong sense of belonging and identity. For a good many years, she has served the Maliks, and now she aspires to outgrow her social station and make her life more meaningful. Through the character of Nancy, Zaidi has explored the dark power dynamic between domestic servants and their affluent employers. The Maliks depend on Nancy to do all the household chores, but the treatment she receives at their household reflects the gaping chasm existing

between their social status. The cattiest attitude of the Maliks has exacerbated her excruciating sense of alienation, insecurity and rootlessness. She ran away from home twice, in search of ontological security. But she failed both times and finally came back seeking asylum at the Malik's household. The playwright has plunged deep into the inner psyche of the protagonist to map out the conceptual parameters of identity and belonging. Nancy's incessant struggle to find a fitting name for herself reflects her deep-seated feelings of anxiety and insecurity pertaining to her own sense of identity.

Anna Zaidi's play, *Name, Place, Animal, Thing* projects her protagonist's frantic struggle for existence in a defunct, unfamiliar civilized urban society. Nancy's incessant struggle for identity and belongingness are well-articulated through the plot of the story that revolves around her desperate fight to give meaning to her existence. The playwright has realistically rendered Nancy's feelings of estrangement and alienation, and has also blatantly exposed the hypocrisy and sham moral standards of the so called 'progressive' urban middle-class male chauvinists. *Name, Place, Animal, Thing* throws light on the heartbreaking plight of domestic workers and their persistent vulnerability.

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## CONCEPT OF AVIDYĀ IN ADVAITA VEDĀNTA

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**Abstract:** *Vedanta in the philosophy which evolved in India. Avidyā is a concept in Advaita Vedānta which was conceived and introduced by Śaṅkarācārya. This concept was examined in detail by one of his direct disciples and a stalwart in Advaita Vedānta famous by the name of Surēśvarācārya. The contributions made by him to Advaita Vedānta are priceless. His analysis of the illusory nature of world and the similarity of the individual soul and the universal soul are highly note-worthy and commendable which can arise only out of a soul established in Brahman, the supreme.*

**Key Words:** *Advaita, Vedanta, Avidya*

Vedānta in the philosophy which evolved in India. Vedas form the foundation for this school of thought. Advaita Vēdānta a sub-school of Vedānta. Advaita Vedānta has the firm conviction that duality does not exist. This system professes that everything in this universe evolved from Brahman, the Absolute. According to Advaita Vedānta, there is nothing real and infinite other than Brahman. The followers of Advaita Vedānta believes in the unity of Brahman and Ātman. Śaṅkarācārya is accredited with laying a firm foundation for this system on scattered thoughts of the saint-philosophers earlier to him.

Avidyā is a concept in Advaita Vedānta which was conceived and introduced by Śaṅkarācārya. This concept was examined in detail by one of his direct disciples and a stalwart in Advaita Vedānta famous by the name of Surēśvarācārya. The contributions made by him to Advaita Vedānta are priceless. His analysis of the illusory nature of world and the similarity of the individual soul and the universal soul are highly note-worthy and commendable which can arise only out of a soul established in Brahman, the supreme. As Surēśvarācārya opines, this empirical, material world and the individual soul (Jīvatman) are Ābhāsas or false appearances of the Brahman. Idea of even a transitory or momentary reality and unity is not entertained. Naiṣkarmyadsidhi is a highly respected work among the followers of Advaita Vedānta authored by Surēśvarācārya. He points out this Ābhāsa theory in the sambandha to the third chapter of this work. Naiṣkarmyadsidhi is one of the four Siddhi texts. In his work, Naiṣkarmyadsidhi, Surēśvarācārya comes up with the question of the locus (āśraya) and content (viśaya) of Avidyā. Śaṅkarācārya was of opinion that the locus and content of Avidyā is Brahman, the absolute. Śaṅkarācārya refrained from bringing up the subject since he did not want to create the impression that Avidyā was real (*Sengaku Mayeda, 1979*).

The concept of Avidyā takes the center stage of the Advaita system. The saint-philosophers of Advaita system saw it in their divine wisdom to use the concept of Avidyā as an effective way to prove how the one non-dual Brahman appears as dual so that the common man can grasp it easily. Recommendations with this view in mind, conveyed in a practical level, is bound to explain bondage, liberation, ethics, aesthetics, values, etc. Explaining in a positive manner the significance of an acceptable and organized way of leading life, for the sake of the common man to grasp, is also an absolute necessity which will lead one, though indirectly, to the final goal of attaining the state of liberation. Advaita Vedānta system realizes that these things can be

understood in its proper perspective only when the truth about Avidyā is realized in the right sense. Advaita Vedānta raises four reasons to illustrate the reason why jīva cannot be the āśraya or abode of Avidyā. Jīva is looked upon by Advaita Vedānta as an embodiment of ignorance. Because of this reason, it does not appeal to reason to regard that ignorance is stationed in ignorance. The true function of Avidyā is concealment. Because of this reason, it cannot do this concealment act over and above its āśraya, which is also ignorance. Jīva does not have knowledge since Avidyā is predominant in it. Knowledge can never dawn and liberation will need to be regarded impossible to attain if Avidyā continues to be stationed in Jīva.

Many other great saint-philosophers who devoted their entire lives on positive analysis of Advaita Vedānta have come up with various theories on the topic. Maṇḍana Mīśra, for example, states his view as Jīva should be considered to be the locus of Avidyā. He continues quickly to point out the fact that because this Avidyā hides the true nature of Brahman, Avidyā has Brahman as its object. Many great Advaita stalwarts raised their objections on this point of view. They assert that there is no differentiation between the locus and content of Avidyā. They emphatically declare that Brahman is the locus and content of Avidyā. Śaṅkarācārya opines in a simple way that “Avidyā is parameśvarāśraya”. This is meant to convey the meaning that Avidyā depends on Brahman. He continues to say that in Avidyā the individual souls having lost their identity with Brahman, rest.” (Swami Swahananda, 1980) In the view of Advaita Vedānta supporters Brahman is 'attribute-less, undifferentiated and non-dual'. Appearance of the plurality of the empirical world because of ignorance.

The question of the existence of both the pluralistic Universe and the empirical Self is a difficult one to solve as per the primordial principle of Avidyā. Advaita Vedānta is seen to make no distinctions between māyā and Avidyā. These words are used in a synonymous way.

“The primal principle which is responsible for the appearance of the world of diversity and finite individuals, though is, in truth, the non-dual Brahman alone, has been designated differently as illusion (māyā ), as the primary germ (pradhāna ), as the unmanifested (avyakta), as ignorance (avidyā ), as nescience (ajñāna ), as the imperishable (akṣara ) till the rise of knowledge, as the undifferentiated (avyākṛta), as the material cause (prakṛti), and as darkness (tamas)”( Mahadeva Sastri, 38).

The characteristics of māyā are provided as follows. "It is beginning-less (anādi). It has an illusory appearance (mithyā) since it is impossible to determine its nature. Since it is of the nature of an existent (Bhāvarūpa), it is positive. It has two functions: One is of concealment and the other of projection. It suppresses the truth and promotes the false. Brahman- Ātman is its āśraya. It has the distinct quality of being not eternal, as it can be annihilated at the dawn of right knowledge. Avidyā which is the effect has a material cause and it rests on the Brahman- Ātman as a power. The Ātman contains Avidyā as a dependent function and gets the reaction by Avidyā which, with its diverse functions covers its base and as a result of such a reaction, transforms it as the base of all the appearances caused by it. Avidyā is functionally diverse by nature, and so the emphasis is given to its functional diversity, as non-apprehension (ajñāna) when it obscures the nature of the given object, as mis-apprehension or erroneous cognition (anyathā-Jñāna or viparyaya-Jñāna) when it presents the given object differently, as

dubitative cognition (Saṁśaya- Jñāna) when there is the cognition of the given object as either this or that in terms of alternative predictions (Surēśvara, 411).

Doubt is a factor that pre-supposes non-apprehension of the real source of the given object. Hence, non-apprehension poses to be the fountain of both doubt and error. (Roer, 2000)

But non-apprehension would be possible only if there is concealment of the nature of the given object. Śaṅkarācārya's assertion in his commentary on the Bhagavad Gīta, has relevance to the present context: "As partaking of the nature of a veil, Avidyā – whether causing erroneous cognition, or doubt, or non-cognition – is a tāmasic notion, i.e., a notion born of tamas: for, on the dawn of light of discrimination, it disappears; and (for instance) we find the same three modes of Avidyā – such as non-cognition etc. – arising also from timira (an eye disease causing dimness of light), which is tāmasic, as partaking of the nature of a veil." (Madhusoodhanasaraswathi, 1983) Avidyā is what veils the truth and, as its result, misguides us to false cognition. This Avidyā is one which is only just one, but gives the impression of being many.

Brahman and māyā are the material cause in the creation of the world. There two characteristics in the world-appearance; the existence and Illusion (Hasurkar, 1958).

Advaita philosophy affirms that Avidyā is a six pronged entity. It is anādi; it gets annihilated when knowledge is attained; it is positive by nature; philosophically it is considered as anirvacanīya; it has two attributes - one of prior concealment (āvaraṇa) and the other of denial (vikṣepa); its locus is either Brahman or the Jīva.

Ābhāsa theory of Surēśvarācārya declares that the empirical world is only an appearance of Brahman in disguise. Avidyā, is a veil which covers it. Brahman seen through this cover, can be seen as having multiple forms and activities. This cover, which is termed māyā or Avidyā, provides Brahman with its own form and name. Brahman is the content of Avidyā as opined by Advaita philosophers.

The universe is explained as a primary appearance. The secondary appearances, of which there are many, are based on and are drawn only from this primary appearance. In the process of creation, Brahman assumes a form as appearance through the medium of Avidyā. A form gets created in Avidyā because of the basic principle of Brahman. This form or basic appearances are then attributed to Brahman by Avidyā. A movement takes place in Avidyā in its initial stage. This movement is referred to as the movement of Brahman, which is, in actual truth, motionless. This primary stage is termed as Īśvara or citābhāsa.

The above-mentioned movement in the initial stage termed as citābhāsa or Ābhāsa carries out its activities of movement in the following stage of evolution. The manifestation of citābhāsa in the initial stage is the primary source of the later appearances of the empirical world. Avidyā is seen to be highly active at this level also. In reality, the thing that got projected in the initial stage is the primary projection of Brahman and not Brahman in its original state. Avidyā which projects the later appearances is known as māyā. Avidyā draws its life from Īśvara which was projected as the primary appearance.

The next stage of projection, which appeared through the medium of māyā is stated to be Hiranyagarbha. During these succession of projections of paramātman or the

universal soul, one stage got further solidified through Avidyā and evolved as buddhi or jīva. The rest of the stages of projection form the manifold world which is nothing but the subsequent appearances of the above ābhāsa through Avidyā, which, in other words, is ajñāna. This process continues to project things like jñānēndriya, karmēndriyas, tanmātras etc. The final stage of this evolution can be said to be the illusory appearances seen in this empirical or material world. As Advaita Vedānta maintains, Brahman is one of the variations of illusion. Because of this reason, illusion has only very little truth behind it. In the process of evolution of the universe, Brahman is seen to remain at one end and illusion at the other end. These two are connected by Avidyā.

As stated by Advaita Vedānta it is not possible to provide a clear idea of Avidyā. The award of the status and nature of Brahman is not right since it becomes indestructible with such an assertion. It cannot be considered to be having any separate entity as distinguished from the Brahman, which will lead to the acceptance of duality. Hence, it is described as being anirvacanīya. The very existence of Avidyā is the result of lack of discrimination. The manner in which this Avidyā comes into play is explained by using the expression “Avicārita-Siddha”.

Ābhāsa theory maintains that Jīva is a reflection of Brahman in the antaḥkaraṇa, known as cid-ābhāsa. The mind, as well as all its samskāras, is a type of Avidyā. The reflection, which is different from the Real Self, cannot have the reality of the Self. This reflection may be described as a false impression. This is what is meant by the term ābhāsa. It is to be noted that Ābhāsas rise out of non-discrimination, which is termed avicārita-siddhas. Non-discrimination in affairs related to the Self is pointed out as the cause of ignorance which misleads one in the case of relationship between the Self and the ignorance. The true nature of the Self is not understood in its entirety. This type of non-realization is known as Avidyā.

The term ‘Avicārita-siddha’ has three components -Vicārita, Siddha and Avidyā. The assumption of an Avidyā is “Avicāraṇa” i.e., pure lack of discrimination. Avidyā is non-existent when there is “Vicāraṇa” or, in other words, correct reason and discrimination.

It can be seen that Avidyā disappears totally when a total and right analysis of the evolution is carried out. It is opined by Advaita stalwarts that Avidyā is not false. It has an existence and is an object of experience. The level of existence accorded to Avidyā can be said to be almost equal to Brahman. Both are within the realm of experience of an individual. The difference between the two, that when Brahman is undeniable at any stage or level, Avidyā fails confronted by a ‘vicāra’. It is to be realized that Avidyā is experienced only at the empirical or material level. The empirical or material world, it may be remembered, is a state of Avidyā and its located is in Brahman.

The fact of the matter is that for purpose of acquiring existence experienced by the individual, Avidyā needs to depend on Brahman. By its very nature Avidyā is Jaḍa and Acētana. The function of Brahman is only to provide Avidyā with the backing it requires. On scrutiny, it can be found that Brahman does not carry out any function in the creation of Avidyā.

In Taittirīya Bhāṣya Vārtika, Surēśvarācārya, the author, explains that Avidyā exists out of its own existence.

“When Brahman is known, there is no Avidyā; and when Brahman which is the locus is not known, how can one know Avidyā which is said to be located in it? Interpretation of the expression “very existence” is given in it as the fundamental Supreme Consciousness. Avidyā comes into being and exists on its own and the Brahman has nothing to do in the existence of such an Avidyā” (Surēśvarācārya, 178-180).

According to Śaṅkarācārya, only the effects of this primordial Avidyā is indescribable, using the term anirvacanīya. At the very same time, it should not be taken to mean that that Avidyā was not existent at all. Avidyā can be said to be false looking when viewed at it in this angle because a reality cannot be destroyed. But it cannot be asserted that it has no existence at all.

Avidyā is seen to manifest itself in a number of varying manners. Surēśvarācārya, in his work Taittirīya Bhāṣya Vārtika, mentions authoritatively the work of projection carried out by Avidyā. He says that “the objects of the world, which are related as causes and effects and which are projected by Avidyā, exist as it were by depending on the Supreme Brahman (Mahadeva Sastri, 1993). The attainment of Brahman, Surēśvara declares, is “obstructed only by the darkness of ignorance” (Mahadeva Sastri, 1993). “Though the inward Self whose light ever shines and never sets is the witness of Avidyā, it is nevertheless obstructed by Avidyā. And we speak about that (obstruction) only on the strength of Avidyā.”(Mahadeva Sastri, 1993). Duality according to Surēśvarācārya, “is due to Avidyā, and through duality Avidyā is the cause of fear” (Mahadeva Sastri, 1993).

Avidyā conceals the non-dual Brahman - Ātman and projects the non-real world of multiplicity. Because its function is of covering up and illusory projection, it is considered as bhāvarūpa. As Surēśvarācārya maintains, Avidyā may be considered as 'non-cognition'. He is of firm opinion that Avidyā, in its nature, “does not consist in anything other than the non-perception of the Self (Mahadeva Sastri, 1993). Surēśvarācārya views Avidyā as a totally positive entity and maintains that a positive thing cannot evolve from something negative or non-existent (Mahadeva Sastri, 1993). Surēśvarācārya opines that Avidyā is not simply the absence of knowledge. It is something very positive. He explains this point in the way that If Avidyā is only absence of knowledge, when vidyā dawns about an object the result will be total disappearance of Avidyā. Avidyā continues to exist even after knowledge of an object dawns. This, according to him, is proof enough that ignorance is something different from just the absence of knowledge. This entity is that which is understood to be Avidyā or ajñāna.

“Since avidyā can be terminated by the knowledge of the Brahman, it has an end. One that has an end also has a beginning. Śruti texts declare of the beginning of the primordial ignorance when it says that Avidyā comes into existence without being caused by anything else.”

A thing needs to be positive to be existent, “It is absurd to speak about a beginning or end of a negative entity. Non-existence has no relation either with action or quality.

Since it has no existence, it cannot be related to anything in any place". (Sureśvarācārya, 4).

"As to the question about the connection between Avidyā and Brahman, it is quite impossible to define this relationship correctly and completely. The difficulty of giving a satisfactory explanation of this relationship is due to the imperfection of human mind which employs limited categories of space, time and cause and which at least commonly entertain fragmentary aspects of the world that are not genuinely real" (Radhakrishnan, S, 1960).

Avidyā, like vidyā, is supposed to have something which serves as its āśraya as well as an object which it refers to. Like a vidyā which remains incomplete in the absence of a subject and an object, Avidyā too needs something to base itself upon to which it really belongs and a content it governs. As far as vidyā or jñāna is concerned, these requirements are for enlightenment. When it comes to Avidyā, these requirements act as the purpose of creation. Enlightenment, the end result sought, is the realization of Supreme Brahman, the absolute, which is present in all the three, the subject, object and the relationship between them. Because of this reason, it is only fair to opine that all the three have their base in the Supreme Brahman, the absolute. When it comes to the matter concerned with Avidyā, the three elements join together to generate illusion and the resultant creation of the universe, it is hard to think that all of them are based wholly on the Supreme Brahman, the absolute.

Brahman is the subject and object of Avidyā in Advaita Vedānta. maintains that is both. Avidyā has this Brahman as its āśraya.

The Supreme Self or Brahman itself a Sākṣin in the embodied of this transient Avidyā and its various functions. A little bit of Avidyā needs to be resorted to even to assume the function of 'Sākṣitva' in the Brahman, which is considered to be free of any function. As Ānandagiri, the famous commentator maintains. Vidyāraṇya, the great philosopher, gives three kinds of Sākṣins in his Vedānta Pañcadaśī. In Kūṭastha Dīpa, Sākṣin is explained as Kūṭastha. Jñāna Ghanapāda nourish that 'Sākṣitva include to the classification of eternal Consciousness but is mistaken through the process of supreme position, as being the function of Jīva'.

The assertion that the Sākṣitva starts from the highest point of creation. When viewed from the epistemological and ontological angle, the postulation of sākṣitva both for Īśvara and Jīva is unavoidable. This is so because Brahman manifests the physical and psychological constructions and their existence is proven and proven only later, but they can be temporary. Intuition is the cause of thought and the latter reflects the past.

Śaṅkarācārya, while explain on 'Upadraṣṭā', gives two different means of sākṣin namely a seer and witness. This interpretation signifies the conception of Īśvara and of Jīva. Avidyā or primordial ignorance which is the cause of bondage is destroyed by the unitary, non-relational knowledge through akhaṇḍākāra- vṛtti-jñāna which is generated by the mahāvākyas like tat tvam asi. Realization in this aspect is immediate and not gradual. The individual soul purifies itself of the benightedness and its cause Avidyā through the mahāvākyas at once and liberation is achieved without any need of repeated contemplation on their contents. There are scriptural passages which affirm that the primal ignorance can be removed by the knowledge of the Self: "One who

knows the Self crosses over sorrow” (SwamiSwahanada, 1980). The Bhagavad Gīta refers to the destruction of ignorance by knowledge.

Jñānena ti tad ajñānam

Yeṣām nāśitam ātmanaḥ |

Teṣām ādityavaj jñānam

Prakāśayati tat param || (Madhusudhana Saraswathi, 1983)

"In the case of those whose ignorance has been destroyed by the knowledge of the Ātman, to them that knowledge reveals the supreme truth, as the Sun does the objects of the world."

A realization of this nature is viable when it is accepted that Avidyā rests itself on Brahman directly. The ābhāsa, maintains a similar cessation. When it say that all the psychical and physical creations are mere appearances of Brahman seen through Avidyā and the denial of this Avidyā is the cardinal cognizance.

Advaita Vedānta philosophy holds the view that, Avidyā exists in the Supreme Soul as a special feature which is 'asādhāraṇa, and can only be realized in the presence of the Supreme Soul. It should be surmised that the individual Jīva shall be considered as the core and there exists the correlation of 'ātmātmavatva' betwixt these two entities when one looks at the results. Brahman himself would get directly involved in the multiple creation. From the view point of kūṭastha, the creation is fallacious but from the view point of Jīva it is partway genuine. Jīvātma which is proficient of containing these two aspects of existent which are truth and falsehood at concurrently only because of this nature of half-truth. Because of this reason, it is within the power of Jīva to discard either of the aspects of this nature and he can, on his own will, be one with the ubiquitous or submerge in the creations of incomprehension.

The process of evolution of the soul, the way Advaita Vedānta professes, involves a progression of manifestations of Brahman, the cardinal Consciousness, via Avidyā. In this series of manifestations, the primary ābhāsa is formed through the primordial Avidyā which is known as Īśvara. Prior to this stage, there is a level of outward evolution in the configuration of all wide spread inward rational consciousness. When this responsiveness becomes exterior, then emerge to require for assuming Avidyā and its consequent association when the primary ābhāsa termed Īśvara arises. Up to this stage, it is seen that there is no appearance of duality. There arises duality when the stage of Īśvara is arrived at. Avidyā arises at this stage and assumes existence. This Avidyā is transient and unreal. Duality consolidates itself further from this stage of Īśvara onwards with the beginning of creation. This creation has two aspects - psychical and physical.

Vṛtti-jñāna disappears once the primordial ignorance is removed. It is seen to disappear after carrying out its work all on its own in a similar manner like a medicine for a disease gets itself removed after healing the disease. "From the (scriptural) utterance there arises the cognition 'I am Brahman', which destroys ignorance. This cognition disappears along with ignorance after destroying it, in the same way as the medicine disappears after destroying the disease" (Mahadeva Satry, 1993). Thus, Advaita Vedānta points out that Brahman-Ātman is the locus of Avidyā.

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# SPATIALISING THE MEMORY: A READING OF *THE SMALL-TOWN SEA* AND *FLY HASINA FLY* BY ANEES SALIM

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**Abstract:** *The construction of everyday reality involves a reconsideration of the past and subversion of events and practices. Psychogeography deals with the study of organized laws and effects of the geographical environment on human behaviour and emotions consciously or unconsciously. This paper is an attempt to reaffirm the psycho-spatial relationship focusing on the psychological impact of the geographical environment on individuals in the light of two novels by Anees Salim: The Small-Town Sea (2017), and Fly Hasina Fly (2020). It analyses the methods adopted by individuals in order to convert their reality through constructed situations that favour their desirable ends.*

**Keywords:** *psychogeography, stroller, stationary walking, memory, topophilia*

## **Introduction**

Space, one of the central motifs in postmodern literature, is interlinked to psychogeography which deals with the intricacies in the human articulation of reality, identity and spatiality since the events, actions and objects within a space affect the psyche of an individual. The connection between space and mind is explored in diverse forms of art and literature. The novels by Anees Salim have captured the inextricable link between space and the human psyche. Space plays an active role in Salim's novels as it is projected as having equal importance as the characters portrayed in them. *The Small-Town Sea* (STS) and *Fly Hasina Fly* (FHF) are two novels by Salim which depict the nuances of space and its effects on the human psyche.

*The Small-Town Sea* by Salim orbits the life of a thirteen-year-old nameless protagonist and his journey to solitude following the demise of his dear ones. This paper attempts to assay how the aforesaid novel accentuates the influential role of geographical environment in the multifaceted development of human psyche. The boy addresses the bitter realities of life and undergoes transformation regarding his perceptions about spaces in the process. The image of certain spaces in the small-town to which the boy's family has shifted becomes exceptional as it leaves deep impressions in his mind. The Secret Beach, Bougainvillea, Vappumma's (grandmother) house, and the orphanage are embedded in the memories and thoughts about the past he has spent with his kith and kin in that small-town.

*Fly Hasina Fly* portrays the life of a vending machine attendant named Hasina Mansoor, whose family ekes out a bare existence on her meager salary. This paper explores how space becomes crucial in defining the personal department, since the utilisation and exploitation of a space exposes the real self of individuals, as evidenced in the novel. A series of actions and events induces Hasina's estrangement from her family and her lover, which eventually leads to an inevitable tragedy.

Psychogeography is invariably connected to spatial theory and it refers to the relation between space and psyche. Guy Debord defines psychogeography as the “study of the specific effects of the geographical environment, consciously organised or not, on the emotions and behaviour of individuals” (Coverley 10). It can be considered as the merging point of psychology and geography. Hence psychogeography is a means to explore the behavioural impact of urban places (Coverley 10).

### Themes and motifs

**Stationary walking and topophilia:** The act of walking, whether intentional or not, seriously impacts the gradual and overall urban experience of an individual. Merlin Coverley in his work *Psychogeography* analyses the characteristic features of Psychogeography and posits the significance of urban wandering by focusing on the flaneur and the stroller, the specific figures that one comes across while dealing with psychogeography. The flaneur as well as the stroller engages in aimless urban wanderings by which they unconsciously implement a crucial subversion. This subversion results from the act of urban wandering and the complementary deconstruction of the perceived notions and general representation of that particular spatial configuration. The act of walking enables the wanderer to inwardly reconstruct the image of the city using one’s own cognitive map. This cognitive mapping is made possible by the personal experience one acquires through the countless wanderings through the streets and corners that are overlooked by the city. Walking can be a real one or an imaginary voyage which in turn becomes a highly subjective purpose that offers a journey through the urban labyrinth (10-15).

Baudelaire observes in *The Painter of Modern Life* that the wanderer is an integral part of most of the works of Edgar Allan Poe. Coverley quotes Baudelaire’s observations on the nature of the wanderer:

For flaneur, for a passionate spectator, it is an immense joy to set up house in the heat of the perfect multitude, amid the ebb and flow of movement, in the midst of the fugitive and the infinite. To be away from home and yet to find oneself everywhere at home; to see the world, to be at the centre of the world, and yet remain hidden from the world. (61)

The urge to blend with the crowd and imbibe the spirit of the space can be considered as an elementary feature of the urban wanderer. The characters in Salim’s novels seek the help of an imaginary voyage to re-visit and relive their past during several instances. In his novel *The Small-Town Sea*, Salim seems to foreground the relationship between man and environment, and the bonding between the space and psyche. The nameless protagonist and his Vappa (father) are haunted by nostalgic memories of the small-town described in the novel. Topophilic sentiments towards the sea and the house rented by them operate in the psyche of both the father and the son alike. Topophilia refers to the love of place, and is used to explain the bonding between an individual and the environment surrounding him (Yi-Fu Tuan 93). There is a sense of yearning in the father and the son for the past and the place where they had lived together and left behind.

Coverley, in *Psychogeography*, describes the term *robinsonner* as a mental traveler who is capable of surviving in a hostile territory (68). In *The Small-Town Sea*, Salim’s

protagonist narrates the story in the format of a letter while documenting his nostalgic memories about the small-town and the sea. The boy in this novel engages in an imaginary voyage, to recollect his past for the purpose of narrating it as a story. Constant relocation or shift from one place to another within a short span of time makes him an aimless stroller. The boy's journey begins from the city in which his family had lived first, and halts at the small-town to which they relocate later. The boy continues his journey, not physically, but by engaging in an imaginary voyage that brings him back to spaces where he had lived in the past. He assumes the status of a stationary walker, since he traverses the spaces even without walking literally.

The boy and his Vappa despise the small-town initially for their own personal reasons. Vappa curses himself for being born there since he believes that his dream of becoming a famous writer will never be possible in a small town, and hence finds his shelter in a bustling city. His attitude towards the town changes when he becomes terminally ill. His hatred transforms into love and he rents a house named Bougainvillea to live in the small-town. The boy longs to go back to Bougainvillea as soon as he shifts to the ancestral house of Vappumma, his grandmother. He starts liking Vappumma's house only when he relocates to a new space. The familiarity with a space breeds emotional sentiments towards it and later develops into topophilia. Memories about the small-town and Bougainvillea become nostalgic to the boy only after his relocation from each of these spaces within the town.

The town seems to be small and depressing for the boy and his Vappa and the sea near their home is the only nice thing in that town according to them. The sea and the railway lines by means of personification play a vital role in this novel as well as in the lives of its characters. Instances of attributing human traits to inanimate objects are aplenty here. The boy says, "The sea, in a way, had been a neighbour, almost a living thing, restless, sleepless and famous for its mood swings" (STS 117). The novel portrays the sea as a lifelike figure, thereby elevating its position from a non-living entity to a living character. It assumes a dominant role that is no less important than the boy. There is clear evidence of topophilic sentiments in the nostalgic memories of the nameless protagonist about the nameless sea.

The shift from Bougainvillea following Vappa's death makes the boy miss the beach they used to visit together. Topophilia is obvious when he says, "I started to miss the sea as much as I missed Vappa. The sea was missed the way dead people were" (STS 125). The boy shares his father's sentiments towards the sea, and is cognizant of the significance it has in his Vappa's life. The sea has a pronounced impact on the psyche of the boy and his father.

**Death and spatial memory:** People keep certain objects and places close to their heart with respect to the unforgettable experiences linked with those spaces or objects. In *The Small-Town Sea*, the occasional visits to the beach during their evening walks result in developing an emotional bond with the sea. It gradually becomes an integral part of their lives after the discovery of the Secret Beach, where they spend their time whenever possible. The boy's love for the sea is an extension of his love for his father and he finds it impossible to set them apart. The nostalgic memories are embedded in the psyche of the boy in such a way that he reminisces about the people and the past events along with the spaces connected to them.

On the day of shifting from Bougainvillea to Vappumma's house, the boy engages in introspection. For him, as he says, "'Home' used to be this, the house on the cliff, and before this, the apartment by the upcoming metro line. It had taken just a week for the house by the railway line to turn into home" (STS 129). The boy has become mature enough to distinguish between house and home. House becomes home only when one has reasons to get emotionally attached to it. Otherwise, a house is like any other building where people choose to stay only till they wish. Bougainvillea is the next space after the Secret Beach that pops in the boy's mind when he thinks of Vappa. People and spaces come back to life as the boy relives the past. The boy has oodles of memories of his childhood which he had spent with his Vappa and wishes to spend the rest of his life, in the fond memories of his Vappa and the spaces that have influenced them the most.

The boy's remark about the sea changes with his experience with different people he comes across in his life. The strange feeling towards the sea ebbs with frequent visits to the sea with his Vappa. He gets to know more about the geographic features of the sea when Vappa's friend takes him to the sea on a boat. The first-hand experience of being in the middle of the sea enables him to learn new lessons of life by himself. He comes to know that the sea is more silent as one goes deeper. The boy realizes that it is the waves in the shore that makes the sea noisy and one has to get out of the sea in order to hear it roar (STS 72). Reading between the lines, the sea evolves as a metaphor of life. It encompasses the essence of life that is mystic to the core. The crests and troughs of the sea waves personify the turbulence of life. One has to be detached from his/her life for a clear vision of life in its magnitude. The detachment from the subjective realm leads to the realisation of how life becomes easier to decipher.

The sea continues to be a space filled with heart-warming memories for the boy until the untimely death of his friend Bilal. The death of Bilal, an orphan and the only friend the boy has in that small-town shatters all the perceptions the boy has in his mind till then as he helplessly watches him die in a space that is just as dear to him. The boy's childhood is filled with incidents that evoke mixed feelings towards the sea. The positive memories of his father makes him yearn to revisit the sea, whereas the devastating memory of Bilal's accidental death threatens him away from the sea. This shows how different experiences can alter the perception of a person towards the same space.

The boy fears that the unexpected death of his sole friend Bilal may break him mentally and physically and also dreads the situation of being given an electric shock if he loses sanity while mourning his death. This upsets him and drains his sanity and he falls unconscious when his mind gets flooded with the memories of Bilal and the sea. His subconscious mind tries to transpose Bilal from the site of the sea to some other space. He hallucinates that Bilal has escaped the monstrous waves and is now rendering azaan in the mosque in a louder voice signaling his safe return.

The boy's mind chooses the space of the mosque since the situation demands a convincing solution to make him believe that Bilal is alive. It is Bilal's association to the orphanage and the mosque that triggers the boy's mind to construct such an imaginary situation. Thus, it is the intricate play of the psyche in association with the images of spaces that are registered in the boy's mind that rescues him from a mental

breakdown. The boy has memories of Bilal begging in the streets for the money to buy refreshments. But those memories cannot serve the purpose of convincing the boy in a dreadful condition like this. His psyche wants to visualise Bilal in a safe and secured space, and here the mosque is apt to suffice his need. His prior knowledge of these spaces helps him to sift out a space to place Bilal. He imagines the space of the mosque and the orphanage since it is the space where Bilal belongs to. This indicates that spaces also get registered into one's psyche along with the people they meet in those spaces.

In *The Small-Town Sea*, the boy recollects how he used to link Bilal with death. The children in the orphanage including Bilal dry their washed clothes near the graveyard that has a cashew orchard. Bilal's dress has the smell of cashew flowers which fall as the wind blows, on the clothes that have been spread on the lines. The boy associates the fragrance of cashew flowers with death since he has seen cashew trees in the graveyard (STS 43). He associates the same meaning to Bilal since Bilal also smells of cashew flowers. The boy conditions his mind in such a way that the fragrance of cashew flowers brings the image of death to his mind automatically. This conditioning change in the course of time, but unfortunately the image of death resurfaces in another form of the sea following Bilal's drowning. The mind associates spaces with incidents and also gets affected by those spaces and the incidents that occur there. A person's perception of other people or a space tends to change according to the varied impressions he/she has towards others and the spaces connected to them.

Bilal's death evokes disturbing thoughts of the sea in the psyche of the boy. Until then, the sound of the sea waves had never hindered his sleep. The sound of the train also starts to shake him out of sleep when the boy gets shifted to Vappumma's house. He used to sleep by listening to the sea waves when he was in Bougainvillea. The boy takes time to get accustomed to the new environment as he has shifted from a place that was dear to him. The time taken by a person to adjust with a new space depends upon the intensity of his/her emotional attachment to the previous space that is left behind. Salim's memory of his home near the sea and the railway lines and its repercussions get reflected in the characters of his novel.

**Space and contextual behaviour:** *Fly Hasina Fly* is another novel by Salim where he seems to foreground the idea of space and its relation to the psyche. In the novel, the airport has a significant role in the life of the protagonist Hasina. She imagines herself as sitting inside an aeroplane and it is this dream that makes her stick to the job of the vending machine attendant in the airport lounge. Hasina is the bread winner of her family which consists of her father, mother, sister and brother. She struggles to seek a better job and education to run her family better. She wishes to take a flight at least once in her life and hence continues to seek jobs related to the airport.

Her experience as a staff in the airport helps her study the way people behave in the airport. She notes that people, while inside the lounge, keep their composure even if a person goes wrong while doing something. They do not raise their voice as they do in the railway stations or bus terminals (FHF 77). This indicates how the people conduct themselves according to the space where they are in. People manage to be culturally sophisticated in spaces that look more complex and alien to them. Airways as a means of transportation are favoured by the elite class whereas the ordinary people resort to

transportation by bus or train which is comparatively cheaper. Thus, space creates an informal categorisation of people in terms of their financial capabilities, as well as their etiquette.

Space becomes conducive to certain actions or events when it is accompanied by pitch darkness. Hasina and Eza, who is both her lover and half-cousin, secretly go to watch a movie in the theatre. Eza kisses Hasina without anyone noticing them, taking advantage of the darkness within the theatre. He chooses the theatre to express his desire to Hasina because of the privacy that the darkness begets. Though they live in the same building, the house is a hostile space for their relationship and hence they meet in a public spot like a theatre. The theatre, unlike the other public spots, veils everyone from each other with its darkness. Eza exploits this situation to kiss Hasina as he thinks no other place can offer him the privacy that the theatre does.

The appearance of ghosts is a common element in Salim's novels in which some of the lead characters are apparently possessed by purportedly paranormal perceptions. Hasina sees the ghost of an air hostess named Natasha Singh who had committed suicide the previous day. The ghost appears in front of her window, in the dark night during rainfall and wishes Hasina on her birthday (FHS 131). Hasina's mind must have been pre-conditioned with the thoughts of Natasha, as they had met a few days before she committed suicide. She has the illusion of the ghost in the darkness and within the household premises, making her scream out of fear. It is the darkness, and the illusion of the presence of a supernatural force like a ghost within a domestic space that triggers fear in her psyche.

*The Small-Town Sea* shares an account similar to this, in which the boy feels the presence of his deceased Vappa as he runs in the darkness to call his relatives to tell them that Vappamma is unwell (271). A heavy cot was leaned against the wall to restrict intruders from entering the compound of the boy's aunt. The boy hallucinates about the presence of his Vappa helping him, when he pushes the cot to enter the compound and wakes his relatives up. The psyche of the boy works in this way because he would have been afraid to step out of his house in the darkness otherwise. Here, the presence of Vappa makes the boy brave enough to push the heavy cot by himself, though he was alone in the pouring night rain, and call out for help in an emergency.

In *Fly Hasina Fly*, Hasina starts to hate being at her home after perceiving that her mother is an exhibitionist. Her hatred towards her mother makes her loathe the time she spends at home in the presence of her mother. She mourns the death of her mother and stays indoors during the days of mourning even though she was not happy to stay at home. She feels better and relaxed when she goes back to the airport lounge a few days later. When people find composure mostly when they are at home, Hasina gets peace of mind when she resumes her work in the airport. It is the workspace that offers her the relaxation she wants. The time Hasina spends at her home makes her uneasy, since that space brings the memories of her mother and Hasina's ex-boyfriend Eza. She caught him red handed when he was peeping into the bathroom while her mother was taking a shower with the windows all open. Thus, the space of home that was once dear to her turns out to be the worst thing which she likes to obliterate. This implies how a space becomes either cherished or despised based on the experiences one attaches to it.

Hasina has an urge to get out of her house and get rid of the bad memories she has about her home and her mother. The prospects of a new job and a better life for her twin sister Shamla make her jealous and corrupt. Hasina sets off towards her dreams by betraying her sister as she boards the flight in the disguise of Shamla. For Hasina, unlike the protagonists of other novels by Salim, the house she lives in fails to provide her what she wants. The cottage in Dubai lures her with the facilities it seems to offer. People yearn to get back to their home and to the spaces related to their childhood memories. Hasina differs from them as she represents those who want to leave behind their home and other places, either to chase their dreams or to escape from the memories of their past.

### Conclusion

Space is foregrounded in Salim's novels since it is an important factor that affects the mind of the characters in them. The protagonists of both *The Small-Town Sea* and *Fly Hasina Fly* relive their past by means of imaginary voyage through their memories. People, spaces, events, objects, and actions are interlinked, and they create a combined effect on the psyche of the individual. The past is re-lived by the cognitive reconstruction of spaces and the incidents wherein everything seems to be connected even though they are exclusive events that have occurred at separate points of time. There is a correlation between space and psyche which in turn becomes vital in the formulation of identity of both the space and its inhabitants. The human mind works in complex ways when a space compels individuals to address adverse realities that they are hesitant to accept. The individuals, as a result, resort to their past, and create constructed situations in which familiar spaces have an inevitable role to resolve the conflict with reality. The prominence of space in one's life depends upon the nature of one's perception of the incidents that occur in that space.

The non-living entities like geographic spaces are attributed with human characteristics thereby making them as lively and important as the characters in Salim's novels. Familiarity with a space helps the individual in understanding the place better. The narratives of the novels *The Small-Town Sea* and *Fly Hasina Fly* have autobiographical elements of the author in them. Salim gives vent to nostalgic memories about the spaces he has lived, through the personal accounts of his protagonists. Most of Salim's characters have a yearning for the good things in their past. These characters ultimately mirror the thoughts of the author and the real spaces that have influenced him. Therefore, the spaces and the incidents in the author's life have a profound influence in the process of weaving the threads together in the narration of both these novels. Thus, the prominence of space and spatiality in the psyche of the individual is reaffirmed through these novels.

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## READING THE FIGURE OF THE ILLEGAL IMMIGRANT IN SUNJEEV SAHOTA'S *THE YEAR OF THE RUNAWAYS*

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**Abstract:** *This paper will try to engage with the representation of the figure of the illegal immigrant in Sunjeev Sahota's *The Year of the Runaways* (2015). It will also try to analyze how the marginal figure of the illegal immigrant becomes an actor in the network of economic globalization in the novel. It will analyze how the characters in the novel become victims of the forced nature of migration initiated by the uneven nature of development in the globe. The representation of the illegal migrant smuggling operation and the varied nature of mobilities of the immigrant as portrayed in the novel through its major protagonists will be analyzed in the paper. The paper will also argue how the concept of "pind" (hometown/village) and "apneh" (one's own community) among the diasporic circle of Indians is deconstructed in the novel, by pitting them against the forces of Capital. The role of women as agents of illegal immigration, being subject to exploitation would also be looked at. The paper will also look at the representation of the "migrant's city" in the novel.*

**Keywords:** *Illegal immigrant, globalization, pind (hometown), apneh (community), migrant city*

Towards the latter half of *The Year of the Runaways* (2015), Narrinder, who is one of the central characters in the novel, and a member of the Punjabi community in Sheffield, observes a person trying to accomplish an almost absurd task. She describes the task as 'bizarre' as the said person tries to roll a large rubber tyre up a hill. This bizarre image is an allegory for the Sisyphian struggle that the protagonists of the novel are engaged in. Tochi, Avtar and Randeep, the three primary protagonists other than Narrinder, throughout the course of the narrative embody the Sisyphian struggle. They desperately try to eke out a living in the country of England.

The three aforementioned characters and the motivation behind their reason for having migrated to England are varied. In debates revolving around the issue of citizenship or membership in a globalized or globalizing world, the figure of the migrant or the immigrant becomes important to understand the changing nature of nations and their boundaries, and also to understand how migrants embody the transnational character.

Globalization has problematized the concept of nations by bridging the gap between nations through the medium of telecommunications and technology and also through more efficient means of transport, which has also propelled the flow of migrants from the former colonies into the first world or the developed countries which are global, cosmopolitan cities which also serve as the centres of capital accumulation. This allure of the capital becomes one of the reasons for the migration of people from the countries of the global south to those of the north.

Migration and urbanization are therefore mutually reinforcing. One facet of this process of urbanization is gentrification, a process which is in motion in the more developed and the developing countries. The process of gentrification or homogenization is a form of territorial exclusion which has resulted in the creation of ghettos or the outer-inner city in both the developed and the developing countries. In the developed countries for instance, the inner-city districts, before the advent of globalization induced gentrification, served as the home for laborers who were low skilled. These low skilled workers are mostly migrants from other countries, who are

engaged in jobs which the natives deem stigmatized. These inner cities served as the entry point for the migrants into the larger city. Because of gentrification, the migrants were forced to move to the more devalued sites on the periphery. These peripheral locations eventually, become the centre of informal economies. The stigmatized districts serve as colonies to the larger metropolis.

The aforementioned male protagonists inhabit a dilapidated building in one of the more undervalued districts of Sheffield. This apartment or building is reminiscent of a refugee camp or an abstract space whose character is indistinct and its inhabitants and the building itself remain invisible from the official map of the country or the city for that matter. The constant fugitive like nature of the migrants renders them invisible and they inhabit places which facilitate invisibility. The title of the novel itself is self explanatory as it captures the transitory nature of the migrant or the immigrant. All the characters in the novel are 'runaways'. In the book *The Figure of the Migrant* (2015), the author states how the twenty first century, would be regarded as the age of the migrant in the annals of history. Migration becomes necessary because of environmental, economic and political instability. Migration also takes place because of the phenomenon of social expulsion which also can be of a varied nature. Social expulsion is an outcome of deprivation of political, juridical and economic rights. He also talks about how expulsion is a centrifugal movement that drives out; it involves the deprivation of social status (Nail 69).

Tochi, Avtar and Randeep are all victims of multifaceted forms of deprivation. Avtar moves to England because of the deprivation of his economic rights. He is fired from his job as a bus conductor. His inability to pay back the loans against his house, forces him to sell one of his kidneys and procure a loan from a loan shark in Pocket Bhai, whose cronies continue to haunt him in England. Randeep, is a high caste middle class youth who moves to England, to work and to reaffirm the social status which eroded as a result of his father's mental illness and eventual exit from his job. Tochi on the other hand is a chammar, whose caste identity becomes his bane and continues to haunt him throughout the story. There's a section in the novel where he moves from village to village, from Jannat to Randoga in search of a job, but gets refused each and everytime owing to his lower caste. In one instance, he even gets sexually exploited and he moves to a separate district in search of a job and he gets denied because the parties contesting the elections despise the lowcastes. His occupation as a rickshaw driver is also short lived, as his family is killed by a group of high caste goons and he is forced to migrate to England.

These backstories shed light on the nature of migrations which are not always voluntary but are most of the times forced. Tochi's reasons for migration are motivated by his double oppression and double deprivation in terms of his political and economic rights. The various migrations mentioned in the book are also an outcome of the phenomenon of uneven development, occurring through -out the world. The phenomenon of illegal migration or migrant smuggling is rooted in local socio-economic contexts. The country or place of departure in most migrant narratives is often imbued with a sense of nostalgic longing, which is not the case in Sahota's portrayal of Punjab.

In the context of the novel for instance, India is shown to be a country plagued with corruption and poverty which harkens back to the nature of uneven distribution of resources globally. The precarious nature of existence is something which is differentially experienced by human beings all over the globe. Judith Butler comments on how precarity is the inescapable vulnerability of social being as it is organised, distributed and hierarchized by contemporary neoliberal capitalism (J.Hogg 1). The global north progressed in their pursuit of capital and overall social and economic development by extracting resources and people from the developing countries. The former imperial centers or former colonial countries view the countries of the global south as recruitment centres for cheap labour and large markets. Tochi, Avtar and Randeep are examples of how the Global north appropriates the labor and services of the people of the global south by providing them entry into their countries but also keeping them in a precarious state. The raids conducted by immigrant authorities keep them on tenterhooks. This is also a power which is wielded by the state of arrival, by not granting immigrants complete citizenship.

Caglar and Schiller argue how past and present research places migrants outside of city making leading to a process of segregation and ghettoisation, marginalizing migrants, disenfranchising them. This mode of segregation is a product of capital accumulation which is encompassing people globally in the mechanics of dispossession, displacement and emplacement, which is eroding the difference between migrants and non-migrants (qtd in Millington 68).

The idea of community reiterated through the words ‘apmeh’ and ‘pind’ is also unraveled and deconstructed in the novel. Tochi’s caste identity of chammar overrides all his other identities. The novel throws light on how caste operates even abroad in England among the Indians. The Pind in the novel instead of referring to its original meaning which is a village or a home town gets replaced with the identity of caste. Gurpreet, one of the immigrants in the novel and also a housemate of Tochi, after having discovered Tochi’s caste, ridicules him and uses a casteist slur by calling him ‘a banchod chammar,’ Gurpreet said, laughing. ‘Even the banchod chammaars are coming to England (19).’ Tochi’s nature of migration to England is also sub-human to say the least which also reflects his marginal status, by virtue of his caste and class identity.

“Tochi hunkered down, knees tight to his chest and head tucked in. It was dark as well. Metal barrels surrounded him-right above his head, too- their clinking the only sound. He fell asleep. At some point he lifted his head off his knees and felt a deep stillness inside him. The barrels weren’t wobbling. The engine wasn’t running. All was peace and darkness. He closed his eyes, though the insides of his lids were painted with images of dying and the dead (80).”

Tochi’s status as an illegal immigrant and a member of a lower caste community also results in him being deprived of jobs. He goes to a Nooze ‘n’ booze outlet in the hope for a job, when the Sardar who mans the building, denies him work, simply because Tochi is from Manighat, which is a place in Bihar. He finally ends up with a job in one of the Sikh owned shops by impersonating as a Sikh from Mojoram. He even changes his name from Tarlochan Kumar to Tarlochan Sandhu, to get the job. His cover gets blown later, and he gets reprimanded for having faked his identity: “‘Get out!’ she screamed. ‘You people stink the whole world up!’ We witness how the sub-human

treatment meted out to the lower castes within the India, also persists outside the country. The stigma associated with caste is something which even transcends geographical borders.

The word “apneh” is also put to the test when the hierarchies of visa come into play; their identities are intertwined with the kind of visa they carry. Avtar is called a “scooter” which is a term used for a person who has a student visa where the nature of stay for the migrant is temporary. Tochi on the other hand, carries fake documents and, Randeep is on a marriage visa:

“Gurpreet’s voice came over the top. ‘He’s got a visa, the boy has. Not a deadhead fauji like us lot.’

The background chatter sank as swiftly as water down a plughole. ‘You a scooter?’ someone asked.

‘I’m on a marriage visa. (203).’

Thus, we witness how not only caste but visa hierarchies also pervade the community of illegal immigrants holed up in the apartment in Sheffield, corroding the essence of ‘pind’ or ‘apneh’. The novel also unravels the concept of ‘apneh’ by pitting it against the allure of capital and progress. The granting of the visa or for that matter smuggling of the migrant from his country of origin to his country of destination is guided purely by capital. The novel sheds light on the organization of the illegal migrant smuggling operation. Local lawyers become the arbiters of smuggling and human trafficking in the novel. Vakeelji for instance offers Avtar a wide range of visas to choose from, as he says

“There are several visas you can opt for, he said dully. Ultimately, it came down to the concept of risk and reward...The marriage route was usually the most expensive, but you could work legally and it more or less guaranteed full rights after one year. At the opposite end, holiday visas were cheaper, but you can’t work and you have to come back. ‘Many don’t, of course. But then many don’t find work either. So, they starve in a shed at the bottom of some chacha’s garden.’ He could always get Avtar there illegally” (164).

The above lines throw light on how even migrating to a certain country does not boil down to an individual act of agency on the part of the migrant but is dictated by his monetary or financial status. The degree of freedom one gets access to in the host country is also controlled by what kind of visa one has access to.

Calgar and Schiller state how, everyone is caught in the churn of capitalist globalization (qtd in Triandafyllidou 68). The pursuit of Capital tears the idea of “pind” asunder in the context of the novel: “It makes you only care for yourself.” Gurpreet spoke quietly. “This life. It makes everything a competition. A fight. For work, for money. There’s no peace. Ever. Just fighting for the next job. Fight fight fight” (225). He says these lines to Avtar while both of them are suspended on a harness, working on a construction site. The author by situating the characters at the construction site, tries to comment on the extremely dangerous occupations that the immigrants were engaged in. He even subtly threatens Avtar by saying that if push comes to shove, he would get rid of every competition near him which includes Avtar, and he knows that in his

position Avtar would do the same. Avtar towards the latter half of the novel would go on to betray Randeep for an underground cleaning job.

The migrant is a figure whose social position is mobile and does not have a fixed identity. A fixed social identity is a marker of privilege and power whereas a migrant is always identified with displacement and movement (63 Millington). This is further exemplified in the novel through the figures of Avtar, Randeep and Tochi, who are constantly on the move. The three of them meet in the apartment but as the story progresses, they venture out into various places which constitute Sheffield.

Sunjeev Sahota in a panel discussion titled “A Booker Bookshelf” in the JLF 2016, talks about how the characters in the novel traverse different spaces and places throughout the novel but do not directly engage with any of the places because they are so caught up in their pursuit of earning money. A migrant’s way of negotiating the city is very different from that of a tourist:

“They’re very much living in these hidden dark corners of the UK and they don’t see the light in any meaningful sense, they don’t have time to admire the shape of a tree or how beautiful the landscape might be, they’re there to run across” ( “A Booker Bookshelf”, 51:56-52:12).

City novels or urban fiction for that matter have mostly revolved around the cities of New York and London. There are numerous books which talk about the “London experience”, where London plays a central role in the plot of the novel. The “English city” experience is predominantly associated with the city of London. London has always enjoyed the status of being the centre, which is not the case in the novel. London is not imbued with a sense of loss and nostalgia. The place of arrival is not presented as a safe haven or a beacon of hope for the protagonists. Sahota does not romanticize London; he draws a very realistic picture of London which has an industrial aura. His description of London further affirms it – “The train juddered out of the station and into the mechanical sprawl of London: cranes, pulleys, industrial lifts; then suburbs, the charmless wet platforms of one outpost after another” (200).

Urban sociologist Gareth Millington talks about the spectre of the past city in reference to London, how the citizens of the city long for a pre-gentrified London, a more authentic and open city which was anti-dispersal and did not dispossess people of their land. He also goes on to talk about the idea of the “appearing city”, new urban places which are actively produced by the migrants or the dispersed people (14 Millington). Sahota decides to tell the story of this new ‘appearing city’ or cities for that matter. Sunjeev Sahota roots his characters in the city of Sheffield. Randeep is ecstatic when he first arrives in Sheffield, “I’m really happy to be here. What a beautiful city you have” (201). The author then progresses to depict the Sheffield which resembles a ghetto, as a result of the gentrification and urbanization with “narrow, boarded-up, wretched looking streets” (201). The author further attempts to emphasize the sterile nature and alienating features of the new ‘appearing city’ by describing the physical features of the apartment, which the illegal migrants inhabit in the novel. “There were mattresses, grey sheets crumpled on them, and the wallpaper was torn in several places, revealing the pink underneath.” (202). The apartment becomes a metaphor for the world of the migrant.

The novel also addresses the fact as to how; women are exploited by the illegal migrant smuggling industry. Narrinder in the novel for instance is a devout Sikhni, she is haunted by the memory of Kavi, an individual whose family tries to manipulate her into marrying him, so that Kavi, his mother and his sister Savraj are reunited in England where they can avail better economic opportunities. Kavi dies while trying to illegally enter England, when Narrinder refuses to marry him on the promise of a marriage visa. Her spiritual nature and the guilt of not having saved Kavi, drives her towards her decision to marry Randeep and help him and his family gain citizenship in England through the marriage visa. This charitable nature is exploited by the lawyers who profit from the transaction. Narrinder is just reduced to a visa wife. Thus, the immigrants when they migrate to the global north illegally are associated with their visa identity. The past life or the identity of the yesteryears slowly recedes into the realm of oblivion.

Savraj on the other hand is a sex worker who lives in the eastern district of London in Poplar. She lived in a shed, which is a dilapidated structure primarily used a front for illegal activities and sex. The inhabitants of the sheds were usually illegal migrants, mostly women. They were called “patakeh” (fireworks) and the sheds they inhabited were called “patakeh sheds”. Her past remains shrouded in mystery. She is a representation of all the women of the third world who are engaged in activities, in stigmatized spaces exploited by individuals who are agents in the illegal migrant smuggling/trafficking business both in the host country and the country of origin. We get an elaborate description of her shed which further paints a bleak picture of the world of the migrants living abroad:

“Her room, it turned out, was at the bottom of the garden, a small wooden structure with a white net aslant across the only window... It was a dispiriting little room: damp, cold, unloved and unloving.” (261-62).

Ruby is another character in the novel that is a resident of England, and is of a sikh descent. Davinder, the co-owner of the shop where Tochi works at, tries to get Ruby married to Tochi. Her motive behind it is to get Ruby re-married, who is a widow and in her late 30's and it would also enable Tochi to become a legal citizen of England. So, we witness how women lack agency when it comes to even choosing their partners and their agency is reduced to being passive recipients of men, facilitating their citizenship in England. Davinder's conversation with Tochi further sheds light on women like Ruby and their lack of agency: “Well, she's divorced and thirty-eight with a twelve-year-old boy, so obviously her choices in life are limited. She needs to be realistic about who she can get.’ (234).

The novel thus, engages with the process of migration in all its aspects and how the figure of the migrant navigates a globalized world where paradoxically the borders are more securitized and xenophobic sentiments are more rampant. This leads to a situation where individuals and communities cross borders through illegal means which also involves a lot of risk, as mentioned earlier. Sahota reveals how neo-imperialism operates in the guise of the migrant smuggling network. He tries to shed light on the migrant's differential experience of anxiety and vulnerability owing to his/her gender, religion, caste or class that operates beyond borders. Thus, through the varied

representation of the migrants in the novel, and their varied nature of personal mobilities, the author seeks to deconstruct the monolithic figure of the migrant.

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## THE QUESTION OF CASTE IDENTITY: REVISITING TAGORE'S CHANDALIKA AND KUMARAN ASAN'S CHANDALABHIKSHUKI

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*Abstract:* This paper attempts to analyse the two works of R.N. Tagore, the stellar figure of Indian nationalism and N. Kumaran Asan, one of the harbingers of Modern Malayalam poetry. The paper is an attempt to discuss how caste identities are formed and performed the subjectivity of caste in Indian context. The literary narratives by Tagore and Asan depicted the 'liberated woman subjectivity' on account of its encounter with the Buddhist philosophy. Both the writers were preoccupied with the spiritual ideologies of Lord Budha. The early phase of Bengal Renaissance was marked with the reawakening of Buddhist traditions and writings. The literary world of Tagore and Asan was in tune with the political discourses of Jotirao Phule, Sree Narayana Guru and Perriyor.

*Keywords:* Caste hierarchy, Indian Nationalism, Buddhism, Politics of love

The emergence of Indian nationalism is ushered in the context of colonial presence which redefines the traditional cultural conditions and embraces the new social, intellectual practices on the basis of western liberal ideologies. The modern Indian intelligentsia tried to construct the quest for an alternative modernity through creative and cultural realms. The ideological transformation of Indian society under the colonial rule was profoundly reflected in literary discourses which encapsulated the complex cultural interactions. The religious dogmas and their value systems were questioned by the rational social reformers and social problems were confronted by denouncing many social evils. On the other hand, the young writers of vernacular literatures also conjured up reformed literary sensibilities which accepted the new cultural and intellectual accomplishments without negating traditions. The social space of nationalist discourses provided a larger framework within which the literary aspirations of vernacular writers took shape in the nineteenth century. The literary discourses on reforms based on colonial education, the politics of language, and the new kind of subjectivity for women exposed how the political spaces of nationalism, gender and language were conjured up and embedded in these vernacular works. These revitalized vibes realized caste system to be eradicated and promoted anti-caste consciousness among people.

The unjust system of caste hierarchy permeated the cultural spaces of social relations which resulted in fragmentation of caste divisions in terms of inequitable power distribution and the denial of civil rights. Noted Indian sociologist M.N. Srinivas puts:

Despite infra-regional differences, the pattern of hierarchy was remarkably uniform over different regions with the Brahmins at the top, other literary, propertied and 'clean' castes following and shudra, atishudra, labouring and 'polluted' castes at the bottom. (66)

By imbibing the spirit of Jotirao Phule, the contestation of caste constituted the ideological debate as part of nationalist discourses. Envisaging a new social order based on social justice and rationality, Phule drew his scholarly attention by reinterpreting the ancient Indian history on account of the Aryan conquest. The sacred literatures written in Sanskrit language were questioned and tried to posit King Bali, the non-Aryan king as a counter-hero or a victimised hero of the non-Aryan indigenous groups. The intricate laws of Indian caste system are consolidated by the



karma philosophy of Hinduism. According to this theory, our pre-ordained birth is based on the deeds of our previous life. The caste as a social menace was strongly addressed by the dissent literary tradition of Bhakthi movement. The saint poets of this tradition rejected the orthodox rules of Vedic tradition. This dissent movement encouraged vernacular writing traditions and deliberately subverted the notions of purity by idealising purity of inner soul as the supreme.

The caste as a social menace was addressed by the writers in their creative realms. The present paper is an attempt to compare and analyse the subjectivity of caste in the works of N. Kumaran Asan, the Malayalam poet and Rabindra nath Tagore in the light of counter-narrative literary traditions during the early phase of twentieth century. Kumaran Asan, one of the harbingers of Modern Malayalam poetry penned the conflict between the tradition and modernity in diverse ways. With the publication of *Veena Poovu*, the lyrical poem, Asan announced a new sensibility of romantic revolution and political ideology by rejecting the style of 'mahakavyas'. Unconventional in religion, reformist in social outlook, the Malayalam poet N. Kumaran Asan represented the class of outcastes in the literary imagination of colonial Kerala. Hailing from the Travancore state, which was notorious for the oppressive feudal society, well- guarded by the Hindu rulers as the agents of the caste hierarchy, Asan was an intellectual protégé of Sri Narayana Guru. He constantly wrote about the mechanical and de- humanizing life of individuals who have even been deprived of a fundamental sense of human dignity. In his eloquent miniature epics (khandakavya), he discussed social problems such as class oppression, feudalism, untouchability etc.

Known for its lucid lyrical expressions like a Chinese painting, the poem *Chandalabikshuki* (The Beggar Woman -1923) probes into the social consciousness of caste hierarchies. Swami Sathyadevan, the exponent of Kadhprasangam, popularized the story of Chandalabikshuki through Kadhprasangam, a type of song -drama across Kerala. The story is based on a Buddhist legend which serves to bring out the absurdity and hollowness of castes. Setting the literary theme in a non-Kerala village, Asan reflected the growing resentment against caste practices through Matangi, a low caste girl from a village near by Sravasthi. The village setting was highly loaded with symbols like peepal tree and the thirsty monk. The thirsty monk symbolizes the inner soul (athman) which seeks peace among the caste- ridden society. The tree symbolizes Thadhagatha, the epitome of world peace. Matangi went to fetch water from the well where she met Ananda, the mendicant. Matangi informed him that she was an untouchable and as such it was decreed that water from the well was to be treated as polluted by the high caste. Ananda silently proclaimed his protest against casteism by quenching his thirst from Mathangi. This incident changes Mathangi's entire outlook on life. She was spiritually - infatuated by Ananda and decided to follow him. This was the beginning of her journey to find herself and realise identity. She left behind the bondage imposed by society and becomes a Buddhist nun. Although the king objected the entry of an untouchable girl in the sangha, he is finally convinced by the blessed one.

The same legend was approached by R.N. Tagore with different dimension which eventually led to the publication of his song-drama *Chandalika* in 1938. This legend was actually from *Sardula Karma Avadan*. Adapted from Rajendralal Mitra's *The Sanskrit Buddhist Literature of Nepal* (1892), Tagore skilfully fused the psychological

dilemma of Prakriti against the backdrop of Indian nationalism. The Buddhist monk Ananda, an ardent disciple of Lord Budha approached towards a well in a remote village. By seeing a girl standing near the well, he asked for water from Prakriti, a young untouchable girl (chandalini). She serves him water from her pitcher and infatuates with him at the first sight. The daring act of taking water from her pitcher by the monk kindled a new sense of acceptance and confidence in her inner soul. She was deeply impressed by him and wanted him to be her lover. Maya, the mother of Prakriti cast a magic spell on Anada to be the lover of her daughter. When Anada realised about the magic spell, he deeply regretted and prayed to Budha out of shame. Finally, Prakriti realised her inner self and decided to follow the lines of Buddhist ideology.

Both Asan and Tagore consciously worked on the same theme and resisted the Brahmanical constructions of caste system by valorising universal humanism through an intense conflict between marginality and spirituality. Represented by the marginalised society, the oppressed Matangi and Prakriti were totally unaware of the spiritual supremacy of Lord Buddha over the Brahmanical Hinduism. Ananda's magical words- "Give me water" (Tagore, 148) addressed to the downtrodden girl, significantly negate the imposed notion of being an outcaste. Following the existing rules of society, both the girls were initially reluctant to offer water. The 'water- act' presents the untouchables 's liberation from the unjust bondage of mental slavery of the customary prison of marginality.

The 'water- act' presents the untouchables 's liberation from the unjust bondage of mental slavery of the customary prison of marginality. Heavily loaded with religious connotations, the water, one among the 'panchaboothas', symbolizes a new life or represents a kind of spiritual rejuvenation. The water -act electrified them and both turned out to be 'empowered full of vitality, exuberance and revolt. Tagore's construction of Maya, the mother of Prakriti set represented 'the confined identity of oppression' by saying "You were born a slave. It is the writ of Destiny, who can undo it?(158)?.Liberating themselves from the passivity and victimhood, they decided to follow Ananda in different ways. Matangi's act of journey and Prakriti's act of dance can be seen as diverse ways of articulating their awakened souls. They proclaimed themselves as new subjectivities of womanhood by emancipating their souls from the shackles of social ostracism and untouchability.

The philosophy of Asan has an exceptional capacity to delve deep into human psyche and to make powerful revelations of its hidden motivations and enigmatic compulsions. Asan's ideology is a harmonious blending of the eastern and western philosophies with a liberal outlook. One stanza from Chandalabikshuki which epitomizes his philosophy of universal love is cited here:

"The world rises from love  
And attains progress with love  
Love is itself the power of the world  
Love brings happiness to all;  
Love is life itself, sir,  
And Love's absence is death".(43)

Love eventually turned out to be a political subject for both of them. The power of female sexuality and the temptations were finally declined by the monk. The carnal

desires of Prakriti were overpowered by the graceful Ananda without debasing her lust. But both of these writers projected 'the politics of love' in their own ways. Caste as a synonym for the manifestation of one's egotism, Asan envisioned love as the creative and motivating force as the source of ultimate happiness. The notion of caste is to be destroyed in order to attain human progress and the unity of people. Being a pacifist, Asan tried to enlighten the common mass and inculcate new values like universal love, compassion for fellow- creatures, tolerance and brotherhood. He was attracted by the universalism and egalitarianism of Buddhism and the Buddha's revolt against Brahmanical theology. Asan believed that universal brotherhood could be achieved through peaceful enlightenment by Lord Buddha. Asan wanted to democratize the society from within through the critique of caste Hinduism. Asan implied that buddhist philosophy could only ensure an indigeneous democracy for women, outcastes, and royalty alike. Asan recognized the tenets of liberty, equality fraternity are requirements of religion because these three are fundamentals of social life and the desired goals of Buddhist philosophy. John Wilson, in his celebrated work, *Indian Caste vol.1* observes, "Buddhism in its most important social aspect was a reaction against caste, the tyranny of which multitudes had begun to feel to be unbearable.....".(278).

Tagore also had an intense reverence towards the teaching of Budhism. His father went to Srilanka and was greatly influenced by Budhism. His brother Rajendralal Mitra engrossed in the budhist literatures from Nepal. Subsequently, Tagore developed deep sentiments towards the ideological teaching propounded by Budha. His literary works Natir Pooja, Malini, Abhisar Chandalika, Shyama and Srimati had profound influence of Budhist ideologies. Tagore realised the spiritual benevolence of this religion. In *Chandalika*, Prakriti explores the spiritual quest of 'Mukti' (liberation). Budhism stands for universal harmony rooted in universal love. Both Mtangi and Prakriti embraced Budhism as a spiritual source of redemption. Budhist teachings treat every human being as unique and mutual respect should be the cornerstone of human relations. Prakriti and Matangi are freed of their carnal desires and decided to be the part of 'idealistic egalitarian society which was idealised by the teachings of Lord Budha.

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## TRANSNATIONAL IDENTITY AND PROBLEM OF BELONGINGNESS: READING SALMAN RUSHDIE'S *THE GOLDEN HOUSE*

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**Abstract:** *Owing to variegated socio-cultural, economic and political developments, sustaining life as a single nation and at a particular location turn out problematic. Given migrancy and transnational habitation being the order of the day, people frequently change their location. As such they come into terms with various cultures, especially those of the host and native country. Indeed, it is at a threshold or "liminal" zone, containing both the past and present that the transnational settlers continue life in spite of the displacement they experience. This is somehow missing from the life of certain characters in Salman Rushdie's *The Golden House*, and it comes down heavily upon them. Their subjection to "either/or" dichotomy proves disastrous. The paper intends to study how total disavowal of the past impacts identity in transnational setting, and how it goes against the ideology of Rushdie, who has been a votary of pluralism, multiculturalism, and inclusiveness.*

**Key Words:** *Nation, transnational identity, liminality, migration, multiculturalism, belongingness.*

With the advancement of time, the prospect of living within the set limits of nation and land of origin becomes impossible. Be it in respect of improved science and technology or socio-cultural, political and economic factors or the mind set of having better livelihood other than the place of one's birth, crossing boundaries and settling elsewhere is not an unusual development. Owing to this, the idea of many nations and locations characterizes much of the condition of people than it had been earlier. Appadurai notes that "we need to think ourselves beyond the nation [and recognize] postnational social norms" (411).

Transnational settlement is largely a voluntary act of people, who assume that it would inculcate better life opportunities that are hardly possible in the home country. However, it is also true that transnational settlement, albeit the assumed prospect of better opportunities, warrants assimilation and this is something that helps sustain life. Throwing light on this aspect, Joshi says, "The New World offers professional opportunity and financial betterment but also insists on assimilation and acculturation, a rejection of old habits, traditions and conditioning, and a merging with the culture of the new context" (84). The observation emphasizes upon adaptation and adjustment on the part of the settlers failing which they might face utmost difficulty in continuing life. Of course, "rejection of old habits, traditions and conditioning" is not as easy as it is assumed. Though settled elsewhere, the concerned individuals are not completely free of the memory of the past and the home country left behind. Their voluntary act of settlement and reminiscence of the country of origin situates them at a complex zone. In this regard, Garrett says, "Even when the move is voluntary, it tends to complicate the relationships these migrants have with their country of origin and settlement; the

experience changes profoundly the way migrants think about themselves, their family and their country” (1).

In fact, transnationalism is a mode of migration that helps to understand the latter in the context of globalization and free market economy. Since the early 1990s, migration literature starts engaging transnational migration and transnationalism as new ways of understanding migration practices. In transnational setting, migrants avail liberal attitude and succeed in establishing link between their home country and the country of settlement. In this context, Schiller et al., say that transnational migration is a “process by which immigrants forge and sustain simultaneous multi-stranded social relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement” (48). The observation makes it clear that transnational migration is not a one way process that prefers a given culture at the expense of the other. Contrary to this, a sound relation between “societies of origin and settlement” is of greater necessity provided the sustenance of the transnational settlers.

With transnational migration, border-crossing and ever shifting tendency of people, the idea of the so called fixed locality changes its conventionally acclaimed meaning. In the midst of such developments, all localities turn out “porous and open-ended, overlap with other such contexts” (Eagleton 48). As such the nationalists’ concerns over the nation or the self-assuring tendency of the anti-national agencies do not find transnational migration as a solid ground to have their practice. Moreover, stringent binary oppositions especially those connected to centre/periphery, dominant/marginalized etc. also experience much challenge in view of transnational migration. The subversive nature of migrancy goes a long way in addressing the disquieting practices of binary oppositions characterizing the imperial and nationalists’ concerns. To say the least, doubling, resistance, ambivalence and dissimulations as embedded in transnational migration bear every possibility of subverting cultural norms both of home and host countries and thus facilitate easeful stay for the concerned individuals.

Salman Rushdie is very much responsive to transnational migration; something that characterizes his own life as well. Connected as he is to different countries, both geographically and culturally, like India, Pakistan, the Great Britain and the US, his life itself validates transnational location marking people worldwide. For this, everything changes including the idea of identity. In conventional parlance, identity and its formation owe much to the country one hails from. The familiar cultural attributes leave their imprints on the life and identity of people, and a kind of essentialist and exclusive conditioning goes to their coffers. This composite fabric of identity loses its ground in transnational setting that takes upon greater ambiguity and plurality in the midst of different cultural practices. Rushdie, in his essay on “Imaginary Homelands”, observes: “Our identity is at once plural and partial. Sometimes we feel that we straddle two cultures; at other times, that we fall between two stools. But however ambiguous and shifting this ground may be, it is not an infertile territory... to occupy” (15). Recognizing his cultural shift and displacement, Rushdie relishes in the development as it broadens the outlook of people keeping at bay petty nationalist or sub-nationalist concerns. As identity turns out plural and partial, the sense of belongingness turns out problematic. Given the subjection to two or more cultural allegiance, transnational

settlers constantly bother about whether they belong to the culture of home country or that of the host country.

If the transnational settlers pursue the idea that they belong to the country of settlement, and their identity would be framed in consonant with the cultural behavior of that country, they are not certain at deserving reception in the host country. They are always looked upon as outsiders despite greater assimilation they make. Second, total allegiance to the culture of adoption is not possible because the culture of home country keeps haunting the overseas settlers all the time. It is not the fact that better life opportunities at transnational location would completely take away the essential self that harps upon the distinctive cultural contours of the home country. This is also ironical in the sense that in spite of palpable bonhomie with the home country, transnational settlers cannot come back. Because of the absence for longer span of time, most of the things would turn out unfamiliar, and they might feel strange in their own home country. In this context, Rushdie's observation, to quote from "Imaginary Homelands", is worth mentioning:

"It may be that writers in my position, exiles or emigrants or expatriates, are haunted by some sense of loss, some urge to reclaim, to look back, even at the risk of being mutated into pillars of salt. But if we do look back, we must also do so in the knowledge – which gives rise to profound uncertainties – that our physical alienation from India almost inevitably means that we will not be capable of reclaiming precisely the thing that was lost; that we will, in short, create fictions, not actual cities or villages, but invisible ones, imaginary homelands, Indias of the mind" (10).

So many things come into limelight in connection with what Rushdie has observed regarding the condition of the emigrants or transnational settlers. Despite comparatively better life opportunities, transnational settlers experience the sense of loss as they cannot come back to the home country. Any attempt at making good the loss is not possible in literal sense. But it is through virtual or imaginative mode that the loss could be addressed, and the process makes things subject to re-definition and re-interpretation. Indeed, they turn out more open-ended putting into scanner the originary, monolithic, and essentialist conditioning of the nation and related issues like identity, race, gender, and community.

There is no disavowal of the fact that the sense of belongingness in transnational setting is problematic, and it continues as long as the approach goes along either/or matrix. Any consideration into exclusive terms poses much problem impacting the continuation of life. To address the problem, the idea of liminality may be taken recourse to, especially the way Homi K. Bhabha postulates it in cultural discourse. As liminality, derived from Latin *limen*, means a threshold zone, there is the dismantling of exclusiveness or hierarchical position a given culture would like to sustain otherwise. Indeed, liminality inculcates an intervening space that facilitates co-existence of two or more cultures as "this interstitial passage between fixed identifications opens up the possibility of a cultural hybridity that entertains difference without an assumed or imposed hierarchy" (Bhabha 5). The liminal space is always transitory that provides decent environment for hybridity, ambiguity, indeterminacy, and subversive potentiality of various cultural practices.

To undo the problem of belongingness in transnational setting, liminality becomes helpful as it maintains greater inclusiveness and easy access to multiculturalism. Liminality champions the inclusion of both cultures, i.e. of home and host country, in which the problem of belongingness could reduce considerably provided the breakdown of either/or conditioning. Keeping this in mind, the present paper takes upon Salman Rushdie's *The Golden House* (2017), and attempts to find out whether transnational identity formation harps upon liminality, and interstitial stage. In liminal space, there is no disavowal of or preference for a given culture. In fact, it is in consonant with all accessible culture that a hybrid and indeterminate conditioning comes up in which the problem of belongingness, considered at exclusive level, attains some sort of conceivable solution. But the characters in *The Golden House* maintain their transnational identity with total disregard at the past. They do not like the idea that they actually belong to home country, not New York. But this mindset does not augur well and pays heavily in their life.

Salman Rushdie's *The Golden House* recounts the arrival of a mafia don by the name of Nero Golden in New York City along with his three sons – Petya, Apu and D Golden, abridged forms of Petronius, Lucius Apuleis, and Dionysus. As they come from Mumbai, India, there is no doubt that their name does not correspond to the home country. That they are adopted names is what comes to notice as Nero, Petronius, Lucius Apuleis have Roman affiliations, and Dionysus does have that of Greek. Of course, Dionysus is known as Bacchus in Roman mythology. Adoption of these Western classical names give a completely new identity in the land of settlement, and with this identity they continue the rest of life.

The arrival of the Golden in New York is a testimony to the emerging trend in transnational migration that opts for the US instead of metropolis related to the erstwhile imperialists as “in many postcolonial novels today, the country of destination to which the protagonist moves is no longer, as it used to be, the old colonial metropolis (London or Paris), but the new power, the United States” (Mardorossian 19). There is no doubt that the American cosmopolitan culture largely receives people coming from different parts of the globe. Apart from the Golden family, Vasilisa, Rene Unterlindon, the narrator of the novel, his partner Suchitra, and Somali artist Ubah Tuur are also transnational settlers staying in New York. Like the Golden, they lead life in the country of settlement without facing much difficulty as such. Of course, their transnational identity is not as wide-ranging as that of the Golden. But their stay in the city imparts much credibility to the American culture especially the reception it accords to the foreign settlers.

In Rushdie's eye, the cosmopolitan culture of the US cuts a contrasting image when it takes upon issues like gender identity. Nero Golden's youngest son, D Golden is perhaps the most pathetic and disturbed of all the three sons. In addition to taking up a transnational identity by adopting the name of Dionysus, he faces another problem of identity in terms of gender. As he is a transvestite, and relishes in feminine mannerism, he finds utmost difficulty in making adjustment provided the society he confronts with. With the passage of time, his identity becomes very much problematic. The narrator says, “[He] – no! – Now it had become appropriate to change her pronouns and say simply she, her, herself!” (*The Golden House* 266) The change of gender identity is not easier a development to grapple with; it does not matter whether the concerned is in

cosmopolitan set up. D Golden does have firm faith in the US culture and thinks that he would be received in the changed look. So, he visits the “2-Bridge girls’ club” (*The Golden House* 254) and strives to manage a space meant for him. This naïve expectation meets a dead end as the club authority calls D’s friend Riya to stop him coming to the club. The entry of a transgender is not received well as the rest of the girl members find their private space being usurped and dismantled.

D Golden’s gender identity in transnational setting faces crisis both in public and personal life. Outright rejection at the 2-Bridge girls’ club and lackadaisical attitude shown at own home come down heavily upon him and the problem of belongingness becomes very much acute. He is born as male, but he cannot ignore feminine qualities. If he wants to live as female, the society does not accept the fact. His earnest desire to manage a space with the blessing of transnational culture also turns out an abject failure. To continue life, he needs to belong to something or some agency, which is not readily accessible. Owing to all this, he takes away life. In the suicide note, he mentions, “It isn’t because of the difficulties of my own life that I do this. It’s because there’s something wrong with the world which makes it unbearable to me. I can’t put my finger on it, but the world of human beings doesn’t function well” (*The Golden House* 267).

The way Nero Golden and his children maintain transnational identity with erasing the past and history brings much challenge to their life. Indeed, their intention is to impart much purity to their identity at the expense of the home country. It is true that the past of Nero Golden is full of disappointment, which is a consequence of his involvement with the anti-social agencies and untimely death of his wife in the deadly 26/11 terror attack on the Taj Hotel in Mumbai. Nero Golden’s words like “Do not tell them the name of the place we left. Never speak it. Not the street, not the city, not the country. I do not want to hear those names again” (*The Golden House* 8), or Apu’s “This is the city (Mumbai) I stopped loving” (*The Golden House* 230) relate their dissent at the home country. Keeping the past identity at unbounded distance, they adopt transnational identity taking recourse to Graeco-Roman classical names. Their transnational identity is sought to be an essentialist and exclusive formulation from which the past is intentionally left out.

By erasing the past, the Goldens intend to attach purity to their transnational identity and inherit the idea that they uncompromisingly belong to New York and its distinctive culture. Any prospect of belonging to the past is beyond their imagination. However, this unidimensional approach to the sense of belongingness in transnational set up brings out lots of problem. They might have forgotten the idea that transnational identity warrants cross-cultural conditioning that comes down heavily upon exclusiveness and purity. If we regard “cross-culturality as the potential termination point of an apparently endless human history of conquest and annihilation justified by the myth of group ‘purity’” (Ashcroft et al., 35), the Goldens’ over-emphasis upon a purely transnational identity and belongingness cuts a contrasting image, and as such all sorts of problems.

With utter disregard at the past and history, and in pursuant with the notion that they do not belong to the home country, the Goldens seem to impart purity to their transnational identity. That they are content with the life in New York bearing an



exclusive identity is what comes to observation. This is partially acceptable since their life in New York is not happy at all, and their pathetic end raises question on adaptability and sustenance of the New York culture itself. Petya's agoraphobia, Apu's too much involvement in the life of the city, and D's "enough secret longings for his future" (*The Golden House* 241) are some of the drawbacks that do not find palpable solution in their transnational settlement. The romantic notion of their transnational identity does not augur well as far as continuation of life with dignity and less difficulty is concerned.

There is an irony in regard to the purity that the Goldens bestow upon their transnational identity and belongingness. Renunciation of cross-cultural phenomenon and interstitial stage points out their preference for a single cultural matrix, and here it is that of New York. But our identity, especially in transnational setting, is not a clear-cut idea. Subject to various cultural influences, most eminently that of the home and host country, transnational identity takes up its provisional nature, and the sense of belongingness moves along the same line. It is Riya, who is in charge of the Museum of Identity, understands identity from this angle saying, "The truth is that our identities are unclear to us and maybe it's better that they remain that way, that the self goes on being a jumble and a mess, contradictory and irreconcilable" (*The Golden House* 290). The "contradictory and irreconcilable" aspect of the self, which is inseparably related to identity, is largely inclusive in nature facilitating sustenance and longevity of the concerned. But the Goldens seem to be missing this angle because of their conformity to New York culture, and erasing the past completely.

The day the Goldens arrive in New York taking new identity is memorable in the sense that it opens up a new phase in their life, albeit for the worst. The new phase presents them in translated form as they take up new name and identity in new set up. In fact, transnational migration is also translational in spirit and practice, and Rushdie is very much responsive to the development characterizing human condition in present context. It is because of wide-ranging movement of people across different geographical and cultural locations that they get translated and newer identities come along. Acknowledging this, the narrator of Rushdie's *Shame* (1995) rightly calls himself "a translated man" (29), and carries that identity throughout his life. Rushdie is of high regard for translation as it opens up new space for inclusion, and exclusion as well. If something new is to come up, translation is a great necessity. In his "Imaginary Homelands", Rushdie says, "Having been borne across the world, we are translated men. It is normally supposed that something always gets lost in translation; I cling, obstinately, to the notion that something can also be gained" (17).

If we apply Rushdie's idea "that something can also be gained" in translation to the life of the Goldens, the matter becomes problematic. It is a big question whether the Goldens have gained something in connection with transnational identity and belongingness or their translated position. There remains no easy answer to offer in this matter. On the one hand, their new identity and translated self gives some sort of respite from the past, and provides new space to concentrate upon at present moment. But this new incarnation does not yield the desired result; rather it proves disastrous in their life. Their complete disavowal of the past and history becomes essentialist in nature, and they hardly get solace and order in the transnational setting. It is none other than Suchitra, partner of the narrator, Rene, who talks about the objectionable aspect of

the Goldens in the following words: “These deracinated rich people (Goldens) rejecting their history and culture and name... What kind of people are they, denying their race? I don’t care if you live in the land of your fathers or not, I’m not proposing some sort of anti-immigration nativist thing, but to pretend it doesn’t exist, that you never existed there, that it’s nothing to you and you’re nothing to it, that makes me feel they’re agreeing to be, in a way, dead” (*The Golden House* 180).

Translation does not mean outright rejection of one thing or the other. Instead it is out of the constituents that translation gets its form; though modification and change come up in the process. Moreover, translation cannot do away with the essence of things and agencies. With the Goldens taking up new name, identity and belongingness in New York, they appear as translated people as they actually come from Mumbai. But their resolve to undo the past makes the idea of translation problematic, and it fails them to sustain life. Their lack of understanding about the reciprocal nature of the past and present with their accompanying culture incurs lacuna in translated self for which they face unbounded challenge in continuing transnational identity and belongingness.

When Bhabha talks about the “interstitial passage” (5), he recognizes the ideas of hybridity, indeterminacy, difference and ambivalence characterizing culture placed at the space. In this context, cultural purity is an obsolete idea, and everything remains in a jumble, in a mess. But the interstitial or liminal space becomes a reality when different cultures are at free play irrespective of the time and geographical location they hail from. The space occupied by the Golden family in New York does not seem to have as that of liminality as desirable in transnational setting. There is no doubt that the culture in New York inhabits multiplicity and heterogeneity, and the cosmopolitan back up accords easy access to each of the cultural groups. However, what characterizes the life of the immigrants is their subjection to both the culture of the host and home country. It is in combination of the two distinctive cultural poles that a kind of hybrid and ambivalent identity comes into effect. Keeping this vital truth aside, the Goldens have tried to give purity to their transnational identity by undoing or ruling out the past they actually belong to. As such they fail to have liminality or interstitial stage despite the contentment they show in new identity and position.

The Goldens’ obsession with new identity and belongingness in their absolutism inculcates polarities back in their existence, and this is opposed to liminality. In transnational setting, it is liminality that facilitates easy living for the people. Bhabha rightly says that the “liminal space, in-between the designations of identity, becomes the process of symbolic interaction, the connective tissue that constructs the difference between upper and lower, black and white. The hither and thither of the stairwell, the temporal movement and passage that it allows, prevents identities at either end of it from settling into primordial polarities” (5). The Goldens have the conviction that they would continue life with primordial identification based on polarities paying no heed to the option of the past and its history. Looking at the sad end of the Golden family members, it comes to mind that their life might have taken different turn, had they inherited the sense of belonging to the past and the culture of the home country.

Except the Goldens, the rest of the people including Rene, Riya and Suchitra recognize plurality and multiplicity in transnational setting. That the transnational migrants do not belong to just one culture or one identity at the expense of the other is what comes to

their understanding. Regarding this, Riya says, “I can define myself in many different ways. This is what I am not: I am not one thing. I contain multitudes. Do I contradict myself? Very well, I contradict myself. To be plural, to be multiform, is a singular thing, rich, unusual, and myself” (*The Golden House* 286). This is the way people in transnational set up should take things for granted instead of harping upon a single, dominant and essentialist identity. The Golden’s identity and sense of belongingness equally relate to the New York culture and that of their home country. In combination of these two distinctive cultural ambiances they could have continued life. Openness to different cultural influences builds up the ground for liminality or ambiguity in which the question of preferring one to the other does not have so much resonance. Indeed, the question of framing identity in respect of a single and dominant cultural affiliation loses its edge in liminal space.

Rene understands the importance of liminality in transnational migration very well when he says to D Golden, “If you choose to be an American and become a citizen you don’t have to give up everything about who you were before. You yourself became an American but when you are challenged you say that you feel foreign so you have kept your foreign part in some way intact” (*The Golden House* 253). Rene’s suggestion to D Golden is, undoubtedly, a measure to address the difficulty the latter faces in his gender identity. But this is not simply connected to gender identity; rather the condition of the transnational migrants as well. By not giving up the “foreign part”, Rene recognizes the presence of the past and history embedded in the life of the transnational migrants. Whatever identity and recognition transnational settlers take up, there is no disavowal of their essence that is constituted with the culture of the home country. It is true that the darker phase of the past makes the Golden indifferent to the home country, and hence their identity and sense of belongingness completely owe to the American culture. In fact, this is not the proper way as their new incarnation negates the presence of the past despite its lasting impact upon their life.

Transnational settlers are always prone to cross-cultural and multicultural practices, and this would provide sound ground for sustenance of identity and recognition. Of course, the identity and recognition are provisional in spirit because of cultural displacement they experience. In his essay on “Imaginary Homelands”, Rushdie mentions that cultural displacement leads writers “to accept the provisional nature of all truths, all certainties” (14). Maintaining provisional stance is a necessity as in multicultural set up adherence to the originary and essentialist formulation is not possible. For the sake of easy living in transnational setting, what is needed is to maintain provisional approach to different cultural influences. In the name of identity and belongingness, the Golden do not seem to have recognized their provisional or liminal nature. Their failure in inculcating this value operates in according fixity to their self along the culture of adoption. But in transnational set up, placing issues including identity and belongingness at fixed location is not possible, and breaking down the requisite of multicultural practices proves fatal in the life of the Golden. In Rushdie’s *The Moor’s Last Sigh* (1996), the narrator assigns much resonance to transnational and multicultural practice categorizing it as the “most profound of our needs, to our need for flowing together, for putting an end to frontiers, for the dropping of the boundaries of the self” (433). In transnational setting, identity and belongingness are not singular, but plural and multiple. The constituents of the Golden’s identity

relate to both the US and Indian culture, and their sense of belongingness also corresponds to this development.

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## ‘MRINAL’ THE SPIRITUALLY EMANCIPATED WOMAN IN TAGORE’S “THE WIFE’S LETTER”

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***Abstract:** Tagore has always been a humanist, modernist and reformer, especially of women of Bengali society. His ideas on universal humanism had its roots in Indian Upanishad philosophy. He has an amazing skill of exploring into the minds of women; their aspirations, pains and perspectives were often delineated with fine craftsmanship. In his writings he portrayed women empowered with spiritual energy, unyielding to the then prevailing social and religious evils, trying to spread their spiritual radiance beyond the confines of the four walls of the household. The character ‘Mrinal’ in the short story ‘The Wife’s Letter’ is one such. The present paper explores the story in a spiritual perspective, the emergence of a ‘new woman’, radiating with the understanding of spiritual self.*

***Key Words:** spiritual, reform, modern, new woman.*

Tagore’s short stories always reflect the social condition of Bengal. Being a progressive writer, he has innovated with form and theme. “The Wife’s Letter” as the name says is written in epistolary form. The 19C Bengali society faced many changes, the western education brought in many reformations; religious, social and political as well. The English educated Bengali men thought of adapting women to their standards, girls were also given education but it cannot be said that it tremendously improved the lot of the women. Still women were considered as the upholders of Indian tradition and culture. Reformation in the society is the result of its emergence in the minds of the people and later in the society. Mostly women of upper-class societies got educated; they appeared in public, but all with the support of the male members of the family. As a result, patriarchy victimised women. The Tagores’ were the harbingers of many of the reforms in Bengali society from the time of Dwarkanath Tagore (Rabindranath Tagore’s grandfather), his wife Digambari Devi attended parties along with her husband; his elder sister Rasibilasi Devi was educated enough to read. Debendranath Tagore (Rabindranath Tagore’s father), was a social and religious reformer and acted as the president of BrahmaSamaj and later Rabindranath Tagore himself adored this position. But the Tagore family never severed its ties with the Hindu culture, and Upanishad philosophy was always a matter of close study. The sons and daughters of the family got married to Hindu households. It must be noted that Tagore’s daughters got married at fairly young age. Rabindranath Tagore’s sister-in-law Jnanadanandi travelled with her husband outside Kolkata to Mumbai and later to England. As a part of the reformation process in Bengal, Tagore’s son married a childhood widow Pratima Devi. It could be said that the reforms were limited to the upper-class women. In 1914 the Amrita Bazaar Patrika reported the suicide of Snehalatha a young woman in her apparent attempt to spare her dad from the burden of gathering dowry for her wedding. Snehalatha had set herself on fire. Tagore was stirred to write a story based on this incident and the outcome was ‘The Wife’s Letter’.

What makes Tagore a great writer is his ability to transcend all limitations of mind and body and to transmigrate in to the consciousness of the women and to delineate their pain and aspirations empathetically. Tagore portrays how women are suppressed in a

male dominated society. With the usual tinge of spiritual philosophy makes his character strong and unyielding to patriarchal atrocities. Mrinal the village girl of about twelve beautiful and intelligent got married to an upper class Zamidar family in Calcutta town. After fifteen years she writes a letter to her husband on her way to pilgrimage to Puri. The letter contains all her experiences in her in laws house. She reveals that in a patriarchal society a woman with intelligence is dangerous and hence least valued. "It did not take long for you forget that I had beauty-but you were forced to remember at each step that I had brains"(Tagore, Rabindranath, Selected Short Stories, Oxford University Press, New Delhi 2000 pp.207). For a woman to be intelligent is a taboo. Mrinal mother always feared her daughter's cleverness. Her love for the cows at the in laws house made her an object of mockery, her lineage was questioned. During the fifteen years of their married life her husband never recognised that she is a poet. Mrinal gave birth to a dead baby girl, she was too depressed by the baby's death; she could only undergo the pain of motherhood but not its joy or freedom. The atmosphere of the ladies' quarter upset the doctor who came to examine Mrinal. It revealed how women were treated within domestic walls. Dirt and stealth adored the walls. Fresh air hardly entered and it felt all the same as cattle shed. If death had pulled her she would have happy moved on with it and every "Bengali woman speaks of dying in every second utterance."(Ibid pp.209) Such was the negligence towards the women in a patriarchal family. But Mrinal is not a kind that takes refuge in death. Her every day mundane life was interrupted by the arrival of Bindu; the younger sister of Mrinal's elder sister in law, the girl had been driven out of the house by her cousins after her mother's death. Her arrival displeased all, even her sister pretended to neglect her as tough to please her husband's family. "Bindu was put to lot of work at the most menial of household chores. She yielded much labour but cost very little."(Ibid pp.201) Mrinal could not bear the injustice and kept on taking care of Bindu which displeased her husband and the rest in the house. An undefined bond developed between the two. Bindu was obsessed with Mrinal's beauty. The depth of her love at times made Mrinal uncomfortable, yet she loved this poor girl. But this, in Mrinal's words, "that love made me glimpse a true image of myself, one that I had never seen before. This was the image of my free self."(pp.211). As per the dictates of the patriarchy Bindu's marriage gets fixed, but by hook and crook with a madman. So much was her suffering that Bindu had to run away from her husband's house again seeking the refuge of Mrinal's family, but forced to go back as they say "however fraudulent the marriage has been, after all he is a man and her husband now" (ibid.pp.213)

Tagore sarcastically remarks that "we don't have hearts, but we have scriptures too" (ibid.pp.213); which proclaim that is only through the devotion and service to one's husband a woman could attain salvation. Often stories of supreme wifely devotions were quoted; "how a wife carried her leprosy stricken wife to a whore's house."(ibid.P. 215) Bindu had to return to her in laws house only to run away again and to be caught and caged. Mrinal was determined to protect her. In the disguise of pilgrimage to Puri she makes a plot with the help of Sharat her younger brother to rescue Bindu. But Sharat comes to her with the sad news of Bindu's fatal suicide, she had burnt herself. Mrinal's faith in the institution of family is shattered. What hurt her more was the family and society's indifference towards the entire incident saying that "It's now the

fashion for girls to set their sari's on fire and kill themselves"(ibid.pp.217). Reacting to her husband's scornful remark, "this is all play-acting."(ibid) Mrinal asks, "That may be so. But one should reflect why this play-acting takes its toll only on the sari's of Bengali women, not on the dhoti's of brave Bengali gentlemen"(ibid).

Mrinal moves to Puri in disguise of pilgrimage and writes to her husband, "I did not suffer in your household as suffering is commonly understood. In your house there is no lack of food or clothes." (ibid.pp. 217). It was a kind of intellectual and emotional abandonment that she suffered in her in laws house which suffocated her. Mrinal takes a crucial decision, she writes, "But I will never again return to your house at number 27, Makhan Baral Lane. I have seen Bindu. I have learnt what it means to be a woman in this domestic world. I need no more of it."(ibid.pp.217). "Mrinal's intelligent comprehension of Bindu's tragedy of dependence becomes Tagore's agency for critiquing the patriarchal mind set."(Lal, Malashri, "Tagore, Imaging the 'Other': Reflections on The Wife's Letter & Kabuliwala", Asian and African Studies, XIV.1,2010, pp.4). Tagore doesn't say anything about Mrinal's future, the reader is left to assume. In those days well-born women hardly had chances of making choices of their own life, of living alone, or choosing a place to live or any choice of falling in love with another man. Here in comes Tagore's philosophical trope; Mrinal realises that she "have a different relation as well with the world and the lord of the world" (ibid.pp. 205). And this realisation freed her from all fears; neither death nor alienation could appal her. She could easily transcend the four walls of women's quarter and the trivial rules of everyday commercial life, the set rules and regulations and merge in the ultimate joy of universe. She had followed the path of spiritual revolt; as she says that she has no intention to die. But like Mira Bai who was abandoned by everyone still had faith in her Lord and clutching on to him she had lived. Mrinal too decides to live with the Lord as her supreme source of attachment; is made clear as the letter ends saying; "Bereft of the shelter of your family's feet."(ibid.pp.218). Mrinal is a character born out of Tagore's intense sense of empathy as well as his idea of spiritual empowerment.

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# THE 'FOURTH WAY' OF GURDJIEFF IN THE LIGHT OF ZEN BUDDHISM

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**Abstract:** *The integration of physical, emotional and mental dimensions is a prerequisite to have the fine balance that levitates man from the ordinary state to a higher state of consciousness. George Gurdjieff identifies these three paths for man's cultivation and further points out that there is a Fourth Way that can actually lead to the evolution of a new man. However, Zen does not identify with any of the 'ways' introduced by varying traditions of spirituality but includes them all in itself. Zen is truly transcendental. It is the transcendence that brings the integration of Self and the Fourth Way is the transcendence achieved through integration. Zen is a direct and immediate "viewing of one's own nature" that is equivalent to the realization of eternal Buddha nature or satori. It is a sudden flash of insight into the mysteries. Moreover, much like the Fourth Way, it requires a rigorous training to overcome physical, emotional and intellectual pitfalls on the way to enlightenment.*

**Key Words:** *Zen, Fourth Way, Transcendence, Buddha Nature, Satori*

## Introduction

The modernity along with its innumerable benefits has successfully solved many a problem that undermined human existence. The threat often came in form of hunger, disease, violence and their several variants. But in recent years, the scientific developments have endeavored to check these problems considerably and strengthened the spirit of *eros* or will to live. It is often applauded as the triumph of reason which serves as the substratum of all scientific advancements. It seems that *sapere aude*, the catch phrase of the Enlightenment popularized by Emmanuel Kant, has finally delivered the desired result. But it also has a dark side to it. Needless to say, the modernity also presented bigger problems for human beings. These are often reflected in the indiscriminate consumerism, the commodification of life, quantification of values, death of God, fragmentation of Self and apparent feeling of a loss of sense of worth and meaning in human existence. An alienation and disenchantment from life is felt intensely by conscientious beings. The recent philosophers often cry out about "existential crisis" that looms large on the serene feelings of being at home. These problems have severely affected the well-being of modern humans and therefore emerged as a greater concern for us all. But what could be the possible solution to this larger problem that has taken the humanity in its grip. We are, in some strange manner, constantly conscious of our mortality in many ways. This disenchantment is also reflected in the flux of Western intellectual development. The observation of Alan Watts in the preface of his famous book *The Way of Zen* is important in this regard,

Western thought has changed so rapidly in this century that we are in a state of considerable confusion. Not only are there serious difficulties of communication between the intellectual and the general public, but the course of our thinking and of our very history has seriously undermined the common-sense assumptions which lie at the roots of our social conventions and institutions. Familiar concepts of space, time and motion, of nature and natural law, of history and social change, and of human personality itself have dissolved, and we find ourselves adrift

without landmarks in a universe which more and more resembles the Buddhist principle of the “Great Void.” (1989:01)

The challenge for the contemporary man is to make sense of his existence and find a meaning in it. Man, since time immemorial, has tried to work a way to find significance in his existence through religion, philosophy, art, intellectual pursuit and selfless service to the mankind. But underneath all these efforts, there is an attempt, conscious or unconscious, to know oneself and thereby give meaning to our existence. It is surely a process of gnosis or knowledge of Being and various spiritual traditions have tried to attain the same in their own way. Needless to say, it is the only panacea that can dissolve the woes and worries of human beings and restore our well-being. The spiritual awakening is the way to deal with the growing anxiety and existential crisis of man. It will begin by bringing a fine balance and harmony to the Self.

The “*Fourth Way*” introduced by George Gurdjieff, a remarkable Russian mystic, and further elaborated by P.D. Ouspensky, a mathematical genius, provides us a way about the remedy of the above-mentioned human conditions that present itself as tormenting “existential crisis.” In the given situation life has become all the more tangled by new and wide-ranging illusions emerging as a result of the advancement of material civilization rendering spiritual awakening or enlightenment increasingly elusive. Human being, living in present times, is almost ready to brush aside its greatest potential of awakening into the mist of some mysterious myth. Gurdjieff, through the *Fourth Way*, has enliven that potential in human beings and offered them a path to walk towards the ultimate truth of life.

Gurdjieff rightly stresses that human beings have lost the fine balance that comes out of an integration of body, emotion and mind. The problem, according to Gurdjieff, is only a reminder of this disharmony and calls for responding to the spiritual quest of man. Carl Gustav Jung, the great psychologist, has also analyzed this human condition and proposed a solution to this problem on the basis of his experiences as a practitioner of psychoanalysis. He emphasizes, interestingly, in “Psychology and the East” not to try to solve these problems but outgrow them.

Now and then it happened in my practice that a patient will grew beyond himself because of unknown potentialities, and this became an experience of prime importance to me. In the meantime, I had learned that all the greatest and most important problems of life are fundamentally insoluble. They must be so, for they express the necessary polarity inherent in every self-regulating system. They can never be solved, but only outgrown. (1978: 15)

The spiritual quest is something that takes us on the path of realization of our ‘true being’ and it is possible only when eternal can be realized in temporal, infinite in the infinitesimal and absolute in the evanescent. For the realization of true being several ways have been discovered so far by various schools. The idea of the *Fourth Way* has many parallels in the spiritual development of mankind. But the Buddhist variant of Zen comes very close to explain the role of the *Fourth Way* in the possible evolution of human consciousness. Zen Buddhism, as explained in the Buddhist *Doctrine of Dependent Origination*, carries the idea of attainment of enlightenment by dispelling the darkness of ignorance which is considered to be the cause of all sufferings. In Buddhist vocabulary it is termed as nirvana (or nibbana in Pali), but Zen Buddhism in

Japan called it satori. Satori is the sudden enlightenment achieved by direct transmission of truth without any verbal or intellectual mediation. This article is an attempt to analyze the relevance of the “*Fourth Way*” in the light of Zen Buddhism.

### **The Fourth Way**

It has been an eternal quest to bring a harmony of body, heart and mind in order to achieve a true integration of Self. The division of the physical, emotional and intellectual creates fragmented beings who lead a disparate life devoid of internal order, considered quintessential to the growth of man. The lack of wholesome harmony is detrimental to the self-actualization and spiritual awakening. The integration of physical, emotional and mental is a prerequisite to have the fine balance that levitates man from the ordinary state to a higher state of consciousness. Generally, one of these aspects have hitherto been emphasized and therefore provides us with three different ways of self-cultivation or self-actualization. But the unidirectional emphasis often led to a lopsided development of the being. Therefore, in order to bring integrity, wholesomeness and harmony, it is imperative to understand the importance of unifying these three ways. George Gurdjieff identifies these three paths for man’s cultivation and further points that there is a *Fourth Way* that can actually lead to the evolution of a new man.

George Gurdjieff studied all possible traditions with utmost sincerity and reverence. He wanted to explore every possible means to pave the path of man’s possible spiritual evolution. The first way is the way of fakirs, the second way is the way of monks and the third way is the way of yogis. The first, second and third ways concerned themselves with physical, emotional and mental dimensions respectively. All these ways are important but not complete in themselves. George Gurdjieff discovered that there is a *Fourth Way* that can liberate man by bringing a harmony of self. Gurdjieff introduced a methodical approach to inform about our true potential and introduced ways to awaken the intelligence that can comprehend the truth by bringing an integration. Jeanne-de-Salzman writes about Gurdjieff’s words of caution: (2010:2)

According to Gurdjieff, the truth can be approached only if all the parts that make up the human being—the thought, the feeling and the body—are touched with the same force and in the particular way appropriate to each of them. Otherwise, development will inevitably be one-sided and, sooner or later, come to a stop. Without an effective understanding of this principle, all work on oneself is certain to deviate from the aim.

The integrated being where all the three physical, emotional and mental work in fine balance can be achieved by following the *Fourth Way*. This brings the question of ‘Being’ at the center-stage. Without comprehending ‘Being’ it is not possible to envisage its possibility. Martin Heidegger considers it to be the most important question in philosophical domain. Heidegger asked through his phenomenological method to disregard the intellectual clutter and try to become conscious of things-in-themselves and let them reveal or manifest to you. The term existence in the existentialism means human way of Being. Being is the centre which evolves with the development of man and it is achieved only through the integration of the three ways, namely physical, emotional and mental. Gurdjieff tried to help us achieve this higher level of Being by expanding one’s consciousness and realizing one’s essence.

P.D. Ouspensky, in his own immutable fashion, has called this effort of bringing about integration of an otherwise fragmented self as ‘creating a moon in oneself’. He explains it in his work *Further Record: Extracts from Meetings (1928-1945)*

We must realize that all this refers to being. What are the features of our being? The chief feature of our being is that we are many, not one. If we want to work on our being, make it correspond better to our aim, we must try to become one. But this is a very far aim. What means to become one? The first step-which is still very far-is to create a permanent centre of gravity. This is what it means to create moon in ourselves. Moon is a permanent centre of gravity in our physical life. If we create a centre of gravity in ourselves we do not need moon. (1986: 81)

### **The Fourt Way in The Light of Zen**

In the whole history of the spiritual development of mankind, Zen has contributed immensely and remains unparalleled in terms of cultivating spontaneity, authenticity, compassion and bringing harmony by transcending all the attachments in the simplest possible manner. Here it is important to note that Zen has a very different approach towards attaining the fine balance in life. Zen is simply the Japanese translation of the Sanskrit word dhyana. The semantic mutation of dhyana from cha'n in China to Zen in Japan is in itself an interesting journey through cultures. It has multiple meanings but most importantly it means bringing an integration of being through the cessation of thoughts. Here, cessation of thoughts has two meanings: one is the actual disappearance of all the thoughts and another is dropping all kinds of attachments to the thoughts. It is just like viewing the white clouds in the open summer sky and realizing that sky remains always untouched by the clouds. It entails the simple and austere acceptance of the eternal reality that everything happens and begins by accepting the way of the nature. Hence, the idea of doer, the centre of ego, disappears and a new dimension of understanding opens. It has been best explained in one of the famous haiku of the celebrated Japanese poet, Matsuo Basho:

Sitting silently, doing nothing,  
Spring comes and  
Grass grows by itself.

It simply emphasizes that the nature will take its course and we can only cooperate with it. The very idea (or attachment to the idea) of doing something runs counter to the fundamentals of Zen Buddhism. Everything happens and the idea of doing is nothing but an egotistical statement of an ignorant. All we need to do is to be present in the moment and make oneself available with sincere receptivity.

Zen has used verbalism only to deepen the silence. Ludwig Wittgenstein has only uttered a Zen *koan*, albeit unknowingly, when he asks us to speak only when we can improve the silence. Zen is anti-intellectual and therefore lays no emphasis on the words, facts, ideas, scriptures theories and their myriad description. These are at best the means to the end called self-actualization. It is more intuitive than intellectual. It is sitting silently in dhyana (what Japanese called *zazen*) and seeing one's true nature which is one and the same as *Buddha-nature*. Alan Watts explains about Zen in his famous work *The Spirit of Zen*:

From the start Zen dispenses with all forms of theorization, doctrinal instruction and lifeless formality; these are treated as the mere symbols of wisdom, and Zen is founded on practice and on an intimate, personal experience of the reality to which most forms of religion and philosophy come no nearer than an intellectual or emotional description. (1958: 16)

The idea is not to create a human mind characterized with nihilistic vacuity, but rather to cultivate a milieu in which the luminous wisdom in all its spontaneity can come to the fore. Zen helps bring the innate and original intelligence to fruition. Zen is the true discipline in enlightenment. It is neither a religion nor a philosophical system. Furthermore, it is not a psychological movement aimed at setting the human psyche free from the fetters of its innumerable bondages. Zen defies all the categorical imperatives in which we can make sense of our world. Much like the *Fourth Way*, Zen is about expanding one's consciousness in such a manner that it goes beyond all physical, sentimental and intellectual boundaries. The *Fourth Way* also appears when the supreme integration of being happens. We make great efforts for achieving that but it is not based solely on the efforts. Efforts can create the space in which the *Fourth Way* can present itself to us. In Zen tradition such spiritual toil is referred to as effortless effort. The *Fourth Way* is also similar to the Tao which maintains that the pathlessness is the true attribute of the Tao. The *Fourth Way* is similar to Zen in its emphasis of using everyday life circumstances to have people feel the truth.

It is bringing the mind to a threshold where it can take a quantum leap in the dimension of *no-mind*. The *no-mind* provides a glimpse of enlightenment or *satori* in Japanese and *wu* in Chinese. In a Zen like emphasis, the fundamental principle of the *Fourth Way* is its immanence with life. It is not about an empty abstraction of abstruse ideas but a certain approach, a certain life to be lived with all intensity. It is full of life and suffused with human divinity. Furthermore, the act of exploring the truth is a tremendous adventure into unknown, always fraught with danger. For this reason, the guidance of the master is considered paramount. It recognizes the import of the olden *Upanishadic* way of transmitting truth that found expression in new traditions. It entails that there is a life contained in the words of those who have arrived by walking on the eternal *Fourth Way*.

The following incident mentioned in *Zen Flesh, Zen Bones* by Paul Reps clarifies the importance of the true way:

*Just before Ninakawa passed away the Zen master Ikkyu visited him. "Shall I lead you on?" Ikkyu asked.*

*Ninakawa replied: "I came here alone and I go alone. What help could you be to me?"*

*Ikkyu answered: "If you think you really come and go, that is your delusion. Let me show you the path on which there is no coming and no going."*

*With his words, Ikkyu had revealed the path so clearly that Ninakawa smiled and passed away. (1989:51)*

The path indicated by Ikkyu to Ninakawa is surely not a tangible way but a pathless path that led the self to the transcendent realm of being. This is what George Gurdjieff and P.D. Ouspensky called the *Fourth Way*.

## Conclusion

George Gurdjieff explained that there are three evolutionary stages or dimensions in the journey of spiritual development. The first stage and the corresponding way are at the physical plain concerning the functional aspect driven primarily by instinctual impulse. The second stage and the corresponding way are related to the heart. It concerns with emotions, feelings, empathy and myriad of varying expressions emanating from the heart centre. Third stage or dimension has to do with the cognitive or intellectual faculty. Generally, any one of the dimensions takes on priority and emerge as a centre of gravity for that person. A person functioning through these centres, namely senses, whims and theories will eventually lose the fine balance required for the spiritual development. The dominance of any or some of the three centres will bring fragmentation of Being. Gurdjieff suggested the *Fourth Way* that will help us achieve harmony by striking the balance among these three centres and in that harmony transcendence happens. Gurdjieff provided a layout to achieve the aforementioned harmony by continued effort and toil. One has to act with utmost sincerity and dedication with a strong resolve to harmonize the three centres.

Zen, however, is a direct and immediate “viewing of one’s own nature” that is equivalent to the realization of eternal Buddha nature or satori. It is a sudden flash of insight into the mysteries of Being and the universe. But much like the *Fourth Way*, it requires a rigorous training to overcome physical, emotional and intellectual pitfalls on the way to enlightenment. More often than not, *koans* are composed to clarify the illogic of logic that dominates this age. *Koans*, paradoxical statements like ‘the sound of one hand clapping’ or ‘one’s true face before one is born’ are devised to break the patterns of mind determined by logical reasoning. One reflects on *koan* until one sees the meaninglessness of reflection. *Zazen* is an effort to sit silently and bring a cessation of thought. These efforts are necessary before the effortless satori happens.

Also, Zen does not identify with any of the ‘ways’ introduced by varying traditions of spirituality but includes them all in itself. Zen is truly transcendental. It is the transcendence that brings the integration of Self and the *Fourth Way* is the transcendence achieved through integration.

The *Fourth Way* and Zen Buddhism both provide us a way to cultivate harmony in this otherwise chaotic world by settling oneself in one’s Being or Self. It is not only important for the growth of an individual but also for the mankind by providing meaning to our existence and thereby dissolving the tormenting ‘existential crisis’ felt more acutely in the modern world.

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## GENDER AND JUSTICE IN DEVDUTT PATNAIK'S *SITA* AND *JAYA*: REITERATING OF MYTHS IN INDIAN NARRATIVES

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**Abstract:** *Every culture creates myths, not an easily understandable material, involving symbolic depths, helping people to see the world that they left behind and transmits these realities through stories, symbols and rituals. This article concentrates on the definition and purposes of retellings, especially the Indian myths and how characterization in myths proclaim the patriarchal views prevalent in Indian culture by mythicizing and glorifying women characters. The present reading pertains to visualizing how retellings is analogous to attainment of salvation facilitating to manipulate the epics by giving voice to the marginalized in the original and successfully portraying the injustice inflicted on them. Pattanaik's retellings -Sita and Jaya- assertions of the voiceless women characters and the revelation of the injustice meted out on them. The concept of marginalizing women characters in epics and the way they are rendered justice in Pattanaik's subverted versions attain vital importance in this study.*

**Key Words:** *Retellings, Myths, Gender, Justice, Indian Narratives.*

Indian tradition places women in high esteem by endowing a mythical semblance and bequeathing them with elysian attributes. A mythicised common thread that binds these women together is their metaphysically secluded status together with the Indian woman's predicament of her detention. The ways of confinement chosen for women by the society is that she is either mythicised and turned into an exalted supernatural being, so that she remains distinct from others belonging to her gender. This societal attitude has created a new turn of events where a whole range of literary writings concentrated on women's position in the puranas.

Accountability of creating mythologies owe much to archetypes and mythology becomes a projection of our collective unconscious. Archetypes serves as responsible vehicle for fashioning myths, religions, principles and beliefs, whereas mythology can be looked upon as articulations of requirements in the human psyche (Stenudd). The female epitome is seen as supplementing the consciousness and the existence of the male, from divine to human, is no exception. A commonality that binds these female archetypal representations is that even in their human forms, they are endowed with divine characteristics. The reiterating of the tales depicted in different Indian epics endorse that woman attain maximum importance not owing to her humane qualities but those which make her divine or beyond that.

'Gender and justice' form the key words of discourse in this article that specifically indicates how the female characters in the above said retellings were sidelined in epic versions owing to their gender and whether the dharma (justice) can have diverse interpretations as different from those in their original versions. The term "myths in Indian narratives" simply denotes those myths which basically originated on the Indian sub-continent and whose history and development could be traced in the historical past of India and Indian culture. The 'retelling' in the title is indicative of Devdutt Pattanaik's retelling of the Indian myths, based on *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*. The author with the opportunity to reinforce certain elements of the story such as



characters, setting, atmosphere etc. Written literary retelling also gives impetus to the development of communication strategies and oral language (Jamison 124).

Retelling a classical or literary text engage "the making and revising of assumptions, the rendering and regretting of judgments, the coming to and abandoning of conclusions, the giving and withdrawing of approval, the specifying of causes, the asking of questions, the supplying of answers, the solving of puzzles" (Fish 172). The best illustration of this is *The Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*, which has many versions and sub-tales.

"Different people will have their own mythology, reframing old ones or creating new ones". (Chakrabarty July 2017) This paper depicts Pattanaik's re-reading of a select portion of *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana* to bring out the effectiveness of reconfigured mythological stories on its readers, a more subjective and thus, posing a new way of re-engagement with these epics. The study also proposes to visualize how a unique retelling of selective episodes of *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana* with a fictional tweak generates a subverted discourse on the existing and standardized notions. Pattanaik's works offers a mythological journey through the myriad possibilities of human forms, subjectivities, and imaginations constitute the scope of this study, justified through his remark that "... my intention is not to recreate reality but to represent thought process." (Pattanaik vi-vii).

The retelling or reiterating of myths in Indian narratives propound a multitude of possibilities of research. This article proposes certain unique perspectives such as projection of major socio-economic or political events, individual past, national or individual history, traditional, particular ethnic or racial stories as the main aim of retellings. This article also traces how Pattanaik's writing style demarcates myth as a "subjective truth" and fantasy as "nobody's truth." (Pattanaik)

Diverse explanations have been offered to the concept of 'myth'. "In its central modern significance, however, a myth is one story in a mythology - a system of hereditary stories of ancient origin which were once believed to be true by a particular cultural group, and which served to explain why the world is as it is and things happen as they do, to provide a rationale for social customs and observances, and to establish the sanctions for the rules by which people conduct their lives". (Abrams) Myths are "symbolic tales of the distant past that concern cosmogony and cosmology, may be connected to belief systems or rituals and may serve to direct social actions and values. Myths and folklore better and deeper understanding of the world order." (qtd in Ragi 2)

Myth is, "a story of the gods, a religious account of the beginning of the, the creation, fundamental events, the exemplary deeds of the gods as a result of which the world, nature and culture were created together with all parts thereof and given their order, which still obtains. A myth expresses and confirms society's religious values and norms; it provides a pattern of behavior to be imitated testifies to the efficacy of ritual with its practical ends and establishes the sanctity of cult." (Honko)

The term *myth* denotes stories with an underlying purpose beyond that of simple storytelling and the term *folktale* denotes stories that expose modest social circumstances and recreation of ordinary fears and desires. (Kirk 299) If myth is the literary expression of the practice, then it can be seen as a depiction of truth or values in its

practical form. There is a general belief that mythical truths are proficient in making people believe that it tells the truth. Myths are the creations of archetypes and Jung describes it as representational mechanisms for unlocking experiences, customs and beliefs stored in our collective unconscious. Freud sees them as 'Archaic heritage' (Talwar 63)

The retelling of epics from a mythical perspective offers a sense of significance not only on the ground of dogmatic, common or imperial power, its richness in tradition, culture and history but also provides us with a feeling of gratification to be a part of such a land where such great mythical characters have proved their valour. Different episodes from the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* illustrate the conditions of marginalized women, stressing on the little attention and importance they were given in the epics. These characters are subverted in the retellings. The epic is narrated through the male point of view, whereas its retellings need not confine to a single character's perspective. The women characters break the ego of the guardians of patriarchy, a common technique used to silence women. The epic tries to project woman as reliant on man together with the pathetic image of 'woman' in patriarchal ideology. The retellings of *Sita* based on *Ramayana* and *Jaya* based on *Mahabharata* forms the central focus.

The opening chapters of *Sita* brings to light a character named Shanta, the daughter of Kausalya and Dasharatha, who is later adopted by King Rompada to fulfill the selfish end of bringing rain in his country. It is notable that this adoption and her being sent to Rishyashringa, son of a mighty hermit Vibhandaka, is done without any question of her consent. Shanta asserts her feminine power and identity before Rishyashringa when she says, "I am a woman," revealed Shanta, 'a different kind of a human. You can create life outside your body but I can create life inside mine'" (*Sita* 28). Discourses on *Sita* in Pattanaik's retellings traverses through the portrayal of *Sita* as a main character. The very opening of the novel speaks of *Sita*'s identity "as the beloved of the man whose ring I seek", which initiates the narrative through the words of Hanuman (*Sita* 18). Her thoughts, perspectives, and actions as different from the narrative in *Ramayana* unfolds in somewhat greater detail than most other versions. Throughout her life, *Sita* has had the least decreeing power, first being exiled due to an inopportune turn of royal family circumstances over which she had petite command and prominence. "She followed her husband to ensure he never felt incomplete" (*Sita* 102) and later cast out by a widely-adored husband. The writer of the epic confers Rama's exile as an act of gentle wisdom that transformed him from a mundane hero into a devout presence. Rama is denied the guise of a sufferer. Contrary to that, when *Sita* was later exiled to the forest, she is depicted as an embodiment of enduring sufferer and sagacity. This is a clear proof of how strong gender bias still exists in the modern writings, inspite of all the advancement avowed.

Rama's exile episode is represented in a totally different mode by Pattanaik, as an illustration of how *Sita* becomes a shadow of Rama inspite of her sacrifices and not even given the consideration of a human being:

The motif of the beloved leaving on a chariot is a recurring one in the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*. Ram leaves Ayodhya on his chariot and the people of Ayodhya try to stop him. Krishna leaves Vrindavan on his chariot and the

milkmaids of Vrindavan try to stop him by hurling themselves before the chariot. Krishna does not keep his promise to return but Ram does. Unlike the departure of the Buddha that takes place in secret, Ram's departure is public, with everyone weeping as the beloved is bound by duty to leave. Ram's stoic calm while leaving the city is what makes him divine in the eyes of most people. He does what no ordinary human can do; he represents the acme of human potential. (*Sita* 135)

Sita is presented in this novel from a totally different perspective as one who "found her feet around the kitchen: peeling, cutting, churning, pickling, steaming, roasting, frying, pounding, mixing, kneading, experiencing various textures, aromas, flavours and chemistry" (*Sita* 41). Also, there are references to "Sita's father never knew of the world that was the kitchen. Sita's mother never knew the world that was the court" denoting the division of labour based on gender (*Sita* 41). The salvation of Ahilya when Ram "touch without judgement" also pinpoints to the injustice inflicted on women (*Sita* 71).

Pattanaik's retelling *Sita* highlights an array of lesser-known backstories. Some of them being, the bravery of Queen Kaikeyi who helped King Dasharatha in his moments of distress by repairing the broken wheel of his chariot and her unwavering attachment to her wet-nurse, Manthara who was a *gandharvi* in her former life. Sita is portrayed as an inquisitive and intelligent young girl. Another modification witnessed is in the case of Lakshmana's wife Urmila. Her fourteen years of solitary life is attributed her husband's decision to accompany the elder brother, Rama in his exile.

Many poets have wondered about Urmila, the wife abandoned by the husband who considers duty to his elder brother more important. Through her, they have expressed the status of the Indian woman, as being servile to the larger institution, the husband's family. Even the husband is servile to his family. In the Indian social order, the individual is inferior to the family. Individualism is expressed only as a hermit; else one has to submit to the ways of the household. The household is this bondage, from which one yearns for liberation. (*Sita* 141)

Over the course of the tale, the Sita who questions grows into the Sita who understands and accepts unquestioningly. All the Ramayanas starting from the 1st to the 19th centuries including versions popular in Southeast Asia has been efficaciously used in the creation of the narrative. Pattanaik verbalizes a culture of the Indian society fastened by decrees against nature with no precincts. The resonant prose employed throughout to retell *Ramayana* renders it as an anecdote of diverse emotions – familial love, faithfulness, love, avarice, desire and hatred in all its intensity helping the readers experience a profound sense of identification with the characters. Here, Sita is not a victim. She has grown up listening to the sages discuss the Upanishads and lifts Shiva's mighty bow with ease, and kills Ravana's twin in a fierce battle. Being wise and strong, she is independent and a single mother to her sons, not abandoned. It is Ram who is seen struggling to come to terms with what he must do as king. He remains devoted to Sita, and walks into the river *Sarayu* chanting her name.

The chariot stopped when it reached the banks of the river Ganga. 'Let us rest,' said Ram. So, everyone sat on the ground around the chariot. Slowly, the night's events began to take their toll. People began to yawn and stretch. No sooner did their heads touch the ground than they fell asleep. Sita saw Ram watching over the

people with a mother's loving gaze. Ram alighted from the chariot and told Sumantra, 'We will take our leave as they sleep....When they awaken tell the men and women of Ayodhya that if they truly love me, they must return home. I will see you, and them, again in fourteen years. No eclipse lasts forever.' Ram walked upriver. Sita and Lakshman followed him. Sumantra watched them disappear into the bushes. The sky was red by the time they reached a village of fisherfolk; the sun would soon be up. (*Sita* 136)

Pattanaik's story inculcates the essence of all existing versions of Ramayana and each chapter ends with a varying account of a particular incident. The original versions of the epic asserting the male supremacy is hinted to by Pattanaik's *Sita*, as it highlights how men lack some aspects because they have conquered various strengths.

Indian philosophy separates what a man is from what he possesses. We are a set of thoughts and we have a set of things. Ram derives his strength from his thoughts, what he is, while Ravana derives his strength from his possessions, what he has. Ravana has knowledge; he may be learned, but he is not wise. Through Ravana, the bards draw attention to the learned brahmin priest who spouts hymns verbatim but fails to appreciate their meaning or transform himself because of them. (218)

The 18 sections and 108 chapters of *Jaya* provides a modern version of the story of the epic *Mahabharata*. It excels in its narration of dharma-adharma concept and the execution of justice, provoking the interpretation of incidents in the epic in the socio-cultural light of the time in which it was written and re-written. Some basic differences in the story are that in Pattanaik's retelling Astika serves as the narrator. This retelling is a summation of the *Bhagavad Gita* story and God Ganesha consents to write down Vyasa's dictation under the condition that he should never pause in between. Vyasa consents to this under the condition that Ganesha takes the time to understand what was said before writing it down. Another instance is Krishna advising Arjuna on his chariot, the battle between Shikandi and Bhishma and Krishna resting under a tree after the Kurukshetra war.

An insight into the stories of women like Gandhari, Kunti and Draupadi, whose sacrifices were not only left unattended but also were subdued throughout as part of dharma. Pattanaik in *Jaya* rightly illustrates the way society skilfully sketches women's lack of choice in her marriage:

As per some Vedic marriage rites, a woman is first given in marriage to the romantic moon-god, Chandra, then to the highly sensual Gandharva named Vishwvasu, then to the fire-god, Agni, who cleanses and purifies all things, and finally to her human husband. Thus, the 'four men' quota is exhausted. Clearly this was an attempt of society to prevent Hindu women from remarrying. (*Jaya* 48)

The marriage of Draupadi is illustration of the rights exercised by women and to what extent. Swayamvara, women's right to choose her husband too can't be viewed as a complete realization of her freedom and independence. This is ostensibly clear in the novel as Draupadi realises her fault of having rejected Karna and chosen Arjuna.

God does not hate you, Draupadi. But you are responsible for rejecting Karna on the grounds of caste. A great warrior, he would never have gambled you in a game

of dice. You chose a priest instead, who turned out to be a prince, who shared you with his four brothers, but who could not protect you. And so here you are—helpless, humiliated, and alone, in a situation that you inadvertently helped create. Take responsibility for it. (*Jaya* 205)

Disrobing of Draupadi in the novel can be recounted as another important aspect of denying gender and justice. The idea that wife is the possession of the husband which can be put to gambling astonishes the society in general. “Draupadi, barely covered, hair unbound, pushed to the floor at Duryodhana’s feet. Not one of the assembled men came to Draupadi’s rescue. The elders maintained a stony silence while the Pandavas hung their heads in shame.”(195) The significance laid on Draupadi’s chastity and being humiliated to name her lover also illustrates the same:

There were many things strength and skill could do, but reattaching a plucked fruit was not one of them. The tree boomed, ‘If you were truly chaste, Draupadi, you could have done it with the power of your chastity...Draupadi broke down. She did not want her secret to be the cause of a Rishi going hungry. She revealed the truth, ‘I love Karna. I regret not marrying him on account of his caste. If I had married him, I would not have been gambled away. I would not have been publicly humiliated. I would not have been called a whore. The revelations came as a shock to the Pandavas. They were not sure whether to be angry with Draupadi or be ashamed of themselves. They realized they had failed her individually and collectively. (*Jaya* 183)

Another episode of the dependence of women on her husband is the part when Pandu decides to become a hermit and his wife, Kunti and Madri follow him. (46) Pattanaik states that the birth of Karna and Vyasa were instances of “sex hospitality” (51) a way of paying reverence by women. Vyasa’s *Mahabharata* reverberates that the world lacks insights and is occupied with deceitful information and Kunti is archetypal of the women who hide one or other truth out of fear. The life of Karna exemplifies how the disguised heroes are part of our society.

Pattanaik’s *Jaya* is a revelation of the strengths inherent in a woman. It clearly evades away the concept of seeing women’s beauty as her appearance, but more beauty is assigned to her heart as seen in following words:

In time, Arjuna tires of mere beauty and hearing tales about the valour of princess Chitrangada, he seeks her out. The princess then reveals her true self to Arjuna. Her words are one of the most beautiful declarations of the angst of a woman, ‘I am not beautifully perfect as the flowers with which I worship. I have many flaws and blemishes. I am a traveller in the great world-path, my garments are dirty, and my feet are bleeding with thorns. Where should I achieve flower-beauty, the unsullied loveliness of a moment’s life? The gift that I proudly bring you is the heart of a woman. Here have all pains and joys gathered, the hopes and fears and shames of a daughter of the dust; here love springs up struggling towards immortal life. Herein lies an imperfection which yet is noble and grand. (*Jaya* 161)

Pandava’s exile signifies how the years of exile and the tests undergone provide them with life’s learning experience enriching their body, mind and spirits. Pattanaik’s version discusses the confusion in dharma concept. “... dharma is not about justice; it

is about empathy and wisdom. Dharma is not about defeating others; it is about conquering ourselves. Everybody wins in dharma.”(413) According to Krishna, the war was for upholding dharma and not just for any worldly purpose but seems ironical since during war at many occasions Krishna asks the Pandavas to break the rule of war, which is against dharma. “Krishna offers Arjuna two things: what he is and what he has. Arjuna chooses what Krishna is. Duryodhana is happy with what Krishna has. This divide between him and his, me and mine, what one is and what one has, is the difference between seeking the soul and being satisfied with matter.” (304) Pandava’s victory in war generates happiness but soon grows tired of it and renounces the world. The author makes this occasion to educate the readers that man has little regard for whatever is attained and always long for the unattained and unfulfilled. The dharma-adharma conflict which has its impact upon every person’s life demands a journey to the path of dharma and ends only with its achievement. “There are two kinds of victory in this world,’ said the storyteller-sage, ‘Vijaya and Jaya. Vijaya is material victory, where there is a loser. Jaya is spiritual victory, where there are no losers.”(453) The author properly concludes the novel which is lacking in the case of the epic and successfully defends why he titled it Jaya, leaving a question of what is justice in the paths of victory. The hope that women will realise her strength obviously surfaces in the lines of the novel:

... the Kali yuga will dawn. A new age will dawn where nothing will be as it was. Only a quarter of the values instituted by Prithu at the dawn of civilization will survive. Man will live for pleasure, children will abandon responsibility, women will be like men, men like women. Humans will copulate like beasts. Power will be respected, justice abandoned, sacrifice forgotten and love ridiculed. The wise will argue for the law of the jungle. Every victim will, given a chance, turn victimizer. (*Jaya* 429)

Concluding, Pattanaik’s version of the story imposes a feminist perspective by presenting subverted and strong women characters. ‘Political pessimism’ rejects marginalization of the ‘other’ and makes them active in the frontline. The injustice meted out on women were part of the society from the Vedic times, but Pattanaik’s works on the other hand communicates how to deal with it. Traditionality and modernity of the present world reflected through these retellings exhibits orthodox traditionalism and the moral ethics of their own culture. Mostly centered on female experiences these retellings are fashioned in a new way that erases the thin line of demarcation between mythology and past.

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# FAT STIGMATIZATION AND GENDERED EXPERIENCE OF FATNESS IN SARAI WALKER'S *DIETLAND*

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**Abstract:** *Culture labels certain body sizes as non-normative and marginalizes them as undesirable. If the desirable normative bodies are unattainable, then they are derogatively tagged by society. For most women, achievement of this physical normality is not very easy, and often unachievable due to many factors like genetic reasons. In Sarai Walker's American novel Dietland (2015), the story was told from the perspective of Alicia Kettle, the protagonist nicknamed Plum, a plus-sized woman, who hates to see herself in public spaces or to get noticed because she believed that to be noticed is to get judged as far as a fat woman is concerned. Her decision to undergo bariatric surgery for weight loss as her last resort depicts the deep concern within a fat woman to protect herself from public mockery and her keen desire to lead a happy true life. The novel carries a much larger message as a feminist-subversive novel that deals with the issues of body shaming and misogyny. Dietland deconstructs the stereotyped notions concerning body size and attacks the prevalent obsessions with weight loss and beauty. The novel also explores gender inequalities and hypersexualization apart from storming the stigmas associated with beauty and body. The recently developed discourse called the 'obesity epidemic' has taken women's fatness and its social-moral disapproval to an aggressive level and conversely thin body privilege has become closely associated with class and gender, almost the world over. Unfortunately, women's fatness was contemplated by society as an underclass, downgraded, the negligible, and deviant entity that personified the moral opposite of the normalized body and its commendable qualities.*

**Key Words:** *Fat, Stigmatization, Gender, Hegemony, Foucault, Obesity epidemic, Biopower, Biopolitics*

Culture labels certain body sizes as non-normative and marginalizes them as undesirable. If the desirable normative bodies are unattainable, then they are derogatively tagged by society. For most women, achievement of this physical normality is not very easy, and often unachievable due to many factors like genetic reasons. In Sarai Walker's American novel *Dietland* (2015), the story was told from the perspective of Alicia Kettle, the protagonist nicknamed Plum, a plus-sized woman, who hates to see herself in public spaces or to get noticed because she believed that to be noticed is to get judged as far as a fat woman is concerned. The novel carries a much larger message as a feminist-subversive novel that dealt with the issues of body shaming and misogyny.

*Dietland* attacks and deconstructs the stereotyped notions concerning body size and prevalent obsessions with weight loss and beauty. The novel also explores gender inequalities and hypersexualization apart from storming the stigmas associated with beauty and body. This debut novel centered on Alicia Kettle, nicknamed Plum, a plus-sized woman, who hates to see herself in public spaces or to get noticed because she believed that to be noticed is to get judged as far as a fat woman is concerned. Her decision to undergo bariatric surgery for weight loss as her last resort depicts the deep



concern within a fat woman to protect herself from public mockery and her keen desire to lead a happy true life. The true life of her dream was designed according to the needs of hegemonic discourses and practices that ruled the contemporary societal perceptions. Based on this assumption, she would like to believe that she will remain happy for the rest of her life if she can attain her thin self.

The protagonist Alicia Kettle, weighing around three hundred pounds tries to hide her inhibitions and insecurities within herself. She is on the road to certain realizations portrayed as a ghostwriter, for a teen's magazine. The plot takes a surprising twist when a mysterious woman drives her attention making her fall into a rabbit hole where she becomes part of Calliope House, an independent, underground community. She takes up challenges offered to her by them to get a prize amount for her surgery. At the same time, another revolutionary group called 'Jennifer' was creating sensational news all over the world with their sinister plots. Jennifer acts against the mistreatments of women and they start terrorizing the whole world with a band of women who live at their own expense. Grappled in her own personal struggles Alicia got attracted to the revolutionary ideology of this guerrilla group named 'Jennifer'.

When the novel begins Plum was leading a fantasy life where she always fantasizes about getting thin. She was a normal girl who couldn't accept her fat body. So she underwent various diet plans but they all failed and finally, she found consolation in the ultimate solution of undergoing weight loss surgery after raising enough money for that. The irony in her profession is that she works for a teen magazine called Daisy Chain which was a popular commercial fashion magazine and she replies to a torrent of emails on behalf of the editor of the magazine prescribing solutions to the troubled and the needy young women. A feminist cabal recruits Plum when they came to know that she is going to be the next victim of stomach stapling surgery as she has scheduled her appointment and has already paid an advance amount for it. The ultimate aim of Calliope House was to halt Plum from her decision to undergo bariatric surgery.

The novel seems to be very light, a disguised version of popular chick literature which deals with the subject of body image. Actually, it is a scathing novel providing awareness to the general public especially women about the power play which constructs certain stereotypes and images on which women are forced to tie themselves to measure and tally their worth and value. Plum's life was not normal at the beginning of the novel. She was disturbed and her life was moped around her apartment and her friend's local cafe where she used to sit and work. Right from her childhood, she was struggling with her oversized body eating only grim little meals, and being an ardent follower of the popular dieting industry called 'Waist Watchers', her body was constantly under punishment and was going through severe disciplinary actions to satisfy the spectators of her body. Even after years of effort, she couldn't whittle down her body into a pleasing shape. She had haunting memories of starving childhood and was beleaguered and doomed due to her failure in achieving an ideal thin body. The depth of the psychological wounds within a fat figure is neatly depicted in this novel. Because Plum wanted society to see her as a normal human being, this reflects back to our research title. Culture plays a key role in deciding what is normative and what is not and what are its implications based on certain practices. Plum could not resist her happiness of getting accepted one day and she pre-orders some thin outfits to wear after her stomach stapling surgery. This optimistic lady always believed that things will

become ok when she will achieve her thin self. At the peripheral level, the book discusses the struggle of a young lady with her oversized body. But at the bottom level, the book discusses several beauty concerns and issues affecting teenagers due to the growing importance of spectatorship culture and disturbances such physical concerns cause in the mind of a youngster. Like many feminist novels, *Dietland* was also successful in raising the consciousness of the protagonist.

Both 'Calliope House' and 'Jennifer', the two feminist factions in the novel acted for the same cause, to stop violence against women and to stop the objectification of the female body. But the organizations operated differently Calliope House believed in non-violence they wanted to make people independent and self-reliant by making them realize the potential within them and to eradicate the internalized self-hatredness by making them aware of the power play they are exposed to and take them to the path of self-acceptance. On the other hand, Jennifer was a revolutionary organization and took arms against their enemies. They took weapons against rape culture and female objectification. The ultimate intentions of both these organizations were the same but the methods they adopted were different.

Foucault's theorization on the philosophy of biopower as well as 'power over life' appears to be pertinent in the context of analyzing the above work. These two famous notions of Foucault are analogous components of the same power architecture. Foucault's *Discipline and Punish* (1979), details the working of modern power structures along with the procedures associated with them. According to him, power is literally reduced to ideology and human beings are used as a medium to propagate those ideologies through discourses and practices. Furthermore, he studied the process of actualization of such managements from the individual level to the population level and how they penetrated over time with the help of certain established norms and techniques.

A review of the tendencies of the past few years reveals that discourse called the 'obesity epidemic' has taken women's fatness and its social-moral disapproval to an aggressive level and conversely thin body privilege has become closely associated with class and gender. Negative charges on fatness seem to be increasing in almost all parts of the world especially in Britain, America, the United States of America, and the United Kingdom. Unfortunately, women's fatness was contemplated by society as an underclass, downgraded, the negligible, and deviant entity that personified the moral opposite of the normalized body and its commendable qualities.

Society views 'femininity' as the natural expression of the female body and insists on performing certain specific societal duties in the normatively accepted way. This interpretation of proper femininity is partly linked to the heterosexual desirability for female bodies. According to Harjunen (2009), 'Proper heterosexual femininity' is considered to be a performance in a certain manner. Female bodies are subjected to a kind of screening process that is always part of such performances. The highly feminized exercises such as body shaping practices and weight loss dieting are also part of the endeavors to achieve a desired performance of femininity.

Normalization of weight-loss dieting has remained an enthralling idea that resulted in the construction of it as a natural occupation and practice. The interesting contrast lies at the point where there exists a highly exclusive group of women who are the only

eligible category who can think of gaining few pounds of weight. Thus, weight gain or the desire to gain more pounds of weight is constructed as an option available only for this exclusive group of women. This group includes people with naturally small stature, weight gain due to some kind of illness or as part of recovery from illness, or those who are with child. In every other situation weight gain is highly pathologized and viewed as something which is highly risky. They are forged as a mark of illness, lack of self-control, and in some cases directly connected to fetishized and marginalized sexual practices and sexuality.

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# ROLE OF MIGRATION IN CULTURAL CRISIS IN LIFE OF WOMEN: A STUDY OF *THE THOUSAND FACES OF NIGHT* AND *THE SHADOW LINES*

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**Abstract:** *Having done their best efforts to assimilate culturally, Indian migrant women remain aloof and culturally uprooted in foreign land. Due to cultural pulls between Indian and foreign culture, they undergo cultural crisis everywhere. Therefore, the paper attempts to investigate the role of migration in life of women culturally. The situations they undergo and their efforts to overcome these are under scrutiny. For this purpose, Amitav Ghosh's The Shadow Lines and Githa Hariharan's The Thousand Faces of Night are under close scrutiny from cultural and feminist theories perspective. The study proves that they undergo endless pain of cultural rootlessness. The cultural suspension forces their further migration. But they find no home. Consequent to incompatibility, they undergo pain, predicament and psychological ailment permanently.*

**Keywords:** *Culture, Identity, Migration, Women, Life*

## **Introduction**

Migration has never been one-dimensional but multi-dimensional. In ancient and middle ages, missionaries, scholars, armies, invaders and travelers migrated advertently from one place to the other for their specific purposes. In imperial age, people were transported forcibly by the colonizers, but purposefully, from Asia and Africa to the other continents. The purpose of transportation included procurement of indentured labour for different projects in the colonies, slave-trade, war etc. The man-made partition resulted into partition exodus. But, in Post-colonial era, people migrate for personal gains—job, education, habitation, business and refuge etc. Moon in this regard argues that “Migration is an expression of the human aspiration for dignity, safety and a better future. It is part of the social fabric, part of our very make-up as a human family.”

Following this mirage, people migrated and still migrate to other cities and foreign countries mainly for better job opportunities, education, business, and for habitation better than their homeland's. Migration helps undoubtedly to fulfill some of the aspirations, if not all. In this race, women do not lag behind. They too migrate to realize their aims. The migration within country whereas does not affect their lives inversely; international migration indisputably does. For example, the human dignity always jeopardizes in the other countries on axis of race, language, ethnicity, dress and culture etc. Women are more prone these threats than the male counterparts. Even if the host country treats all immigrants indiscriminately respecting their identities, culture, habits; the immigrants themselves face crises.

The people have been “carrying the greatest burden of historical dislocation, and it is their ‘missteps’ that lead to personal tragedy, as also trace the rocky paths of larger national and international conflicts.” (Kaul 285) The cultural pulls and pushes let them not belong to either culture. Regarding impact of culture Vijay Tendulkar in play *Kanyadaan* argues that people are “brought up in a specific culture. To erase or to change all this overnight is just not possible.” (13) Since cultural adaptation takes decades or centuries, individual undergoes cultural crises.

## **Materials and Methods**

This sense of cultural crisis has been chosen by numerous writers in their writings. But the researchers have chosen only two novels to map the cultural crises of the educated women who opted to migrate. The first one is Githa Hariharan's *The Thousand Faces of Night* and second one is Amitav Ghosh's *The Shadow Lines*. In *The Thousand Faces of Night* the protagonist stays in America to get education and in *The Shadow Lines* due to the job in foreign services the protagonist stays in England. This research is divided into two sections: the first one is cultural Crisis in *The Thousand Faces of Night* with three sub-sections namely; in marriage and out of marriage. And the second one is cultural Crisis in *The Shadow Lines* which has three sub-sections. To analyse this crisis cultural theory and feminist theory are used as a tool.

### **Discussion**

As mentioned, the study is divided into sections mainly and then subsections. The researcher first studies *Thousand faces of Night* under title Cultural Crisis in *The Thousand Faces of Night* with three sub-sections namely: In American: Before Marriage; At Jacaranda Road: In Marriage; and In Delhi: Out of marriage. Likewise, the second novel *The Shoadow Lines* is studies under title Cultural Crises in *The Shadow Lines* with three sub-sections namely: Ila in India and England; Thamma in India and Bangladesh and May in Bangladesh and India.

### **Cultural Crisis in *The Thousand Faces of Night***

#### **In America: Before Marriage**

The crisis that Devi who has migrated from India to America to do M.A. faces is of colour. Grappling this, she chooses Dan, a black, as friend to answer "the white claustrophobia of an all-clean, all-American campus." (Hariharan 3) Her reaction against all-white in choosing Dan comes to naught culturally. The coloured people across globe are not homocultural but heterocultural. She feels awkward in the house of Black people she visits with Dan where though climate is almost India-like but even then, she feels an outsider. The sense of indifferent to Black culture and her mother's letters about marriage proposal for her in India suspended her between Indian culture and foreign culture which lastly results not to choose Dan as her prospective husband. Due to the cultural practices she was alien in America. She wonders at the relations her "friends had with their mothers. They chatted about boyfriends, their quarrelled, they kissed . . . 'I love you, mom!' . . . as if I [she] had seen an embrace between the lovers." (Hariharan 13) Contrarily, it must not be mistaken that she cherished Indian culture. She knows very well that "Going back is a bigger risk." (Hariharan 6) The Black culture does not interest her, the white culture did not accept her, and Indian culture was a risk for her. So, the pulls cultures prove a dilemma for her which forces her return to India.

#### **At Jacaranda Road: In Marriage**

She returns to India and undergoes all match-making-meeting ordeals in typical Indian way; wearing saree, vermilion and all other paraphernalia which makes her Indian. It was not her true self rather covered self which was under pose and paraphernalia. Her true-self likes freedom in dresses, thoughts and relations but her acculturation through stories that her grandmother told during her childhood overpowers her. Finally, she gets married to Mahesh who proves a typical Indian husband who plays two roles: one when he needs her physically and second when he needs as housewife in which husband remains totally aloof, unrelated like. Mahesh plays the role as Apanna plays in

play *Naga-Mandala* wherein he visits his wife only at night. (Karnad) Likewise, Devi finds him a visiting husband.

Devi regarding her expectation of having a loving husband and reality of her husband reveals that “. . . two or three brief encounters a month when bodies stutter together in lazy, inarticulate lust. Two weeks a month when the shadowy stranger who casually strips me of my name, snaps his fingers and demands a smiling handmaiden.” (Hariharan 54) It is pertinent to mention here that her education left her “unprepared for the vast, yawning middle chapters of womanhood.” (Hariharan 54) Thus Hariharan suggests that modern education without cultural readiness proves a bane. Education proves helpful only in a specific cultural context. But in case of Devi, the education was like a sword in hand of Buddha. It is so because in America, “you could brazenly plead your rights as an individual” (Hariharan 6) but here it’s diagonally opposite. Culture she was living in reduced her to the role of a housewife only. She mentions “I cooked all afternoon as if my life depended on it. Chop, boil, stir. Like silver eyelids the onion-skin slid on to the board, one by one. The heat and smoke in the dingy old kitchen turned my entire body into a map of little streams.” (Hariharan 72) Hariharan further depicts Devi’s condition as “I [Devi] felt my resentment, my aches and pains, trickle away, leaving me quite, still, resigned” (Hariharan 72)

What she received here is the patriarchal lessons, to be a woman, shadow of husband. She gets reduced to a “wooden puppet in his [Mahesh] hands.” (Hariharan 83) After all “husband is a man. So is father.” (Hariharan 92) The patriarchal culture, being educated in America, she finds foreign and American culture was foreign without any doubt. Mahesh’s tour, father-in-law’s lessons on different topics particularly marriage institution and mythical stories she grew up listening gave her lesson to be shadow of her husband similar to the women in mythical stories. Her cultural inadaptability due to various reasons leaves her in mental ailment where she reveals her predicament by saying that “I am neurotic because I am a lazy woman who does not polish her floor every day? An aimless fool because I swallowed my-hard earned education, bitter and indigestible, when he tied the *thali* round my neck? A teasing bitch because I refuse him my body when his hand reaches out; . . .” (Hariharan 92) All this happens because of the cultural impact. Had she been educated in India; lived in India only, perhaps she would have not felt as she feels now. This cultural tug of war finally displaces her further and she finally flees with Gopal, a musician. “Devi has run away,” Mahesh wrote to her mother Sita. (Hariharan 108)

### **In Delhi: Out of Marriage**

As the cultural crises had forced Devi to experiment and decide in new situations, with new persons and places lead her to further experiment. Leaving Dan and America far behind first, and subsequently Mahesh and his City, now she lands in Delhi. Her constant cultural crises leave her in state of hollowness. She narrates as and when “looked for the bedraggled, submissive peahen every time she saw herself reflected in the mirror-studded buttons of Gopal’s kurta.” (Hariharan 129) She could not find her image in heart or eyes of Gopal but only in mirror studded buttons which means she was not more than kurta which could be put out at any time and as many times he wanted. The love of Devi for Gopal was a serious engagement but casual encounter as it was with ‘raga’ in his life. He says ““A raga... is life a woman... what made women women was their unpredictability”” (Hariharan 130) So for Gopal Devi and her love

were unpredictability, nothing else. For Gopal, she is just a body as “Gopal’s silk-covered thighs pressed against her legs.” (Hariharan 131)

In disarray of thoughts, movement and her life she introspects and “She felt like an ignorant child imprisoned in a woman’s body. . . I [who] have no husband or lover, only this blissful anonymity in the darkness.” (Hariharan 128) The diverse cultural atmospheres she lived in had made her suffer crises. She comes to realize that “My grandmother fed me fantasies, my father a secretive love. My mother sought me out with hope, and when disappointed, pushed me forward in the direction she chose. . . I have mimed the lessons they taught me, an obedient puppet whose strings they pulled and jerked with their love.” (Hariharan 136-7) While Mahesh and father-in-law poured every lesson of patriarchy and about “husband is like a sheltering tree.” (Deshpande 32) Gopal just treated her body only which is why she confesses that “I have run away from all my trials, my tail between the legs . . .” from place and persons both. (Hariharan 137) She comes back to her mother’s home leaving Gopal. Thus, she remains unfit in these situations and with these people because of “culture” as Tendulkar argues. (25) So, migration in life of Devi leads her to cultural crises which kept forcing her to migrate further for peace and fulfillment.

### **Cultural Crisis in *The Shadow Lines***

#### **Ila in India and England**

Similar to Hariharan, Amitav Ghosh raises issue of culture crises among migrants. He weaves the story around two families Dutta Chaudhary family India and Price family from London. Dutta Chaudhary family has shifted to England for professional purpose, befriends with Price family consequent to which both the families keep visiting each other in England as well as in India. Since Ila from Chaudhary family wants complete freedom which is why she is quite frequent to bars and pubs in England. Since the freedom matter the most, she attempts to live the life in India similar to her life in England. So, her visit to bars and pubs is quite normal even in India. But cultural codes of India don’t allow a woman such freedom. When she desires to dance at Grand Hotel, Roby scolds her “you can do what you like in England. But here there are certain things you cannot do.” (Ghosh 88) The cultural disparity between Indian and English regarding freedom of women bursts her in anger. She doesn’t like the culture which gags women and their freedom. She shouts, “Do you see now why I’ve chosen to live in London? Do you see? It’s only because I want to be free... Free of you! Free of your bloody culture and free of all of you.” (Ghosh 88-89) It was not the matter of visiting pubs and bars but also her lifestyle. Being short haired and in tight-trousered, Thamma, her grandmother, doesn’t like her she goes to the extent to call her “a greedy little slut.” (Ghosh 79)

Her notion of freedom is somewhat similar to laissez faire theory but distorted one. She wants complete freedom from the culture and people’s interventions but without realizing the traps she has fallen into. For the hollow freedom that she considers perfect one, she shares a flat with three others; “one Irish computer scientist, a girl from Leicester who works with the Fourth International, and a “morosy” young Ghanasion who is very active in the anti-Nazi League.” (Ghosh 17) Living with people from different location and culture, she feels free but in imprisonment with her own relatives. She, understand this perhaps a hybridity or cosmopolitanism.

But, her cosmopolitanism or cultural hybridity is a delusion. For her room mates she is “a kind of guest, a decoration almost.” (Ghosh 17) In addition to it, her cultural

marginalization is quite perceptible in public place. The cultural marginalization gets further strengthened when she is discriminated racially in London. Nevertheless, Thamma realizing the fact says: "It was Ila's fault. It was her own fault, and Maya's fault and fault of that half-witted mother of hers. It was bound to happen. She has no right to be there. She doesn't belong there." (77) Thus Thamma comment on the mishap with Ila verifies the cultural crisis the migrants face abroad. Thamma's perception regarding cultural discrimination is not due to her cultural understanding rather consequent to her postcolonial approach.

Even in face of cultural rejection at both sides India and England, Ila likes England and her culture. In this connection, Franz Fanon in argues that "Colonization is not satisfied merely with holding a people in its grip and emptying the native's brain of all forms and content. By a kind of perverted logic, it turns to the past of oppressed people, and distorts, disfigures and destroys it." (170) It is pertinent to mention here that Ila does not celebrate the English cultural perfectly but half-heartedly. In face she is in cultural dilemma. By heart she is Indian and by mind she is a foreigner. Her claim regarding chastity verifies it as she says that she is as chaste as "any woman you'll ever meet." (Ghosh 188) So the cultural gap between head and heart makes her incompatible in both the culture which further complexes her cultural crisis.

#### **Thamma in India and Bangladesh**

Contrary to Ila's idea of freedom from her own culture owing to migration, Thamma has different perception of freedom even in her country (un)divided. The nostalgia or revulsion from culture as is the case of Ila has nothing to do with geographical migration. In this connection, Ashcroft argues that "Diaspora doesn't mean just geographical dispersal. It also refers to the question of one's identity, memory and home which is produced by such a displacement." (217-18) Thamma is equally fond of freedom but her notion of freedom is totally different from Ila's.

For Ila, freedom means free from culture, roots, traditions and social construction. Her attempt to merge with the English culture is rejected by English culture; and the culture that flows in her blood and veins, she has rejected. Therefore, her attempt to reject and accept the culture lends her nowhere. Contrary to it, the forced migration from Bangladesh (erstwhile East Bengal or East Pakistan) due to partition, propagate an idea of freedom in mind of Thamma. For her the freedom does mean the freedom from colonialism even though through violence. It is same as Frantz Fanon sets up in both the novels *The Wretched of the Earth* and *Black Skin, White Masks*.

So, Thamma is also suffering from cultural crisis because the culture that she was brought in up and have lived all these years now is a different culture or say foreign culture. Thamma though rejects colonialism ideologically but intends to administer the same practically in the house as she had done in school being a Headmistress all those years. Thus, she cannot differentiate between theory and her praxis. Her cultural dualism reveals her crisis.

#### **May Price in India and Bangladesh**

May Price, a cultural conscious person, tries to be more human, more cultured and sympathetic. But her cultural superiority which in fact is cultural crisis results in Tridib's death. When Ila and Tridib with May Price go to Bangladesh to their ancestral house they were caught up in the communal riots. To save a puppy when no one comes out of the car May Price jumps out of the car suddenly. It was a question of cultural assimilation for the reason India has taught the whole world lesson of non-violence



[IAhimsa pramo dharama] (non-violence is topmost duty); and cultural supremacy also due to the fact that none comes out of the car to save the puppy and her attempt of kindness will supersede Indian culture. So, her mindless jump from the car forced her lover Tridib get down from the car and mob murdered him. She continues to think whole life that “I thought I’d killed him. I used to think: perhaps he wouldn’t have got out of that car if I hadn’t made him, if I’d understood what I was doing.” (Ghosh 251) This was in heterogeneous/hybrid notion of culture that Bhabha theorises. So, all made-up attempts of migrants regarding culture result in death, dilemma, dis-ease and crisis.

### **Conclusion**

From the discussion we can conclude that migration is essential characteristic of human beings. Human beings have been migrating from time immemorial. It had no problem before acculturation of human beings. But now it has. Whether it is intended or forced, in both the cases human beings are at loss and women in particular. Thus migration, contrary to its blessings, robs a person of his/her cultural identity. Consequently, neither one gets accepted in the foreign culture nor associated with his/her own culture. One’s own culture also rejects. In this delusion, one suffers cultural crisis throughout life. Due to this crisis, one remains in constant search for a cultural identity and every effort result in nothingness as it is visible in case of Devi. No place or its culture adopts such persons and this leads further migration. The cultural crisis results in death, dis-ease, dilemma, psychological and compatibility problems. Thus, study reveals through the chosen texts the way women migrants suffers cultural crises.

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## HOW MANY FLIGHTS OF STAIRS IS GOOD FOR DEATH?

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**Abstract:** *This paper apparently is about the suicide of a successful business person from Kerala, while doing business in the Middle East, amidst the COVID-19 pandemic because of a business failure. It is observed here that capitalism apart from its inherent logical contradiction resulting in harm becomes detrimental to its very agent. Simultaneously it extrapolates the incident to the greed that capitalism generates and its equating success and happiness with wealth. Tolstoy's poetic truth on greed in a story is examined. Positivity is identified as the ideology that advances the idea of success. This ideology is one of dog-eat-dog generating aggressiveness, greed, extravaganza, servitude and conformism. It is an ideology of anthropocentrism as well, hence detrimental to ecological wellbeing. This ideology is dispensed and marketed by self-help and broadly by culture industry. The ideology thus produces a one-dimensional human and effectively blocks individual freedom and social change as Herbert Marcuse observed.*

**Key Words:** *Capitalism, COVID-19, Tolstoy on greed, Success, Positivity, Culture Industry, One-dimensional human*

This ironic and positivity-ridden question which forms the title, is imagined as a tongue in cheek reversal of a question expected from a lumpen valetudinarian, "how many flights of stairs is good for health?". Flights of stairs is metaphorically used here for success, especially from the corporate point of view. This paper apparently is to throw light on the sad demise of a very ambitious business man from Kerala in the height of the COVID-19 pandemic by jumping from the fourteenth floor of a building in the Middle East, because of the alleged setback in new business ventures, and its implications for culture and the human as well. But the paper through this incident likes to probe the insatiable desire for profit and the so-called success through it and the ideology of positivity which fuels this kind of restiveness for opulence. The person in his early fifties was known as the owner of the newly-built palatial home of 45000 square feet, in the ecologically sensitive district of Wayanad in Kerala, touted to be the biggest and arguably the most luxurious home in Kerala. While Kerala witnesses extreme climatic conditions as elsewhere in India and outside in the past at least five years because of climate change, the district of Wayanad no exception to that, in fact showed early signs of it and is notorious for its landslides because of the hilly terrain. "Wayanad district, a biodiversity hotspot on the Nilgiri biosphere reserve, is paying the price for reckless development," thus begins a *The Hindu* report of August 2019 (Manoj). In 2019 alone fourteen people lost their lives in landslides following intense rainfall during monsoon, against the background of which the report was filed.

The business man had owned oil refineries in Sharjah and Ras al Khaimah in the UAE and Dammam in Saudi Arabia. Two things are notable here, oil prices fell to a negative value, understandably due to pandemic-driven lockdowns globally, for the first time in history on 20 April 2020 as stockpiles surpassed storage facilities. In the section "Opposition to Globalization" in his book *A History of Modern Europe*, John Merriman, Yale University historian briefly discusses the role of oil production in global pollution: "Damage to the environment is itself linked to global interconnectedness. The oceans have become veritable highways for the shipment of

oil in huge tankers, a good many of which are old and badly maintained. Periodic oil spills have damaged coasts catastrophically . . .” (1357).

This unexpected suicide of a very “successful” business man will certainly raise some questions about the insatiable human desire for profit under the tyranny of the capital which understandably has led to it. Is not the desire then becoming what Berlant in a totally different situation calls as “cruel optimism,” a condition when desired object becomes an obstacle to one’s own flourishing? Many thinkers including Slavoj Zizek, Dipesh Chakrabarti, and Akhil Bilgrami highlighted the role of capitalist mode of production in the highly consequential anthropogenic climate change, with Zizek characterizing the situation as the whole (life on Earth) now being contained in the part (capitalist system of just one species). The paper here contrary to using the homicide as an instance for *schadenfreude* sees it as a problematic, an instance of the capitalistic logic and consciousness with its ideology of excess, extravagance, positivity, exploitation and cornucopianism – in other words unbridled capitalist desire-- not only leading to ecocide but boomeranging on its very agent, besides being disastrous to all its subjects. Confronting this capitalistic desire steeped in anthropocentrism, which legitimizes “technological rationality” is one of the compelling urgencies of aesthetic education now (Marcuse 14).

The body of the business man was brought home after seven days of death in a chartered air ambulance accompanied by his wife and children after receiving special permission from the Indian and UAE governments. The high-profile business figure who died had a starkly contradictory and austere funeral at least in terms of the number of people who could be present at the event, and the desolation around joining the universal desolation in the wake of COVID-19. The District Collector had earlier said only twenty persons would be allowed to participate in the last rites, complying with the COVID- 19 restrictions in place in the district at that point in time. In comparison, the two YouTube videos of the house he built termed as “palace” had more than 4.2 million views jointly as on 29 July 2021.

“Owner and founder of several business ventures based in the UAE, . . . [he] had been a *successful* business magnate from Kerala, who was recently awarded the UAE Gold Card which grants holders and their dependents a renewable ten-year residency visa in the UAE,” [Italics mine] this was how an online news outlet defined him after the death (Business). When the industrialist died not many could believe that it was a suicide. The manager with the firm in Wayanad, said he did not even have a faint idea that it was a suicide and had never thought of him committing suicide. The business man had even scheduled an internal meeting in his company for the day of death, he said. Even the Dubai Police took one week to confirm that it was a suicide. Though these stories of successful business persons ending their lives because of the so-called failures are not very rare, the public generally are surprised by them because of their victor status. A Karnataka industrialist went missing on July 29, 2019. His body was found on the banks of the Netravati river, near Hoige Bazaar in Mangaluru, two days later. The sixty-year-old had reportedly jumped from a bridge, and people received the news with dismay. In a letter that surfaced hours after he went missing, it was revealed that financial troubles and “harassment” by tax authorities had led him to “succumbing to the situation.” The police also later said forensic reports confirmed that cafe outlet network founder had committed suicide. That people generally respond with disbelief

to these incidents is because we are all oriented to success stories only, of business people. And these deaths were deaths different from what anyone supposed for them. Yet the fact is, “There shall be no difference between them and the rest” (Whitman 34). People tend to overestimate the possibility of positive events happening to them, and subsequently underestimate potentially negative ones. Psychologists call this ‘optimism bias’, which studies say around eighty per cent of the global population possess to some extent (Mudditt). But cultures until the postmodern ones had a better realization of the human condition, and Montaigne, the French Renaissance philosopher, says that is what Egyptians did when they would bring in a mummified corpse to serve as a warning to the guests during banquets. He in his “To Philosophize is to Learn How to Die,” says “In the midst of joy and feasting let our refrain be one which recalls our human condition. Let us never be carried away by pleasure so strongly that we fail to recall occasionally how many are the ways in which that joy of ours is subject to death or how many are the fashions in which death threatens to snatch it away” (Montaigne 38).

Tolstoy appears to be very prescient about human condition of helplessness in relation to the incident narrated here. One of the most insightful literary representation of human greed is his short story “How Much Land Does a Man Need?”. Death is an inevitability and no amount of success and money can ward it off. The question really is whether the craze for amassing wealth could make it really imminent, at least occasionally. The short story in its beginning has a conversation between two sisters. Here elder sister is boasting about her town life and its exquisite privileges and younger replies, “ ‘I wouldn’t care to change my life for yours,’ she said. ‘I admit mine is dull, but at least we have no worries. You live in grander style, but you must do a great deal of business or you’ll be ruined. You know the proverb, Loss is gain’s elder brother’ (Tolstoy 1).” We would expect the younger sister in our naively binary thinking -- of country and the city, where country is the embodiment of simplicity -- to be very humble. But she was not. For her town is surrounded by temptations and says, “We don’t have to crawl to anyone and we’re afraid of no one” (Tolstoy 2). Her husband, Pakhom who overheard it also felt very proud and said to himself “ ‘...My only grievance is that I don’t have enough land. Give me enough of that and I’d fear no one – not even Devil himself!’ ”(Tolstoy 2). Angry Devil therefore lays a trap for the man. Pakhom who was led to learn about a far-off land of the Bashkirs where he could have as much fertile land as he needs, left for that place taking a workman with him. “There is so much land that you couldn’t walk around it all in a year. It all belongs to the Bshkirs. Yet the people there are stupid as sheep and you can get land of them for practically nothing” said his acquaintance (Tolstoy 10).

The Bashkirs appeared to Pakhom to be very “cheerful” and relaxed people “laughing and shouting” (Tolstoy 12). Here what is important to remember is Phakom is in a sense the original capitalist in a place where land was considered as a common good, collectively owned by the entire community. The importance of cooperationism has been emphasized by many intellectuals (Harcourt) during COVID-19 and in fact the slogan of the Gavi international vaccine alliance, “No one is safe until everyone is safe” is itself an embodiment of this idea.

While for the governments and corporates COVID-19 offered a rare opportunity to virtualize and business-manage the whole world, the Covid-19 pandemic at least for a

time gave a lesson to some engaged in obsessive consumption. Reuters reported that ditch your stuff became a trend among young Chinese spenders, especially those who lost their jobs due to the pandemic. It reported the case of a twenty-seven-year-old teacher from the city of Guilin. She was now selling things which she had acquired recklessly. For many Chinese who lost jobs this was the latest behavior, the voluntary dispossessing of possessions and embarrassing the new ethic of frugality for hard times as it were less was more.

In the land of Bashkirs, Pakhom was offered as much land he could walk in a day for thousand Roubles. “ ‘But there’s one condition: if you don’t return to your starting point the same day, your money will be forfeited,’ ” said the elder in the group (Tolstoy14). A greedy and restive Pakhom had only a little sleep, the day before, and then he had nightmare vision as well. In his dream vision, he saw a man lying dead which he identified at last to be himself. In spite of all this Pakhom, blaming the complacency and laziness of the Bashkirs hurried to the place to acquire the land and started walking. After a very long walk the harried Pakhom turned to be a motivator for himself and told himself “A moment’s pain can be a lifetime’s gain” (Tolstoy18). But by the time he decided to return it was already too late and he was tired as well. Even after walking faster and faster he found it to be lacking. “ ‘Oh dear’, he thought, I’ve been too greedy. Now I’ve ruined it. I’ll never get back by sunset’ ” (Tolstoy19). He started running with his throat parched, and his lungs working like a blacksmith’s bellows. He now remembered his dream “ ‘I’ve plenty of land now, but will God let me live to enjoy it? No I’m finished. I’ll never make it’ ” (Tolstoy 20). In spite of his initial misgivings he achieved the so-called rare feat of an entrepreneur. But then his legs gave way and he fell forward. “ ‘Oh well done!’ exclaimed the elder. ‘That’s a lot of land you have earned yourself!’ ” (Tolstoy21).

For a thought experiment, imagine a government employed teacher, giving private tuition, say after their office hours, something we see here and there in our country. It is not right to call the extra money that s/he is making is because of her/his own hard work alone. Of course not, in the first place work itself is illegal, leave alone being unethical and of course at the cost of her/his own actual work, that is by diminishing it. Let me share a personal experience at the risk of being cavalier. I had earlier shared this in a newspaper article, and let me repeat myself: “The present writer remembers – after rejecting an invitation to take private NET coaching classes – the inviter innocently justifying that some good academics do visit and he considers it as a UGC extension activity. These are days of public private partnership!” (Rajan). Now let me add one more thing, while I write this paper the well-established academic on the government payrolls who then invited me is in detention facing trial though for a different reason, but perhaps not completely unrelated to the enterprise and runs the risk of losing his livelihood. To return to Tolstoy, Pakhom was now dead with blood oozing out from his mouth. “Pakhom’s workman picked up the spade, dug a grave for his master – six feet from head to heel, which was exactly the right length – and buried him” (Tolstoy21). Whether one is ready to acknowledge or not what inheres within the poetic truth contained in the story of Tolstoy is that vaulting ambition and greed has to be at a cost. And this cost is nothing less than one’s own devastation, if not of others’ or if not along with that of others’. Now we increasingly realize this “other” includes nature as well.

The personal story of tragedy here appears to be a real life representation of Tolstoy story.

Thomas Pickety, the author of *Capital in the Twenty-First Century*, a widely acknowledged classic of economics of modern times provides some authoritative illumination on the current state of aggressive capital. Pickety's work is based on fifteen years of research concentrating on the historical dynamics of wealth and income. For one thing, Pickety is unambiguously pro-capital. He also believes in the meritocratic world view of the capital. Notwithstanding that Pickety writes "When the rate of return on capital exceeds the rate of growth of output and income, as it did in the nineteenth century and seems quite likely to do again in the twenty-first, capitalism automatically generates arbitrary and unsustainable inequalities that radically undermine the meritocratic values on which democratic societies are based" (1). He acknowledges that the loss of "humanity's natural capital" "is clearly world's principal long-term worry" (567). Discussing Nicholas Stern report -- published in 2006 and according to which "the global well-being is so great that it justifies spending at least five points of global GDP a year right now to attempt to mitigate climate change in the future" — and public debt, Pickety says "The more urgent need is to increase our educational capital and prevent the degradation of our natural capital. This is far more difficult and a serious challenge, because climate change cannot be eliminated by the stroke of a pen (or with a tax on capital, which comes to the same thing)" (568).

Now the human anthropocentric hubris and unidimensional thinking in terms of gain and profit alone and the later human helplessness in the face of a consequential catastrophe is especially significant in times of COVID-19. Presently, it is more or less reasonably assumed by scientific fraternity that the Sars Cov-2 virus jumped from bats to humans probably through pangolin or some other animal from a wild market in Wuhan in China somewhere around November 2019. Here what is significant is the trade in wild animals, based merely on the logic of the market disregarding the wider consequences, despite repeated warnings of the possibility of zoonotic diseases by the experts, led to this pandemic which is arguably the greatest in the whole of human civilization. Nearly forty-two lakh people have already fallen prey to the epidemic by July 2021. What is called as "excess deaths" may also come to several more millions. But what is really worrying is that human culture itself is steeped in a logic of self-centeredness. Now what is disappointing from the cultural standpoint is the motivation behind this kind of human greed.

Positivity is defined by online dictionaries as the practice of being or tendency to be positive or optimistic in attitude. Positivity is a shortened version of positive thinking and is often contrasted with negative thinking or negativity in popular culture. Though the idea of positivity has been there since the beginning of civilization, the terminology gained currency only in recent decades. Even the sixth edition of *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* published in 2007 does not carry the word. One of the most popular and influential cultural products of twenty-first century is the motivational and self-help products and services and these are engaged in the positivity business. Self-improvement market is booming and self-help industry is one of the most flourishing of industries. Indian self-help publishing industry has witnessed exponential growth in the last one and a half decades. Self-improvement has its various manifestations like books and videos by self-help gurus and self-help cum spiritual gurus, public speaking

coaches, motivational speakers, coaching centers and others. A new tribe of people called influencers who have been around for a while, has now come of age during the time of pandemic, especially exploiting people's immobility and ennui. "Self-help apps are the solution to our on-demand society," so goes an online site's definition of it. But what are these agencies and enterprises basically teaching? According to experts thinking positively is an evolutionary trait which gives strength for innovation but an overbalance of optimism would lead to unrealistic thinking and underestimating risk.

There are millions who miss out of this rat race, left high and dry and even becoming mentally wrecked. There are also several instances of complicity, hypocrisy and even cold blooded criminality of people completely immersed in or related to this apparently beneficent enterprise, reported throughout the world. Is it very accidental, for instance, for the son of a career guru to get implicated and booked in drunk driving and homicide, despite the former pontificating on unethical driving culture and occupying a very highly responsible and accountable government position as an IAS officer? If one's positivist orientations are still not convinced just recall the 2017 event in which an IPS officer, was caught cheating while retaking the Civil Services Examination for qualifying for IAS. Besides, the man had been running an IAS coaching institute in his own name, and it was none other than his wife, a coaching center faculty member who got arrested for helping him in cheating by using high-tech gadgets. "I also say it is good to fall . . . battles are lost in the same spirit in which they are won," so says Whitman, and nobody would pay heed to or money for this immaterial wisdom (34). What do these establishments and individuals teach other than egotism first and egotism last, through their aggressiveness and dog-eat-dog philosophy. It is maleficence in the garb of beneficence. Besides, it "sustains and absolves the destructive power and the repressive function of the affluent society" (Marcuse 9). "When you want something, all the universe conspires to help you to achieve it," (59) and unsurprisingly, this quote from *The Alchemist* is a ubiquitous one in self-improvement circles. Crucially the publisher classified the book in the category Fiction/philosophy, as it were, authenticating the new age philosophy. Though the book's main theme is about seeking what Coelho calls one's "personal calling," as *The New York Times* says, *The Alchemist* is "more self-help than literature" (Cowles). These readers are not the kind of reader that Roland Barthes had in mind when he wrote "The Death of the Author." This process of conditioning of the individuals by the culture industry and other agencies to accept what is spontaneously offered by the society is what Herbert Marcuse calls repressive desublimation. For Freud sublimation is the transformation of repressed sexual drives in to a creative or intellectual activity. Desublimation is the process by which this is reversed and immediate gratification is offered by the system (Macey 327). Here the selfless acts of many people during COVID-19 situation in helping others is not overlooked but many of them are not even educated or rich enough to afford those assistance, leave alone schooled in positivity.

Herbert Marcuse, the Frankfurt philosopher, is of substantial help here to understand this cultural phenomenon of overweening ambition and its nurturing by the ideology of positivity and the self-help industry, which thrives on that ideology. Though Marcuse is not directly dealing with that. Marcuse in his *One-dimensional Man* talks about unidimensionality of thought, saying that the power of reason and independent thought are waning in capitalist society, which he terms as the late industrial society. While the

time about which Marcuse is talking is the that of around sixty years back this analysis is particularly relevant now, as the capital now exceeds all imaginative limits. He reminds us that the intensity, the satisfaction and even the nature of human need, beyond biological level have always been preconditioned (Marcuse 6-7). An individual's doing or undoing, possessing or rejecting, celebrating or denouncing something as need depends upon whether it is essential and desirable for the prevailing social institutions and interests. Thus, he distinguishes between two kinds of needs – true and false needs. The false needs which perpetuate toil, aggressiveness, misery and injustice are superimposed upon the individual by particular social interests engaged in their repression. Most of the prevailing needs to have relaxation and pleasure, to behave and consume in accordance with the advertisements, to love and hate what others love and hate etc. come under this category of false needs. Consciousness of the real social condition gets obliterated through this mechanism of need and satisfaction.

Luckas also talks about the nature of modern capitalist society in which commodity fetishism invades all fields of human activity including the every consciousness (Macey 326). For Marcuse these social controls exact the overwhelming need for production and consumption of waste; the need for stupefying but unnecessary work; relaxation that prolongs this stupefaction and the need for maintaining deceptive liberties. The 'one dimension' of the title denotes the flattening of discourse, imagination, culture and politics into the field of understanding, the perspective, of the dominant order as Andrew Robinson remarked (Ceasefire). This dominant order is that of the capital with its motto of profit. This profit becomes synonymous with success for which positivity acts as a fuel. Intellectual freedom gets suppressed in this indoctrination as well.

As Pickety himself recognizes distribution of wealth is in fact too important an issue to be left to experts like economists, sociologists, historians and philosophers only. It is of interest to everyone, and he benignly views it as a good thing. The concrete, physical reality of inequality that he analyses is visible to the naked eye all the more than ever during this post-COVID situation. The most striking social reality during the pandemic, apart from the embodied suffering and the fatality, was the misery of the ordinary worker. International Labour Organisation estimated in April 2020 that the global workforce was 3.3 billion. Of this 2 billion worked in the informal economy in jobs with no basic protection, no possibility to work from home and no replacement during lockdown. "The working day was long; and the wages were very low" and this is Pickety discussing Marx and describing first half of nineteenth century which resulted in the birth of classics like *Les Misrables* and *Oliver Twist*. What happened to Indian industrial workers in post-COVID times may read like this. Just to suggest it, multiple Indian states increased the working hours from eight to twelve, at the behest of some industrial bodies. While the distribution of wealth is too important to be left to social scientists, it is equally important not to leave the conditions of culture, its dominant ideology that perpetuates the inequality, unanalyzed, whether by an expert or non-expert, especially when humanity is passing through the crisis of pandemic, which basically is anthropogenic. Capital after all is a political choice as Bernard E. Harcourt of Columbia University, taking cue from Pickety, says.



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## MAYA ANGELOU AND URMILA PAWAR'S PERSONAL NARRATIVES: SOCIAL RELEVANCE IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

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**Abstract:** *The study attempts to showcase the nuances of awakening that occurred in Black American literature and Dalit literature in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries with the publication of personal narratives by Maya Angelou and Urmila Pawar. The study also talks about the importance of analysing their personal narratives that speak of women's anxieties and their marginalised status in their own societies. These accounts will certainly enable our women and women writers to act as freedom seekers and come out of the ordeal of subjugation. The patriarchal society always tries to disrupt the thinking process of its female members and teaches them the principles of reconciliation. However, these female writers talk about their own powerful stance and decisions to retaliate against the traditional portrayal of women. Their personal narratives and subsequent revival will certainly serve as a wake-up call for women around the world.*

**Key Words:** *Personal narratives, Dalit Literary Movement, Black American Civil Rights Movement, Social relevance*

Personal Narratives are the accounts of writers who talk about their own experiences in poignant words which have the power to carry the readers into these writers' worlds. These writers were born and raised in societies that shaped strange customs and values that eventually made them stoic. However, their internal struggles enhance the quality of their works that have attracted readers for years. They become trapped in worlds of suffering and pain, which eventually forces them to experience the purification of all emotions. We become one with the characters that they have created. Sometimes, we see the authors' own frantic selves, and we learn how they survive and succeed in emerging as extraordinary women.

The origins of Dalit and black American literatures provide great insights into the proficiency and expertise of the early literary figures. In 1639, the African slaves arrived in the New World, which made their lives so miserable that they had to obey autocratic white masters. Lucy Terry Prince's ballad "Bars Fight", written in 1746, expressed her bitter feelings for the white domination. Phillis Wheatley, the mother of African American literature, was a slave, and later she became a poet of remarkable style and language. Her first poem was "On Being Brought from Africa to America" and it talked about the merciless treatment of the Blacks by the white people. The slave narratives written in the 18th and 19th centuries spoke of the marginalized state of the African Americans, the emotional and spiritual struggles, and how they were torn between two cultures. The writers of African origin began writing in English and used their literary skills in depicting the plight of their own people. These writers witnessed the dreadful effects of slavery; thus, their works were autobiographical. Dalits in India, like the American blacks, faced severe torture experiences. They had to endure the psychological pain given to them by the upper classes who claimed to have special religious rights. So, they treated other communities as *untouchables*. It was Mahatma Jyotirao Phule, in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, used the term *Dalit* to talk about the downtrodden or the disregarded sect of India who went through a socially pathetic conditions and in 1958 the Dalit Writers' Conference initiated the *Dalit Panthers Movement* and

eventually the Dalit Literature took its origin. “Phule’s *Gulamgiri* (meaning *Slavery*), published in 1885, was a scathing attack against the caste system, calling for the emancipation of the Dalits”(Ramabadrans and Paswan). African-American and Dalit writers and their protagonists seek liberation through their narratives which voice out their mental dilemma, stigma and shame. They try to break the chains fastened by the dominant group and try to shatter the status of the marginalised group. The term *marginalised* is used to talk about people who are deprived of the basic rights and lead a traumatic life in society. Their crying is suppressed by the privileged group.

Marguerite Annie Johnson better known as Maya Angelou, the prominent voice of the Black Literature and Urmila Pawar, the true woman representative of the Dalit Literature talk about the marginalised people who are considered the untouchables of society. They compete against the main stream of their societies and strive for their liberation and rights. They talk about their own experiences and how they hold the status of the underprivileged. Her works talk about the unending shocking experiences of their own black men who are subjected to the brutalities of white masters. The prejudice and injustice of the white masters weakened her community. But they will rise from the ashes like a phoenix and fight back injustice. Her African American identity prompted her to express her opinions by joining the *Harlem Writers Guild*. Thus, she challenged the main stream of her community. Angelou’s autobiography, *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*, published in 1969, clearly depicts her emotional growth. Her traumatic childhood experiences and physical abuse by her mother’s boyfriend empowered her as a female writer who later became the voice of the African American people, especially women:

Angelou accredited much of her development as a writer to her childhood growing up in the small town of Stamps, Arkansas with her paternal grandmother. Back then it was a town ravaged by racial inequality, affording the young Angelou her first taste of the injustices she would spend a lifetime trying to right. (Kelsall, “The Maya Angelou Biography: A Voice for Black America”)

Being a girl born into the black community, she was always marginalized by white people who regarded the white skin tone as a symbol of beauty and aristocracy. She was deeply troubled by the segregation and discrimination experienced by her own community, unleashing a verbal fight against the racism and prejudice displayed by white people. In her poems, she tries to awaken members of society and convince them of their grace and nobility.

In his epoch-making poem, “Still I Rise” Angelou lashes out at white masters who mistreat her and her black companions. She supported the causes of her own people and grew brave enough to stick to during the struggle. She tried to free her own people from the iron clutches of the dominant group, which enjoyed rights and luxuries. The opening lines of the poem reveal her determination:

You may write me down in history  
With your bitter, twisted lies,  
You may tread me in the very dirt  
But still, like dust, I’ll rise.

Does my sassiness upset you?  
Why are you beset with gloom?  
'Cause I walk like I've got oil wells  
Pumping in my living room. (Angelou 7)

The poet is aware of the fate of her ancestors who suffered the unfair treatment of white people. She is audacious enough to address them and speaks with a lot of confidence about her appearance and strong character. These white masters are shaken by her touching poetic expressions, which have the power to open up about the pains they have suffered over the centuries. She is conscious of the enslaved status of her people, who work for white people and are subjected to physical and mental abuse. She asks the white masters, "Did you want to see me broken? / Bowed head and lowered eyes?" (8). These lines show her rebellion against the bigotry shown to them by white people. Their narrow attitude never allowed them to accept the black people as their own. The white masters viewed her brothers and sisters as slaves and forced them to work in their gardens and homes, so that they remained with them until the end of their lives. They were weakened by the enslavement of their ancestors and their companions. However, the poet is different from them. Injustice and trials do not prevent her from demonstrating her valour. She says,

Leaving behind nights of terror and fear  
I rise  
Into a daybreak that's wondrously clear  
I rise  
Bringing the gifts that my ancestors gave,  
I am the dream and the hope of the slave.  
I rise  
I rise  
I rise. (10)

She asks her female companions to break the chains of slavery and shame they have been carrying for so long. She reminds them of the need to feel strong as women with grace and nobility. No power in this world can suppress her because she knows she is beautiful and strong and she will rise like a phoenix.

The feminist literary movements in India never focused on the marginalization of socially backward societies in the 20th century. As a Dalit woman writer, Pawar portrayed the social deprivation of Mahar women and their unspoken pains and suffering, which eventually originated from her own bitter experiences. The upper-class women had the right to write about women's problems; however, they never talked about poor women suffering in slums or small colonies, dreaming of a luxurious lifestyle. These women raised their children because they thought they would save their own mothers from their deteriorating condition. Dalit feminism developed in Maharashtra when the Dalit women writers started *Mahila Sansad*, where they shared their literary views and opinions. Initially, writing and literature were considered to be

the monopoly of upper-class literary figures. As a Dalit woman writer, Pawar has always been concerned about the experience of women in her own Mahar community located in Ratnagiri, Maharashtra. She says that the women in her own society have experienced the victimization of the elite for years. Her works reflect the atrocities that the Dalits have suffered all their lives. Trapped by the main stream, they face many humiliating experiences. The explicit liberation narratives of the Dalit writers sound the fate of the Dalit people of India:

*It was Dr BR Ambedkar who stressed on literary assertion as a means to struggle against the caste system. Thus began the ceaseless movement of literary assertion by Dalits, who went on to write powerful stories about their lives. It marked a resurrection of their experiential world, which had been appropriated by the pens of Savarnas. (Maitreya)*

Pawar published a collection of short stories titled *Sixth Finger* (Sahav Bot) and *Fourth Wall* (ChauthiBhint) in 1988 and 1990 respectively. The stories depict the plight of women surviving in rural and urban areas of Maharashtra, especially the Dalits and their resilience. Many of them are voiceless and weak for the rest of their lives. Some of her characters resemble her own personality, and they speak in a wide variety of dialects. Her autobiography *Aaydan* was originally published in Marathi in 2002 and was translated by Maya Pandit into English under the title *The Weave of My Life: A Dalit Woman's Memoirs* talks about her own experiences as a Dalit woman and how her mother and other women of her Mahar community lived a gloomy and bitter life due to the oppression of the uppercastes in her society. Born and raised as a Dalit girl in a rural area of Maharashtra, she was denied the luxuries enjoyed by rich and upper-class girls. She talks about how her mother used to make *aaydans*, the household items with bamboo, to earn family income. The author talks about her condition and how she became a burden on family members. The struggles she had to go through as a child weakened her, but later enabled her to become part of the *Dalit Literary Movement* formed in Bombay to give voice to the oppression faced by people in her Mahar community, especially women. She narrates the endless sufferings of the women of her community who had to cross the forest to reach Ratnagiri. They left their babies at home and neglected poisonous reptiles to sell artifacts made from bamboo to earn their livelihood. The author's narrative style was actually shaped by listening to the experiences of women in her society. Her parents' strong determination to send their children to school helped Pawar get a proper education, despite the disgust of school teachers. During her childhood, the upper-class children of her neighbourhood enjoyed the privileges of their lives. Perhaps the humiliation she suffered at her school made her stronger. Her life in Mumbai gave her the opportunity to interact with notable writers and participate in literary and social events with her husband's support. She was deeply saddened by the oppressed conditions of Dalit women; so, she started working for them day and night. Pawar's social and personal circle shaped her literary career and gave her the courage to endure the negative aspects of her life. She shows her rebellion against victimization, which reached its peak in the 20th century. Caste divisions, untouchability and the dominance of upper-class Brahmins worsened the situation of Dalits, especially in Maharashtra:

Dalit literature registers protest; uncovers hypocritical double standards of behaviour among caste Maharashtrians; acquaints readers with, and expresses

anger at, the inhuman treatment experienced by such communities; and is committed to an incisive critique of the social, cultural, and political world the writers experience with a view to raise a voice for justice and equality. (Deivasigamani19)

Pawar's female characters are members of the Marathi-speaking Mahar community who try to build a better economically sound atmosphere in their society. They imitate other women in neighbouring villages and go to markets to sell vegetables and goods. The author has made them true representatives of the society that embodies its own customs and laws for the Mahar community, which has its own religious customs and ceremonies. In 2013, she published a collection of short stories titled *Mother Wit*, translated into English by Veena Deo. The protagonists of all these short stories try to talk about their liberation from the troubled life they have been leading for so long. They are so strong that they try to come out of the sheath, protecting them from expressing their desires and dreams. Vahini, the protagonist of the story "Mother" is so powerful that she wants to give the children a good education even though her husband has died. She is reluctant to move to her village where she can stay with her relatives. She says, "Caste troubles are in village too. As a matter of fact, caste discrimination is much worse in the village" (Pawar). Even in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the repressive system prevailing in India hinders the social and economic progress of the members of the Dalit community. Her understanding of untouchability made her a powerful female Dalit writer whose female characters are the embodiments of perseverance and tolerance. The short story "Justice", *Nyaay* in Marathi, introduces a male narrator who initially doesn't speak highly of society and the village. The opening lines of the story reveals his attitude: "You go through a valley and the road gets quite steep in places, So, walking there is an ordeal. Thirdly, I hate living among the uneducated villagers. Their conversations and behaviours always seem brutish. Mannerless, generally!" (Pawar). In the end, however, he was deeply moved by the tragic story of a Dalit woman Paru and the attack on her by an unknown man on her way home from the market. The story reveals the courage of Paru, a Dalit woman who was subjected to physical assault; but she decides to raise the child in a patriarchal Dalit society that utters its own laws and laws. Her other short story "The Odd One" (*Vegliin* Marathi) depicts the marginalised status of Nalini, a woman who belongs to the Dalit community. Readers can see how she holds the title of an outcast among her colleagues and how they mock her 'inferior' status. They say, "Dalits really have it good these days. The government pampers them. They are always first with promotions, housing . . . Don't ask." (Pawar). Their mockery is visible throughout the story. One of her colleagues says, "What I want to know is: if they get all these privileges, what about the rest of us? All it means that they will get ahead and we will all stay behind. What kind of equality is that?" (Pawar). The never-ending discrimination against the Dalit women and community continues in the 21<sup>st</sup> century that upholds the ideals of solidarity. Nalini's colleagues represent the society that preaches the nobility of their economic status and upper caste.

Like Pawar, Angelou also talks about her own experiences as a woman born into the black community. She is really proud and considers herself a phenomenal woman. She chose the same title for her 1978 poem "Phenomenal Woman" which reveals much about the writer and her identity. She is an exceptional woman, unlike the elegant

models who keep thin looks to attract the attention of people in the fashion industry. So, she says:

Pretty women wonder where my secret lies.

I'm not cute or built to suit a fashion model's size

But when I start to tell them,

They think I'm telling lies. (Angelou 3)

Her personality and appearance make her different from others. She is not ready to bow her head. She says that her appearance frightens everyone. Her self-esteem and confidence make her an extraordinary female writer who never fears the political and social forces that ruled and controlled African Americans in the US. Her poem is a wake-up call for all women around the world, especially women in her community, to realize their inner strength. She says:

Now you understand

Just why my head's not bowed.

I don't shout or jump about

Or have to talk real loud.

When you see me passing,

It ought to make you proud.

I say,

It's in the click of my heels,

The bend of my hair,

the palm of my hand,

The need for my care.

'Cause I'm a woman

Phenomenally.

Phenomenal woman,

That's me. (5-6)

She talks about the oppressed state of the African American women trying to gain independence. Thus, they will be strong to give up their imprisonment. Her anthology, "Shaker, Why Don't You Sing?", published in 1983, contains many poems that speak vividly about the experience of being part of the black community in America, where they are denied basic rights. The poet in "Caged Bird" one of the poems from anthology, demonstrates the difference between the privileged group and the underprivileged group in his own country. She says:

A free bird leaps  
on the back of the wind  
and floats downstream  
till the current ends

and dips his wing  
in the orange sun rays  
and dares to claim the sky.  
But a bird that stalks  
down his narrow cage  
can seldom see through  
his bars of rage  
his wings are clipped and  
his feet are tied  
so he opens his throat to sing.(Angelou 34)

The comparison of birds shows us the notions of inequality that black Americans had to endure during the author's time. They want a liberated world that offers all the privileges that the mainstream enjoys. They live under an alien blue sky that offers no protection. They spend their lives in a world of uncertainty. It is a really traumatic and terrifying experience for them.

Angelou and Pawar's literary pieces voice the plight of women in societies that portray women as feeble and marginalised. They use writing as an act of liberation and self-expression. Their literary pieces show the need to break down the patriarchal canons that have blurred women's personality. However, we can see that the plight of women remains the same everywhere. They portray themselves as characters to express women's fate and ignore the usual styles of writing and conservative attitudes when they express their feelings. They have always dared to resist misfortunes that come in the form of domination because of age, gender, caste and race.

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# THE OMNIPRESENT MALE NATION: SUBTERRENEAN PRESENCE OF THE NATION IN K.R. MEERA'S ARACHAAR

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**Abstract:** K.R. Meera's masterpiece novel *Arachaar* is a watershed point in the history of Malayalam literature. It is a novel completely set in the premise of Bengal, yet written in Malayalam. The protagonist Chetna Mullick gets appointed as the first ever female executioner of the nation and is hailed as a source of inspiration for the women of the country. The paper is an attempt to evaluate how deep into the fabric of the nation has patriarchy permeated, so that Chetna, in spite of her position of power, is under constant male supervision. The paper argues that history has been biased towards women, deliberately obliterating female achievers without traces. This is an attempt to trace the presence of a male nation within the novel's premises. All quotations cited from the novel are self-translated by the author.

**Keywords:** Patriarchy, Nation, History, Justice, body

K R Meera, the leading Malayali novelist is popular for her short stories and novellas and her magnum opus *Arachaar*. Published in 2012, *Arachaar* won the Kerala Sahitya Akademi Award in 2013, Odakkuzhal Award in 2013, Vayalar Award in 2014 and Kendra Sahitya Akademi Award in 2015. Meera resigned the post of the senior sub editor of Malayala Manorama to pursue her literary career. Meera's oeuvre is characterized by its dexterous emotions and profound female experiences. Her other popular works include *Meerasadhu*, *Aa Maratheyum Marannu Marannu Njan*, *Yudasinte Suvishesham*, *Karineela*, *Mohamanja* etc.

*Aarachaar* was serialized for 53 weeks in the *Madhyamam* Weekly before published as a novel in 2012. It is a Malayalam novel with its premise completely set in Bengal. The novel tells the story of Chetna Mullick, a young 22-year-old woman belonging to the traditional executioner tribe of the Grddha Mullicks, who got appointed as the nation's first female executioner. The novel traces her pursuits, memories, angsts, longings and the love-hate relationship she has with the television journalist Sanjiv Kumar Mitra. In the course of narrating Chetna Mullick's present, the novel also unveils the glorious saga of the Grddha Mullick family. Death and life are inextricably superimposed by Meera in the novel. *Arachaar* was translated to English in 2014 by J. Devika under the title *The Hangwoman* and was released by Arundhati Roy.

Meera's writing belongs to the *Ecriture Feminine* style, introduced by the French feminist Helene Cixous. It deliberately deviates from the masculine writing strategies and is more fluid than the rigid male language. The free flow of language, thoughts and emotions employed by Meera in *Arachaar* through the use of the stream of consciousness technique is a qualifier of *Ecriture Feminine*. *Ecriture Feminine* is a concept that women's writing uses the white ink that the female authors have inherited from their mothers to psychologically inscribe the female bodies and its grievances and joys onto the paper. (Cixous889). It claims that the language used by the female authors hold the key to the female psyche. Through this strategy of 'writing the body', Meera locates the female protagonist Chetna Mullick in an essentially masculine Bengali society, identifying her as the first ever female executioner in the world. What could have turned out as a male world is retained as a feminine universe through

emotions and images intrinsic to the female experiences of Chetna, Ma, Thakuma, Pingalakeshini and other women. Even the language Meera uses to refer to her fountain of creativity is exclusively feminine. She said “don’t underestimate me, my creativity has no menopause” (Kuruvilla np). “The inscription of the feminine body and female differences in language and text” that Elaine Showalter talks about is evident in *Arachaar* (Showalter 249). The novel had boldly withstood the allegation of plagiarism, which critics observe as a patriarchal strategy to weaken the woman in Meera. Her translator J.Devika dismissed the accusation and criticized the habit of ‘taming’ the female authors practiced by the Malayalam literary establishment for ages. She identifies Lalithambika Antaranam, K.Saraswathi Amma, Madhavikutty, Rajalakshmi, K.R.Meera and many more as its victims (Kuruvilla np). The desire to control and regulate the female body and female creativity is the default instinct of the society. Meera in her talk at the Calicut literary festival stated that being a woman is a condition; a condition which she excruciatingly unraveled in the novel *Arachaar*. Thereader’s trauma involved in reading her novels springs from the fact that she never cushions the raw female experiences to make them palatable. All her female protagonists like Radhika, Tulsi, Chetna etc. merge together to produce a real female lived experience.

The novel begins with the President of India rejecting the mercy petition of Jatindranath Banarjee. The old and weary executioner Phanibhushan Grddha Mullick who self-proclaims that he has carried out 451 hangings demands from the state a government job for his daughter Chetna Mullick in return for hanging Banarjee. This is the premise in which the young Chetna gets appointed as the first female executioner of the country. Chetna is a ‘born’ executioner, a ‘natural’ in the profession, renowned for her small, deft, perfect nooses using her dupatta. The question if Chetna is willing to take up the physically and mentally traumatizing job of being a hang woman is irrelevant since she belongs to the very patriarchal family of Grddha Mullicks in Bengal with centuries’ worth tradition of hanging the criminals. The Mullicks are part of a very patriarchal state apparatus where the sounds of women and the underprivileged subaltern go unheard. The woman’s choice of profession and her consent for the profession are negated right at onset of the novel and Chetna is forced to inherit the job of the executioner. Even her opinions made in *The Hang Woman’s Diary* aired on television belong to her father. While the Grddha Mullick line continues through the male successors, Chetna’s rise to power as the Hang woman is only due to the absence of an able-bodied male successor, since Chetna’s brother Ramu is incapacitated and bedridden. This sheds clear light on the patriarchal family system, where women are denied access to power. Chetna is chosen, in the absence of ‘better’ options to carry forward the Grddha Mullick pedigree of hanging men for the sake of justice. The novel is narrated in an epic canvas and history is marked with reference to the succeeding patriarchs of the family, referred in the novel as *Pitamaha*. The novel clearly states that history is always his’story and Chetna’s attempt to rewrite history through the revolutionary appointment as the hang woman is discouraged by the state, the men around her as well as the women of her own household.

A major question the novel addresses is whether women have the audacity to hang a man. Women are historically positioned as the weaker sex, submissive, maternal and kind. While Chetna proves her mettle from a very young age by instantly learning to

make the perfect noose, hanging (though accidentally) her childhood playmate, injuring Maruti Prasad who attempted to molest her and expressing her desire to hang Sanjiv Kumar Mitra when he expresses his carnal desires for her. “That night I imagined that he was standing on the top of the platform of death; that I had covered his face with the death mask; that I pulled the lever in 727 ways” (Meera 122). Another major question that the novel raises is how many women were hanged in history. There aren’t many because the state and judiciary make a soft verdict for the female criminals, taking into consideration their gender and familial responsibilities. However, the novel discusses in detail the hanging of Kadambari, a woman who killed her husband during his illicit affair. When the lever was pulled and her body was suspended, her legs parted in pain and the audience rejoiced in the clear view of her privates. It is only after this incident that the law was made to cover the women convicts from head to toe and their legs to be tied before hanging them. Every page of the novel stinks of death. Hangings, relishing of the execution, execution turned into a spectacle, amputations, deaths in Chetna’s own house, the nearby Nimtala Ghat crematorium, vehicles that pull dead bodies and above all, the living beings dead and frozen inside themselves, especially on the streets of Sonagachi abound the pages of the novel.

Sonagachi plays a crucial role in the novel. The hangmen of the yore were philanderers in the streets of Sonagachi. Phanibushan Mullick had affairs with many women of the red street. He however killed Chetna’s Kaki ma when he found her in a suspicious situation in the Red street. While men have the social sanction for profligacy, women are bound by chains of moral purity, virginity, maternity etc. Sanjiv Kumar Mitra leads a high-profile life and is ashamed to reveal that his mother Trilokyadebi was once a *beshya* in Sonagachi. The sinner mother passes down the traits of the street onto her son, that Sanjiv Mitra’s nimble fingers can steal things from vendors in broad daylight, without anyone noticing. The men enjoy sexual freedom, in spite of all familial obligations that bind them; the women, however, are choked by invisible codes of conduct that strangle them. India as a nation, deifies women as the Prakriti, Mother and Goddess but demonizes her when she fails to conform to the standards set by the society and violate the gender roles. Both deification and demonization are essentially processed of dehumanization.

After being appointed as the nation’s first female executioner (though Chetna denies it multiple times), Chetna becomes an overnight celebrity, and suddenly becomes the source of India’s pride and becomes the symbol of Indian womanhood. She is the embodiment of Shakthi, a figure every Indian woman looks up to. She becomes the click bait for the channel’s TRP. The sudden publicity bamboozles even Chetna, who had never been the centre of attraction before. In spite of her high marks, Chetna was forced to discontinue her studies and take up the job as proof reader in the private firm of Maruti Prasad. She was a victim of the society’s gender discrimination and there is no wonder that she said nothing at the prospect of the government job, even if that meant she will have to do a cursed job for all her life. Hailing from a family dwelling in abject penury, the experience of being thrown into the limelight is numbing for Chetna Mullick.

The motif of ‘story telling’ is pivotal to the plot. Most part of the history is presented through stories and the rest in the form of factual narration. Phanibushan Grddha Mullick, Thaku ma and Chetna are the main story tellers; the oldest have the most

stories to tell. All of them take pride in their ancestry and never misses a chance to tell stories about their forefathers who devised, improved and revolutionized the act of hanging criminal men. The Grddha Mullicks have been living in Bengal since the pre-colonial days when Bengal was a princely state. Their lineage had survived the colonial period when Bengal was a presidency to the present day independent India. Their family saga therefore is a revelation of the mechanics of power. Every time Sanjiv Kumar Mitra tries to trap Chetna with his questions, she delves into the past, citing the story of her ancestors as an answer to the tricky questions raised. The story teller wields certain powers and privileges; they sometimes withhold or alter the ending of the stories to their benefits. Chetna hides parts of the stories many times during the interview. These omissions and additions are very political; they reveal the patriarchal nation's choices, preferences and priorities. The wielder of power will always be favored by history over the other and in most cases, the power-wielder is a man. The male adventures thus gain place in history while the female experiences get obliterated. Chetna Mullick stands over the graveyard of obliterated and forcefully obliterated female experiences, representing the Indian feminine self. Her ascend to limelight and nation-wide acclaim is therefore, every Indian woman's ascension to power.

The glorification of the male tradition is very evident in the text, while the absence of a female tradition is equally obvious. Chetna picks up the rope to hang Banarjee and feels scared "but felt proud as I thought that this rope was passed down the hands of my Baba, Dadu and his Dadu" (Meera 124). Also questions on the necessity of hanging and the justice involved in it are problematized by the text. The interviewer in *The Hang woman's Diary* asks, "hanging has never decreased the number of crimes or criminals in any country. Then, is not hanging to death the state's denial of a human being's right to live? By executing the hanging, Chetna, aren't you also being a part of the state's agenda?" (131,132). Chetna's response echoes the responses of all her forefathers, that the executioners are mere tools in the hands of the state. It is the state that concludes upon the crime, the victim and the perpetrator and passes the final verdict; the executioners simply execute the act, so that justice prevails.

When the stories of Chetna's male ancestors were marked in golden ink, the women in their lives were forgotten. When Thaku Ma told Chetna the story of Udayamitra Mullick who became a monk, saddened by the elopement and death of his wife, Chetna responds with the question "what about the women? Were they never sad?" to which Thaku Ma replied, "women can hold back grief" (139, 140). When Chetna asks her did Dadu love her, Thaku Ma said, "man's love and woman's love differ. A man can only love a woman who pleasures him; woman can love even a man who hurts her" (140). Chetna's confusion about her feelings for Sanjiv Kumar Mitra springs from her inability to say 'no'. Ramu Da lovingly discourages Chetna from marrying Sanjiv Mitra. Phanibhushan Mullick however is impressed by the qualification and prosperity of Mitra and forces her to marry him. "I longed to utter a no, but no words came out. My heart desired him, even when he hurts me" (142). At a point where Sanjiv Mitra abuses Chetna in her own house for lowering the TRP of his channel, she fiercely answers back to him and runs inside, hiding her tears. She expects her Ma or Kaki Ma to console her, but they were busy consoling Sanjiv Mitra. Chetna painfully realizes that a man's tears are priceless in comparison to the trivial tears of a woman. Phanibhushan Mullick praises his daughter, but the very moment she back answers to

him, he asks her to shut her mouth because women are not supposed to raise their voices inside his family. The women in the novel are trapped in a suffocating male world.

The victimization and objectification of women is very evident when Sanjiv Kumar Mitra brings in Kokila Banarjee, the wife of the sentenced-to-death Jathindranath Banarjee alongside Chetna, his executioner. The tears of the former and the resoluteness of the latter become the channel's bait for rating. Chetna shivers in the presence of Kokila. Mitra asks the most insensitive question that can only spring from the tongue of patriarchy- "Kokila Di, have you given a thought about your kumkumbindi that simply has a life of ten more days?"(153). Mitra later brings Pratima Ghosh, the mother of Ramesh Chanderghosh, the last hanged culprit. Pratima surprisingly endorses hanging, saying it is better to hang the poor than torture them in jails. Mitra tries his best to evoke tears from her but fails. When he tries to molest Chetna inside the match box-sized house of Pratima Ghosh, she slaps him. The noose that was tied tight between the third and fourth vertebrae of Mitra's neck bore witness to an unusual female sisterhood between the mother of the hanged and the daughter of the hangman.

Chetna clearly explicates the politics of hanging. She says, "I can kill anyone with the noose made out of my dupatta. But it is not expected by the citizens from a responsible government. When the government decides to hang a criminal, it should be executed foolproof. Therefore, the government-appointed hangman/woman can't hang the criminal the way a hitman does"(173). Chetna insists that India is a democratic nation and "Sanjubabu, the government elected by the people get to decide how the citizens should live and die" (175).

The executioner-executed motif is extended to the love-hate relation Chetna Mullick and Sanjiv Mitra share between them. When Chetna has the upper hand in the studio room, she feels powerful like the executioner and longs to tighten the noose around his neck. While he behaves playfully and expresses his love, she melts and the love frozen inside her starts flowing and then she exchanges roles with him, becoming the executed, with the noose tight around her neck, precisely between the third and fourth vertebrae.

Reference to Pingalakeshini, the only hangwoman in the Mullick family before Chetna abounds in the twenty second chapter. "When Pingalakeshini laughed, the house as well as the land were destroyed"(215). She had to suffer physical violence at the hands of many men and as a revenge, she killed all nine children born from her womb using their umbilical cord as the noose. After the conquest of Balban, Pingalakeshini demanded him the job of the executioner to execute her violators. Sanjiv Mitra asks Chetna why did Pingalakeshini opt to be an executioner when she could have wreaked vengeance on the violators even otherwise. Chetna replies "all that I can say is that the wrath of some women do not end by simply killing a man" (220). What Chetna did not tell Mitra was the fact that Pingalakeshini hung Thumkhanke seven hundred and twenty-seven times. However, her story is unrecorded in history, which celebrates Chetna as India's first ever hangwoman. History has always been partial towards women. When Ramu Da tells Chetna that she now has a place in history, Chetna says "I am scared of History". He replies, "All women are". Chetna finds it to be slightly

faulty: “it is not women who are afraid of history. it is history who is afraid of the women. This is why very few women find place in history” (237). Even when the world looks up to Chetna, her world merely revolves around two men – her Baba PhanibhushanMullick, whom she is afraid to defy and Sanjiv Mitra whom she is afraid to love or hate. Chetna’s body is the embodiment of Indian womanhood, yet that body is regulated by men. She sometimes resists and mostly succumbs to the force.

The patriarchal state that overpowers the feminine presence is evident in Meera’s *Arachaar*, though not explicitly; it functions in the most subterranean fashion within the novel. The presence of the state is experienced in the form of the figure of the executioner, who functions for the state. Chetna, who is appointed as the first hangwoman of Indian nation and performs a task, the prospects of which make even men shiver fails to resist this powerful patriarchal presence in the form of the state. It is also very evident that women, especially, Thaku Ma and Kaki Ma are carriers of patriarchy who fears the world to stop when women laugh loud or tread hard. Meera realistically portrays the plight of women inside an essentially male nation in the novel *Araachaar*.

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# DALIT MOTHERHOOD: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF CASTE EXPERIENCES IN SUJATHA GIDLA'S *ANTS AMONG ELEPHANTS* & YASHICA DUTT'S *COMING OUT AS DALIT*

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**Abstract:** *Dalit autobiographies and memoirs open up a new paradigm of scholarship by the revelation of caste discrimination and humiliation that has largely remained invisible to both academia and popular culture. Among Dalits, Dalit women come under the most vulnerable section of society as the subject of caste oppression from upper caste, as laborers subject to class-based oppression and as women from patriarchal society including men of their own caste. This paper endeavors to conduct a comparative study of the experience of Dalit women as mothers in Sujatha Gidla's *Ants among Elephants: An Untouchable Family and the Making of Modern India* (2017) and Yashica Dutt's *Coming Out as Dalit* (2019). The selected texts portray atypical mother figures who are in search of attaining some sense of dignity and self-worth in a world filled with preoccupied caste notions which denies them these values. This study focuses on depiction of motherhood and its relation to women's sense of identity. Mothers here resist stereotypical gender-ascribed roles of dalit woman and/or dalit mother.*

**Keywords:** *motherhood, dalit, caste, gender, experiences*

Indian society, known for its unique system of stratification embedded with purity, categorized people into a four-layered caste system topping Brahmin to least pure Shudra. This structure is added by Ati-shudra or Dalit, a group comes below all others and occupies lowest ladder in the caste system. Broken or scattered; as etymological meaning of the word Dalit says, they are considered untouchable, looked down by all other castes and sidelined into margins of society. "Dalit women bear the embodiment of pollution doubly: through their status as outcaste and through their female bodies... As women, their female bodies, also assigned at birth, carry untouchability through biological functions including menstruation and childbirth" (Hibbs, 273). Historically, motherhood is glorified as an eternal role and sole identity for women. Studies focused upon celebrated 'ma' figures in visual and literary narratives like the concept of 'mother India', but such narrative analysis knowingly or unknowingly stood away from bringing dalit mothers into literary paradigm. Dalit women writer's depiction of their own everyday life through the forms of autobiographies and memoirs successfully brought caste and gendered discrimination as Dalit women into academia.

Sujatha Gidla (1963- ), Indian American author and activist, is popularly known for her memoir *Ants among Elephants: An Untouchable Family and the Making of Modern India* (2017). She was born and brought up in a Dalit community in Andhra Pradesh and moved to United States at the age of 26. Gidla is considered among the new faces of Dalit literature. Yashica Dutt (1986- ), is a journalist, activist and writer of caste related social issues. Her first literary work *Coming Out as Dalit* was published in 2019. Born in a Valmiki dalit family, lived in disguise as Brahmin *Coming Out as Dalit* is Dutt's quest for her true identity. Rigid caste system and suppressed female voices depicted as dominant concern in these selected works. The objective of this paper is to examine complexity of dalit motherhood and its relation to women's sense of identity in *Ants among Elephants* and *Coming Out as Dalit*.

Gidla's text deals with poverty and fight against caste in a dalit family of three generations located in a town called Kazipet, situated in Andhra Pradesh. Having been born into an untouchable caste they suffer immense tragedies and pain in the story. The lives of Sathyam, Manjula and Gidla are retelling of systemic caste/ gender discrimination in family household, academic institutions, political organization etc. Manjula, breaking all odds, crossing boundaries of village, acquiring masters from a Central University in Uttar Pradesh. Even though excelling in studies and not getting deserved marks due to untouchable caste identity Manjula comes out with flying colours. She had to face such challenges again in various stages of life from colleagues, superiors, house owners and even from hospital attendees. Marriage, children and ever present caste identity takes a toll on the independent professional young woman's life. Dutt's narrative follows the troublesome life of a mother-daughter duo, who hide their lower caste dalit identity for social acceptance and pretends to be upper caste Brahmin. It recounts living with the exhausting burden and constant fear of being found out. The writer took more than two decades to shake off the fake identity and stand for herself. The setting occupied by the women in both texts differ acutely, yet they are united by the struggle to attain some sense of dignity and self-worth.

The writers present complexity of Dalit motherhood in a unique way which allows them to move away from conventional boundaries of traditional motherhood. Dalit women as mothers rooted in gendered and caste oppression yet intersect in diverse ways in individual experiences. The concept of black intersectionality originated in black feminist theory to separate first world, race, gender and class intersection from euro-centric experiences. Dalit feminists adapted caste, gender and class as important intersections in Indian context. "In both contexts, intersectionality operates as a tool to observe and address the patriarchal injustices faced by the most marginalized and vulnerable women in the world" (Rege, 171). Dalit women/mothers are most prone to violence from caste (as untouchable), class (from upper class labors), gender (men including their own caste) factors. Gidla narrates Manjula's experience of third delivery and tubectomy in the text,

"After the operation, they did not give her penicillin, because her family had yet to find the money to buy it... the pakis working as janitors in government hospitals often behave cruelly toward patients who are poor...She violently pulled off Manjula's sheet. For hours the blood had been oozing out at her incision, soaking the sheet, and as blood dried, the sheet got stuck to her stitches. Tearing off that sheet, this woman ripped the incision open" (262).

The deep pain she suffered mixed with the pain of every dalit woman who lacks the privilege of upper caste, wealth and 'male body'. In another part, young Gidla remembers her father chasing her mother to beat for waking up late.

"The terrified woman—her mother—disheveled, her hand wounded, utterly naked, running to save herself. The man—Sujatha's father, her beloved father—chasing after her mother, who, desperate, ran out of the house. Her father went after her. Sujatha's mother ran around to the other side of the well. Her father followed. He pretended to start chasing her mother in one direction, and when she tried to run away, he turned around and caught her from the



other side. The children's grandmother stood looking on with pride at her son's display of manliness" (295/296)

In *Coming Out as Dalit* narrator's mother dreamed of becoming IPS officer, but her marriage, dealing with her husband's drunken abuse, early pregnancy leads to shattering her childhood dream and ends up trying to kill herself. Even though the selected mothers succumb to patriarchal abuse but in a longer run they come out of the conventional boundaries of rigid motherhood. Manjula single handedly manages her three young children, without spousal support and moves to her new job along with them. Worse domestic conditions or gender/caste bias in job or unfaithful abusive husband cannot resist her from leading a respectful life. She hails as a self-reliant modern working-class woman with an exemplifying outlook. Whereas the mother in Dutt's narrative breaks away all glorified ideas of super woman/mother. She remains like any other human being who failed to build an ideal life but uses every chance in front of her making her life a better one. After the loss of her husband's job she tries her hand in various jobs. Patriarchal India protected womanhood sometimes worshiping as goddesses or hailing as mother India or claiming mother status to idealized female bodies. Such narratives underline the fact that glorification itself is patriarchy and real woman experiences lie far away from such images. These memoirs successfully come out not dehumanizing mothers in their text and celebrating them as any other human being who are not perfectly idealized larger than life characters but simply as practical individuals in any other society. As per existing social norms motherhood is the ultimate identity of woman and not becoming mother is considered as less of a woman. Academic qualifications, career achievements, and financial success are valued less than child bearing ability in patriarchal norms. Both mother figures in the selected texts find their own identity apart from being a mother. Manjula finds her identity as a lecturer of History and Sashi (Dutt's mother) tries her hand in tailoring, candle making, teaching, etc. Thus, mother characters in *Ants among Elephants* and *Coming out as Dalit's* can read as alternatives to historical stereotyping in depicting mother figures who instigate their own distinct individuality regardless of society's reservations and limitations.

The selected mothers are not playing a passive role but face bitter realities of social existence. Instead of simply staring at poverty, domestic violence, human rights violence and caste segregation they actively participate in each struggle. Sashi was denied the right to choose the subject she wanted to study and the college she wanted to go for higher education, both women had no active role in whom/ when they wanted to marry. Dutt explains,

"Mum's heart had been set on Allahabad University, arguably the best university in Uttar Pradesh at the time, whose illustrious alumni included poet Harivansh Rai Bachchan and writer Mahadevi Verma. But Allahabad, which was farther from home, was unacceptable, especially after a distant relative, who was neither a fan of women's autonomy nor quality education, had informed her father that girls at Allahabad University smoked cigarettes and drank alcohol. He suggested that keeping Mum closer to home would make it easier to keep a check on her; unsurprisingly, that idea appealed to her father" (3).

The decision makers were fathers and brothers of the family even though they both lived in completely different parts of India, with different socio-economic settings. Yet they tried to participate in each role of decision making. Dutt's mother was adamant about giving the best education to her children even though she could not afford it. She was criticized by her own family and in-laws for spending too much money on a girl's education. However, she along with her husband managed to pay the fee by selling property or pawning jewelry. She valued education above all earthly possessions.

Education is considered to be a great uplifting tool among Dalits and the best way to attain respectability and dignity. This tool was constantly denied to them for generations by upper castes. From a very young age they internalized 'otherness' from school via their seating positions or economic factors or red marked id card/attendance books. In a study about experiencing Dalitness, Sara Sindhu Thomas writes, "The inferiority and humiliation are ingrained in them from childhood, they grow up internalizing this inferiority and humiliation. The consequence of such treatment is so damaging to their self-esteem that they are very often- even after they mature into adults- unable to pull themselves out of that mental make-up. They go about believing and accepting their condition as something that is inevitable to those belonging to the lower caste" (252). Dalit life can read as an attempt to gain self-worth and dignity in a world filled with preconceived caste notions. Sashi's desperate attempt to fit in upper class by hiding their dalit identity faking as Brahmin throughout her life is a way to gain better opportunities and respect only a dalit can dream of. Dutt confess "Until I came out as Dalit, I passed as an upper-caste Hindu... passing refers to an elaborate posturing by mimicking the costumes, traditions and manners of a majority community" (7). She further adds, her parents mimicked the upper-class habits even though they couldn't afford it. The performance was to break out from lower caste. The most embarrassing parade of the year for young Datt was her birthday party with fairy tale cake, decorations and invitations to classmates she hardly spoke to. Dutt recalls the incident as "an assertion that we are 'equal' of the upper castes" (20). Other hurdles to pass as an upper caste were speaking perfect English, fitting in the top convent school of Ajmeer and picking up little details like how upper caste girls spoke, braided their hair or tucked in their sheets etc. Dutt explains,

"So the only choice was to maintain the upper-caste aura. Mum feared that without necessary trappings, my outing as a Dalit would happen in less than a week. So she spent money we clearly didn't have on more expensive things that would make up for my caste...kid's shoe of 1992, high quality buckets and mugs from shiny plastic and matte gold studs for my ears meant to convey that we were rich so that no one would wonder if we were the right caste"( 26).

Living with the fake identity for more than decades Dutt narrates the exhausting burden of being found out and guilty of not being true to herself. Though the mother's attempt was to be treated as respectful dignified individuals in society, it took a toll on her daughter's mental health and self-respect. Burdened with the evil nature of caste and responsibility of the lives of their children these mothers do whatever appears necessary for the survival, dignity and better life for their children.

The oppressive caste structure, combined with gender discrimination suppress Dalit women into abusive positions within the social construct. Dalit women are easier

targets of abuse by upper caste men, women and men of their own community. Lack of financial empowerment force Dalit women to cling to even abusive husbands. Girls have to leave their own home during marriage and move to their husband's home at a very young age. They are forced to leave the security of home by this arrangement. Even in educational institutions or workplaces they are ridiculed and abused by the upper caste. The respect imposed upon upper caste/ Brahmin can never possible for untouchable Dalit. They have to work hard their entire life to earn such respect. In one of her writings Bama recalls psychological trauma she went through when she was falsely accused of stealing coconut from school premises. Similarly, Gidla recounts tortures she had to go through under caste Hindu superiority.

“Despite the problems at her workplace, her infants and poverty infected with caste–gender barriers, Manjula braves the odds and bequeaths one of the most important contributions that goes beyond SM, which is to be a self-reliant woman who is directing, supporting and birthing revolution Manjula becomes a woman like other Dalit women who deserve a place in the books of feministic diaries that transcend convoluted forms of gender-ascribed roles. Manjula in many terms represents the Dalit women of today.” (Yengde, 112)

Even confined into double or triple oppression Dalit women come out of the status of victim. They try to seek a greater role for themselves and in a caste discriminated male dominated public sphere. Gidla and Dutt use their life narratives as testimonies to challenge mistreating Dalit women within the constraints of caste and gender by either glorifying or slut shaming their gendered presence in public domain. Both narrators as new faces of current Dalit literature bring many unseen elements in modern professional dalit women’s lives. Thus, Dalit autobiographies and memoirs open up new paradigm of scholarship by the revelation of caste discrimination and humiliation that have been largely remained invisible to both academia and popular culture. The setting occupied by the dalit women in two texts differ acutely, yet they are united by the common ground in gendered caste abuse. They portray atypical mother figures in society and their quest for self-worth and dignity using various options open up for them.

In a society where maternity is considered as an integral part of a woman’s state of being, these life stories arise the question of maternity being an unavoidable condition for a woman’s fulfillment in life. And what would happen if young women choose freedom and independence over the concept of family and motherhood. In the selected texts the mothers Manjula Gidla and Sashi Dutt were not allowed to choose what they wanted in their life but both gave those choices to their daughters. In other words, it took a generation of woman life to come forefront of family/social paradigm, with lifelong abuse, fight and sacrifice to give their daughters freedom to choose which is considered beyond imagination for any dalit young woman.

Both Sujatha Gidla and Yashica Dutt enjoy a greater sense of identity in their lives rather than being confined to patriarchal ideas of motherhood. Both succeeded in getting higher education from the best institutions in the world and were able to lead fulfilling professional lives. Both move casteless foreign countries and tell their stories as representatives of many voiceless dalit women still suffocating in the chains of caste.

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# A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE RUSSIAN, INDIAN AND CHINESE SOFT POWER IN WEST ASIA

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**Abstract:** *Soft Power pioneered by Joseph Nye has become an important discourse among many academic enthusiasts. It encompasses a disparate range of issues like culture, foreign policy and political values, though is not limited to the mentioned three sets. This paper seeks to analyse the Russian, Indian and Chinese soft power in West Asia. First, the paper explains the concept of soft power and the importance of the grouping Russia, India and China (RIC). Russia, India and China as a grouping was coined by the then Russian Prime Minister Yevgeni Primakov and ever since the RIC has become the foundation of a multi polar, polycentric, anti-hegemonic world order. Second, the paper examines the variables namely, culture, diasporas and economic engagement of RIC with the West Asian countries. It must be mentioned that despite Russia, India and China have independent foreign policy; soft power has been an important instrument of their foreign policies. West Asia as a region continues to be the seat of rich culture and heritage, yet has vulnerable populace who look forward to peace and development. This region has witnessed great socio-economic and political unrest, the ramifications of which have been experienced world over. RIC has a global dimension as like West Asia they too have been ancient civilisations. This paper attempts to examine how RIC has explored its soft power for the betterment of the West Asian region and its population.*

**Keywords:** *Soft Power, Russia, India, China, foreign policy, culture*

## Introduction

The dynamic demeanour of international actors keeps everyone perplexed. What is certain in international politics is the element of uncertainty. The conscious decision of U.S. President Trump to withdraw from the nuclear deal and the perpetration of violence on Iran thereafter, has consolidated the rift between U.S.A and Iran whose ramifications have been felt world over. Many media analysts assume that the seeds of World War III have been sown. Some even have made a categorical mention of putting it as 'Hashtag it World War III' (Roberts, 2020). No qualms, hard power is here to stay, if the only realist agenda of international actors is to resort to war for protecting their national interest. The use of guns and bullets, annihilation of humanity (in case a nuclear war breaks out), sabotages the positive image of the country inflicting violence. It has been argued that despite a direct confrontation between Tehran and Washington seemed unlikely, however, the intensification of Iran's proxy war in West Asia (Iraq, Syria, Lebanon and Yemen) is likely and there seemed no halt in the operations of the 'Axis of the Resistance' comprising Lebanon, Iraq, Syria, Yemen and Palestine (Jahanbegloo, 2020). The use of force finds justification in the UN Charter only on two grounds. Article 2(4) of the UN Charter prohibits members from using force against a state's "territorial integrity or political interference", with two exceptions: first, when a state uses force in the lawful exercise of its right to self-defence, and second, when such an act is carried out with the UN Security Council's prior approval (UNSC). Trump justified the attack on grounds of 'anticipatory self-defence' (Sanklecha, 2020). 'Coercion though would remain indispensable but would not suffice to enhance a country's influence (Saran, 2019). Hard power (use of force) is not only costly but is morally denigrating too.

Jospeh Nye coined the term ‘Soft Power’ in his celebrated book *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics* which meant the ability of a state to influence the behaviour of other states in order to secure desired outcomes through the means of its culture, political values and foreign policy (Nye, 2011: 84). Fan (2008: 152) argued that soft power is ‘soft’ or ‘tactical power’. Fan further argued that soft power is cumbersome in the sense that the resources work ‘slowly and indirectly, are diffused and also takes years to get desired outcomes’ (Simons, 2013: 07). Having mentioned about soft power let us now briefly understand the important features of Russian, Indian and Chinese soft power.

**RIC: What & Why**

As the global balance of power tilts towards the Pacific, the rise of Russia, India and China have become an undeniable certainty. The term Russia, India and China popularly called as RIC (henceforth), was pioneered by the then Russian Prime Minister Yevgeni Primakov on his visit to New Delhi in 1999 to counter the western alliance and has often been dubbed by the Russian media as ‘Primakov’s triangle’ (Das, 2010). Through this, Primakov had sent signals in two directions: ‘warning to the west and invitation to the east’ (Mohanty, 2001: 77). Russian, India and China ‘span two continents, link three oceans and represent forty percent of global populace’ (Wang, 2013). The three have been ancient civilisations and have contributed abundantly to the world culture. A brief description of RIC has been outlined as in the following table:

Country	Area (1000 sq.km)	Capital	Currency	GDP US (\$) 2016
Russia	17,125	Moscow	Rouble	1,286
India	3,287	New Delhi	Rupee	2,273
China	9,600	Beijing	Renminbi	11,203

**Table 1: Key Statistics about Russia, India and China**

Source: BRICS Joint Statistical Report, 2017 (2017:10).

Stating the importance of RIC, former Foreign Secretary, Government of India, Ambassador Kanwal Sibal reiterated that ‘multi polar world has become the foundational ethos of the RIC trilateral venture with a sincere rejection of a unipolar world order’ (Varma, 2018). These three ancient civilisations have time and again propagated a multi polar world order by challenging the ‘core’ countries and have also given a new perspective to global political comprehension, thus forming what Tabata (2015: 01) called as an ‘intermediary layer’. Mahapatra (2013) argued that RIC would be playing the role of a ‘balancer’ in global affairs be it polity or economy. They are also part of many multilateral groupings like BRICS, SCO, G 20 etc. The three countries are also nuclear powers and the stability of South Asia majorly depends upon their camaraderie; they have functional nuclear war heads: Russia - 6,850; India - 135 and China - 280 warheads (Arms Control Association, 2018).

The Institute of Chinese Studies (ICS), New Delhi mentioned the principle of the “Three No’s” of RIC namely: no confrontation, no bloc and no targeting against third countries. The ICS website states: “RIC countries, by rejecting the policy of force, following the instruments of dialogue, ‘soft power’ and cross civilisation dialogue has contributed in the process of elimination of imbalances and relaxation of turbulence in

international politics” (Institute of Chinese Studies). The regular annual meetings of the RIC foreign ministers have been taking place which have been briefly mentioned in the following table:

<b>Year</b>	<b>Meeting and Place</b>
2011	11 <sup>th</sup> RIC in Beijing
2012	12 <sup>th</sup> RIC in New Delhi
2014	13 <sup>th</sup> RIC in Moscow
2015	14 <sup>th</sup> RIC in Beijing
2017	15 <sup>th</sup> RIC in New Delhi
2018	16 <sup>th</sup> RIC in New Delhi
2019	17 <sup>th</sup> RIC in Beijing

**Table 2: RIC Meetings**

Source: Institute of Chinese Studies Website

RIC is required for a stable South Asia as much as it is required for Russia, India and China as well as stability in other regions. Volkhonsky (2015) reiterated that the need for the consolidation of RIC was to ‘integrate an isolated India for Eurasia and the Asia Pacific region, developing economic cooperation mechanisms, and all this was consolidated by India’s inclusion in the SCO endorsed by Russia and China’. Shortly before the 14<sup>th</sup> RIC Ministerial meeting Russian Foreign Ministry mentioned: “Russia considers the RIC dialogue mechanism an important element of multilateral net diplomacy, working in the interests of establishing a fair world order, formation of overwhelming, equal and indivisible security architecture in the Asia Pacific region and its inclusive sustainable economic development” (Tass 2016). The 14th RIC meeting focused on the Middle East peace process, the situation in Afghanistan, and the resolution of the political crisis in Ukraine (ibid). Also, a similar triangle called the USA-India-China has emerged. NBR Analyst John Graver said: “The crux of the new triangle is that each other fears alignment of the other two against itself. This fear exists for all three actors but is especially strong for the two weaker state actors, China and India. China and India have each taken action to counter a perceived link up of the other with the United States”.

To analyse soft power of RIC in West Asia seems adventurous. It is known that Russia has been explicitly using its hard power along with the U.S.A in West Asia. China’s economic prowess and India’s diaspora engagement looks promising. Pethiyagoda (2017) mentioned “While the United States and Russia have long displayed their military power, and China is known for its economic power, India’s presence in the Gulf is distinctly shaped by its massive expat community there”. Having understood RIC and its importance let’s now understand their soft power in West Asia. Because the horizon of soft power is magnanimous therefore for the purpose of study three variables namely, culture, diasporas and economic engagement have been taken. Let’s deliberate on all three.

### **Russian Culture**

In the pre-Soviet period, Russia’s involvement with West Asia began with Iran (modern day Turkey) in the form of pilgrimage, tourism, cultural exchange (Syria and Palestine). On both an official and popular level, Russia’s moral credentials among Arabs were higher than the Western counterpart. Its most important lobby in the region

was that of the local Christian Orthodox, who were protected from Turkish authorities and Greek clergy by Russian envoys. The presence of Russia's hard power is known in West Asia, however, lesser known is the presence of Russian soft power i.e. culture in this region and therefore, this paper analyses Russian culture in West Asia. Despite propaganda elements were present during the Soviet period; however, Russian soft power has emerged only recently. Russia sees itself as being at a disadvantage on the international stage as a result of a negative image and reputation caused by a "lack of comprehension" and "bad (non-objective) information in the global information environment" (Simons 2013: 08). Russia is on its approach to regaining the level of soft power that the USSR once had in its immediate zone of influence, says Fiona Hill, a Brookings Institution researcher (Myers 2004). In terms of Russian foreign policy, Lukyanov (2013) has identified three objectives: the *first* is to "promote Russian culture, the Russian language, and the Russian education system as attractive and competitive"; the *second* is to "counter foreign media's negative portrayal of the country's policies and way of life"; *thirdly*, by conducting International Festivals of Youth and Students, Russia hopes to "build a group of Russia's friends around the world".

Russia is twice the size of the United States, with over a hundred ethnonational groupings, including a sizable Islamic population accounting for more than 15% of the overall population. Although Russia is predominantly Christian, its Eastern Orthodox Christianity differs from the Western tradition. As a close neighbour of the Middle East for more than a millennium, Russia is actively involved in all Middle Eastern affairs. Russia's contacts with the Middle East in the pre-Soviet era were mostly with Iran and modern-day Turkey. Pilgrimage, tourism, cultural exchanges (Syria and Palestine), and modest business enterprise were among Russia's interactions with the Arab world. Its most important lobby in the region was that of the local Christian Orthodox, who were protected from Turkish authorities and Greek clergy by Russian envoys.

In the Soviet days, the Fourth Congress of the Communist International in November 1922 mentioned: "that in certain circumstances, transitory (communist) alliances were acceptable to include the feudal aristocracy and the pan-Islamic movement". Bolsheviks after the revolution courted the Arab world, but its enthusiasm waned after a few years. After WWII, the Soviet Union backed the establishment of Israel, but afterwards backed extreme Arab nationalist parties in Egypt, Syria, and Iraq. Soviet military and economic help, as well as political clout in the Middle East, peaked in the late 1960s. The end of the Soviet's active participation in the Arab world was highlighted by the First Gulf War and the Madrid Peace Conference in 1991.

Russian Federation was established in 1991. In June 2004, an Egyptian journalist commented, "no one denied that Russia is not what it once was. But is still a major player in the international scene, and its political position on the Middle East Peace, Iraq and terror is one which the Arabs happen to agree" (Kreutz, 2007). Russia's large Muslim population has an impact on its foreign policy making process, and indirectly influences its foreign policy towards Arab world. Iran is not an Arab country but is a Muslim nation. Russia protects the interests of Iran in the United Nations along with China. Russia was granted Observer status at the 32<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the Organisation of Islamic Conference on June 30, 2005. Speaking at this event Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov stressed that Russia is an integral of both the Christian and Islamic



worlds and “its historical mission is to make the contribution to strengthening of the unity of the world civilisation” (ibid).

In 1994, Moscow strengthened diplomatic ties with Syria because of its strategic location, which allowed Russia to bypass Turkey and Iraq, where the Syrian Communist Party had gained some clout. Russian soft power is still nascent and needs to grow. Russia’s goal in Iraq focuses on the preservation of Iraqi territorial integrity, its political stability, U.S. withdrawal from the country, and the protection of Russia’s remaining economic interest. As goes for Egypt, in contrast to Saudi Arabia, Egypt has offered little support to the spiritual Islamic revival in Russia and maintained close ties with Moscow. It can be considered symbolically important that Egypt was the destination of the new Russian Prime Minister Mikhail Fradkov who himself is a Jew. In 2001 Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov said: “from the development of pilgrimages to the Holy Land, the construction in the last century of Russian schools and hospitals, to the training of a large army of qualified specialists, the equipping of large industrial enterprises, contributing to the development of the national economies of a range of Arab countries” (Kreutz, 2007).

**Indian Diaspora**

India’s diaspora has been a significant tool in the country’s foreign policy. The Indian diaspora has proven to be a valuable source of soft power. According to the United Nations’ International Organization for Migration, India is the greatest country of origin for international migrants, with a diaspora of 17.5 million people spread throughout the globe, and it receives the highest remittance of \$78.6 billion from Indians living abroad (The Hindu, 2019). If we analyse the Indian diaspora in the Middle East region, it is both loud in quantity as well as quality. Below is a list of overseas Indians residing in different regions of the West Asia:

Country	Non-Resident Indians (NRIs)	Persons of Indian Origin (PIOs)	Overseas Indians
Bahrain	3,12,918	3,257	3,16,175
Cyprus	5,730	128	5,858
Egypt	3,500	265	3,765
Georgia	3,192	8	3,200
Iran	4,000	273	4,273
Iraq	10,000	0	10,000
Israel	12,467	85,000	97,467
Jordan	20,050	157	20,207
Kuwait	928,421	1482	9,29,903
Lebanon	8,500	37	8,537
Libya	1,500	2	1,502
Morocco	258	96	354
Oman	6,88,226	919	6,89,145
Palestine	20	0	20
Qatar	6,91,539	500	6,92,039
Saudi Arabia	2,812,408	2160	2,814,567
Tunisia	121	16	137
Turkey	1609	99	1708
U.A.E	3,100,000	4586	3,104,586
Yemen	500	10,000	10,500

**Table 3: Population of Overseas Indians in West Asia**

Source: Population of Overseas Indians in 2018, Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India.

Traders from India began migrating to West Asia in the 6th century AD, and Persian Gulf ports such as Aden and Socorro had thriving Indian merchant communities. Arab merchants were also welcomed in various Indian cities, including Calicut. India was a close diplomatic and commercial partner for the Saffavids and Mughals. From Afghanistan through Baku, Azerbaijan, and from Bandar Abbas, Iran, to Alexandria, Egypt, trade was strongly established. The Sultan of Egypt was said to receive 600,000 crusaders each year in the 15th century as a result of customs duties imposed on spice traders from India. Gujarati merchants dominated Central Asia, Baku while Indian business groups like Sindhi, Battias and Luwatiyyas dominated Muscat in the 18<sup>th</sup> century contributing towards the 'internalisation of trade' in Muscat (Jain, 2007: 153). The importance of Indian traders in the Gulf region's socioeconomic development cannot be overstated. The Bombay presidency was the administrative capital of the Persian Gulf during the British rule, and the Indian rupee was the primary currency. Dubai's socio-cultural growth was aided by the establishment of schools and literary societies by Indian and Persian traders (ibid).

Following the discovery of oil, Indians began to emigrate in sizeable numbers during the 1930s and led to the development of Bahrain Petroleum Company. In 1949, Indian expatriates also made up 86 per cent of the ministerial technical staff in the Kuwait Oil Company. The Indian populace in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries<sup>3</sup> constituted about 11 percent of the total population vast majority of whom resided in Saudi Arabia (46 per cent) and the UAE (27 per cent) in 2002: white collar jobs, skilled and semi skilled Indian workers are present in large numbers (Rajan and Nair, 2007: 222). This number has risen considerably over less than two decades. There has always been a shortage of skilled manpower in the Gulf and the Indian workers have created a positive image of India as they are known for being peaceful, adjusting and laborious. According to the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs, India's diverse culture, "in which people of many faiths, languages, races, and political persuasions co-exist and thrive" is critical to the country's positive migratory and labour mobility (ibid, 2017).

From the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, Indian traders were known to import pearls and dates from the U.A.E region in exchange for Indians textiles. After the World War II, the number of Indians in the region began to increase exponentially. Three-quarters of Indian workers in the U.A.E were unskilled workers, a large majority of whom were from the South Indian states, particularly from Kerala. Indians in the U.A.E have developed social and cultural activities on a large scale, based on linguistic and regional identities. They have established Indian schools, built temples, gurudwaras and have also been allowed to set up cremation grounds for the benefit of their community (ibid, 2007: 225).

According to UAE government figures, the population of the UAE was 93, 04,277 in 2017, with three-quarters of the population being immigrants from other countries, including India. Mr. Yusuff Ali M.A (Padamshree in 2008), Mr. Syed M. Salahuddin, Mr. B.R. Shetty (Padamshree in 2009), Mr. Krishnamurty Kumar, Dr. J.R. Gangaramani (Padamshree in 2010), Dr. Azad Moopen (Padamshree in 2011), Mr.

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<sup>3</sup> Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) consists of Saudi Arabia, Oman, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates. In all the Gulf countries, Islam is the state religion, the Sharia is the basic law and the Arabic is the only official language.

Krishnamurthy Kumar, Dr. J.R. Gangaramani ( (Padamshree in 2011),Mr. Mohan Jashanmal, Mr.P.Bava Haji, Dr. Zulekha Daud, Mr. Surendra SinghKhandari, Mr. Girish Pant etc. The India Social and Cultural Centre (ISC) in Abu Dhabi had received the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award (The Ministry of External Affairs).

During the 1970s in Dubai, the Indians constituted a large proportion of the manpower in trade and commerce. Hindi was used widely in the market place. Indians occupies supervisory and technical positions in electric power plants and hospitals. As of recent years, Indian culture has been accommodated well in Dubai. Cinemas screening Malayam and Hindi Bollywood movies have become popular, Indian restaurants have opened in large numbers, Indian stores selling Indian designer clothes and jewellery are in vogue, Indian schools affiliated to C.B.S.E (like the Indian High School) and I.C.S.E curricula with Indian teachers have been doing well (IR, 2019).

Likewise, in Abu Dhabi the Indian community organisations such as the Indian Centre, Malayalee Samajam, Kerala Art Centre, Indian Ladies Association, Indian Islamic Centre and ST. Joseph's Club have been formed that cater to the Indians living there. Key figures of the Indian diaspora have helped in building bilateral ties: E. Ahamed, a Kerala native, coordinated a crisis management team in reaction to the kidnapping of three Indians in Iraq in 2004 and assisted in their release (ibid). Rich, influential and philanthropic Indians in the Gulf included B.R. Shetty (founder of NMC, one of UAE's largest health care provider), Padam Shri Yusuff Ali M.A. (founder of Lulu Group, one of the largest supermarket chains across GCC), Sunny Varkey (founder of GEMS chain of schools), Sunil Vaswani (founder Stallion Group), Dr. Shamsheer Vayalil (VPH Healthcare) and Joy Alukkas (founder of Joyalukkas Group which is a jewellery group) (Anderson, 2018). In the field of art, Muhammed Jumaa Khan is considered one of Yemen's greatest singers (Reeves and Knehtl, 2007: 235).

The Indian community in Bahrain have had a long history. In the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Indian merchant established import business in rise, tea, sugar and shoes, subsidised Arab smugglers of gold and pearls, and even managed to trade opium from Kabul to Bombay. The Indians are Bahrain's largest expatriate community and account for 30 per cent of its total workforce. Indian workers who are employed as skilled and semi skilled labourers account for 70 percent of the Indian diaspora in Bahrain. However, Indian housemaids who are less in numbers occasionally face problems of maltreatment. The Indian community has established schools and socio-cultural associations. There are 43 such organisations including Keraleeya Samajam. These function under the Coordination Committee of Indian Associations (CCIA) (ibid, 2007: 227).

The Indian community in Qatar are known as hard working, law abiding and sincere. They have technical expertise. Many are affluent and therefore send annual remittances from Qatar to India. The Indian community in Qatar has established schools affiliated to C.B.S.E and also Kerala State Education Board syllabuses. An Indian cultural centre functions under the aegis of Indian embassy. It oversees the activities of nearly 50 socio cultural organisations (ibid).

Talking about other countries of West Asia like Yemen, Israel and Turkey the Indian communities have flourished in these areas also.

In Yemen, the Gujarati community had established trade links and settled in Mocha. A fleet of 20 Gujarati vessels – ‘the fleet of Hindustan’ – made the journey each year to Mocha particularly to service the great Haj markets at Jeddah and Mecca. The bania community from Kathiawar, wealthy Bohra community from Ahmadabad and Muslim merchants from Surat settled in Yemen. During the British period the port of Aden and the coastal area of the Hadhramaut, running eastward as far as Omani territory of Dhofar was under the Bombay administration from 1839 until 1939. As a result, influx of considerable number of Indians occurred. The Parsi merchants from Bombay like Sorabji Cowasji, Edulji Manockji, Cowasji Dinshaw and others were well connected. In the present day Yemen, Indians are concentrated in large numbers in Al Mukalla, Ash Shihr, Lahij province Mocha port and Al Hudaydah (Reeves and Knehtl, 2007: 235).

In Israel, India’s three Jewish communities – Kochi, Bene Israel (from the Konkan coast near Mumbai) and Baghdadi (Arabic speaking Jews) have had its own history. Kochi’s Jews migrated due to the biblical philosophy of ‘Land of Israel’ to help build a Jewish homeland. Many Jews had an undaunted commitment to make aliyah – the process of immigration to Israel. Economic reason also figured. The Jews in Kerala migrated due to the land refoem policies of the Communist government in 1979. The Kochi Jews are found in Moshav Nevatim and women have congregated to sing Malayalam songs. They also play mediator roles between Kerala and Israel (Katz, 2007: 239).

Though marginal in number, the Bene Israel Jews in India met Mahatma Gandhi in 1938 and supported the national movement. The Bene Israel are a much larger community and are more visible in Israel. They have transported the malida rite a propitiation of Prophet Elijah, who is believed to have visited India (ibid).

In ancient period (2<sup>nd</sup> millennium BC) the empire of Mitanni in Anatolia, Turkey had Indo-Aryan ruling nobility with typical Indian names such as Mitra and Varuna. The Archaemenid or Old Persian Empire included both Northwest India and the territory of present day Turkey. With the acquisition of Arabia in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the Ottoman Empire witnessed huge numbers of Indian Muslims travelling to Mecca and Medina, scared cities of Islam which were protected by the Turks. Turkey also became destinations for Indian revolutionaries during the Khilafat movement like Abdurrabb Barg (officer in the British Foreign Political Department). Indian expatriates are settled in Istanbul, Izmir, Bodrum, and Mrmaris; the growing trade led to the establishment of direct flights between Istanbul and New Delhi in September, 2003 (Kotin, 2007: 241).

### **Chinese Economic Engagement**

As previously stated, China's soft power is primarily motivated by economic considerations. The use of “trade, investment, and finance policies to support China’s diplomatic, political, and strategic purposes, with a focus on securing resources, expanding export markets, and promoting China's soft power to advance China's economic development” has been defined as the Chinese concept of economic diplomacy (Wang, 2004). “State and military diplomacy, as well as whatever other strategy promotes economic advantage, in order to gain access to resources, markets, capital, technologies, or skilled labour for China's economic benefit” is also included in Chinese economic diplomacy (Heath, 2016). State and military diplomacy are part of

China's economic diplomacy. China's economic expansion drives its involvement with the Middle East in particular and the rest of the globe in general. China, according to Chaziza (2019: 24), employed diplomatic tactics to defend and pursue its business investments. China, according to Chaziza and Goldman (2016) “does not intervene in the internal affairs of other sovereign countries until its own national or economic interests are jeopardised” (e.g., the safety of its increasing foreign interests, Chinese citizens, and energy supply). Within the Belt and Road Initiative, China has increased its foreign investment in the Middle East (BRI). China had urged West Asian countries to join the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank as founding members (AIIB). China has also participated in Middle East peacekeeping missions. Chinese observers participated in the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization in the Middle East in 1990, stationed military advisers in Syria, and built its first overseas naval base in Djibouti for Chinese troops to rest and relax. China’s involvement has included contributing to UN peacekeeping forces (e.g., Lebanon), passing UN Security Council resolutions (e.g., Iran nuclear crisis), mediating between conflicting parties (e.g., as in the Syrian government and opposition leaders), appointing special envoys (e.g. Syrian crisis and China’s special envoy on Middle East affairs) or hosting high level dialogues (Chaziza, 2019: 28).

West Asia is a strongly contested region, and China's primary goal in the region is to defend its diaspora and interests. According to the Chinese Ministry of Commerce, Beijing has 14 businesses and 460 employees in Yemen, working on trade projects in oil extraction, telecommunications, construction, roads and bridges, and fisheries (Lee, 2015). Each month, Yemen sells 1.4-1.5 million barrels of Masila crude, primarily to China.

### **BRI in West Asia**

According to Chinese President Xi Jinping, the unrest in West Asia is the result of delayed economic development, hence the ultimate answer is dependent on continued economic development. In a speech to the Arab League in Cairo in January 2016, Chinese President Xi Jinping stated that Beijing should be the "builder of regional peace, promoter of development, booster of development, booster of industrialization, supporter of stability, and partner of people-to-people exchange in the Middle East" through the Belt and Road Initiative (China Daily, 2016). The BRI connects the Red Sea to the Bab al-Mandab Strait, which is controlled by Yemen, and hence has a strategic significance. Yemen is strategically essential for China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and energy security. Yemen's proximity to the Horn of Africa, where Beijing has a significant commercial presence, and its location on the Gulf of Aden, making it a vital location for the Suez Canal, are examples of this. President Xi also offered \$55 billion in investment and loans during his January 2017 visit, including the formation of a \$20 billion common investment fund for the UAE and Qatar, as well as signing \$15 billion in accords with Egypt (The National, 2016).

China is aiming to build industrial cities under the BRI framework, such in Oman (where it will invest \$10.7 billion to transform Duqm into an industrial hub) and Egypt, which has become the heart of the new Maritime Silk Road Initiative (MSRI). China is one of the most significant foreign investors in the new Suez Canal Economic Zone (SCZone), with 86 Chinese companies investing over \$1.1 billion. China has also

assisted in the post-war reconstruction of Syria and Iraq. In West Asia, China has also been involved in humanitarian efforts. President Xi promised \$20 billion in loans to help Arab states with economic reconstruction at the China-Arab States Cooperation Forum's 8th ministerial meeting in Beijing, and pledged that China will provide Palestinians with more than \$15 billion in aid as part of a plan to provide Arab states with more than \$23 billion in lines of credit. Iran became a crucial way station in the BRI project after signing the JCPOA, and both nations pledged to raise commerce to \$600 billion over the next decade. China supports Iran's SCO participation and has urged Tehran to join the AIIB as a founding member. In projects like the Saudi-China Industrial Cluster (Jizan), the China-Oman Industrial Park in Duqm, the China-UAE Production Capacity Demonstration Zone, and the China-Egypt Suez Economic and Trade Cooperation Zone, Chinese enterprises are also gaining engineering and construction contracts. Gwadar in Pakistan and Djibouti in the Horn of Africa are examples of Chinese investments that first gain economic control before converting them to military use (Izzadeen, 2017). Harbor Pan Mediterranean Engineering Company of China is constructing a private port on Israel's Mediterranean coast, and Shanghai International Port Group has been awarded a 25-year licence to manage a deep sea private port in Haifa. China has also proposed investing in a Red Sea-Mediterranean railway (Red-Med railway), which may serve as a substitute for the Suez Canal (Hindy, 2017). The first Chinese cargo train landed in Tehran in February 2016, as part of a Chinese plan to resurrect the historic Silk Road.

## Conclusion

To conclude, one can say that the RIC has emerged as one of the important groupings, an alternative to the West. The three countries have been ancient civilisation and have been part of many groupings. While Russia has used its humanitarian grounds to validate its presence in West Asia, India has to use its diaspora in more effective ways and China has been using its economic investments to further its interest in West Asia. West Asia as a region has been vulnerable and the biggest atrocities of this vulnerability is faced by women and children. The ambit of soft power of Russia, India and China, to say the least tries to address this issue through humanitarian activities, employment generation etc. It is an understood fact that WWIII will be a nuclear war if at all it takes place. In this scenario, the role of soft power of RIC becomes crucial in the region of West Asia. Soft power promotion in West Asia has also helped in advancing the foreign policy objectives of these countries in West Asian region. The humanitarian activities of Russia in has helped to bolster its image there. Likewise, a two-way process of benefit has been brought by the Indian diaspora where they have been able to help India as well as the West Asian countries in which they are residing. Also, Chinese investment has paved way for employment generation etc.

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# ‘DUST’ AS MEDITATION ON LIFE: A READING OF SELECT SUFI AND BHAKTI POETRY

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**Abstract:** *Sufi and Bhakti poets often engage with the elemental in life in their quest for the higher Truth. They frequently engage with the mundane and the material to explain the basic truths of life and hint at the subtle that lies beyond the mundane. This engagement with the elements – the earth, the fire, the air, the water and the sky – in their poetry manifests itself variously – descriptively, analytically, metaphorically and spiritually – to contextualize a point of view or an argument at hand. This paper is an attempt to explore the shades of this elemental interaction that constitute Bhakti and Sufi poetry, with special reference to dust/mitti that informs the poetic worldview of Sheikh Farid, Bulleh Shah and Kabir in particular.*

**Key words:** *Bhakti poetry, Earth, Elements, Dust, Sufi poetry*

Bhakti and Sufi world view, *inter alia*, evolves through an intricate play with the elements. The poets engage with the elements variously and in many forms to describe and reflect on the transitory and capture and concretize the Absolute. This elemental engagement, in fact informs their worldview, its existential reality and its spiritual possibilities. Their poetry is suffused with symbols – earth, water, fire, air, sky – that constitute and are constitutive elements of nature and that coalesce and combine in various permutations and combinations to organize the very being and becoming of a human being. Chakbast, an Urdu poet, very presciently sums up this elemental organization and its play in life thus:

Zindag-kyā-hai-anāsir-meñ-zuhūr-e-tartīb  
Maut-kyā-hai-inhīñ-ajzā-kā-pareshāñ-hona. (Chakbast)  
What is life; an ordered coherence of elements

What is death; scattering of the very elements. (Translation ours)

Sufi and Bhakti poets have not only employed these elements poetically to describe the material transitoriness of life but have also used them – separately or in combination – to reflect on various aspects and enigmas of human and spiritual truth. To illustrate Sheikh Farid (1188-1280 CE), in one of his *padas*, reflecting on life says:

Beda-bandhi-na-sakiyo-bandhan-ki-bela  
Bhari-sarvaru-jab-uchhale-tab-taranu-duhela.  
Hathu-na-layi-ka-sunmde-jal-jaasi-dhola  
Ik-aapeene-patli-sah-kere-bola.  
Kahe-Faridu-saheliho-sahu-alaaeisi  
Hansu-chalsi-dummna-ahi-tan-dheri-this. (Farid 106)

To risk paraphrasing, Farid says that to cross this life-ocean, we need a boat. When the human soul had time to tie or build the boat it whiled away the opportunity.

Consequently, when the waves of life-ocean would become calamitous, it would be difficult for the soul to make the boat.

Farid further warns the soul not to touch this fragrant but fiery flower; it will burn it (human soul) in its fire. He advises the human beings not to be trapped by this seductive *maya*, otherwise it would destroy their purity.

Farid also exhorts the devotee not to despair for the God/ the lover would surely call the beloved to itself. The immortal soul will walk away, even if saddened. The mortal body will crumble like dust.

As is obvious from the above *pada*, Farid builds up his reflection on this worldly and other worldly life through interweave of the elements – water/ocean, fire/*maya* and dust/mortal body in this particular case.

Bulleh Shah (1680-1724 CE) yet another Sufi poet, hints at the idea of self in Self and itself as a simultaneous presence and transcendence of elements, as a meditative acknowledgement of self/being through a series of negations – negations as a sequence of neither and nor: “Na-mein-aabi, na-mein-khaki/ Na-main-aatish-na-mein-paun” (Bulleh Shah in Duggal 30). The ‘I’ of the self and the Absolute in the Soul is a presence that is beyond binaries – in not being born it is beyond elements, senses, time and space:

I belong neither to water nor to earth;  
I am neither fir, nor air.  
I know not who I am. (Duggal 31)

Kabir, a prominent Bhakti icon of India, similarly engages with the elements poetically to comment on and capture various shades of Bhakti – relational, emotional, mystical, and metaphysical. In one of his *padas*, for example, he invokes the elements to deliberate on life and death thus:

Kaun-mare-kaun-janme-aai  
Sarag-narak-kaun-gati  
Panchtat-abi-gati-tain-utpana-eikein-kiya-nivasa  
Bichhure-tat-firi-sahaj-samanaan-rekh-rahi-nahi-asaa  
Jal-mein-kumbh-kumbh-mein-jal-hai-baahri-bheetri-pani  
Phuta-kumbh-jal-jalhin-samanaan-yahu-tat-katho-giyaani  
Aadei-gagnao-antei-gaganon, maddhe-gagnon-bhai

Kahe-Kabeer-karam-kis-laage-jhooti-sank-upaai. (Kabir in Sharma 338)

Kabir here reflects on life and death through the images of water, pot (earth) and sky. He underlines the Bhakti credo that Soul is eternal and it does not die. All the five elements (*panchtatv*) of this manifest world have their origin in the unmanifest, it is That, the Absolute, that resonates in all that is manifested through these elements. If and when scattered, these elements remerge in the Absolute. Water is in the pot and the pot is in the water; water is within, it is without. The moment the pot is broken, water moves into the water. This metaphysics is propounded by the wise. The Absolute is omnipresent – it is both within the body/pot and outside it. As a material entity, the pot is *maya* incarnate. The moment this spell of *maya* breaks or is broken through, the devotee transcends his ignorance and becomes one with the God. The sky, the cypher

or *atma* is everywhere – in the beginning, middle and in the end. *Karma* is just a pseudo faith; it holds no truth.

The Sufi and Bhakti poets/saints thus delve into the ‘play of elements’ to cull out images to contextualize life and death, love and longing, and to talk about human follies and foibles and to propound *bhakti* and *sufi* ideas and ideals.

## II

Sufi and Bhakti traditions, though distinct, overlap. Despite deriving from different spatial-cultural roots, their nature and texture is syncretic. Strong inter-textual echoes reverberate through and bind Bhakti and Sufi thought and poetry. They form an organic continuum wherein the voice, thought and symbolism of the one echo through the other. The Sufi and Bhakti devotional and existential streams converge to create a common cultural-religious pool. Here both become one in their melody and metaphysical intent. For example, if Kabir posits his bhakti quest and identity in terms of non-ritualistic spontaneity, so does Bulleh Shah. The spiritual quest for the self and the Self in both closely proximate each other and is informed by similar ideas, images and idioms. This is how Kabir envisions this quest:

I'm neither pious nor impious  
I'm neither an ascetic nor a hedonist.  
I don't dictate and I don't listen  
I'm neither a master nor a servant  
I'm neither a captive nor a free man  
I'm neither involved nor indifferent.  
I haven't been estranged from any one –  
and I'm one's close companion.  
I'm not going to a place called hell –  
and I'm not going to heaven.  
I'm the agent all my actions –  
yet I'm different from my deeds.  
A few in a million can grasp this notion –  
they sit with poise, ensconced in immortality.  
Such is the creed of Kabir –  
some things it builds, some it destroys. (Dharwadker 204)  
And this is what Bulleh Shah says:  
I know not who I am.  
I am neither a believer going to the mosque.  
Nor given to non-believing ways.  
Neither clean nor unclean.  
Neither Moses nor Pharoah.  
I know not who I am.  
I am neither among sinners nor among saints.  
Neither happy nor unhappy.  
I belong neither to water nor to earth.  
I am neither fir, nor air.  
I know not who I am.  
Neither do I know the secret of religion.

Nor am I born of Adam and Eve.  
I have given myself no name.  
I belong neither to those who squat and pray.  
Nor to those who have gone astray.  
I know not who I am.  
I was in the beginning; I'd be there in the end.  
I know not any other than the One.  
Who could be wiser than BullehShah  
Whose Master is ever there to tend?

I know not who I am. (Bulleh Shah in Duggal 31)

Both the Bhakti and Sufi poets not only proximate each other in the organization of their quest but they also draw from similar semiotic pool to capture and communicate this quest. The metaphor of dust is one such reoccurring symbol that resonates through Bhakti and Sufi poetry and evolves into a palpable metaphysical, existential and pedagogical prop.

### III

Sheikh Farid is the oldest of these three poets under focus in this article. Also known as Shakarganj, he was born in Kothewal near Multan, and would finally settle in Pakpattan, now in Pakistan. Recounting Guru Nanak's travel to Multan, Harbhajan Singh tells us that Multan of Nanak's time was notorious for four things – dust, heat, fakir and cremation ground:

Chahar-cheez-tohfa-aj-Multan  
Gard, garmi, Gada-o-goristan. (Singh 19)  
Multan gifts you four things

Dust, heat, Sufis and cemeteries. (Translation ours)

Being rooted in his moment and milieu, Farid's poetic worldview might have imbibed and improvised on this folk understanding of his surroundings. His poetry mostly comes out as austere engagement with Sufiana thought and expression. The images of dust (*gard*), asceticism/ascetic (*gada/fakiri*) and tomb or cemetery (*gor*) peep through his poetry as stark reminders of the transitoriness of material life and as 'embodiments' of *Sufiana* thought:

Bole-sheikh-Faridu-piyare-alah-lage  
Ih-tanu-hosi-khak-numani-gor-ghare  
Chhail-lang-de-paari-gori-manu-dheereeya  
Kanchan-vanne-paase-kalvati-cheeriya  
Kaatik-kunza-cheti-dau-saawani-bijaliyan  
Seeyaale-sohdeeyan-pir-gali-baahdiya  
Jimmi-puchhe-asmaan-Farida-khewat-kinti-gaye

Jaalab-goran-naal, ulaame-ji-saahe. (Farid in Singh 101)

Farid exhorts the people to be and stay in love with the Beloved, i.e., God. Let it be a bond of the self with the Self. It is a relationship that of necessity demands transcendence of the material self. Material body is mere dust and would ultimately be

consigned to dust. It would end up as dust in the grave: “Ih-tanu-hosi-khak-numani-gor-ghare.”

The body is as physical and as gross as dust. Dust constitutes the materiality of the body and surrounds it ultimately. Body may be a physical reality but not the spiritual truth. Tomb may seem to be the final destination for the body, yet it is not the final destination of the soul, the real self. It lies across (*paari*) the river of life. In other words, it is a moment in a movement – a moment when the self/*atma* moves over to merge with the Self. While the body rots in the grave, the beautiful self (*chhail*), crosses the river of life (*bhavsagar*) and gets to ‘that’ shore of peace. Farid’s *sufiana* worldview is cognizant of this spiritual truth and hope that it offers to the devotee: “chhail-lang-de-paari-gori-manu-dheereeya.” It is only in this crossing that the self (*gori*) is at peace with itself. It is this devotional hope that sustains one through *bhavsagar*. All else – the gold and glitter (*kanchan*) or the material affluence including the body – is mere dross; it only enslaves and tortures the lesser mortal – the *khak* – through its sensual illusion/*maya*. Provoked by the senses, the mortal being deludes itself like *kunz* in flight in the month of *Kartik*, like passions on fire in the month of *Chaitra* or like the restlessness of lightening in the sky in the month of *Saawan*. For a spiritually awakened one, all these provocations are mere bodily indulgences, temporary and need to be transcended. The devotee should live like *Hemant*.

A material body that is prey to these indulgences have to bide their time in the graves to be finally interrogated by Munkar and Nakeer.<sup>4</sup> This is the only answer that sky (enlightened being/subtle) offers to the dust/earth, when it/the gross asks the subtle (sky) about the whereabouts of all those who had led a life of ostentatious indulgence sans devotion: “Jimmi-puchhe-asmaan-Farida-khewat-kintigaye /Jaalab-goranaal, ulaame-jie-aahe.”

Farid thus plays with the elemental images, the images of the sky and the earth to concretize the idea of subtle and gross in Sufi worldview. The gross in Farid’s worldview not only surrounds us as a material reality (dust) but also becomes our interrogative frame (*Jimmi-puchhe-asmaan*). However, for answers one has to go beyond the gross. One has to mediate through inquisitive mind (*jimmi*) to access the subtle (*asmaan*). Farid thus uses the image of dust not only as a descriptive category to embody the idea of material grossness but also, by pitching earth as questioning being and sky as being with answers, turns it into a tool of comparison between the gross and the subtle.

But ‘dust’ in Farid’s worldview also appears as a simile for *Sufiana* devotion. Farid adroitly employs this simile to capture the texture and intent of *ishq-e-mazazi* and *ishq-e-haqiqi* bond, or the physical and the platonic love relationship:

Farida-aisa-hoi-rahu, jaisa-khak-maseet

Pairan-tale-litaariye, kade-na-chhode-preet. (57)

Farid posits the devotee as the dust on the floor of the mosque (*jaisa-khak-maseet*). It is a very complex but revealing image. Dust symbolizes ego-less-ness. A human being/devotee needs to de-empty himself of his arrogance if he has to reach the Self.

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<sup>4</sup>Munkar and Nakeer, it is believed in Islam, are the angels (*farishte*) who interrogate the dead in the tomb.

Dust also symbolizes steadfastness. A devotee needs to be pliant but steadfast in his devotion. He has to continuously forgo his ego and become dust under the feet of the devotees visiting the mosque, and at the same time be firm in his resolve to not leave the floor of the mosque despite every possible humiliation or agony. It is this devotional faith/truth that Farid posits and communicates through the image of dust. He thus turns dust into a dynamic symbol that is both active and passive at the same time. The devotee needs to trample the ego (*pairan-tale-litaariye*), but there is a meditative process involved: the ego has to be replaced by steadfast love (*kadena-chorode-preet*). Besides this act of being trampled of necessity requires the feet/presence of other devotees; the ego of the devotee cannot be trampled on by any one, but only by those visiting the mosque. The Devotee cannot reduce himself into ‘any kind of dust’, he has to be a qualified dust, a dusty speck forever on the floor of the mosque.

This *Sufiyana* take on dust continuously informs Farid’s poetry. He uses the imagery of dust in its various connotations to contextualize the idea at hand. For example, in the following *shaloka*, dust, in its abundance, becomes the symptomatic measure of human vice:

Farida-main-tan-augun-aitare, jete-dharti-khak  
To-jeha-main-na-ahan, main-jehihaan-kai-lakh. (4)

Farid says that he is an embodiment of vices; his body is a dusty mass of vices. These vices have made him as worthless as dust. He reviles this dusty presence in him that does not let him transcend his raw earthiness. As a consequence, he sees himself as a mere bundle of vices and pathetically seeks Him – the storehouse of virtues – to help redeem his mortal-dusty himself. Despite conveying the idea of futile abundance and raw earthiness, the image of dust in the above *shaloka* also helps convey the idea that transcendence of the vices of necessity demands transcendence of the gross in the body to make it a transparent, i.e., viceless vehicle of spiritual quest.

The transitoriness of life – a tree on unstable muddy bank of the river – is once again emphasized on by Farid in the following *shaloka*:

Kandhi-utte-rukhada-kichraku-banne-dheer  
Farida-kachche-bhande-rakhiye-kicharu-taani-neer. (83).

Life is short lived, transitory. Human being/soul is like a tree growing on the unstable river bank. How long does it survive? Its impatience is natural. Water (life) in earthen pot (body/river bank) cannot be retained for long. The pot will break and the water will flow away. Death is certain.

The idea of life as dust/mud/earth in Farid occurs in many forms and in many tones – pathetic, empathetic, ironic or as a simple fact, a given of life. It takes on many semantic possibilities. If the idea of life as dust, and dust as *maya* reverberates through the image of the temporary embarkment and pot in the above cited *shaloka*, it reappears in the following *shaloka* to express and critique false notion of security that brick-and-mortar houses and palaces seemingly impart to a mortal being:

Farida-kothe-mandap-mandiyan-et-na-laye-chitu  
Mitti-payi-atolvi-koi-na-hosi-mitu. (68)

Farid asks one and all not to lose their heart to material wealth such as houses, palaces and *havelis*. All material forms are merely dust/*mitti*. This dusty presence is neither weighed by anyone nor it can be weighed or trusted. These false props of life do not support anyone after death; none of these can be anyone's saviours or friends.

Similarly, dust/mud re-emerges in the guise of the grave, the final, yet traumatic destination of human restlessness and sorrow in the absence of true understanding and anchor:

Farida-itt-siraane, bhui-sawanu, keeda-ladiyo-maas

Ketadi-jag-waapre, ik-tu-paiya-paasi. (72)

Here Farid through a nightmarish imaginative interplay of the earth as cemetery describes the helpless, almost pathetic, state of human being both in life and after death. The somber and cynical reality of human life in dust and as dust is once again put into ironic relief by him in the following *shaloka*:

Farida-khak-na-nindiye-khaaku-jaidna-koi

Jeeb-diyan-pairan-tale-moiyan-upari-hoi. (52)

Dust is human destiny. One should not take it for granted. In fact, in its sheer elemental persistence in life on earth, it surpasses human life. It is a part of human being in life and remains a part of his being even after death. None is as omniscient as dust; it is beneath one's feet when alive, and it covers and envelops one after death.

Farid's idea about the omnipresence of dust in life and death is expanded on and carried further by Kabir. Though his early life is shrouded by legendary, historical and hagiographical wrangles, he probably lived in the eastern half of North sometimes between 1398 and 1518 CE. Commenting on his Bhakti credo, Mehrotra says that Kabir strove most to "erase [what] was the illusory line between the true god 'without qualities' . . . and the vision of the god with perceptible qualities . . . Sufi mysticism . . . may have taught Kabir, or at least encouraged in him, the emphasis on the abstract" (Mehrotra xii). Another quality that Kabir shares with the Sufis is his propensity to dip into and resource the cultural idiom, especially its weave of elements, for its symbolic and spiritual values. Accordingly, dust occurs as a prominent figure of speech in his poetic reflections. He seems to expand upon Farid's idea when in one of his quoted *doha*, he says:

Maati-kahe-kumhar-se-tu-kya-roundhe-mohe,

Ek-din-aisa-aayega-main-roundungi-tohe. (Kabir in Hilsayan 2)

Stomp me not so arrogantly, Clay warns the potter

Beware the day when you will lie crushed under me (Translation ours)

This existential truth, Kabir implies needs to be taken into cognizance and turned into a spiritual quest. The human self should be realized in its pristine ego-less-ness. He, accordingly, foregrounds the clay/dust or earth as a great equalizer in death. Bhakti movement, in which Kabir was an important voice, aimed at such spiritual awakening.

Farid's engagement with dust is somber. He mainly uses this image to convey the idea of impermanence of life and to underline the need for spiritual awakening. Kabir, however, makes this image not only more nuanced but also a pliant vehicle to bear the

contextual load of his musing and appropriately articulate his varied moods, meanings and messages. However, he like Farid does see dust as the elemental destiny of passion-entrapped human body. In one of his *padas*, Kabir says:

Dehri-lon-baar-naari-sang-hai, aage-sang-suhela  
Mritak-than-lon-sang-khatola, phir-puni-hans-akela.  
Jare-deh-bhasam-hoi-jai, gaade-maati-khayi  
Kanchein-kumbh-udak-jyon-bhariya, tan-ki-ihai-badaai.  
Raam-na-ramsi-moh-ke-maate, parehu-kaal-vash-kuvaa

Kahhin-Kabir-nar-aap-bandhayon, jyon-lalni-bhram-suva. (Patel 142)

After death every asset is a waste. Death renders one lonely. After death one's life partner accompanies one only till the threshold and one's friends and relatives only till the cremation grounds. Thereafter one is alone. The body burns and disintegrates into its elements. It turns into ash when burnt, rots when buried. The ignorant body, of which one is so possessive, is only an unbaked pot; it can never retain water for long and would crumble. Everyone is privy to this reality, but entrapped as one by one's senses/sensuality, refuses to secure one's self in 'Ram.' In life, one binds oneself in ignorance; one is bound by no one else.

The metaphor of dust in the above *pada* evolves both as a pedagogical tool and as an existential and ontological truth. Kabir conveys the similar idea, but in more satirical tone, in the following *pada* to once again underline omnipresence of dust/*matti* as an all-pervading existential reality circumscribing an arrogant mind and ignorant body:

Pande-bujhi-piyahu-tum-paani  
Jimi-mitiya-ke-ghar-manh-baithe, taamanh-sristi-samaani.  
Chhappan-koti-jaadav-bheenje-munijan-sahaj-athaasi,  
Paig-paig-paigambar-gaade, so-sab-saari-bho-maanti.  
Tehi-mitiya-ke-bhaande-paande, bujhi-piyahu-tum-paani  
Machh-kachh-ghariyaar-biyaane, rudhir-neer-jal-bhaiya  
Nadiya-neer-narak-bahi-aawe, pasu-maanas-sab-sariya  
Haad-jhari-jhari-good-garee-gari, dudh-kahaan-te-aaya  
So-le-paande, jeinvan-baithe, matyaahi-chhuti-lagaaya  
Bed-kiteb-chhadin-devu-paande, ee-sab-man-ke-bharma

Kahihin-Kabir-sunahu-ho-paande, ee-tumhrehain-karma. (103)

As is obvious the *pada* embeds in it the critique of social and religious hypocrisy, a very important aspect of Kabir's Bhakti praxis. His central argument here evolves around two converging and diverging metaphors – that of soil and water. Dust/earth is life's *terra-firma*, but it is not a *tabula rasa*. It is a sum total of the character and conduct of those who inhabit it and how they live it. Mortal beings muddy this 'earth' with their ways of living, in turn wallow in its polluted materiality and ironically pretend to remain untouched by this materiality. They instead create hypocritical rituals around them based on the binaries erected around the concept of pure and impure, touchable and untouchable, virtuous and profane. What makes this critique interesting and insightful is the way Kabir juxtaposes the image of the earth/dust with its various connotations: We inhabit the house of mud that contains all creation (*jimi-mitiya-ke-ghar-manh-baithe, taamanh-sristi-samaani*). It is a house of permanent impermanence



– life springs from it and lies buried in it (*so-sab-saari-bho-maanti*). It is this earth that shapes and sustains all – and is contaminated by all that inhabit it – and yet we pretend to remain pure while living and embodying it. The image of earth (*maanti*) thus evolves through this *pada* as an ambivalent trope.

Kabir constantly remains with the image of dust and continuously improvises on its poetic potentials to capture various facets of human life. He captures the idea of transitoriness of life and permanence of its constitutive elements thus:

Kabir-dhuli-sakeli-kari, pudi-ja-baandhi-eh

Divasi-chaari-ka-peshnaan, anti-sheh-ki-sheh. (Kabir in Sharma 184)

The body is a bundle of dust collected from here and there. It is a show that would go on for only few days, ultimately the dust would end up in dust.

He once again improvises on this image to capture the existential agonies of life thus:

Maati-malni-kumhaar-ki, ghani-sahe-sirilaatt

Ihi-ausar-chetya-nahin, chukka-ab-ki-ghaat. (186)

Dust/mud is thus both a reality and an opportunity. Kabir reiterates this ambivalent nature of dust/human corporeality when he invokes it in the image of the pot:

Yahu-tan-kacha-kumbh-hai, liye-phire-tha--haathi

Dabaka-laaga-phut-gaya, kachhu-naa-aya-haathi. (188)

The human body is vulnerable to the sensual incitements. It needs to be handled very delicately. A small stumble and it would be shattered. It is only through awareness – a subtle human preposition – that such incidents can be avoided. It is this subtle awareness that Kabir is privy to and also makes his audience default partners in this awareness. He communicates the idea of this ‘subtleness’ through the elemental imagery thus in the following *saakhi*:

Paani-hi-te-paatla, dhuvan-hi-tain-jheen

Pavna-begi-utavla, so-dost-Kabir-keenh. (195)

This awareness is not only a theoretical imperative; it has also to be practiced to turn the body-dust continuum into a medium of enlightenment. This enlightened self is only possible through a symbiotic convergence of the acted and the articulated, otherwise body will forever remain dead dust – a meaningless debris of the human potentials both spiritual and existential:

Kathani-kathi-tau-ka-bhaya, je-karni-nau-thehrai

Kaalbut-ke-kot-jyon, desh-at-hi-dhahi-jayi. (212)

What one speaks is of no worth if it cannot be acted upon. The thought, if it remains unimplemented is a meaningless pretense/exercise. It is like a mud fort that would get demolished in no time. It is only when the act and thought, speech and action converge to become one in spiritual quest, and in love for the beloved, that the subtle animates the gross. This is what Kabir probably advocates when he says: “dehi-maati-bole-pavana” (336) or when he says:

Jhirmir-jhirmir-barshiya-paahan-upari-meh

Maati-gali-sejal-bhayi, paahan-bohi-deh. (299)

Having achieved this spiritual-existential purity, the devotee moves a step closer to attaining the self, he dies not in death but only changes form. The constituting elements that made him initially merge to reemerge in new form:

Kaun-marey-kahu-pandit janaa  
So-samjhai-kaho-ham-sanaa  
Maati-maati-rahi-samai, pavane-pavan-liya-sang-layee

Kahe-Kabir-suni-pandit-guni, rup-mova-sab-dekhein-duni. (338-39)

Here Kabir expands on the metaphorical play of elements. Dust now no more retains the connotation of transitoriness, but becomes a symbol of possibilities, though in changed forms. Its turns into an essence that endures from self to self as a self-same presence:

Soham-hansa-ek-samaan.  
Kaya-ke-gun-aanhi-aan.  
Maati-ek-sakal-pasra, bahu-bidh-maande-ghade-kumbhara.  
Panch-varn-das-duhiye-gaai, ek-dudh-dekho-patiyaa.

Kahe-Kabir-sans-kar-duri, Tribhuvannath-rahya-bharpuri. (342)

The same elements inform all existence. Only the form changes and the essence remains the same. Thus, dust becomes a medium and reflection of universal commonality and identity. Kabir further presses this idea when he says:

Aisa-bhed-biguchini-bhari.  
Baid-kataib-deen-aruduniya-kaun-purikh-kaun-naari.  
Ek-rudhir, ekai-mal-mutar-ek-chaanm-ek-gooda.  
Ek-boond-te-sristi-rachi-hai, kaun-bahman-kaun-sooda.  
Maati-ka-pind-sahaj-utapano, naad-rubind-samaano.  
Binis-gaya-tei-ka-naav-dhariho-padi-guni-marm-n-jaana.  
Raj-gun-brahma, tam-gun-sankar, sat-gun-hari-hai-soi.

Kahe-Kabir-ek-Ram-japehu-re-hindu-turuk-na-koi. (344)

The dust in the above pada acquires syncretic potentials; it is envisioned as a point of origin and end, an end that is a new beginning in different forms. This syncretic idea is not only secular but also spiritual. It is this idea and image created around dust that Kabir returns to again and again: “Kumbhra-ek-kamaai-maati, bahavidhi-baan-ilaai” (371) to finally clinch the argument (*baad-bishaad*) about the place and salience of *maati* (clay, dust, spoil, whatever one calls it) in the following *pada* thus:

Pande-na-karsi-baad-bishaad  
Ya-dehi-bina-sabad-na-swaad.  
Annd-bramaand-khand-bhi-maati, maati-navnidhi-kaya  
Maati-khojat-satguru-bhetya, tin-kachhu-alakh-lakhaya.  
Jeevat-bhi-maati-muva-bhi-maati, dekho-gyaan-bichaari  
Anti-kaal-mmami-main-basa, laite-paanv-pasaari.  
Maati-ka-chitr-pavan-ka-thamba, byand-sanjogi-upaaya  
Bhaane-ghade-sanware-soi, yahu-gobayand-ki-maya.

Maati-ka-mandir-gyan-ka-deepak, pawan-baati-ujijaara

Tihi-ujijaare-sab-jag-sujhe, Kabir-gyan-bichara. (459)

Kabir, in this *pada* improvises on and plays with various connotations of *maati* to emphasise the fact that it is the constitutive element of all *bhakti* perception and quest. The human body is but *maati* resonating with the word (*sabda*) and flavour/essence (*swaad*) of the Self. It straddles all creation – sensate and insensate. *Bhakti* is, in fact, a quest for this *maati* – and it is this search that enables one to ultimately find the *satguru*. So *maati* is not only the base but also the superstructure, it is not only a path but also a discovery – a discovery of the self in the Self and a realization and discovery of the constitutive element of life.

Like Farid before him, Kabir finds in dust/*maati* the fundamental insight on life and a perfect communicative material. The life emerges from dust, lives it, and re-merges with dust after death. But Kabir is more optimistic. Though the body is an effigy of clay, it nevertheless is erected on the pillar of divinely ordained elements (*bayand-sanjogi-uaapya*). The supreme Self organizes, scatters and reorganizes this elemental order. This divine structure, mostly constituted by clay, is lit by the effulgence of the Self (*gyan-ka-deepak, pavan-baati-ujiyara*). It is this enlightened awareness that lights the world and enables one to see it in its spiritual inclusiveness.

What Kabir enunciates as a general process of human awareness from the vantage point of *maati*, is given an existential and ontological twist by Bulleh Shah. Bulleh Shah is perhaps the emotionally most exuberant of the three poets. He sang, danced and found a commensurate expression in his *kafiyas* and other verse. He like Farid and Kabir before him, was rooted in the folk idiom of the day and made it a robust medium of his musings on man and his passage through life and time. *Maati* or earth is the sustaining metaphor of this human passage:

The earth works miracles.  
Dressed in earth, the earthly rider  
Sits on a horse of earth;  
The earth makes the earth run  
And the earth takes an earthly turn.  
The earth attacks the earth,  
Charging with the weapon of earth.  
He who is more earthly  
Prides on his earthly girth.  
The garden and orchards are of earth,  
Earth is reflected in the flower-beds.  
Earth has come to witness earth,  
The glory that the earth does shed.  
Bulleh! Try and solve the riddle,  
The earth works many a miracle

Of which there is never a dearth. (Bulleh Shah in Duggal 80-81)

For Bulleh Shah, this world is a dramatic battleground where earth/*maati* is pitched against *maati* to destroy *maati*. And it is this *maati* that ironically recreates the world of *maati*. It is a world of airy nothings, of spectral presences that make this world whirl

around itself. This earth/*maati* “works many a miracle,” creates many illusions and underlines unsubstantial substantiality of mortal’s “sound and fury” that, as Shakespeare has so aptly put, “signifies nothing.” The whole idea evolves around the metaphor of *maati* and subsumes within it the moral, ethical and metaphysical universe. It enables him to connotatively converge both the physical body and the material world within the Sufi worldview. It simultaneously constructs and deconstructs the reality of the embodied world. What one sees is not what it is. The appearance is but a mirage – the world is not stable and the body is a mere heap of dust. The realization lies in resolving this riddle. It demands awakening oneself from *maya* induced deep slumber, otherwise one will only end in and as dust:

Main-supna- sab-jag-vi-supna, hor-supna-lagge-biyaana

Khaki-khaak-so-ral-jana (Bulleh Shah in Puri and T.R. Shangari 127)

#### IV

Dust as a poetic perspective thus emerges as an important aspect of Bhakti and Sufi poetics and politics. It provides a platform for ontological ruminations. It is also turned into a pedagogical and epistemic tool to chart the trajectories of existential pangs, passions and the processes of being and becoming. While the meaning and poetic function of ‘dust’ change to illumine and concretize the twists and turns of Sufi and Bhakti thought and purpose, dust – along with other elements – remains an enduring presence in Sufi and Bhakti poetry. These poets engage with it figuratively and philosophically, comparatively and exclusively to communicate with the initiated and the laity.

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# REWRITING THE LITERATURE COMPARING AKUTAGAWA RYŪNOSUKE'S SHORT STORIES WITH THE ORIGINAL TEXTS

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**Abstract:** Recreation or rewriting a literary piece is a task that has its own merits and demerits. One may say that rewriting is just a mere repetition of already existing work and hence carries no originality; however, there are ample examples where the relevance of this activity cannot be denied. One such fine example is that of Akutagawa Ryūnosuke- a mainstream writer of Taisho Japan (1892-1927) of twentieth century who is still largely read and researched in the field of Japanese language and translations alike. This paper attempts to showcase the relevance of rewriting a literary piece and why it plays a significant role in literature studies, particularly foreign literature while discussing the work of two of Akutagawa Ryūnosuke's short stories- *Hana* and *Rashōmon*.

**Keywords:** Literature, Akutagawa Ryūnosuke, *Konjaku Monogatari*, *Hana*, *Rashōmon*

## Introduction

Stories have been retold in all languages and mediums from time immemorial. Epics have been reinterpreted; films have been remade. What could be the significance of the exercise be. An author brings with him a uniqueness of perspective and vision which give a new focus and understanding to the story. Indian epics such as the Ramayana and Mahabharata have many versions. The texts have been simplified and rewritten to reach them to a larger audience who read, watch, listen and consume these in various ways and with different intent. The epics are now available in a serialized format or even as animation movies. Even as the core of an original text remains, rewriting often amounts to re-visiting it with a new perspective and thereby allowing scope for re-interpretation. Rewriting the ancient stories or already existing stories is neither new nor limited to any one particular genre or country.

One prominent author known to rewrite the classical literature of Japan is *Akutagawa Ryūnosuke*. Often criticized for lacking originality, the author has rewritten many classical texts in modern times, and this paper will discuss two such works- *Hana* (1916) and *Rashōmon* (1915). These two stories, *Hana* and *Rashōmon*, have their roots in the classical Japanese literature, *Konjaku Monogatari*. The paper attempts to study aspects that were introduced in rewriting the stories, and the relevance of rewriting classical literature through the case study of *Hana* and *Rashōmon*.

## *Akutagawa Ryūnosuke: An Introduction*

One of the well-known authors of Japanese Literature of nineteenth century, *Akutagawa Ryūnosuke* has written more than a hundred of short stories in his short life span of 35 years. He was born to a dairyman –*Toshizo Niihara*, and later, when he was 9 months old, he was adopted by his uncle since his mother went insane after his birth. As a student in his early days, he developed an avid interest in literature and believed that 'art' should be always considered as 'supreme' in comparison to the real world. Even *Tsuneo Kurachi* also observes that *Akutagawa's* perspective on literature was unique and says "Akutagawa did not observe the people on the street in order to realize their existence, but he would realize their existence through reading books" (Kurachi,

1991). *Akutagawa* committed suicide and left behind a variety of content on various subjects that present views of the Japanese author about the outside world.

However, growing up in the literary environment in his foster home, developing an interest in literature was not unusual for *Akutagawa*, as he started to read Japanese and Chinese classics. In 1916, when *Natsum eSōseki* praised *Akutagawa* for his writing, his literary career began in earnest after his association with *Shinshicho*, which was a journal in Japanese. Over the years, *Akutagawa's* short stories appeared at a rapid rate covering a wide range of subjects and he experimented with many different styles of writing, from short stories to two- or three-page sketches, to reworking of historically inspired older tales such as *Rashōmon* to social satire such as *Hana*, etc., while retaining their originality. At the same time, the stories have been retold in a way that they are relevant to the contemporary art society and have a universal character. *Akutagawa's* stories were translated into European languages even during the long period from the early 1920s to the mid-1950s, when hardly any modern Japanese literature was being translated; consequently, it gained popularity even outside Japan. It seems that his early stories do not always stand up to repeated readings, but their effectiveness, even in translations, is undeniable. There were opinions that *Akutagawa's* works have many aspects that portray his hatred of stupidity, greed, hypocrisy, and the rising jingoism of the day. However, his artistic integrity kept him from joining his contemporaries in the easy social criticism or naive introspection. What he did was to question the values of his society, dramatize the complexities of human psychology, and study, with a Zen taste for paradox, the balance of illusion and reality. Probably this was the reason why he is considered as one of the greatest authors of Modern Japanese Literature. One of the Japanese scholars also correctly points out that “*Akutagawa's* accomplishments win the approval of being ranked equivalent to Maupassant or Chekhov”(Iwamoto, 1973, p. 706).

### ***Hana* and *Rashōmon*: Two popular stories by the author**

As an author, he was more interested in writing the content that resembles the real world. “It is worth repeating that *Akutagawa* never wrote a single love story.” (Tsuruta, 1999, p. 92). This statement clearly shows that the focus of his was not depicting an imaginary world rather a true world. Though *Akutagawa* has written many stories, two stories selected for the purpose of analysis for this paper find huge readership even in present times. One possible reason could be the content he touched upon is the human behavior which is more universal in nature and never feels outdated. A brief outline of both the stories is given below.

#### ***Hana* (The Nose)**

Titled as *Hana* in Japanese, which translates as nose in English, it is a story of high-rank priest named *Zenchi Naiguof* of a place named *Ike-no-O*. Unlike others, the priest had exceptionally long nose that caused trouble for him in executing his day-to-day affairs. Even while having meals, he needed someone to hold his nose with a wooden stick so that he could have his food. Though he was a priest by profession, he felt inferior to other people with usual noses and could not express his displeasure in front of anyone. So, he used to see his face in the mirror from different angles and tried to think that it had shortened from before. He also had searched desperately in the old

Buddhist texts to find someone like him just to console himself but, there was no such mention. Rather there were mentions of those with long ears but none with a long nose.

Once, one of his old students, who studied medicine from China, came to meet him. The student also wanted to show his skill and *Naigu* also wanted to know about the same but both were hesitant. While eating together, when the student mentioned about the treatment he had learnt for shortening the nose, *Naigu* acted as though he was not willing to try it but agreed reluctantly for his student's sake. And, the procedure of treatment began. Since the procedure was long and had many steps, *Naigu* found it painful but was hopeful that after the treatment, his nose would become normal in length. The result was also as per his expectations—and his nose shortened to normal length. However, people around him were not used to his short nose and found it strange. Moreover, whenever he was out in the public they would stare at him as if he was not a normal person. Now, even after achieving what he wanted, he was not satisfied.

One night, he felt itching in his nose and developed a light fever. With the passing of time, the itching became unbearable. He stood up and went to pray in the hall. He was not able to sleep and when he touched it, he realized that what came in his hand was his longnose again. It was morning and while touching it repeatedly *Naigu* was happy because no one would laugh at him now, as he was back to being his old self again.

### ***Rashōmon* (The *Rashōmon* Gate)**

Set up in the backdrop of Kyoto, the whole story starts and finished at the *Rashōmon* gate. It has two main characters: a servant who lost his job and an elderly woman. The servant has been fired from his job by his master due to the famine and came to the gate as he did not have any other place to go. There, while sitting under the gate, he was looking at rain and thinking about his future and how he will survive with no job.

Since the gate was an abandoned place, no one would dare to visit it, particularly, at night. People used to bring dead bodies and throw them here. So, there was a heap of dead bodies on the first floor of gate. While the servant was at the gate, he saw the light of a candle moving here and there at the first place. At first, he thought it must be some ghost but, later he thought of going and checking out of curiosity. When he went upstairs, he got surprised seeing an old lady standing with a candle in her hand and moving around among dead bodies as if searching for something. As soon as she saw the servant, she tries to escape but the servant catches her and enquired about her presence there. The lady said that she collects the hair from the dead bodies and makes wigs and sells them in the market. This is her means of livelihood. Upon hearing upon this, the servant developed the feeling of hatred towards her as he thought she had committed the unthinkable crime- stealing from the dead.

Understanding the servant's feeling towards herself, she justified her actions. She pointed towards the body of a woman and said that when that lady was alive, she used to sell a poisonous dried snake in place of fish for her livelihood and thus, was not doing anything wrong. Further, in order to have a livelihood herself, if she is picking hair of the dead, it is also not wrong.

Now, convinced with her answer the servant went near to her, snatched her kimono and ran away in the darkness of that night. No one knew which way he went.

### ***Hana and Rashōmon in Konjaku Monogatari***

As a work belonging to classical Japanese literature, *Konjaku Monogatari* was compiled in later *Heian* period (794-1185) and has the diverse stories. Comprising of 31 volumes, it consists of stories from India, China and Japan under the section named as *Tenjiku*, *Shintan* and *Honcho* respectively. The two stories described below belonged to the *Honcho* section. The brief outline of both the stories is given below.

*Hana* is the story of a Priest named *Naigu*, he had an uncommon nose which has very long. In order to shorten it, he tried a few ways, but all were in vain. One day, while he was having his meal, one of his disciples was holding his nose with a wooden stick to help him. However, at one moment, the disciple sneezed and mistakenly dropped the stick resulting in the fall of *Naigu's* nose inside the bowl of meal. All started laughing and the *Naigu* ended up scolding the disciple in failing to do his job properly. The story ends on this note.

In the case of *Rashōmon*, the story starts with a thief coming to the gate, *Rajomon*, which was ruined because of a natural calamity and now, it is being used by the thieves as hideouts or being used as a place to throw the corpses. The thief came there in search of things he could steal. However, he met with an old lady at the first floor of the gate who was picking her dead husband's hairs. When asked by the thief for such act, she said that her husband's hair was incredibly good and hence, she thinks of making a wig with them. After this conversation, the thief took away her kimono and ran away. This is the end of the story.

### **A Comparison with the Original Text**

By going through both the versions of stories, it is evident that the two stories of *Akutagawa Ryūnosuke* have their root in the classical literary work *Konjaku Monogatari*. This classic is the first major collection of Buddhist tales divided into three categories. The three sections of the work are the division of stories on the basis of three countries, i.e., India, China, and Japan and further classified into 31 volumes. *Tenjikuhen*, *Shintanhen* and *Honcho-hen* are the three categories of stories from India, China and Japan also signifying the route that Buddhism took from India to Japan. The tales are of a mixed nature comprising of those which are Buddhist and Secular as well. Since this book has more than 1000 such stories it is difficult to guess about the author and the work is believed to be compiled by a group of people from the elite class belonging to that time.

### **The significance and novelty in Akutagawa's version of stories**

There could be various aspects, based on which comparisons between the original and the newer stories can be made; however, here it is done taking the content and narrative into focus.

Firstly, the portrayal of the main character *Naigu*, the priest, is not the same. On one hand, in *Konjaku*, the priest is not very much bothered by the surroundings due to his nose. Though he also wanted to shorten his nose but did not try any of the methods as an attempt to fulfill his aim. On the contrary, *Akutagawa* gives the priest some human touch in terms of emotions of jealousy, anger, shame etc. *Akutagawa* very skillfully depicts the scenes where *Naigu's* desire to make the nose short clearly comes out along with the hesitancy of not letting the disciple know that he wants to try the treatment.



This aspect is completely absent in the classical book. Secondly, the story in *Konjaku* ends with a funny episode where the disciple drops *Naigu's* nose in the food bowl and end up being scolded. *Akutagawa* took this incident as the basis to provide background to his version and mentions it as a incident happened sometime in the past. The third difference comes in terms of depicting Human nature. Though the *konjaku* story does not touch this aspect as it just mentioned about the priest but not about what should be his behavior in public or how a dissatisfied human behaves despite being at the top position. However, *Akutagawa* touches this with great literary skill. Even after the treatment, when *Naigu's* nose became normal, to show his state of mind, *Akutagawa* says that human beings have two contradictory feelings in their heart. When someone is in some trouble, they feel happy but when the same person overcomes it, the other person gets disappointed. Further, he also depicts the change of human behavior in terms of how a dissatisfied man turns into a satisfied human being. Moreover, in the classical version, there is no mention about the bodhisattvas though *Akutagawa* mentioned it. The author humorously illustrates through *Naigu's* portrayal, as to how irrespective of one's stature in society, human beings intrinsically are the same having the same set of insecurities in them.

As far as *Rashōmon* is concerned, the main character in *Akutagawa's* version was a low-rank servant initially. However, circumstances made him a thief. In fact, he was hesitant in doing anything which is unethical for him in spite of having no job at hand. But after finding the elderly woman's justification in plucking hair from dead bodies, he goes gets the courage or justification of treading a similar path. In the *Konjaku Monogatari* version, thief is the protagonist since the beginning.

This shows that the *Konjaku* version was mainly for entertainment purpose and quite predictable since the character was a thief so it was obvious that he would steal but *Akutagawa* changes it to show the reality. By making a low-rank servant a thief at the end, he tries to emphasize the fact that no human being chooses to be bad or good, it is the circumstances that make their actions negative. Human beings are vulnerable to the situations and adjust themselves as per the situation. The next difference appears at the end of the story. The *Konjaku* version does not give a detailed account and only says that the thief stole the kimono of the elderly woman and ran away. However, in *Akutagawa's* story, he makes sure to convince the reader that the act of servant is justified. Every person has flaws and it is not worth hoping to act like an ideal man without making mistakes. He tries to say that it might be possible that one action can be good for someone but the same action can be taken as bad as well. It is all about perspective and the circumstance one finds oneself in.

## Conclusion

Literature is, undoubtedly, a source of information relating to our past which the younger generations will not be able to see ever but will be able to read if it is made available in different forms. *Akutagawa* took clues from older stories and created his versions of them. His stories do not only offer enjoyment for the reader, but also make us reflect on how there is no absolute virtue and that it is subject to the circumstances one finds oneself in. Therefore, though he belonged to a particular era and time period, the relevance of his stories will remain forever. Even though he drew criticism for rewriting the already existing stories, the criticism does not seem completely true. To

understand the difference and novelty in his stories, one has to look into them very minutely in both the versions and compare them. The language and content were changed to appeal to a different readership making the same story appealing to people across time. Hence, by doing so, it offers two main advantages: one of keeping the ancient culture alive and introducing the younger readers to their roots.

As a foreign language learner, I also first got introduced to *Akutagawa's* stories and then went on reading the older version that appears in *Konjaku* to answer my curiosity as to why he had rewritten something which already existed. And, after comparing both the versions, I can surely say that it is an exercise worth doing and probably, this skill of skillfully weaving his magic as an author into existing tales which might have otherwise be forgotten, made *Akutagawa Ryūnosuke* one of the prominent Japanese writer, who is read even today.

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# SCHEMATIZING A MISSING VOID: ANALYSING “LOSS” IN THE INHERITANCE OF LOSS BY KIRAN DESAI AND THE NAMESAKE BY JHUMPA LAHIRI

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**Abstract:** *There goes the popular saying, “Home is where the heart is.” Everyone longs for shelter, something where the heart of an individual appears to be content. But then, human beings not always are fed with what they desire. There are numerous occasions when an individual has to leave his native place and move to a place which is utter strange to him. Numerous situations and responsibilities call for a change in place in the life of an individual where he or she becomes a ‘hybrid.’ This state of diaspora generally aligns with the very notion of ‘identity’ or ‘self-image’ of an individual. As soon as a person goes away from the native place, he or she is bound to face numerous challenges. Suddenly there are fights going on, fights in terms of culture, assimilation, language, food habits within the individual. Indian English fiction has rose to another level in the modern scenario in their depiction of this very state of alienation of an individual. Various writers tend to bring this very state of loneliness to the fore with the depiction of the state of loneliness. Jhumpa Lahiri and Kiran Desai are two towering pillars in the field of Indian English writing who have blatantly depicted the idea of longing for the identity of an individuals through their fictions. Talking about their fiction, none better can describe the pain of the loss of home than the two respective masterpieces *The Inheritance of Loss* and *The Namesake*. These two novels are the vivid pen-pictures of the utter sense of the awareness of one’s sense of belonging. The characters of both the novels are always seen to be struggling with their very identity and all the chaotic situations seem to stem out from the schematic thought of “home.” This paper is an attempt in order to portray the very sense of belongingness of an individual. It also critically investigates the idea of shattered-identity of an individual experiencing cultural clash. The hypothesis that the paper argues is that there is always an unfulfilled ‘void’ once a person leaves his own place.*

**Keywords:** *culture, diaspora, home, identity, individual*

## **Introduction:**

Fiction has always been a creative invention with a little or no reference to truth. It is more of imagination and writers, specifically, the novelists, the playwrights and the poets, include their individual imagination as well as some factual materials, in their fictional writings. As such in the modern and the post-modern era, the Indian English fiction has become more innovative and greatly experimental with the coming up of a great number of new writers. A noteworthy aspect this new interest are the works of the post-modern writers of the Indian Diaspora. Their literature explores the concept of identities formed under the influence of a number of cultures as a result of living in a number of different places. This kind of multiplicity creates a clash between cultures, languages, people, and their thoughts and views, which leads to what Homi K. Bhabha has defined as ‘hybridity.’ The earlier concepts of ‘fixed homes’ have been replaced by the concepts of mobile and mutable nature of homes as defined by the post-colonist theorists such as Homi Bhabha, Avtar Brah and Stuart Hill. Moreover, the displacement and transfer of people due to migration, whether voluntary or involuntary, brings into further debate the stability of the concept of one’s ‘homeland.’

**Analysis:**

Different kinds of migrations cause the Diaspora to experience different kinds of emotions related to the concept of identity such as of yearning to return to homeland, nostalgia, pathos, loss, alienation, rootlessness. Though the circumstances leading to the manifestation of these feelings are different, the ultimate feeling of identity loss is the same. Both Desai and Lahiri are notable writers of the Indian Diaspora and both of them have included in their writings their personal as well as imaginary incidents mostly experienced by the Indian Diaspora living in America. It was a sort of spontaneous reflection of their own experiences. Lahiri once wrote about her writings,

When I first started writing I was not conscious that my subject was the Indian-American experience. What drew me to my craft was the desire to force the two worlds I occupied to mingle on the page as I was not brave enough, or mature enough, to allow in life. (qtd. Fawcett 569)

Man has always been in a dilemma about his existence and identity, especially in this post-colonial era with the advent of concepts such as globalisation, hybrid identity, multi-culturalism. In the same manner, the characters of Desai's *The Inheritance of Loss*, and Lahiri's *The Namesake*, are also in a dilemma related to their identity and belongingness. These novels centre around the theory of Postcolonial studies and intricate precision of the importance of ideas such as 'roots,' 'routes,' and 'hybridity' in context to Diaspora. Depicting the situation of individuals who move away from their homeland, Esther Peeran commented in the following manner,

enduring condition of dischronotopicality – of conflict between the way time-space constructions governed subjectivity, community and memory in the homeland and the way they govern subjectivity, community and memory in the place of dispersal-the resulting hybridity. (Peeran 74)

The novel *The Inheritance of Loss* has a division of narratives that shows two exceedingly different settings: one setting is of an Indian village, Kalimpong, at the foothills of the Himalayas and is under great political tension and disorder due to the violent and illegal activities of the Nepali Gorkha regiment. And the other setting is the urban scenario of the New York City. The Indian setting of the novel *The Inheritance of Loss* revolves around the judge, Jemubhai; his granddaughter, Sai, who live in the old, crumbling and ruined remains of an old colonial mansion along with an elderly cook whose life centres round his son, Biju, who lives in America, struggling every day.

The characters in are engulfed in the feelings of fractured identities. The title of the novel, *The Inheritance of Loss* is quite implicative in this regard, as it gives a clear indication of the feeling of loss of one's individual identity with which almost all of the characters of the novel can be related. Jemubhai Patel, the Judge and an ICS officer, has lost almost everything even his identity in his ineffective attempts to get accepted in the American society by getting accustomed to the American ways, but failed miserably. His granddaughter, Sai, confronts a dilemma regarding her identity, though of a different kind. She spoke in English and "knew only the English way" (Desai 6) of things. Therefore, she was lost and struggling in her own ways. The cook of Jemubhai, who is Biju's father, also dwells in loss but of a different kind as he idealised the West. It was seen that he regretted for not being able to serve an English official like his

father did, but was stuck with the always preoccupied judge. The other diasporic character, Biju, suffers the bitter feelings of loss during his stay at America. Thus, every character is so distressed in their own ways that their identity gets disarrayed and shattered at times.

### **Interpreting schemas:**

According to James Clifford, diasporic consciousness is nothing but the very “sense of attachment elsewhere, to a different temporality and vision.” It is “a sense of rupture, of living a radically different temporality” (Clifford 312-318). The sense of ‘loss’ and ‘identity crisis’ that was seen in the character of Jemubhai, was passed on to the next generation of characters in the novel and can be seen in the character of Sai. Another important character who is also profoundly submerged in this feeling of ‘loss’ is the character of Biju, the cook’s son. The novel portrays that was sent to America in search of economic opportunities, and to escape the insufficiency of resources and poverty of India. It was clearly evident that Biju sometimes blamed his father for sending him to a country where he was even denied of his basic rights as a worker as he was illegal immigrant there (Desai 82). Exploited by employees and owners, he dreamed of getting a Green Card in the U.S. but could only manage to get a Visa.

Though in his homeland in India, everyone, including his father, was thinking of Biju of having a pleasant life as the ground reality was not known to them. The condition of the illegal immigrants was worse than the rodents of America, living in packed up rooms, in the basement of a building in the Harlem neighbourhood in New York. Biju, as the characteristic feeling of all Diaspora, felt restless. Whenever he used to feel depressed thinking about home or due to overburden of work, he used to go the place “where the homeless man always slept in a dense chamber of green” and “where also a homeless chicken lived” (Desai 81). Those were the only beings who didn’t judge him on his failures and struggle. When Biju used to see the chicken scratching in the dirt, he instantly felt a sudden and transitory agony of not being able to stay at home. Desai has beautifully portrayed this image when she presents the character of Biju as going to place of the homeless beings, whether man or animal. There, he finds solace and calms down his restless mind, which is most of the time worried about his father, whether he’s ill or maimed or dead. He was often nostalgic about his days back at home, in India:

Lying on his basement shelf that night, he thought of his village where he had lived with the money his father sent each month. (Desai 102)

The problem and the hope of getting the green card follow him through the whole time of his stay in the States. He hopelessly wished to obtain it, which would enable him to come back if he goes back to India sometime. Here, Desai has intended to show an immigrant’s worries in the form of Biju’s situations and limitations. He lived alone in an alien country or ‘host’ country, away from his family and father, and moreover, he could not visit them because he wouldn’t have another chance to return to America if he goes back. This shortcoming arouses the feelings of homesickness and dilemma in him.

Moving on to the next novel, *The Namesake* by Lahiri, the novel is set in Massachusetts, where the newly wedded Gangulis move to at first. They had two children, Gogol, their son and the protagonist of the novel, and Sonia, their daughter.

The entire novel revolves around their lives and how their individual identity crisis led to the creation of a huge emotional gap between the son and the parents. The most suffering characters of the novel were Ashima, Gogol and Moushumi, Gogol's wife. It was seen that Ashoke, got easily occupied in his work and studies, leaving Ashima all alone with the responsibility of bringing up their two children. Even in her old age, she had to stay alone as all other three members were busy with work and lives. She often had the feeling that things would have been much better if they were in India. Ashima was scared as:

Without a single grandparent or parent or uncle or aunt at her side, the baby's birth, like everything else in America, feels somehow haphazard, only half true. (Lahiri 24)

Gogol too was engulfed in his worries and insecurities related to his name as he hated having an unusual name, after some Russian writer. He never knew the reason of his father naming him the name 'Gogol,' and neither did he ever try to find it, until at the end of the novel after Ashoke's death. He was so irritated by his name that he changed his name to 'Nikhil' but then, again, he could not identify himself with the new name. Moushumi, Gogol's wife, who he later divorced, had also some memories from her stay in Paris which troubled her individual identity for some time.

### **Discussions:**

It is to be noted that "the crisis of identity into being" has been the indefinitely continuous theme in postcolonial writings (Ashcroft 47). The novels, *The Inheritance of Loss* and the *Namesake*, glaringly exhibit postcolonial sensibilities and dilemmas. We can see that there are many aspects in which these two novels can be compared and contrasted with the ultimate motive of bringing out the common feelings of loss and identity crisis at the end. We can see that all the characters of *The Namesake* are of good economic and social background unlike those of Desai's novel where she has portrayed characters of all the social classes. In *The Namesake*, two generations of Diaspora are shown in the form of Ashima and Ashoke as the first generation and Gogol, Sonia and Moushumi as the second generation. Both these groups of characters have their own sets of dilemmas related to identity and alienation living in a foreign land.

The big "American dream" of the characters of *The Namesake* is different from that of Desai's novel. Unlike Biju, the Gangulis were not of the lower social order; they belonged to a nicely established family of Kolkata. Moreover, they did not move to America in search of employment opportunities due to scarcity of resources in India but did as Ashoke had to pursue a graduate program as an engineering student, at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and later gets settled in America itself. The novels, *The Namesake* and *The Inheritance of Loss* have the settings of 1968 and 1986 respectively, and have showed two different dimensions of the Indian Diaspora of America. Desai has beautifully portrayed the harsh scenario of America in the form of struggles of the immigrants who had moved there illegally. Therefore, they were not eligible for the exercise of any kind of worker's rights and resultantly, suffered a lot of humiliation and exploitation in the foreign land. They are left with distorted images of themselves at the end. And on the other hand, in *The Namesake*, Lahiri has shown the characters going through the emotions of identity loss, alienation, in a more familial way. Here, the characters are living with their family unlike Biju of *The Inheritance of*

*Loss*. But despite that, characters such as Ashima, the protagonist's mother, experiences feelings of loss and has the urge to move back to India. At the beginning of the novel itself, Ashima feels like giving birth for the first time would have been an easy task if they were in India amidst all their loved ones. She fears to raise her child at a place, a country, unknown and alien to her. Once she even speaks about moving back to India to her husband, Ashoke.

When we look into the societal aspects of the two novels, a sharp difference can be seen. Biju lived and worked in a society mostly represented by people from Third World countries, the uneducated masses of people with no contact with the rest of society while the Gangulis belonged to the educated civilised mass and where, later in the novel, Ashoke became the Assistant professor of a famed university. When it comes to the emotional sphere, the Diaspora are seen to be linking their emotions with some material things such as “a Ganesha icon, a dog-cared copy of the Ramayana or the Quran, an old sari or other *deshi* outfit, a photograph of a pilgrimage and so on” (Mishra 2007).

With this in view, it can be said that the characters of the novel *The Namesake* have access to exercise or practise Indian rituals in their ‘host country.’ For instance, their society comprised of the well-off Indian families settled in America and all of them came together to celebrate occasions such as the naming ceremony or “namarkaran” of Ashoke and Ashima's daughter, Sonia, which was alien to the American people and its society. They even conducted the marriage ceremonies of Gogol and Moushumi in the typical Bengali style, and not a white wedding. But Biju, of the novel *The Inheritance of Loss* didn't have any such feeling while being amidst the people of his kin. In fact, the Indian restaurant owners exploited him without much care of being of the similar race. There is nothing much that he can do to console except being worried about his old father, the cook, and thinking about his ineffective struggle to get hold of the American Green Card.

### **Conclusion:**

Thus, it can be said that although the journey and circumstances of the two sets of characters of the novels *The Namesake* and *The Inheritance of Loss* were totally different and unusual in their own ways, the feelings of bitterness and despair of the loss of one's identity are the same. These two novels showed two different sides of the condition of the Indian immigrants living in America, one is about the legal and other one is of the illegal immigrants. Both Desai and Lahiri have presented their characters as individuals who have failed to assimilate into the American culture and give up their original culture in totality because of their longing to return to their homeland, India. Their diasporic feeling of loss hindered them from merging into the great American culture and society.

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# WHEN THE “POLITICAL” BECOMES THE “PERSONAL” IN ARIEL DORFMAN’S *DEATH AND THE MAIDEN*

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**Abstract:** *The political milieu that an individual is part of, plays a significant role in determining his/her quality of life. Some of the aspects embedded in the latter include emotional and mental well-being as well as the enjoyment of safety, security and freedom. Peaceful and harmonious political conditions may enable conducive atmosphere for the development of the citizens of a nation-state. At the same time political turmoil, specifically, that which is tyrannical, autocratic and inflicts violence on the persona of its citizens are likely to trigger a sense of increased vulnerability in the lives of the latter. The emotional and mental trauma thus produced may persist in their psyche that may compromise their sense of freedom and security to a large extent even after the cessation of the undesirable scenario. In this context, the paper attempts to locate the vulnerable situation that such a context pushes the central protagonist of the play “Death and the Maiden” into. It also focuses on the types of healing mechanisms that are suggested by the text which invariably envisages the need for ensuring a nexus between the personal and the political while considering the measures to be adopted.*

**Keywords:** “Unrepresentable” trauma, Breaking the silence, Post-traumatic stress disorder, “Politics of memory,” Truth- tellings, State-sponsored commemoration.

## **1.Introduction:**

The title here is evidently a subversion of the popular slogan, “the personal is political” associated with Carol Hanisch, the American feminist. If the latter centers on women’s oppression as a result of patriarchal power relationships within political and social structures, here, the paper attempts to understand how the physical and emotional oppression of a large section of a nation-state ensues with the advent of an overtly repressive political apparatus. The central protagonist Paulina Salas in *The Death and the Maiden*, becomes the mouthpiece of the traumatic past carried over by a generation who was under a dictatorial regime. The paper would undertake a detailed examination of the persona of Paulina to probe into the undercurrents pervading the psyche of the victim, and her companion even after the end of “reign of terror” unleashed by an autocratic government. The question whether power hierarchies would get reversed in such a context is addressed here. Also, the repercussions of the violent act on the collective unconscious of the population even after the overthrow of a tyrannical era and the establishment of democracy with respect to Chilean history would be considered.

The play does not explicitly state that its setting is Chile, post the military dictatorship era. As Cathy Caruth observes “the play *Death and the Maiden* is set in the present time in a country” which according to another scholar “is probably Chile” but “could be any country that has just departed from a dictatorship” (qtd. in Caruth 93). The text in itself seems to provide certain hints in this regard. Considering the biographical background of Ariel Dorfman who is an Argentine-Chilean-American playwright, and

also the contextual background in which the play was written, i.e. “written during the transitional government that followed the Pinochet dictatorship (1973–1990) in Chile,” (Caruth 93) the references that Gerardo Escobar, Paulina’s husband makes in the play regarding the new found freedom in association with “democracy” points to the reinstatement of democracy in Chile in 1990. Hence, the constant mention that Paulina and Gerardo make of the “fifteen years” that have passed should be probably indicative of the “Chile’s military-led authoritarian regime of 1973 to 1990” (Hite et. al). According to certain sources, this period witnessed rigorous human rights violation including severe physical torture of those with anti-military sentiments and their detention under deplorable conditions. “The systematic human rights violations that were committed by the military government of Chile, under General Augusto Pinochet, included gruesome acts of physical and sexual abuse, as well as psychological damage...” (Skidmore, 134). This is evidently indicative of the brutal repression that was in force to quell dissent against the political regime. The trauma thus triggered among the survivors was likely to last for a long time. The ramifications the same has in the life of one such victim and her companion, in spite of its forced suppression, form the core of *Death and the Maiden*.

## **2.Representation of Traumatic Past:**

Cathy Caruth in her work *Unclaimed Experience*, a seminal text in the field of trauma studies, mentions that trauma is “a shock that appears to work very much like a bodily threat but is in fact a break in the mind’s experience of time” (61). This perhaps points to the fact that the person undergoing trauma invariably lives in the past memories that triggered the same, for a long time, or even throughout the course of his/her life, unable to accustom completely to an improved state of affairs or a much more conducive present environment. The condition becomes gruesome largely due to the unrepresentable nature of the experience. In fact, the classic definition of trauma” considers it to be “unrepresentable” due to which empathising with the subject becomes nearly impossible unless and until an individual has undergone (if not exactly the same) a similar experience as that of the victim (Balaev 4). However, it cannot be denied that attempts may be made towards this end that enable some form of representation, by persuading the subjects to speak or somehow vent their suppressed emotions. This could potentially help in eliminating the memories associated with the event from the person’s system. Paulina’s queries regarding the institution of an Investigation Commission by the current democratic government may be understood in this light. The Commission has been appointed to investigate the atrocities, particularly human rights violations, the most extreme ones that the citizens had to endure during the tenure of the previous tyrannical military junta. The nature of the violence that she had to go through is not mentioned at this point, the audience (or the readers) gets to know from her words that it has been something almost irreparable. In fact, she vehemently insists that Gerardo, who is named to the commission, probe the nuances involved in every case to not let any perpetrator go scot-free. “Find out what happened. Find out everything. Promise me that you’ll find everything...” becomes not only a means of venting the fury and agony that she has been enduring for fifteen years but also a means of identifying herself with other survivors (Act I Sc. 2). Her words are also representative of the voice of the victims who had to undergo gross injustice and torture during autocratic rule. What apparently seems a personal gesture turns to be a

collective sentiment and it endorses the hope that the wronged would receive justice. Here, Michelle Baleav's observation that "the idea that the knowledge of the past, not just any past but a particular type of past experience, can never be known or remains forever unclaimed by either the individual or society is being challenged by critical approaches that elucidate other possibilities regarding the value of trauma in terms of psychological, linguistic, and social mechanisms," is significant since the play in itself in a way attempts to do the same (Balaev 4). At this point, it becomes imperative to examine the vestiges of trauma associated with Paulina given the possibility that "trauma is not locatable in the simple violent or original event in an individual's past, but rather in the way that its very unassimilated nature...returns to haunt the survivor later on" (Caruth 4).

The hints regarding the possibility of neurosis in the protagonist are provided right at the very outset of the play. When Paulina is introduced, she is shown to be startled by the sound of a car, after which she secures a gun and hides behind the curtains though she had been completely relaxed just a moment ago. Also, her insistence on knowing the identity of the stranger who passed by and Gerardo's mention regarding a "relapse" and an event that they have not made public, evidently points in this direction. The audience eventually realises that Paulina's condition is not solely a personal affair but is embedded within a larger political framework. The political underpinnings that significantly contributed to such a state of affairs with respect to the protagonist and a wider community at large who represents the nation-state, is implicit in the mention of "official reports," objective conclusions, "crimes" unreported and the hope that "our country will never again live through the excesses..." that it once went through (Act I, Sc. I). Hence, Paulina's condition depicts a traumatic past embedded within the psyche of a large population.

Considering the symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder enables one to understand that the protagonist too exhibits similar symptoms. Startling at the sound of a car stopping near her house, equipping herself in order to defend a potential danger, and believing that she hears the voice of the perpetrator who inflicted violence on her fifteen years ago, indicate how the memories of the past return to haunt the survivor. Also, every time she hears Schubert's songs being played, she is invariably gripped by fear and in all likelihood goes through a panic attack. How "small, seemingly insignificant reminders can also evoke memories, which often return with all the vividness and emotional force of the original event" and how "even normally safe environments may come to feel dangerous" become evident here (Herman 26). As is the case with "chronically traumatized people" Paulina is "continually hypervigilant, anxious, and agitated...Events even remotely connected with violence—sirens, thunder, a door slamming—elicited intense fear" (Herman 62). She anticipates imminent danger and the recurrence of the undesirable event that scarred her past. Herman observes that Freud identifies this condition as ensuing from "repetition compulsion." The extreme affliction that such a situation can cause is the erasure of the self that Paulina too undergoes since the audience is told that she has been doing nothing with her life for fifteen years. It probably arises from the void that the traumatic event has triggered which needs to be filled by some concrete action from her part. Herman Rapaport and Greg Forter, consider that reliving of the past can be a healing mechanism. According to the former, "the recursive and repressed nature of

trauma does not remove its expressive potential” and to Forter, “novels employ modernist techniques to convey a concept of trauma, contrary to the traditional psychoanalytical view, in which remembrance of the past does not produce a repetitive foreclosure of knowledge but rather produces understanding and healing” (Balaev 9). But, if it proves to be true within the purview of the text needs to be considered.

The protagonist as discussed before undergoes prolonged, repeated trauma which Judith Herman identifies as ensuing from circumstances of captivity, “repeated trauma occurs only when the victim is a prisoner, unable to flee, and under the control of the perpetrator. Such conditions obviously exist in prisons, concentration camps, and slave labor camps” (54). From what Paulina herself reveals, she was captured, tortured and raped a number of times by those inclined towards the military junta. The details she gives which are later uttered by Roberto Miranda during his “supposed” confession, present the extreme nature of the atrocities that the political prisoners had to endure:

A kind of brutalization took over my life, I began to really truly like what I was doing. It became a game. My curiosity was partly morbid, partly scientific. How much can this woman take? More than the other one? How’s her sex? Does her sex dry up when you put the current through her? Can she have an orgasm under those circumstances? She is entirely in your power, you can carry out all your fantasies, you can do what you want with her... Everything they have forbidden you since ever, whatever your mother urgently whispered you were never to do. You began to dream with her, with all those women. (Act III Sc. 3)

Herman observes that apart from such acts intended to terrorise the victims, the perpetrator also resorts to destroying the autonomy that an individual enjoys, specially over his/ her body. This takes either the form of surveillance where the individual, his/ her actions are constantly monitored or the form of depriving the individual of the basic necessities required for survival such that after a certain point “even when the victim’s basic physical needs are adequately met, this assault on bodily autonomy shames and demoralizes her” (56). Evidently, this happens in Paulina’s case as she subtly implies being forced to drink the water she had passed while in captivity. The survivors of such physical and emotional forms of violence will definitely be scarred during the course of their lives and in the text, trauma in the individual is located not only in the ways in which it haunts the survivor later, but also in the original event associated with the individual’s past.

### **3.Reparation and Healing Post-Political Persecution:**

Katherine Hite, Cath Collins and Alfredo Joignant in *The Politics of Memory in Chile: From Pinochet to Bachelet* considers “politics of memory” as a conducive political strategy that could potentially serve as a panacea to a past legacy mired in atrocities:

The term “politics of memory” is most often associated with study of policies specifically designed to address the legacy of past atrocities—primarily, prosecutions, truth-telling and reparations... Memory politics is also associated with what is commonly referred to as “transitional justice” literature, tracing the dynamic post-authoritarian interactions of particular political institutions,

policies, and actors including the judiciary, the military, and human rights organizations (1).

*Death and the Maiden* offers such a possibility in the institution of the “Investigation Commission” under the democratic government, to probe into the instances of gross human rights violation during the past regime. The effective nature of the same manifests itself towards the end of the play, when a woman who has been denied justice for fourteen years over the disappearance of her husband, vests hope in the Commission that makes concerted efforts at bringing retribution to the wronged. “This woman was so timid. She began to speak standing up. “Please sit down,” the president of the Commission said and stood up to hold her chair for her. She sat down and started to sob...In all these years...It was the first time that anyone had ever asked her to sit down” (Act II Sc. 2). As Hite et.al observes, the reconstruction of the past serves a twin purpose, one for the individual for whom it produces a cathartic effect and for the polity in general that is working towards reconstruction.

At the personal level, the “repetition compulsion initially conceptualized by Freud “as an attempt to master traumatic event,” helps Paulina to a certain extent to gain control over her traumatic experience (Herman 29). In defending herself in the wake of a potential danger, she is ensuring that the past does not recur. She identifies Miranda as the perpetrator of the violence inflicted on her through her memories regarding the latter’s voice and his skin. However, the possibility that her acoustic and tactile faculties could be infallible in locating the actual perpetrator after a gap of fifteen years may be a far- fetched surmise to make and this is indeed remarked by Gerardo. This is possibly why political scientists foreground the subjective nature of an individual’s memories that is very likely to make matters difficult especially in bringing the truth behind political crimes. However, Herman makes a different observation, “in contexts that involve transition from conflict, repression, and trauma, memories prove difficult to ignore politically” (6). Dorfman too seems to endorse a similar perspective as in the play, he does leave subtle hints suggesting that Paulina may have been right in her assumptions. This is not overtly stated though, thus leaving the question ambiguous and open for audience’s interpretation.

Paulina’s attempts to heal herself involves the toppling of the power hierarchy assumed by the perpetrator while she was under captivity. This corresponds to Herman’s proposition that “psychological trauma is an affliction of the powerless. At the moment of trauma, the victim is rendered helpless by overwhelming force” and that “captivity, which brings the victim into prolonged contact with the perpetrator, creates a special type of relationship, one of coercive control. In situations of captivity, the perpetrator becomes the most powerful person in the life of the victim” (24, 54). Paulina tries to topple this power by subjecting the “supposed” perpetrator, Miranda to the same violence that she had to undergo. As she confides in Gerardo, “you know what I was thinking of? Doing to them, systematically, minute by minute, instrument by instrument, what they did to me. Specifically, to him, to the doctor ... When I heard his voice, I thought the only thing I want is to have him raped” (Act I Sc. 4). When she says this, she is making an attempt at adaptation by repairing the injury that was inflicted upon her as a powerless subject at the time of violence. However, she does give a concession, asking him to confess his crimes at the detention centre *in lieu* of the punishment she has in store for him. Nevertheless, when the play ends the audience is

left to wonder if she shoots Miranda to enable a complete erasure of the past that haunts her and to reinstate a sense of self that had been hitherto absent since the original event. Since “helplessness constitutes the essential insult of trauma, restitution requires the restoration of a sense of efficacy and power” which Paulina attempts to attain through coercive control of Miranda (Herman 30). This becomes important especially while considering the observation that the knowledge that the perpetrator could still be at large in the society would confine the individuals for a long time. Hence, her words and actions may be read as attempts to acquire mastery over the overwhelming experience of the traumatic past and to liberate herself from the haunting memories with regard to her captor. However, they go against the general notion that the victims of abuse do not become perpetrators of violence. Since they are directed against an individual who is supposed to have committed a gruesome crime she may be justified to a certain extent, provided Miranda had actually been her captor. Dorfman does not explicitly state if she does execute her thoughts, thereby allowing the audience to frame a conclusion of their own probably according to their ethical beliefs and considerations.

Basic human relationships as well as the support of the society are crucial in making reparations specifically when the violence inflicted has a political hue to it. “People in the survivor’s social world have the power to influence the eventual outcome of the trauma” (Herman 44). Gerardo succeeds in this respect, showing heart-felt concern to his traumatised wife as well as to other victims who had to succumb to the pressures exerted by the previous regime. Herman details some of the forms of succor that another individual can and should offer to the traumatized individual. “In the immediate aftermath of the trauma, rebuilding of some minimal form of trust is the primary task. Assurances of safety and protection are of the greatest importance” (44). Paulina herself remarks how determined Gerardo was to avenge the crime committed upon her when he heard about it. Also, realising that “the survivor who is often in terror of being left alone craves the simple presence of a sympathetic person,” he shows concern towards Paulina and seeks her consent before he joins the Investigation Commission to ensure that she would be perfectly fine (Herman 44). He also plays the role of the mediator in negotiating the deals that she makes with Miranda, in an attempt to pacify her. “Having once experienced the sense of total isolation, the survivor is intensely aware of the fragility of all human connections in the face of danger. She needs clear and explicit assurances that she will not be abandoned once again” and Gerardo succeeds in assuring her the same (Herman 44). It is evident that she finds a stronghold in her husband, which probably eliminates the possibility of “disconnection” that traumatized individuals usually go through with respect to their relationships with their kith and kin. He is capable of mitigating her fears that she would be utterly alone in her sufferings by offering steadfast support not only until the end of the text, but throughout her life as implied by the conclusion where Paulina is depicted as comfortably attending a truth-telling session organised by the ministry where she appears calm and composed. This implies that she has recovered extensively after the encounter with Miranda where Gerardo played a significant role in effecting the same. Involving her in the truth-telling session could be yet another therapeutic strategy while considering the fact that “feelings of guilt are especially severe when the survivor has been a witness to the suffering or death of other people. To be spared

oneself, in the knowledge that others have met a worse fate, creates a severe burden of conscience” (Herman 39). Hence, participating in the very process that intends to deliver justice to the wronged may be helpful in alleviating this guilt that she probably harbours.

Truth-tellings are considered important in mitigating trauma, since it permits an individual to lift the barriers of denial and repression associated with the undesirable event. Hence, speaking the unspeakable becomes imperative. In the case of Paulina too, the initial efforts to master her trauma, happens through the assertion of her voice. She herself declares “I can speak—it’s been years since I murmured even a word, I haven’t opened my mouth to even whisper a breath of what I’m thinking, years living in the terror of my own... but I’m not dead, I thought I was but I’m not and I can speak, damn it—so for God’s sake let me have my say” (Act II Sc.1). A part of the healing process commences when she finds courage to break her silence which could be why at a point, she becomes ready to provide her perpetrator some concession. The Investigation Commission, in its endeavours too intends to provide due significance to such narrations so that it would enable the reconstruction of the society and polity to a considerable extent. “Public acknowledgement of the traumatic event and some form of community action to repair the injury” are essential factors required to restore “the survivor’s sense of order and justice” and the Commission here endorses the same perspective in its intentions (Herman 51).

At times, prosecuting human rights violators under a new government might become problematic. Hite et al. details such a scenario, “for some time, dominant political science literature on transitions from military rule suggested that holding former repressors accountable

through prosecutions was politically risky” (15). But, they do assert the need for such prosecutions, the absence of which may restrict the citizens from reposing their trust on the newly elected democratic government. According to them, this must preferably underline two aspects, that the violent history would not be repeated and that the criminals would be punished. The former is realized through “government-sponsored truth-telling processes... mainly intended to produce societal acknowledgment of past atrocities and to drive home the message of *nunca más*, never again” (Hite et. al 16). This is exactly what the Commission attempts to do in the play. The reference to the Commission also evokes the functions performed by truth-commissions constituted in Chile under President Patricio Aylwin, “the country’s first elected leader in the wake of the seventeen-year military regime” (Hite et.al 16). Hite, Collins and Joignant mention that the National Commission on Truth and Reconciliation took upon the task of identifying victims who came forward to share their experiences and this mode of state-sponsored commemoration enables catharsis as well as concrete political actions. “The testimonies of relatives of the dead and disappeared meanwhile began to gain new visibility... survivors began to become publicly and judicially visible for almost the first time” (Hite et.al 18). The same process is depicted towards the end of the play where a woman breaks down at the thought of the visibility she has been currently vested with, which had been denied for a long time. It also carries the hope that further concrete community action would be taken to alleviate the sufferings of the survivors and to bring the perpetrators of violence before justice.

#### 4. Conclusion:

The political space that intrudes the biological and emotional spaces of an individual may be effectively identified as the underlying cause of trauma within the purview of *Death and the Maiden*. It shows how the violence inflicted on the body of the political prisoners pervades their psyche and remains within the collective unconscious of a large populace. The adverse traumatic conditions that the survivors endure for a long period of time and their desperate attempts to “belong” have been significantly explicated here in the persona of Paulina. She evidently appears to be the representative of a group for whom the reconstitution of the self that was broken due to a traumatic event induced by a certain political scenario, turns out to be considerably effective. The play has been able to offer certain plausible solutions in this regard especially at the wake of persistence of trauma even after a transition into a better political climate. The text implicitly suggests that it wouldn’t suffice to adopt reparations at the personal level but a collective attempt at healing should be initiated. The role of the immediate relatives of the survivors, the support they should receive at the societal level, an enhanced visibility and voice that should be offered to them, an effective judicial mechanism that would undertake concrete actions to ensure justice and the assurance of security and freedom that would be offered to its citizens are foregrounded here to suggest the same. A reconstructed political machinery empathetic to the concerns of its citizenry may turn out to be crucial and desirable in this process. The play attempts to validate such a claim.

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## THE JOYS OF MATERNAL EXPERIENCE: MOTHERHOOD AND MOTHERING IN BUCHI EMECHETA, FAY WELDON AND R. K. NARAYAN

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**Abstract:** *Motherhood is a glorious life force that imparts new possibilities and provides a new dimension to the very existence of women. Being a mother, imparts a sense of fulfilment to a woman's life. The love of a mother is selfless and unconditional, no matter to which cultural milieu she belongs. The method adopted by various novelists who deal with the problem of motherhood vary strikingly, and they embody realism, anti-realism and fantasy as distinctive features of their style. They depict motherhood as an experience that affords immeasurable pleasure and a sort of ambiguous power. The paper highlights three different aspects of motherhood enshrined in Madeleine, Savitri and Nnu Ego. These novels also portray the home as the hub of the power-struggle between the sexes.*

**Keywords:** *Motherhood, Mothering, Motherliness, Power and Vulnerability, Instincts, Femininity*

The attribution of divinity to mother is essentially an Indian concept. It glorifies mother as a divine form, elevating her to a level of a goddess. Nature is conceived of as a foster mother who nurtures and protects all created things. The 'Shaktheya' cult is the most logical manifestation of the Indian mode of worshipping the universal mother. The Indian outlook on woman is shaped and nurtured by the perception of divinity in feminine form. For example, Shakthi is the counterpart and complement of Shiva. This angle of vision is the pivot of the Indian literary concept of womanhood, and the cardinal virtue of Indian philosophy. The glorification of the feminine principle underlies all classical mythologies, but not in relatively new and revealed religions.

According to Andrea O'Reilly, "motherhood refers to the institution of motherhood, which is male-defined and male-controlled, and mothering refers to experiences of mothers which are female-defined and female-centred" (97). The role of mother, in all its depth and vicissitudes, can be entered through giving birth, adoption or marriage to a child's father. The duties and rights of motherhood vary considerably. They depend on various factors like the mother's position in society, her nature, age, race, marital status, sources of support and so on. The gender, the order of birth, physical condition and behaviour of the child influence the mother. That mothers parent differently from fathers is a matter to be attributed to both physiological and social factors, and feminist scholars have bestowed a lot of attention on this subject. It may be noted that motherhood is more than a biological event. Why women are willing to become mothers is a question answered by Chodorow with the help of psychoanalytic theory, by Lorber and Coser from a sociological point of view, and by Rossi with reference to the interplay between biology and social structure. Although medical advances have enlarged the potential for choice over whether and when to have children, societies vary in whether or not such action should be encouraged. For the most part, women's decisions are constrained by policies created and maintained by men for political, economic or religiously guided goals. The concept of fertility seems to be mandated in some parts of the world but suppressed in others.

Women of colour were not accorded the respect and social support for the mother role that white middle-class women received. Racist ideology triumphed over sexist ideology. Women of colour were not deemed to be truly women, exempting them from the protective cloaks of feminine frailty or womanly morality. Their roles as workers took precedence. Thus Black, Mexican-American and Japanese-American domestic servants were expected to devote long hours to taking care of their mistresses' households and children, while leaving their own offspring in the care of others.

An Ibu woman born near Lagos, and currently settled down in London, Buchi Emecheta is a widely acclaimed African novelist who portrays the agonies and tortures that the women in African cultures had to endure under an unsympathetic imperial regime. The major focus in her novels is on the conflicts that the African women face, when a colonial-influenced life style forces its ways into the traditional African culture. Her novel, *The Joys of Motherhood*, though ironically titled, presents the agonies, burdens and obligations of motherhood. Many of the conflicts that torment Nnu Ego, the central figure of *The Joys of Motherhood*, are in a sense, akin to those of Emecheta herself had to face in her life. In an interview with Adeola James, Buchi Emecheta clearly states that "everything coming out of Africa, in literature, is still concerned with colonialism, what the English man has done to us. We forget that some of us have been independent for more than two decades. It is about time we started writing about ourselves now."

The struggles of Nnu Ego, a Nigerian woman to cling to her traditional tribal culture in the face of the new ways of life, introduced by the colonizers are a pivotal point in *The Joys of Motherhood*. To be a mother and to rear her children properly is Nnu Ego's chief concern. They care little for their daughters to be educated. Daughters, on marriage, can bring them bride price, which, they think can be utilized for their brother's education. Nnu Ego pins all her hopes on her two sons to whom she can turn in old age for protection and help. But her hopes and dreams remain shattered, as her sons are essentially self-centred and they pursue their own selfish interests, instead of serving the collective interests of the family. They are lured by the prospect of education abroad, and the reward it brings. Her sacrifices fetch no dividends and her unrealized joys and expectations finally land her in a state of utter disillusionment and she dies alone, at the side of the road, without receiving a single gesture of approval from anyone for selfless services and sacrifices.

Nnu Ego's aspirations are not limited to solely being a mother, and provider to her family. She is the helpless victim of her time, caught at a decisive juncture in W. African social history. To Nnu Ego, motherhood is a source of both delights and defeats. As a girl, she is taught that her duties are to be limited to bearing and rearing children. She has a sense of utter self-defeat when she fails to conceive during her early struggles and the fear of being incapable to exemplify the uniquely female destiny that her culture prescribes haunts her like a nightmare. When she finally becomes the mother of many children, and struggles a lot to feed the growing family, and invests so much of her life for their sake, her idealism falters. A sense of regret comes over her when she realizes that her children are ungrateful, with no concern at all for her well-being. Though, her identity is rooted in her status as a mother, she assumes occasionally the traditional male role of being a provider and a bread-winner for her family. She is constrained to modify her vision of motherhood, apparently different

from the ideas she once cherished. But she gets nothing out of life for her toils, and sacrifices, and has her end like a sacrificial lamb.

The evils of colonialism run as an undercurrent all through *The Joys of Motherhood*. Emecheta hints at the fact that the colonizing power has devastated the native culture. By being compelled to adopt and adhere to systems and beliefs alien to their own, the natives lose their identity as well as culture. The traditional Nigerian culture suffers an irrevocable setback, as a result of the onslaught of capitalism, Christianity and the western notions of education and conduct. Their impact trickles down to all levels of society, harming families and individuals, besides eroding tradition and culture. Nnu Ego's joys and expectations as a mother, and her dreams about a unifying, interdependent family would have fructified and fulfilled, but for the changes ushered in by the colonizers. Nnu Ego's tragedy can be ascribed to her inability to accept and absorb changes, which even if accepted, are not positive forces beneficial to the interests of the natives. This is the message that Buchi Emecheta conveys through *The Joys of Motherhood*. Emecheta also explores the idea that the femininity of a woman can be only defined by her ability to bear children, preferably sons, who alone can perpetuate the interests of a male-dominated society.

Adrienne Rich's *Of Woman Born: Motherhood as Experience and Institution* is a monumental work in which she reveals the ties between reproduction and sexuality. Rich focuses attention on the ways in which society controls mothering by making the nuclear family the main reproductive institution. She describes the 'erotics' of motherhood and argues the case for a clearly confirmed tradition of maternal power. She distinguishes between the social institution of motherhood which controls women's reproductive and sexual possibilities, and the experience of motherhood which, either as fact or as potential, gives women great pleasure and great power. In contradiction to de Beauvoir, Rich does not believe that women's biological and reproductive capacities necessarily cause them to be oppressed. Both Firestone and Rich have been potent sources of influence for Fay Weldon, one of the leading novelists of Great Britain, in formulating her views on motherhood and mothering.

Weldon offers an excellent example of the powerful bond existing between the mother and daughter through her portrayal of Madeleine in *Remember Me*. She is the deserted first wife of the architect, Jarvis Katkin. She is highly solicitous about her daughter, Hilary, whose welfare and well-being are uppermost in her mind even when she is put to unbearable indignities from the part of her husband who lives with Lily, his second wife and their son Jonathan. There was a time when she was perfectly happy with her husband, and that was during her pregnancy.

Once Madeleine woke up singing. When she was pregnant with Hilary, she even sang in her sleep. Jarvis heard her. Once Jarvis loved Madeleine, drew back chairs for her, brought her tea when she was tired; held her hand in the cinema; scowled at her admirers; brought her yellow daffodils fifty at a time (Weldon 18).

Those days are irrevocably gone. Her husband ignores her totally, treating her as a "thorn in Lily's white soft flesh" (RM 19). Hilary is sad that her parents have separated and she is all pity for her mother whose presence she longs for. She often tells herself: "Mother, do you hear me? I need your help. I am growing stunted, I know I am. If you

don't do something soon, I'll fall apart like some dried-up walnut, and you will find me withered in my shell inside" (Weldon 91).

By presenting this "sharp peremptory call of the child bent on survival" (91), Weldon accentuates the strong bond of affinity between the mother and the daughter. The daughter's love for the mother has to be viewed against Jarvis's selfishness, which makes him use and abuse Madeleine and destroy her and her child's life for the sake of sex.

It is, indeed, strange that Madeleine dies in a car accident at exactly the same moment that her husband drinks a toast to all ex-wives. While she was alive, Madeleine was compared by her husband and his new wife to a "neurotic bitch" (Weldon 96), an ogre, a vampire, a leech, to succubus and to old women "who suck men's blood, destroy their life forces" (Weldon 97). Madeleine's corpse lies for a long time on the road, in the hospital, and in the morgue before its burial. Her face, though drained of blood, appears uncanny, as her eyes seem to close and open repeatedly. Her re-appearance as a revenant by getting possession of Margot Bailey, her friend, invests her with enough power to make her defiant husband submissive; she easily makes Jarvis abide by all her wishes without demur. Her wishes are rooted in her great concern for her daughter's future. Jarvis finds it impossible to resist her demands, which are intended to safeguard Hilary's interests and ensure for her a sense of security and well-being.

More effective in death than in life, Madeleine, once she haunts Jarvis, makes him consciously acknowledge her interests, as well as those of her daughter. The mother in Madeleine comes to the fore more compellingly and persuasively when she is dead than when alive. Her return as a revenant has such an effect that Jarvis even sides with her against his second wife. Furthermore, once Madeleine is dead, Jarvis desires her again and again. He comes to recognize that he was unfair to her. He realizes that there is truth in her accusation, "You took away my life, my home, and gave them to Lily. Now you want to destroy my child as well" (Weldon 245). Perhaps, a sense of guilt that runs through his heart may be one of the reasons why he becomes the very soul of affability, giving extreme regard for her wishes about Hilary. *Remember Me* is a novel in which Weldon describes the essential forces that conjoin parent and child, husband and wife and lover.

It is interesting to note that *Remember Me* bears semblance to R. K. Narayan's *The English Teacher*. Both the novels take the readers to certain unfrequented domains. Sushila, the wife of Krishna, the English teacher dies, but her presence is felt throughout the novel, though the way she appears is different from the manner in which Madeleine makes herself felt. The upbringing of her daughter becomes uppermost in Sushila's mind, as in the case of Madeleine. Krishna is able to establish spiritual communion with his wife and this is a point where Weldon's novel differs from Narayan's. But the dead wife makes her presence felt in both the novels. The motive force behind their visitations is their great concern for their daughter's future. In both the novels there is a continuance of life even after the death of the wives. Though Jarvis and Krishna lose the physical presence of their wives, the spiritual presence of the two women pervades the novels and one feels that even death fails to destroy their concern for their daughters.

*The Dark Room* by R. K. Narayan is a social novel, which presents the trials and travails of a mother from an Indian standpoint. The tyrannical acts of a selfish husband cause immeasurable grief and agony to Savitri, the passive wife and the mother of two children. Savitri is a typical representative of the Indian motherhood, who confines herself strictly to her household and her duties centre round the interests of her husband and children. She represents the women who suffer from the highhandedness of their imperious husbands. Her life under her husband is an adventure. Only a woman of extra-ordinary patience can live under the same roof with Ramani who is “eccentric and lawless” (Narayan 2) in taste. His talk is full of what may be called irrational, unpalatable cynicism.

Savitri’s self-control and womanly patience receive a severe setback when she learns that her husband has been making a fool of himself, with a typical daughter of Eve, a Shantha Bai, a woman probationer in one of the branches of Ramani’s Insurance Company. Savitri feels that her husband has neglected her and runs away from home as if to teach him a lesson, and give him sufficient room for repentance. As Prof. Srinivasa Iyengar aptly points out, “His (Ramani’s) callous behaviour strikes some fire in her and she is for the once transformed into Ibsen’s Nora, asserting her elementary rights as a woman. Ramani is an even cruder Helmer, and so, Savitri defiantly walks out of the “doll’s house”, leaving her husband and children behind” (292). But her disappearance fails to work a change in her husband who does not make a hubbub about it and views it with complete equanimity.

Savitri is a synonym for motherliness. When she goes away from house, her motherly instincts come to the fore and she resolves to go back to her former routine of life. It is the presence of her children that mitigates her mental agony, caused by her husband’s beastly attitude towards her. “What will they do without me? Will the children sleep there without me?” (Narayan 112). Even at the time of her attempt to drown herself in Sarayu, she thinks of her children, “Sumati and Kamala must study upto the B. A. and not depend for their salvation on marriage” (Narayan 93). Like a true Indian mother, her mind is always preoccupied with thoughts about her children. In a fit of fury, she bursts forth to her husband, “They (the children) are yours absolutely. You paid the midwife and nurse. You pay for their clothes and teachers. You are right. Didn’t say that a woman owns nothing” (Narayan 88). These bitter words of Savitri will strike a tragic chord in the heart of all mothers. She also reveals her rebellious temper when Ramani asks her to quit the house, taking whatever things she has. “Things? I don’t possess anything in this world. What possession can a woman call her own except her body? Everything else that she has, her father’s, her husband’s or her son’s... even the children are absolutely yours – you are right, didn’t I say that a woman owns nothing?” (Narayan 88)

Savitri is a mother torn between two forces – one imparting her strength to rebel against the autocratic ways of her husband, let alone the social system and the other driving her back to her miserable, dependent motherhood, where she proves herself weak and powerless. Her entry into the dark room to register her protest, her departure from home to reinforce it and her subsequent return may seem to be a failure from a material angle, but a victory from a spiritual plane.

The dual aspects of womanhood – motherhood and mothering, have been the alluring theme for novelists, in almost all flourishing literatures. The contradictions of power and vulnerability pertaining to motherhood find expression in Fay Weldon’s novel, *Remember Me*. Her maternal solicitude for her only daughter comes to the fore, not only when she is alive, but even after her death. Savitri in R. K. Narayan’s *The Dark Room*, is a synonym for motherliness. Thoughts about her children are uppermost in her mind at all times, providing a ray of hope to her otherwise gloomy life. Even when circumstances force her to abandon her house, anxiety about her children almost chokes her. As a mother, Nnu Ego offers a striking contrast to Savitri, in that the former is concerned only with the welfare of her sons, pinning all her hopes on them. But her sacrifices go unrewarded and her unrealized joys and expectations finally land her in a state of utter disillusionment. Motherly instincts assert themselves differently in these heroines and they represent different facets of motherhood. Though circumstances and the cultural milieu differ, the maternal instincts remain universal at the emotional and psychic level.

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# MULTILINGUALISM AS LINGUISTIC AND SOCIAL CAPITAL: THE CASE OF FRENCH LANGUAGE LEARNERS IN INDIA

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**Abstract:** *The post liberalisation era and especially the beginning of the century has witnessed new opportunities for students of foreign languages in India, resulting in a paradigm shift in the relationship between language, power and professional mobility in an already complex multilingual environment. The BA and MA French programmes in Indian universities attract students from different geographies and socioeconomic backgrounds, offering an affordable alternative to the till-now favoured English language-based courses, but also to the more exclusive institutes of foreign language learning. This adds to the existing multilingual base of students in India who enjoy an additive bilingualism (Cummins, 1998) or plurilingualism (CEFRL, 2001) and offers new possibilities in the formation of linguistic and social capital (Bourdieu, 1986) in the workplace. A survey conducted among students of BA and MA French courses recruited in corporate companies ascertains how the specific use of French and the general use of multiple languages has given them an advantage in their work environment.*

**Keywords:** *linguistic capital, social capital, multilingualism, French, foreign languages.*

## Introduction

India with its multiple languages is at the forefront of the debates between globalisation, multiculturalism and multilingualism. However, in the job market, it has always been English that held sway, paving the way for better employment opportunities and social advancement. Nonetheless, in the new millennium, foreign languages such as French, German, Spanish, Russian, Japanese and Chinese and others are making significant inroads by tapping into the needs of the technology oriented multinational companies that offer outsourcing and offshore services. India has now become global hub for the service industry, giving new direction to foreign language studies. This has created a unique situation where a degree in foreign languages has similar if not higher demand than an equivalent degree in English language. By examining a few cases of French language graduates (BA and MA French), this article seeks to demonstrate that a degree in foreign languages empowers students of varied socioeconomic backgrounds and functions as a linguistic and social capital, providing access to better employment opportunities. These new forms of capital play a role in recalibrating the equations between social inequality, language and power.

French language has enjoyed a presence of over two hundred years in the Indian subcontinent, and it still remains one of the most favoured foreign language to be taught at the school and university level. *Label France* pegs learners in French as “over 300 000 in India, for 3,000 teachers. This number includes 60,000 students enrolled at university level, with around 500 teachers” (*Diplomatie France*, 2008).

As part of the BA (Hons.) French programme, students not only learn French language in the initial stages, but are also introduced to French literature, history and culture along with an initiation to translation techniques. This is carried further in the MA French programme where the students gain in-depth knowledge of various disciplines in French such as Linguistics, Literature, Culture and Translation and may even specialise in any of them. A study on student profiles in the BA (Hons.) French

programmes conducted as part of my doctoral thesis in four central universities in India (The English and Foreign Languages University Hyderabad, Delhi University, Jawaharlal Nehru University Delhi and Pondicherry University) in 2016 revealed that 56% of students in the BA (Hons.) French programme out of a sample size of 190 came from Tier 2 cities with a population of 50,000 – 99,999 inhabitants (the cities were categorised according to Census 2011 data), while 21% from smaller Tier 3 cities (20,000 – 49,999 inhabitants). Only 23% came from three major metropolitan cities (Delhi, Hyderabad and Mumbai). 66.3% of students had at least one parent who was a graduate or post-graduate and were professionals (doctors, engineers, CA, architects), or government employees, business persons, university faculty, bank employees, journalists etc. However, 19% had parents who were not graduates (Secondary or Primary education) and were bank clerks, school teachers, factory workers, taxi drivers, electricians, daily wage workers, etc. A large majority of students (78.4%) self-reported as highly proficient (reading and writing skills) in at least three languages, while 20.3% claimed varying levels of proficiency in four or more languages. Only 1.3% of students declared they spoke only one or two languages. As for the reasons that drew them to joining the BA (Hons.) French programme, 69.5% were looking for better employment opportunities while the others cited other reasons such as pursuing higher studies, visiting France and the pleasure of learning a foreign language (Damodar Sridhar, 2016, unpublished thesis).

Therefore, these programmes attract students from a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds and from all over the country each year, presenting an interesting mosaic of the Indian population. They also indicate a pragmatic approach to learning French that is removed from the historical and elitist conditions under which French was taught in India (Jeannot, 2012: 355). The status of French in India has shifted from the earlier historical positions of privilege that conferred a social distinction upon the speaker, to an instrumental and functional value, as evidenced by the number of students enrolled in university programmes seeking better employment opportunities. The MA French programme was not part of the above study but attract a smaller but equally diverse public, comprising of former BA French students as well as those who had independently learnt French in other institutes in cities all over the country.

This paper attempts to examine the role played by French in the current socio-economic scenario in India where traditional sociocultural divisions grapple with the economic reality of rendering students employable. It explores to what extent learning French and being multilingual acts as a linguistic and social capital for the students of BA (Hons.) French and MA French (henceforth referred to as BA and MA French students) who had found employment in corporate companies. The sample for the study was drawn among the BA and MA French students of the English and Foreign Languages University, Hyderabad, the latter being the university of this researcher.

### **The concept of Linguistic and Social Capital**

The notion of linguistic capital comes from the work of French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu who had developed the notion of capital in social sciences. Capital here, as he saw it, was not just economic, involving material wealth and property rights, but also cultural, “convertible, in certain conditions, into economic capital and institutionalized in the form of educational qualifications” and social, “made up of social



obligations(“connections”), which is convertible, in certain conditions, into economic capital” (Bourdieu, 1986: 16). Individuals could use these forms of capital as currency and derive advantages from them, exchanging one form to another to gain value in life. Bourdieu later elaborated on the notion of linguistic capital, examining how language is a function of power relations that are established in society. “Different speakers possessed different quantities of ‘linguistic capital’ – that is, the capacity to produce expressions apropos, for a particular market. Moreover, the distribution of linguistic capital is related in specific ways to the distribution of other forms of capital (economic capital, cultural capital, etc.) which define the location of an individual within the social space” (Bourdieu,1991: p. 14).

Bourdieu’s idea was that all these forms of capital contributed to the continuation and maintenance of structures of power in society, by ensuring that only those individuals who already had access to them could participate in the benefits accrued through the establishment of informal networks and relations. These forms of capital conferred a particular *habitus* to the individual, that he described as a set of dispositions that generate a “system of internalised structures, schemes of perception, conception, and action common to all members of the same group or class” resulting in an “objective coordination of practices and sharing of a world-view” (1977:86). These dispositions are inculcated through childhood experiences; they are structured, generative and transposable (1977:72). In other words, they participate in the replication of practices throughout the life of the individual, governing his actions and tastes, and engender other practices in other domains (such as the arts) common to persons sharing the same habitus.

In a subsequent study, American sociologist James Coleman extended the use of social capital as conveying benefits to the poor and the marginalized communities and not just the elite who had been the subject of Bourdieu’s theory. His definition of social capital included trusts, norms and networks that improved the efficiency of society facilitating coordinated actions and was based on the principle of cooperation rather than competition. According to him, “Physical capital is wholly tangible ... human capital is less tangible, being embodied in the skills and knowledge acquired by an individual; social capital is even less tangible, for it is embodied in the relations among persons” (Coleman 1990: 304).

Although Bourdieu’s theory was restricted to the description of a hierarchical French society in a particular sociocultural context, his notion of linguistic and social capital finds an application in a wide range of scenarios and specifically, in our context, the case of students learning foreign languages in India.

Studies on the link between foreign language communicative competence as contributing towards the linguistic capital of a person has not received much attention as it is usually linked to its conversion into economic capital (Sakharova et al. 2021). Linguistic capital makes a certain contribution to cultural capital. Along with economic (resources of an economic nature), social (a stable network of relations of mutual acquaintance and recognition) and symbolic capital (honour and prestige), it lays a complex of personal resources. It should also be noted that according to Bourdieu’s concept, all types of capital are interconnected and can be converted into each other, thereby allowing a person to claim higher social positions. (Sakharova et al. 2021:

817). A similar situation can be established among Indian students of French who have access to employment in corporate companies, are able to develop professional contacts and acquire access to new sources of information, which creates additional conditions and opportunities for professional and personal growth. The acquisition of a foreign language functions as a form of linguistic capital for the student, already bi- or multi-lingual in the case of Indian students. The ability to communicate in a foreign language, when linked to the favourable economic conditions (increased chances of being hired by multinational companies in need of foreign language experts) confers a note of distinction on the individual, marking her/him as standing apart from other potential candidates and adding to her/his employability and negotiating power in the job market. Once employed, this capital is converted to other forms, such as social capital through the acquisition of new skills and the establishment of contacts and relations within the company, ensuring the continuance of the privileged position occupied by the foreign language speaker in the company. The notion of social capital, described variously by researchers, refers here to as “the sum of resources, actual or virtual, that accrue to an individual or a group by virtue of possessing a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition” (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992:119). The notion of linguistic capital and the social benefits thereof has rich possibilities in India, given that multilingualism is a norm rather than the exception, and foreign languages seem to function as the game changer in the past few decades.

### **The survey**

Twelve students of French of the EFL University (6 from BA (Hons.) French and 6 from the MA French programmes) participated in a qualitative survey that was conducted between 2018 and 2021 with the help of a questionnaire. In addition to the written responses, students were questioned individually through email or telephone conversations whenever clarifications were required. In general, foreign language students also work as teachers, translators or pursue higher education in French, therefore only those students who were working in corporate companies were contacted for the study. For reasons of confidentiality, all references to names of companies and a few specific job descriptions have been suppressed. It was decided to study both BA and MA students' groups in view of the small sample size and the fact that both had equal opportunities during campus recruitment programmes, although the positioning in the company could vary according to their qualifications.

The students were asked three main questions:

Q (i) A description of their employment and roles in the company (related to economic capital);

Q (ii) Their perception of the satisfaction derived in their employment with respect to their self-image and their value in the company (related to symbolic capital); and

Q (iii) their knowledge French, English and other Indian languages and its value in establishing networks and contacts (linguistic and social capital).

The responses are given below, grouped according to the main themes.

### **Q i. Employment and role in the companies**

The BA (Hons.) French students who participated in the survey had completed their course between 2009 and 2014 so were in employment for the past seven to nine years, the longest being twelve years. The MA French students had completed their course between 2014 and 2020, and so had had relatively lesser work experience.

The BA students came from Madhubani, Shillong, Kota, Muzzafarpur, Uttar Pradesh (sic), and Aurangabad. At least one of the parents had completed graduation in all cases except for two students (10+2) and their occupation was returned as farmer, businessman, weaver and government employees in the case of three students.

The MA students came from Guntur, Kollam, Pondicherry, Madurai, Chennai and Mumbai. All had parents who were graduates or post-graduates and were employed in government services, bank or school or college teachers.

All the respondents had found employment in major software product and services companies with some finding a source of employment with telecom companies. The job descriptions of the BA French students varied from French Language Analyst, French e-support officer, French Language Researcher, Transaction Risk Investigator, Associate Translator and Senior Business Manager in the case of the student with 12 years' experience. The MA French students who participated in the study had similar job descriptions (French language Associate, Risk operation process team, Product Authentication specialist, Senior French Language Analyst, Senior Investigator for Europe, etc.), although they were also often asked to mentor others.

f) All the respondents were of the opinion that the BA and MA French degrees provided them with an extra advantage when it came to finding a job and a better salary. The advantages were perceived in terms of economic returns:

*Better salary packages; more job opportunities with attractive salaries; In terms of remuneration the foreign language investigators are paid almost double the amount of salary to that of a normal English investigator; When it comes to job perspective, it is obvious that people with French knowledge are getting highly paid at entry-level and learning French can have scopes in many parts of the world.*

b) Several among them believed that they had received a better offer with as compared to their English language speaking colleagues with respect to opportunities or job security: *better opportunities at work compare to English (speaking) employees; The English people do the same work as French people does. But we receive more salary; Easy to get a job being a French language candidate comparing to English and other graduate (B.A) candidate; language investigators are hired on permanent basis wherein English-speaking candidates are hired on contract basis. So there is job security.*

### **Q ii. Perception of satisfaction and value of BA and MA French programme**

a) For some others, it served as a mark of distinction that helped them to go beyond the original mandate of the job for which they were hired: *helped me staying on the top of the crowd; A lot of companies deal with French Speaking countries and knowledge of French becomes crucial to work with them; French language also opens doors for onsite work. I worked in Cameroon, Africa for 2 years.*

**b)** Almost all respondents believed that they had good growth opportunities within the companies, thanks to their proficiency in the foreign language and communication skills.

*The knowledge of French language helps in enhancing the communication skills which is important in the discussions with leadership people. The better I am able to express myself and reach out to audience the more opportunities I get in terms of work like mentoring and training. So the leadership partners definitely appreciate your language skills and help you explore different options;*

*Yes, knowing French will land us with a truckload of opportunities in the corporate world because it helps us to grow professionally with promotions and it also helps us to build leadership qualities in us.*

*We get to mentor multiple people on understanding French culture, behaviour, etc. It'll definitely help us get promotions and higher incentives compared to others.*

*Yes, there is lot requirement in the companies now a days than before. But less people available in the market.*

*Having command over another foreign language apart from English and French can be beneficial in some firms and give added perks.*

**c)** Most respondents found that knowledge of a foreign language was definitely helpful in integrating into the work culture. Some attributed it to the fact that knowing about a new culture had already adapted them to a different work culture, as *the person has a broader point of view regarding everything.*

*Some others found it added to their confidence and ownership at work... The foreign language experts stand out from others for their linguistic and diverse experience at any organisation; Yes, because having a knowledge of French and English is a great advantage when it comes to corporate world. It helps us stay motivated and also, we can easily mingle with people.*

*Some of the respondents from the BA group found the situation more stimulating. There are few people who speak Foreign Languages and it helps them to be treated as unique. It also adds colours to personality as true foreign Language Experts are more open towards different culture because of their educational upbringings during the Language course. We can conclude in a way that everyone speaks English but few speak Foreign Languages.*

**d)** However, for some others, it was a job just like any else:

*Language experts are hired as permanent employees. But promotion might take some time, one to two years minimum;*

*I don't think so. Ultimately it boils down to your metrics and performance. That's the only thing that matters in such corporate companies.*

*Language experts and English investigators all do the same work. Only the language they use in the process differs. The company gives everybody equal opportunities;*

According to one student (MA), *initially it was easy integrating...However, staying motivated is another question altogether. In my 2+ years, I am struggling to find the motivation to stay in my job. It's very monotonous and robotic work.*

e) Similarly, most of the respondents found that the advantage of learning a foreign language was only valid at the entry level. They needed to diversify their skills and also gain mastery over English if they wished to get into higher management positions.

*Knowing French helps to start a better career but to remain competitive in market one must learn multiple skills depending on the area of interest.*

*My job profile requires a good proficiency level in English language also. Because we always need to translate the textual information and put them in English in the tool on which we work.*

*A good command of English is a must to thrive in corporate environment. Also, technical skills are a must (...) in addition to French language.*

*English language in team meetings or meeting with operational teams.*

*French is used at entry level only .... but it is nowhere used when one reach to manager level post.*

*French was an advantage only in the initial stage, growth after that depends on the ability to learn new skills.*

*Yes! People working in different domain must learn the new skills sets. I had to learn a lot of Marketing and Sales. (...) I have always opted in for various learning programs like PMP (Project Management Professional), Free You tubes videos... Currently I am pursuing Professional Certificate Programme in Business Management from IIM Kozhikode.*

*New skills were mostly not related to language. The new skills that I had to learn was getting familiar with the process, metrics and keeping up with daily targets. So I had to learn time management and few analytical skills.*

*Not really. Just basic work knowledge is sufficient.*

*Just Excel and MS Office.*

### **Q iii. Advantages of being multilingual**

The question of multilingualism was considered separately as it was tied to the notion of linguistic capital. It was found that while almost all respondents thought that being multilingual was a major advantage in working in corporate companies, their perceptions of the utility of the languages were quite different.

a) Most respondents agreed that being multilingual helped in *communicating, being adaptive towards other people, culture etc. it is easier to adjust with the environment.* It was also considered as an asset in *connecting to wider audience. When the language barrier is removed you can reach out to more people in order to expand your circle.*

b) Specific advantages of knowing French were linked, as mentioned above, directly to internal opportunities like better projects, etc. French was used *during half the day, while working directly on the work at hand.* Therefore, while the instrumental benefits

of French were indispensable, it was not the language of day-to-day communication in the office.

c) Very few respondents spoke of being part of official networks based on their language proficiencies:

*I'm part of an (name of company) world-wide language speaking experts' group. I get exposure to new people, new languages, new culture and much more.*

*I am part of some groups in LinkedIn and it helps to know the available jobs in market.*

*Yes, I am part of a couple of WhatsApp groups*

d) However, it was seen that all their informal professional and personal contacts in the organisation was enriched by the knowledge of Indian languages and English, helping in the formation an intangible social capital:

*The team meetings, huddles and connects are all done in English. The other Indian languages are mostly used for casual conversations outside of work.*

*And while talking to each other I use the language the other person is comfortable with. It could be either English or Indian languages like Hindi, Tamil and Malayalam.*

*Multilingual is a huge plus because I converse in English, Hindi or Telugu when the need arises and helps in forming bonds.*

*English is a global language and sometimes Clients prefer to interact in English (...) It also helps in internal communications as in the country like India, a good English speaker is considered more capable.*

*Though being multilingual is a great asset because people usually speak English everywhere in my company and I would say there is very less usage of French or any other languages.*

e) On the personal front again, it is the use of all languages to communicate with co-workers that help build bonds and, in some cases, develop one's personality.

*Yes! It has helped me in personality growth. Co-workers get used to my foreign language skills like one get used to cold winter in country like Europe. After some time, they really don't care about the foreign language skills. But some tend to learn some words and show interest.*

*Yes, it has helped to make contact with other people, when you are communicating with an employee who also knows a foreign language you can connect with the person on the different level, you share the same thoughts, have same perceptive and have lot of mutual things.*

*Yes, I think being multilingual (...) helped me to reach out to more people who are also foreign language investigators. (...) me aware about different language learning options and various work positions for language learners. Overall, it helped me in improving my interpersonal and communication skills.*

*Yes. During training period, few of us in our batch were French language experts. We had a more interesting conversations on our journey in learning a different language.*

*It does not help much because we usually communicate with people only in English in my company and so it doesn't matter even if we are multilingual.*

*Being able to converse in multiple languages makes me feel more confident.*

Also, most of their informal and sometimes even formal interactions take place in Indian languages. One of the statements is particularly revealing: *In organizations use of local languages like Hindi, Telugu, Tamil... are also frequent for internal meetings and communication. In my previous company (...) most of the meetings happened in Telugu. If I was required to participate, they would translate it for me or change the language some times.* The role of Indian languages therefore, as a factor of professional social networking, therefore, needs to be explored further.

**f)** The pandemic may have had an effect on the morale of the respondents, as one of them says that she was at *a crossroads with my career currently. I am fed up of corporate jobs. I feel I need my independence. Even if I do switch careers to something completely different, I don't think I will let go of French completely.* Being multilingual did not seem to be a panacea, as she says, *I don't see any use for it in the workplace, especially now in the corona period where we are all working from home.*

## **Discussion**

It was observed from the responses (**Qi**) that the students were satisfied with their roles at the workplace and believed that learning French had conferred a value-addition in terms of better salary packages, higher job security as they were given permanent work contracts. Also, speaking a foreign language helped distinguish themselves from the others, and gave them additional perks as mentioned by a BA student who had had the opportunity to travel to French speaking countries (**Qii a**). They also believed that they received higher salary packages in comparison to their non-foreign language speaking counterparts leading to job security and better economic capital.

Learning a foreign language also helped them develop better communication and leadership skills which was translated as high levels of “motivation” and “ability to mingle with people”, increasing their confidence levels and their performance in the company (**Qii b**). Foreign language learning in India, especially French, has been largely influenced by the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach that focusses on the acquisition of not only grammatical, but also pragmatic and sociolinguistic competencies and interaction strategies. Studies have shown the correlation of CLT with increased fluency in language as well as self-confidence (Boonkit, 2009; Saputra and Wargianto 2015). The latter have demonstrated that students who learnt English as a foreign language through CLT had better self-confidence, expressed their ideas freely while speaking and showed high levels of motivation to communicate. (2015: 11) Interaction strategies that are part of CLT trained them to negotiate meaning, improved their communicative competence and allowed them to participate in meaningful discursive exchanges with their peers.

Therefore, fluency in foreign language added to their symbolic capital through higher levels of motivation and self-confidence.

Some of the respondents in our study believed that exposure to a foreign language developed their awareness of other cultures and made them more open to integrate into different work environments (**Qii c**). This could be because students of French or other foreign languages enjoy a wide exposure to foreign cultures as compared, for example, to students of English as second language in India. The foreign language students are immersed in the new culture from the very first day of language learning, exposing them to new ways of being and thinking different from their use of English or other Indian languages in India. It may be noted that the CEFRL has integrated intercultural education (2000:27) as part of the curriculum in foreign language teaching and learning. Therefore, the development of pragmatic competencies such as awareness of new norms of politeness, sociocultural competencies such as awareness of different values and traditions and interpersonal communication scenarios prepare them to face a wide variety of people and make them more sensitive to norms of cross-cultural communication, as validated in a few other studies (Drobot, 2021, Çakir, 2006; Yinghao Li, 2006), adding to their cultural capital.

Finally, it could also be seen that the respondents' multilingualism (or linguistic capital) contributed towards the development of social capital, defined above as establishment of contacts and integration into personal or professional networks of relationships (**Qiii**). All the respondents were multilingual, fluent in at least four languages including French, English and two Indian languages, without necessarily being proficient in all four competencies of reading, writing, speaking and comprehending in the latter. Although very few students reported being part of formal networks of foreign language specialists, some belonged to professional groups on social networks such as LinkedIn and WhatsApp. However, from the responses, it was found that multilingualism worked at varying levels with different functions for the respondents. While French was the main language for work, it was English that was used during "huddles" and other "team meetings". However, both English and Indian languages seemed to play a significant role in the establishment of friendships and other professional relationships at the workplace, contributing to their social capital, as can be seen in the responses to (**Qiii d and e**).

Mohanty (1994:5) has observed that "speaking or learning several languages is part of an integrative and adaptive strategy for a positive relationship with the wider society" in India. This statement remains valid even in the case of the Indian corporate workplace where the foreign language and English are used for strictly professional team building scenarios, while Indian languages, with or without English, and rarely French, are used building more durable relationships between the employees. In this connection, it may be worthwhile to recall the two types of social capital described by Putnam, bonding (exclusive) and bridging (inclusive) social capitals (2001: 22) While *bonding* refers to the strong connections built between family and friends or persons of the same community, *bridging* refers to the ties that bring together people with shared interests and activities, transcending social, ethnic religious and other divides (Field, 2008:148). Language plays a major role in establishing the latter connections, and communication in English and other Indian languages seems to be the crucial factor in the case of the respondents.



In this context, the Common European Framework of References (CEFR) also advocates the notion of *plurilingualism* as “the ability to use languages for the purposes of communication and to take part in intercultural action, where a person, viewed as a social agent, has proficiency of varying degrees, in several languages, and experience of several cultures. This is not seen as the superposition or juxtaposition of distinct competences, but rather as the existence of a complex or even composite competence on which the user may draw”. (Council of Europe, 2001: 168) The use of English and other local Indian languages along with French functions therefore as an *additive* (Lambert 1975; Cummins, 1998) plurilingualism, with French acting as an enriching element to the languages already spoken by the students.

As Clark (2006) puts it, “If ‘social capital is the glue that holds society together’ (Putnam 2001:23), then language must be a critical ingredient of the glue. If, as I see it, social capital is more like a diverse set of glues performing that one identified function, then language is one glue among many. Language is a mode, a form, a concrete reality of relations between people”.

Given the current demand in foreign language experts, learning French has given a relatively direct access to students from all socioeconomic backgrounds (as seen in the sample of the study) to employment in multinational corporate companies. They have better chances of earning a higher salary at entry level, as compared to graduate hires from other disciplines. They are able to visualize a long-term career in French, as the offer fell far short of the demands of the market. Finally, for a few of them, learning French opened up a new vision of the world, and the possibilities of living life differently, with openness and acceptance of other cultures, that many perceived as advantageous to their work. This creates a *habitus* that is peculiar to foreign language students, that they perceive as a factor that distinguishes them from others. However, the career advantages conferred by the foreign language was valid for the entry-level. Sooner or later, those who wished to further their careers had to fall develop skills or degrees and also acquire a better proficiency in English, considered indispensable for a career in today’s globalized world.

Learning French has provided those who come from smaller towns of India and with not much proficiency in English a relatively easier access to a better life and career, neither through the traditional modes of technical knowledge nor skill in the English language. Courses such as the BA and MA French programmes help spread the benefits of linguistic capital to all strata of Indian society, establishing links between the linguistic and the social capital, which helps create new networks and eventually allows access to places of privilege and power.

The MA French students perceive the same advantages, however, some of them seem more eager to continue further studies in the form of a PhD or change their line of specialisation while continuing to work with French.

## **Conclusion**

I have tried to demonstrate in this paper that the introduction of foreign language education at the under-graduate and graduate level in Indian universities has brought about a paradigm shift in the relationship between language, power and professional mobility in an already complex multilingual environment. Although the study was

conducted on a small scale, the responses reflect to a large extent the situation of the students and their peers working in the companies in India today. The reality of the domination of English in the workplace cannot be wished away. However, knowledge of foreign languages is increasingly seen to provide opportunities for multilingual and plurilingual learners. They enjoy increased employability and are able to enter the economy in professional, managerial, or administrative work, even though they may not all be very proficient in English. In addition, their multilingual personalities help establish and maintain contacts within the organisation with other colleagues, helping as factors of motivation and personal evolution. If multilingualism is the default human situation as mentioned by Agnihotri (2009: 269) in the context of children's education in India, then learning foreign languages may also have a role to play in the complex linguistic fabric of Indian society, subverting the existing power dynamics that favour one language. In this manner, they function as important factors of linguistic and social capital that empowers and allows learners to participate fully in the global economy. Another factor for integrating into the company and building personal contacts seems to be the knowledge of Indian languages that are instrumental in daily communications beyond work and meetings, important to form bonds of friendship and conviviality across the company. Therefore, this is an area of study that requires more investigation and could underline the importance of learning multiple Indian languages as soft skills along with a foreign language.

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## A HISTORY OF P.E.N. IN PRE-INDEPENDENCE INDIA AND THE BOMBAY-CALCUTTA RIVALRY

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**Abstract:** *P.E.N. International, the international organisation of writers established in London in 1921, established its branch in India in 1933. The main branch in India, officially considered directly under the London branch and officially called “P.E.N. India Centre”- was established in Bombay under the leadership of the theosophist Sophia Wadia. Another branch, officially designated as the P.E.N. India Centre’s “Bengal chapter”, was opened in Calcutta with the historian Kalidas Nag at the helm of affairs. Letters and documents archived in the Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center of the University of Texas at Austin and the British Library in London show that the early history of the P.E.N. in India is one riddled with conflict between these two branches. Unlike organisations like the Progressive Writers’ Association, the P.E.N. in India was aligned to the mainstream nationalist movement, with top office bearers of the Indian National Congress like Nehru and Sarojini Naidu playing important roles. People who participated in the activities of the P.E.N. in India went on to hold influential positions in the post-independence era. This article presents a short history of the early days of this important yet forgotten organisation. This article is a result of a survey of the quoted primary material as part of a project on “The Inter-relation of the International P.E.N. and Literary History of the World: Japan-China-India Diplomacy and History of the British Commonwealth and Europe” (JSPS Kakenhi number 16K02607). The primary material was collected by Prof. Meno Yuki of Kokushikan University, Tokyo from the Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center of the University of Texas at Austin. A version of this article was orally presented by the author at the British Library, London in August 2018 (<https://www.bl.uk/events/a-history-of-pen-in-preindependence-india>).*

**Keywords:** *P.E.N. International; Sophia Wadia; Kalidas Nag*

The P.E.N. International is an international organisation of writers established in London in 1921. At the time of establishment, P.E.N. stood for “poets, essayists and novelists” but was later extended to “poets, playwrights, editors, essayists and novelists”. Established just after the first world war, the organisation started off as nothing more than a dinner club in London where writers could socialize and discuss issues pertaining to the fraternity of writers. In her diary, the founder of the International P.E.N., Catherine Amy Dawson Scott, had referred to the P.E.N. as a “dinner club” for “persons of distinction” (Watts 1971, 13–14). However, branches of the organisation (called centres) soon were set up in different parts of Europe and eventually different cities in other parts of the world. This made P.E.N. International the first international organisation of writers. Most centres of the P.E.N., including the main London one, had eminent figures of the literary world of the respective countries as their members. The P.E.N. International organized (and still does) an annual congress, hosted by a different centre each year, and attended by representatives from all centres.

The P.E.N.’s philosophy stated that freedom of expression and literature are inseparable and therefore the main objectives of the P.E.N. included defending the right of writers all over the world to write freely without political intervention or pressure. Politics was therefore consciously avoided within the organisation during its formative

years. However, as the international political situation in Europe deteriorated into a war like situation in the 1930s, the P.E.N. could not remain apolitical any longer.

### **The Indian Centre of the P.E.N.**

The P.E.N. International's branch in India was established in these volatile 1930s. It was established in 1933, the very same year that scholars have referred to as the year "an unavoidable consciousness of political turmoil evolved to become political engagement" in the P.E.N. (Gearon 2012, 274). The fact that the history of the P.E.N. in India has been largely ignored by historians is surprising, considering the stature of the people who were involved in its formative years. As has been noted by Rosemary Marangoly George, "The leaders of the all-India P.E.N., of the central government, and in 1954 of the governing body of the SA (Sahitya Academy) were all drawn from this same roster of English-educated literary elite" (George 2016, 219). The main branch of P.E.N. in India - officially considered directly under the London branch and officially called "P.E.N. India Centre" - was established in Bombay. Another branch, officially designated as the P.E.N. India Centre's "Bengal chapter", was opened in Calcutta. The early history of the P.E.N. in India was riddled with conflict between these two branches, especially regarding the hierarchy between the two. The Bombay centre considered itself to be the "All India Centre" and considered the Bengal branch a "chapter" *under* the "All India Centre". The Bengal branch however considered both itself and the Bombay branch as directly under the London headquarters, and therefore equal in the organisational hierarchy.

In the diary of Catherine Amy Dawson Scott, she writes that in the International Committee meeting of 1925, Tarini Sinha and KM Panikkar came to discuss an Indian P.E.N. They decided that the chief centre should be in Calcutta, while Madras, Bombay and Delhi should derive from the chief centre (Watts 1971, 32). However, concrete plans of a branch of P.E.N. in India first appears in a letter dated 19<sup>th</sup> October 1932, written by Hermon Ould, the General Secretary of the International P.E.N., to Sophia Wadia. Sophia Wadia was a Colombia-born theosophist who shifted to India from the USA after marrying fellow theosophist B. P. Wadia and established theosophical centres in India together with her husband. She was also the founder editor of the theosophical journal *The Aryan Path*. After being informed by "the representatives of The Aryan Path in London" that Wadia was interested in establishing a centre of the P.E.N. in India, Ould wrote a letter to her on 19<sup>th</sup> October 1932, asking her to go ahead with her plans. He suggested that she should request Rabindranath Tagore to be the president of the organisation (Ould 1932). In her reply dated 19<sup>th</sup> November 1932, Wadia accepted Ould's proposal (Wadia 1932a). She used the letterhead of *The Aryan Path* to write this letter, but later explicitly communicated to Ould that the P.E.N. will not be a "side activity" of *The Aryan Path*, and that she would be shifting the P.E.N.'s office from *The Aryan Path*'s office to her residence to remove any such confusion (Wadia 1933c).

Emma Bird, in her article titled "A platform for poetry: The PEN All-India Centre and a Bombay poetry scene", quotes a web article which says that the Wadias established the P.E.N. club "to further promote the teachings of theosophy". Bird explains that "Certainly, the two organizations have had a close relationship", and as evidence for this, points out that "both (organisations) were run from the Wadias' home" (Bird 2017,

209). It is however evident from the letterhead of the letter (Figure 1) that *The Aryan Path* had an office of its own in Esplanade Road and was not being run from the Wadia house in Pedder Road. However, as Wadia mentions in this letter, the P.E.N. India Centre was initially run from the office of *The Aryan Path*, but later shifted to the Wadia residence. It is possible that rumours had begun to circulate that both the organisations were related, which might be the reason behind Wadia's clarification to Ould.

Wadia's correspondence with Ould reveals her constant efforts to get the best of the literary world in India into the fold of the P.E.N. India Centre. In her next few letters to Ould, she informed him that Tagore had accepted to be the President, while Sarojini Naidu, Ramananda Chatterjee and Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan were willing to be the vice-presidents. She also wanted Muhammad Iqbal to be the fourth vice president, as she wanted a Muslim to be among the vice presidents (Wadia 1932b; 1933a; 1933b). Iqbal, however, denied the offer. Before the P.E.N. India centre was established, five Indians were already members of the London headquarters. Tagore was an honorary member, while the novelist, historian and diplomat K.M. Panikkar, the archaeologist and politician Ram Chandra Kak, the novelist Alice Pennell and the litterateur R.B. Saksena were regular members of the London P.E.N. headquarters. Tagore, Panikkar and Kak joined the Indian P.E.N. and the "P.E.N. All India Centre" was established in 1933 (Wadia 1933d).

Bird mentions that the Indian branch of P.E.N. was established in Bombay in 1934 (Bird 2017, 209), while George writes that it was established in 1933 (George 2016, 218). P.E.N. All-India Centre's official publications from the 1940s say it was established in 1933, while P.E.N. International's official website mentions the year of establishment as 1930<sup>5</sup>. The primary material consulted for this study confirms 1933 as the accurate year of establishment. While the existing correspondence between Wadia and Ould do not reveal an official date of establishment, the organisation seems to have been established notionally at first, and then ratified by the International Executive Committee as the Indian branch of the International P.E.N. Wadia's letters to Ould from February and March 1933 reveal that she was still in the stage of writing letters to prospective vice-presidents, while her letter dated 29 April 1933 say that Panikkar and Kak have already taken up the posts of vice-presidents, and they now just await ratification by the International Executive Committee, which was supposed to meet in the International Congress to be held in May 1933 in Yugoslavia. The next letter Wadia wrote to Ould was written in October 1933, and the printed letterhead - complete with the names of the office bearers and the centre's address - suggests the existence an officially ratified centre. The contents of the letter too suggest that the centre was ratified, since Wadia was now talking about setting up rules and publishing the centre's journal. It can probably be safely assumed that the International Congress in Yugoslavia ratified the Indian Centre on 25-26 May 1933.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> All journals of the P.E.N. All-India Centre (edited by Sophia Wadia) mention that the Indian P.E.N. was born in March 1934. "The Indian P.E.N." here is the name of the journal, not the organisation.

<sup>6</sup> Subhas Chandra Bose, unaware of the formation of the P.E.N. All India Centre, wrote to Ould from Vienna on 18th May 1933, requesting for assistance in establishing an Indian branch of the P.E.N. (Bose 1933)

Within a few months of the formation of the centre in Bombay, Kalidas Nag, a professor at Calcutta University, wrote to Ould stating the need for a branch of the P.E.N. in Calcutta, arguing that one branch in Bombay is not enough for a country as huge as India. Nag's memoirs tell us that he attended a luncheon of the Paris P.E.N. club on 12 December 1922, and that is how he "got the first direct contact with this new international group of writers who were trying to create a new kind of human cooperation based on peace" (Nag 1991, 2:52). Although Nag's letter to Ould is not available at this moment, Ould's reply to it is available, which gives a clear hint at what Nag would have written. Ould writes that "I quite agree with you that a centre in Bombay is probably not sufficient to represent the whole of Indian culture". Ould does however go on to say that "You will no doubt be in touch with Mme. Wadia, the secretary of the Bombay Centre, on this matter and co-operate with her" (Ould 1934).

The centre in Bombay however, under the leadership of Wadia, had a clear intent of being an "All India" centre (as opposed to a regional Bombay/Marathi branch), which is evident from a number of sources. In her letter to Tagore dated 27th September 1933, Wadia writes:

Thus our periodical should chronicle news as well as enlighten the entire P.E.N. about literary work say in Malayali Malabar in the South or of your own great province of Bengal. I am told that there is great deal going on in the Kannada localities. The development of these vernacular cultures which so intimately affect the lives of the people ought to be made known to the whole of India and beyond.<sup>7</sup>

In the rules laid out by the founders of the P.E.N. All India Centre during its formation, the All-India character is asserted by article five which says that "The Committee of the Association may organise branches in different parts of the country, subject to such rules and regulations as the Committee may decide upon". Further, in her letter to Ould dated 10th January 1934, Wadia writes about her intention to constitute a "committee as an advisory body" to the P.E.N. All India Centre, "composed of one or two authors" each for "Hindi, Urdu, Bengali, Gujrati, Marathi, Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, Kanarese, Oriya, Panjabi" (Wadia 1934a). Rosemary Marangoly George has pointed out that this pan-Indian ambition was typical of Indian litterateurs of the period who were writing in English (like Sophia Wadia), arguing that "Indian writing in English ... was entrusted with the task of constructing and consolidating the image of a unified, modernizing India for consumption both at home and abroad" (George 2016, 30).

As Wadia went about creating the above-mentioned advisory committee of experts from different languages, she requested Kalidas Nag to represent Bengali in that committee. The motive behind the formation of this committee was to ultimately form regional centres, as is evident when Wadia writes, "We hope in these meetings to work out a type of local activity which will be suitable for application in the various regional centres, to the ultimate formation of which we are looking forward" (Wadia 1934b).

### **The Bengal Chapter and the Beginning of the Rift**

Within a month of the above-mentioned letter, Wadia wrote to Ould informing him that a regional branch has been established in Calcutta on 16th December 1934, with

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<sup>7</sup> Sophia Wadia to Rabindranath Tagore, September 27, 1933

Ramananda Chatterjee and Kalidas Nag at the helm of affairs, and that it “is very gratifying”. But signs of trouble between the two branches show right from the time of the establishment of the Calcutta branch. Wadia, while expressing her satisfaction at the formation of the Bengal branch, also seems uneasy about the possibility of losing her grip over the P.E.N. movement in India. She argues against making the Bengal branch (and other regional branches which might form in the future) an autonomous one directly under the International P.E.N., saying that having various autonomous regional centres would mean that “those provinces where (P.E.N.) clubs do not exist are bound to suffer”. Rather, she favours one All India Centre, “with the provincial clubs working in cooperation with the central office”, an arrangement which will be “better for national unity”. She also enquires about the process of collecting membership fees from the regional branches if they are under the All India Centre, and whether the All India Centre will get any part of the total money collected as membership fees. She also talks about budgetary constraints in the All India Centre and mentions how the All India Centre has been running on donations of Rs. 100 made by herself (Wadia 1935a).

Another letter of Wadia written after a month reveals that Ould had responded to her earlier letter, in which he had proposed the use of ‘the “Chapters” plan’ (Wadia 1935b). It is evident that by ‘the chapter plan’, Ould is referring to the system of one All India ‘Centre’ and various regional ‘chapters’ *under* it. Probably emboldened by this, when Wadia prepared a proposal for making the journal *The Indian P.E.N.* a regular quarterly one, she included a plan to publish “surveys of the last quarter in the following vernaculars: --Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Kanarese, Malayalam, Marathi, Punjabi, Tamil, Telugu and Urdu, as well as in English” (Wadia 1935c). Clearly, Wadia was in no mood to give up the idea of an All India Centre with nationwide reach, covering literatures in all the regional languages. The proposed survey of Bengali would therefore be published from Bombay, in the journal of the All India Centre, despite the existence of a Bengal branch.

Real problems between Bombay and Calcutta started the next year. In her letter to Ould dated 13th January 1936, Wadia complained about lack of co-operation from the Bengal chapter and that “the situation is becoming very delicate and we may have to take strong measures”. She accuses the Bengal chapter of “trying to establish other chapters with no previous intimation to us”. She also objects to the London headquarters and the Bengal chapter communicating directly, requesting Ould to refer any such future communication to the All India Centre. This, she thought, would help the Bengal chapter know its place in the hierarchy and “change its present attitude”. She also expressed her eagerness to participate in the International P.E.N. congress in Buenos Aires in September. She was probably worried that Nag would be invited for attending the congress, and when she saw media reports about Nag getting invited, she sent an angry telegram to Ould demanding an explanation (Wadia 1936). Nag’s memoirs confirm that he did visit Buenos Aires for the conference (Nag 1991, 2:106).

Ould took a few steps to resolve the problem, by pointing out to Nag that his use of the term “Bengal Centre” in official communications is incorrect and that “there is an Indian Centre whose headquarters are in Bombay; other branches of the P.E.N. are usually denominated chapters”. He cited the example of the USA, where “the centre is in New York and there are chapters in San Francisco and Chicago”. He also reiterated



the importance of Wadia's role in the P.E.N.'s activities in India, and again advised Nag to be in "close touch with Madame Wadia" (Ould 1936).

Sophia Wadia continued to write to Ould about how India should have only one 'centre' and as many 'chapters' as required. She also argued how if one more centre is allowed in Bengal, all provinces in India would start demanding for separate centres and this would lead to the splitting up of the P.E.N., adding that "We want a united India above all else" (Wadia's underlining). Wadia attacks Nag and also Bengal in general, using stereotypes of Bengali people that exist even today, eighty years after the letter was written:

"My colleagues in Bombay tell me that Bengal is generally difficult in such matters as it wishes to lead all movements, and I hear Dr. Kalidas Nag is a most ardent propagandist no matter what cause he is working for; and he belongs to numerous bodies and associations in Calcutta."

She also wrote to Nag directly, asking for monetary contribution from the Bengal chapter, which would go towards the publishing costs of *The Indian P.E.N.* Given the timing and context of this request, it is difficult not to believe that it was part of Wadia's efforts to make the Bengal chapter acknowledge its subordination.

Wadia's concern about losing her position as the leader of the writer's movement of India was not limited to the affairs of the Bengal chapter of the P.E.N. Her letters to Ould also reveal her concern about the rise of the Progressive Writer's Association, where she wondered whether the two organisations' work would overlap or not.

### **Worsening of the Antagonism**

Correspondence between the Bombay centre and London headquarters dated 19th May 1938 show that the headquarters asked for data regarding membership and activities directly from the Bengal chapter, undermining the organisational hierarchy that the Bombay centre was expecting (Bhagwat 1938). It was at this time that Wadia sent two telegrams to Ould, proposing that the 1940 congress be held in the princely state of Mysore in India (Wadia 1938a; 1938b). The dewan of Mysore had enthusiastically agreed to host the congress (Wadia 1938c), while Ould telegraphed Wadia informing her that the Prague congress of the International P.E.N. has agreed to her proposal (Ould 1938).

Wadia's letter to Ould a month later complained about how Kalidas Nag was at the same time travelling to different parts of the country and advising people to open regional branches (Wadia 1938d). In the same year, when Wadia learnt that the international headquarters would be issuing membership cards to all members, she suggested that all the cards be sent to the All India Centre, from where the cards for members of the Bengal chapter would be sent after being countersigned there (Wadia 1938e). This was again an attempt on Wadia's part to establish the hierarchy she desired.

Within a month of this letter, Wadia wrote to Ould saying that the All India Centre's managing committee wants "reorganization or even dissolution of the (Bengal) branch". She cites three main reasons for this demand. Firstly, that the branch is virtually dead as most members have never paid their fees since the branch was first organized. Secondly, there are many prominent literary figures in Calcutta who have

not joined the branch there, and would not join in the future “unless it is reorganized or something happens”. Thirdly, and this appears to be the immediate reason, that the Bengal branch has not been cooperating in preparing for the 1940 congress in Mysore. Wadia goes on to declare that “the Bengal Branch is just a dead weight which we are carrying” (Wadia 1939b).

Wadia also wrote to the secretary of the Bengal branch, P. C. Bagchi, on the same day, using the same stern tone. She argued that without the approval of the All India Centre, the Bengal branch would not have official status as a P.E.N. branch. She also pointed out the dissatisfaction of the All India Centre “with the lack of co-operation of the Bengal Branch or with its virtual stagnation”. She went on to say, among many other things, that the Bengal branch had brought discredit to the P.E.N. in India, that the Bengal branch’s letterhead does not mention the existence of the All India Centre or that the Bengal branch is a subdivision of it, that the Bengal branch never contributed any money for the functioning of the All India Centre, and that the All India Centre wishes to see audited reports of the Bengal branch (Wadia 1939a).

Reacting to these accusations, the Bengal branch wrote to the international headquarters, saying that the Bengal branch was recognised as a centre for two years since its formation, until 1936, when it started to be listed as a chapter by the international federation. The international federation was reminded how Kalidas Nag had voiced the same concerns at the international congress of the P.E.N. at Buenos Aires, after which the Bengal branch was invited to send separate representatives at the Paris and Prague congresses. The same letter also argued against “disastrous centralisation” of the P.E.N. in India, and cites examples of the two separate centres for French and Flemish in Belgium and separate English and Scottish centres in the United Kingdom (Bagchi 1939a). The Bengal branch also passed several resolutions in its annual general body meeting, declaring that “the India P.E.N. Bombay is unjustified in assuming the status of an all India organisation”, and that “the relation of the Bengali P.E.N. to the Bombay P.E.N. should not be that of a branch or a chapter but that of a sister institution which is responsible only to the International Federation” (Bagchi 1939b).

### **The End of the Path for the Bengal Chapter**

In a letter to Ould four months later, Wadia straightaway threatened that if the Bengal branch was not dissolved, she couldn’t continue working for P.E.N. India. Not only would she quit, the whole Bombay centre would give up all responsibilities to Bengal and close down. The preparations for the 1940 congress would also be halted until the Stockholm congress came up with a decision regarding the dissolution of the Bengal branch. She also informed Ould that she intends to attend the Stockholm congress because of this (Wadia 1939c). However, realising that “to take the trip for that one purpose will mean a great expenditure of money, not to speak of both time and energy”, she sent another letter to Ould, this time with the heading “STRICTLY PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL”. In this letter, she asked for Ould’s “personal assistance”, and asking him to tell her “in what direction the wind is blowing” (Wadia 1939d). But with the war looming large over Europe, Ould’s letters talked more of the political situation than addressing Wadia’s concerns, adding to her frustration. She wrote to Ould again saying that she was “very disappointed” and reiterated what she

had said in her earlier letters in stronger language, that if the Bombay branch is to be considered a regional branch rather than an All India Centre, she and all other members of the P.E.N. in India would quit the organisation (Wadia 1939e).

Ould suggested that the problem that the P.E.N. in India (or in Yugoslavia etc.) is ultimately a problem of nomenclature (centre, chapter etc.) and that a new nomenclature can be adopted. There can be one national federation with various regional branches. This national federation would not be one centre, it would be the name given to “the whole organisation” in a country. In this arrangement there would exist “The Indian P.E.N. Club, with local centres in Bombay, Calcutta etc.”, meaning Bombay would become a regional centre just like Bengal (Ould 1939b). Wadia strongly disapproved of this suggestion, arguing that the P.E.N. in India was too young for that, and that it would end up dividing India and go against the idea of a united India. She continued her Bengali bashing, writing “Bengalis are proverbially known throughout India for their provincialism and now -- since the trouble between Gandhiji and Subhas Bose -- they have become worse than ever” (Wadia 1939f).

Wadia’s well timed threat to Ould, saying it would not be possible to organise the 1940 Congress unless the matter is resolved in the way she wants, was highly effective. Ould took the matter more seriously than he was taking it earlier. In his letter to Wadia dated 13 June 1939, Ould expressed serious concern that if the congress in India was abandoned at that stage, no other country would be able to host the congress at such a short notice. While the decision regarding the situation in India was to be taken at the Stockholm congress of 1939 (Ould 1939a), the congress was cancelled due to the war situation in Europe, and therefore there could be no discussion or decision regarding it. With constant pressure from Wadia to give her “the necessary authority to assume full responsibility in the matter and to dissolve the Bengal branch” (Wadia 1939g), Ould and the International P.E.N. finally authorised Wadia to dissolve the Bengal branch (Wadia 1939h). The managing committee of the P.E.N. India Centre declared the Bengal chapter dissolved on 14 January 1940 (Wadia 1940a).

The Bengal branch did not take this decision lying down, and wrote a lengthy letter to Ould, raising a few points regarding the validity of the dissolution. It was pointed out that while the decision regarding the Bengal branch was supposed to be taken in the Stockholm congress, the congress did not actually take place, either in Stockholm or elsewhere (Bagchi 1940). The Bengal branch also issued a circular to its members saying that the dissolution announced by Sophia Wadia is not valid, as the Bombay centre does not have any authority over the Bengal branch. The letter from the International Secretary which said that the decision would be taken in the Stockholm congress, was quoted in the circular and it was pointed out how Ould had used the word ‘centre’ for both the Bombay and the Bengal branch. It is also pointed out that in the bulletin of the International P.E.N., the Bengal branch is listed as an independent centre of the international P.E.N. The members were urged to “attach no importance to the circular letter issued by Mrs. S. Wadia”. The branch even went on to issue a statement to the press titled “NO DISSOLUTION OF BENGALI P.E.N. To Function As Independent Centre” (As reproduced in Wadia 1940b).

It was Wadia who sent all these circulars and press releases of the Bengal centre to Ould, as proof of how the Bengal branch was undermining her and Ould’s authority.

She also subtly pointed out that she had protested the listing of both Bombay and Bengal as ‘centres’ in the bulletin of the International P.E.N., hinting that if her protests would have been paid heed to, this situation would not have arisen. Wadia also wrote to Ould asking for a letter directly from the International P.E.N. headquarters, signed by the international secretary, dissolving the Bengal branch, since Wadia’s circular was not taken seriously.

Ould replied to Wadia’s request, calling the then Bengal secretary Bagchi dishonest, and attaching a letter which “will settle the matter once and for all” (Ould 1940). Ould explained the situations in the P.E.N. centres of countries like USA, Italy, Belgium and Yugoslavia, saying that all the countries where there were multiple branches (centres or chapters), were in a state of amicable mutual co-operation. The Indian situation was however different and there was no doubt ever regarding the all-India status of the centre in Bombay. He declared that Bengal’s allegations were based on “flimsy grounds”, and Bagchi’s statements were “false” and “stupid”. Ould attached a letter which officially declared the Bengal branch dissolved:

“I decided - after consulting the International President and the President of the English Centre, to advise the dissolution of the Calcutta chapter. The question of dissolving a Calcutta Centre did not arise, as no Calcutta Centre has ever existed. (Ould 1940)” (Ould’s underlining)

With this the Bengal chapter of the P.E.N. was dissolved, six years after it was formed. The congress supposed to be organised in Mysore was “postponed”, according to Ould’s letter, but was actually never held thereafter.

### **The P.E.N. All India Writers’ Conference of 1945**

After the dissolution of the Bengal branch, as the Bombay Centre became the undisputed representative of the P.E.N. International in India, Wadia’s vision of the P.E.N. was further fulfilled as India inched closer to independence. The Mysore Congress of 1940 got cancelled because of the international political situation, but an All-India Writers’ Conference was conducted in Jaipur on 20-22 October 1945 on a scale similar to that of an international P.E.N. congress. International delegates to the conference included EM Forster, Hermon Ould and Chinese and French writers. The theme of the conference was “The Development of Indian Literatures as a Unifying Force” and was advertised on the cover page of the July 1945 issue of P.E.N. News, the journal of the London P.E.N. centre.

The conference was a culmination of Wadia’s vision of a diverse yet unified Indian literary arena. Nunes (2019) has shown that the conference was an example of the politicisation of P.E.N. outside the fascist - anti-fascist binary. Quoting attendees of the conference, Nunes argues that the conference was an example of P.E.N.’s politicisation on the lines of colonialism and nationalism. However, while the attendees did include prominent Indian leftists and hardliner anti-colonial intellectuals of the time, the official communications and publications related to the conference never took a visibly militant anti-colonial stand. A collection of essays presented in the conference was officially published and in the foreword to it, Wadia steers away from topics of colonialism or India’s independence. She rather concerns herself with getting “Indians in the several language areas better acquainted with each other’s literary achievements”,

while at the same time, making them realise that “the problems of one Indian literature are common to them all”. This “composite picture”, she says, would “serve as an introduction of modern Indian literature to the larger world of letters” (Wadia 1947, vii). Wadia’s agenda for the conference is clearly “unity in diversity”, rather than anti-colonial nationalism.

While some of the attendees of the conference might have spoken about how British intellectuals were ignorant about Indian culture, the official literature of the P.E.N. All India Centre was largely non-confrontational towards British intellectuals. This also explains the support the conference got from the British government. The Secretary of State for India of the time, Frederick Pethick-Lawrence, sent a message for the conference attendees which was delivered by Hermon Ould (Iyengar 1947, 20). Documents available in the India Office Records and Private Papers archive in the British Library, show that British officials enthusiastically agreed with the philosophy of the conference. A handwritten note from the India Office librarian, H. N. Randle for India Office Information Officer, J.F. Gennings, argued that this conference was a “challenge to the people (Hindi propagandists) who want to produce unity by flattening out the diversity of languages and by introducing Hindi as the ‘national language’ of India” (Randle 1945). The Jaipur conference seems to have been organised in harmony with the British government, even though many speakers expressed anti-colonial sentiments while speaking in the conference.

### Conclusion

As the correspondence between Wadia, Nag and Ould suggests, the P.E.N. club in India was more about gaining prominence in literary circles than about protecting the rights of Indian poets, essayists or novelists. Most early correspondence between Wadia and Ould consisted of conversations about attending dinners and social meetings of literary circles in England and America. Wadia’s letter dated 21 June 1935, for example, provided Ould with instructions as to how to introduce Wadia among the guests at a dinner party in London (Wadia 1935d). She also wanted to take her sister with her to the party, using the platform to build networks for her sister too. The activities of the P.E.N. increasingly becoming more about networking and dinners and social gatherings than about writers’ issues, was an international problem, as one letter from Ould to German author Klaus Mann suggests, where Ould needed to clarify that “The P.E.N. has never confined its activities to dinners and excursions” (Ould 1935).

The conflict between the Wadia led Bombay centre and Nag/Bagchi led Bengal chapter also looks more like an unhealthy competition to stay ahead of each other in the race to prominence. Both Wadia and Nag were well connected to the leading literary figures of the West. Nag used his connections in the West to secure a teaching position in University of Hawaii in January 1937 and resigned from the post of secretary of Bengal P.E.N. (Bagchi 1937). It was after Nag left for Hawaii, that the Bengal branch lost its pace in the race and the international headquarters turned more sympathetic towards the Bombay centre.

The Bombay centre, under the leadership of Wadia, was way more active than the Bengal branch. While the Bombay centre was organising regular meetings and publishing regular newsletters and journals, and even made *The Indian P.E.N.* monthly, the Bengal branch kept communicating to Ould that they would soon come up with a

bulletin (Bagchi 1937), but actually never did. The Bengal branch was also not communicating regularly either with the Bombay centre or the international headquarters. This inactivity also helped the Bombay centre to tilt the debate in their favour.

The international secretary paid hardly any attention to the nomenclature of centre/chapter/branch before the dispute broke out, he took strong positions regarding the nomenclature only after Wadia started complaining. Even then, Ould was optimistic, writing, "I still believe that some solution ought to be possible whereby Calcutta writers will work in harmony and not in conflict with Bombay" (Ould 1939c). Both the factors of the Bengal branch's inactivity, and the absence of a figure like Kalidas Nag, seem to have helped Sophia Wadia's cause, convincing Hermon Ould and the International P.E.N. to dissolve the Bengal branch.

Rosemary Marangoly George's argument about the relationship between the P.E.N. in India, English language and nationalism (George 2016) is validated by the numerous letters, telegrams and documents quoted above. Wadia repeatedly expressed her desire to unite India through literature in her letters, and therefore not wanting to let the P.E.N. in India be decentralised. George argues, in the context of an editorial foreword Wadia wrote for an anthology, that this assuming "the responsibility of fulfilling this self-defined national obligation" was fuelled by the "linguistic vantage point" that she occupied as the "English language litterateur", from where all the literatures of different regional languages could be noticed (George 2016, 34).

The P.E.N. in India, under the leadership of Wadia, was aligned with the mainstream of the nationalist movement, with top office bearers of the Indian National Congress like Nehru, Sarojini Naidu taking up important positions in the P.E.N. The ideas of Wadia of a united India with diverse cultures and languages were in consonance with those of the Congress leadership of the time and the later popular government-sponsored slogan of "unity in diversity".

The people who participated in the activities of the P.E.N. in India went on to hold influential positions in the post-independence era. P.E.N. India member Nehru became the first prime minister of India, P.E.N. India's vice-president S. Radhakrishnan was to be the second president of India. As George has noted in her book, a lot of P.E.N.'s members from the pre-independence era, went on to be part of the first general council of the Sahitya Akademi when it was established in 1952. Kalidas Nag was nominated to the Rajya Sabha in 1952, while Sophia Wadia was awarded the Padma Shri in 1960. This article attempted to present a short history of the early days of this important yet forgotten organisation called P.E.N.

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# AGAN CAPITALISM VS CHRISTIAN SELFHOOD IN *GOBLIN MARKET*

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**Abstract:** *Most readings of Goblin Market speak with certainty about Christianity, gender, sexuality, and patriarchy. Even within the socio-religious purview, there is a consistent theological underpinning that hints at something beyond the monolithic interpretation of the poem. The conflicting religious ideas include contradictory pivots of self-indulgence by Rossetti. Through these pivots, Rossetti tries to navigate between an allegory, a parable and arrives at a visionary Neo-Christian inclusive view that replaces Christ and Adam by female figures of Lizzie and Laura, and extends a tale of supreme duty and renunciation triumphing over the damning Paganistic forces. Rossetti's intellectual rigour in portraying the Goblins hints at an obscure theology: Christian sisterhood against Capitalist Goblin brotherhood; humanity against monstrosity, spirituality against nihilism, self against capital, women against men or, to put it more appropriately, the fragile second sex against the violently nihilistic forces in an age of Pre-Raphaelite brotherhood, a reformist movement. The complexity of this interpretation has a clear pigmentation of a political warning, vaguely suggestive of the ominous exhortations of the half-men, half-demonic brotherhood. The present paper attempts to explore Goblin Market as a commentary on Pagan Capitalism and materialism that threaten to shatter the conservative society's spirituality, and as an ode to Rossetti's timely intervention against this potentially formidable adversary of the Neo-Christian Victorian ideology. The paper will identify Rossetti's religious and gender constructs in the poem as both a prelude and a kernel of her effective, visionary advice for the forever fallen and disenfranchised.*

**Keywords:** *Paganism, Capitalism, Nihilism, Pre-Raphaelite, Sisterhood, Neo-Christian.*

## Introduction

Goblin Market reworks the fascinating Biblical potations of temptation, suffering, and redemption in a feminist manifesto. Rossetti's creativity produces a compelling testament of spirituality and religion, conforming to the Bible, and actively engaging with biblical truths against the popular myths. Unlike some would believe, Rossetti was not a passive Christian figure and was - in fact - passionately critiquing practices, deliberating upon issues, taking up gender questions, and forming a new paradigm for women to engage with a religion that was (and arguably is) fundamentally misconstrued as enabling men. To achieve this, she works around the culturally embedded notion of dominant male figures (Christ and Satan) and radically revises them to celebrate womanhood/sisterhood. The Satanic Goblins are at the center of this revision - they render an understanding of the forbidden and oppressively Nihilistic forces of appropriation in the cautionary tale. This, however, does not determine them as homogeneously evil, and beyond this veneer of hostility lies a substratum of a primitive cult, an alliance with nature, a high religion that diversifies from the tenets of Christianity, and offers a secular comparative ground for Rossetti to explore the unmitigated oppositions, customs and practices against Christianity. The starting point of this approach makes it pertinent to cross the fictive boundary and accept Goblins as nature-worshippers, labourers, capitalist producers, and sellers.



### **Paganism and the Exploitative Market Economy.**

William Michael Rossetti, while warning against reducing *Goblin Market* to mere 'feminist sisterhood', speaks at length about the its ever-expanding readings. Charlotte's experimentation with language spills over to the very many versions defeating her claim that she "did not mean anything profound by this fairytale" (William Michael Rossetti, 459). In the floodgate of critiques, an often-overlooked facet of Christina Rossetti's *Goblin Market* is its overwhelming underlying paganism. This paganism does not exist in isolation or operate by mere accident, but is instead centrally embodied by the most tangible conceptions of 'antagonists' in the narrative - i.e., the infamous goblins - in a rather conscious, visionary structuring. These supernatural creatures personify, among other things, the most popular connotation of paganism: nature-worshipping. Rossetti moves ahead of the historically crude and elementary portrayal of Goblins (as mischievous troublemakers) and reasons them with paganistic agency: her goblins fundamentally arise from - and are extensions of nature - hauling their fruits from mystical orchards that thrive somewhere in Nature's bottomless depths, labouring incessantly every day (hawking wares) to fuse the magical fruits of Nature, Nature which is great, infinite and unknown, with the Victorian man's world of Commerce, a world that is mundane, materialistic and bounded. Such bold labour, so audacious as to be capable of existing only - and precisely - on the verge of extricating the domain of reality from the lair of fantasy, directed at ideological sublimation through subjugation, forms the core of the goblins' nature-worship. It constitutes an attempt to promote the coercive socio-capitalistic forces of Great Britain in to propagate the naturalistic ideology, while fanning the flames of materialism - of succumbing to the dream-peddling market - at the same time.

The push from rapid industrialisation during the Victorian age and the emerging markets reflects a global cultural occupation with materialism that serves to embolden this peddling spirit. This force initially operates at two levels: appeal (the Goblin cries) and the lure (sumptuous description of fruits). These forces involved in selling are innate and in conformity with the Goblins' desires, instincts, wants, and needs. The appeal and lure (key components of modern-day advertising) are pagan in their targeting and appeasement of the similar set of urges of the consumers. The simple-minded consumer identity at the center of this equation is grossly manipulated by incessant mis-selling, "Morning and evening/ Maids heard the Goblins cry", (115). In this manner, the product is made to occupy the most desirable space in the mind of the consumers: thus, the innocent ones, like Laura, commit themselves to a sensual longing for exotic fruits in an imaginary paradise. Their willingness becomes fodder for the goblins' commercial exhortations. The long list of nature's abundances, advertised as luxurious and lavish, casts a spell on the sensibilities of women like Laura:

Lemons and oranges,  
Plump unpeck'd cherries,  
Melons and raspberries,  
Bloom-down-cheek'd peaches,  
Swart-headed mulberries,  
Wild free-born cranberries,  
Crab-apples, dewberries,

Pine-apples, blackberries,  
Apricots, strawberries; (115).

The extent of penetration of this selling potentially and understandably highlights the efficiency, specialisation, productive methods supplanted by Goblin's idealistic worship of nature. In the course of their marketing, the goblins fulfill another connotation of paganism: hedonism, or the worship of the senses. The sensory form of nature-revering is heard in the goblins' praise of the values and traits of the indulgent fruits. The fabulously luxuriant fruits are sold as the 'access key' to a sensuously erotic paradise attracting the feeble and the formidable all at once. The hedonistic tenet of 'pleasure as the greatest good' foreshadows capitalistic commerce as virtues and ethical means are replaced by sensory impressions of personifications and adjectives associated with the fruits. Even the uneasy confrontation with savage market forces during the purchase by consumers is submerged under the smoldering temptation built around the pitch of the product, crushing the foundational Christian sensibilities of modesty and restraint.

Being true embodiments of nature, the goblins vehemently worship their product, so driven in their worship that they breach even such queer realms as the anomalous, the aberrant, and abominable. For, like Nature, they are myriad in their characteristics; like Nature, they are simply unrestrained in physicality: with body structures that are mixtures of various animals like rattles, cats, wombats, snails, parrots, mice, and whatnot, they are truly naturalistic in that they are not confined to a single form, shape or structure. There is no prototypical or archetypal 'Goblin' in Rossetti's England- at least not physically. Like Nature, Rossetti's goblins are visually enthralling in this vibrant diversity, perhaps this eye-catching, arresting characteristic is a strategic part of their seemingly friendly yet insidiously stealthy means of seduction. These diverse characteristics of Goblins are fused through a commendable oneness - enthralling Laura to leave her sister's side, stay back, and linger over the merchants and their products. Immediately following a description of the goblins' diversity are the lines: "She heard a voice like voice of doves / Cooing all together" (116-117). This is an expression of the oneness that glues together the goblins' diverse characteristics into an infinitely more seductive and palatable form:

Wondering at each merchant man.  
One had a cat's face,  
One whisk'd a tail,  
One tramp'd at a rat's pace,  
One crawl'd like a snail,  
One like a wombat prowl'd obtuse and furry,  
One like a ratel tumbled hurry skurry.  
She heard a voice like voice of doves  
Cooing all together:  
They sounded kind and full of loves  
In the pleasant weather (116-117).

The diversity of Goblins in an equally multifarious natural world encourages a desire for variety that could damage the Christian cause to view nature as moral. To necessitate a moral view of nature's abundance, Rossetti places it in the harmonious

proximity and unity of the sisters. Unlike the Goblins' visually enthralling variety, the sisters are physically identical: they have golden hair and ivory skin and together they live "Like two pigeons in one nest / Folded in each other's wings, / They lay down in their curtain'd bed: / Like two blossoms on one stem," (120). their physical uniformity is in contrast with their essential being. They choose to act independently, bear the consequences, represent female autonomy, and yet advocate a homogeneous religiosity and the value of sacrifice to obtain it. The Goblins, on the other hand, act as one: hawking together, molesting together, and disappearing together, thereby encapsulating the true spirit of Nature's unity. One won't find a lone, single goblin with agency; instead, one would always see the tramping the glen together, bound by and driven collectively by the traditions, proclivities, and laws of Nature. Fundamentally, thus, they are agents, extensions, and representations of Nature.

This nature, however, is the immoral extreme, a pagan cult of the soul, a worship seeped in extortionist production, and exchange in an eponymous market. The dubious pagan impulses challenge the traditional cultural boundaries of wilderness, and the domestic environment, emphasizing social association with nature as material and transactional. The naturalist foundations are thus transformed; the autonomy in this laissez-faire nature's market lies in the hands of marketeers who assert compliance on the target community. The market interactions are also uniform for all consumers regardless of their approach towards the product. Be it Lizzie, the late Jeanie, or Laura, all are subjected to violence in their attempt to purchase, reconcile to newfound existence, or abstain from the dictates of capitalists. In this hegemonic association, the policy, practice, rules, conditions, and regulations of commerce are solely governed by free-market capitalists, i.e., the sinister Goblins.

It is interesting to note that there are no other sources of fruits in the poem. The goblins are the only known producers and sellers of fruits that are available to the two sisters - a clear sign of a monopolistic market structure. And the goblins are not ones to shy away from exercising their exclusive control over this commodity. Instead, they seek to unabashedly leverage the despotic power of the monopolist - indeed, they wear the monopolist's badge proudly, staking their claim and marking their territory by naming the very market after themselves. Through acts like these, the goblins, champions of capitalist materialism, reveal their domineering, conceited, and exploitative nature. Rossetti, thus, weaves into the narrative a grim forewarning of the monster whose birth will follow the rapid industrialisation taking place in Victorian England. In the very cauldron where this hyper-industrialisation boils and bubbles and seethes shall unrestrained capitalism take birth, climb out of its evil womb, and terrorise society by shattering man's spiritual havens. Under such conditions of unrestrained capitalism - as Rossetti portrays with the goblins' example - despotic monopoly shall naturally prevail. And as Rossetti warns, the monopolists (or the direct offspring of Victorian England) shall be every bit as savage and self-serving as the goblins - who, after all, were the archetypal monopolists.

### **Paganism and Christian Faith.**

Interestingly, the Goblin's form of capitalism derived from their paganistic pursuits is an antithesis of the Christian doctrine itself. Christianity is the gold standard of monotheism, and has a crisp list of sins that one mustn't flout. Rossetti's goblins, as mentioned before, do not fit into a single body type, thus reflecting anti-

monotheistic conceptions that spring into existence in the human imagination when polytheism seeps into culture and civilisation. Myriad animals being ostentatiously equivalent members of the Goblin Brotherhood signify strong anti-monotheistic beliefs. The creatures also actively reflect and encourage Christianity's seven deadly sins: greed, pride (the goblins claim to have the choicest edibles), wrath (the goblins furiously punished Lizzie), envy (Laura envied Lizzie's faculties of perception that allowed her to hear and see the goblins), lust, gluttony (Laura took a kernel-seed home to attempt to quench her appetite), and sloth (Laura retired from household chores and duties, falling into a lethargic trance).

The characteristics of the goblins bear interesting parallels to the traits of the sisters, fueling Rossetti's visionary aim of recreating the Biblical tale within a more human framework. To arrive at the core tenets of Christianity, Rossetti builds a compelling socio-political, economic, gender-specific critical discourse around the sisters. And at the center of this discourse lies the antithesis of all that is purely Christian: the goblins. Just as the goblins worship nature in a feverish, propagandistic, extreme manner, so do the sisters walk the path of Christianity with psychological intensity. They are unconscious adherents of Biblical lore, with Laura taking after Eve and Lizzie taking up the mantle of the Redeemer himself. After partaking of the forbidden fruit in Eden, Eve, envious of Adam's persistent innocence and perhaps also envying his starkly higher moral ground in light of succumbing to terrible temptation herself, sought to share the fruit with Adam. The kernel here is envy. Laura shares Eve's envy:

Laura turn'd cold as stone  
To find her sister heard that cry alone,  
That goblin cry,  
"Come buy our fruits, come buy."  
Must she then buy no more such dainty fruit?  
Must she no more such succous pasture find,  
Gone deaf and blind?  
Her tree of life droop'd from the root:  
She said not one word in her heart's sore ache;  
But peering thro' the dimness, nought discerning,  
Trudg'd home, her pitcher dripping all the way;  
So crept to bed, and lay  
Silent till Lizzie slept;  
Then sat up in a passionate yearning,  
And gnash'd her teeth for baulk'd desire, and wept  
As if her heart would break (121-122).

Adam's trust in Eve is betrayed when she seduces him to consume the forbidden fruit. He had held her to a higher moral code- a code that she violated with her actions. Laura betrays her sister's faith in her in a similar fashion. Lizzie's counsel- so painstaking, persistent, and protective- does not faze Laura's lust, leading to the archetypal betrayal. Lastly, following her actions, Eve's fate is marked with pain in childbirth, "I will make most severe your pangs in childbearing; in pain shall you bear children." (Prager, 54). In Laura's case, too, motherhood forms the eventual destination, though not in the shape of punishment. As Christ made the impossible call to take on the sins of humanity onto his own vulnerable self, so does Lizzie shoulder the burdensome

consequence of her sister's indulgence-induced suffering. Her character is extraordinarily similar to the Redeemer. Neither started with the noble intent - instead, each occupied a modest station in society. What propels Lizzie to sacrifice herself is the same great call to a more heroic mode of being that defined Christ's difficult path. Both Lizzie and Christ begin in commonplace capacities and decidedly progress towards selfless courage that leads them to purge the sins of others. Though the terrifying and all-too-real prospect of meeting the same fate as Jeanie looms large before her, Lizzie acts regardless to redeem her sister. Indeed, Lizzie's religious devotion is so ardent that she boldly sidesteps the obvious barrier of entry for women to adopt the role of Christ.

There is yet another way in which Lizzie walks in Christ's footsteps. Preceding His crucifixion is the story of Christ's sojourn in the desolation of the dreary desert, a place to which He was led "to be tempted by the Devil" (Troyte, 230). Forty days and nights are spent by the Son of God in that desolate wilderness: alone and starving. At the end, He is tempted by none other than the Tempter himself - and tempted, on top of that, with that which He sorely needs at that time, that which would easily be enough to seduce a lesser man. Satan first transforms the desert rock into bread and urges Christ to end his miserable starvation of forty days. Second, Satan tempts Christ to throw Himself off a cliff and call on His Father the Lord and the angels to save Him from any serious harm. Third, and this is perhaps the most powerful temptation of all, Satan spreads out all the riches, empires, and kingdoms of the world before Christ, available to be enjoyed by Him if He so wishes. But as He is Christ, He is able to reject these temptations - and reject the immeasurable power that came with them. Lizzie, in a similar fashion, is able to reject the goblins' temptation. When lesser maidens allowed themselves to be seduced, Lizzie abstained, practicing the very restraint that Christianity prizes, the restraint that the 'Son of God' was capable of exercising. To be sure, Laura is not a perfect Eve and Lizzie is not a perfect Christ but the paths chosen by each are unconscious manifestations of deep, archetypal Christian worship and Biblical belief.

### **Goblin Brotherhood vs. Christian Sisterhood.**

The alternate theory of paganism is placed against the widely accepted Christian faith. With potent intent, this religious juxtaposition is further consolidated by the positioning of the goblin brotherhood against the 'sisterhood' of Laura and Lizzie. The contrast between the brotherhood and sisterhood traverses beyond religion. The goblins operate with idealism of purpose while the sisters busy themselves with seemingly mundane, day-to-day tasks. The Goblin brotherhood exhibits remarkable integrity: it is entirely unsullied in this regard, possessing an indefinable unity of purpose and a more potent togetherness as opposed to Laura and Lizzie who tend to behave individualistically. The sisters' desires, capabilities, interests, and goals are unique and pronounced with autonomy which, at times, renders their interdependency invalid. Moreover, their definite self-knowledge and emancipatory potential shape their social reality and individual identities. The division in both Lizzie and Laura points towards a powerful female identity within an exclusive sisterhood. Their individual identity evolves in the face of a choice as the sisterly proximity and camaraderie get divided; at this point, their identity discovers its own paths led by their unique agency. Laura deems it appropriate to taste the fruit, while Lizzie draws agency from the

burden of Laura to intervene and exercise her power to fix the situation and redeem her sister's soul from the clutches of depravity and death. The moral vision of their life choices, especially the suffering caused by seduction, abandonment, and physical violence faced by Lizzie, in spite of the empowered state, and agency of the sisters, affects an explicit Christian warning placed against the incorruptibility of the Goblin Brotherhood. The Brotherhood's robust integrity serves as a powerful reminder to the divided or missing Christian unison that marked the Victorian age - it forewarns the detractors of Christianity by exemplifying the persecution and hardships of dissidence.

The divide in the forewarning is spelled out - it's capitalistic commerce versus cultural and moral aspirations of Christian souls. The goblins are offspring of tradition, self-appointed custodians of society's natural order, and violent perpetrators of male power and agency. They oppressively maintain the boundary between the domains of the two genders: the market for men and the home for women. Any outlier who attempts to engage in the 'masculine' activity of commerce is exploited and subjected to violence. This defense of patriarchal dogma is contrasted with the sisters' empowered mode of being: two maidens living alone in the house, capably managing all domains on their own, fetching water from the stream while also possessing the agency to purchase fruits, be it by bartering a lock of hair or through currency. Gender, individualism, and social roles are rescripted to potentially reform social attitudes. Gendered utopias are explicitly invoked and engaged with to envision a dynamic environmental, familial and innocent sexual sufficiency between the sisters. Environmental sufficiency stems from the lesson of staying away from forbidden areas and nature's exclusives, while the sister's familial and sexual sufficiency are controversially signaled. In fact, the warmth, proximity, and propriety of the sisters could be an interesting equivalent of premarital sexual abstinence for women in Victorian society. The arrangement or ordering of the goblins is profoundly pertinent in this regard as it serves to fulfill and reinforce a certain character to the sister's intimacy. The brotherhood acts as the catalyst of its female counterpart's innocent sexual, erotic union. The sisters' physical proximity is mutually comforting- and their support for each other is intensified by the presence of these ominous corruptive forces. The tempter is positioned against the conventionalist ideology, serving as a connection between the Victorians and Christianity.

The ontological difference between goblins and sisters also occupies a position of prominence. The functional demarcations of their respective domains, bodies, and responses (active, violent responses of goblins as opposed to silent responses of the two sisters) when considered, transcribe to the iconoclastic discipline of self and notion of restraint in Christianity. The goblins are uniform in purpose to the extent of turning offensive and violent to dissonance, whilst simultaneously fanning and feeding on the dissonance of the sisterhood. One understands that the goblins never truly lost track of the essentiality of tempting Lizzie, the still-pristine maiden. Indeed, perhaps the cunning creatures seduced and deceived Laura with the strategic motive of gaining a route to her sister by holding her spirit hostage, knowing that someday, Lizzie- the protective pigeon of the two- will come to bargain for Laura's soul.

The notion of power seems embedded in both the brotherhood and sisterhood. While the goblins appear to lack individual agency, thinking and acting en masse and mechanically, the sisters operate on the basis of different and more human dynamics,

possessing the faculties that enable relatively autonomous modes of being. It appears that the essential traits of the goblins signify the dark depths of the human unconscious, the lair in our collective psyche that is concealed by ancient shadows. This is the poorly understood birthplace of human-engendered evil, chaos, delusion, and destruction. The goblins are fundamentally savage. Brought into sharp relief by the brotherhood's deep-rooted Nihilism and intrinsic savagery is the fact that the sisters come to effectively symbolize civilization itself- and the moral values that come with it. They represent our inherent proclivity for emotions, rationality, and sensibility, while the goblins embody the primal forces of oppression and domination over others. The sisters are grounded in openness and encourage freedom between individuals while the goblins demonstrate a vicious capacity for foreshadowing and suppressing individuality. The sisters personify human passion, Christian duty, reconciliation of the opposites, and a humane idealism in contrast to the goblins who champion a repressed, inhuman, and conformist idealism. Laura and Lizzie are maids dwelling in a household who are able to combat the male merchants of the market or the manipulative capitalistic forces of Victorian England. This is no insignificant feat. They resist the brotherhood's vehement subjugation and choose the path of renunciation in the face of the goblins' violent indulgence.

### **Conclusion**

Beyond the all-too-certain approach towards gender, Christianity, sexuality, perils of free market economy, lesbian empowerment, incest, and anorexia - lies a range of theological and political concerns that indicate the inadequacy of giving preference to a particular interpretation of the poem. Religious inconsistencies abound, most notably Rossetti's paradoxical moments of self-indulgence and suggestive revelations. The broader purpose of these indulgent moments is an inclusive, Neo-Christian outlook wherein personages like Christ and Adam are supplanted by Lizzie and Laura (respectively), and forces like supreme duty and renunciation emerge victorious in battle against the dominant irreligious and paganistic agencies. The method adopted for this synthesis is through the coercive apparatus of seductive fruits that serve both as a means to corrupt and as an instrument of salvation. Goblin's use of fruits to possess the mind and the body is in line with the ancient use of psychotropic plants for possession of human mind, for medicinal use, for healing, and botanical remedies by ethnic groups. The Goblin's occupation and the hypnotic after effects of the fruit borders on a sort of a witchcraft that gradually destroys one's core. The fruit may also be called the Victorian equivalent of drugs. The Goblin's competence to seductively create a 'false consciousness' in individuals, through fruit induced trans, scores the horrific means and extent to which the brotherhood was willing to navigate to effectively manipulate the socio-spiritual order. While on the face of it, the episode satirises the susceptible and decadent generation of pleasure-seeking youth, represented by Laura - the perfect prey of the authoritative Goblins; a deeper look, would also reveal the seductive narrative and rhetoric of fruits - the propaganda selling as a part of the Goblin enterprise to usurp Christianity and vehemently consolidate their totalitarian power. The primitive form of Goblin barbarism (choaking Laura and Lizzie) along with the psychotropic weapon (forbidden fruits) highlights the hegemonic - 'consent and coercion' used by Goblins for "intellectual and moral leadership" (Gramsci, 57). Lizzie's absolute transformation at the hands Goblins, her inability to disassociate from their motive, her passivity to her

altered consciousness, and submission to the intents of the dominant group is all part of the larger design. Their leadership is based on the psychological abuse of the victims who consensually relinquish their self-awareness, interests, needs, and individual freedom to serve the Goblin purpose. Those that chose to resist are subjected to the culture of Goblin terror that bears resemblance to the fascist mode of execution.

Lizzie's bold intervention counters the Goblin terror at several levels and addresses the silence around their provocation. Her resistance, afforded by her spiritual agency, is the reluctance to accept the privilege and supremacy of their culture of totalitarianism. She counters violence with non-violent common sense laced with immense dignity and, unlike Goblin's who choose the psychotropic fruits to corrupt the human soul, she invests faith in the remedial quality of the very fruits to salvage Laura from the false sensation and trans like existence. The phenomenon of subverting everyday experience, intent, and common sense with systematic dictates of hegemony is thwarted by reevoking the truest form of experience, intent and sense by Lizzie. Rossetti's desire to restore the individual agency and sensibility becomes crucial at a time where we are made to ponder upon the absence of any law or authority to prevent the violent onslaught of the Goblins upon the supposedly weaker sex/class. The story of Jenny too, is an example to validate a sort of extended emergency like situation. Rossetti through Lizzie's ability to seize the persecution of human mind and soul - empowers, restores, maintains and consolidate the common women's position in their independent domestic, familial and social life. Her Christian antidote, *Goblin Market*, synthesizes the inherent good in the tradition to thwart the apocalyptic forces with the dangerous potential to wean conservative society off spirituality. She reasons through a dialectical engagement with antithetical values that lead to an equilibrium and reconstruction of the humane socio-spiritual space. The visionary counsel on the relationship between Paganism and Christianity which since antiquity has been "forever entangled in death struggle or fruitful intercourse, according to prejudice," (Fowden, 173) gives a powerful critique of the combination of feudal structures of capitalist economy and dominant ideological leadership. Rossetti succeeds in rescuing the human consciousness through a bold reconciliation between the conservative and the liberal Neo-Christian reality into a harmonious whole in the Victorian society.

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# SURVEILLANCE IN THE TIME OF PANDEMIC: SHIFTING PARADIGMS

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**Abstract:** *The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in an unusual death toll worldwide, causing alarms in the fields of healthcare, economy, education and so on. It has caused the implementation of novel policies in almost all walks of life effecting far reaching implications. The nature of the pandemic has called for an increased implementation of surveillance so as to contain the disease by maintaining social distancing and quarantine regulations. The trying times that the humankind is passing through has witnessed a paradigm shift in the nature of surveillance exercised on humankind as a whole. The pandemic has brought about great changes in almost all walks of life; it has affected a division in human life, as before COVID and after COVID. The present paper attempts to analyse the shift that has happened in the nature of surveillance and human being's approach to surveillance during these pandemic times.*

**Keywords:** *Surveillance, pandemic, posthuman, paradigm shift, normation*

Surveillance has always been the strategy used to keep human beings under disciplinary control. It has emerged as a tool for manoeuvring human beings into docile bodies which subjected them to the power centres. Surveillance using technology is a major feature of the era that we are living in. The surveillance methods keep on shifting due to the advancement in science and technology. The technology-assisted surveillance methods have encroached into the private space of human beings even without their awareness. Epidemics always call for some kind of control and surveillance in the effort to contain them. Surveillance can be of a mixed nature; it can be both caring and controlling. Especially, in the time of a pandemic which has been devastating regarding humankind as a whole, the approach to it cannot be rigid in nature. The earlier attacks of epidemics in the world were mainly contained in different areas or rather different continents. The trying times that humankind is passing through has witnessed a paradigm shift in the nature of surveillance exercised on humankind as a whole. The pandemic has brought about great changes in almost all walks of life; it has affected a division in human life, as before COVID and after COVID. The present paper attempts to analyse the shift that has happened in the nature of surveillance and human being's approach to surveillance during these pandemic times.

The term surveillance has etymological roots in “sur” meaning from above and “veillance” meaning to watch. Michel Foucault views surveillance as the means to enforce disciplinary power on individuals. It is at work everywhere at many places in the society. Surveillance and discipline are usually terms that had been thought and discussed in connection with crime and punishment only. But it got integrated into society through carceral societies and later through a normalisation of it. Disciplinary power exercised through surveillance has become a part of our public life so that we have stopped to about it. CCTV cameras are an example which shows how one has got normalised to it. A person is exposed to constant observation even if he is at a mall, hospital, examination hall, school, on road and so on.

When we approach the phenomenon of a pandemic in terms of surveillance, we understand from Foucault's deliberations on the panopticon that the panoptic structures were greatly used for inhabiting and observing the diseased ones. In the times of

epidemics like plague, the affected ones were brought under the constant watch of the system. Foucault's conceptualisations on panopticon begin with the discussion on the disciplinary mechanism in force at the end of the seventeenth century when the plague appeared in a town. A strict spatial partitioning and close observation of the town and the outlying districts were done by appointing an intendant to govern each division. A government official, syndic, was appointed in every street who was supposed to keep it under constant watch and he would have to face death on the violation of the duty. The people were asked to stay indoors without moving out. It was the syndic himself who locked the door of each house from the outside forbidding the inmates to move out under the pain of death. Bread and wine were supplied to each family through a wooden canal made between the street and interior of the house. There were observation posts at every town gate. Every day the town syndics visited every house and the members had to appear at the window, helping him to make reports on the condition of the people. In *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault observes: "This surveillance is based on a system of permanent registration: reports from the syndics to the intendants, from the intendants to the magistrates or mayor" (196). There was a hierarchy involved in it. At the beginning of this lockdown, a register is made on every inhabitant of the town, on which entries are made every day based on the visit of the syndic. Foucault calls this system a compact model of disciplinary mechanism:

This enclosed, segmented space, observed at every point, in which the individuals are inserted in a fix place, in which the slightest movements are supervised, in which all events are recorded, in which an uninterrupted work of writing links the centre and periphery, in which power is exercised without division, according to a continuous hierarchical figure, in which each individual is constantly located, examined and distributed among the living beings ... all this constitutes a compact model of disciplinary mechanism. (197)

In Foucault's opinion, rather than being a system meant to stop the contagion of the disease, it was a perfect mechanism meant to discipline the subjects according to the needs of the state, though being caring and controlling in nature at the same time.

Analysed in the light of the new COVID-19 pandemic, one can see that a similar disciplinary mechanism has been in operation during the times. The route maps of the infected people were prepared and made public even though a feeble attempt was made to conceal their identities, thus bringing their personal life and each movement under the close inspection of society. A lock down was imposed on people in most of the affected countries. Restriction of movement made the people remain in a fixed place where even the slightest movements were supervised. The infected ones were taken to a centralised system of observation which was very similar to a panoptic structure where the inmates were under an all-peering eye.

When compared to the earlier outbreaks of epidemics where a physical verification and a one-to-one contact were employed by the state to ensure containment of the disease, the new pandemic witnessed a shift towards the increased use of technology to make the contact and verification easily possible. The everyday verification through one-to-one contact by the syndics was replaced by the phone calls by the health workers and updation of details in a centralised network system. Approached from a Kerala context,

those who were visiting Kerala during those times had to register in the Jagratha portal by the government and undergo the surveillance mechanisms associated with it. The portal was meant to bring every aspect regarding health care related to the corona virus under a single roof so that people could access facilities easily. A person who was cut off from the outside world could easily get in touch with the authorities using these portals and apps. Along with the help that one gets, his/her movements could easily be tracked using the system once he/she registers using the mobile number in the site.

The Arogya Setu App developed and recommended by the Union government of India has also been a surveillance system used to coordinate the COVID-related efforts: “This Arogya Setu app is a government initiative to ensure the utmost safety for its citizens from this deadly virus. In essence, this application connects Indian health services to its people at this unpredictable time” (“Arogya Setu”). Contact tracing is effectively employed by this application so as to make a list of all individuals whom a user meets during the pandemic. The app alerts the user if any of these contacts develops any symptoms of the disease. GPS and Bluetooth are required for the effective functioning of Arogya Setu App. It stores the data regarding a person’s contact with and proximity to others, and “if your self-assessment through this app shows a strong likelihood of COVID-19 infection, this data will be uploaded to a server for government inspection and use” (“Arogya Setu”). The gadget functions in the role of a caretaker who can even take decisions for the individual.

An individual is basically converted to data in the COVID times. Whenever and wherever one goes, one’s temperature is being recorded and reported if higher than the prescribed permitted limit. His plans and intentions for himself depend on whether he passes this test of being within the confined limits. If one wants to make an air travel or wants to go outside the state, he/she needs the COVID negative certificate. The certificate issued based on the testing of one’s swab determines his/her mobility. The identity, self-will and determination of human beings have come to nothing in these circumstances. Many of the basic rights like the right to travel have been denied to us. An individual’s permission to meet his/her loved ones depend on not his/her desire or readiness to travel, but on many other factors and conditions imposed by the state. All these restrictions come with the welfare state because the wellbeing of the subjects is one of the primary concerns and responsibilities of the government. But together with the concern for the subject, the element of discipline is also involved in it. As D. Lyon says in the article “The Search for Surveillance Theories”: “The subject of surveillance is being watched with a certain purpose, which can be controlling and disciplining the subject into certain behaviour or a set of norms, but also ... protecting and caring for that subject” (10). Hence surveillance can be about both care and discipline. What we think as the caring aspect of surveillance can have another aspect of interfering in the lives of the citizens.

The data integration and the collection of big data by companies has gone on smoothly during the COVID times in the guise of collecting and coordinating information regarding the pandemic. The affected ones and the primary contacts all became entries in the data pool which could be and might be used for anything and everything that these companies want. We are sold for high money; or the data collected from us can be sold for whatever they want. The controversy regarding Sprinklr in Kerala can be referred to in connection with this. “The Kerala government was in the dock for

allegedly breaching privacy of 1.75 lakh people under quarantine in the state by striking a deal with a US-based tech firm to handle the data compiled from them without taking their individual consent” (Varma). The project was aimed at organising the data at the grassroots level using a tool developed by the company. Though the intention was to help the healthcare system, the chances of the data being used for other purposes invited criticism from various sectors.

The use of drones was a phenomenon seen as assisting the government in employing surveillance upon the people. It was used to check upon people who violate the lock down rules and regulations. This technology encroaching into the privacy of humankind in the form an aerial surveillance imposed upon a wider area at a single glance was employed by many governments in different parts of the world. The civil liberties of human beings are at threat such situations: “But the surveillance capabilities of this technology raise the spectre of a digital form of authoritarianism and a corresponding erosion of our human rights. A Paris court recently suspended the use of COVID-19 drone surveillance in the French capital until privacy concerns are addressed.” The long-term implications of these kinds of technology-assisted wide scale surveillance techniques are yet to be seen once the lock down and restrictions regarding COVID-19 are over. One can see that human rights are at stake where the continued use of drones prevails as they are an intimidating presence which does not value people’s dignity.

Hence, from all the discussions that we made, we can assume that what Foucault observed about plague is true in the case of COVID-19 also: “The plague as a form, at once real and imaginary, of disorder had as its medical and political correlative discipline” (198). The novel corona virus which was let loose on the world since December 2019 shattered all the order that existed in our lives until then, but implemented a disciplinary system which has permitted all authoritarian governments to interfere in human freedom and lives if they wanted so. Going back to Foucault, he talks about the treatment of lepers in society where they were excluded from the town because the concept was to have a pure community. Plague-like pandemics implement great confinement because the aim of the political society is a discipline society. According to Foucault, these are “two ways of exercising power over men, of controlling their relations, of separating out their dangerous mixtures” (198). Foucault states that the “normation” is a process closely linked to the disciplinary effort. The state creates norms of behaviour through forced rituals, habits and so on. The disciplined bodies are “docile bodies” in Foucault’s opinion. Normation is central to the disciplinary mechanisms in disciplining bodies and making them subjects.

In short, Foucault states that “the plague-stricken town traversed throughout with hierarchy, surveillance, observation and writing” (198). The very same hierarchy, surveillance, observation and writing happened in the case of the new pandemic also; but the difference lies in the fact that technology was more involved in these forms of surveillance and observation. Considering the modes of surveillance employed by the states in different eras, we can see that a shift towards the posthuman happens in the present with humanity becoming more and more posthuman. What happens as a result is that we accept these forms of surveillance as normal and tend to consider them as done for the greater benefit of humanity whereas the power imposed in the form of surveillance converts us into docile bodies who are ready to obey the authorities in

everything. The public surveillance systems would continue even after the pandemic. This leads us to a situation of normalisation where we consider surveillance as something normal and beneficial for a better future.

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## REWRITING THE EPIC: THE PORTRAYAL OF FEMALE IDENTITY IN CHITRA BANERJEE DIVAKARUNI'S *THE FOREST OF ENCHANTMENTS*.

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*Abstract: Though myths are considered as stories from the past they are relevant today as propagators of hidden agendas. Myths have an oral quality and are mainly used by religion, literature and academics. Myths are argued as phallogentric constructs used by patriarchy to suppress female identity. It can be seen that women in myths are either silenced or misrepresented. Patriarchy used myths as effective tool to suppress and control women. Revisionist myth making tries to re-read the myths from the point of view of the suppressed which in turn helps to view history and culture differently. Revisioning of myth is an attempt to give voice to muted female identity with the help of gynocentric languages. Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's novel The Forest of Enchantments is a feminist interpretation of the epic story of Ramayana. Divakaruni attempts to present Ramayana from the perspective of Sita, one of the complex but neglected characters. Divakaruni's Sita stands as a strong woman against the male dominated society. She re-imagines and reinterprets the incidents of the epic from a female perspective in order to give voice to all the silenced women who wanted to speak. Divakaruni shatters the female archetypes created by patriarchy of daughter, sister, wife and mother through her brave portrayal of Sita.*

**Key words:** Re-vision, phallogentric, gynocentric, patriarchy.

Myths are not mere stories from the past but are relevant today as propagators of hidden agendas. They have an oral quality and are mainly used by religion, literature and academics. Myths are argued as phallogentric constructs used by patriarchy to suppress and control female identity. It can be seen that women in myths are either silenced or misrepresented. Re-visioning myth has been a popular and successful tool used by the writers of 20<sup>th</sup> Century to mark the female identity. Re-visionist myth making tries to re-read the myths from the point of view of the suppressed which in turn helps to view history and culture differently. Re-visioning of myth is an attempt to give voice to muted female identity with the help of gynocentric languages. Andrienne Rich in her essay "When we Dead Awaken: Writing as Re-vision" defines Re-visionist myth making as:

Re-vision- the act of looking back, of seeing with fresh eyes, of entering an old text from a new critical direction- is for women more than a chapter in cultural history: It is an act of survival. Until we can understand the assumptions in which we are drenched we cannot know ourselves. And this drive to self-knowledge, for women, is more than a search for identity: it is part of our refusal of the self-destructiveness of male dominated society. (18)

Re-visionist mythmaking allows women to break from the enduring attitudes of tradition which the phallogentric society had placed upon them. Patriarchy defines women only on the basis of gendered roles of mother, wife, daughter, sister and daughter-in-law. It fails to understand the true identity of women as individuals. Myths are part of logocentric system which is undeniably supports phallogentrism to establish the masculine order. It completely neglects the role of women in the social order.

Through myths, patriarchy represents women as weak, passive, submissive and helpless. Patriarchy expressed women as nothing but the angels of home. It inevitably associated women with beauty and patience. Phallogocentric society effectively used myths as a tool to represent women the way it wanted to see them. Patriarchy rejected the individual existence and identity of women. Female images shown in myths are the products of male frustrations and fantasies about women.

One of the major concerns of feminist theory has been the demand that women writers should be the ‘thieves of language.’ Since the language of patriarchy is inadequate to express women’s experiences, feminist theorists attempt to create a language of their own by transforming the male centred language. Alicia Ostriker in her essay “The Thieves of Language: Women Poets and Revisionist Mythmaking” describes this idea in detail:

Though the language we speak and write has been an encoding of male privilege, what Adrienne Rich calls an “oppressor’s language” inadequate to describe or express women’s experience, a “Law of the Father” which transforms the daughter to “the invisible women in the asylum corridor or the “silent woman” without access to authoritative expression, we must also have it in our power to “seize speech” and make it say what we mean. (69)

Female identity can be represented only through a gynocentric language. Women should steel and alter the male oriented languages to successfully use them to portray female experiences. Gynocentric language system helps women to define themselves. Gynocentric language system helps women to define themselves. Judith Fatterly observes:

The first act of feminist critic must be to become a resisting rather than an assenting reader and, by this refusal to assent, to begin the process of exercising the male mind that has been implanted in us. (570)

Being an advocate of feminist re-reading of myths Fatterly believes that Revisionist mythmaking is a successful strategy to unveil the female identity. It attempts to redefine ‘women’ and reinterpret her position in our culture. Alicia Ostriker defines the term “revisionist mythmaking” as:

Whenever a poet employs a figure or story previously accepted and defined by a culture, the poet is using a myth, and the potential is always present that the use will be revisionist: that is, the figure or tale will be appropriated for altered ends, the old vessel filled with new wine, initially satisfying the thirst of the individual poet but ultimately making cultural change possible... Myths belongs to “High culture and is handed “down” through the ages by religious, literary and educational authority. At the same time, myth is quintessentially intimate material, the stuff of dream life, forbidden desire, inexplicable motivation- everything in the psyche that to rational consciousness is unreal, crazed, or abominable (72)

The major concern of revisionist mythmaking lies in challenging and correction of gender stereotypes embodied in myths. Revisionist mythmakers question the familiar images and the related socio-literary conventions.

The classics, being product of patriarchal tradition, mostly represent the ideology of male superiority. The agents of patriarchy create and preserve myths. As a result, almost all the epics are male centred narratives. Indian Classics *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* are no exemption. Both these epics are written by men to glorify the life and adventures of the men of royal lineage. The women in these epics are marginalised and controlled by their male counterparts who consider them as mere receivers of lust, anger, passion and revenge. While celebrating men as heroes of supernatural powers, these epics keep women under the shadow of these heroes and deprive them of human rights and independence. The sufferings of women and the sacrifices they do are never addressed or given due respect by the patriarchal society. They are used, without any humanitarian concerns, by the patriarchal tradition to maintain the rules, regulations and code of conduct designed by the phallogocentric ideologies. The feelings and emotions of them are never given any consideration. These epics have played inevitable role in the construction of Indian female identity. They are extremely political with underlying layers of meanings.

The true purpose of retelling is to challenge and deconstruct the already established notions of power and gender identity. Women are excluded from the socio-cultural, political and linguistic milieu. Malayalam writer and critic Sachidanandan states in the introduction to *Puthuramayana* that re-visioning is reading the entire text from the bottom: “The problem here is in the incoguity between the historical experience of the historical experience of the defeated and the history written by the victor” (XXVIII). The victorious men enjoy the luxuries of being in the centre.

Patriarchy propagates its ideology to the younger generation by idealizing and stereotyping the female characters in myths. Indian epics have been glorifying violence against women in different situations. The naturalisation of violence against women is a strategy used by patriarchy to impart male superiority. Submissive and suffering women are idealised in through epics. Characters like Sita, Savitri, Draupadi, Gandhari are presented as standard female figures in front of the Indian society who suffer all throughout her life for the sake of the men in their lives. This shapes Indian society’s attitude that women are bound to suffer violence and humiliation. Women suffering to establish and protect the male centred world order are celebrated as true examples of femininity.

Chitra Bannerjee Divakaruni in her *The Forest of Enchantments*, a retelling of *Ramayana*, places Sita at the centre. In her *Sitayana*, Divakaruni unravels Sita’s version of the epic story and also proposes a very human version of other women of the epic who are misunderstood, misrepresented and often relegated to the margin. She challenges, subverts and redefines the coy and fragile epical figure of Sita in her novel. The characters of epics are presented as idols in front of Indian women and generations have internalised patriarchy through these characters. The re-visionist writers try to free these characters from misrepresentation by giving them voice. Sita in the novel is a powerful character who challenges and criticizes the prevailing power structure. Unlike Sita in the epic, she, in many occasions, questions the decisions made by male patriarchs.

The novel is about women’s struggles to maintain autonomy in a world that privileges men. The protagonist Sita proposes powerful comments on duty, betrayal, infidelity



and honour which men uses as effective tools to control the lives of women. Not only Sita but almost all the female characters in the novel including Kaushalya, Kaikeyi, Urmila, Sunaina, Surpanakha, Ahalya, Mandodari and Sarama are suffering and humiliated in the male centred society. They are suppressed, manipulated, exploited, insulted and marginalized mostly by the men whom they loved the most in their lives. Sita being the spokeswoman unveils how women are deprived of justice by male counterparts. She argues for women's rights in relationships and emphasises on how women should stand up and say 'enough' to men.

Divakaruni portrays an entirely different Sita who is confident, courageous and righteous. Sita in the novel is not a weak woman. The conventional beauty myth is subverted here. Divakaruni does not describe Sita's physical beauty anywhere in the novel. Sita here is a healer and understands and performs her duties with utmost care and devotion. She has learned martial arts lessons also for self-defence who as a child loved the idea of being a warrior. Sita remembers: "I learned to move like a panther on the hunt, to run and leap and climb in silence, to fall the right way, without injury, to accept pain when it came" (10). Though she does not like violence, she has used her expertise in martial arts many times in life. She succeeded in defeating Kaikeyi in a friendly dual during the early days of her marriage. Though defeated, Sita tried hard to defend herself while Ravan, a ferocious warrior, attacked her. She used her martial arts skill against Surpanakha also to protect herself from the anger of the rakshasa princess. She even teaches her children the lessons of self defence in Valmiki's ashram. The epic keeps Sita always under the protection of Ram or Lakshman. In the novel Sita decides to accompany her husband to the forest because she believed that she could be of great help to him. She convinces him by saying that: "..., not all women are weak and helpless like you think. For all you know, I might be of help to you" (111). Divakaruni Portrays Sita as a mature, understanding and learned woman who knows to handle difficult situations in life with ease.

Sita here is a woman of passion. She loves and understands people, trees and animals around her. Sita's unconditional love for her husband Ram defines her identity as a wife. She enjoyed each moment of her life with Ram. She cherishes their intimate movements:

What I enjoyed as much physical pleasures of love was the time afterwards, when Ram and I lay, limbs intertwined, heads on the same pillow, and conversed into the night. Darkness added a special intimacy to the moment. I felt I could tell Ram things I would have hesitated to bring up otherwise. (66)

Sita decides to accompany Ram to the forest because of her love for him. She believed that she could take care of him in the forest. She also believed that woman's predicament is "always to be pulled between conflicting loves" (115). She enjoys her forest days with Ram because for her those are the days of love she spends with her husband in the lap of enchanting and liberating forest. She spends her life in Lanka, under the sorrow tree, remembering her beloved Rama. Her love for him gives her strength to defend herself against Ravan. Sita, who expects Ram to passionately embrace her after a long separation, is completely shattered and insulted by his rejection. She realizes that Ram "didn't understand the complexity of the female existence" (257). Even after being banished by Ram, Sita could not hate him. She runs

to save his life when he gets wounded in battle with his sons. Sita love for Ram is unique and unconventional.

Sita's love extends to every being around her. She understands every woman in her life with compassion. She believed that only a woman can understand another. She expresses this opinion when Valmiki mentions about his Ramayana:

For you haven't understood a woman's life, the heartbreak at the core of her joys, her unexpected alliances and desires, her negotiations where, in the hope of keeping one treasure safe, she must give up another. (2)

Myths showcase women as either 'angel' or 'monster'. It never allowed women to come out of this dichotomy. But Sita in the novel unravels the pain, sufferings, sacrifices and hatred women experience while handling different relationships. They are caught between love and duty. Every single woman in the novel is entrapped in the whirlpool of relationships. Sita wants to speak not only for herself but for other women in her life also because they "have been pushed into corners, trivialized, misunderstood, blamed, forgotten-or maligned and used as cautionary tales" (4). She says:

But as I dipped my quill into the inkpot, the rose inside me. Voices. Some clamouring, some tentative, some whispering, so that I had to still my breath to hear them. Kaikeyi, second queen of Ayodhya, who wrested our throne from us out of blind devotion to her son, only to be hated by him for it: Ahalya, her beauty turned to stone by her husband's jealous fury; Surpanakhs, wild enchantress of the forest, whose gravest crime was to desire the wrong man; Mandodari, wife of the legendary demon king, forced to watch her kingdom fall into ruin and her beloved son perish because of her husband's obsession with another woman; Urmila, my sweet sister, the forgotten one, the one I left behind as I set off with blithe ignorance on my forest adventure with my husband.(4)

Sita's description about these marginalized women discloses the harsh realities of their lives. She unsettles the traditional conventional angel/monster dichotomy.

Mythology celebrates patriarchy and praises gods, heroes, warriors and deities while considering spirituality superior to Mother Nature. Mother Nature is celebrated in Sita's life. She considers herself as an ordinary woman, the daughter of mother earth. Mother earth protected her when she was a newborn, abandoned by her parents, and handed over her to Janak for safe upbringing. Sita loves plants and learned about the healing power of herbs at a very young age. She is a natural healer. All throughout her life she helps to heal the ailing people and cures their diseases with herbs. Even when her greatest enemy Ravan was suffering with pain during his last hours, she thought of giving him some special herbs which could help him to bare pain.

Sita values mother earth and father fire for shaping the woman she is. From the day of her fire test in Lanka when the Fire god proves her innocence, she considers him as her father. Even during her last conversation with Ram, she requests both of them to save her from the sufferings of life forever. They immediately appear to save her from the mortal world.

Myths are not only stories from the glorious past. They also play great role in shaping societies. Rewriting the myths will help to view society from a different perspective

and understand the silences of the people who belong to the margin. Re-visionist mythmaking succeeds to give voice to muted female identity with the help of gynocentric languages. Re-visioning of myths is an attempt to re-read the myths from the female point of view which in turn helps to view history and culture differently. Reading myths from female perspective discloses how women are marginalized in these cultural texts. It gives the real idea of women's position in society. Re-visionist reading rejects the angel/monster dichotomy which is far removed from reality. It reveals the discrimination, subordination and suppression suffered by women on the basis of gender. Revisionist myth making intends to liberate women from the traditional archetypes created by phallogocentric organizations.

Re-visionist myth makers are “thieves of language” who steal the male centred and refashioning it to redefine themselves (69). Kate Millet support Simon de Beauvoir's opinion about the patriarchal depiction of women in myths:

The image of women as we know it is an image created by men and fashioned to suit their needs. These needs spring from a fear of the “Otherness” of women. Yet this notion itself presupposes that patriarchy has already been established and the male has already set himself as the human norm, the subject and referent to which female is the “Other” or alien. (46)

Millet tries to unveil the patriarchal conception of women as “Other” or alien. Patriarchy neglects the exclusive female experiences and thus tries to suppress female identity. Revisionist myth makers try to view myths from the perspective of marginalized. They try to create a space for women and given them an identity in a male centred world. The Forest of Enchantments is an attempt by Divakaruni to re-vision, reinterpret and re-imagine *Ramayana* from the perspective of Sita. She succeeds in giving voice to marginalized women of *Ramayana* who were suppressed and silenced by the androcentric society.

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## **DISEASE IS NOT A METAPHOR: THE REQUISITE RECITAL OF SUSAN SONTAG IN THE TIME OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

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**Abstract:** *The brutal effects of the narratives of cancer, tuberculosis, and AIDS are prevalent in society. In the contemporary socio-political context, Covid is being dealt with in war metaphors. All narratives used in comparison to war are threatening. Susan Sontag, the prolific American writer, social critic and activist defined such a situation in her book *Illness as A Metaphor*. Literary scholars and scholars often use metaphors to describe unfamiliar situations. But military metaphors in reference to disease are a dangerous tendency to mark in a socio-cultural linguistic realm. All the metaphors used to define diseases exchange symbols of the patriarchal social structure and should not be used in a gender equal socio-political environment. The process of expelling such metaphors from all discourses requires time and society, as it influences the rational thought, reasoning, and actions of humans. A reinterpretation of existing narratives is essential. This article intends to re-read Susan Sontag's works and life to get a clairvoyant notion regarding the approach to the pandemic.*

**Keywords:** *War, metaphor, Sontag, Illness, Covid-19, Pandemic*

The Covid-19 pandemic is rampantly ravaging the human body and the human race by creating many narratives in society. The horrendous effects of the narratives of cancer, tuberculosis, and AIDS are still haunting society. At such a time, it should be noted that the narrative of the Covid 19 virus is being formed as a war metaphor.

The government, the media, political and social figures including doctors are making a clarion call against Covid when they interact with the public in the following manner. *We are on a warfront, pandemic is our enemy, and the immune system is called a weapon.* The Covid Vaccine, more recently, is also known as the "Covishield" (shield means shield, weapon of defense). Doctors and nurses treat patients to become heroes and heroines. Health workers are referred to as frontline fighters and soldiers on the warfront. The term *soldiers* is used in many countries around the world to denote the health workers. India is the same in this regard. Throughout his speeches, Prime Minister Modi described the lockdown challenge in the pandemic era as "war" and the worst war since World War II. The immigrant workers were referred to as "disciplined soldiers" and the health workers as "guardians of the land". In his "Mann Ki Baat" speech, a digital portal was announced. It was called <https://covidwarriors.gov.in/>. Within seconds of the announcement, there were 12.5 million registrations, including of doctors, nurses, NCC cadets and Asha workers. They all proudly lined up to guard the land.

The military terms such as war, soldiers, warriors, weapon and shield started to resonate in the society spreading rancor, and the lockdown was filling the air with the apocalyptic ambiguity of war. We know which metaphor is pointing to the time when all the fundamental rights of the citizen were abolished. All narratives used in comparison to war are dangerous. This will spread misconceptions about the disease and will eventually lead to discrimination among the people. Susan Sontag, the prolific American writer, social critic and activist defined such a situation years ago. As Sontag remind us

*“The military metaphor not only provides a persuasive justification for authoritarian rule but implicitly suggests the necessity of state sponsored repression and violence.”(Sontag,susan.2002.Illness as Metaphor &AIDS and its metaphors .London :penguins classics)*

In our culture, disease is a metaphor. Metaphorizing it, is a harm done to the disease. All narratives about the disease are more serious than what the disease actually is. In fact, Sontag makes it clear in her book *Illness As metaphor*. As per her view of disease, disease should be seen only as a disease and that figurative thinking is not good for a healthy society.

During the first phase of Covid-19, some young people who had been diagnosed with Covid committed suicide. People started viewing foreigners as a threat, and police used to check the route map of each individual, with many spying on their own neighbors. The houses where Covid was diagnosed were isolated and they were struggling to meet their needs. It was the result of interpretations created by narratives. All these are examples of the fact that metaphorizing disease is harmful to society itself.

In the second stage of Covid 19, the scenario drifted drastically and more people became infected. The death toll increased steadily. War Metaphor itself is still featured in the description of the pandemic. Susan Sontag's ill life shows how it is dangerous to use metaphor when diseases are rampant and that it can strongly affect people's perceptions of the disease, and how to live with complete disregard for metaphors and surviving the disease.

### **Susan Sontag, Life, Sickness, and Death**

Susan Sontag first discovered the presence of cancer cells in her body in 1975. She was in her early forties during that time. The disease took over the body in the form of breast cancer. The doctors did not share any hope. But Sontag never thought about death. She was very determined and was reluctant to give up. In the face of a society that could not think of cancer other than death, Sontag treated cancer like any other disease and survived the disease. In an article on photography, she described this condition as *the sex appeal of death*.

Sontag's friend Sharon Delano says that Sontag always considered herself as an extraordinary persona from others. That's why the Metaphorical Force of Cancer could not trap Sontag. Sontag was a rebel throughout her life, especially when it comes to the politics of power. So she was persuaded to seek another treatment, by rejecting the claims of doctors. She did not want to approach the disease in a conservative way, which is why Sontag was able to overcome the disease. Then in 1998, Sontag was diagnosed with bladder cancer. Still, like any other disease, she was able to overcome through chemotherapy and surgery.

The self confidence level of Sontag was very high. The myth she had created about herself surrounded her the whole time. Sontag's friend once mentioned that Sontag is a genius with "star quality". Sontag wrote in a journal about society's attitude to disease: "Weakness is a contagious disease, and strong people stay away from it." This kind of self-proclaimed myth was Sontag's confidence. So, the change from the disease itself was amazing. Many say life is a drama, and Sontag opposes surrendering to mental and

physical illness. Instead, Sontag became a vociferous advocate about the energy it received when it faced such a situation with vigor and awareness.

Sontag's son, David Raif, wrote in amazement about his mother's attitude toward the concept of death. "My mother spent a large part of her life sick. Despite being an asthma patient since childhood and having been diagnosed with cancer three times and living in a cancer ward in hospitals, the idea of death never even crossed her mind. For Sontag, "death" is an unimaginable word. In Sontag's eyes, death is a murder. In fact, she could not accept it. In hanker to live a few more years, she beseeched the doctor if she could have a bone marrow transplant, even though she knew she would not be able to enjoy the perks of life as before. Even at the age of 71, she looked at life as she was flipping through a book every day. Because she has such a strong desire to live."

Sontag did not sit idly by, even during her days of illness. She learned about how society treats disease, the way the patient is viewed, and the misconceptions that result from creating distorted narratives. She wrote the book *"Illness as Metaphor"* from a society that views disease as a metaphor. Readers are prompted that a patient must survive not only the disease but also the society that makes the disease a metaphor.

### *Illness as Metaphor*

Sontag hesitated to describe the metaphors of the disease in her life. She was against it. She wrote in the introduction to the book. "I will not write about the exodus to the realm of disease and the life within it. No such writing would be useful to anyone." She even refused to use her photo on the cover of the book.

At the beginning of the book, Sontag says, *"Illness is the night side of life."* Disease is the darkest zone in human lives. It is not because of the severity of the disease, but because of the traumatic tribulation created by the narratives about the disease. The traditional view that disease is a punishment haunts the patient. Atmospheres intertwined with emotional fantasies. Dramatic scenes experienced in real life, from which the community does not allow the patient relief. Therefore, Sontag wrote in stark contrast to the stereotypical nature of society: *"My topic is not about disease but about using disease as a metaphor"*

In his book *Death of Ivan Ilyich*, Tolstoy portrayed the ill-fated life of the protagonist Ivan Ilyich. When he was alive, Ivan Ilyich was upset about his illness and death. He blamed the fate that befell him despite living well. Only a few moments before his death he did recover from the metaphor of the disease. Tolstoy wrote at the climax:

*"As usual, his face after death looked more handsome and noble than when he was alive. The look on his face said that he was able to do what he could and did well. In addition, there was a reproach and a warning against the living."*  
(Tolstoy, *The Death of Ivan Ilyich*)

Sontag illustrated the ill-fated lives of many writers with examples. Tuberculosis was considered a romantic disease. Narratives had created tuberculosis as a disease of the soul because it was a disease affecting the lungs. In the eighteenth century, artists were the most affected by the disease. Depression and vulnerability. The cliché that tuberculosis affects anarchic and artistic lives was prevalent at the time. Sontag also argued that romantic writers Keats and Shelley were victims of such metaphors.

The myth that tuberculosis is a disease that affects people outside the conservative conceptions of society has been widely circulated. Later, after 1900, with the development of modern medicine and a hygienic society, the metaphor of tuberculosis disappeared gradually.

Numerous metaphors about the syphilis disease that afflicted young people in the fifteenth century were also widespread at the time. As syphilis was a sexually transmitted disease, the lives of syphilis patients were considered to have a very low standard of living and society has subjected them to moral judgment. Even Shakespeare, the bard of Avon, feared the metaphors that advanced the disease more than the syphilis that afflicted him. The disease was called Mercurian Personality disorder. Mood swings, depression, and bipolar disorder affected his personality. Shakespeare's unusual behavior often frightened everyone. At that time, 85% of syphilis patients were suffering from mental illness. Excessive anger, depression and frustration at not being able to have sex due to diseases of the genitals were also a concern. In addition, the social construct regarding homosexuality, extramarital affairs and sex were putting guilt in to their lives. Shakespeare had all these traits, so he was slowly failing to articulate his imagination.

Metaphors classify people into binaries of good and bad. The greatest example of this can be seen in the depiction of AIDS. Even if the HIV virus enters the body through improper blood donation, the patient is still branded as a criminal. The narratives of the disease were created in such a way that AIDS is a severe punishment for those who lead an immoral life, excessive sex and drug use as a way of life. AIDS is a disease that is narrated with death. There was a widespread belief that the disease affected people from the worst living backgrounds. Sex workers and the gay community have been hardly hit by the AIDS narrative. The socially marginalized group has always been the victim of AIDS metaphors. AIDS is a disease with a military metaphor background. It was these types of war metaphors that strongly narrated the body's immune system. According to Sontag, this is a combination of political fanaticism that views the disease as an enemy and the patient as a criminal.

In the film "Cries and Whispers" by Swedish filmmaker Bergman, Sontag points out that the death from tuberculosis as a beautiful death and the death from cancer as the fall of a man who lost all his abilities due to extreme actions. In her work, Sontag sharply criticizes the metaphor of the disease used by Bergman.

The diagnosis of cancer in the human body is also a recognition of death. The cancer patient may not have experienced as much as the severity of the disease according to the narratives, but Metaphor does not trivialize it. This may be due to the belief that if tuberculosis affects only one organ, the cancer will affect the whole body. The construction of such a myth is always widespread because cancer is a disease of growth. Moreover, even Freud was plagued by interpretations that cancer reduced life expectancy. Sontag cites Sigmund Freud, the renowned modern psychologist, as an example.

Despite being called as the father of psychoanalysis, Freud was unable to lead a clear expressive life due to cancer. After having children, he abandoned his sexual relationship with his wife, Martha Bernice. Later he led an unromantic life without heeding his carnal desires. Freud wrote theories of id, ego, and super ego based on

sexuality while his sex life was not in prime. Life and theory were on opposite sides. Freud saw smoking as a substitute for sex. In fact, it can be assumed that even Freud, a psychoanalyst, was influenced by the metaphor of cancer.

In the narratives of modern capitalism, human life is a conflict between satisfaction and dissatisfaction. Therefore, the symbolism of cancer was conceived as the negative behavior of the twentieth century. Right-wing intellectuals also portrayed cancer as a consequence of industrialization.

*Illness as Metaphor* testifies that it was the basis for the emergence of a metaphor society that accelerated overgrowth and the suppression of energy. The metaphor of cancer has been propagated around the world as a "war". Sontag speaks of the brutal use of many terms used in the treatment of cancer. The patient's body is under attack. References to the fact that it can only be countered by counterattack place disease and treatment on the warfront. Doctors and patients have fallen into the trap of these types of metaphors. In medical terms such as "cancer cells multiply aggressively and if the body's defense system works properly, then only the treatment will be effective" She also refers to aerial warfare, in which patients are exposed to intense radiation, and interprets chemotherapy as a chemical weapon, arguing that the part of the body that is destroyed by radiation and chemotherapy is "life-saving." Cancer has recently been referred to as the "colonial war". Cancer is used metaphorically when describing wars, just as cancer is portrayed in war metaphors. Sontag criticizes the use of cancer as a metaphor for socio-political and ideological contexts.

*"Israel is a cancer in the heartland of the Arab world."*

If Trotsky called Stalinism is the cancer of Marxism, the Christian-Lebanese right-wing forces referred to the Palestinian refugees as a "cancer in the Lebanese body". The metaphorical application of cancer makes people look at the disease more frighteningly. So, Sontag tells people that in order to get rid of the disease physically and mentally, they need to be able to get out of these metaphors.

Literary scholars and writers often use metaphors to describe unfamiliar situations. But military metaphors in reference to disease are a dangerous tendency to mark in language, behavior, and social attitudes. Moreover, all the metaphors used to define the disease exchange the symbol of the patriarchal social structure. They should not be used for any reason in a socio-political environment that claims gender equality. The process of expelling such metaphors from all discourse requires time and society, as it influences the rational thought, reasoning, and actions of man and causes fear and discrimination among the people. A reinterpretation of existing narratives, interpretations and descriptions of diseases, is essential.

The second phase of Covid-19 is taking away human lives ruthlessly and rigorously. In the contemporary socio-political context, Covid is being dealt with in war metaphors. We need to re-read and recite Susan Sontag and her purports at such a time with predominant pertinence.

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# ROLE OF SUGGESTION IN LITERATURE: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF ĀNANDAVARDHANA'S *DHVANYĀLOKA* AND THE WESTERN THEORIES ON MEANING AND LANGUAGE

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**Abstract:** *The following paper is a comparative study of Indian and western poetics with respect to the concept of suggestion or meaning. The concept of suggestion occupies an important place in literature: suggestion is what produces unstated, indirect, emotive or multiple meanings in the heart of the reader and this is what distinguishes literary language from scientific language. Suggestion is the soul of poetry, said Ānandavardana; it also gives imagination to the listener or reader. Literal statements are the domain of science only (although Mammata calls every statement suggestive) and that which keeps on producing multiple meanings, in the heart of the reader, is literature. The characteristic which produces this reverberation is suggestion or Dhvani which was discussed explicitly by Ānandavardana in his treatise named Dhvanyāloka. Similar concept was picked up by western critics to discuss language and meaning in literature. For example, structuralism views text as a system that poses the question of how a construct of language can contain meaning for the reader and post structuralism views literature as 'the infinity of language'. Both imply that meaning is to be deduced and is not fixed. This resembles the concept of Dhvani as it is the indirect meaning which lies beyond words and arises from words or plays of signifiers and signified only. The following paper is a discussion on Ānandavardana's theory of suggestion and uniqueness of literary language. It also touches upon few aspects of comparative study of dhvani theory with western theories related to suggestion and meaning.*

**Keywords:** *Suggestion, post-structuralism, Indian poetics, Western poetics.*

## Introduction

This paper takes us on a tour of the famous theoretical framework written by Ānandavardhana who was a ninth century Sanskrit philosopher and literary critic from Kashmir and contributed a major critical treatise to Indian Poetics known as *Dhvanyāloka*. Besides, it will place, side by side, the ideas laid down by post-structuralists and new critics which somehow resonate with Ānandavardhana's ideas. *Dhvani* or suggestion is the ultimate meaning in any great work of art which supersedes and shines above all other meanings. It is not apparent in the surface or direct meaning of words but it rather clicks in the mind of an adept and passionate reader after he remains dissatisfied by the surface or direct meaning of words. Also, it results in the release of *rasa* or pure pleasure in the heart of the reader and it comes not from individual words but from the overall text. Having said that let us now look at the distinctive features of *Dhvani*:

- a) It generates a unique emotive response from the reader/ listener
- b) It is not in the direct and implied meaning of words but can exist beneath the metaphors or can be metaphoric and rhetoric
- c) It can have breaches or breaks to force reader into thinking and reaching certain meanings himself
- d) It is not literal like a statement.

*Dhvanyāloka* discusses a significant aspect of Sanskrit poetics and, Ānandavardhana has built a structure of poetic theory on the foundation of thoughts laid down by his predecessors viz. Bharata, Bhamaha, Udbhata and Vamana. His theory is the first one to talk about aesthetics and semantics in the entire history of Indian Thought. He gives the reader a better understanding of poetic theory and distinguishes well between true and false poetry. Besides, he lays down principles of poetic creation before us and K. Krishnamurthi calls him in his introduction to *Dhvanyaloka* as ‘both the Aristotle and the Longinus of India’ (23).

Although a lot of Sanskrit texts on poetics have lost their deserving place in literary theory and criticism, they have definitely inspired Western theoreticians time and again in their theories. For example, Saussure was a Sanskrit Professor and his published papers are based on Sanskrit Poetics. His signification concept is close to the denotative (*abhida*) and connotative (*laksana*) meaning of *Dhvani* principle. Somehow, both Indian and western poetics have drifted apart; while one is sinking into the abyss of obscurity, the other has reached its greatest momentum and hence, the need to bring the former to the surface. *Dhvani* being the all-encompassing concept which leads to release of *rasa* in the heart of the reader, takes place step after step because appropriate expressions by the true poet will evoke appropriate emotions and sentiments in the reader with ultimate release of aesthetic pleasure. This *rasa* however, is released by the production of meaning which is dependent upon the artist or poet who leaves appropriate room for suggestion to make way for itself, and reader is guided to reach it on his own.

Professor Kapil K. Kapoor writes in his *Eleven Objections to Sanskrit Literary Theory: A Rejoinder* that the educated Indian is ‘de-intellectualized’ because western vocabulary has put his own vocabulary into ‘hibernation’. Moreover, “For him, West is the theory and India is the data” (1). To correct it, Kapoor suggests, the Indian mind has to be ‘relocated’ in the Indian thought. This relocation requires a careful study of Indian critical texts and a meticulous comparison and re-establishment. The treatises have entered an abyss of obscurity because of the oblivious attitude of Indian writers who emerged in the modern and pre-modern eras fully fed by the western thought and of course the British rule and post-colonial impact as the backdrop. As a result, contemporary Indians are afflicted by a sense of ‘amnesia’ due to the alienation from the intellectual ethos. Nevertheless, some writers have toiled hard to make the archaic treatises come into limelight through their translations and critical insights. Just as Greek philosophers gained acclaim only due to the English translations of their texts; Indian Poetics needed a similar route to reach the same height as Greek thought. An exquisite study dedicated to applying Indian poetics to both Indian and Western texts is still a felt need because both thoughts are closely related with traces of Indian in the Western as can be inferred from the statement of Pathak in her essay “*Vakrokti* and the Language of Poetry”,

...both Indian and Western scholars are convinced that a certain obliqueness or indirection is the most indistinguishable characteristic of the language of poetry. They all point out this very central aspect of poetic language...The Indian concept...however, is far more comprehensive and convincing than the assertion of Western critics (178).

The paper delves into the different aspects of Indian poetics step by step, starting with the concept of literature to the points of departure of Indian literature (especially poetics) from Western literature. The special emphasis, however, shall remain on the 'theory of Suggestion' or *Dhvani Siddhanta*.

### **What makes literary language different?**

Literature stands in opposition to Science mainly because the latter focuses upon purpose and result of things. Ransom opposed science to art stating in his *New Criticism*: "the free and unpredictable associations (of art)... are impertinences to the scientific temper, but delightful to the soul that in the routine of scientific chores is oppressed..." (206). Moreover, 'the World of art offers fullness of content, to give us the sense of actual values' (279). Science attempts to dominate the environment while literature and art only aim to develop a harmony with the outer and inner essence of things. Science cannot come into action in our daily conversations and joys we experience for they would scientifically seem purposeless yet we derive pleasure, joy or *ananda* from them. The Indian attitude to the problem thus raised by these New Critics is revealed in the concept of *Sahitya* literature. This word comes from the word '*sahita*' meaning togetherness given by Bhamaha in his *Kavyalamkāra* in which he called a poem as the union of sound-word and meaning. Later critics gave similar theories in which they separated the poem from its meaning which lies in the effect it creates upon the reader. Even New critics explained the same concept with the help of different vocabulary. For example, I.A Richards argued in his *Science and Poetry* that poetry deals with 'pseudo statements' because it has 'emotive meaning' which is totally different from its 'referential meaning'.

Ānandavardhana expressed his concept of Suggestion by placing the *vyanjana* above the primary and secondary meaning. He expounded that *Dhvani* shines out distinctly amid a cluster of meanings: *abhida* (literal import) and *laksana* (figurative meaning). The third form of meaning is *vyanjana* or suggested sense, which shines distinctly like the charm of a woman irrespective of the beauty of her individual limbs. This charm is inexplicable and mysterious yet it shines out distinctly but cannot be analysed.

Words are the material (objects and symbols) which lead to individual experiences of the reader and the *Sahridaya* (passionate heart) understands suggestion through the way created by the poet. True literary art thus, breaks the existing realms of meaning and offers limitlessness to text as explained here:

Literary art therefore will always be, in some degree, Suggestion; and the height of literary art is to make the power of suggestion in language as commanding, as far-reaching, as vivid, as subtle as possible. This power of suggestion supplements whatever language gives merely by being plainly understood and what it gives in this way is by no means confined to its syntax (Abercrombie 38-39).

A poem is always more than it says and it is its emotive/aesthetic meaning which imparts glory to it and differentiates it from ordinary words and lines. Literariness lies in the unstated implied meaning of a text which makes it look special and provides solace to a tired utilitarian mind. Besides, it always paves the way for the reader to deduce and infer infinite meanings as explained by Mary Ann Selby- "*Dhvani* theory is a system of meaning in which the signifier is fixed, but its corresponding signifieds are

theoretically infinite” (qtd. in Ashima 351). Hence, meaning takes birth in the infinite imagination of the reader who is otherwise not satisfied with the limited and limiting meaning of text.

However, Ānandavardhana has pointed out that a *Sahrdaya* can decipher the meaning easily. He establishes that only a true reader with right understanding of things and compassionate heart (*Sahrdaya*) can demystify that meaning as is clear from the following lines “He (Ānandavardhana) tried to recognize the truth that though the first and original inspiration could be only in the poet, yet all who could sympathize with him and rightly interpret him, must also be partakers of the same inspiration” (Krishnamoorthy 98)

A literary work differs from a non literary discourse also because of its complexity of language; this complex language is pregnant with suggestion. The lines from *Dhvanyāloka* convey a similar thought “only that word, which conveys a charm incapable of communication by any other expression and which is pregnant with suggestive force, becomes a fit instance for the title ‘Suggestive’” (15). I.A. Richards also says that complexity of meaning is one of the signs of good poetry. Poetry in which *Vyangartha* is not better than its *Vacyartha* is called *Madhyama Kavya* but if *Vyangartha* dominates then its *Uttama* or *Dhvani-Kavya*. Likewise, Richards contends that the best kind of poetry should convey the intention (similar to *Dhvanyartha* or *vyanjana*) of the poetic piece.

### **All Literature is Suggestive**

Krishna Rayan said in his book *Sahitya: A Theory* that, “Literature is defined by the preponderance of suggested meaning” (8). All literature is suggestive in nature or, that text which comes from writer’s thoughtfulness and intentional use of suggestion falls under Literature. ‘Neutral transparent discourse’, says Rayan, does not exist anywhere in literature but only in scientific writing. This suggests that suggestion is the essence of Literature. As far as the Western equivalents to Theory of Suggestion are concerned, the paper has explained how slipping away of signified from the signifier, creates room for suggestion. It corresponds to Saussure’s signifier-signified concept and to Lacan’s concept of ‘polysemy of language’- language creates a multitude of meanings and single meaning is obtained by barring certain items of the syntagmatic chain.

Futhermore, as Rayan has clearly related the signification theory with *Dhvani* theory, he says that as process of signification has shifted from denotation to polysemy and beyond to dissemination and undecidability (post structuralism) and “once connotation and polysemy are accepted as the basis of signification and it is seen as a complex, flexible, loose process, it becomes identical with ‘suggestion’” (9). So after redefining signification and equating it with suggestion, two most essential characteristics of signification come out: figurality (discourse based on image or metaphor) and pregnancy (discourse based on impliedness of meaning). Furthermore, a literary signifier can be distinguished from a non-literary signifier in the words of Rayan as, “what marks off the literary signifier from the non-literary signifier is its evasion of the signified and its imposition on the reader of the necessity of producing rather than recovering meaning” (11). Meaning is produced by the reader with the help of words which are not directly implying it. It reverberates on and on in the mind of the listener or reader. It might also run like an undercurrent beneath the surface meaning so that the

listener or spectator produces another meaning side by side. Rayan says that pure statement is an illusion and meaning is never limited to just one and Mammata suggested similar attributes of language.

I.A Richards' 'Intention' is 'suggestion' of Ānandavardhana. A close reading of the four-fold meaning indicated by Richards would reveal that Sense is nothing more than Indian *Abhida*. The other two meanings i.e. Feeling and Tone are *Vyanjana*. He gives utmost importance to Intention which 'may subjugate the others' (99). So, Richards' concept of Intention is the crystallization of Sense, Feeling and Tone which resembles Indian concept of *Rasa-Dhvani*.

Moreover, It is not what is said but what is left behind is of paramount beauty as reflected in the famous line from Keats' *Grecian Urn* 'heard melodies are sweet but those unheard are sweeter' (11-12). This line is suggestive in nature as the literal meaning is paving the way for another meaning which is 'sweetness of silence'. There is an oft quoted line from the text of *Dhvanyaloka: gangayam gosha-* in this line the literal meaning is someone lives in the Ganges which is clearly not the meaning which the speaker wants to convey, so we go ahead with the secondary meaning (*laksana*) and it turns out that the person lives on the shores of Ganga river (*ganga tate gosha*). However, the suggested meaning is one step beyond both which would produce *rasa* in the heart of the reader or listener on being able to decipher it. Hence the *vyanjana* in this case is that he lives at a place which is pure, holy and cool like the Ganga. So, Literature is imbued with multiple meanings and a close reading can take us away from single moral but many suggestions and the whole text can be read from the attitude of a new critic where the tale matters more and the author is dead.

### **Relation between Suggestion and Signifier**

The plurality of meanings is the starting point for Ānandavardhana because one meaning leads to another and stays subservient to the suggested meaning. It is hence, 'the purposeful inability of a capable artist' ("Shaale", 00:08:20-00:08:50) to create words which leads to suggestion. Also, he classifies *Dhvani* into three types, viz. *Vastu*, *Alankara* and *Rasa-Dhvani*. While the former two are parts of Suggestion, the latter is the ultimate charm of poetry. *Rasa-Dhvani* is always indicative of a genius. He emphasizes that a sensible person (*sura*) gives importance to meaning and not the word because meaning is the soul and words are only the body of poetry. The way to the soul however, is through the body only. Hence, in the end the theory gets a mystical touch too with Ānandavardhana giving out principles of poetic creation where a true poet will use words intentionally and purposefully such that they convey suggestion indirectly and step by step through the literal words and their meanings. Parallel to this, New Critics (Rene Wellek) have proposed that meaning is given to the text through a system of norms or ideal concepts which are inter-subjective. That is, they depend upon both the individual experience of the reader and the sound structure of sentences. Furthermore, New critics state that "language of literature is its being distinctly above the norm in ratio of implicit to explicit meaning" (Bradby 37). The implicit meaning is equal to Ānandavardhana's suggested meaning or *vyangartha*. Ānandavardhana had clearly established that true poetry is only that in which primary meaning or literal meaning renders itself subservient to the implicit or suggested meaning. Besides, he is

giving his theory of poetic creation quite adeptly here but that is beyond the scope of this paper.

Both the eastern and western theories imply a common conclusion, that is: meaning is decided by its preponderance over statement. There is nothing like single and fixed meaning in Literature and as long as words remain a play of signifier and signifieds, the search for the meaning goes on and on.

### Conclusion

As post-structuralism has already proved the fluidity of meaning and there is no fixed meaning, it goes in concurrence with what the famous Kashmiri philosopher said in his manuscript, *Dhvanyaloka*. A lot lies at the capability and discretion of the reader whom Ānandavardhana calls *Sahrdaya*. The paper has re-visited certain ideas which have proved the supremacy of suggestion. Suggestion is the quality test for all good writings as without its play, reader cannot get immersed into the multitude of meanings and only a *Sahrdaya* will successfully sail through it. Moreover, indirect and infinite meaning of literary language offers a continuous discourse just as post-structuralism is a continuous discourse.

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## **SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIVISM: A FUNDAMENTAL APPROACH TOWARDS ORAL DEVELOPMENT**

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***Abstract:** Communication is a fundamental means to enhance oral skills. Even though English language educators have utilized various methods and techniques in instructing for many years, speaking, as one of the four basic skills, stays hard to deal with. Therefore, teaching speaking as a significant segment of oral skill should turn to manifold methodologies and strategies. One potential solution to deal with oral abilities is the use of the social constructivist strategies by Lev Vygotsky. Social constructivism, a learner-centred methodology, is increasingly more recognized by language educators as a possibly fruitful way to develop speaking skill. This paper reviews social constructivism and explore the chance of applying it in oral classes to overcome the psychological factors that affect their verbal production. Subbing the traditional repetitive methodology with a really stimulating one that triggers learners' inclinations and improves their learning systems will extensively add to making them great speakers of English in and out of the classroom.*

***Key Words:** Autonomy, Constructivism, Learner-centeredness, Motivation, Social Constructivism, Speaking.*

Learner-centred instructions in ESL classes take the learners' potentials, experiences, and needs into account and prepare them for life. Learner-centred speaking sessions prompt learners to take part actively in the tasks where the teacher acts as a facilitator. As it ensures the active involvement of the learner, it results in the negotiation of the input. It confirms the total engagement of the learner either independently or collaboratively as it opens a platform for them to reflect on their learning process. The focus of such instruction is on what the students are doing and so it builds the responsibility of the learner. Such learner-centred, task-oriented approaches arouse the confidence level of learners and it results in fluent oral output by students.

Speaking skill development needs to be addressed seriously. Fluency in oral production is quite essential as the real-life demands developing conversing skills in natural settings. Classroom instructions and strategies are the stepping stones upon which oral production gets flourished. Developing activity-oriented, teacher mediated tasks encourages learners to take initiative and thereby develops their confidence and the pace of oral production. English as a global language demands fluency in speaking as a prerequisite to get employment. Social Constructivist strategies boost up the oral developments of learners at the school level, and that in turn trigger the development of communicative competency in future.

The hypothesis of Stephen Krashen on his distinction between acquisition and learning offer a theoretical foundation to give place to communication in second language learning. According to him, second language acquisition is parallel to how a child would acquire the first language. The concept entails that languages can be learned effectively without a formal study of structure and form. Developing learner-focused



activities in a real-life context triggers interaction and ensures the active participation of the learner. According to Krashen, achieving language proficiency requires meaningful contact in the target language (natural communication), in which speakers are not preoccupied with the form of their utterances but rather with the messages they are communicating and understanding (Second 5).

The search for a cure to the harmful effects of behaviourist pedagogic methods led to constructivist pedagogy techniques. Constructivism has been hailed as a theory of knowing that better explains the complexities of the teaching-learning process since the 1970s. The findings of Jean Piaget (1960), Lev Vygotsky (1978), and Jerome Bruner (1996) are the cornerstones of constructivist language pedagogy. The mind is at the centre of constructivist theory, and its functioning is regarded as crucial in education. Self-constructed knowledge can be obtained through offering opportunities to discover, acquire, and apply new facts and concepts. Constructivism claimed that knowledge and reality have no absolute objective worth. Constructivists shifted the emphasis away from knowledge as a product but towards knowledge as a process. The mind is a compiler, carrying out work to come up with meanings and conclusions. Jean Piaget, who examined the mechanism by which knowledge is assimilated by learners, is widely credited with formalising constructivism. Piaget's theories tended to be more focused on individual development. The channels of constructivism are obviously visible in Piaget's attention on the necessity of action and activities in an individual's development, despite his disregard for the socio-cultural context (Piaget, *Genetic* 14-15).

Social Constructivism, pioneered by Russian psychologist Lev Vygotsky, is the most popular and current branch of Constructivism. Vygotsky's social constructivist theories have influenced constructivist educational approaches in large part. It recognises the importance of social interactions and the environmental elements in the learning process. He views learning as a social negotiation of concepts and meanings that enables people solve problems through the medium of language (Vygotsky, *Thought* 98). He stressed that cultural and social contexts have an impact on an individual's learning and development. The use of cooperative and collaborative learning, as well as projected and discovery learning models, is at the heart of social constructivism, as these practises emphasise the social nature of learning and cognitive apprenticeship, which provides a platform for people to contribute and exchange ideas. Inter-psychological functioning in social involvement, he claims, enables intra-psychological activity, which leads to individual psychological development. Astington asserted that Vygotsky linked people's psychological development to social processes and saw inter-psychological functioning in the individual as a derivation of inter-psychological functioning in social participation (18).

Three main assumptions underpin Vygotsky's social constructivist theories. The first assumption is that community engagement is crucial in the process of meaning formation. The individuals around them have a big influence on how students see reality. Inter-psychological functioning in pupils is considerably triggered by involvement in activities in a social setting. Parents, teachers, peers, and the community, according to Vygotsky, play a critical influence in determining the type of interaction that occurs between children and their settings. The second premise is that cognitive growth is influenced by the type and quality of the tools available to the

student, which may include adults, culture, and language. The differences between him and Piaget can be seen in his assumption regarding the utility of such tools. The assumption about the Zone of Proximal Development ZPD is his most frequently quoted assumption. According to him, there are three types of problem-solving abilities in the activities he performs. Those that the student can complete individually, those that cannot be completed even with assistance, and those that fall in between the two extremes—those that can be completed with assistance from others. He favoured social constructivist pairs that included a child and an adult or an advanced peer. A child is more successful while executing a task in this manner than when working alone.

In pedagogical settings, Vygotsky's theories have formed the cornerstone of social constructivism. His focus on the influence of others or the external social context in learning has caused educators to reconsider how much learning is an individual activity. Prior to his influence, people's beliefs about the formation of knowledge were seen to be a personal endeavour. Individuals were the focus of attention in behaviourist and even Piagetian educational applications. The focus of Vygotsky's theory shifted to the role of the larger community and significant others in learning. He emphasised the impact of socio-cultural variables in shaping a child's learning and development.

According to Douglas Brown, social constructivist theories focus on communication between individuals (245). The fundamental emphasis of his concept of the Zone of Proximal Development is the continuous interplay between the individual and others through scaffolding and mediated learning. It emphasises the significance of giving students complex tasks that are relevant to their lives and can be completed with the help of peers, teachers, or parents. The more capable peers or adults in the Proximal Development Zone help to regulate learning of the individual. According to the Zone of Proximal Development paradigm, teaching and instruction should concentrate on maturing functions rather than existing functions that are relevant to the next stage of development. Transition from one state to another is the focus of the Zone of Proximal Development.

According to Astington, in three distinct contexts, Vygotsky employed his notion of Zone of Proximal Development. In the context of development, the Zone of Proximal Development is used to explain a child's evolving psychological functions. In the real world, ZPD explains the disparity between a child's individual and aided performance in assessment and classroom learning circumstances. Finally, it is employed as a metaphoric "place" where the child's everyday concepts interact with "scientific concepts" offered by educators or other learning mediators (3).

In language learning, the social constructivist method has been demonstrated to be beneficial. Language learning is a process of making sense of the world in a social context through social interactions that combine the pupil's own conceptions with the teacher's objective facilitation. The social interactionist approach to language learning and instruction has provided fundamental insights into language education. It has been recognised that a learning experience should benefit a person's overall education as well as language learning. Learners only learn what is meaningful to them, which needs teachers' comprehension of what the students consider important and meaningful.

The constructivist language classroom is founded on the idea that learning occurs in a social setting through interaction with others. Situations and contexts have an impact

on language learning. Individual respect, confidence building, appropriate learning methodologies, and learner autonomy are all fostered by the teacher's position as an effective mediator. The learner must be at the centre of the learning process at all times. The teacher, the student, the tasks, and the contexts all have a role in the learning process. Social interaction takes place in the classroom and at school.

Children learn through activities and interactions with adults and peers while engaged in activities. Internalized dialogues become children's inner speech, which they use to guide their cognition and behaviour. The classroom interaction and collaborative exercises assist pupils in internalising the language, which will later serve as supportive inner speech. According to the Framework, teachers must recognise the importance of inner speech in education and language learning and take appropriate measures to encourage the development of inner speech in students' minds.

The role of the second language teacher is to scaffold students' language learning by utilising the target language in such a way that they can acquire the language's intricacies by providing slightly advanced language samples. In collaborative classrooms, where students learn from both the teacher and each other, scaffolding and working in one's own zone of proximal development can be accomplished. Language acquisition is made more relevant in constructivist activity-based classrooms by combining learning with activities. At several levels, such as personal, interpersonal, and textual, learners are given the opportunity to speak and interact. Students participate in simulated activities with the support of the teacher, which aids in language acquisition.

Students will have the opportunity to interact in the target language if the classroom and activities are collaborative in nature. Interactions, creative meaning-making processes, and the creation of language in students' minds are all major goals of the Framework. The proposed methodology, which is based on an activity-based, process-oriented, and child-centred approach, is based on the constructivist paradigm, which will aid learners in constructing language appropriate for various communicative contexts. This Framework maintains a balancing between the learner's language autonomy, which is primarily innate in nature, and social interaction, which takes care of the functional aspects of the language. At this level, interaction takes on three dimensions: learner-teacher, learner-learner, and learner-material. The proposed three-tier interaction is more favourable to the psychological and cognitive development of the learner.

Psychological factors like lack of confidence and anxiety adversely affect the active involvement of the learner, especially in ESL oral sessions. Fear of mistake and failure, negative feedback, and linguistic deficiencies like lack of vocabulary result in anxiety and nervousness. It makes them silent, and passive, and so distract them from being involved in the communicative session. A teacher who designs the social constructive communicative classroom activities can transform the classroom into an authentic real-life situation and thereby trigger the need for communication as quite essential by learners. Lack of confidence is a psychological dilemma that adversely affects oral sessions. Teachers and peers shall instil the qualities of high esteem through motivation techniques and scaffolding. It helps learners to get rid of the fear of loss, and so they

will start visualising each situation as an opportunity to polish their communication and interpersonal skills.

Developing tasks that enable learners to visualise and organise the ideas in advance results in boosting up the confidence level of learners during oral production. Creating socially relevant communicative tasks arouse positive self-perception, and that in turn results in oral performance. By arousing the interest of the learner in English communication tasks, the level of anxiety can be controlled to an extent. By transforming the classroom to a socio-cultural context, social constructivist teachers develop a platform using constructivist materials for meaningful interaction between the teacher and the learners, between the peers, and between the groups. It enriches the linguistic and communicative competency of the learners. As Can asserted, the constructivist approach fosters teacher-learner autonomy, social interactive skills, language and communicative skills, and develops them as active, confident and responsible individuals (60). It is due to the learner-centred instruction, a flexible and supportive atmosphere is created in the classroom to ensure that all students take part actively in real-life conversations and expressions adhering to the idea that language is not an isolated phenomenon, instead, it is to be practised in context. The group works and pair works are effective strategies to attract the attention of the students to the actual use of language. It motivates the learners to express their thoughts orally. Working in groups, according to Vygotsky, is an opportunity to broaden one's knowledge by enabling novice and advanced learners to interact (*Mind* 92). Group works equip them with the skills essential to use language in a natural way. Such an innovative and constructive strategy boost up oral communication skills in the classroom and in real-life situations.

Cooperative and discovery learning trigger the consciousness and enthusiasm of the learners. According to Slavin, discovery learning arouses students' curiosity and encourages learners to work more often until they find the desired explanations (261). Encouraging students to use activities like debates, discussions, games, and role-plays in natural social settings significantly improves their learning of speaking. The creation of a negotiating atmosphere promotes teamwork and develops a level of self-confidence. Discussions enable learners to exchange their views and expressions in a natural way in the target language. By placing the learners as the central part of the instruction and learning, teachers create a natural setting where they go through problem-solving, discovery, critical thinking and cooperative learning. Technological integration in ESL oral lessons provide a platform for the learners to see social networking sites not only as a source of exposure but also as a means of language. It serves as an effective source in comprehending real-life language and the target culture.

It demands the active involvement of the learner in the process, and so it promotes communication and negotiation in real-life interactions. The technological swift advance and globalization have increased the demand for learning English as a foreign language and as a means of communication more than ever before. This paper suggests the implementation of the social constructivist approach based on Vygotsky's theories in teaching oral skills.

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## NOT SIMPLY THIN, BUT VALUED. DESIRABLE: THE BODY IMAGE IN ANDIE MITCHELL'S *IT WAS ME ALL ALONG: A MEMOIR*

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**Abstract:** *Body images play a vital role in creating one's sense of identity from preadolescent period through adolescent to post-adolescent period. The pressures of the society that one inhabits constantly impact on the mind and how it perceives the body. Body image, dissatisfaction and disturbance, objectification of the body, surgical interventions on the body to attain the culturally accepted ideal form, eating disorders and its relation to obesity are part of the illness narratives. Obesity memoirs, a subgenre of illness narratives, are fraught with such issues. The paper examines the body images in Andie Mitchell's *It Was Me All Along: A Memoir* to explore the extent to which the female body is susceptible to cultural normalizations and how the very act of growing up is deeply entrenched in questions of attractiveness, and desirability. The constant surveillance to which one subjects one's body through the normative patterns of body contours as it manifests in Mitchell's memoir and the variety of responses to cultural norms are within the scope of this paper.*

**Keywords:** *body image, obesity, objectification, abdominoplasty, EDNOS*

The paper aims to study the body image in Andie Mitchell's memoir *It Was Me All Along: A Memoir* (2015) which is part of the growing body of illness narratives related to the eating disorder. The fact that we live in an increasingly obesogenic world, has created literature both creative and scientific that border on the apocalyptic. Literary representation of fat which has a long tradition dating back to many centuries primarily used such representation for the humorous effect that it could provoke. From Falstaff to Fat Joe there are figures whose body image did not say much about the society that used such figures for the humorous effect. Contemporary narratives about obesity examine in detail the social fabric in which obesity is placed and the way certain body types are considered acceptable and certain are not. Fat narratives in the form of memoirs are candid in their representation of the body and the anxiety that a 'deviant' body induces in an obese person. It is about the cultural receptions of obesity and the responses that Mitchell mounts against it.

The idea of overeating as a moral problem (gluttony) was gradually replaced by the advances in the modern medicine that tried for a better understanding of the etiology of overeating or eating disorders. The discourse around overeating became secular, scientific and part of medical research. Mitchell's memoir, is a moving account of her eating disorder, her obesity, her fight against it and coming to terms with it.

This paper concerns itself with the body image that the narrator constructs in the narrative, the relation between the narrator and her body image and how it conflicts with the acceptable versions of the body that circulate in the world she and her body inhabit and how she fights the negative feelings she has towards her body. The obese suffer in many ways. Shell notes: "We have for decades argued without evidence over its etiology often laying blame on the unwitting victims. The obese and overweight are mocked, shamed, and harassed; they are pummeled with bad advice and patronized with marketing campaigns" (4).

*It Was Me All Along* is in the form of a sustained reflection on the body image that the author has of herself and the changing relationship that she experiences towards it. Diagnosed as suffering from EDNOS (Eating Disorder Not Otherwise Specified) Mitchell in her memoir writes of living with her body image, her attempts to change it, through dieting, exercise, and finally surgical interventions. Mitchell's work, though it is primarily about her body, is also about attitudes, mental states, social perceptions of the human body particularly the female one, and sexuality. Describing body image, McLean and Paxton write:

Body image has been described as a multidimensional construct that encompasses the internalized view one has of one's body. It includes perceptions, thoughts, feelings, and attitudes related to physical aspects of the body, such as weight and shape, leanness and muscularity, athleticism, sexual attractiveness, physical function, and aging. Although the concept of body image is broad, there has been a focus in research and practice on appearance-related self-perceptions, thoughts, feelings, and attitudes because these have been linked most frequently to negative psychological outcomes. For similar reasons, although body image lies on a continuum from positive feelings of appreciation and enjoyment to negative feelings of loathing and distress, until recently, the focus of research and practice has primarily been on negative body image experiences. (145)

Mitchell's preoccupation is also mostly with the negative emotions that her body elicits from her due to what she sees as unacceptable in her body to herself and to society at large. Being a victim of EDNOS, hunger is the major villain and it appears in the second page of the memoir: "Though I had already eaten lunch and cake batter, a new hunger appeared, unexpected and urgent, the kind that forced me to stop whatever I was doing and tend to it. It was the kind that I couldn't ignore, the one that wrestled away my power, every hidden weapon of will, and thrust me into the kitchen, where it always seemed I'd run out of milk and self control" (i-ii). Attempts to understand obesity as lack of control or will have a long history. Gilman traces the history thus: "Obesity," as the French writer on taste Jean Anthelme Brillat-Savarin (1755–1826) states in *The Physiology of Taste or, Meditations on Transcendental Gastronomy* (1825), ... "is not actually a disease, it is at least a most unpleasant state of ill health, and one into which we almost always fall because of our own fault"(59).

This shame that the lack of control brings is more severe in the case of women due to the value placed on slenderness as an ideal quality of femininity. Latner, Puhl and Stunkard in their study of the cultural biases towards persons suffering from obesity point out: "Weight bias is widespread and acceptable in Western society. The stigmatization of obese adults and children is pervasive and harmful. Prevalence rates of weight discrimination have been found to be as high as rates of racial discrimination, and among women weight discrimination is higher than racial discrimination"(42).

The fact that there are more fat memoirs by women than men may be explained by the higher incidence of weight discrimination among women. Engelen observes "that girls and women who struggle to feel at home in their own bodies are not some odd subculture of America. They are not a vanity struck minority. They are our daughters our sisters, our students, our friends our partner and our loved ones" (7). That that there

is a large population worried about feeling uneasy with their body image does not make it normal. The lack of control over one's impulses to eat results in guilt and Mitchell imagines guilt as having an anatomy similar to the human body. Fat determines the shape of guilt that it takes in the author's mind: "Guilt has a way of resisting digestion. There is nothing natural about its aggressive spread, it stretches outside inside me, doubles its size by uncurling its chubby arms and legs. I would let myself down. I lament not having more control"(ii).

Mitchell's feeling that she has lost control over her mind's grip over food and hunger is the pathologizing of will, the lack of control of the mind over the body. Gard and Wright argue that "the fat are blamed for exceeding the boundaries of their bodies, they are said to have 'let themselves go', which suggests that they have no self-control. Fatness is seen as the result of self-indulgence, as a rejection of the strictures of a society that expects self-denial and the repression of desire" (161). The condition of overweight is inextricably linked to a series of negative emotions and the loss of excess weight leads to a release from negative emotions. Wertheim, Paxton and Blaney observe:

Dissatisfaction with one's body, an important element of body image, can range from a mild preference for different body characteristics to severe distress associated with extreme behaviors to change the body or avoid negative judgments. Furthermore, body image disturbance can vary depending on the specific body characteristic targeted, including concern over body shape, weight, various body parts, facial characteristics, fitness, and strength. (48)

Mitchell's memoir speaks of the associations of body, eating disorders, and contour concerns. The introduction is written as a highly condensed version of the entire narrative. With images of secretive eating, losing weight, sensuous descriptions of the birthday cakes, her twentieth birthday and the three birthdays that come after that, the sour cream fudge cake that she still loves making, the altered perspectives on food, eating, and of living life through food experienced in the extremes, the body image remains predominant in the introduction as it is in the entire narrative. The weight of the body and the emotional burden of weight come together when Mitchell with a sigh of relief writes: "Since that time I have lost 135 pounds. The weight has left my body and with it, the guilt, the shame and the hatred too" (4). The pressure to conform to beauty ideals begins early and is coterminous with death. The centrality of the body in what constitutes the personal makes life equated with the body. Bordo in a rhetorical mode writes: "What, after all, is more personal than the life of the body? And for women, associated with the body and largely confined to a life centered *on* the body (both the beautification of one's own body and the reproduction, care, and maintenance of the bodies of others), culture's grip on the body is a constant, intimate fact of everyday life" (17).

This grip that Bordo writes of, Dworkin foresaw and described most graphically in her landmark work *Woman Hating*. The overarching presence of the regulatory powers of culture is the central concern of that work, the relevance of which has only increased since 1974, the year of its publication.

In our culture, not one part of a woman's body is left untouched, unaltered. No feature or extremity is spared the art, or pain, of improvement. ... from head to



toe, every feature of a woman's face, every section of her body, is subject to modification, alteration. This alteration is an ongoing, repetitive process. It is vital to the economy, the major substance of male-female role differentiation, the most immediate physical and psychological reality of being a woman. (113-114)

For Mitchell, the loss of weight does not mean a total win. The thinness she achieves brings with it a fear – that the weight might return and one has to engage in a fight which will never end. A little carelessness, she feels, will be disastrous: “The thinness I had achieved came with its own brand of indignity. It was the fear of gaining back each pound, of proving myself a failure, that plagued me. It was the fatness of my shadow that followed me into the dark alley of an eating disorder”(iv). Mitchell’s feeling that something is not right with her body comes from a widespread condition that Ricciardelli identifies as “the internalization of the thin ideal, awareness of the thin ideal, and perceived pressure from the media to achieve thinness”(84). Mitchell’s describes her agony: “Seeing the way the other nine –year olds looked at me made my pants feel tighter, made the waist band dig deeper into my belly. Everyone had moved on wearing jeans, and I was still in stretch pants. ... I was out of place” (26). Body weight is only one among the factors that affects body image perceptions. Smolak and Thomson observe:

Body image disturbance is a rather broad umbrella term that consists of several dimensions, including affective, cognitive, behavioral, and perceptual components- Much of the work in the area of eating disorders and obesity focuses on the evaluation of a specific dimension referred to as weight and/or body shape dissatisfaction. Body dissatisfaction is evident by the early elementary school years and perhaps even during the preschool years. Both boys and girls show body dissatisfaction, although the nature and patterns of this problem are gendered, with boys being more concerned with muscularity than girls, although some boys also worry about being too fat. Girls, on the other hand, primarily tend to be concerned about being or becoming overweight. (4-5)

Nothing but food figures in the mind of the memoirist. When she thinks of her father’s death in November everything remains “jagged, and disjointed and holey except the gummy crumbs of a store bought blue berry, muffin”(33). The traumatic incident of the narrator’s father’s death is seen as way of redefining herself for a while and the fat girl tag is replaced by that of the girl whose father has died. During her visits to her grandmother Nana, she is advised on eating habits. Though well intentioned, Nana becomes part of the mechanism of power that works in the subtlest manner to regulate femininity. Bartky’s observations throw light on the way femininity is constantly constructed and maintained: “The disciplinary power that inscribes femininity in the female body is everywhere and it is nowhere; the disciplinarian is everyone and yet no one in particular. Women regarded as overweight, for example, report that they are regularly admonished to diet, sometimes by people they scarcely know”(74). Mitchell contrasts her grandmother with her mother who does not talk about her body weight. “My weight was something that we both[ my mother and I]wished were different, but neither of us spoke of it as something fixable. We treated my fat in the same way we treated New England Winters: wishing they weren’t so burdensome, but accepting that they probably wouldn’t change any time soon” (40).

In a society where thinness is equated with sexual attractiveness, first date and falling in love become moments of great torment. When the Medfield School Freshman Christmas dance approaches, Mitchell asks a boy whether he would dance with her. She recalls: “Will you go to the Christmas dance with me and in the second before he responded, I grabbed a handful of fat on my waist and squeezed it firmly, wanting the pain I inflicted on myself to hurt worse than what I was sure was a more painful rejection to come” (48). Questions of what is socially desirable and heterosexually appealing become more pressing. Body image touches everything. Wertheim et al., analyzing the body image in girls stress the relation between body dissatisfaction and body size: “Although biological characteristics and neurobiological disorders can result in a direct experience of body disorientation, distortion, or discomfort, most body image disturbances come about because the individual's body characteristics do not fit within culturally determined norms, the most commonly discussed of which involve body size and shape”(51). Mitchell is under the control of a condition that is not extraordinary. Berger writes:

Men survey women before treating them. Consequently, how a woman appears to a man can determine how she will be treated. To acquire some control over this process, women must contain it and interiorize it. That part of a woman's self which is the surveyor treats that part which is the surveyed so as to demonstrate how her whole self would like to be treated. And this exemplary treatment of herself by herself constitutes her presence. Every woman's presence regulates what is and is not 'permissible' within her presence.(47)

Mitchell becomes increasingly conscious of her weight and its aesthetic implications. The three hundred dollar dress that her mother buys for her aggravates her unflattering shape :“The empire waist made me feel as if I were wearing the latest in formal maternity” (49). Mitchell's condition is not atypical and her body makes her an outsider to the social circles: “As people around me started dating, as my best friends started experiencing their first kisses and started going boy crazy, I felt more like an outsider than ever before. And so instead of moving on to healthy adolescent relationships with boys, I clung to my childhood crush. While my friends were kissing boys, I was kissing that poster of Leo”(52). Mitchell is a victim of that mindset she has internalized, of which Bartky writes:

The woman who checks her make-up half a dozen times a day to see if her foundation has caked or her mascara run, ... or who, feeling fat, monitors everything she eats, has become, just as surely as the inmate of Panopticon, a self-policing subject, a self-committed to a relentless self-surveillance. This self-surveillance is a form of obedience to patriarchy. It is also the reflection in woman's consciousness of the fact that *she* is under surveillance in ways that *he* is not, that whatever else she may become, she is importantly a body designed to please or to excite. (80)

Bartky writes of the beauty standards that rule the imagination and behavior of girls. After undergoing weight loss programs, Mitchell becomes diet weary and at sixteen she has to face the fact that she weighed two hundred and ten pounds. Not able to last more than four days she drops out of the medical programs and starts thinking of gastric bypass surgery. Mitchell is torn by the financial commitment that the surgery would

entail. But these are not the only thoughts that trouble her: “The potential financial guilt aside, I thought long and hard about going under the knife, about downsizing my stomach and removing much of my intestines, as my only hope for health”(52). Mitchell knows that gastric bypass surgery is the last and extreme option and she visualizes her body braving the scalpel but feels that she has to exhaust all other options. The medicalized body and the social body appear juxtaposed, the former as a way to attain the standard of the socialized perception of the ideal body.

The highpoint of Mitchell’s early life is Prom day at Medfield High school when she is judged prom queen of her class. With Mike Oppel as the King she enjoys the day thoroughly. She is overwhelmed by the day’s experience: “I was beautiful. I was prom queen. I was accepted. I was weightless”(65).The body image continues to determine her identity. Reflecting on her conversation with Mike Oppel she asks herself: “Did I really allow myself to think that Mike Oppel had any romantic feelings for the fattest girl in our grade?”(66). Her thoughts about how she will be perceived by others are explained well by objectification theory. Mclean and Paxton describe:

Objectification theory is based on the premise that in Western societies, the female body (and increasingly the male body), is viewed as an object to be looked at and evaluated according to appearance. Through this experience, individuals learn to internalize an observer’s perspective on their own body and to evaluate it relative to prevailing social ideals. It is proposed that this self-objectification leads to body shame because of perceived failure to live up to the social appearance ideal, and increased body surveillance, and consequently body dissatisfaction.( 147)

When Mitchell falls in love she defines her being in love again in relation to her obese body: “I had someone. Finally Someone. I was validated. I was worthy of love. All 210 pounds of me” (68). Orbach writes about how women set up the mechanism of surveillance over the body image: “The curating of self image is implied as essential and, essential too is a kind of Body fascism and the tyranny of thin and the sense that we should all be one size is not only unrealistic, it is unhealthy and unattainable” (xix). Mitchell relates the loss of her relationship to her being fat. It is interesting to note that she relates and tries to understand her loss of relationship in terms of food. She likens it to a faulty recipe. Naomi Wolf explains the prescriptive power that functions in a relation: “Beauty practices are being stressed so that the relationships between men and women will continue, in spite of a social movement toward equality, to feel dictatorial. Placing female pleasure, sex or food or self-esteem, into the hands of a personal judge turns the man into a legislator of the woman’s pleasure, rather than her companion in it”(173).

The conclusions she arrives at point to the body image that Mitchell has of herself. She believes that her lover, Mike, might be getting teased for dating the fat girl that she is. The relation is seen in terms of fatness. Mitchell takes refuge in eating and the loss of the relationship adds ten pounds to her weight. Later her love for Daniel takes the same route. Fat brings her closer to her lover, but she fears that her lover, though big, is not as big as she is. Her friends with their slim figures cause her more worry: “In every photo, I was twice- and sometimes thrice - the size of all my friends. The clothing that I spilled out was shameful to me. Nicole. Jenny, Sabrina –they looked sexy in tank tops

and flouncy, low cut blouses. Their shirts showed cleavage on purpose whereas mine tore open trying desperately to contain me”(80).

Mitchell’s perception of her body becomes more acute as she gets fatter and she starts skipping classes due to the anxiety of walking into a class with all the students watching her struggling to find a seat. Perceptions of one’s own body stand in the way of pursuing learning and one’s role and function as a student. Mitchell sees everything in terms of her being overweight: “I left school that May praying that this time would be different. That this would be the summer my weight would finally pack its bags and leave for good”(87). Constant appraisal of oneself in terms of body size, shape and weight goes on in her mind. It is linked to acceptance of one’s self and body and social prescriptions are implicated. Leach comments:

Fat people are noticeable by virtue of their size; they cannot in that sense hide their issue. By this ‘displaying’ of the problem they will attract negative attitudes that are common in a rejecting society. The fact that size and shape have so repeatedly been at the centre of acceptance historically means that there is a collective sub-consciousness about the right to belong. There is an endemic judgmental attitude towards size and shape that has been laid down over centuries. (26)

The YWCA gym also does not offer much solace. The feeling of being surveyed does not leave her: “I wondered. The blond one’s here to tone up; the brunette’s here to overhaul her life”(90). Mitchell wonders: “What must the people working the front desk have thought when the two of us walked in together? I had to stop myself from dwelling on it too long, for fear that resentment might brew” (90). The socially acceptable norm of body image and Mitchell’s deviation from it find reflected in her conflicting attitudes towards food which is generally seen as related to weight gain: “I struggled between wishing away all the food that had collected on my body as fat and fiercely missing every morsel”(91). Mitchell finds herself in a conflicting situation when the desire to conform clashes with her need to resist. The body image as it is and as it should be determining her thoughts. “I wanted to fit in while also wanting, so badly, to say a careless f-off to all of society” (91).

Mitchell writes of two categories of people, those who have to struggle to remain thin, and those who would be naturally thin. “These individuals were more enviable, because whereas the former half of thin folk at least seemed to work to be bodily beautiful, this effortless half seemed to have the genetic lottery. My genes were not so lucky”(92-93). This leaning towards the genetic implications of obesity shifts the axis away from reason and will as Shell notes: “But the deciphering of the genetic underpinnings to weight regulation has ascertained that appetite is to some degree biological, and that our drive to eat can sometimes eclipse reason. There is no longer doubt that some of us more than others are inclined toward overeating, and as a result, toward fatness”(221).

Mitchell returns to School in the summer of 2005 and she joins a Weight Watcher’s plan. She succeeds in reducing her weight considerably initially but loses it when she falls a prey to the eating joints that are newly opened in the campus. The idea of diet means constant surveillance. Explaining the relation of body to diet Bartky writes: “Dieting disciplines the body’s hungers. Appetite must be monitored at all times and

governed by an iron will. Since the innocent need of the organism for food will not be denied, the body becomes one's enemy, an alien being bent on thwarting the disciplinary project"(66). A twenty pound loss instills pride in her and makes her think of one hundred and forty pounds as not a far off dream. Daniel is her source of strength in her moments of doubt in the battle against fat. The special bond that she shares with him comes from Daniel's own propensity for binge eating.

During her stay in Rome she takes up writing and when she leaves Rome it is with a heavy heart and a lighter body. The reflection of her body on the glass windows of the airport makes her happy. She sees a much slender and hence more normal figure smiling at her. The first day back at UMass turns out to be a success for Mitchell. The journey from her rented apartment to the campus becomes a memorable experience for her: "With guys and girls alike, I felt more accepted, respected. Not simply thin, but valued. Desirable. ... I was applauded and admired"(118). The entire experience is related to changes in the contours of her body. Writing about the standards of what is right and wrong in body image and how they are constructed and given currency by magazines, Schmidt notes the differences:

At present, magazines for both men and women construct clear images of the 'right body'. For women the slim body is the reference point. This is the result of a long tradition: 'Food and figure tolerance were narrower for women than for men'. For men the ideal body is muscular: but it is less pronounced than the body ideal for women. (156)

The months in Amherst strike Mitchell as a new life in a new body and new body image. "For the very first time, I was exactly the girl I'd always wanted to be. Those first few months when I inhabited a new, hard-earned body were a raw, explosive high"(118). Yee historicizes the thinness obsession thus: "The female's obsession with "thinness" was born in the 1960s, when the matchstick-like models became international stars on the runway. In the 1980s, designers of the biggest fashion houses modelled their clothes after the thin and frail figures of runway supermodels. It was like saying, if you want to be stylish, be thin" (182).

Being thin makes Mitchell happy but exposes her to unforeseen confusions, realizations and the need to revisit her body: "I resented that the size of my body was correlated to my value, my worth as a person. ... Before, when I was fat, no one spoke aloud about my body. They couldn't. There's no decent way to bring up someone's obesity. And now the thinness was the centerpiece on the table of conversation"(119-120). Mitchell here touches the paradoxical nature of visibility. The fatter you are the less visible you want to be the thinner you are the more visible one becomes. Mitchell experiences and voices feelings that are shared by many. That one has to be thin invades each American's consciousness early and it is present in all forms and is everywhere. Paul Campos writes "power and privilege in all of its forms are associated with thinness, and, especially in the case of women, unhealthy extremes of thinness" (65-66).

Mitchell finds a way to handle her obsession with body image and eating -writing. The act of writing thus parallels the act of reshaping and redefining the body through dieting and exercise. Rejection of food becomes difficult for Mitchell since food operates as a stabilizing and consoling force in her life. "When I was sad, food lifted

me up. For every single emotion, I could turn to food”(128). At some point she reflects: “The only way to get through food addiction is by making peace with the food and uncovering the reasons we use food for anything other than hunger”(130). Mitchell realizes that she has to change to shift the emphasis from emotional bondage with food to a focus on building a new and healthy relationship with it.

Though Mitchell is happy that she has lost weight, body and body images are too complex to be explained by the single factor of fat. Fat is just only one factor and loss of fat does not solve all the problems. Mitchell becomes obsessed with her skin and finds it difficult to accept the body even with the fat gone. Looking at the mirror while in the bath she is greeted by her not very appealing figure: “Stretch marks swam up my front, my back, like silvery white fish. I was sympathetic toward the skin that bore them, having stretched so far beyond its limits that red veins emerged where it simply could not bear to stretch farther. The markings, now faded, I could live with. But the excess skin plagued me”(154).

Mitchell’s repeated attempts to get insurance coverage for abdominoplasty fail as the visual appeal or the lack of it is not a medical condition. This raises questions for Mitchell who as she puts it is living with five pounds of excess skin: “If they deem it elective, is this all just superficial of me? Am I considering the equivalent of a face-lift?”(155). Abdominoplasty along with thigh skin removal costs fifteen thousand dollars and Mitchell’s mother raises the money from her retirement account. The body image has such a tenacious grip on the obese they have to go under the scalpel at great financial cost to those who are obese and those who care about those who are obese. Often such surgeries cost a lifetime’s earnings and affect economic security. Mitchell’s decision to go in for abdominoplasty points to the violence that one is forced to allow on one’s body for the sake of acceptance. The medicalized body comes to occupy Mitchell’s thoughts. The medicalized body is offered as solution to normalize obesity. Even after the abdominoplasty Mitchell is bound to the mirror and what it shows her. If it was fat that initially troubled her, after the surgery it is the surgical scar. Still she feels better: “Removing the skin brought me closure. And I respected what remained”(157). The mirror is such a regulatory force that even the postsurgical body cannot escape it.

Once Mitchell’s body heals, she returns to her work in films, but soon opts out and goes food blogging, an idea that Daniel suggests to her and starts *Can You Stay for Dinner*, her blog site. Of the blog’s therapeutic value and her attachment to it, Mitchell recalls: “And the blog—my baby if ever I’d known one—grew. I fell deeper in love with writing. I poured my energy, all my eccentric intensity, into developing recipes, crafting stories, telling my own truth about weight loss and maintenance”(172). She later moves to Seattle and works for Foodista, and breaks up with Daniel. Mitchell writes: “In grieving the end of our relationship, I’d gained fifteen pounds”(178). Mitchell ends her memoir by recollecting how she could regain the balance of her life and recalls it was all a constant learning process.

Her vision of fat as an alien force coming to set up a commune in her as she felt years ago, of the guilt of not being able to control her appetite taking a heavy human shape, of food as an emotional stabilizer - all are replaced by a greater, deeper, purer and more intense understanding of life She realizes “Maybe because I was acutely aware of my

size, I cultivated an awareness of all of life”(183). In a memoir about being fat, it is pleasantly predictable that the memoirist’s reshaped body appears on the last page of the memoir proper. “Maybe because my heart has ripped, and has lost pieces, and still has visible stretch marks and sewn seams, my character will be ultimately more resilient”(183). Mitchell’s body and mind both split in itself and against each other, cease to be so, realizing that there is both room for the fat and the thin. She identifies herself with both not rejecting the one for the other and acknowledges that both are her own.

*It was Me All Along* ends with images of food, body, dieting and renewed perspectives about perceiving one’s body. It ends with the feeling that she has seen the extremes of attitudes towards one’s body, fat and the loss of fat, dieting, and binge eating, cooking and writing about cooking, falling in love and out of it, and hating her body for its size and shape and accepting it. The sense of empowerment that comes from outgrowing an abusive relation with food finally manifests in the form of something that may technically lie outside the frame of the memoir proper in the form of a recipe for the sour cream fudge cake. It shows how much she has moved away from the love-hate relation that she had had with food years ago. With participation in an international food blogger conference in New Orleans she graduates to a level where she can hold food at a distance, take a look at it and write about it too. The sour cream fudge cake to which she could respond only with passionate intensity years ago becomes a recipe with its formal narrative pattern. The fact that she can write about her much-loved sour cream fudge cake without affective responses, to put it as a recipe, is a sure sign of the neutrality with which she can approach food which she once was incapable of.

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## PICS AND EPICS: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF TELEVISED RAMAYANA AND MAHABHARATA

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**Abstract:** *The present paper compares and contrasts the televised Ramayana and Mahabharata which turned out to be not only thumping commercial successes but determinative as far as popular view of epics was concerned, and was central in redefining the political sensibility of entire populations. After briefly mentioning the inherent fluidity of the epic tradition, sketching their evolutionary trajectory and demonstrating how their appearance on the mini screen would practically transfigure mundane social/familial spaces into sites of a collective epiphany, the paper goes on to focus on the modalities of their television avatar and seeks to explain the ingredients which made right wing political outfits treat these epics differently such as their ideological moorings, political positioning and ideational undercurrents. The paper also inventories and discusses these television productions in terms of their structuring metaphors and visual grammar.*

**Key words:** *Ramayana, Mahabharata, television, epiphany, Other, epic traditions, political positioning, ideological moorings*

The *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* are two of the oldest extant epics which have always been popular and managed to retain a unique centrality in literary traditions, historical narratives and religious discourses in South Asia. That does not mean that they have survived centuries in a uniform form. Far from it, they have had innumerable versions all of which are valid and authentic in their own right. Their origins are equally diverse and controversial. Regarding the evolution of the epics, Romila Thapar opines that the *Mahabharata*, *Ramayana* and the *Puranas* “began as oral tradition, were more informally memorized [than the texts which formed the Vedic corpus] and frequently added to and were converted to their present textual form in the first millennium” (*Ancient India* 98). After toiling for nearly five decades, The Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute finally brought about the critical edition of the *Mahabharata* in 1966. Regarding its diffuse textual nature, the institute made the following description in the same year:

It is the biggest Epic, not only of India but of the entire world, having a wide currency from Kashmir in the north-west, Nepal and Bengal in the north-east, and Kanyakumari and Kerala in the extreme south. Its manuscript material lay buried in not less than 12 different scripts from the *parada* script of Kashmir to the Malayalam script of Kerala... The number of manuscripts handled and examined for the Critical Edition is nearly 1300; the number of those actually used, about 800. ('The Completion' iii)

Sheldon Pollock also comments: “The permeability and instability of Sanskrit textual categories find their limit case in Vyasa's *Mahabharata*... no Sanskrit *kavya* in India was ever as textually open, as expandable, as the *Mahabharata*” (*Literary Cultures* 59). He adds that “the Valmiki *Ramayana*. . . was for many premodern readers a work that simultaneously narrates what truly happened exactly as it happened and makes absolute

claims for regulating the moral order; that is, it is both an *itihasa* and a *dharmasatra*" (*Literary Cultures* 60).

To be sure, there are older works such as the vast Vedic corpus, but generally speaking they are dense and abstruse philosophical/metaphysical treatises which lack those decisional dilemmas, emotional tensions, casuistry conflicts, factious disputes, distraught characters and psychological nuances which have rendered the first named epics not only readable but durable and influential over generations of readers and listeners from every imaginable social stratum.

Between them the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* have supplied fecund fodder for umpteen number of verbal recensions, didactic verses, puppet shows, literary adaptations, dance forms, dramatic performances, critical exegeses and orally transmitted narratives which have animated the lives of millions. To borrow the words of Stanley Rice, these epics:

are living and throbbing in the lives of the people of India, even of those illiterate masses that toil in the fields or maintain a drab existence in the ghettos of the towns. To such as these, the famous old stories are the music and colour of life. They are the perennial fount from which the oft-repeated draughts never quench an insatiable thirst. (qtd. in Sharma 349)

This slightly romanticized description agrees with the lived experiences of many people including B.R. Ambedkar. As a child he was brought up on a steady diet of myths and legends in which stories from the aforesaid epics too must have figured (Jeffrelot *Analysing* 26). More interesting is the case of the Baba of Sahavati, a low-caste agricultural *Chamar* (which incidentally is the caste into which Ambedkar was born) for whom the epics were indeed the "music and colour of life" (Sharma 349) though neither of them was permitted to learn Sanskrit, a prominent linguistic medium of these epics. In short, unlike any other literary work and cultural idiom, the epics under reference have percolated into the elusive interstices of Indian social life and have firmly remained there as a repository of a wide, and at times conflictingly different, spectrum of literary reworkings, legitimizing imaginings and originary narratives.

Generally speaking abbreviated retellings, comic strips, novels, dramas and movies were the main formats in which the epics have remained organically popular in the modern era. In the more recent years television has been pivotal in keeping the epics alive by giving them prime slots in telecast schedules. The reach of television and its programmes are put into better focus by the information provided in the report of FICCI that in 2018, the number of television owning households in India increased to 197 million; of this 103 million used cable connection and 56 had DTH (34). The words of Lloyd I. Rudolph would throw light on the general impact of television. He comments;

one of the important effects of the electronic media is that it makes less relevant the distinction between literates and illiterates. Illiterates can see and hear even if they cannot read. Television coverage (access but not viewing) grew from 167 million in 1981 to 500 million in 1988 (62 percent of the population). Actual viewing, the TV audience, was much more modest, 16

million watching 1.7 million sets in 1981 and 90 million watching 11 million sets in 1988. By this year, 1990, it is estimated that 90 percent of India's population will have access to television broadcasts... As television coverage and viewing spreads, illiteracy becomes a decreasingly significant bar to popular participation in public culture and cultural politics. (1489)

A short introduction to the two programmes mentioned would be pertinent at this point. Ramanada Sagar's *Ramayana* was telecast on Doordarshan in seventy eight episodes from 25 January 1987; the same channel—at that time the only one—aired *Mahabharata* of B.R. Chopra from 1988 October 2 to 1990 July 14 in ninety one episodes. Both registered unprecedented viewership. Christophe Jaffrelot writes: “*Mahabharata*'s success led in turn to all activity being suspended on Sunday mornings when the broadcast was taking place—the average audience was estimated at 91% of those owning TV sets” (*The Hindu Nationalist*, 389). Even mounting a scathing and vitriolic attack on the televised *Ramayana* as “a poorly acted, still more poorly produced, lurid dramatization of the epic is what the Sagar *Ramayana* is” (2215), G.P. Deshpande descriptively commented on the social space it was inserted into: “People do not go to the temples as often as they once did. There are no grandmothers around to tell them the tales from the epics. Ramanada Sagar has devised to be that missing grandmother. The *Ramayana* is fulfilling a social need” (2216). It is indubitable that these two programmes redefined the existing perceptions about television productions as they had incorporated most elements of mainstream Hindi movies and plays such as gaudy costumes, songs, sonorous background music and sentimental speeches. In the context of Kerala the phenomenal popularity of *Mahabharata* can be gauged from the fact that the *Mathrubhumi* newspaper began to publish the full screenplay of the same from the 12<sup>th</sup> episode telecast on 18 December 1988 and even brought out it as an 855-page book in 1991 which included the first eleven episodes too. Translated into Malayalam by Prof. V.A. Kesavan Namboodiri, it featured eight pages of colour photographs from the programme.

The epistemological reconfigurations and social influence of the epics, as Llyod I. Rudolph writes, was tremendous, to say the least:

Media events like the mega-series are visual and speech acts that have constitutive consequences. They create categories of thought and meaning that can motivate choice, establish rules of conduct and justify action. Like the knowledge of the rules of conjugation that enable a child to ‘go on’, epic docudrama, by establishing a standardised civilizational grammar, becomes generative of norms and practices. Because of their constitutive and generative consequences, docudramas can be more political, and more disputed than how news and information is presented, i.e. selected and interpreted. (1490)

There is no denial that the televised *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* were so sensational that they did heavily impact on popular conceptions and imaginations of culture and nation. As Arvind Rajagopal summarises, they were described as *dharmic* serials and interpreted as giving a sense of identity and consolidation for the Hindu community (92-94) in a political environment that was witnessing seismic shifts and consolidation along communal lines in the late 1980s.

## Secular and Sacred Spaces

It is a commonplace to treat the televised *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* as forming a monolith in terms of visual grammar, dialogue structure, political sensibility and ideological undercurrents. This, however, is not accurate. While they shared many features of visual grammar and dialogue structure, it is not logical to equate them in terms of political sensibility and ideological undercurrents.

The televised *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*, despite their opulent costumes and latest special effects, primarily and often exclusively depended on dialogues for narration, and thus were closer to stage performances than movies in sensibility. Both the epics in their televised format appealed to the popular penchant for imaging gods as decked and decorous, and royal heroes as leading a sanitized and refined life. Most importantly both the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* transformed modern spaces into sites of epiphany. We have to remember that they were telecast in an age where television, especially a colour set, was still a luxury and a status symbol of the middle class. That is why normally all those gadgets which signified modernity and prosperity—television, telephone, refrigerator—were kept in the drawing room as objects of public gaze. The presence of these devices, technically, transformed it into a modern social space which as Henri Lefebvre says is not a thing among other things, nor a product among other products, but rather something that subsumes things produced, and encompasses their interrelationships in their coexistence and simultaneity—their (relative) order and/or (relative) disorder (73).

The weekly arrival of gorgeous gods and goddesses into this space for less than an hour every Sunday would transmute it into a site of collective epiphany because, unlike the highly private viewing modes (like streaming in a mobile phone) we take for granted today, it was customary and at times necessary for people to gather in households or other spaces rich enough to own a television. Rajagopal writes that many people considered the appearance of Rama on the television screen as a *darshan* which is:

what one partakes of when one sees a deity, or someone of exalted status. The word connotes a more physical sense of space than its English language equivalent [sight]; the deity gives *darshan*, and the devotee takes *darshan*; one is ‘touched’ by darshan, and seeks it as a form of contact with the deity. The relationship it establishes is tactile as much as it is visual, rendering the television image into a material presence, at least for the duration of the *dharmic* serial. The sacred images sanctified the space of its presence, and to share that space was to partake of the *darshan*. (93)

It is worthy to note that the association with touch or physical contact is all the more important in India as it is connected with caste interdictions. The opportunity to touch a god, though symbolically and privately, was a privilege and recognition of sorts.

Clearly what fascinated the viewers was not the plot, the anxiety to know what was going to happen next. Both the epics—with all the minute details—were familiar to everyone and in the case of *Mahabharat* the Malayali audience had another advantage: every single dialogue was available in idiomatic Malayalam and most of them had the habit of reading it before placing themselves in front the television. In a manner of speaking the reading of the screenplay was a ritual. It was common for members of a

family and neighbours to huddle together to read and master the scenario in the morning before the program started. To save time and for the sake of the illiterate, often children would read it out aloud. The number of households rich enough to afford a television was low, and even lesser was the number colour televisions. So it was not uncommon for the humble owners of black and white televisions to go to a house or public facility with colour TV to watch *Ramayan* and *Mahabharat*.

In retellings or cinematic adaptations of epics the question ‘what happens next?’ is of least importance as everyone knows what is in the offing. What the appearance of gods offered was neither elements of surprise or revelation but practically an epiphany—a televised epiphany. Witnessing (and vicariously precipitating in the communicative process) gods speaking a living language was an act of reiteration and reinforcement, a renewal of theological and cultural bonding—real and imaginary—that the people shared. The sacred space of families—reinforced by objects like portraits of forebears and heirlooms—enhanced the sense of solemnity, solidarity and belonging.

### Poetics and politics

When it comes to ideological moorings, ideational undercurrents and political perspectives these epics differed from each other in many crucial fronts. In terms of sensibility *Mahabharat* sharply differed from its predecessor *Ramayan* as the former “largely avoided the devotional motif . . . relying on a realistic, historical presentation” (Rajagopal 94) and “lacked the religious intensity of the *Ramayana*” (Majumder 206) which could be attributed to the script written by the noted Urdu poet Rahi Mazoom Raza. In the first episode of *Ramayan*, we can see the veteran actor Ashok Kumar attributing the popularity of the epic in other territories to India’s greatness and exemplary conduct—“we did not send armies out to conquer but were apostles of love and peace”—and considers all other versions as later translations or adaptations of the Sanskrit text by Valmiki in a period when Sanskrit ceased to be a spoken language. He imagines the *Ramayana* both as a scripture and a cultural document, eulogises it as championing the ideals of love, sacrifice and duty, and describes it as an eternal work which shows the common man the true path and teaches him how to lead a principled life. In contrast to this theodicean discourse, the first episode of *Mahabharat* contains many voiceovers by the *Kalapurush* (Time personified) who offers perceptive commentaries to everything, specifically the dilemma faced by Bharata in choosing a worthy successor; eventually he declares an outsider as the heir. M. Rahman wrote in 1988 itself:

In one brilliant stroke, not only does Chopra's *Mahabharat* become contemporary in comparison to Ramanand Sagar's *Ramayan*, but it also becomes politically explosive. Invariably, the question of whether power should be inherited or acquired by merit creates interesting allusions to modern-day political dynasties on the subcontinent. For viewers, the comparison would be with the Nehru family. (n pag)

The *Kalapurush* comments that this decision is the root cause of all the dramatic events in the *Mahabharata*. Such a situation is fraught with anxiety and its eventual outcome must have struck a chord with the viewers: should succession be based on birth or merit? This difference in sensibility is unmistakable in subsequent episodes too. Ashok Kumar equates virtually all the objects and events of the *Ramayana* to modern gadgets

and practices whereas in the *Mahabharata* the attempt is to show how human emotions have remained more or less same over ages .It may be mentioned in passing that the concept of merit and its role in government jobs—the modern day equivalent of being a part of power equations— may have resonated with the larger public as the V.P. Singh government, which assumed office while the telecast of *Mahabharat* was underway, had promised to implement the Mandal Commission report which stipulated twenty seven percent reservation for Socially and Educationally Backward Classes in central government services and public sector undertakings.

In the televised versions—which are a discourse in their own right—there has been an attempt to stabilize and canonise the *Ramayana*. The reason behind this is simple: there are countless *Ramayanas* which not only differ from each other in terms of theme, time and tone but are often contradictory in narrative except the main characters. The structural and thematic diversity of the *Ramayanas* have been studied in detail by scholars like A.K. Ramanujan, Paula Richman, Romila Thapar (*Past as Present*), Susantha Goonatilake, K.R. Srinivasa Iyengar and D.L. Narasimhachar. The *Mahabharata*, despite its existence in many languages and regions, has a different category of life. As Sheldon Pollock testifies, we can identify the same source text of the *Mahabharata* over a large geographical area which can roughly be described as South Asia (*Language of Gods* 229). V.S. Sukthankar, who was the general editor of the Critical Edition of the *Mahabharata*, opines that there has intervened a long period in the history of the epic in which there occurred a free comparison of manuscripts and extensive mutual borrowings (Mehendale 193). To cut a long story short in the case of the *Mahabharata* differences are in more subtle aspects such as the moral scaling up or down of individual characters, narrative focalization, space and tone, not on the main story structure per se. Locales and accentuations change but the *fabula* and the *syuzhet* remain more or less the same enabling one to suggest that temporal and spatial changes are phonotypical in the case of the *Mahabharata* whereas they are genotypic so far as the other epic is concerned.

Given its pervasiveness and proliferation there should have been more televised *Ramayanas* than *Mahabharatas*. But the reality is the other way round. Ramananda Sagar's *Ramayan* had only one successor: *Ramayan* (2002) directed by B.R. Chopra and Ravi Chopra. But the incarnations of *Mahabharata* on the mini screen are a league apart: following the first one, there have been twelve more viz. B. R. Chopra's *Mahabharat Katha* (1988), *Bharat Ek Khoj* (1988), *Sri Krishna* (1993), *Ek Aur Mahabharat* (1997), *Jai/Mahakavya Mahabharat* (2001), *Maharathi Karna* (2002), *Kahani Hamarey Mahabharat Ki* (2008), *Dwarkadeesh Bhagwan Sri Krishn* (2011), *Mahabharat* (2013), *Dharmakshetra* (2014), *Suryaputra Karn* (2015) and *Karn Sangini* (2018). Basic information on these programmes requires a mention of here. *Mahabharat Katha*, produced by B. R. Chopra and directed by his son Ravi Chopra, had 45 episodes of 45 minutes duration each. It contained portions and stories left out of the 1988 *Mahabharata*. The cast and crew were the same as the original series, except for some actors who were replaced. *Bharat Ek Khoj* (1988), aired on Doordarshan, based on *The Discovery of India*, had two episodes on the *Mahabharata*. *Shri Krishna*, written and directed by Ramanand Sagar, was aired weekly on Doordarshan in 1996. It was a compilation-cum-adaptation of stories of the life of Krishna from *Bhagavata Purana*, *Brahma Vaivarta Purana*, *Harivamsa*, *Vishnu*

*Purana, Padma Purana. Garga Samhita, Bhagvad Gita and Mahabharata. Ek Aur Mahabharata* directed by Dr. Chandraprakash Dwivedi, was telecast on Zee TV in 1997 though it was terminated after fourteen episodes. Sanjay Khan's *Mahakavya Mahabharat* (2001) was the most expensive television series ever made in India at that time. He followed it up with *Maharathi Karna* (2002-03) made on a budget of sixteen crore and a total of 104 episodes. *Dwarkadeesh Bhagwan Sri Krishn* (2011-12), a television series based on the adult life of Krishna, was based primarily on *Shrimad Bhagavata Mahapurana*. *Kahani Hamarey Mahabharat Ki* (2008), produced by Ekta Kapoor and Shobha Kapoor, was aired from 7 July 2008 to 6 November 2008 but went off air due to low TRP and negative reviews. In all respects *Kahani Hamarey Mahabharat Ki* resembled Bollywood flicks of the time than other (both old and new) television programmes. *Mahabharat* (2013) was telecast on Star Plus from 16 September 2013 to 16 August 2014. Regarded as the most expensive series on Indian television so far, *Mahabharat* was made on a whopping budget of Rs. 120 crore. *Dharmakshetra* (2014), set in the aftermath of the battle of Mahabharata, aired on EPIC had twenty six episodes in which the story unfolds from the perspectives of characters brought to the court of Chitrugupta. *Suryaputra Karna* (2015) premiered on Sony Entertainment Television covered the life of Karna. *Karnasangini* (2018), aired on Star Plus, was based on Kavita Kane's novel *Karna's Wife: The Outcast's Queen*. The series went off air on 25 February 2019 owing to low TRP. These shows are not full-length adaptations of the Mahabharata and they use other sources as their materials.

In hindsight the scarcity of *Ramayana* retellings and adaptations appears to be a concerted attempt to erase the fluid textual traditions of the epic and thus is a ploy used by the right wing organizations in projecting a textually stable Rama as the single embodiment of a homogenized cultural fabric. Rajagopal writes that as a show which drew on myth and devotionism to portray a golden age of tradition which was yet ahead of the modern era in statecraft and warfare, *Ramayan* adroitly made appeals to diverse social groups, under a symbolic rubric that could be tied to the banner of Hindu assertion (15) which the B.J.P. was quick to seize as the best platform for its political expression. Christophe Jaffrelot suggests that although Ram had been associated with Vaishnavism and was depicted as a Northern king in the epic of the *Ramayana*, the B.J.P. had concentrated on presenting him as a hero of significance to Hindus of all sects and as the ruler of the whole of India, and that the receptiveness of the public to this manipulation of the symbol of Ram had undoubtedly been heightened by the broadcasting of *Ramayan* (389-90). It should be noted that neither the B.J.P. or any of its allied/feeder organizations have not exulted and glorified Krishna as a structural metaphor for an ideal Bharath. On the contrary, in 2017 the Samajwadi Party sought to project Krishna as an icon of inclusion, integration, peace and unity, in contrast with Rama mentions the *Times of India* dated 20 November. Going back in time, during the campaign of the 1989 parliament elections, N.T. Rama Rao, chairman of the National Front and the then Telegu Desam chief minister of Andhra Pradesh, erected in the centre of New Delhi a giant cut-out poster of himself in the guise of Lord Krishna (Rudolph 1494) though he had often enough played the role of Rama too, the most important being the Tamil movie *Sampoorna Ramayanam* (1958).

The reasons/factors which endear the figure of Rama to right wing organizations are many and varied. We think the most important is that in the *Ramayana* the Other is a

demonized figure who clearly belongs to another ethnic group and not related to the hero in any way whatsoever; he is best killed in the interest of the kingdom and the preservation of *dharma*. Contrastingly in the *Mahabharata*, your enemy is your own blood; you are fighting with yourself. There is no convenient Other with whom your political foes can be identified, and by extension can be used to achieve contemporary political mileage. Two: while Rama rigorously maintains monogamous and endogamous marriage (thus eliminating the possibility of miscegenation, a prospect which has consternated elite classes/castes in India and elsewhere), Krishna has an entirely different take on matrimonial alliances and is far from the dream of a monolithic culture. Thirdly, Rama has impeccable pedigree or lineage; though Krishna too has royal blood he belongs to the Yadava clan which is these days identified with the Samajwadi Party—which (supposedly) represents and safeguards the interests of the OBC groups—founded by Mulayam Singh Yadav in 1992. To worsen things the Pandavas have, as Sanjoy Majumder suggests, the potential to destroy notions of patrilineage (and replacing it with matrilineage) as they were born of divine unions between gods and their mother (211). Fourthly while the televised *Ramayana* was a direct and linear adaptation of the *Valmiki Ramayana* and the *Ramacharitmanas* of Tulsidas, *Mahabharata* was complex and different: every episode contained nuanced but unmistakable references to contemporary political developments and social upheavals. Unlike other print versions including the critical edition of 1966, Chopra's *Mahabharat* begins with an event which is not customarily linked to the later dynastic cataclysm and ends with the death of Bhishma. Though the televised *Mahabharata* was utilized by right wing organizations in imagining a homogenous nation state, it had an inherent ability to resist and subvert such manoeuvres: “the cultural project of those who wish to utilize it as an all-consuming hegemonic text is self-defeating. The epic already exists in multiple contexts: different communities across India have different versions and readings of it” (Majumder 209).

Considering the qualitative differences between *Ramayan* and the *Mahabharat* in terms of orientation and Weltanschauung, the latter can even be construed as counteracting the regressive influence of the former. By leaving many things unresolved and highlighting disquieting realities and paradoxes of life along with perplexities and predicaments, *Mahabharat* was reaffirming the secular spirit of the Nehruvian era that B.R. Chopra possessed and visualised in his movies, both as a producer and as a director, in the previous decades. Through a carefully critical and concretely contextual appropriation of the epic without losing its nuances and a political positioning it within a hallowed tradition, he was in a way offering better resistance to the overarching narratives of the right wing than those who criticised them from outside.

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# ഹസ്തലിഖിതഗ്രന്ഥങ്ങൾ:പരിരക്ഷണവും പ്രസിദ്ധീകരണവും

കെ.കെ അബ്ദുൾ മജീദ്,  
അസിസ്റ്റന്റ് പ്രൊഫസർ, സംസ്കൃത വിഭാഗം, കാലിക്കറ്റ് സർവകലാശാല  
**Manuscripts: Preservation and Publication.**

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**Abstract:** A manuscript is a handwritten document that includes all sorts of handwritten documents like symbols, diagrams, mathematical works, figures, paintings, and illustrations. It is through orally every culture in premodern era handed down the knowledge they acquired to new generations. Three kinds of manuscripts are found in the manuscript's libraries: autograph copy, immediate copy, and transmitted copy. The collection of manuscripts and their critical edition are a strenuous work while they help to bring a text without any errors. Doubtlessly, the manuscripts are the legacy of the past, and their publication is essential to have a complete picture of our glorious past. This paper is an attempt to provide a general outlook to manuscriptology and preservation methods.

**Key words:** വാമൊഴി (Oral tradition), വരമൊഴി (Written tradition), ഹസ്തലിഖിതങ്ങൾ (Manuscripts), ഓട്ടോഗ്രാഫ് കോപ്പി (Autograph copy), ഇമ്മീഡിയറ്റ് കോപ്പി (Immediate copy), ട്രാൻസ്മിറ്റഡ് കോപ്പി (Transmitted copy), പാഠവിമർശനം (Textual Criticism).

ചിഹ്നങ്ങളിൽനിന്ന് അക്ഷരങ്ങളിലേക്കും വാമൊഴിയിൽനിന്ന് വരമൊഴിയിലേക്കും മാറിയ മനുഷ്യരുടെ ആശയസംവേദനോപാധി പരിവർത്തനങ്ങളുടെ തുടർച്ചയെ നോക്കുന്ന ഡിജിറ്റൽ പ്ലാറ്റ്ഫോമിലാണ് എത്തിനിൽക്കുന്നത്. എഴുത്തുവിദ്യയിൽ മനുഷ്യൻ കൈവരിച്ച പുരോഗതിയായിരുന്നു വൈജ്ഞാനികമേഖലയിൽ കാണുന്ന സ്റ്റോടനാത്മകമാറ്റത്തിന്റെ പ്രധാനകാരണം. സാമൂഹിക-സാംസ്കാരിക-ജീവിതക്രമങ്ങളുടെ നേർക്കാഴ്ചയായിരുന്ന ഹസ്തലിഖിതഗ്രന്ഥങ്ങൾ പ്രാചീന വിജ്ഞാനങ്ങളുടെ സംഭരണശാലകളായിരുന്നു. കാലാവസ്ഥാവ്യതിയാനവും അലക്ഷ്യമായ അവയുടെ ഉപയോഗവും കയ്യെഴുത്തുപ്രതികളുടെ നിലനിൽപ്പിന് പ്രതികൂലമായിട്ടായിരുന്നു ഏതുകാലത്തും നിലകൊണ്ടിരുന്നത്. വൈജ്ഞാനികോന്നതിക്ക് പ്രയോജനകരമായ ഹസ്തലിഖിതങ്ങളുടെ സംരക്ഷണവും പരിപോഷണവും സമൂഹത്തിന്റെ സമൃദ്ധമാറ്റങ്ങൾക്ക് അത്യന്താപേക്ഷിതമാണ്. പ്രാചീനവിജ്ഞാനങ്ങളുടെ ഉറവിടമായ ഹസ്തലിഖിതങ്ങളുടെ പ്രസിദ്ധീകരണം കയ്യെഴുത്തുഗ്രന്ഥങ്ങളെ സംരക്ഷിക്കാനുള്ള പ്രധാന ഉപാധിയാണ്. നാശോന്മുഖമായ ഹസ്തലിഖിതങ്ങളെ പാഠവിമർശനപ്രക്രിയയിൽകൂടി പ്രസിദ്ധീകരിക്കുന്ന പ്രവർത്തനം ഏറെ ശ്രമകരമായിരുന്നു. പാഠവിമർശനത്തിന്റെ ആവശ്യകത ബോധ്യപ്പെടുത്തുന്ന പ്രസ്തുത പ്രബന്ധം ഹസ്തലിഖിതങ്ങൾ സമാഹരിച്ചുകൊണ്ട് ശുദ്ധപാഠം തയ്യാറാക്കുന്ന പ്രക്രിയയുടെ വിവിധവശങ്ങൾ വിശകലനം ചെയ്യുന്നു.

## പ്രാചീന എഴുത്തുപ്രതലങ്ങൾ

വാമൊഴിരൂപത്തിൽ അനവധിതലമുറകളിൽ പ്രചരിച്ചിരുന്ന അറിവുകൾ വളരെ കാലത്തിനുശേഷമായിരുന്നു ഓരോ പ്രദേശത്തും ലഭ്യമായ പ്രതലങ്ങളിൽ ആലേഖനം ചെയ്തിരുന്നത്. പകർത്തേണ്ട ഗ്രന്ഥങ്ങളുടെ വലുപ്പം, എഴുത്തുപ്രതലങ്ങളുടെ ലഭ്യത, ഒരു സ്ഥലത്തുനിന്ന് മറ്റൊരു സ്ഥലത്തേക്ക് കൊണ്ടുപോകാനുള്ള സൗകര്യം എന്നിവ എഴുത്തുപ്രതലങ്ങളുടെ തെരഞ്ഞെടുപ്പിനെ സ്വാധീനിച്ച പ്രധാന ഘടകങ്ങളായിരുന്നു (ശിവഗണേശമൂർത്തി,1996:25). ശിലകൾ, ലോഹപ്പാളികൾ, മരത്തടികൾ, കളിമൺകട്ടകൾ, ഇറപ്പാളികൾ, താളിയോലകൾ, മൃഗചർമ്മം, ഭൂർജ്ജപത്രം, പേപ്പിറസ്,

<sup>8</sup> ആംഗലേയ ഭാഷയിൽ കയ്യെഴുത്തുപ്രതിയെ 'കോഡക്സ്' (Codex) എന്ന പദം കൊണ്ടാണ് വ്യഹരിക്കുന്നത്. കോഡക്സിന്റെ ബഹുവചനരൂപമായ 'കോഡിസസ്' (Codices), 'കോഡക്സസ്' (Codexes) എന്നീ പദങ്ങൾ മാനുസ്ക്രിപ്റ്റുകളെ കുറിച്ച് പ്രതിപാദിക്കുന്ന ഗ്രന്ഥങ്ങളിൽ ധാരാളമായി ഉപയോഗിച്ചു കാണുന്നു. കയ്യെഴുത്തുപ്രതിയെ പരാമർശിക്കാനായി 'ഹസ്തലിഖിതഗ്രന്ഥം' എന്ന പദമാണ് സംസ്കൃതത്തിൽ പ്രായേണ പ്രയോഗിച്ചുവരുന്നത്. അതുകൊണ്ട്തന്നെ മലയാള ഭാഷയും ഹസ്തലിഖിതഗ്രന്ഥങ്ങൾ എന്ന പദം സ്വീകരിക്കുന്നു.

പരത്തിവസ്ത്രം, ഇഷ്ടികകൾ തുടങ്ങിയവയായിരുന്നു പഴയകാലത്ത് പ്രചാരത്തിലുണ്ടായിരുന്ന പ്രധാന എഴുത്തുപ്രതലങ്ങൾ. കടലാസ്സിന്റെ ആവിർഭാവംവരെ എഴുതാനായി പ്രധാനമായും ആശ്രയിച്ചിരുന്നത് ഇത്തരത്തിലുള്ള പ്രതലങ്ങളെയായിരുന്നു. ഇന്ത്യയിൽ താളിയോലകൾക്കും ഭൂർജ്ജപത്രങ്ങൾക്കുമായിരുന്നു വളരെയേറെ പ്രചാരം സിദ്ധിച്ചിരുന്നത്. ഇന്ത്യയിൽനിന്നും കണ്ടെടുത്ത പല പ്രാചീനഗ്രന്ഥങ്ങളും താളിയോലകളിൽ എഴുതിയവയായിരുന്നു. കടപ്പനയുടേയും കരിമ്പനയുടേയും ഓലകൾ സംസ്കരിച്ചായിരുന്നു താളിയോലകൾ തയ്യാറാക്കിയിരുന്നത്. ഇന്ത്യയുടെ വടക്കൻ പ്രദേശങ്ങളിൽനിന്നായിരുന്നു ഭൂർജ്ജപത്രങ്ങളിൽ എഴുതിയ പല കൃതികളും ലഭിച്ചിരുന്നത്. ഹസ്തലിഖിതഗ്രന്ഥങ്ങൾ തയ്യാറാക്കുന്നതിനായി ഇന്ത്യയിൽ പ്രധാനമായും ആശ്രയിച്ചിരുന്നത് താളിയോലകളേയായിരുന്നെന്ന് ഏ.ഡി ഏഴാം നൂറ്റാണ്ടിനു മുമ്പ് ഇന്ത്യ സന്ദർശിച്ച ചൈനീസ് സഞ്ചാരി ഹ്യൂയാങ്സാങ്ങ് വ്യക്തമാക്കുന്നു (എൻ.വി.പി.ഉണിത്തിരി, 2009: 20). എഴുതാനുള്ള സൗകര്യവും ലഭ്യതയുമായിരുന്നു ഭൂർജ്ജപത്രത്തെ അപേക്ഷിച്ച് താളിയോലകൾക്ക് ഇന്ത്യയിൽ കൂടുതൽ സ്വീകാര്യത ലഭിക്കാൻ കാരണം.

നൈൽ നദിയുടെ തീരങ്ങളിൽ സമൃദ്ധമായി കണ്ടുവരുന്ന പേപ്പിറസ് ചെടികളെയാണ് ബി.സി 3000 മുതൽ ഈജിപ്റ്റുകാർ എഴുത്തുപ്രതലങ്ങൾ തയ്യാറാക്കാൻ ആശ്രയിച്ചിരുന്നത് (ഒരു സംഘം ലേഖകർ, 1974 :13). അനുയോജ്യമായ വലുപ്പത്തിൽ മുറിച്ച പേപ്പിറസ് തണ്ടുകൾ ചീന്തിയെടുത്ത് തലങ്ങളേയും വിലങ്ങളേയും ഒട്ടിച്ചായിരുന്നു എഴുത്തുപ്രതലങ്ങൾ തയ്യാറാക്കിയിരുന്നത്. പ്രാചീന ഗ്രീസിലും, റോമിലും പേപ്പിറസ്സ് ചുരുളുകളെ തന്നെയായിരുന്നു എഴുതാനായി ആശ്രയിച്ചിരുന്നത്. പാർച്ചമെന്റുകളായിരുന്നു പല പാശ്ചാത്യരാജ്യങ്ങളുടേയും പ്രധാന എഴുത്തുപ്രതലം. പശുക്കുട്ടികൾ, ആടുകൾ എന്നിവയുടെ ചർമ്മങ്ങളായിരുന്നു പാർച്ചമെന്റുകൾ തയ്യാറാക്കാനായി അവർ ഉപയോഗിച്ചിരുന്നത്. പാർച്ചമെന്റിൽ എഴുതിയ അക്ഷരങ്ങൾ മിനുസപ്പെടുത്തി വീണ്ടും ഉപയോഗിക്കാൻ സൗകര്യമുണ്ടായിരുന്നു (ഒരു സംഘം ലേഖകർ, 1974: 14). ഇന്ത്യയിൽ പാർച്ചമെന്റിൽ എഴുതിയ കയ്യെഴുത്തുപ്രതികൾക്ക് വളരെയോണം പ്രചാരം ലഭിച്ചിരുന്നില്ല. ചിത്രങ്ങളും രാജശാസനകളും ആലേഖനം ചെയ്യാനായിരുന്നു ശിലകളും ലോഹങ്ങളും സാധാരണയായി ഉപയോഗിച്ചിരുന്നത്. അച്ചടിവിദ്യ വ്യാപകമാകുകയും കയ്യെഴുത്തുപ്രതികളുടെ നിർമ്മാണം പൂർണ്ണമായും നിലക്കുകയും ചെയ്തപ്പോൾ, പാഠവിമർശനം തയ്യാറാക്കി ഗ്രന്ഥങ്ങൾ പ്രസിദ്ധീകരിക്കുന്ന പ്രവർത്തനം ഊർജ്ജിതമാകുകയും ചെയ്തു.

**ഹസ്തലിഖിതഗ്രന്ഥങ്ങളുടെ വൈവിധ്യം**

ഓട്ടോഗ്രാഫ് കോപ്പി (Autograph copy), ഇമ്മീഡിയറ്റ് കോപ്പി (Immediate copy), ട്രാൻസ്മിറ്റഡ് കോപ്പി (Transmitted copy) എന്നിങ്ങനെ കയ്യെഴുത്തുപ്രതികളെ മൂന്നായി തരംതിരിക്കാം. ഗ്രന്ഥകാരൻ സ്വന്തം കൈകൊണ്ട് എഴുതിയ ആദ്യ ഗ്രന്ഥഭാഗങ്ങളായിരുന്നു ഓട്ടോഗ്രാഫ് കോപ്പി. ഗ്രന്ഥകാരന്റെ സാന്നിധ്യത്തിൽ മറ്റൊരാളാണ് എഴുതിയതെങ്കിലും അത്തരം ഗ്രന്ഥഭാഗങ്ങളും ഇതേ വിഭാഗത്തിൽ തന്നെയാണ് ഉൾപ്പെടുന്നത്. ഓട്ടോഗ്രാഫ് കോപ്പിയിൽനിന്നും ആദ്യമായി ഉണ്ടാകുന്ന പകർപ്പാണ് ഇമ്മീഡിയറ്റ് കോപ്പി. ഈ രണ്ടുതരം പകർപ്പുകളിൽനിന്നും വ്യത്യസ്തമായി ഒരു ഗ്രന്ഥത്തിന് പിന്നീടുണ്ടാകുന്ന എല്ലാ പകർപ്പുകളും ട്രാൻസ്മിറ്റഡ് കോപ്പികൾ എന്നാണ് അറിയപ്പെടുന്നത്. ഗ്രന്ഥകാരനിൽനിന്നും വ്യത്യസ്തമായ ഹസ്തലിഖിതങ്ങളെ പാഠവിമർശനത്തിനു വിധേയമാക്കിയാണ് ഒരു ഗ്രന്ഥം പുനർനിർമ്മിക്കുന്നത്. ഇതിനായി ശേഖരിച്ച ഹസ്തലിഖിതങ്ങളിൽ ഓരോന്നും എത്ര ഘട്ടങ്ങൾ കഴിഞ്ഞവയാണെന്ന് പറയുക അസാധ്യമാണ്.

കൂട്ടിച്ചേർക്കൽ (Addition), വിട്ടുകളയൽ (Omission), പകരം വെക്കൽ (Substitution), സ്ഥാനം മാറ്റൽ (Transposition), തുടങ്ങിയ തെറ്റുകളാണ് സാധാരണയായി കയ്യെഴുത്തുപ്രതികളിൽ കണ്ടുവരുന്നത്. മാതൃകയിൽനിന്നും വ്യത്യാസമില്ലാത്ത ഒരു കയ്യെഴുത്തുപ്രതിയാണ് പകർപ്പെഴുത്തുകാരൻ പകർത്തേണ്ടിയിരുന്നത്. ഗ്രന്ഥഭാഗങ്ങൾ പകർത്തുന്നത് ആയാസകരമായ ഒരു പ്രവൃത്തിയായതിനാൽ മാതൃകയിൽനിന്നും

വ്യത്യസ്തമായി അനവധി ഭാഗങ്ങളാണ് പലപ്പോഴും ഗ്രന്ഥത്തിന്റെ ഭാഗമാകുന്നത്. വിവിധ ഘട്ടങ്ങളിൽ കൂട്ടിച്ചേർക്കലിനു വിധേയമായ ഇന്ത്യയിലെ ഏറ്റവും ബൃഹത്തായ ഒരു ഗ്രന്ഥമാണ് മഹാഭാരതം. ജയ, ഭാരതം, മഹാഭാരതം എന്നീ മൂന്നുഘട്ടങ്ങളിൽ വികസിച്ച മഹാഭാരതം സമാഹരിച്ചത് വ്യാസനായിരുന്നു (ശിവഗണേശമൂർത്തി, 1996 :115). മാതൃകയിൽനിന്ന് വ്യത്യസ്തമായി ഇത്തരത്തിലുള്ള ചില ഭാഗങ്ങൾ ആവശ്യമില്ലെന്ന് കരുതി പകർപ്പെടുത്ത് തയ്യാറാക്കുന്നവർ കയ്യെഴുത്തുപ്രതികളിൽനിന്ന് ഒഴിവാക്കാറുണ്ട്. മാതൃകയിൽ കാണുന്ന പദങ്ങൾ, വാക്കുകൾ, ആശയങ്ങൾ എന്നിവക്ക് പകരമായി മറ്റു പദങ്ങളും വാക്കുകളും ആശയങ്ങളും മാറ്റി ഉപയോഗിക്കുന്ന പ്രവണത ഹസ്തലിഖിതഗ്രന്ഥങ്ങളിൽ കണ്ടുവരുന്നു. പകർപ്പെടുത്തുകാരന്റെ താല്പര്യം മുൻനിർത്തി മാതൃകയിൽനിന്നും വ്യത്യസ്തമായി ഗ്രന്ഥഭാഗങ്ങൾ സ്ഥാനം മാറ്റി ഉപയോഗിക്കുന്ന പ്രവണത പഴയകാലത്തുണ്ടായിരുന്നു. ഒരു ഗ്രന്ഥത്തിന് വ്യത്യസ്ത പകർപ്പുകളുണ്ടാകാൻ കാരണങ്ങൾ പലതാണെങ്കിലും പകർപ്പെടുത്തുകാരുടെ ഇത്തരം ഇടപെടലുകൾക്ക് പ്രഥമസ്ഥാനമാണുള്ളത്. പകർപ്പുകളുടെ വൈപുല്യം ഗ്രന്ഥകാരന്റെ യഥാർത്ഥകൃതി കണ്ടെത്തുക പ്രയാസകരമാണ്. കയ്യെഴുത്തുപ്രതികളുടെ ഓരോഘട്ടം കഴിയുന്നോടും പകർപ്പുകളിൽ കടന്നുകൂടുന്ന തെറ്റുകൾ പാഠവിമർശന പ്രവർത്തനം സങ്കീർണ്ണമാക്കുന്നു. ഗ്രന്ഥകാരനിൽനിന്നും വ്യതിരിക്തമായ നൂതനാശയങ്ങൾ പിന്നീടുണ്ടായ പാഠങ്ങളിൽ കൊണ്ടുവരുന്നതാണ് ഒരു പാഠം മറ്റൊന്നിൽനിന്നും വ്യത്യസ്തമാകാൻ കാരണം. പാഠവിമർശനത്തിന്റെ ആവശ്യകതയാണ് ഇത് ബോധ്യപ്പെടുത്തുന്നത്.

**ഹസ്തലിഖിതങ്ങളുടെ സമാഹരണവും അപഗ്രഥനവും.**

മനുഷ്യബുദ്ധിയുടെ വിദഗ്ധമായ അഭ്യാസവും നൈപുണിയും വിനിയോഗിച്ച് കയ്യെഴുത്തുപ്രതികളുടെ അപഗ്രഥനത്തിൽ കൂടി മാലികരൂപത്തിൽ ഗ്രന്ഥത്തെ പുനർനിർമ്മിക്കുന്ന പ്രക്രിയയാണ് പാഠവിമർശനം (എസ്.എം കത്രേ, 1941: 30). കയ്യെഴുത്തുപ്രതികളുടെ ശേഖരണവും ജീനിയോളജിയനുസരിച്ച് അവയുടെ വർഗ്ഗീകരണവുമാണ് പാഠവിമർശനത്തിൽ ആദ്യമായി ചെയ്യേണ്ടത്. തെറ്റുകൾ കുറഞ്ഞ ഒരു കയ്യെഴുത്തുപ്രതി കണ്ടെത്തുകയും, തുടർന്ന് പ്രസ്തുത പാഠത്തെ (Reading) അടിസ്ഥാന പാഠമായി നിശ്ചയിച്ച്, ലഭ്യമായ മറ്റു കയ്യെഴുത്തുപ്രതികളുമായി താരതമ്യം ചെയ്താണ് ഗ്രന്ഥകാരൻ എഴുതിയതോ അല്ലെങ്കിൽ അതിനടുത്തു നിൽക്കുന്നതോ ആയ ഒരു പാഠം തയ്യാറാക്കുന്നത്. രാമായണം, മഹാഭാരതം തുടങ്ങിയ പ്രാചീന ഗ്രന്ഥങ്ങളെല്ലാം പാഠവിമർശനത്തിൽ കൂടിയാണ് ഇന്നുകാണുന്ന രൂപം കൈവരിച്ചത്.(പി.എം വിജയപ്പൻ,2009:99) 'ടെക്സ്ചുൽ ക്രിട്ടിസിസം'(Textual Criticism) എന്ന പദമാണ് പാഠവിമർശനത്തെ സൂചിപ്പിക്കാൻ പാശ്ചാത്യർ ഉപയോഗിച്ചിരുന്നത്. ലോവർക്രിട്ടിസിസം (Lower Criticism), ഹയർക്രിട്ടിസിസം (Higher Criticism) എന്നിങ്ങനെ രണ്ടായി അവയെ വിഭജിക്കാം. വിവിധ ഘട്ടങ്ങളിൽ തയ്യാറാക്കിയിരുന്ന കയ്യെഴുത്തുപ്രതികൾ സമാഹരിച്ച് പാഠവിമർശനത്തിനു വിധേയമാക്കിയാണ് ലോവർക്രിട്ടിസിസം വഴി ഗ്രന്ഥകാരന്റെ യഥാർത്ഥകൃതി (Autograph Copy) യിലേക്ക് കൊണ്ടുവരുന്നത്. ഹ്യൂറിസ്റ്റിക്സ് (Heuristics), റെസൻസ്യോ (Recensio), എമൻഡേഷ്യോ (Emendatio) എന്നീ മൂന്നുഘട്ടങ്ങളോട് കൂടിയതാണ് ലോവർക്രിട്ടിസിസം (ശിവഗണേശമൂർത്തി, 1986: 136). ഗ്രന്ഥനിർമ്മിതിക്ക് ആവശ്യമായ പാഠങ്ങൾ സമാഹരിക്കുന്ന ഘട്ടമാണ് ഹ്യൂറിസ്റ്റിക്സ്. സമാഹരിച്ച പാഠങ്ങൾക്ക് പേര് നൽകി, ജീനിയോളജിക്കനുസൃതമായി അവയെ ക്രമീകരിക്കുന്ന ഘട്ടമാണ് റെസൻസ്യോ എന്നറിയപ്പെടുന്നത്. കൊളഷൻ ഷീറ്റ് (Collation sheet) തയ്യാറാക്കി ദോഷങ്ങൾ നിർദ്ധാരണം ചെയ്യുന്ന ഘട്ടമായ എമൻഡേഷൻ (Emendation) ശേഷം മൂലഗ്രന്ഥത്തോട് അടുത്തുനിൽക്കുന്ന ഒരു ശുദ്ധപാഠം ലഭിക്കുന്നു. കയ്യെഴുത്തുപ്രതികൾ എമൻഡേഷൻ വിധേയമാകുന്നതുമായി ബന്ധപ്പെട്ട രണ്ട് വാദങ്ങൾ പാഠവിമർശനസമ്പ്രദായത്തിൽ കാണപ്പെടുന്നു. മാലികരൂപത്തിൽ ഒരു ഗ്രന്ഥം പരിഷ്കരിക്കുമ്പോൾ കയ്യെഴുത്തുപ്രതികളിൽ കാണുന്ന തെറ്റുകൾ പൂർണ്ണമായി നിർദ്ധാരണം ചെയ്യണമെന്നതാണ് പ്രഥമപക്ഷത്തിന്റെ വാദം. തെറ്റുകൾ യഥാസ്ഥാനത്ത് അവശേഷിപ്പിച്ചുകൊണ്ട് ശുദ്ധപാഠം തയ്യാറാക്കലാണ് ഏറ്റവും അഭികാമ്യമെന്ന് ദ്വിതീയപക്ഷവും കരുതുന്നു (ശിവഗണേശമൂർത്തി,1996:157). ഹസ്തലിഖിതഗ്രന്ഥങ്ങളിൽ

കാണപ്പെടുന്ന പിഴവുകൾ പൂർണ്ണമായി ശുദ്ധീകരിക്കുന്നത് ഗ്രന്ഥകാരന്റെ താല്പര്യത്തിനു വിരുദ്ധമായ ആശയങ്ങൾ ഗ്രന്ഥത്തിൽ കടന്നുവരാൻ കാരണമാകുന്നു. ഗ്രന്ഥത്തെക്കുറിച്ചും ഗ്രന്ഥകാരന്റെ കാഴ്ചപ്പാടുകളെക്കുറിച്ചും ധാരണയില്ലാത്ത ഒരാൾ ഗ്രന്ഥത്തിൽ കാണുന്ന പിഴവുകൾ പൂർണ്ണമായും നിവാരണം ചെയ്യാൻ (അക്ഷരം കൃത്യമായി മനസ്സിലായില്ലെങ്കിലും തോന്നിയതുപോലെ മാറ്റി എഴുതിയാൽ), ഗ്രന്ഥകാരന്റെ യഥാർത്ഥകാഴ്ചപ്പാടുകളെക്കുറിച്ചും ഗ്രന്ഥത്തിലെ പ്രതിപാദ്യത്തെ കുറിച്ചും ആരെങ്കിലും തുടർപഠനം ആഗ്രഹിക്കുന്നെങ്കിൽ അത് അസാധ്യമാകുന്നു. പാഠവിമർശനത്തിൽ ബോധ്യപ്പെടാത്ത പിഴവുകൾ ശുദ്ധപാഠത്തിൽ പ്രത്യേകം അടയാളപ്പെടുത്തിയശേഷം ആവശ്യമായ ഭേദഗതികളാണ് വരുത്തുന്നതെങ്കിൽ, ഗ്രന്ഥത്തെക്കുറിച്ച് തുടർന്ന് നടക്കുന്ന ഏതൊരുപഠനത്തിനും അത് സഹായകമായി മാറുന്നു.

ലോവർക്രിട്ടിസിസത്തിൽനിന്നും വ്യതിരിക്തമായ ഹയർക്രിട്ടിസിസം, ഗ്രന്ഥത്തെക്കുറിച്ചും ഗ്രന്ഥകാരനെ സംബന്ധിച്ചും നടത്തുന്ന ഒരു സമഗ്രമായ അന്വേഷണമാണ്. ഹസ്തലിഖിതങ്ങളുടെ സമാഹരണവും അവയുടെ അപഗ്രഥനവുമാണ് ലോവർക്രിട്ടിസിസത്തിന്റെ വിഷയമെങ്കിൽ ഗ്രന്ഥകാരന്റെ ഭാഷ, ശൈലി, ഗ്രന്ഥത്തിന്റെ ഉറവിടം, സ്വാധീനിച്ച മറ്റു ഗ്രന്ഥങ്ങൾ, രചനയുടെ കാലികപ്രസക്തി, തുടങ്ങിയ വിഷയങ്ങളെ അധികരിച്ചാണ് ഹയർക്രിട്ടിസിസം പ്രതിപാദിക്കുന്നത്. പാഠവിമർശനത്തിലെ മറ്റൊരു ഘട്ടമായാണ് ഹയർക്രിട്ടിസിസത്തെ കണക്കാക്കുന്നത്.

**കയ്യെഴുത്തുപ്രതികളുടെ സംരക്ഷണം.**

കയ്യെഴുത്തുപ്രതികളുടെ സംരക്ഷണത്തിനും അവയുടെ പ്രസിദ്ധീകരണത്തിനും അനവധി ഗ്രന്ഥാലയങ്ങൾ ഇന്ന് ലോകത്തിന്റെ പലഭാഗങ്ങളിലും നിലവിലുണ്ട്. ജൈവികവും, അജൈവികവുമായ പ്രതലങ്ങളിലെഴുതിയ ഗ്രന്ഥങ്ങളുടെ വൻശേഖരമാണ് ഓരോ ഗ്രന്ഥാലയങ്ങളിലും കാണുന്നത്. ഭൂർജ്ജപത്രം, താളിയോല, പേപ്പിറസ്, മൃഗചർമ്മം തുടങ്ങിയ പ്രതലങ്ങളിൽ എഴുതിയവയാണ് ജൈവിക കയ്യെഴുത്തുപ്രതികൾ. അതിവേഗം നശിക്കുന്നതിനാൽ അവയുടെ സംരക്ഷണം ഏറെ പ്രയാസകരമാകുന്നു. അജൈവിക പ്രതലങ്ങളായ ശിലകളിലും ലോഹങ്ങളിലും ഗ്രന്ഥഭാഗങ്ങൾ മുദ്രണം ചെയ്യുന്ന പതിവ് പഴയ കാലത്തുണ്ടായിരുന്നു. മഹാരാഷ്ട്രയിലെ അജന്ത, എല്ലോറ എന്നീ ഗുഹകളിൽ കാണുന്ന ചിത്രങ്ങളും ഇന്ത്യ, പാക്കിസ്ഥാൻ, അഫ്ഗാനിസ്ഥാൻ തുടങ്ങിയ രാജ്യങ്ങളിൽ വ്യാപിച്ചുകിടക്കുന്ന അശോകന്റെ ശിലാലിഖിതങ്ങളും, ഇടക്കൽ ഗുഹയിലെ (വയനാട്) ബ്രാഹ്മിയീൽ കാണുന്ന ലിഖിതങ്ങളും അജൈവിക പ്രതലത്തിൽ ആലേഖനം ചെയ്ത ഹസ്തലിഖിതങ്ങളാണ്. ഒരു പതിപ്പ് മാത്രം അവശേഷിക്കുന്ന ലിഖിതങ്ങൾ സിംഗിൾ മാനുസ്ക്രിപ്റ്റ് (Single Manuscript) എന്ന ഗണത്തിലാണ് ഉൾപ്പെടുന്നത്.

ഇന്ത്യയുടെ പലഭാഗങ്ങളിൽനിന്നുമായി താളിയോലകളിൽ പകർത്തിയ അനവധി കയ്യെഴുത്തുപ്രതികളാണ് ഗ്രന്ഥാലയങ്ങളിൽ സമാഹരിച്ചിട്ടുള്ളത്. താളിയോലകൾ കൈകാര്യം ചെയ്യാൻ പ്രത്യേക വൈദഗ്ദ്ധ്യം ആവശ്യമായിരുന്നു. നിശ്ചിത അകലത്തിൽ രണ്ട് ദ്വാരം നല്കി ചരുകൊണ്ട് ബന്ധിപ്പിക്കുന്ന താളിയോലകൾ അശ്രദ്ധമായി ഉപയോഗിച്ചാൽ പെട്ടെന്ന് നശിച്ചുപോകും. താളിയോലകളുടെ സംരക്ഷണം വൃത്തിയാക്കുന്ന സംസ്കൃത പദ്യം വ്യക്തമാക്കുന്നതും മറ്റൊന്നല്ല.

“തൈലാത് രക്ഷ ജലാത് രക്ഷ രക്ഷ മാം ശ്ലഥബന്ധനാത്

ആഖ്യഭ്യഃ പരഹസ്തേഭ്യ ഏവം വദതി പുസ്തകം.”

തൈലവും, ജലവും, അഴിഞ്ഞുകെട്ടും, എലികളും, കൈകാര്യംചെയ്യുന്നവരും താളിയോലഗ്രന്ഥങ്ങൾക്ക് ഭീഷണിയാണെന്ന് ഈ പദ്യം വ്യക്തമാക്കുന്നു. (എൻ.വി.പി ഉണിത്തിരി, 2009:26). പ്രതികൂല സാഹചര്യങ്ങളിൽനിന്ന് താളിയോലകൾ സംരക്ഷിക്കപ്പെടേണ്ടതുണ്ട്. കയ്യെഴുത്തുപ്രതികൾ നശിക്കാൻ അശ്രദ്ധമായ ഉപയോഗം ഒരു കാരണമാണ്. കാലാവസ്ഥാവ്യതിയാനം, കീടാണുക്കളുടെ ഉപദ്രവവും തുടങ്ങിയ ഭീഷണികളിൽനിന്നും കയ്യെഴുത്തുഗ്രന്ഥങ്ങളുടെ സംരക്ഷണത്തിനായി അനവധി മാർഗ്ഗങ്ങൾ അവലംബിക്കുന്നുണ്ടെങ്കിലും കയ്യെഴുത്തുപ്രതികളുടെ പരിപൂർണ്ണ

സംരക്ഷണത്തിന് അവയൊന്നും പര്യാപ്തമാകുന്നില്ല. ഹസ്തലിഖിതഗ്രന്ഥാലയങ്ങളിൽ ഡിജിറ്റൈസേഷനടക്കമുള്ള നൂതന സംവിധാനങ്ങൾ നടപ്പിലാക്കിയാൽ ഒരു പരിധിവരെ കയ്യെഴുത്തുഗ്രന്ഥങ്ങളെ സംരക്ഷിക്കാൻ കഴിയും. ആവശ്യക്കാർക്ക് കയ്യെഴുത്തുപ്രതികളുടെ ഡിജിറ്റൽഫയൽ കൈമാറുകയാണെങ്കിൽ, ഹസ്തലിഖിതഗ്രന്ഥങ്ങളുടെ പ്രസിദ്ധീകരണം ത്വരിതഗതിയിലാക്കാനും അശ്രദ്ധമായി ഹസ്തലിഖിതഗ്രന്ഥങ്ങൾ കൈകാര്യം ചെയ്യുമ്പോഴുണ്ടാകുന്ന നാശനഷ്ടങ്ങൾ ഒഴിവാക്കാനും സഹായകമാകും.

**കയ്യെഴുത്തുപ്രതികളുടെ പ്രസിദ്ധീകരണവും പ്രതിസന്ധികളും**

കയ്യെഴുത്തുഗ്രന്ഥങ്ങളുടെ പകർപ്പുകൾ സൂക്ഷിക്കുന്ന പതിവ് പഴയകാലത്തുണ്ടായിരുന്നു. ഒരു കയ്യെഴുത്തുപ്രതി നശിക്കുമ്പോൾ ആ ഗ്രന്ഥം തന്നെ പരിപൂർണ്ണമായും നശിക്കുന്നത് ഒഴിവാക്കാനായിരുന്നു ഒരു ഗ്രന്ഥത്തിന് അനവധി പകർപ്പുകൾ എഴുതി സൂക്ഷിക്കാൻ അവരെ പ്രേരിപ്പിച്ചിരുന്നത്. ഓരോ കയ്യെഴുത്തുപ്രതികളും വ്യത്യസ്തമാകാൻ അനവധി കാരണങ്ങളുണ്ട്. യാദൃശ്ചികമായോ, മനഃപൂർവ്വമായോ പകർപ്പെഴുത്തുകാർ (Scribe) വരുത്തുന്ന തെറ്റുകളായിരുന്നു അവയിൽ പ്രധാനമായിട്ടുള്ളത്. പാഠങ്ങളുടെ വൈപുല്യം പാഠവിമർശനപ്രക്രിയ സങ്കീർണ്ണമാകാൻ കാരണമാകുന്നു. ഒരു ഗ്രന്ഥത്തിന്റെ അവശേഷിക്കുന്ന കയ്യെഴുത്തുപ്രതികൾ കണ്ടെത്തുകയും ജീനിയോളജിയുടെ അടിസ്ഥാനത്തിൽ അവയെ ക്രമീകരിക്കുകയുമാണ് പാഠവിമർശനപ്രക്രിയയുടെ പ്രരംഭപ്രവർത്തനം. ഓട്ടോഗ്രാഫ് കോപ്പിയിലേക്ക് ഒരു കയ്യെഴുത്തുപ്രതിയെ എത്തിക്കുന്നതിന്റെ ഭാഗമായി പ്രസ്തുത ഗ്രന്ഥവുമായി ബന്ധപ്പെട്ട പ്രാഥമികവും (Primary sources of evidence)<sup>9</sup> ദ്വിതീയവുമായ തെളിവുകൾ (Secondary sources of evidence)<sup>10</sup> സമാഹരിക്കുകയും അവയെ പാഠവിമർശനത്തിന് വിധേയമാക്കുകയുമാണ് ചെയ്യേണ്ടത്. കാലപ്പഴക്കം വന്നതിനാൽ പാഠവിമർശനത്തിന് വിധേയമാക്കുന്ന പല കയ്യെഴുത്തുപ്രതികളും കൈകൊണ്ട് എടുക്കാനോ കൃത്യമായി വായിച്ചു മനസ്സിലാക്കാനോ പാകത്തിലായിരിക്കില്ല. പ്രാചീനലിപികളിൽ എഴുതിയ പല ഹസ്തലിഖിതഗ്രന്ഥങ്ങളും പ്രണികൾ നശിപ്പിച്ചതിനാലോ പൊടിഞ്ഞതിനാലോ വായിച്ചു മനസ്സിലാക്കുക ഏറെ ദുഷ്കരമായിരുന്നു. നിശ്ചിത താപനിലനൽകിയാണ് അമൂല്യമായ പല കയ്യെഴുത്തുപ്രതികളും ഗ്രന്ഥാലയങ്ങളിൽ സംരക്ഷിച്ചുവരുന്നത്.

**ഉപസംഹാരം.**

കൊട്ടാരങ്ങളിലും പഴയ തറവാടുകളിലുമായിരുന്നു കയ്യെഴുത്തുപ്രതികളുടെ വൻശേഖരമുണ്ടായിരുന്നത്. വിജ്ഞാനത്തിന്റെ സംഭരണശാലകളാണ് മിക്ക കയ്യെഴുത്തുപ്രതികളും. ഇന്ത്യയിലെ പല നാട്ടുരാജാക്കന്മാരും പ്രഭുക്കന്മാരും ഹസ്തലിഖിതഗ്രന്ഥങ്ങളുടെ പരിപോഷകരും സംരക്ഷകരുമായിരുന്നു (സുകുമാർ അഴീക്കോട്,1985:vii). പുതിയ ഗ്രന്ഥങ്ങൾ കണ്ടെത്തുന്നതിനുള്ള അപൂർവ്വ അവസരമായിട്ടായിരുന്നു ഉത്സവങ്ങളേയും രഥയാത്രകളേയും അവരിൽ പലരും കണ്ടിരുന്നത്. ഗ്രന്ഥങ്ങളുടെ പകർപ്പുകൾ തയ്യാറാക്കാനായി പകർപ്പെഴുതുന്നവരെ കൂടെ കൊണ്ടുപോകുന്ന പതിവ് അവർക്കുണ്ടായിരുന്നു. നിശ്ചിത സമയത്തിനുള്ളിൽ പകർപ്പെഴുതാൻ നിർബന്ധിതമായതിനാൽ പകർപ്പുകളിൽ സംഭവിക്കുന്ന പിഴവുകൾ വളരെയേറെയായിരുന്നു. കയ്യെഴുത്തുപ്രതികളിൽ കടന്നുകൂട്ടുന്ന അപാകതകൾ പരിഹരിച്ച് ഗ്രന്ഥകാരന്റെ യഥാർത്ഥ രചനയിലേക്ക് ഒരു ഗ്രന്ഥത്തെ കൊണ്ടുവരാനുള്ള ഏക ഉപാധിയാണ് പാഠവിമർശനം. കയ്യെഴുത്തുപ്രതികളിൽ സംഭരിക്കപ്പെട്ടതായ പ്രാചീനവിജ്ഞാനങ്ങൾ സമൂഹോന്നതിക്കുവേണ്ടി വിനിയോഗിക്കണമെങ്കിൽ,

<sup>9</sup> പാഠവിമർശനത്തിന് സഹായകമാകുന്ന കയ്യെഴുത്തുപ്രതികളും, പ്രസിദ്ധീകൃതമായ പുസ്തകങ്ങളും പ്രാഥമിക തെളിവുകളുടെ കൂട്ടത്തിലാണ് ഉൾപ്പെടുത്തുന്നത്.  
<sup>10</sup> മൂലഗ്രന്ഥവുമായി നേരിട്ട് ബന്ധം ഇല്ലാത്തതും, എന്നാൽ പാഠസംസ്കരണത്തിന് ഏറെ സഹായകമാകുന്നതുമാണ് സെക്കണ്ടറി എഡിഷനൻസ്. ഗ്രന്ഥത്തിന്റെ വ്യാഖ്യാനങ്ങൾ, തർജ്ജമകൾ, സമാഹാരങ്ങൾ, ഉദ്ദരണികൾ, വ്യക്തമായ അനുകരണങ്ങൾ എന്നിവ ഇതിൽ ഉൾപ്പെടുന്നു. പ്രാചീനമായ ഗ്രന്ഥങ്ങളുടെ പാഠവിമർശനം തയ്യാറാക്കാൻ ഇത്തരം തെളിവുകളെ ഏറെ ആശ്രയിക്കേണ്ടിയിരിക്കുന്നു.

ഹസ്തലിഖിതഗ്രന്ഥങ്ങളുടെ പ്രസിദ്ധീകരണം സാധ്യമാകേണ്ടതാണ്. ലോകത്തിന്റെ വിവിധഭാഗങ്ങളിൽ വ്യാപിച്ചുകിടക്കുന്ന ഹസ്തലിഖിത ഗ്രന്ഥങ്ങളുടെ സംരക്ഷണവും പ്രസിദ്ധീകരണവും പോയ കാലത്തിന്റെ സാക്ഷ്യപ്പെടുത്തലുകളായി എന്നും നിലനിൽക്കും. പ്രാചീനഗ്രന്ഥങ്ങളുടെ ഉറവിടമായ ഇത്തരം കയ്യെഴുത്തുപ്രതികൾ സംരക്ഷിക്കേണ്ടത് കാലഘട്ടത്തിന്റെ ആവശ്യകതയാണ്.

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# വടക്കൻപാട്ടുസിനിമകളിലെ രാഷ്ട്രഭാവന

ദിവ്യ കെ

അസിസ്റ്റന്റ് പ്രൊഫസർ, ഡിപ്പാർട്ട്മെന്റ് ഓഫ് റഷ്യൻ ആന്റ് കമ്പാരറ്റീവ് ലിറ്ററേച്ചർ,  
കാലിക്കറ്റ് സർവകലാശാല

## THE CONCEPT OF NATION IN VADAKKANPATTU CINEMAKAL

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പ്രബന്ധസംഗ്രഹം: ബ്രിട്ടീഷ്ഭരണകാലത്ത് 'മലബാർ' എന്നും ഐക്യകേരളപിറവിയാനന്തരം 'വടക്കൻകേരള' മെന്നും വിശേഷിപ്പിക്കപ്പെട്ട പ്രദേശങ്ങളിലെ അവർണ്ണർക്കിടയിലും മുസ്ലീങ്ങൾക്കിടയിലും പ്രചാരത്തിലിരുന്ന പാട്ടുകളാണ് 'വടക്കൻപാട്ടുകളെ'ന്ന് അറിയപ്പെടുന്നത്. ഇത്തരം പാട്ടുകളെ ആധാരമാക്കി നിർമ്മിക്കപ്പെട്ട സിനിമകളെയാണ് 'വടക്കൻപാട്ടുസിനിമകൾ' എന്ന് വിശേഷിപ്പിക്കുന്നത്. നാടുവാഴിത്തവും കോളനീകരണവും സമ്മിശ്രമായി നിൽക്കുന്ന രാഷ്ട്രീയാധികാരഘടനയാണ് വടക്കൻപാട്ടുകളിൽ ദൃശ്യമാകുന്നത്. എന്നാൽ, ഈ വടക്കൻപാട്ടുകളെ ഉപജീവിച്ചുകൊണ്ട് 1960 കളിൽ നിർമ്മിക്കപ്പെട്ട സിനിമകളിലാവട്ടെ ആധുനിക ദേശ-രാഷ്ട്രത്തിന്റെ ജീവിതബോധവും രാഷ്ട്രീയ പ്രത്യയശാസ്ത്രങ്ങളുമാണ് നിലീനമായിരിക്കുന്നത് എന്നതാണ് പ്രബന്ധത്തിലെ പ്രധാന വാദം. രാഷ്ട്രത്തിന്റെ, ദേശീയതയുടെ രൂപപ്പെടലിന് അത്യന്താപേക്ഷിത ഘടകമായ ഏകതാബോധത്തിന്റെ നിർമ്മിതിയിൽ സിനിമകൾ വലിയ പങ്കുവഹിക്കുന്നുണ്ട് എന്ന് നിരീക്ഷിക്കപ്പെട്ടിട്ടുണ്ട്. മലയാളീദേശീയതയുടെ രൂപപ്പെടൽ പ്രക്രിയയിലാണ് വടക്കൻപാട്ടുസിനിമകൾ ഇടപെടുന്നതെന്നും പ്രബന്ധത്തിൽ സമർത്ഥിക്കുന്നു).

**താക്കോൽവാക്കുകൾ:** ദേശീയത, മലയാളീദേശീയത, ദേശീയസിനിമ, വടക്കൻപാട്ടുകൾ, വടക്കൻപാട്ടുസിനിമകൾ.

### ദേശീയത, ഇന്ത്യൻ ദേശീയത, മലയാളീദേശീയത

രാഷ്ട്രം, ദേശീയത എന്നിവയുടെ ഉത്ഭവത്തെ സംബന്ധിച്ചുള്ള ചർച്ചകൾ പത്തൊമ്പതാം നൂറ്റാണ്ടിന്റെ തുടക്കത്തിൽത്തന്നെ ആരംഭിക്കുന്നുണ്ട്. ആധുനികതയും ദേശീയതയും തമ്മിൽ അഭേദ്യമായ ബന്ധമുണ്ട് എന്നും ദേശീയത ആധുനികതയുടെ കാലത്താണ് ഉരുവംകൊണ്ടത് എന്നും വാദിക്കുന്ന മോഡേണിസ്റ്റ് സമീപനമാണ് ഈ ചർച്ചകളിൽ ഏറ്റവും പ്രധാനപ്പെട്ടത്.<sup>2</sup> ജനങ്ങൾക്കിടയിൽ പലവിധേന രൂപംകൊള്ളുന്ന ഏകതാബോധമാണ് ദേശീയതയെന്ന സ്വതാബോധമായി വികാസം പ്രാപിക്കുന്നത് എന്നാണ് മോഡേണിസ്റ്റുകളുടെ വാദം. ഒരു രാഷ്ട്രത്തിന്റെ ഭാഗമെന്ന നിലയിൽ ജനതകളെ കൂട്ടിയിണക്കുന്ന ഘടകങ്ങളെക്കുറിച്ച് അവർക്കിടയിൽ വ്യത്യസ്തമായ അഭിപ്രായങ്ങളുണ്ടെങ്കിലും ഏകതാബോധം ദേശീയതയിലേക്ക് നയിക്കുമെന്ന പൊതുവായ നിഗമനത്തിൽ അവർ എത്തിച്ചേരുന്നുണ്ട്. ഗിഡെൻസ്, ഫ്രെഡ് റിഡ്, ബെനഡിക്ട് ആൻഡ്രൂസ്, എറിക് ഹോബ്സ്ബാം എന്നിവരാണ് പ്രധാനമായും ഈ ആശയത്തിന്റെ വക്താക്കൾ. ഈ കാഴ്ചപ്പാടുകളുടെ പശ്ചാത്തലത്തിൽ നിന്നുകൊണ്ട് ഇന്ത്യൻ ദേശീയതയുടെയും ദേശ-രാഷ്ട്രത്തിന്റെ ഉത്ഭവത്തെ സംബന്ധിക്കുന്ന ആലോചനകൾ ഉണ്ടാകുന്നുണ്ട്. ഇന്ത്യൻദേശീയതയും ദേശ-രാഷ്ട്രവും ആധുനികകാലത്ത് രൂപംകൊണ്ടതാണെന്നും ദേശീയപ്രസ്ഥാനത്തിന് അതിൽ വലിയ പങ്കുണ്ടെന്നുമാണ് മാർക്സിസ്റ്റ് ചരിത്രകാരൻമാരുടെ വാദം.<sup>3</sup> 1920കളിൽ കമ്മ്യൂണിസ്റ്റ്ആശയങ്ങളുടെ പ്രധാന വക്താവായിരുന്ന എം. എൻ റോയ് ആണ് മാർക്സിസ്റ്റ് പരിപ്രേക്ഷ്യത്തിൽ നിന്നുകൊണ്ട് ദേശീയതയെക്കുറിച്ചുള്ള ചർച്ചകൾക്ക് തുടക്കം കുറിക്കുന്നത്. റോയിയുടെ അഭിപ്രായത്തിൽ ഇന്ത്യൻദേശീയത സാമ്രാജ്യത്വത്തിന്റെ തണലിൽ 19, 20 നൂറ്റാണ്ടുകളിൽ ഉടലെടുത്ത തദ്ദേശീയ മുതലാളിത്ത (native capitalism) ത്തിന്റെ രാഷ്ട്രീയപ്രത്യയശാസ്ത്രമാണ് (qtd.2016:484). ഇന്ത്യൻദേശീയതയുടെ



ഇങ്ങനെതെക്കുറിച്ചും വികാസത്തെക്കുറിച്ചുമുള്ള നിരീക്ഷണങ്ങൾ മുന്നോട്ടുവെക്കുന്ന മറ്റൊരു ചരിത്രകാരൻ ബിപൻ ചന്ദ്രയാണ്. കൊളോണിയൽവിരുദ്ധ സമരത്തിന്റെ ഉൽപ്പന്നമാണ് ഇന്ത്യൻദേശീയത എന്നാണ് അദ്ദേഹം വാദിക്കുന്നത് (2012:216-219).

ഇന്ത്യൻദേശീയതയുടെ പ്രധാനപ്പെട്ട സവിശേഷത അത് സാമ്പത്തികദേശീയതയായും രാഷ്ട്രീയദേശീയതയായുമാണ് രൂപംകൊണ്ടത് എന്നതാണ്. ദേശീയതയുടെ രൂപപ്പെടുത്തിയ അത്യന്താപേക്ഷിതമായ ഘടകം ഒരു രാജ്യത്തിലെ ജനങ്ങൾക്കിടയിൽ രൂപംകൊള്ളുന്ന തങ്ങൾ ഒരേ രാഷ്ട്രത്തിലെ ജനതയാണെന്ന ഏകതാബോധമാണ്.<sup>4</sup> പല പാശ്ചാത്യരാജ്യങ്ങളിലെയും ദേശീയതയുടെ രൂപപ്പെടുത്തിലേക്ക് നയിച്ച ഏകതാബോധത്തിന് ആധാരശിലയായിരുന്നത് പൊതുവായ സംസ്കാരം, മതം, ഭാഷ, വംശം എന്നിവയായിരുന്നു. എന്നാൽ ഇന്ത്യൻദേശീയതയെ നിർണ്ണയിച്ചത് പൊതുവായ സാമ്പത്തികാവസ്ഥയും രാഷ്ട്രീയപ്രത്യയശാസ്ത്രങ്ങളുമായിരുന്നു. ഇത്തരമൊരവസ്ഥയെ സംജാതമാക്കിയത് കോളനീകരണമാണ്. സാംസ്കാരികവും ഭൂമിശാസ്ത്രപരവുമായ ഏകതാബോധം ഇന്ത്യയുടെ ചരിത്രത്തിലുടനീളം പലനിലയ്ക്ക് രൂപപ്പെടുന്നുണ്ടായിരുന്നുവെന്നും ബൃഹദാഖ്യാനങ്ങളും ലഘുആഖ്യാനങ്ങളും പലമേഖലയിൽപ്പെട്ട ജനങ്ങളെ കൂട്ടിയിണക്കിക്കൊണ്ട് സാംസ്കാരികമായ ഏകാത്മകത്വം സ്ഥാപിക്കുന്നതിന് സഹായിച്ചിട്ടുണ്ട് എന്നും ബിപൻ വിശദമാക്കുന്നു. എങ്കിലും, ആധുനികമായ ദേശീയതാബോധത്തിന്റെയും ദേശ - രാഷ്ട്രമെന്ന നിലയ്ക്കുള്ള ഇന്ത്യയുടെയും രൂപപ്പെടുത്തിനാവശ്യമായ ഏകതാബോധം ഉടലെടുക്കുന്നത് കോളനീകരണത്തോടുകൂടിയാണ് അദ്ദേഹം അഭിപ്രായപ്പെടുന്നു (Bipan, 2012:218). കോളനീകരണം ഇന്ത്യൻ സാമ്പത്തികമേഖലയെ ഏകീകരിക്കാൻ നടത്തിയ ശ്രമങ്ങളും ഏകതാബോധത്തിലേക്ക് നയിക്കുന്നുണ്ടെന്ന് അദ്ദേഹം അഭിപ്രായപ്പെടുന്നു(2012:226). സാമ്രാജ്യത്വവിരുദ്ധത, സ്വാതന്ത്ര്യം, ജനാധിപത്യം, സോഷ്യലിസം, മാനവികത, സാർവ്വലൗകികദേശീയത, മതനിരപേക്ഷത തുടങ്ങിയ രാഷ്ട്രീയപ്രത്യയശാസ്ത്രങ്ങളാൽ ദേശീയപ്രസ്ഥാനം ഇരുപതാം നൂറ്റാണ്ടോടുകൂടി ആകർഷിക്കപ്പെടുന്നുണ്ട്. ഈ രാഷ്ട്രീയപ്രത്യയശാസ്ത്രങ്ങളാണ് ഇന്ത്യൻദേശീയതയുടെ ആധാരശിലകളായി മാറുന്നത്.

ഇതരരാജ്യങ്ങളിലെ ദേശീയതകളിൽനിന്നും ഇന്ത്യൻദേശീയതയെ വ്യതിരിക്തമാക്കുന്നത് അത് ഉപദേശീയതകളെ നിർമ്മിച്ചുകൊണ്ട് രൂപപ്പെടുന്നു എന്നതാണ്. 'ഇന്ത്യക്കാർ' എന്ന ബോധത്തിലേക്ക് മലയാളിയും തമിഴനും, ബംഗാളിയും ചുവടുവെയ്ക്കുന്നത് തങ്ങളുടെ തായ ദേശീയതകളെ ഉൽപാദിപ്പിച്ചാണ്. ദേശീയബോധവും ഉപദേശീയബോധവും പരസ്പരപൂരകമായ പ്രതിഭാസമാണെന്നും അതിനാൽ കേരളം ഇന്ത്യയുടെ ഒരു ഖണ്ഡമല്ല, രാഷ്ട്രം തന്നെയാണെന്നും കെ.എൻ. പണിക്കർ നിരീക്ഷിക്കുന്നത് അതുകൊണ്ടാണ് (Panikkar, 1995: 47). മലയാളീദേശീയത (കേരളീയത) യെ രൂപപ്പെടുത്തിയാണ് കേരളം ഇന്ത്യയെന്ന ദേശ - രാഷ്ട്രത്തിന്റെയും ദേശീയതയുടെയും ഭാഗമാകുന്നത്. മലയാളി എന്നൊരൊറ്റ ദേശ - ഭാഷാസ്വത്വം സൃഷ്ടിക്കുന്ന ഏകതാബോധമാണ് മലയാളീദേശീയത. ഈ ഏകതാബോധത്തെ സൃഷ്ടിച്ച് ഐക്യകേരളത്തെ, മലയാളികളുടെ മാതൃഭൂമിയെ രൂപപ്പെടുത്തുന്നത് നവോത്ഥാനത്തിലൂടെയാണ്.

നാടുവാഴിത്തത്തിൽനിന്നും ആധുനികദേശ - രാഷ്ട്രസംവിധാനത്തിലേക്കുള്ള പരിവർത്തനത്തെ മാത്രമല്ല, പറ്റത്തിലൊരാൾ എന്നതിൽ നിന്ന് ആധുനിക വ്യക്തിയിലേക്കും, ജാതീയമായി വേർതിരിക്കപ്പെട്ട സ്ഥലരാശിയിൽനിന്നും ജാതീയാതീതമായ പൊതുമണ്ഡലത്തിലേക്കും, ആധുനികമായ ഉൽപ്പാദന-ജീവനോപാധികളിലേക്കും, കൂടുംബ, സ്ത്രീപുരുഷബന്ധങ്ങളിലേക്കും കേരളത്തെ പരിവർത്തിപ്പിക്കുന്ന പ്രക്രിയയാണ് കേരളീയനവോത്ഥാനം. ഇന്ത്യൻദേശീയതയുടെ ആധാരശിലകളായി വർത്തിച്ച എല്ലാ രാഷ്ട്രീയമൂല്യങ്ങളും കേരളീയനവോത്ഥാനത്തിലും കാണാം. കേരളീയനവോത്ഥാനത്തിന് രണ്ടുഘട്ടങ്ങളുണ്ടെന്ന് സുനിൽ പി. ഇളയിടം നിരീക്ഷിക്കുന്നു; പത്തൊമ്പതാം നൂറ്റാണ്ടിന്റെ അവസാനദശകങ്ങൾ മുതൽ 1930കൾ വരെ നീണ്ടുനിൽക്കുന്ന ആദ്യഘട്ടവും, 1930കൾ മുതൽ 1960 കൾ വരെ തുടരുന്ന രണ്ടാംഘട്ടവും (സുനിൽ, 2014:197). കേരളീയനവോത്ഥാനത്തിന്റെ പ്രത്യേകത അത് മുന്നോട്ടുവെച്ച ജാതിവിമർശനമായിരുന്നു. ജാതിയെ മറികടക്കുന്നതിനായി ജാതീയമായി സംഘടിപ്പിക്കുന്നതിലൂടെയാണ് സമുദായങ്ങൾ നിലവിൽ വന്നത്. ഒരേ സമയം ജാതിയും ജാതിവിമർശനപരവുമാണത്. അപ്പോഴും ആധുനികമാനവികതയുടെ മൂല്യങ്ങളാൽ പ്രചോദിതമാണ് (2014, 195 - 196). 'മനുഷ്യാണാം മനുഷ്യത്വം', 'നവ്യുതിരിയെ മനുഷ്യനാക്കുക' തുട

ങ്ങിയ പരിഷ്കരണപ്രസ്ഥാനങ്ങളുടെ പ്രമാണങ്ങൾ കേരളീയനവോത്ഥാനത്തിന്റെ മനുഷ്യ കേന്ദ്രിത സ്വഭാവത്തെ വെളിവാക്കുന്നു.

ഹ്യൂഡൽവിരുദ്ധവും സമുദായപരിഷ്കരണപരവുമായ സമരങ്ങളിൽനിന്നും സാമ്രാജ്യത്വവിരുദ്ധവും കേരളീയസ്വത്വബോധത്തിൽ അടിയുറച്ചതുമായ പുതിയൊരു തലത്തിലേക്ക് ജാതി വിരുദ്ധസമരങ്ങൾ വളരുന്ന ഘട്ടമാണ് നവോത്ഥാനത്തിന്റെ രണ്ടാംഘട്ടമായി സുനിൽ പി. ഇളയിടം പരിഗണിക്കുന്നത് (2014, 197). ദേശീയപ്രസ്ഥാനവും ഇടതുപക്ഷവും കമ്മ്യൂണിസ്റ്റു പ്രസ്ഥാനവും നടത്തിയ ഇടപെടലുകളാണ് ഈ ഘട്ടത്തിൽ നവോത്ഥാനസംരംഭങ്ങളെ നിർണ്ണയിച്ചത്. സാമ്രാജ്യത്വവിരുദ്ധത, മതനിരപേക്ഷത, സോഷ്യലിസം തുടങ്ങിയ ദേശീയ പ്രസ്ഥാനം ഉയർത്തിപ്പിടിച്ച രാഷ്ട്രീയപ്രത്യയശാസ്ത്രങ്ങളും ഗാന്ധിയൻസമരരീതികളും കേരളത്തിൽ പ്രചരിപ്പിക്കപ്പെടുന്നത് ഇക്കാലഘട്ടത്തിലാണ്. ദേശീയതയോടൊപ്പം കേരളീയതയും ഈ ഘട്ടത്തിൽ വിഭാവനം ചെയ്യപ്പെടുന്നുണ്ട്. 'ഭാരതമെന്നുകേട്ടാൽ അഭിമാനപൂരിത മാവുക'യും 'കേരളമെന്നുകേട്ടാൽ തിളച്ചുമറിയുക'യും ചെയ്യുന്ന മനസ്സുകളോടുള്ള ആഹ്വാനങ്ങൾ മുഴങ്ങുന്നതങ്ങനെയാണ്. ഇ.എം.എസ് ഒന്നേക്കാൽ കോടി മലയാളികളെക്കുറിച്ചെഴുതുന്നതും പിന്നീട് മലയാളികളുടെ മാതൃഭൂമി എന്ന് വിശദീകരിക്കുന്നതും ഇതേ ആശയത്തെത്തന്നെയാണ് (2014:198).ജാതിരഹിതം മാത്രമല്ല വർഗരഹിതം കൂടിയായ ഒരു സമൂഹത്തെ വിഭാവനം ചെയ്തുകൊണ്ട് 1940 കളോടെ കമ്മ്യൂണിസ്റ്റ്പ്രസ്ഥാനവും കേരളത്തിന്റെ നവോത്ഥാനപ്രക്രിയയിൽ സജീവമായി ഇടപെടുന്നുണ്ട്.

ഐക്യകേരളമെന്ന ആവശ്യവും നാൽപ്പതുകളിൽ ഇടതുപക്ഷം ഏറ്റെടുക്കുന്നു. ഐക്യകേരളം എന്ന മുദ്രാവാക്യത്തിന് രൂപം നൽകിയതാണ് 1942 - 1945 കാലഘട്ടത്തിൽ കമ്മ്യൂണിസ്റ്റ് പാർട്ടി നടത്തിയ ശ്രദ്ധേയമായൊരു കാൽവെപ്പെന്ന് ഇ.എം.എസ്. അഭിപ്രായപ്പെടുന്നു (ഇ.എം.എസ്., 2008: 296-197). നാനാതരത്തിലുള്ള ആശയധാരകളിലൂന്നി നിന്നുകൊണ്ടുള്ള ഇടപെടലുകളിലൂടെ 1957 ൽ ഐക്യകേരളം യാഥാർത്ഥ്യമാകുന്നുണ്ട്. ഇത്തരത്തിൽ, നവോത്ഥാനപ്രസ്ഥാനങ്ങൾ ജാതിവിരുദ്ധവും സാമ്രാജ്യത്വവിരുദ്ധവും മതനിരപേക്ഷവും മാനവികവുമായ ലോകബോധത്തിൽനിന്നുകൊണ്ട് രൂപപ്പെടുത്തിയെടുത്തതാണ് ആധുനികകേരളവും മലയാളീദേശീയതയും.

**ദേശീയതയും സിനിമയും**

ദേശീയതയുടെ നിർമ്മിതിയിൽ സിനിമകൾ വലിയ പങ്കുവഹിക്കുന്നുണ്ട്. 'ഇന്ത്യൻസിനിമ'യെന്ന സംജ്ഞതന്നെ മുഴുവൻ ഇന്ത്യക്കാരെയും കുട്ടിയോജിപ്പിക്കുന്ന ഒന്നാണ്. ദേശീയതയും സിനിമയും തമ്മിലുള്ള ഈ ബന്ധത്തെക്കുറിച്ച് ധാരാളം നിരീക്ഷണങ്ങളുണ്ടായിട്ടുണ്ട്. രാഷ്ട്രത്തെ സങ്കൽപനം ചെയ്യുന്നതിൽ അച്ചടി മാധ്യമ മുതലാളിത്തത്തിനുള്ള പങ്ക് ആൻഡേഴ്സൺ വിശദീകരിക്കുന്നുണ്ട്. എന്നാൽ ഇന്ത്യപോലെ ഭൂരിഭാഗം ജനങ്ങളും നിരക്ഷരരായ ഒരു സമൂഹത്തിൽ രാഷ്ട്രത്തെ വിഭാവനം ചെയ്യിക്കാനുള്ള ശേഷി അച്ചടി മാധ്യമത്തേക്കാൾ കൂടുതൽ ദൃശ്യ മാധ്യമങ്ങൾക്കാണ് എന്നാണ് ജ്യോതിക വെർദി അഭിപ്രായപ്പെടുന്നത്.ഹിന്ദി സിനിമയുടെ സ്വാധീനം സർക്കാർ നിയന്ത്രണത്തിലുള്ള റേഡിയോ, ടെലിവിഷൻ എന്നിവയേക്കാൾ എത്രയോ കൂടുതലാണ് (Jyotika, 2004:6) എന്ന് വെർദി നിരീക്ഷിക്കുന്നു.<sup>5</sup> ഇന്ത്യൻ ജനപ്രിയസിനിമ വ്യക്തമായും ഒരു 'ദേശീയ സിനിമ'(national cinema) യാണ് എന്ന് വിശേഷിപ്പിക്കാൻ സാധിക്കുമെന്നും വെർദി പറയുന്നു.ആൻഡേഴ്സന്റെ ഒരേ സമയം ജനങ്ങൾ പത്രം വായിക്കുന്നതിലൂടെ ഒരു രാഷ്ട്രത്തിന്റെ ഭാഗമായിത്തീരുന്നു എന്ന ആശയത്തിൽ നിന്നും പ്രചോദനം ഉൾക്കൊണ്ട് സിനിമകൾ ജനങ്ങളുടെ ശ്രദ്ധയെ ഒരേ ദിശയിലേക്ക് ഒരേ സമയം അണിനിരത്തുന്നതിലൂടെ ഒരു രാഷ്ട്രത്തിന്റെ ഭാഗമായിമാറുന്നുണ്ട് എന്ന് റിക്ക് ആൾട്ട്മാൻ നിരീക്ഷിക്കുന്നു(Jyotika, qtd., 2004:218). ഇന്ത്യയെ ഒരു രാഷ്ട്രമെന്ന നിലയിൽ ഏകോപിപ്പിക്കുന്ന എട്ട് ഘടകങ്ങളിൽ ഒന്ന് ഹിന്ദിസിനിമയാണ് എന്ന് രാമചന്ദ്ര ഗുഹെയും അഭിപ്രായപ്പെടുന്നുണ്ട്<sup>6</sup> (Ramachandra, 2007:704).

ആദ്യത്തെ സിനിമ രൂപം കൊള്ളുമ്പോൾ ഇന്ത്യ ഒരു പരമാധികാര സ്വതന്ത്രരാഷ്ട്രമായി മാറിയിട്ടില്ല. അതുകൊണ്ടുതന്നെ സ്വതന്ത്രപൂർവ്വ ഇന്ത്യയിലെ സിനിമകളെല്ലാം കൊളോണിയൽ ഭരണകൂടത്തിന്റെ ശക്തമായ നിരീക്ഷണങ്ങൾക്കും നിയന്ത്രണങ്ങൾക്കും നടുവിലും പങ്കുവെച്ചത് സ്വതന്ത്രരാഷ്ട്രത്തെക്കുറിച്ചുള്ള സങ്കൽപ്പങ്ങളാണ്. പുരാണ-ഐതിഹ്യങ്ങളിലൂടെയും സന്യാസികവികളുടേയും ചരിത്രവ്യക്തിത്വങ്ങളുടെയും ജീവചരിത്രങ്ങളിലൂടെ

സാമ്രാജ്യത്വവിരുദ്ധ ആശയങ്ങളെ, ഇന്ത്യയെന്ന സ്വതന്ത്രരാഷ്ട്ര സങ്കല്പങ്ങളെ ഒളിച്ചുകടത്തിയാണ് അവരുടെ സിനിമകൾ ദേശീയബോധത്തെ നിർമ്മിച്ചത്. സാമ്രാജ്യത്വത്തിനുമുമ്പ് സാമ്രാജ്യത്വവിരുദ്ധാശയങ്ങളും ദേശീയപ്രസ്ഥാനത്തിന്റെ - പ്രത്യേകിച്ച് ഗാന്ധിയുടെ ആശയങ്ങളാണ് ഇന്ത്യൻസിനിമകളുടെ ഉള്ളടക്കത്തെ നിർണ്ണയിച്ചിരുന്നത്. സമാന്തരമായി ഭഗത്സിങ്ങും ചന്ദ്രശേഖർ ആസാദും സുഖദേവു മൊക്കെ ഉൾപ്പെടുന്ന ക്ഷുബ്ധയാവനത്തിന്റെ രാഷ്ട്രീയബദലുകളും ഇരുപതുകളിൽ സജീവമായിരുന്നു എന്ന് പി.എസ് രാധാകൃഷ്ണൻ നിരീക്ഷിക്കുന്നുണ്ട് (2016:14).

**മലയാളദേശീയതയും വടക്കൻപാട്ടുസിനിമകളും**

മലയാളസിനിമയാകട്ടെ, മലയാളദേശീയതയുടെ നിർമ്മിതിയിലാണ് ഇടപെട്ടുകൊണ്ടിരുന്നത്. നവോത്ഥാനപ്രക്രിയയിലൂടെ രൂപംകൊണ്ട ആധുനികകേരളത്തെയാണ് മലയാളസിനിമകളിലെ ആഖ്യാനഘടനയ്ക്കുള്ളിൽ ദൃശ്യമാകുന്നത്. നവോത്ഥാനാശയങ്ങളെ സ്വാംശീകരിച്ചുകൊണ്ട് ആധുനികകേരളത്തിന്റെ നിർമ്മിതിയിൽ പങ്കുചേരുകയും ചെയ്യുന്നു മലയാളസിനിമ. പുരാണങ്ങളെയും ഐതിഹ്യങ്ങളെയും ആസ്പദമാക്കിയുള്ള ഇതരഭാഷകളിലെ ആദ്യകാലസിനിമകളിൽനിന്നും വ്യതിചലിച്ചു സാമൂഹ്യമലയാളികൾ അവതരിപ്പിച്ചുകൊണ്ട് തനതായ ഒരു ചലച്ചിത്രപാരമ്പര്യത്തെ മലയാളസിനിമ രൂപപ്പെടുത്തുന്നു. 1928 ൽ മലയാളസിനിമ *വിഗതകുമാരനി* (1928) ലൂടെ ജന്മം കൊള്ളുന്നുണ്ടെങ്കിലും ഒരു സാംസ്കാരികരൂപമെന്ന നിലയിലേക്ക് വളർച്ച പ്രാപിക്കുന്നത് 1950കളിലാണ്. തമിഴ്സിനിമകളുടെ അനുകരണവും അമ്മായിയമ്മപ്പോര്, നാത്തുൻപോര് തുടങ്ങിയ പ്രമേയങ്ങളും മാത്രമായി നിലനിന്നിരുന്ന മലയാളസിനിമ കേരളത്തിന്റെ ആധുനികീകരണ പ്രക്രിയകളോടും ഐക്യകേരളമെന്ന ആവശ്യത്തോടും ഐക്യപ്പെടുത്തുന്നുണ്ട് 1950 കളോടെയാണ്. നിർമ്മാണത്തിൽ സ്വന്തം നാട്ടുകാർ മാത്രം അണിനിരക്കുന്ന പൂർണ്ണ മലയാളസിനിമയാവുകയെന്ന ലക്ഷ്യം *നീലക്കുയിലി* (1954)ന്റെ അണിയറ പ്രവർത്തകർക്കുണ്ടാകുന്നത് ഇതിന്റെ ഭാഗമായാണ്. എഡിറ്ററൊഴിച്ച് ചിത്രത്തിൽ സഹകരിച്ചവരെല്ലാം മലയാളികളായിരുന്നു. കേരളത്തിലെ ആദ്യത്തെ മലയാളസിനിമയാവുക എന്നത് *നീലക്കുയിലി*ന്റെ പ്രധാന അവകാശവാദങ്ങളിലൊന്നായിരുന്നു (രാധാകൃഷ്ണൻ, 2010:28).

ഐക്യകേരളം യാഥാർത്ഥ്യമാകുന്നതിന് മുമ്പ് ഇറങ്ങിയ സിനിമകളിൽപോലും കേരളത്തെ ഒരൊറ്റ ദേശമായി കണ്ടാണ് കേരളം അവതരിപ്പിക്കപ്പെട്ടത്. തിരുകൊച്ചിക്കാരായോ മലബാറുകാരായോ അല്ല സിനിമകളിൽ കഥാപാത്രങ്ങൾ ചിത്രീകരിക്കപ്പെട്ടത് മറിച്ച് കേരളീയരായ, മലയാളികളായ, പൗരരായിട്ടാണ്. 1954 ൽ പുറത്തിറങ്ങിയ *നീലക്കുയിൽ* ജാതിവ്യത്യാസങ്ങളില്ലാത്ത ഫ്യൂഡൽബോധയൊഴിഞ്ഞ സ്ഥിതിസമത്വമുള്ള ഐക്യകേരളത്തെയും ദേശ- രാഷ്ട്രത്തെയും അതിലെ പൗരരെയുമാണ് ഭാവന ചെയ്യുന്നത്. ജാതീയതയ്ക്കെതിരെയും അസമത്വങ്ങൾക്കെതിരെയും ശക്തമായ നിലപാടെടുത്തുകൊണ്ട് *നവലോകം* (1951), *ന്യൂസ്പേപ്പർ ബോയ്* ( 1955), *രാരിച്ചൻ എന്ന പൗരൻ* ( 1956), *മുടിയനായ പുത്രൻ* (1961) എന്നീ സിനിമകൾ നാരായണഗുരുവും സംഘവും തുടങ്ങി വെക്കുകയും കർഷക - കമ്മ്യൂണിസ്റ്റ് പ്രസ്ഥാനങ്ങൾ പൂർത്തീകരിക്കുകയും ചെയ്ത നവോത്ഥാനമുന്നേറ്റങ്ങളെ ഏറ്റെടുക്കുകയായിരുന്നു. അതുപോലെ തന്നെ, സമ്പന്നനും ദരിദ്രനും തമ്മിലുള്ള സംഘർഷത്തിൽ ദരിദ്രന്റെ പക്ഷത്തും, ജന്മിയും കുടിയാനും തമ്മിലുള്ള വൈരുദ്ധ്യത്തിൽ കുടിയാന്റെ ഭാഗത്തും സവർണ്ണനും അവർണ്ണനും തമ്മിലുള്ള പോരിൽ അവർണ്ണന്റെ ഒപ്പവും ( രാമചന്ദ്രൻ, 2009:4) മലയാളസിനിമ നിലയുറപ്പിച്ചത് നവോത്ഥാനപാരമ്പര്യങ്ങളോടുള്ള പ്രതിബദ്ധതകൊണ്ടായിരുന്നു. നവോത്ഥാനസാരങ്ങളിലും ആധുനികകേരളനിർമ്മിതിയിലും ഇടപെട്ടുകൊണ്ട് വളർന്നുവരുന്ന മലയാളസിനിമയിലാണ് ആദ്യകാല വടക്കൻപാട്ടുസിനിമകളും കണ്ണിച്ചേരുന്നത്. ഐക്യകേരളപിറവിക്കുശേഷം 1961 ലാണ് വടക്കൻപാട്ടുസിനിമകൾ പുറത്തിറങ്ങുന്നത്. 1956 ൽ ഐക്യകേരളം യാഥാർത്ഥ്യമായെങ്കിലും അതൊരു മാനസികയാഥാർത്ഥ്യമായിത്തീരുന്ന പ്രക്രിയ തുടരുകയായിരുന്നുവെന്നും ഈ പ്രക്രിയയിലാണ് ഇതരകലകളോടൊപ്പം സിനിമകളും ഇടപെടുന്നതെന്നും പി. എസ്. രാധാകൃഷ്ണൻ നിരീക്ഷിക്കുന്നു (രാധാകൃഷ്ണൻ, 2010:42).

വടക്കൻപാട്ടുസിനിമകളും ഇതിൽ ഭാഗഭാക്കാനുണ്ട്. ഐക്യകേരളനാന്തരം, വിമോചനസമരത്തെ തുടർന്നുള്ള കമ്മ്യൂണിസ്റ്റ് സർക്കാരിന്റെ പിരിച്ചുവിടലിനുശേഷം ഉടലെടുത്ത, ദീർഘകാലം നീണ്ടുനിന്ന രാഷ്ട്രീയാസ്ഥിരതയുടെ കാലത്താണ് വടക്കൻപാട്ടുസിനിമകൾ പിറവിയെടുക്കുന്നത്. ഐക്യകേരളത്തെ മാനസിക യാഥാർത്ഥ്യമാക്കുന്ന പ്രക്രിയയോടൊപ്പം തന്നെ, ഈ രാഷ്ട്രീയസന്ദിഗ്ദ്ധാവസ്ഥയെക്കൂടി വടക്കൻപാട്ടുസിനിമകൾക്ക് അഭിസംബോ

ധന ചെയ്യേണ്ടിയിരുന്നു. വിമോചനസമരം സൃഷ്ടിച്ച ജാതി, മത, സാമുദായിക ധ്രുവീകരണംമൂലം ചിന്നിച്ചിതറിപ്പോയ കേരളത്തെ ജാത്യതാമയ, മതാതീതമായ, മാനവികതയിലധിഷ്ഠിതമായ രാഷ്ട്രഭാവനയെ മുൻനിർത്തി ഏകോപിപ്പിക്കാനുള്ള ശ്രമങ്ങളാണ് വടക്കൻപാട്ടുസിനിമകൾ നടത്തുന്നത്.

വടക്കൻപാട്ടുകളിലെ കഥയും കഥാപാത്രങ്ങളുമാണ് തിരശ്ശീലയിൽ ദൃശ്യമാകുന്നതെങ്കിലും അതിൽ ഉൾച്ചേർന്നിരിക്കുന്നത് ആധുനിക ദേശ - രാഷ്ട്രത്തിന്റെ ലോകാവബോധമാണ്. പ്രാദേശികമായി നിലനിന്നിരുന്ന വാമൊഴി പാരമ്പര്യങ്ങളെ കേരളത്തിന്റെ പൊതുവായ ഭൂതകാലപാരമ്പര്യമായി അവതരിപ്പിച്ചുകൊണ്ട് പ്രാദേശികഭേദങ്ങളില്ലാത്ത ഒരൊറ്റ ദേശമായി കേരളത്തെ സിനിമകൾ സങ്കല്പിക്കുന്നു. കേരളത്തെ പൊതുവിൽ ഒറ്റ ദേശീയതയായി സങ്കല്പിക്കുകയാണ് വടക്കൻപാട്ട് ചിത്രങ്ങൾ എന്ന് കെ.പി.ജയകുമാർ നിരീക്ഷിക്കുന്നതുപോലെ, പാട്ടിന്റെ ഭൂമിശാസ്ത്ര സാങ്കാരിക പ്രാദേശികതയിൽ നിന്നും അടർത്തി കേരളത്തിന്റെ പൊതുവായ ഭൂതകാലമാക്കി വടക്കൻപാട്ടുകളെ അനുഭവിപ്പിക്കാൻ സിനിമകൾക്ക് കഴിഞ്ഞു. അതിലൂടെ പുരാണികവും പാവനവുമായ ഒരു ബൃഹത്പാരമ്പര്യത്തിന്റെ അഭാവം നികത്തുകയായിരുന്നു സിനിമകൾ. യൂറോപ്യൻ ദേശീയതകൾ ശ്രീസിലെ ക്ലാസിക് പാരമ്പര്യത്തെ തങ്ങളുടെ അതീത ഭൂതകാലവുമായി ബന്ധിപ്പിക്കുന്നതുപോലെ വടക്കൻപാട്ടുകളെ കേരളത്തിന്റെ പൊതുപാരമ്പര്യ ചരിത്രമാക്കി മാറ്റാൻ സിനിമകൾക്ക് കഴിഞ്ഞു (ജയകുമാർ, 2013:61).

ആരോമലും ഉണ്ണിയാർച്ചയും ഒതേനനുമെല്ലാം മലബാറിന്റെ മാത്രം വീരൻമാരും വീരാംഗനമാരുമായിരുന്നുവെങ്കിൽ സിനിമകൾ അവരെ കേരളത്തിന്റെ പൊതുവായ വീരപാരമ്പര്യമാക്കി മാറ്റുന്നു. പുത്തൂരപാട്ടുകളിലെ ഉണ്ണിയാർച്ച കേന്ദ്രകഥാപാത്രമായി വരുന്ന സിനിമയാണ് വടക്കൻപാട്ടുസിനിമാശ്രേണിയിലെ ആദ്യസിനിമയായ *ഉണ്ണിയാർച്ച*. *ഉണ്ണിയാർച്ച*യിലെ ഒരു ഗാനത്തിൽ അവരെ 'കേരളമാതാവെ'ന്ന് വിശേഷിപ്പിക്കുന്നുണ്ട്. പ്രാദേശികമായ വീരനായികാപട്ടത്തിൽ നിന്നും ഉണ്ണിയാർച്ചയെ കേരളമാതാവ് എന്ന പദവിയിലേക്ക് ഉയർത്തി കേരളത്തിന്റെ പൊതുപാരമ്പര്യമാക്കി മാറ്റുന്നു. പാട്ടുകൾ പ്രചാരത്തിലുണ്ടായിരുന്ന പ്രദേശവും പാട്ടുകളിൽ പ്രതിപാദിക്കുന്ന പ്രദേശങ്ങളും മലബാറും അതിലെ നാടുകളുമാണ്. അതിൽത്തന്നെ കടത്തനാട് എന്ന നാട്ടുരാജ്യത്തെ കേന്ദ്രീകരിച്ചാണ് കൂടുതൽ പാട്ടുകൾ ഉണ്ടായിരിക്കുന്നത്. വടക്കൻപാട്ടുസിനിമകളിലും ദൃശ്യമാകുന്ന നാട് കടത്തനാട് തന്നെയാണ്. എന്നാൽ, പാട്ടുകളിലെ കടത്തനാട് പലനാട്ടുരാജ്യങ്ങളിലൊന്നാണെങ്കിൽ സിനിമകളിലേത് കേരളമെന്നൊരൊറ്റ രാഷ്ട്രീയഭൂമികയെയാണ് പ്രതിനിധാനം ചെയ്യുന്നത്. ജാതീയമായി മനുഷ്യർ പ്രത്യേകം കുടികളിലും, ചാളകളിലും, മനകളിലും കോവിലകങ്ങളിലുമായി വേർതിരിക്കപ്പെട്ടിരുന്ന കടത്തനാടിനെയല്ല സിനിമകളിൽ കാണുന്നത്, മറിച്ച് എല്ലാ ജാതികളെയും ഉൾക്കൊള്ളുന്ന ആധുനികകേരളത്തിലെ പൊതുമണ്ഡലമാണ് സിനിമകളുടെ ആഖ്യാനഘടനയിലുള്ളത്. സ്ത്രീകളും നായരായ ഒതേനനും ഈഴവനായ ആരോമലും മുസ്ലീമായ വടകര പോക്കറും ദളിതരായ വണ്ണാൻ അമ്പുവും പാണനും പുളളുവൻ ചത്തുവുമൊക്കെ കുടിയിരിക്കുന്ന, അടുത്തിടപഴകുന്ന ജാതിമതലിംഗ വേർതിരിവുകളില്ലാത്ത പൊതുസ്ഥലമാണ് സിനിമകളിൽ കാണുന്നത്.

സിനിമകളിൽ കാണുന്ന രാഷ്ട്രീയാധികാരഘടനയിൽ രാജാവ്, നാടുവാഴി, അവരുടെ സംരക്ഷകരായി വീരയോദ്ധാക്കൾ എന്നിങ്ങനെയുള്ളതാണ്. രണ്ടുതരത്തിലുള്ള രാഷ്ട്രീയാധികാരഘടനയാണ് സിനിമകളിൽ കാണുന്നത്: 1. രാജഭരണം 2. നാടുവാഴികളുടെ ഭരണം. പുത്തൂരപാട്ടുസിനിമകളിൽ<sup>6</sup> രാജാവിന് പ്രഥമസ്ഥാനം കൽപ്പിച്ചുകൊണ്ടുള്ള രാജഭരണമാണുള്ളത്. കടത്തനാട് ഒരു രാജ്യമായും ആ രാജ്യത്തിലെ ധീരയോദ്ധാക്കളായി ആരോമലും ഉണ്ണിയാർച്ചയും ആരോമലുണ്ണിയും കണ്ണപ്പനുംണ്ണിയും അവതരിപ്പിക്കപ്പെടുന്നു. തച്ചോളിപ്പാട്ടു സിനിമകളിൽ<sup>7</sup> നാടുവാഴികളെയാണ് കാണുന്നത്. രാജാക്കൻമാരും നാടുവാഴികളുമൊക്കെ അപ്രധാന കഥാപാത്രങ്ങളാണെങ്കിലും ഈ അധികാരരൂപങ്ങൾ സിനിമയിൽ ദൃശ്യമാകുന്നുണ്ട്. എന്നാൽ, സിനിമകളിലെ നാടുവാഴികളും രാജാക്കൻമാരും വീരയോദ്ധാക്കളും നാടുവാഴിത്തമുല്യങ്ങൾക്കു പകരം ആധുനിക ദേശ - രാഷ്ട്രത്തിലെ മുല്യങ്ങളാണ് ഉയർത്തിപ്പിടിക്കുന്നത്.

വടക്കൻപാട്ടുസിനിമകൾ നിർമ്മിക്കപ്പെടുന്ന കാലത്തെ കേരളം വിമോചനസമരത്താൽ ജാതി-മതാടിസ്ഥാനത്തിൽ വിഭജിക്കപ്പെട്ട ഒന്നായാണ് നിലനിന്നിരുന്നതെങ്കിൽ, തിരശ്ശീലയിൽ മതനിരപേക്ഷതയും മാനവികതയും ഉയർത്തിപ്പിടിച്ച് നാടിന്റെ അഖണ്ഡതയ്ക്കു വേണ്ടി നിലകൊള്ളുന്ന ഭരണാധികാരികളെയാണ് കാണുന്നത്. *ആരോമലുണ്ണി*യിൽ ജാതിയും മതവും നോക്കാതെ സ്വന്തം മകളെ വിവാഹം കഴിപ്പിച്ചയക്കാൻ തീരുമാനിക്കുന്ന

കോലശ്രീ നാട്ടിലെ രാജാവുണ്ട്. ജാതിയും മതവുമല്ല, ധീരതയും പോരാട്ടവീര്യമാണ് തന്റെ മകളുടെ വരനുവേണ്ട ഗുണങ്ങളെന്നാണ് രാജാവ് പറയുന്നത്. ഇത്തരത്തിലുള്ള മതനിരപേക്ഷമായ നിലപാടുകൾ ആദ്യകാല വടക്കൻപാട്ടുസിനിമകളിലുടനീളം കാണാം. തച്ചോളി ഒതേനനിലെ ഒതേനൻ ജാതി, മത വ്യത്യാസമില്ലാതെ വ്യക്തിബന്ധങ്ങൾ പുലർത്തിയിരുന്നു. ഒതേനനുമായി ഗാഢബന്ധം പുലർത്തിയിരുന്ന സുഹൃത്തുക്കളിലൊരാൾ വടകര പോക്കർ എന്ന ഇസ്ലാംമതവിശ്വാസിയായിരുന്നു. ഒതേനന്റെ വിവാഹത്തിന്റെയ്ക്ക് വെറ്റിലയും അടയ്ക്കയും നൽകി ബഹുമാനിക്കുന്ന വ്യക്തികളുടെ കൂട്ടത്തിൽ പോക്കരുമുണ്ട്. ‘ജാതിയും മതവും നോക്കിയല്ല ഒതേനന്റെ ചങ്ങാതിക്കൂറ് മനുഷ്യനെ നോക്കിയാണെന്ന്’ ഒതേനൻ വ്യക്തമാക്കുന്നു. മരണസമയത്ത് കൂടിനിന്ന നാനാജാതിമതത്തിൽപ്പെട്ട അനുയായികളോട് ഒതേനൻ പറയുന്നത് :

ഇനി ഈ നാടിന്റെ മാനം കാക്കേണ്ടത് നിങ്ങളാണ്. നിങ്ങളുടെ കുറായിരുന്നു എന്റെ ഏറ്റവും മുർച്ചയേറിയ ഉറുമി. നാം തമ്മിൽ തമ്മിൽ വിരോധം വെച്ചുപുലർത്താതെ സത്യത്തിലും നീതിയിലും ഉറച്ചുനിന്ന് ജാതി, മത വ്യത്യാസം കൂടാതെ, വലിയവൻ ചെറിയവൻ എന്നു നോക്കാതെ ഒറ്റക്കെട്ടായി നിന്നാൽ നമ്മുടെ നാടിന്റെ അഭിമാനവും വിജയവും എന്നെന്നും നമുക്ക് കാത്തുസൂക്ഷിക്കാം. ആ പരിശ്രമത്തിൽ ഞാൻ നിങ്ങളോടൊപ്പം ഉണ്ടാകും

എന്നാണ്. ജാതിമതവ്യത്യാസങ്ങളില്ലാത്ത, സമത്വസുന്ദരമായൊരു നാടിനെ സ്വപ്നം കാണുന്ന ഒതേനൻ നാടുവാഴിത്തകാലത്തെ ജാത്യധിഷ്ഠിത സമൂഹത്തിന്റെ പ്രതിനിധിയല്ല മറിച്ച് മതനിരപേക്ഷത ആധാരപ്രമാണമാക്കിയ ആധുനിക ദേശ - രാഷ്ട്രത്തിലെ പൗരനാണ്. നാടിന്റെ സ്വൈര്യവും സമാധാനവും ഐക്യവും തകർക്കുന്ന ഒന്നിനോടും വിട്ടുവീഴ്ചയുണ്ടാകില്ലെന്ന് ഒതേനൻ വ്യക്തമാക്കുന്നു.

മലയാളിത്തമുള്ള ആദ്യസിനിമയായ നീലക്കുയിൽ തുടങ്ങിവെച്ച ജാതിക്കും മതത്തിനും അതീതമായി മനുഷ്യൻ, മാനവികത എന്ന സങ്കല്പത്തിന്റെ തുടർച്ചയാണ് തച്ചോളി ഒതേനനിൽ ദൃശ്യമാകുന്നത്. നീലക്കുയിലിൽ, മോഹനെ ശ്രീധരൻ മാസ്റ്റർക്ക് തിരിച്ചേൽപ്പിച്ച് ശങ്കരൻനായർ പറയുന്നത്:

അവനെ ഒരു നല്ല മനുഷ്യനായി വളർത്തും. നായരും മാപ്പിളമാരും പൊലയനും ഒന്നുമാക്കണ്ട.. എനിക്ക് അതുമാത്രം മതി

എന്നാണ്. ഒതേനന്റെ ജാതിമതവ്യത്യാസമില്ലാത്ത കൂട്ടുകെട്ടുകളിലും ദൃശ്യമാകുന്നത് ഈ മാനവികബോധമാണ്. മലയാളസിനിമകളിൽ പൊതുവെ കുറ്റവാളികളായും മതമൗലികവാദികളായുമാണ് മുസ്ലീം കഥാപാത്രങ്ങൾ അടയാളപ്പെടുത്തുന്നത്. എന്നാൽ, വടക്കൻപാട്ടുസിനിമകൾ ഇതിൽനിന്നും വ്യത്യസ്തമായ നിലപാടാണ് സ്വീകരിച്ചത്. മുസ്ലീങ്ങളോട് വിരോധം പുലർത്തുന്ന ധാരാളം പാട്ടുകൾ പുത്തൂരം - തച്ചോളിപ്പാട്ടുകളിലുണ്ട്. പുത്തൂരംപാട്ടുകളിൽ സ്ത്രീകളെ വഴിനടക്കാൻ സമ്മതിക്കാത്ത തെമ്മാടികളായാണ് അവരെ ചിത്രീകരിച്ചിട്ടുള്ളത്. വടക്കൻപാട്ടുസിനിമകളിൽ പക്ഷേ, ഇത്തരത്തിൽ മോശക്കാരായോ ശത്രുക്കളായോ അല്ല അവതരിപ്പിച്ചത്. ഉണ്ണിയാർച്ചയിൽ, സ്ത്രീകളെ വഴിനടക്കാൻ സമ്മതിക്കാത്ത തെമ്മാടിക്കൂട്ടം മുസ്ലീങ്ങളല്ല. അതുപോലെ തന്നെ, പാട്ടുകളിൽ വിവരിക്കുന്നതുപോലെ ചുണ്ടങ്ങാപ്പൊയിൽ മായിൽകുട്ടിയല്ല തച്ചോളി ഒതേനനിൽ ഒതേനനെ കൊല്ലുന്നത്. തച്ചോളി അമ്പുവിലും ഇത്തരത്തിൽ ഒതേനന്റെ കൊലപാതക കുറ്റത്തിൽ നിന്നും ചുണ്ടങ്ങാപ്പൊയിൽ മായിൻകുട്ടിയുടെ മകനായ ബാപ്പുവിനെ വിമുക്തനാക്കുന്നുണ്ട്. മായിൻകുട്ടിയും ബാപ്പുവിന്റെ മകനും അമ്പുവും ഒരുമിച്ചുനിന്നാണ് ഒതേനനെ കൊന്ന പരുന്തിങ്കൽ പണിക്കരോട് പകരം ചോദിക്കുന്നത്. ഇപ്രകാരം ആഖ്യാനഘടനയ്ക്കുള്ളിൽ മുസ്ലീങ്ങൾക്ക് സുപ്രധാനമായ ഇടം നൽകിക്കൊണ്ട് മതസൗഹാർദപരമായ കാഴ്ചപ്പാട് വടക്കൻപാട്ടുസിനിമകൾ മുന്നോട്ടുവെക്കുന്നു.

ജാതീയതയ്ക്കെതിരെയും വടക്കൻപാട്ടുസിനിമകൾ കൃത്യമായ നിലപാട് അവതരിപ്പിക്കുന്നു. എല്ലാ ജാതിവിഭാഗങ്ങളിൽപ്പെടുന്നവരും പരസ്പരം സഹവർത്തിത്വത്തോടെയും തൊട്ടുകൂടിയും കഴിയുന്ന ഒരു കേരളത്തെയാണ് വടക്കൻപാട്ടുസിനിമകളിൽ കാണുന്നത്. ജാതിവ്യവസ്ഥപ്രകാരം അവർണ്ണരായി കണക്കാക്കിയിരുന്ന പാണനും കൊല്ലനും മണ്ണാനുമെല്ലാം പുത്തൂരംവീടിന്റെയും തച്ചോളിവീടിന്റെയും അകത്തുവരെ കയറാനും അവരോട് ജാതിവ്യത്യാസമില്ലാതെ ഇടപെടാനും കഴിയുന്നു. പുത്തൂരംപാട്ടുസിനിമകളിൽ പാണൻ ഒരു പ്രധാനപ്പെട്ട കഥാപാത്രമാണ്. ആരോമലുണ്ണിയുടെയും ഉണ്ണിയാർച്ചയുടേയുംമൊക്കെ വീരഗാ

ഥകൾ നാടുമുഴുവൻ പാടി നടന്ന് അവരെ പ്രശസ്തരാക്കിയത് പാണൻമാരാണ് എന്നാണ് സിനിമകളിൽ വിവരിക്കുന്നത്. ആരോമലിനെ വർണ്ണിച്ചുകൊണ്ടുള്ള പാണന്റെ പാട്ടോടെയാണ് ആരോമലുണ്ണിയുടെ തുടക്കം. ആരോമലുണ്ണി ആരോമൽ ചേകവരുടെ പെങ്ങൾ ഉണ്ണിയാർച്ചയുടെ മകനാണ്. പാണപ്പാട്ടിലൂടെ പ്രേക്ഷകർക്ക് ആരോമൽ ചേകവരുടെ പുത്തരിയങ്കം, പുത്തൂരംവീട് എന്നിവയെക്കുറിച്ചെല്ലാമുള്ള ധാരണ ലഭിക്കുന്നു. പാണപ്പാട്ടിലൂടെ നടക്കുന്ന കഥാകഥനം ഭൂതകാലത്തെ സമകാലീകരിക്കുന്നതിന് സഹായകമാണെന്ന് പി. എസ്. രാധാകൃഷ്ണൻ അഭിപ്രായപ്പെടുന്നു. ചലച്ചിത്രാഖ്യാനത്തിന് വസ്തുതാപരമായ ഘടന നൽകുന്നതും പാണന്റെ കഥനമാണ്. ഭൂത - വർത്തമാനങ്ങൾക്കിടയിലെ ദൂരം കുറയ്ക്കാനുതകുന്ന സങ്കേതം കൂടിയാണ് പാണപ്പാട്ട് (2010:44).

ഉണ്ണിയാർച്ചയിൽ പാണനോട് സ്നേഹത്തോടും ആദരവോടും കൂടിയാണ് ആർച്ചയും ആരോമലുമെല്ലാം പെരുമാറുന്നത്. പുത്തൂരംവീട്ടിലേക്ക് വന്ന പാണനെ സ്നേഹപൂർവ്വം ക്ഷണിച്ചിരുത്തുകയും വെള്ളിപ്പാത്രത്തിൽ പാൽപ്പായസം നൽകി സൽക്കരിക്കുകയുമൊക്കെ ചെയ്യുന്നുണ്ട്. പാണന്റെ പാട്ടിനൊപ്പം ഉടുക്കുവായിക്കുന്ന ഉണ്ണിയാർച്ചയെയും സിനിമകളിൽ കാണാം. ആരോമൽ അങ്കത്തിനുപോകുമ്പോൾ പാണരോടും യാത്ര ചോദിച്ചിട്ടാണ് പോകുന്നത്. ആരോമലുണ്ണിയിലും പാണൻ പ്രധാനപ്പെട്ട കഥാപാത്രമാണ്. ഏറെ വർഷങ്ങൾക്കു ശേഷം പുത്തൂരംവീട്ടിലെത്തുന്ന പാണന് സ്നേഹനിർഭരമായ സ്വീകരണമാണ് കണ്ണപ്പച്ചേകവരും ഉണ്ണിയാർച്ചയും നൽകുന്നത്. 'പുരങ്ങളായ പുരങ്ങളിലും കാവായകാവുകളിലുമെല്ലാം പാണനെ തേടാറുണ്ടെന്ന് ഉണ്ണിയാർച്ച പറയുന്നു. കണ്ണപ്പച്ചേകവർ പാണനെ ആലിംഗനം ചെയ്യുന്നു. വെള്ളിപ്പാത്രത്തിൽ കഞ്ഞി നൽകുകയും പാണന്റെ കൈ കഴുകി കൊടുക്കുകയും ചെയ്യുന്നുണ്ട് കണ്ണപ്പച്ചേകവർ. പാണനെ ചന്തുവിന്റെ മകൻ വധിച്ചതിന് പകരം ചോദിക്കാൻ ഉണ്ണിയാർച്ച ചാടിയിറങ്ങുന്നു. പാണനുവേണ്ടി ഒരു തുള്ളി ചോര ചിന്താൻ ഞാൻ സമ്മതിക്കില്ലെന്ന് പറഞ്ഞ് തടയുന്ന കുഞ്ഞിരാമനോട് ഉണ്ണിയാർച്ച പറയുന്നു :

പാണനും പറയനും.. പറഞ്ഞുതള്ളാൻ എന്തെളുപ്പം. കാരണോൻമാരെ പാടിയുണർത്താൻ പാണൻ വേണം. ആ പാണന്റെ തലയറുത്ത മാറ്റാന്റെ മൂന്നിൽ മുട്ടുമടക്കി നിൽക്കണംപോലും.

ജാതിയിൽ താണവരായ പാണനും പറയനും നേരെയുള്ള അതിക്രമങ്ങളെ നിസ്സാരവൽക്കരിച്ചുകാണുന്ന മനോഭാവത്തെയാണ് ഉണ്ണിയാർച്ച ചോദ്യം ഇവിടെ ചെയ്യുന്നത്. 'പാണനെ കൊന്ന മാറ്റാന്റെ തലയെവിടെ' എന്നാണ് ആരോമലുണ്ണിയോട് ഉണ്ണിയാർച്ച ചോദിക്കുന്നത്. ആരോമലാങ്ങളെ അങ്കം കുറിച്ചതിനുശേഷം ഊണും ഉറക്കവുമില്ലാതായ, പുത്തരിയങ്കത്തിൽ ചതിച്ചുകൊല്ലപ്പെട്ട, ആരോമലിനെക്കുറിച്ചും നാടായനാട്ടിലെല്ലാം തൊണ്ടപൊട്ടി പാടി നടന്ന പാണനെക്കുറിച്ചും ഉണ്ണിയാർച്ച വിശദീകരിക്കുന്നുണ്ട്. ആരോമലുണ്ണിയും ചന്ദ്രപ്പനും അങ്കം കുറിക്കുന്നതുപോലും പാണനെ കൊന്നതിന് പകരം ചോദിക്കാനാണ്.

ജാതി അധിക്ഷേപങ്ങൾക്കെതിരെയുള്ള ശക്തമായ നിലപാട് കണ്ണപ്പനൂണ്ണിയിലും കാണാം. ഒഴുക്കിൽപ്പെട്ട മാമംഗലം പൊന്നിയെ രക്ഷിക്കുന്നത് ഒരു മരംവെട്ടുകാരാനാണ്. പൊന്നിയിൽ കൊതിയുള്ള പൊങ്ങൻ ചെട്ടിയും മുസാക്കുട്ടിയും നാടുവാഴിയെ കണ്ട് മരംവെട്ടുകാരനിൽനിന്നും പൂട്ടവവാങ്ങി എന്ന് ആരോപണം ഉന്നയിക്കുന്നു. മരംകൊത്തിയെ വിവാഹം കഴിക്കാൻ തയ്യാറാകുന്ന പൊന്നി, 'തന്നെ കിട്ടാൻ അരയും തലയും മടക്കിയോടിയ കൈയൻമാരെ ഇന്നേക്ക് നൂറ്റിയൊന്നാം നാൾ മരംകൊത്തിയെ പൊന്നിക്കുചേർന്ന മാർനാക്കി മാറ്റുമെന്ന് ശപഥം ചെയ്തിട്ടാണ്' അയാളുടെ കൂടെ പോകുന്നത്. ശപഥം ചെയ്തതുപ്രകാരം നൂറ്റിയൊന്നു ദിവസം കൊണ്ട് മരംകൊത്തിയെ യോഗാവാക്കി മാറ്റി നാട്ടുകൂട്ടത്തിന്റെ മൂന്നിൽ കൊണ്ടുവന്ന് വീരത്വം തെളിയിക്കുന്നു. അതിനുശേഷവും 'മരംകൊത്തി', 'മരയണ്ണാൻ', 'കാട്ടുപറയൻ' എന്നിങ്ങനെ ആക്ഷേപിക്കുന്നവരോട് ഈ മലനാട്ടിൽ പാണനെന്നോ പറയനെന്നോ പറഞ്ഞ് ആക്ഷേപിച്ചാൽ തലകാണില്ലെന്ന് പൊന്നി ആജ്ഞാപിക്കുന്നുണ്ട്. 'വാളുകൊണ്ടൊരു തുള്ളി ചോര പൊടിഞ്ഞാൽ മുറിവുണ്ടാണമെങ്കിൽ പറയൻ പറിച്ചുകൊണ്ടുവരുന്ന പച്ചമരുന്നുവേണ്ടെ, ഭദ്രകാളിയുടെ അനുഗ്രഹം കിട്ടിയ കാളിദാസൻ പറയനല്ലേ, ചിദംബരനാഥന്റെ ദർശനം കിട്ടിയ നന്തനാർ പറയനല്ലേ ഭക്തപാണനാർ പറയനല്ലേ ഈ മലനാട്ടിലെ മക്കളെല്ലാം പറയിപെറ്റ പന്തിരുകുലത്തിൽനിന്നുണ്ടായ തല്ലേ' തുടങ്ങിയ ചോദ്യങ്ങൾ സിനിമ ഉയർത്തുന്നുണ്ട്.

തച്ചോളി ഒതേനനിൽ, ഒതേനന്റെ സന്തതസഹചാരിയായി പുള്ളുവൻ ചന്തുവുണ്ട്. ഒതേനനെ മറഞ്ഞുനിന്ന് വെടിവെച്ചു കൊന്നയാളെ അന്വേഷിക്കുകൊല്ലുന്നത് പുള്ളുവൻ ചന്തുവാണ്. ഒതേനന്റെ മകനിലും നാണിയും ആനുകൂണ്യമൊക്കെ തെക്കമ്പാട്ടെ കുടുംബത്തിലെ അംഗങ്ങളെപ്പോലെ തന്നെയാണ്.

നാടുവാഴിത്തഅധികാരഘടനയും സിനിമകളിൽ വിമർശനവിധേയമാകുന്നു. നാടുവാഴികൾ പെൺകൊതിയും അധികാരമോഹവും പല സിനിമകളിലും പരിഹസിക്കപ്പെടുന്നു. രണ്ട് വാഴുന്നോർ തമ്മിലുള്ള അധികാരതർക്കം ആരോമൽ എന്ന ധീരയോദ്ധാവിന്റെ മരണത്തിൽ കലാശിക്കുന്നതാണ് ഉണ്ണിയാർച്ചയിൽ കാണുന്നത്. ‘ചേകവൻമാർക്ക് വാൾക്കണയിലാണ് ചോറ്’ എന്നകാര്യം ആരോമൽ ആവർത്തിച്ചുപറയുന്നത് കണ്ണുനിറഞ്ഞുകൊണ്ടും തൊണ്ടയിടറിക്കൊണ്ടുമാണ്. അധികാരം നിലനിർത്തുന്നതിനുവേണ്ടി മനുഷ്യരെ ബലികൊടുക്കാൻ മടിയില്ലാത്ത നാടുവാഴിത്തം വിമർശിക്കപ്പെടുകയാണിവിടെ. കർഷകരെ ചൂഷണം ചെയ്യുന്ന ജന്മിത്തവും വിമർശിക്കപ്പെടുന്നുണ്ട്. തച്ചോളി ഒതേനനിൽ ഒതേനൻ പറയുന്നത് :

പാവങ്ങളുടെ അധാനഫലം തട്ടിയെടുത്ത് അവരുടെ വയറു തടിക്കുന്നൊരു ജന്മി. കരുവഞ്ചേരി എമ്മൻ കിടാവ്. എത്രയോ കാലമായി ഈ സ്ഥലത്ത് ജോലി ചെയ്ത് ജീവിക്കുന്നവരാണ് ഈ സാധുക്കൾ. ഇവിടം അവർക്കുതന്നെ പതിച്ചുകൊടുക്കണം

എന്നാണ്. നാടുവാഴിത്തകാലത്തെ ഒതേനന് ഒരിക്കലും ഇത്തരമൊരു കാര്യം പറയുക സാധ്യമല്ല. ‘കൃഷിഭൂമി കർഷകർക്ക്’ എന്ന കർഷക - കമ്മ്യൂണിസ്റ്റ് പ്രസ്ഥാനങ്ങൾ ഉയർത്തിയിരുന്ന മുദ്രാവാക്യത്തിന്റെ അപ്പോഴും അടങ്ങിയിട്ടില്ലാത്ത അലയൊലികളാണ് സിനിമകളിൽനിന്നും കേൾക്കുന്നത്.

നാടുവാഴികളുടെ പെൺകൊതിയും സിനിമകളിൽ ചോദ്യം ചെയ്യപ്പെടുന്നു. തച്ചോളി ഒതേനനിലും കാവിലുംചത്തോത്ത് കുങ്കിയുമായി സംബന്ധം ആലോചിച്ചുവരുന്ന കരുവഞ്ചേരി എമ്മൻകിടാവിനെ കണക്കറ്റ് പരിഹസിച്ചു ആട്ടിയിറക്കുകയാണ് കുങ്കി ചെയ്യുന്നത്. ഒതേനന്റെ മകനിലും തെക്കമ്പാട്ടെ കുഞ്ഞിയെ ഒരു ദിവസം അന്തിയുറങ്ങാനുള്ള അനുമതി ചോദിച്ചു നിരന്തരം ശല്യം ചെയ്യുന്ന നാടുവാഴിക്കും സമാനമായ അനുഭവമാണ് ഉണ്ടാകുന്നത്.

നാടുവാഴിത്ത കുടുംബ, ദായക്രമ, സ്ത്രീപുരുഷബന്ധങ്ങളെയും തള്ളിക്കളഞ്ഞുകൊണ്ടുള്ള നിലപാടാണ് സിനിമകൾ സ്വീകരിക്കുന്നത്. കേരളീയനവോത്ഥാനത്തിന്റെ പ്രധാനപ്പെട്ട അജണ്ടകൾ സ്ത്രീയുടെ സാമൂഹികപദവി ഉയർത്തുക, കുടുംബദായക്രമങ്ങൾ പരിഷ്കരിക്കുക എന്നിവയായിരുന്നു. ഇങ്ങനെ, പരിഷ്കരിക്കപ്പെട്ട കുടുംബദായക്രമങ്ങളും സ്ത്രീപുരുഷബന്ധങ്ങളുമാണ് സിനിമകളിൽ കാണുന്നത്. സംബന്ധത്തിന് പകരം ദാവത്യവും മരുമക്കത്തായത്തിനു പകരം മക്കത്തായവും ബഹുഭർതൃത്വത്തിന് പകരം ഏകദാവത്യവും പിന്തുടരുന്നവരാണ് സിനിമകളിലെ ആരോമലും ഉണ്ണിയാർച്ചയും, തച്ചോളി ഒതേനനുമെല്ലാം. സ്ത്രീകഥാപാത്രങ്ങൾക്ക് ആഖ്യാനഘടനയിൽ തുല്യസ്ഥാനം നൽകിക്കൊണ്ട് സ്ത്രീപദവിയുമായി ബന്ധപ്പെട്ട് നടന്ന പ്രവർത്തനങ്ങളോടും വടക്കൻപാട്ടുസിനിമകൾ ഐക്യപ്പെടുന്നുണ്ട്.

**ഉപസംഹാരം**

ഇപ്രകാരം, മാനവികതയിലും ജനാധിപത്യത്തിലും മതനിരപേക്ഷതയിലും അധിഷ്ഠിതമായ ജീവിതവീക്ഷണങ്ങളെ അവതരിപ്പിച്ചുകൊണ്ട് മലയാളിദേശീയതയുടെ നിർമ്മിതിയിൽ ഇടപെടുകയാണ് ആദ്യകാല വടക്കൻപാട്ടുസിനിമകൾ ചെയ്തത്. നവോത്ഥാനമൂല്യങ്ങളുടെ കേവലമായ പിൻപറ്റലല്ല മറിച്ച്, സിനിമകൾ നിർമ്മിക്കപ്പെട്ട കാലത്തെ രാഷ്ട്രീയാസ്ഥിരതകൾക്ക് ഈ മൂല്യങ്ങളെ മുൻനിർത്തി പരിഹാരം നിർദ്ദേശിക്കുക കൂടിയാണ് സിനിമകൾ ചെയ്യുന്നത്.

**കുറിപ്പുകൾ**

1. 1961 മുതൽ 1978 വരെ പുറത്തിറങ്ങിയ സിനിമകളെയാണ് ഈ പ്രബന്ധത്തിൽ പഠനവിധേയമാക്കുന്നത്. ഉണ്ണിയാർച്ച (1961), പാലാട്ടുകോമൻ (1962), തച്ചോളിഒതേനൻ (1964), ഒതേനന്റെ മകൻ (1970), ആരോമലുണ്ണി(1972), പൊന്നാപുരംകോട്ട ( 1973), തുമ്പോലാർച്ച (1974), തച്ചോളി മരുമകൻ ചന്തു (1974),

അങ്കുരത്ത് ( 1974), കണ്ണപ്പനൂണി (1977), തച്ചോളി അമ്പു ( 1978), കടത്താനാട്ടുമാക്കം ( 1978) എന്നിവയാണ് ഇക്കാലത്തിനിടയിൽ സിനിമകൾ.

2. രാഷ്ട്രങ്ങൾ മധ്യകാലം മുതലോ അല്ലെങ്കിൽ അതിലും പൗരാണികമായ കാലം മുതലോ നിലനിൽക്കുന്നുണ്ട് എന്ന് വാദിക്കുന്ന പ്രൈമോർഡിയലിസ്റ്റ് സമീപനവുമാണ്. മാർക്സോച്ച്, ജോഹൻ ഹ്യൂസിംഗ, ഹ്യൂദ്സെടൺ - വാട്സൺ, അഡ്രിയാൻ ഹേസ്റ്റിംഗ്സ്, ലിയാഹ് ഗ്രീൻഫീൽഡ് എന്നിവരാണ് ഈ വിഭാഗത്തിൽ ഉൾപ്പെടുന്നത്. എതിനിസിസ്റ്റ് സമീപനമാണ് മറ്റൊന്ന്. എ.ഡി. സ്മിത്ത്, ജോൺ ഹച്ചിൻസൺ തുടങ്ങിയവരുൾക്കൊള്ളുന്ന ഈ വിഭാഗം രാഷ്ട്രം തീർച്ചയായും ഒരു ആധുനിക കണ്ടുപിടിത്തമാണ് എന്നത് അംഗീകരിക്കുന്നുണ്ടെങ്കിലും അതിന്റെ ഉത്ഭവം വംശസമുദായങ്ങളുടെ നിലനിൽപ്പിനും മൂന്നാണ് എന്നാണ് വാദിക്കുന്നത്.
3. ഇന്ത്യൻദേശീയതയുടെ ഉത്ഭവത്തെയും വികാസത്തെയും സംബന്ധിച്ച് പല ധാരയിലുള്ള ആലോചനകൾ നടന്നിട്ടുണ്ട്. ഈ പ്രബന്ധത്തിൽ മാക്സിസ്റ്റ് ചരിത്രധാരയുടെ നിഗമനങ്ങളെയാണ് ഉപജീവിച്ചിട്ടുള്ളത്.
4. ദേശ - രാഷ്ട്രനിർമ്മിതിക്കാവശ്യമായ ഏകതാബോധത്തെ നിർണ്ണയിക്കുന്ന ഘടകങ്ങളെക്കുറിച്ച് ബെനഡിക്ട് ആൻഡേഴ്സൺ, എറിക് ഹോബ്സബോം എന്നിവർ ചർച്ച ചെയ്യുന്നുണ്ട്. വിശദാംശങ്ങൾക്ക് കാണുക : Anderson, 1983., Hobsbawm, 1990
5. In India, however, where literacy rates are low, nonprint media are far more important, and Hindi cinema’s influence is even more profound than that of state – controlled radio and television (Jyotika, 2004:6).
6. Ramachandra Guha had identified Hindi cinema as one of the eight factors which held the nation together, the other factors being the English language, railway, cricket, civil service, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata territorial boundedness provided by the Himalayas and the oceans, and finally the integrative idea of India embodied in the constitution( Ramachandra, 2007:704)

**ഗ്രന്ഥസൂചി**

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**പരമ്പ്-പുരയിടവിഭവങ്ങളും അന്നചരിത്രവും**  
**രഞ്ജിത്ത് സി. കെ.**

അസിസ്റ്റന്റ് പ്രൊഫസർ (ഓൺ കോൺട്രാക്ട്)  
മലയാളം & കേരള പഠനവിഭാഗം, കാലിക്കറ്റ് സർവ്വകലാശാല

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**പ്രബന്ധസംഗ്രഹം:** കേരളത്തിന്റെ പരമ്പ് പുരയിടമേഖലയിലെ അന്നസംസ്കാരത്തെക്കുറിച്ച് ഉള്ള അന്വേഷണമാണ് ഈ പ്രബന്ധം. വയൽ, കാട് എന്നീ ഭൂരുപങ്ങളിൽനിന്നും വ്യത്യസ്തമായി പരമ്പ് പുരയിടമേഖലയിലെ വിഭവങ്ങളെ ഇവിടെ പരിശോധിക്കുന്നു. മുഖ്യധാരാ ചരിത്രങ്ങളിൽ പ്രധാന അന്നോപാധിയായി പറയുന്ന നെല്ലിനപ്പുറം മറ്റു വിഭവങ്ങളാണ് ഇവിടെ കേന്ദ്രസ്ഥാനത്ത് നിൽക്കുന്നത്. കാർഷികസംസ്കാരത്തെക്കാൾ അകാർഷികമായ പാരമ്പര്യത്തെക്കുറിച്ചുള്ള തെളിവുകളിലേക്കും ഈ പഠനം നീളുന്നു.

**താക്കോൽ വാക്കുകൾ:** കൃഷി- പെറുക്കൽ- പരമ്പ് പുരയിടം- അന്നവിഭവങ്ങൾ

**ആമുഖം**

വാസസ്ഥലം എന്ന നിലയിൽ കേരളീയർ ഏറെ പ്രാധാന്യം കല്പിക്കുന്ന മേഖലയാണ് പരമ്പ്-പുരയിടങ്ങൾ.<sup>1</sup> പുര ഇരിയ്ക്കുന്ന ഇടവും അതിന് ചുറ്റുമുള്ള പ്രകൃതിസ്ഥലവുമാണ് പുരയിടങ്ങൾ. പരമ്പിനേക്കാൾ മനുഷ്യസാന്നിദ്ധ്യം പുരയിടങ്ങളിൽ ഏറെ. കൊത്തുകാട്ടിൽനിന്നും (പുനംകൃഷി) കാലത്തിനൊത്ത് ഉത്പാദനസ്വഭാവം വളർന്നുവരികയും കൃഷിയുടെ സ്വഭാവങ്ങൾ പ്രകടിപ്പിക്കുകയും സ്ഥിരവാസം തുടങ്ങുകയും ചെയ്തതോടെയാണ് പരമ്പ്-പുരയിടങ്ങൾ രൂപപ്പെടുന്നത്. പശ്ചിമഘട്ടമേഖലയുടെ താഴ്വാരമായി നിലകൊള്ളുന്ന ചെങ്കല്ലും ചെമ്മണ്ണും നിറഞ്ഞ കരപ്പറമ്പുകൾക്ക് കേരളത്തിന്റെ അന്നചരിത്രത്തിലുള്ള പ്രാധാന്യമേറേയാണ്. ഈ കരമേഖലയെ പരമ്പ്-പുരയിട സമ്പദ്വ്യവസ്ഥ എന്ന് വിശേഷിപ്പിക്കുന്നു.<sup>2</sup> ഈ മേഖല കേന്ദ്രീകരിച്ച് നിരവധി ചെടികളും മരങ്ങളും നിലനിന്നിരുന്നു. അവയെ ഒരുപരിധിവരെ നിലനിർത്തിക്കൊണ്ടാണ് വിവിധങ്ങളായ അന്നോപാധികൾക്കും വളരാനുള്ള അനുകൂലസാഹചര്യം ഒരുക്കിക്കൊണ്ട് പരമ്പ് പുരയിടങ്ങൾ വികസിക്കുന്നത്.

**പരമ്പുപുരയിടം**

പരമ്പും പുരയിടവും രണ്ട് പരികല്പനകളാണെങ്കിലും അവയെ ഒരുമിച്ച് പരാമർശിക്കുന്നത് അത് കാടോ വയലോ അല്ലാത്ത കരമേഖലയായതുകൊണ്ടാണ്. വയലിൽ മനുഷ്യന്റെ ഇടപെടൽ പൂർണ്ണമായും നടക്കുമ്പോൾ കാട്ടിൽ കാര്യമായൊന്നും സംഭവിക്കുന്നില്ല. പരമ്പിലും പുരയിടത്തിലുമാകട്ടെ മനുഷ്യന്റെ ഇടപെടൽ ഭാഗികമായി നടക്കുന്നുണ്ട്. ഇവയിൽ കാടിന്റെ ഭാഗികസ്വഭാവം കൂടുതലുള്ള സ്ഥലം പരമ്പാണ്. അവിടെ ബഹുവിഭവങ്ങളും തടിയും മറ്റും പ്രദാനം ചെയ്യുന്ന ബഹുവൃക്ഷങ്ങളും സസ്യങ്ങളും വളരുന്നു. വളരേണ്ട സസ്യങ്ങളെ തിരഞ്ഞെടുക്കുകയും അവയിൽ ചിലതിന്റെ വിത്തുകൾ നടുകയും ചെയ്യുന്നുവെന്നുള്ള പ്രത്യേകതയുണ്ട്. എന്നാലതിനെ കൃഷിയെന്ന് പറയാനുമാവില്ല. അതേസമയം ചില കരധാന്യങ്ങളോ മറ്റോ കാലാവസ്ഥയ്ക്കനുസരിച്ച് മണ്ണ് കൊത്തി വിത്തെറിയുകയും ചെയ്യുന്നു. അതാകട്ടെ പുനംകൊത്തിന്റെ മറ്റൊരു മാതൃകയായിരുന്നു. പുരയുടെ പരിസരങ്ങളിൽ വളരാനനുവദിക്കുന്ന തെരഞ്ഞെടുത്ത സസ്യങ്ങളുടെ എണ്ണം കൂടുതലായിരിക്കും. കാരണം പുരയിടം അവിടെ വസിക്കുന്നവരുടെ ആവശ്യങ്ങളെ നിർവ്വഹിക്കുന്ന വിഭവങ്ങളുടെ തോതായിരിക്കും നിർണ്ണയിക്കുന്നത്.

<sup>1</sup> പരമ്പ്, തോട്ടം, വീടിരിക്കുന്ന പരമ്പ്, പുര വെക്കാനായി അതിരു തിരിച്ചെടുത്ത സ്ഥലം എന്നെല്ലാം അർത്ഥം, ശ്രീകണ്ഠേശ്വരം പത്മനാഭപിള്ള, *ശബ്ദതാരാവലി*, 2011, പৃ.1386  
<sup>2</sup> എം.ആർ രാഘവവാര്യർ, *മധ്യകാലകേരളം-സമ്പത്ത് സമൂഹം സംസ്കാരം*, 1997, പൃ.23

കേരളത്തിലെ ഭൂമിയെക്കുറിച്ചുള്ള പഠനത്തിൽ തിരിച്ചറിയാവുന്ന മറ്റൊരു കാര്യം ഇവിടെ പുരയിടങ്ങൾ അളവിലുണ്ടാകാതെ ഉടമസ്ഥതയുള്ള പറമ്പുകൾ അളവിൽ കുടുതലുമായിരുന്നുവെന്നാണ്. മാത്രമല്ല ഭൂമിയുടെ ഉടമസ്ഥതയെന്നത് ന്യൂനപക്ഷം ജന്മിമാരുടെ (ഭൂപ്രഭുക്കനമാരുടെ) കൈവശവുമാകുന്നു. അതുകൊണ്ടുതന്നെയാണ് സമീപകാലംവരെയും കേരളത്തിന്റെ കരപ്രദേശങ്ങൾ കാടിന്റെ സ്വഭാവം വ്യക്തമാക്കുന്നത്. അങ്ങിനെയാകുമ്പോൾ കാടിന്റെ സ്വഭാവം കാണിക്കുന്ന കേരളത്തിന്റെ കരപ്രദേശങ്ങളിൽ കാര്യമായതോതിൽ കൃഷി ഉണ്ടായിരുന്നില്ല എന്ന് വ്യക്തമാണ്. അതേസമയം അതാത് ഇടങ്ങളിലെ പുരകളിൽ (വീട്) വസിച്ചിരുന്ന ആളുകളെ ലക്ഷ്യമാക്കിക്കൊണ്ട് ലഘുകൃഷിരൂപങ്ങൾ (ഭാഗികകൃഷി) ഉണ്ടായിരുന്നില്ല എന്ന് പറയാനാവില്ല. ജനസംഖ്യയിൽ വലിയ വിഭാഗമായിരുന്ന അവർണർക്ക് ഭൂമിയിൽ ഉടമസ്ഥത ഉണ്ടായിരുന്നില്ല. പറമ്പോ പുരയിടമോ ഇല്ലാത്തതുകൊണ്ട് അവർക്ക് പെറുക്കി ജീവിക്കേണ്ടിവന്നു. 1851-ലെ കാനേഷുമാരിപ്രകാരം മലബാറിലെ അടിയാളരായ ചെറുമക്കളുടെ എണ്ണം 1,87,741 ആയിരുന്നു.<sup>3</sup> കാടിന്റെ മാതൃക സൂക്ഷിച്ചിരുന്ന കേരളത്തിന്റെ പ്രകൃതിവിഭവങ്ങൾ അവരെ നാമമാത്രമായിട്ടെങ്കിലും നിലനിൽക്കാൻ സഹായിച്ചു. ആവശ്യങ്ങൾ അധികമാനും ഇല്ലാതിരുന്ന അവർ ജീവൻ നിലനിർത്താനുള്ള വിഭവങ്ങൾ മാത്രം പെറുക്കി ഉപജീവിക്കുകയായിരുന്നു.

**പറമ്പ്-പുരയിടങ്ങളിലെ വിഭവങ്ങൾ**

പത്താം നൂറ്റാണ്ട് പിന്നിടുമ്പോൾത്തന്നെ മിശ്രവിഭവങ്ങൾ വളരുന്ന തോട്ടങ്ങളായി കേരളത്തിലെ പുരയിടങ്ങൾ രൂപപ്പെട്ടിരുന്നുവെന്ന് ചരിത്രകാരൻമാർ പറയുന്നു.<sup>4</sup> ഓരോ പറമ്പും അതിന് ചുറ്റും വേലിയും ഒത്തനടുക്ക് ഒരു വീടും എന്ന നിലയിലുള്ള പുരയിടങ്ങളുടെ കാഴ്ചകളെക്കുറിച്ച് പതിമൂന്നാം നൂറ്റാണ്ടിൽ ഇബൻ ബത്തൂത്ത പറയുന്നുണ്ട്.<sup>5</sup> കേരളത്തിന്റെ തീരപ്രദേശത്തെ മുഖ്യവിഭവമായി തെങ്ങും, മലനാട്ടിലെ മുഖ്യവിഭവമായി കുരുമുളകും ഏലവും അവർ ചിത്രീകരിക്കുന്നു. എന്നാൽ ഇത്തരം വേർതിരിവുകൾ പിൽക്കാലത്ത് ഒരു പരിധിവരെയെങ്കിലും അപ്രസക്തമാവുന്നുണ്ട്. തെങ്ങ് ഇടനാട്ടിലും വളരുന്നത് കാണാം. പറമ്പിന്റെ ആദായം വർദ്ധിപ്പിച്ച വിഭവമാണ് കുരുമുളക്. തെങ്ങും അടയ്ക്കയും കയറ്റുമതിവിഭവങ്ങളെന്ന നിലയിൽ പ്രാധാന്യം നേടിയത് പതിനാലാം നൂറ്റാണ്ടോടെയാണ്.<sup>6</sup> വിവിധങ്ങളായ വിഭവങ്ങൾ പറമ്പുകളിൽ വളർന്നിരുന്നു. കേരളത്തിലെ പുരയിടങ്ങളുമായി ബന്ധപ്പെട്ട് അനവധി വിഭവങ്ങൾ ഉണ്ടെങ്കിലും ചരിത്രാഖ്യാനങ്ങളിൽ പ്രബലമായി നിൽക്കുന്നത് കുരുമുളകും തെങ്ങുമാണ്. അന്നവിഭവങ്ങളുടെ അഭാവവും വാണിജ്യവിഭവങ്ങളുടെ പ്രഭാവവുമാണ് പ്രസ്തുത ആഖ്യാനങ്ങൾ പങ്കുവെക്കുന്നത്.

**അന്നവിഭവങ്ങൾ**

മലയാളക്കരയിലെ ജനതയുടെ അതിജീവനസമരങ്ങളിൽ നിർണായകമായി നിലകൊണ്ട നിരവധി അന്നവിഭവങ്ങളുടെ കേന്ദ്രമാണ് പറമ്പ്-പുരയിടങ്ങൾ. ഇലകൾ, ധാന്യങ്ങൾ, പയറുവർഗങ്ങൾ, പഴങ്ങൾ, കിഴങ്ങുകൾ എന്നിങ്ങനെ അന്നരൂപങ്ങളുടെ വിവിധ മാതൃകകൾ പുരയിടങ്ങളിൽ കാണാം.

**തെങ്ങ്** - ആയിരത്തിയഞ്ഞൂറ് വർഷത്തെ ചരിത്രമാണ് തെങ്ങിന് കേരളക്കരയിലുള്ളത്. പോളിനേഷ്യക്കാരാണ് കേരളത്തിൽ തെങ്ങ് കൊണ്ടുവന്നതെന്നും കേരളത്തിലെ ഈഴവരുമായി ഇവർക്ക് അടുത്ത ബന്ധമുണ്ടെന്നും സർദാർ കെ.എം പണിക്കർ സൂചിപ്പിക്കുന്നു.<sup>7</sup> പതിനഞ്ചാം നൂറ്റാണ്ടിന് മുമ്പ് കേരളത്തിൽ തെങ്ങുകൃഷി ശാസ്ത്രീയമായി ഉണ്ടായിരുന്നില്ലെന്ന് അദ്ദേഹം രേഖപ്പെടുത്തുന്നുണ്ട്. പോർച്ചുഗീസുകാരും ഡച്ചുകാരും ശാസ്ത്രീയമായ തെങ്ങുകൃഷി പ്രചരിപ്പിച്ചത്. മറ്റുപലവിഭവങ്ങളേയുംപോലെ സ്വാഭാവികമായി വിത്ത് വീണ് മുളച്ചുപൊന്തിയതായിരിക്കണം തെങ്ങും. കേരളത്തിലെ തെങ്ങിനെക്കുറിച്ച് ആദ്യമായി രേഖപ്പെടുത്തിയ കോസ്മസ് തീരപ്രദേശത്തെ തെങ്ങുകളെക്കുറിച്ചാണ് പറയുന്നത്. ഉൾപ്രദേശങ്ങളിൽ തെങ്ങ് കുറവാണെന്നും അദ്ദേഹം

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<sup>3</sup> പി. ഭാസ്കരനൂണി, *പത്തൊമ്പതാം നൂറ്റാണ്ടിലെ കേരളം*, 1988, പৃ.491  
<sup>4</sup> എം.ആർ രാഘവവാര്യർ, *മലയാളചരിത്രബോധം കോളനിവാഴ്ചക്ക് മുമ്പ്*, 2013, പৃ.6  
<sup>5</sup> എൻ.എം നമ്പൂതിരി, *കേരളസംസ്കാരം*(കാലിക്കറ്റ് യൂണിവേഴ്സിറ്റി), പൃ.230  
<sup>6</sup> എം. ആർ രാഘവവാര്യർ, *മധ്യകാലകേരളം-സമ്പത്ത് സമൂഹം സംസ്കാരം*, 1997, പൃ.24  
<sup>7</sup> കെ.ടി. രവിവർമ്മ, *പണ്ടത്തെ മലയാളക്കര*, 2014, പൃ.18

പറയുന്നുണ്ട്.<sup>8</sup> ഉപദ്വീപിന്റെ തീരപ്രദേശങ്ങളിലെ തെങ്ങിനെക്കുറിച്ച് ഡി. ഡി. കൊസാംബിയും രേഖപ്പെടുത്തുന്നുണ്ട്.<sup>9</sup>

ചരിത്രപരമായ നിരീക്ഷണങ്ങൾക്കപ്പുറം തെങ്ങിനേയും തേങ്ങയേയുംകുറിച്ച് അന്നവിഭവമെന്ന നിലയിലും നിരീക്ഷിക്കേണ്ടതുണ്ട്. പട്ടിണിയുടെ നാളുകളിൽ തേങ്ങ ആഹരിച്ച് അതിജീവിച്ചതിനെക്കുറിച്ച് കല്ലേൻ പൊക്കുടൻ രേഖപ്പെടുത്തുന്നുണ്ട്. “ഒരു തേങ്ങ ഉരിച്ച് എട്ടു കഷണമാക്കി ഉപ്പിലിടും. ഒരു നേരം ഒരു കഷണം. അങ്ങിനെ നാല് ദിവസത്തേക്ക് ഒരു തേങ്ങ. അന്ന് സ്വന്തമായി ഒരു പുലയനും തെങ്ങുണ്ടായിരുന്നില്ല. മുതലാളി എപ്പോഴെങ്കിലും കനിഞ്ഞു തന്നാൽ ഒരു തേങ്ങ കിട്ടും. ചില വിരുതൻമാർ രാത്രിയിൽ കേറിപ്പറിക്കും.”<sup>10</sup> കേരളത്തിന്റെ അന്നചരിത്രത്തിൽ നിരവധി വിഭവങ്ങൾക്കൊപ്പം തേങ്ങയും പ്രധാനപ്പെട്ടതാകുന്നു. പത്മശ്രീ അലി മാണിക്ഫാനും തേങ്ങയുടെ അന്നപരമായ പ്രാധാന്യത്തെക്കുറിച്ച് പറയുന്നുണ്ട്. ജൈവികമായ പരിക്ഷണങ്ങളാൽ സ്വന്തമായ തന്റെ ജീവിതത്തിൽ രണ്ട് വർഷം അദ്ദേഹം തേങ്ങ മാത്രമാണ് ആഹരിച്ചത്. പ്രകൃതിയിൽനിന്നും ഭക്ഷ്യയോഗ്യമായതെല്ലാം പെറുക്കിയെടുത്ത് ആഹരിച്ച ജനത തേങ്ങയും ആഹരിച്ചു എന്നുമാത്രം. കേരളത്തിന്റെ വന്യമായ ഭൂപ്രകൃതിയിൽ നിരവധി അന്നരൂപങ്ങളിലൊന്നായി തേങ്ങയും വീണുമുള്ളുവളർന്നു. പാകമായി വീഴുന്ന കായകൾ വിഭവദാരിദ്ര്യം അനുഭവിച്ച ദേശവാസികൾക്ക് ആഹാരമായെങ്കിലും തെങ്ങ് കൃഷിചെയ്തു പരിപാലിക്കുന്നതിനെക്കുറിച്ച് ഭൂരിപക്ഷം ജനതയും ചിന്തിച്ചിരുന്നില്ല. സ്വന്തമായി ഭൂമി ഉണ്ടായിരുന്നില്ല എന്നതായിരിക്കാം ഇതിന് പ്രധാനകാരണം. എന്നാൽ പതിനാറാം നൂറ്റാണ്ടോടുകൂടി തേങ്ങ ആഗോളതലത്തിൽ ഒരു കച്ചവടവസ്തുവായി മാറി. അതിന്റെ കാരണം അന്നതലത്തിലുള്ള പ്രാധാന്യമായിരുന്നില്ല മറിച്ച് കയറിന് കൈവന്ന ആഗോളപ്രസക്തിയായിരുന്നു.

**ചക്കപ്പഴവും പ്ലാവും -** പ്ലാവിന്റെ ജന്മദേശം ഇന്ത്യയാണ്. ചരിത്രപരമായി ലഭിച്ച തെളിവുകളുടെ അടിസ്ഥാനത്തിൽ ഇന്ത്യയിൽ മുവായിരം മുതൽ ആറായിരം വർഷത്തെ പഴക്കമാണ് പ്ലാവിന് കണക്കാക്കുന്നത്.<sup>11</sup> സംഘകാലകൃതികളിൽ പ്ലാവിനെക്കുറിച്ച് പ്രതിപാദിക്കുന്നുണ്ട്. ചക്കപ്പഴം തുങ്ങിനിൽക്കുന്ന മലകളെക്കുറിച്ചും, മധുരമുള്ള പഴത്തോടുകൂടിയ പ്ലാവിന്റെ ചുളയിൽ നിന്നുണ്ടായ തേനിനെക്കുറിച്ചും അകനാനൂറിൽ പ്രതിപാദിക്കുന്നു.<sup>12</sup> ചിലപ്പതികാരത്തിലും ‘പിലാവി’നെക്കുറിച്ചുള്ള പരാമർശങ്ങളുണ്ട്. 1801-ൽ കേരളത്തിൽ സന്ദർശനം നടത്തിയ ഫ്രാൻസിസ് ബുക്കാനൻ വിവിധ പ്രദേശങ്ങളിലെ പ്ലാവുകളുടെ എണ്ണം രേഖപ്പെടുത്തുന്നുണ്ട്.<sup>13</sup>

കേരളത്തിലങ്ങോളം സമൃദ്ധമായ വൃക്ഷമാണ് പ്ലാവ്. ഡച്ചുകൃതിയായ *ഹോർത്തൂസ് മലബാറിക്കസി*ൽ കേരളീയവിഭവമായ ചക്കയും പ്ലാവും പരാമർശിക്കപ്പെടുന്നുണ്ട്. “മുപ്പതിലേറെ പ്ലാവിനങ്ങളെ കണ്ടെത്തിയിട്ടുണ്ട്. എങ്കിലും ഇവയെല്ലാം നോക്കുമ്പോൾ രണ്ടിനങ്ങളായി ചുരുങ്ങും. ഇതിൽ ഒരിനത്തിന് ചുളക്ക് ഉറപ്പ് കാണും. രുചി തേൻപോലെയിരിക്കും. *വരിക്ക* എന്ന് ഇതിനെ വിളിക്കും. മറ്റേ ഇനത്തിന്റെ ചുള മാർദ്ദവമേറിയ കൃഷ്ണതൂപോലെയിരിക്കും. രുചി കുറവാണ്, ചക്കപാപ്പ എന്നിതിനു പേര്. ഇളംചക്ക

<sup>8</sup> വേലായുധൻ പണിക്കശ്ശേരി, *ചരിത്രകവാടങ്ങൾ*, 2011, പৃ.72  
<sup>9</sup> “settlement of the costal strip in the face of the dense jungle and terrific rainfall became really profitable when coconut plantations were introduced. The trees were gaining hold on the Orissa coast by the time of Varahamihira. Coconut trees grew in tremendous profusion on the coast of Thana district by 120 A.D”D.D Kosambi, *The Basis of Ancient Indian History*, Journal Of American Oriental Society, Vol. 75, 1955, P.235.  
<sup>10</sup> കല്ലേൻ പൊക്കുടൻ, *കണ്ടൽക്കാടുകൾക്കിടയിൽ* എന്റെ ജീവിതം, 2010, പൃ.31  
<sup>11</sup> സി.ആർ., *രാജഗോപാൽ, കലിയാ കലിയാ എന്റെ പ്ലാവിന്റെ ചോട്ടിക്കൂടെ പോ*, 2009, പൃ.66  
<sup>12</sup> “പഴന്തുക വിടരക തെങ്ങുത കാമ്പിൻ”, *അകനാനൂർ*, 272.10-1  
“ത്തീർപ്പഴ പ്ലാവിൻ ചുളെവിളെ തേൻ വീളെ അമ്പിൻ ഇളെതരൊടു മാന്തി”, *അകനാനൂർ*, 182.3  
<sup>13</sup> ഫ്രാൻസിസ് ബുക്കാനൻ (വി.വ.സി.കെ കരീം), *ഫ്രാൻസിസ് ബുക്കാനന്റെ കേരളം*, 1981, പൃ.17, 198, 228, 239

കറിയുണ്ടാക്കാനുപയോഗിക്കും. അല്ലെങ്കിൽ ഉപ്പുചേർത്ത് അച്ചാറുണ്ടാക്കും.”<sup>14</sup> ഹോർത്തൂസ് മലബാറിക്കസിലെചക്കപാപ്പകേരളീയരുടെ പഴംചക്കയാണ്. ഇതിന് ചിലയിടങ്ങളിൽ കുഴച്ചക്ക എന്നും പേരുണ്ട്. നടീൽ കഴിഞ്ഞ് ഏഴ് വർഷത്തിനുള്ളിൽ കായ്ച്ച് തുടങ്ങുന്ന പ്ലാവ് എഴുപത് വർഷം വരെ നമുക്ക് ഫലസമ്പത്ത് നൽകുന്നവൃക്ഷമാണ്. ശാസ്ത്രീയവും ആസൂത്രിതവുമായ നടീലും പരിപാലനവും വഴിയായിരുന്നില്ല പ്ലാവ് കേരളത്തിലെ പ്രധാന അന്നസ്രോതസ്സായി മാറിയത്. പലപ്പോഴും മനുഷ്യരും മറ്റു ജീവജാലങ്ങളും ആഹരിച്ച ശേഷം കളയുന്ന വിത്തുകൾ മുളച്ചു പൊന്തിയതായിരുന്നു നമ്മുടെ പറമ്പിലും പുരയിടങ്ങളിലും വഴിയോരങ്ങളിലുമുള്ള പ്ലാവുകളിലേറെയും. 1836-ൽ ബ്രിട്ടീഷ് സർജനായിരുന്ന വൈറ്റ്സിന്റെ നിർദ്ദേശപ്രകാരം ഗവർണ്ണർ മദ്രാസ് പ്രസിഡൻസിയുടെ എല്ലാ ഭാഗത്തും പ്ലാവ് നട്ടുപിടിപ്പിക്കാൻ നടപടിയെടുത്തിരുന്നുവെന്ന് ചക്കപ്പഴത്തിന്റെ പ്രാധാന്യം വ്യക്തമാക്കുന്നു.

കേരളംപോലെ മിതമായ കാലാവസ്ഥയുള്ളതും വന്യപ്രകൃതി ഏറിനിൽക്കുന്നതുമായ പരിസ്ഥിതിയിൽ വിഭവസമൃദ്ധമായ ഈയൊരു വൃക്ഷത്തിന്റെ പ്രാധാന്യം എത്രമാത്രമായിരുന്നെന്ന് തിരിച്ചറിയാൻ സാധിക്കുന്നു. കേരളത്തിലെ ന്യൂനപക്ഷമായ വരേണ്യജനതക്ക് പുറത്ത് ഭൂരിപക്ഷം വരുന്ന സാധാരണക്കാരും ദളിതരുമായ ജനവർഗത്തിന്റെ ആഹാരത്തിൽ ചക്ക പ്രധാനവിഭവംതന്നെയായിരുന്നു. ഭൂരിപക്ഷത്തിന്റെ ആഹാരത്തിലെ നിർണായകഘടകമായ പ്ലാവ് ആസൂത്രിതകൃഷിയുടെ ധാരയിൽ ഉൾപ്പെടുന്ന മരമായിരുന്നില്ല. മനുഷ്യരും മറ്റ് ജീവജാലങ്ങളും ചക്കപ്പഴം ആഹരിച്ച ശേഷം വലിച്ചെറിയുന്ന/ ഉപേക്ഷിക്കുന്ന കുരുക്കൾ മുളച്ചുപൊന്തിയാണ് ഭൂരിപക്ഷം പ്ലാവും വളർന്ന് പന്തലിച്ചത്.

**കിഴങ്ങുവർഗങ്ങൾ**

മലയാളിയുടെ ആഹാരത്തിൽ മണ്ണിനുമീതെ വിളയുന്നവയോളമോ അതിലേറെയോ പ്രാധാന്യം മണ്ണിനതാഴെ വിളയുന്ന കിഴങ്ങുവർഗങ്ങൾക്കും<sup>15</sup> ഉണ്ടായിരുന്നു. വിവിധയിനം കിഴങ്ങ്, ചേമ്പി, ചേന എന്നിവ കേരളീയരുടെ പ്രധാന അന്നരൂപങ്ങളായിരുന്നു. അരിയാഹാരം അനുമായിരുന്ന ഭൂരിപക്ഷം ജനതയുടെ മുഖ്യാഹാരങ്ങളിൽ കിഴങ്ങുവർഗത്തിന് വലിയ സ്ഥാനമുണ്ടായിരുന്നു. ഗോത്രവർഗത്തിൽപ്പെട്ട ജനതയുടെ പ്രധാന ആയുധം പാരക്കോലായിരുന്നുവെന്ന് അതിന് തെളിവാണ്. കേരളത്തിലെ വന്യവും മഴ ധാരാളം ലഭിക്കുന്നതുമായ മണ്ണിൽ ധാരാളം കിഴങ്ങുകൾ ലഭ്യമായിരുന്നു. ഇവ പെറുക്കി ആഹരിച്ചായിരുന്നു വലിയൊരുവിഭാഗം അതിജീവനമാർഗം കണ്ടെത്തിയത്.<sup>17</sup>

ബാഹ്യപ്രകൃതിയിലെ പഴങ്ങളും കായകളും ധാന്യങ്ങളുമെല്ലാം കണ്ടെത്തിയതിന് ശേഷമായിരിക്കാം മനുഷ്യൻ മണ്ണിനടിയിലെ കിഴങ്ങുകളെക്കുറിച്ച് മനസ്സിലാക്കിയത്. വസ്തുത എന്താണെന്നയാലും ഇളക്കിമറിച്ച് മണ്ണിനടിയിൽനിന്നും ആദ്യത്തെ കിഴങ്ങ് കണ്ടെടുത്ത് ആഹരിച്ച മനുഷ്യൻ വിഭവസമ്പാദനമേഖലയിൽ വലിയൊരു മുന്നേറ്റംതന്നെ നടപ്പാക്കി. മുൻമാതൃകകളിൽനിന്നും വ്യത്യസ്തമായൊരുവിഭവം പരിചയപ്പെടുന്നതോടെ നിശ്ചിത ഭൂമേഖലയിൽ വിഭവങ്ങൾക്കു നേരിടുന്ന അപര്യാപ്തതയെ മറികടക്കാനും അവർക്കു സാധിച്ചു. കിഴങ്ങ്, ചേമ്പ്, ചേന എന്നിവ കൂടാതെ പിന്നെയും ഒട്ടനവധി വിഭവങ്ങൾ ഇവിടെനിന്നും ലഭ്യമായിരുന്നു. അവയുടെയെല്ലാം തന്നെ കൂടിച്ചേരലിലായിരുന്നു ഒരു പരിധിവരെ നമ്മുടെ പൂർവ്വികർ പട്ടിണിയെ അതിജീവിച്ചതും ഇവിടുത്തെ ഭക്ഷ്യവ്യവസ്ഥ നിലനിന്നതും. വാഴക്കിഴങ്ങ്, കാവത്ത്, നീണ്ടി, കൂവൂ, നിലക്കടല, മക്കുങ്കാ, കുർക്ക, ശതാവരി, താമരക്കിഴങ്ങ്, നീർമുത്തങ്ങ, മുപ്പക്കിഴങ്ങ് എന്നിവയെല്ലാം അതിലുൾപ്പെടുന്നു. കാട്ടിലും തൊടിയിലും വളരുന്ന കുവ പരിച്ചെടുത്ത് പൊടിയാക്കി

<sup>14</sup> ഹോർത്തൂസ് മലബാറിക്കസ്, (Cited by സി.ആർ രാജഗോപാൽ, കലിയാ കലിയാ എന്റെ പ്ലാവിന്റെ ചോട്ടിക്കുടെ പേര്) 2015, പৃ.67  
<sup>15</sup> സെലുരാജ്, ബി., കോഴിക്കോടിന്റെ പൈതൃകം, 2011, പৃ. 65-66  
<sup>16</sup> “നിലമ്പക വീഴ്ത്ത വേർമുതിർ കിഴങ്ങ്കിൻ”, എന്ന് നിലം വിണ്ടുകീറുമാറ് ആഴത്തിലിറങ്ങിയ വേരോട് കൂടി വളരുന്ന കിഴങ്ങുകളെക്കുറിച്ച് സംഘം കൃതികൾ പറയുന്നുണ്ട്, അകനാനൂറ്, 176.2  
<sup>17</sup> “കാട്ടിലിയ കിഴങ്ങു കുഴിച്ചെടുത്തെ/ ചുട്ടുതിന്നെ - വെള്ളോ - മുക്കിക്കുടിച്ച്” എന്ന് വയനാട്ടിലെ പണിയരുടെ പാട്ടിൽ പറയുന്നു.

വീടുകളിൽ കൊണ്ടുപോയി വിറ്റിരുന്നവരാണ് ക്കാരത്തിമാർ.<sup>18</sup> ഉണങ്ങിയ കുവപ്പെടി ഒന്നിലേറെ വർഷം സൂക്ഷിച്ചുവെക്കുക ഇന്നും പതിവാണ്.

**ധാന്യങ്ങൾ**

പറമ്പുകളിലെ വിവിധ ധാന്യങ്ങളും നമ്മുടെ നിത്യഹാരത്തിന്റെ ഭാഗമായിരുന്നു. അരിയാഹാരത്തിന് അവസരമില്ലാത്ത ഭൂരിപക്ഷം ജനതയും നെല്ലിതരധാന്യങ്ങൾക്കായിരുന്നു മുഖ്യസ്ഥാനം നൽകിയത്. പുരയിടങ്ങളിൽ സമീപകാലംവരെ വിവിധ ധാന്യങ്ങളുടെ വിത്തറിയാറുണ്ടായിരുന്നു. സാധാരണക്കാരായ ജനസഞ്ചയത്തിന്റെ ആഹാരത്തിൽ ചാമ, വരക്, തിന, റാഗി എന്നിവയെല്ലാമായിരുന്നു പ്രധാനം. എള്ളും കേരളത്തിലെ പറമ്പുകളിൽ പതിവായിരുന്നു. ഇതിൽത്തന്നെ കാരെള്ള, വെള്ളെള്ള, പെരിയെള്ള, ആശാളി, കറുത്തതൊണ്ടൻ, കൂട്ടനാടൻ, വെള്ളെള്ള, വലിയെള്ള, ചെറിയെള്ള എന്നിങ്ങനെ വിവിധയിനം സമീപകാലംവരെ കേരളത്തിൽ വിളഞ്ഞിരുന്നു.<sup>19</sup> ഓണാട്ടുകരപ്രദേശം എള്ളിന് പ്രസിദ്ധമാണ്. എള്ള വരുത്തുതിന് വിശപ്പടക്കാൻ ശ്രമിച്ചതിന്റെ ചരിത്രം ഇന്നും പ്രായമേറിയ പലരുടേയും ഓർമ്മകളിൽ തെളിയുന്നുണ്ട്.

**മറ്റുവിഭവങ്ങൾ**

കേരളത്തിലെ പുരയിടവിഭവങ്ങളിൽ വാഴക്ക് മുഖ്യസ്ഥാനമുണ്ട്. വിവിധ ഇനം വാഴകൾ മലയാളക്കരയിൽ കാണാവുന്നതാണ്. വാഴകളുടെ പതിനാറോളം വൈവിധ്യങ്ങളെക്കുറിച്ച് കൃഷിഗീതയിലും പരാമർശമുണ്ട്. കദളി, പൂവൻ, കുന്നൻ, വണ്ണൻ, ഇരുമുടിക്കുന്നൻ, കാളി, ചിങ്ങൻ, നെന്ത്രൻ, കണ്ണൻ, കരുവാഴ, മലവാഴ, രസതാള, നീറൻ, മുതൻ, കരുവാഴ, ആറ്റുനേന്ത്രൻ എന്നിവയാണ് കൃഷിഗീതാകാരൻ രേഖപ്പെടുത്തുന്ന ഇനങ്ങൾ.<sup>20</sup> തെങ്ങുപോലെ പരിപാലനമെന്നത് നടീലിൽ മാത്രം ഒതുങ്ങുന്ന വിളയായിരുന്നു വാഴയും. പുരയിടങ്ങളിൽ കന്നുകൾ പൊട്ടിമുളച്ച് കൂട്ടമായി ഇവ വളർന്നു. ഇരുപതാം നൂറ്റാണ്ടിന്റെ അവസാനദശകങ്ങളിൽ നെൽവയലുകളിലേക്ക് മാറിയതോടെയാണ് വാഴ കൂടുതലായും ആസൂത്രിതപരിചരണമുള്ള കൃഷിയായത്. നീർനിലങ്ങളെ പറമ്പുകളിലേക്ക് പരിവർത്തിപ്പിക്കുന്നതിന്റെ ആദ്യപടികൂടിയായിരുന്നു വയലുകളിലെ വാഴകൃഷി.

സംഘകാലം മുതൽ ചരിത്രമുള്ളതും കേരളത്തിൽ സമൃദ്ധമായതുമായ വൃക്ഷമാണ് പന.<sup>21</sup> പനനൊക്ക്, പനമ്പൊടി, പനഞ്ചക്കര, പനങ്കൽക്കണ്ടം, പനങ്കള്ള എന്നിവയെല്ലാമാണ് പനവിഭവങ്ങൾ. പനപ്പഞ്ചസാരയും പനങ്കളും മാർക്കോപോളോയുടെ വിവരണങ്ങളിൽപ്പോലും കടന്നുവരുന്നുണ്ട്.<sup>22</sup> ഒരിയ്ക്കലുമൊരു കാർഷികവിളയായിരുന്നില്ല പന. വിത്ത് മണ്ണിൽ വീണ് മുളയ്ക്കുകയായിരുന്നു പതിവ്. അപൂർവ്വമായി മാത്രം വിത്തുനടീൽ നടന്നിരിക്കാം. എന്നാൽ കൃഷിയുടെ ഭാഗമായ ആസൂത്രണവും പരിചരണങ്ങളും അവിടെ അന്യമായിരുന്നു. കേരളത്തിലെ പറമ്പുകളിൽ സ്വാഭാവികമായി കാണുന്ന മറ്റൊരു മരമാണ് ഇഴന്ത്. കൊല്ലത്തിൽ ഒരിക്കലാണ് ഇഴന്ത് കായ്ക്കുന്നത്. ഇഴന്തിൻകായ രുചികരവും ഔഷധഗുണമുള്ളതുമായ വിളയാണ്. പനമ്പൊടിപോലെതന്നെ ഇഴന്തിനും സാധാരണ ജനതയുടെ ആഹാരത്തിൽ വലിയ സ്ഥാനമാണുള്ളത്.

കോമാവ്, മുട്ടികുടിയൻ, ചുണയൻ, ചകിര്യൻ, ചക്കേൻ, തത്തമ്മച്ചുണ്ടൻ, മുവാണ്ടൻ, തേനൊലിയൻ, ഒളോർ, ചേലൻ, കപ്പമാങ്ങ, നീലമാങ്ങ, കറുമുസ്മാങ്ങ, കോട്ടമാങ്ങ, നാട്ടുമാങ്ങ, മയിൽപ്പീലിമാവ്<sup>23</sup> എന്നിങ്ങനെ വിവിധ പേരുകളിൽ അറിയപ്പെടുന്ന മാങ്ങകൾ നിറഞ്ഞതായിരുന്നു നമ്മുടെ ജീവിതപരിസരം. 1801-ൽ കേരളം സന്ദർശിച്ച ഫ്രാൻസിസ് ബുക്കാനൻ ഇതേക്കുറിച്ച് രേഖപ്പെടുത്തിയിട്ടുണ്ട്.<sup>24</sup> മുൻകാലങ്ങളിൽ പഴുത്ത മാങ്ങയുടെ

<sup>18</sup> കെ. വിദ്യാസാഗർ, നമ്മുടെ നാട്ടറിവുകളും പഴഞ്ചൊല്ലുകളും കടങ്കഥകളും (നമ്മുടെ സമൂഹം), 2011, പৃ.581  
<sup>19</sup> രാഘവവാര്യർ, രാജൻഗുരുക്കൾ, കേരളചരിത്രം, 2004, പൃ.136  
<sup>20</sup> സി.ആർ രാജഗോപാലൻ, കൃഷിഗീതയും ഭക്ഷ്യസുരക്ഷയും (കൃഷിഗീത), 2013,പൃ.124  
<sup>21</sup> കരിക്ക് കുടിച്ച് മതി വരുമ്പോൾ വൈക്കോൽത്തൂറുവിൽ കയറി പനനൊക്ക് പറിക്കാൻ ശ്രമിക്കുന്ന കർഷകബാലന്മാരെ മരുതനിലത്ത് കാണാം, ഇളംകുളം കുഞ്ഞൻപിള്ള, സംസ്കാരത്തിന്റെ നാഴികക്കല്ലുകൾ, 1979, പൃ.17  
<sup>22</sup> എൻ.എം നമ്പൂതിരി, കേരളസംസ്കാരം (കാലിക്കറ്റ് യൂണിവേഴ്സിറ്റി), പൃ.230  
<sup>23</sup> മനില സി. മോഹൻ, മരമായി വളർന്ന മനുഷ്യൻ, മാതൃഭൂമി, പുസ്തകം.96, ലക്കം.8, 2018, പൃ.31  
<sup>24</sup> സി.കെ.കരീം (വി.വി.) ഫ്രാൻസിസ് ബുക്കാനന്റെ കേരളം 1981, പൃ.2

തൊലി ഉണക്കിയെടുത്ത് നേരിട്ട് ആഹാരമാക്കിയിരുന്നു. പച്ചമാങ്ങയുടെ തൊലി ഉണക്കിയെടുത്ത് കറി വെക്കുകയായിരുന്നു പതിവ്.<sup>25</sup> ഹരിജനിൽ ഗാന്ധിജി എഴുതിയ *മാങ്ങയണ്ടി വിത്ത്* എന്ന ലേഖനത്തിൽ ഭക്ഷ്യധാന്യങ്ങൾക്കും കാലിത്തീറ്റയ്ക്കും നല്ലൊരു ബദൽ എന്ന് മാങ്ങയണ്ടിയുടെ ഭക്ഷണമൂല്യത്തെ പ്രശംസിക്കുന്നുണ്ട്.<sup>26</sup> മാങ്ങയണ്ടി ശേഖരിച്ച് അതിനകത്തെ വിത്ത് ചൂട്ടെടുത്ത് ധാന്യങ്ങൾക്കുപകരം ഭക്ഷിക്കുകയോ അല്ലെങ്കിൽ ആവിശ്യക്കാർക്ക് നൽകുകയോ ചെയ്യുന്നത് നന്നായിരിക്കും എന്നാണ് ഗാന്ധിജിയുടെ അഭിപ്രായം. കേരളീയർക്കിടയിൽ മാങ്ങയുടെ അണ്ടി പ്രധാനപ്പെട്ട ഒരാഹാരമായിരുന്നു. മാങ്ങ തിന്നശേഷം വലിച്ചെറിയുന്ന അണ്ടി പിന്നീട് മുളച്ചു വരുമ്പോൾ അതിന്റെ പരിപ്പെടുത്ത് വെയിലത്ത് വെച്ച് ഉണക്കിപ്പൊടിച്ച് അടയുണ്ടാക്കുമായിരുന്നു.<sup>27</sup> സാധാരണക്കാർക്ക് പട്ടിണിനാളിൽ സമീപകാലത്തുപോലും ആശ്വാസകരമായിരുന്നു ഇത്തരം വിഭവങ്ങൾ. കൃത്യമായ പരിചരണമൊന്നും ആവശ്യമില്ലാതെ വളർന്നിരുന്ന മരമാണ് മാവ്.

ഹരിതാഭമായൊരു പ്രകൃതിയോട് ചേർന്നാണ് കേരളീയരുടെ ജീവിതവ്യാപാരങ്ങൾ നിലനിൽക്കുന്നത്. അതിനാൽത്തന്നെ പ്രകൃതിയിൽനിന്ന് നേരിട്ട് സ്വീകരിക്കാവുന്ന വിധത്തിൽ നിരവധി ഇലച്ചെടികൾ നമ്മുടെ ആഹാരരീതിയുടെ അടിസ്ഥാനമാവുന്നു. *താളും തകരയും* എന്ന ശൈലിയും *ഏതുമില്ലെങ്കിൽ താൾ* എന്ന ചൊല്ലും, ചീരപ്പാട്ടുകൾ പോലുള്ള ആലാപനങ്ങളും കേരളീയരുടെ ആഹാരത്തിലെ ഇലക്കറിയുടെ സാധീനത്തോടാണ് വ്യക്തമാക്കുന്നത്. ഇലകളിൽ ഭൂരിപക്ഷവും പരിചരണമൊന്നുമില്ലാതെ നമ്മുടെ പരിസരങ്ങളിൽ തനിയെ വളരുന്നവയുമാണ്. സാധാരണക്കാരുടെ ആഹാരത്തിൽ ഇലകൾക്ക് വലിയ സ്ഥാനമുണ്ട്. കേരളത്തിന്റെ പ്രകൃതിയിൽ നമുക്ക് ആഹാരയോഗ്യമായ നൂറുകണക്കിന് ഇലകളുണ്ട്. അവ തിരിച്ചറിയാനും ആഹരിക്കാനുമുള്ള കഴിവാണു് സുപ്രധാനമാകുന്നത്. ഇലകളിൽ പ്രധാനപ്പെട്ട ഒന്നാണ് മുരിങ്ങയില. സംഘകാലം മുതൽ ദക്ഷിണേന്ത്യയിൽ മുരിങ്ങമരം ഉണ്ടായിരുന്നു.<sup>28</sup> ചിലയിനം ചെടികളുടെ പൂക്കളും നമ്മുടെ ആഹാരത്തിൽ ഉൾപ്പെട്ടിരുന്നു.

**ഉപസംഹാരം**

പഠനുകളിൽ ‘കൃഷി’യെന്ന പേരിൽ നാം വിവക്ഷിച്ചിരുന്നത് നടീലിലോ കൊത്തി വിത്തെറിയലിലോ അധിഷ്ഠിതമായ ഒന്നായിരുന്നു. പൂർണ്ണഭക്ഷ്യവസ്തു എന്നനിലയിൽ കേരളത്തിലുടനീളമുള്ളതും പഠനുകളിൽ സമൃദ്ധവുമായിരുന്ന ചക്ക സാങ്കേതികാർത്ഥത്തിൽ കൃഷി ചെയ്തിരുന്നില്ല. വിവിധയിനം വാഴകളും സാഭാവികമായി ഒരേ കന്നിൽനിന്ന് അനേകങ്ങളായി പടർന്നുനിന്നിരുന്നു. കിഴങ്ങുകളാകട്ടെ കൂടുതലും മണ്ണിളക്കി നട്ടിരിയ്ക്കണം. പിൽക്കാലങ്ങളിൽ വളപ്രയോഗവും നടത്തിയിട്ടുണ്ട്. പക്ഷേ ആസൂത്രിതകൃഷി എന്നനിലയിൽ അതിന് സാങ്കേതികമായ വികാസം സംഭവിച്ചിരുന്നില്ല. ഭക്ഷ്യോപയോഗത്തിന് മാത്രമായി അവയെ പരിപാലിച്ചുപോന്നു. പല കിഴങ്ങുവർഗങ്ങളും മണ്ണിലും മരത്തിലും പടർന്ന് പരിപാലനമാവിശ്യമില്ലാത്തവിധം സ്വയംവളരുന്നവയായിരുന്നു. അങ്ങിനെ നോക്കുമ്പോൾ സാങ്കേതികാർത്ഥത്തിൽ കാർഷികമാതൃക കേരളത്തിലെപഠനപുരയിടങ്ങളിൽ ദൃശ്യമായിരുന്നില്ല. കേരളത്തിലെ ആദിമജനതയുടെ തുടർച്ചയിലും ദ്രാവിഡജനതയുടെ പരിണാമത്തിലും ആസൂത്രിതമായ കൃഷിയുടെ സാന്നിധ്യമില്ല. അവർ പലപ്പോഴും കാടിന് സമാനമായ ഭൂപ്രകൃതിയോട് ഇഴുകിച്ചേർന്ന് നട്ടും പെറുക്കിയും ജീവിച്ചുപോരുകയായിരുന്നു. അന്നയോഗ്യമായ ബഹുവിധവിഭവങ്ങളെ പ്രകൃതിയിൽ നിന്നും പെറുക്കിയെടുത്ത് ആഹരിക്കാൻ നമുക്ക് ഇന്നും സാധിക്കുന്നുവെന്നത് കൃഷിയേക്കാൾ പെറുക്കലിനുള്ള സാധ്യതകളെ വെളിപ്പെടുത്തുന്നു.

<sup>25</sup> എ.നൂജും, *ചാലിയാർ രേഖകൾ*, 2004, പൂ.61  
<sup>26</sup> ലൂയി ഫിഷർ, *രാഷ്ട്രീയവുംനിലക്കടലയും*(ഗാന്ധിയും സ്റ്റാലിനും), 2009, പൂ.19  
<sup>27</sup> എൽ. തോമസുകുട്ടി, *മാങ്ങാണ്ടിക്കഞ്ഞിയും പുളികുരുപ്പുട്ടും* (നാട്ടുഭക്ഷണം, എഡി. ലീന എം.എ), 2004, പൂ.47  
<sup>28</sup> “മുരുക്കെ മേയ്ന്ന പെരുക്കെ യാന്നെ/ വേരിനോക്കു ചിറുപുറ മുരിഞ്ഞ വൊല്കി” എന്ന് മുരിങ്ങമരം ഒടിച്ചു തിന്നുന്ന ആനയുടെ ചിത്രം അകനാനൂറിൽ കാണാം, അകനാനൂർ, 167.11

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