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EDITORIAL NOTE

Language is the medium of Literature. Every language is a collective art of expression. Literature moves in language as a medium comprising multiple layers of signs, symbols and meanings. Literature serves as a gateway to imagination, creativity and knowledge. Every discourse of literature is both personal as well as universal wisdom encompassing time and space. Both, Language and Literature record the intuitive expressions of human beings from time immemorial. To quote the words of Oliver Wendell Holmes, “Language is the blood of the soul into which thoughts run and out of which they grow.” This international seminar will provide a valuable platform to scholars and researchers to express their thoughts and ideas on the specified areas of language and literature. This book is a collection of articles exploring the techniques, methods, approaches, uses of e-learning-teaching tools framing the recent developments in English Language Teaching and narrative modes, gender issues, autobiographical elements, identity quests, ecological aspects, postcolonial discourses, postmodern conditions constituting contemporary trends in literature.

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Dr. J. Ahmed Meeran, joined as Assistant Professor of English in the year 2006 at Hajee Karutha Rowther Howdia College, Uthamapalayam, While working as Assistant Professor, he studied M.Phil., and also completed his Ph.D., and he was elevated as Head of the Department of English. During his service he has attended many seminars, workshops and conferences at the Regional, National and International levels and presented papers. So far, more than 20 of his articles have been published in various books and journals related to English Language and Literature. He did his Doctoral Degree in “Use of Myth in the Select Plays of Girish Karnad”. He has been serving as a Public Relation Officer, Member of College Academic Council, Board of Studies, and acted as a Resource Person and delivered guest lectures in various colleges. He has been guiding PG students in their projects and M.Phil Scholars. He is also one of the associate editors of the International refereed Journal. He continues to strive hard to bring laurels to the institution. His saga of rendering services in the field of teaching will continue forever.

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CONTENTS

S. No.	Title	Page No.
1	Diaspora and Cross – Cultural Identity in Jhumpa Lahiri's "Namesake" C. Hemalatha	1
2	Barriers in Acquiring Second Language Reading Competency at the Collegiate Level Ms. S.A. Sadaffunisha	4
3	Igbo Society in Chinua Achebe's Novels- A Study Ms. K. Fathima Nasreen	6
4	Waxing of Hope in the Lives of the Wretched with Reference to Iyayam's <i>Beasts of Burden</i> Ms. S. Brindha	9
5	Mental Conflicts and Emotions in Anita Nair's <i>Mistress</i> Ms. L.T. Hema Latha	13
6	The Influence of Social Networks on the Appropriate Use in Conditional Clauses Mr. P. Sathishkumar	16
7	The Social Issues in Tamil Movie <i>Velaikkaran (Servant)</i> Dr. C. Arun	20
8	A Quest for Identity and Liberation an Analysis of Jaishree Misra's <i>Ancient Promises</i> Mr. E. Lenin	22
9	Smart Phones for ELT Ms. M. Askara Fakmeen	27
10	Themes and Characters in Anita Nair's <i>The Better Man</i> Mr. S. Shafi Ahamed	33
11	The Buddha Incarnation: A Study on the Transcendence of Lord Buddha's Life in the Characters of the Dalit Novel ' <i>Pulayappattu</i> ' Dr. D. Rejjikumar	37

12	A Perspective on the Presentation of Complexities of Migration and its Effects in the Literature of Indian Diaspora Mrs. D. Gayathri Devi	40
13	Redefining Feminist Episteme and Gender Roles an Analysis of Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's <i>Half of a Yellow Sun</i> Ms. Geethu Jose	43
14	Trauma and Dreams: Constructive Elements in <i>Gone with the Wind</i> Ms. D.F. Lydia Evelyn	47
15	Gendered Subalternity in Mahasweta Devi's "Douloti the Bountiful" Ms. K.P. Sreelakshmi	51
16	Social Realism in Rohinton Mistry's <i>A Fine Balance</i> Mr. I. Amalraj	55
17	Magic to the Multiculture in Chitra Banerjee's <i>Mistress of Spices</i> Ms. S. Ashline	58
18	The Unpoken Immense Strength of Voiceless Women in Indian Mythologies Ms. S. Ellakkiyaa	61
19	Use of Symbols and Images in Margret Atwood's "Surfacing" – A Review Dr. J. Ahmed Meeran	64
20	Re-Reading Indian Gender Constructs from Indian Cultural Perspective with Reference to Shashi Deshpande's Select Novels Ms. K. Maheswari	67
21	Commodification of Woman: A Study of Indian Media and Advertisements in English Dr. N. Kavidha	72
22	Revolution of New Woman in Manju Kapur's Novel <i>Home</i> Ms. B. Kavikashree	75
23	Journey of the 'Self' in Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's <i>Oleander Girl</i> Prof. T.S. Sahaya Mary	79
24	Demystifying the Myths: A Study on Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's <i>Sister of My Heart</i> Dr. S. Ramya Niranjani	82

DIASPORA AND CROSS – CULTURAL IDENTITY IN JHUMPA LAHIRI’S “NAMESAKE”

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Abstract

Today diaspora becomes highlighted issue when people become parts of global world. The Use of the term diaspora is quite wide spread in discourse of various kinds. It is Used to describe the dispersion of a people from their original home land. The paper focuses on how Lahiri deals with the issues which are at once cultural and universal the issues of Migration and cultural assimilation, globalization and cultural clashes, family relationship and its fragility on the foreign land – the delicacy, clumsiness, beauty and vitality of each family relationship. Gender roles, Indian heritage and family obligation are also the issues incorporated in the novels of Lahiri. Jhumpa Lahiri belongs to a new generation of the writers of the Diaspora who deals such themes in her first Novel, “*The Namesake*” (2003). The Hindu way of life and the American social system are two different sets of culture and individuals caught in the whirl wind of having one system and living in another feel born between the two in clearly visible in her novels.

Keywords: Diaspora, Jhumpa Lahiri, Namesake

Introduction

Jhumpa Lahiri an Indian American author. She has emerged as a successful novelist and short story writer. Jhumpa Lahiri is one of the Undisputed leading writers who are studied as Diaspora writer. She focuses on characters moving from one place to another meeting each other, or separating in their subtle tensions and conflicts rediscovering moments of happiness or pain. Lahiri delves deeply and richly into the lines of immigrants. But through immigrants may be the stories protagonists, their doubts, insecurities losses and heart breaks belong to all. Lahiri herself of Bengali descent but born in London, raised in Rode Island and how lining in Brooklyn seems to be telling that it is not necessary that the place one in born in is the one to which provides the strongest attachment. All stories focus on members of Bengali families dealing with England or America.

The Namesake (2003)

The Namesake is the first novel by Jhumpa Lahiri. It was originally a novel published in “The New Yorker” and was later expanded to a full – length novel. It explores many of the same emotional and cultural themes as her Pulitzer prize – winning short story collection Interpreter

of Maladies. Moving between events in Calcutta Boston, and New York city, the novel examines the nuances involved with being caught between two conflicting cultures with Lightly distinct religious, social and ideological differences.

The Novel describes the struggles and hardships of a Bengali couple who immigrate to the United States to form a life outside of everything they are accustomed to.

The story begins as Ashoke and Ashima Leave Calcutta, India and settle in Central square, in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Through a series of events, Gogol becomes the main character’s official birth name, an event that will shape many aspects of his life in years to come. Throughout the story, Gogol fights an internal battle to find himself. He struggles trying to balance between American versus Indian culture and appreciating friendship more than family. Continuously in the novel, the author, Lahiri, uses different appeals of argument to show the reader that family should always be valued and help the reader connect with the story. Pathos in particulars forces the reader it connect emotionally with the story, specifically of how Gogol’s name came about and Ashoke’s tragic accident.

Cross - Cultural Identity in Lahiri's the Namesake

Lahiri's *The Namesake* is the tale of immigrants, Ashoke and Ashima Ganguli who come from India and raise their family in America, a country they adopt, all the while keeping their own traditions intact. *The Namesake* refers to Gogol, their first born, who grows up at first accepting his name, but later rejecting it to the point where he changes it legally as an adult. Gogol's name represents his father's hopes for a bright future, stemming from a massive train wreck that Gogol's father survived. A turning point in Ashoke Ganguli's life, it is this tragedy that shapes his future family's life, taking him to America and a few years later, bringing back with him to this foreign land his new wife Ashima.

The novel takes several jumps to describe Gogol's life: his childhood, spent mostly in the US, with occasional long trips to India; his college career, at Yale and Columbia, where he becomes an architect; several love affairs – in college with an American girl, then a strange sort of affair, including living together, with a very privileged American; then an affair with a married woman; and finally a semi – arranged relationship followed by marriage to another Indian – a girl he had met as a child. Gogol – Who eventually does take a “real” name, Nikhil (related of course to Nikolai Gogol's first name) – is a fully realized character, and very much an American born in the US with an identity split between his Indian heritage and his American life.

While the book starts with Ashoke and Ashima's early life, it is really Gogol that becomes the main focus as he grows up as an American, but is constantly reminded that he is of Indian descent, thus in some ways setting him apart from his peers. But as an adult, he makes it clear that he rejects his name and his family ways as he renames himself Nikhil, and rarely sees his family, as he says he's too busy with work. The story mostly follows Gogol, with significant chunks of narrative from the point of view of his mother, his father, and his wife.

Lahiri does a solid job of following the Ganguli family and their assimilation into American culture, one that really only crystallizes

with the birth of Gogol and Sonia, the two Ganguli children. Lahiri deftly weaves together the lives of these characters, balancing important perspective shifts and temporal ones so that we can see the ups and downs of the family. Lahiri is successful in describing the small details of Indian – American life and the typical conflicts between immigrant parents and native-born children.

Ashoke and Ashima do a heroic job of raising a family, protecting a culture in an alien land, in which they are recently emigrated strangers. They have a very close-knit community of Bengali friends in the US and their interaction is restricted to this group who meet for weddings, birthdays, anniversaries and other social dos. “They all come from Calcutta, and for this reason alone they are all friends. Most of them live within walking distance of one another in Cambridge.” (38) The urge is very strong among migrants to maintain their cultural identity when they are in an alien land, and Ashoke and Ashima would like to pass on their Indian-ness to their children.

But the children are drawn towards the mainstream white culture. Gogol has affairs with white girls/women and nearly marries one much against the wishes of his parents. The Indian girl he marries eventually, through the persuasion of his mother Ashima jilts him for a Russian. Sonia marries a white man, and therefore Ashoke's and Ashima's dream of propagating the culture they have so assiduously cultivated in an alien land collapses.

At the most basic level, this is a story of a family that is coming to grips with who they are and where they are under what circumstances. So necessarily, there are conflicts. The general theme is well conveyed – the conflicted desire, of someone like Gogol to be fully American (as he surely is) but not to lose his heritage (a desire sometimes expressed more as rebellion tinged with guilt). And this is nicely contrasted with Ashima's situation – She is really reluctant to move from India, and misses her home her whole life – then by the end she is herself, we realize, as American as she is Indian. For Ashima “Being a foreigner is a sort of lifelong pregnancy – a perpetual wait, a constant burden, a continuous feeling out of sort. Like pregnancy, being a foreigner, Ashima

believed is something that elicits the same curiosity from strangers, the same combination of pity and respect" (50).

India keeps cropping up as a setting, sometimes literally, sometimes more figuratively, in the memory of the characters. The Namesake is, essentially, a story about life in the United States, so the American setting was always a given. The terrain is very much the terrain of New England and New York, with Calcutta always hovering in the background. The characters struggle and come to terms with what it means to live in America, to be brought up there, to belong and not belong there.

The question of identity is always a difficult one, but especially so for those who are culturally displaced, as immigrants are, or those who grow up in two worlds simultaneously, as is the case for their children. For them it is a question of allegiance, of choice. They want to please their parents and meet their expectations. They also want to meet the expectations of American peers, and the expectations put on them to fit into American society. It's a classic case of divided identity, but depending on the degree to which the immigrants in question are willing to assimilate, the conflict is more or less pronounced. For immigrants, the challenges of exile, the loneliness, the constant sense of alienation, the knowledge of and longing for a lost world, are more explicit and distressing than for their children. On the other hand, the problem for the children of immigrants – those with strong ties to their country of origin – is that they feel neither one thing nor the other.

Whether it is the stories in the collection, *Interpreter of Maladies* or the novel *The Namesake* they are a testament to Lahiri's versatility as a writer. She has the ability to change cultural perspective as easily as a bilingual person's ability to shift from language to language. She does not paint pretty pictures. Her canvas is made up of details that make up the reality of everyday life. Most of her works are written from a perspective that is between cultures. The characters are not traumatized refugees but are negotiating a path in a country (America) that seems to provide opportunities ("A Temporary Matter," "The Third and Final Continent," "Mrs.

Sen's," "When Mr. Pirzada Came to Dine"); or they are the Americanized children of such Indian families (*The Namesake*, "Interpreter of Maladies", "This Blessed House"). Ties to the Asian sub-continent may be strong or weak, primary text or subtext, but they are ever-present. Living between cultures lends an extra layer of complexity to situations and relationships that are difficult in and of themselves.

The East- West divide is fundamental to Lahiri's characters but the truth is people everywhere today inhabit mixed orders of reality. It's a given. For them it is always a question of allegiance, of choice. They want to please their parents and meet their expectations. They also want to meet the expectations of their American peers, and the expectations they put on themselves to fit into American society. It's a classic case of divided identity, but depending on the degree to which the immigrants in question are willing to assimilate, the conflict is more or less pronounced.

Conclusion

Her works are overtly about immigrants, cultural clashes, assimilation and adaptation and so forth. They reveal how the socio-cultural forces, ethnicity and genders have influenced the expatriate characters and bring out the anxieties, uneasiness, nostalgia, rootlessness and alienation that they have to come to terms with. She has, very successfully delineated the problematic of exile in her works. The exile has to deal with two centers – external, colonial or modernist and the internal and national – filtering into a personal identity. Her characters deal with these polarities sometimes rejecting and sometimes accepting them. During their stay in the new country and in interaction with the representative culture the subjectivities and modes of thinking of the diaspora also change and intervene in the cultural discourse of the dominant culture.

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BARRIERS IN ACQUIRING SECOND LANGUAGE READING COMPETENCY AT THE COLLEGIATE LEVEL

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Abstract

Language is the medium human communicate, to convey ideas and the acquisition of language still is one of the most fascinating aspects of human development. Students today have to face a great challenge of learning three languages, one being our mother tongue, next the medium of instruction, English and our national language Hindi. Since three languages are introduced to an individual it is difficult for a student to acquire and learn the language skills. A growing number of studies have begun to illustrate the factors affecting to acquire the reading competency of the L2(second language – English.)Leaver et al (2005) acknowledge that language learning experience will differ depending on whether it is the first(L1), Second(L2) or third language (L3. The effects of the student's inability to acquire the reading competency of the L2 is very evident in a classroom at the collegiate level when you ask him to read. In spite of scoring above average marks at the Stateboard +2 examinations in English a fresher is unable to read a given text fluently. The paper tries to highlight the major factors affecting second language reading competency at the collegiate level.

Keywords: L2, Language Acquisition, reading competency, language teaching.

Introduction

A competency is the capability to apply or use a set of related knowledge, skills, and abilities required to successfully perform "critical work functions" or tasks in a defined work setting.

Reading Competency is the ability to read text, process it, and understand its meaning. An individual's ability to comprehend text is influenced by their traits and skills, one of which is the ability to make inferences.

The reading competencies expected of a college student may be divided into two categories: literal comprehension and critical comprehension. In this paper, the generally accepted skills of reading comprehension are listed along with examples to better describe them. A student will likely improve his score on any reading test or all read in general to get a better comprehension of the text.

Reading competencies are usually divided into two broad categories:

- Literal Comprehension
- Critical Comprehension

The literal comprehension skills are directed at the actual words written by the author. They are:

- Selecting the topic sentence of a paragraph
 - Identifying the main idea of a passage
 - Identifying the supporting detail of a passage
 - Determining the meaning of words by context
- The critical comprehension skills are directed at the reasoning employed by the reader to go beyond the ideas of a passage and make certain inferences or conclusions about them. They are:
- Recognizing the author's purpose and tone
 - Identifying the author's overall organizational pattern
 - Recognizing explicit/implicit relationships between words, phrases, and sentences
 - Distinguishing between facts and opinions
 - Detecting bias
 - Recognizing valid arguments
 - Drawing logical inferences and conclusions

Factors Affecting Second Language Reading Competency at the Collegiate Level

A student at the collegiate level lacks reading competency due to the particular learning situations.

Age: Second Language Acquisition is influenced by the age of the learner. Students who have already have the basic skills of the L2 learn

the language skills better than the students who have less basic skills of the L2.

Motivation: L2 learners need a definite motivation at every level of interaction with the students in the classroom. Teachers usually pick good readers to read and leave the weak students. Motivating the student is very important to take the fear of learning a second language.

Personality: Introverted or anxious learners usually make slower progress, particularly in the development of reading skills. They take less advantage of opportunities to read.

Experiences: Students of L2 acquire reading competency and are stronger position to develop the other skills with the help of their experience in the L2.

Cognition: In general, it seems that students with greater cognition abilities will make faster progress. Some linguist believe that there is specific, innate language learning ability that is stronger in some students than in others.

Curriculum: For acquiring reading competency it is important that the totality of the educational experience is appropriate for their needs. Learning reading skills is less likely to take place if students are fully submersed into the mainstream program without any extra assistance or, conversely, not allowed to be part of the mainstream until they have reached a certain level of language proficiency.

Instructions: The problem with language teachers is that they try to translate and teach English in the native language. This discourages the Student to improve their proficiency in L2. Effective learning experience will provide the needful competency of reading.

Stress on Reading the text: Stress should be put on reading the text rather than summary and other short forms or methods of learning.

Importance: Reading habit should be developed among the students and equal importance should be given to reading as for other skills of L2 learning.

Conclusion

The acquisition of language is doubtless the greatest feat any one of us is ever required to

perform. (Leonard Bloomfield, Language1993.) The capacity to learn and comprehend what you read is deeply ingrained in us as a species, just as the capacity to walk, to grasp objects, to recognize people. Language learning is a process under the influence of some factors such as determination, hard work and persistence. Language learning experience will differ depending on the importance given to learning the skills of L1, L2 and L3. When we take all the three languages that we learn less stress and practice is given to reading skills as we see education and judge the Students according to the examination and marks. If equal or more stress is given to reading skills as with writing skills students would improve their competency level and be confident readers at the collegiate level.

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IGBO SOCIETY IN CHINUA ACHEBE'S NOVELS- A STUDY

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Abstract

This paper focuses on Chinua Achebe's novels on African Culture. Being a member of Igbo society he depicts the Nigerian culture in most of his novels. His work has a number of themes such as religion, culture and the practices prevalent in native Africa. These issues are skillfully woven into a structure in his novels. He was lucky to have had the kind of background which helped him in creating his great novels. Each novel of Chinua Achebe is thus a chapter on the charred history of his people and country, examined from political, social and economic point of view, Achebe, as an African writer, meets more than the challenges he is called on to take. Not only does he pin point the problems but also endeavors to suggest solutions. Achebe delved deep into African tradition to write about Igbo life and culture from within as an Igbo.

Chinua Achebe, the major exponent of the modern African novel, is greatly concerned with the Anthropology of his novels to the human condition in his Igbo quartet and dealt with the aspects of this particular society called "Igbo". Of the six major language groups in Nigeria – the Hausa, Yoruba, Igbo, Kanuri, Fula and Efik – Ibibio- the three largest ethnic groups dominate different parts of Nigeria, the Hausa Fulani in the North, the Yoruba in the south- west and the Igbo in the south-east. 'Achebe Country' is large enough to embrace the central province of Igbo speaking people, a multitude of clans that show Igbo language, culture and tradition.

Chinua Achebe has been the first Nigerian writer to transmute successfully the conventions of the 'novel' a European art form into African Literature and to use 'African things' and employ certain narrative techniques of narration to give authenticity and African flavour to his novels in order to attract the native and overseas reader as well. The Igbo literary revolution, a transition from fiction-writing in Igbo to writing in English took place in Nigeria after the second world war. The translation of the Bible into Igbo was also undertaken under the supervision of Archdeacon Dennis.

Achebe's novel evoke the traditional life of Nineteenth and early twentieth century. It speaks of Igbo life, culture and history. The Igbo earlier did not have well established, centralised

institutions and powerful chiefs to constitute a large Igbo "tribe", but later have developed a rich cultural heritage and a well-defined tribal consciousness.

The four novels of Achebe – "*Things Fall Apart*" which was awarded the Margaret Wong Memorial Prize, "*No Longer at Ease*" which won the Nigerian Trophy for literature, "*Arrow of God*" which received the Jack Campbell New Statesman Award for Literature, and "*A Man of the people*" are critiques of colonization and constitute a chronicle of life in Eastern Nigeria. The novels depict the Nigerian situation in different eras. pre- colonial (*Things Fall Apart*), colonial (*Arrow of God*) pre – independence (*No Longer at Ease*) and post independence (*A man of the people*). The success of Achebe as a novelist is attributed to his ardent desire to delve deep into African tradition. Achebe writes about Igbo life from within as an Igbo. In his interview with Lewis Nkosi, Achebe said:

"I know around '51, '52. I was quiet certain that I was going to try my hand at writing, and one of the things that set me thinking was Joyce Cary's novel set in Nigeria, "*Mister Johnson*", which was praised so much, and it was clear to me that it was a most superficial picture – not only of the country – but even of the Nigerian character, and so I thought if this was famous, then perhaps someone ought to try and look at this from the inside."

Achebe dispassionately mirrors the strengths and weakness of the Igbo traditional society in his works. The Igbo world is 'masculine, coherent and in a curious way classical.' Okonkwo in, "Things Fall Apart" as a match wrestler, 'a rearing flame', and 'a flaming fire' and 'a proud and imperious emissary of war' embodies the traditional values of Igbo society. In "Arrow of God", Ezeulu the chief priest of Umuaro endeavours to protect the dignity of his people against the alien intruders. Obi Okonkwo in "No Longer at Ease" represents the Igbo crisis of hybrid culture. The problems of public and private morality of Igbo society exposed to the west are dramatized in "A Man of the people". The Igbo traditional society is achievement-oriented where 'age is respected but achievement revered' and it is dynamic in the sense that it allows considerable freedom to the individual to grow as long as it does not militate against communal good. Okonkwo and Ezeulu develop inordinate ambition and allow themselves to be goaded by excessive individualism at the expense of the society and consequently face the same sticky end. In "Things Fall Apart" Okonkwo's impulse rage, obstinacy and ambition to become one of the lords of his clan, drive him to his tragic end.

In "Arrow of God", the over bearing and overweening ambition of the iniquitous priest to become the king – priest of Umuaro make Ezeulu the laughing stock in his own village.

The Igbo traditional society as depicted by Achebe in the novels of "African past" is masculine, hierarchal, self-contained, coherent and organic and in a curious way classical and above all, far from primitive. The society is governed by distinct social institutions and the legal system. The trial scene in "Things Fall Apart" demonstrates the highly sophisticated, civilized social mechanism of Igbo society.

The religious tradition of the Igbo culture falls neatly into three clearly defined areas. First, worship and rituals of traditional deities, including the oracle of the Hills, and Caves. Secondly, the worship of ancestors and finally the concept of 'Chi' that occupies a place of great importance in the Igbo cosmology. For Igbos every man and woman has his or her 'Chi', 'god within' that gives

one the knowledge of good and evil, and 'Chi' is sometimes equated with the Christian concept of 'free will'. 'Chi' is the guiding spirit and in some measure 'Chi' keeps civil order and the clan. The Igbo 'tribe' is 'presbyterian', without rulers but run by a committee, often of elders and is achievement oriented. The 'Ozo' title of Igbo society has diffused the 'kingship' and men of title become 'the hidden kings of non-royal clans' to constitute the decisive force of the community and are intermediary between the dead and the living and after death they find their place in memo, the spirit world of ancestors. The Igbo 'tribe' is totemic, totem means 'brother-sister kin,' a visible symbol of unity, kinship, belongingness and common affinity. The Igbo society is polytheistic.

'Chi' has two distinct meanings in the Igbo language. It is translated as God, guardian, angel, personal spirit, soul, spirit-double etc. It also means day or day-light, commonly used for twilight between day and night.

In the two novels of Achebe the realities speak for themselves. For example, in "Things Fall Apart", Unoka, presents a disc containing a kola nut, some alligator pepper and a lump of white chalk to Okeye, his guest. of kola it is said, "he who brings kola brings life", and Okeye takes the lump of chalk and draws some lines on the floor and then paints his big toe. Further Unoka tells significance of groups of short perpendicular lines drawn in chalk. "Each group, there represents a debt to someone and each stroke is one hundred cowries". In "Arrow of God" Akukalia, carries the white clay and the new palm frond for war.

Emmanuel Obiechina in "Culture, Tradition and Society in the 'western African Novel' about the concept of time, has pointed out that Achebe has established the details of Igbo Chronology. The traditional concept of Time in African fiction is entirely different from that of the western. The market weeks, moons, harvests, festivals, lunar years and seasons can be contrasted with the western week, days, dates and twelve months year.

The descriptions of African traditions and customs especially of Igbo society such as the offering of kola nuts to guests, sacrifices to Ani, the Earth goddess, the observance of the

peaceweek by the community before the harvest, traditional feast like Uri and the second Burial feast and festivals like pumpkin Leaves festival and New Yam festival evoke African atmosphere and lend a colour to the narratives.

The situational novels of Achebe depend heavily on anthropological details to project the true traditional Igbo life and its cultural crisis. In 'Things Fall Apart' Achebe has described the traditional feast of the New Yam Year (chapter five), an occasion for joy throughout Umuofia, a communal experience we have the wrestling match (chapter six), a communal recreation, the rituals of traditional marriage gifts and the settlement of the bride-price, (chapter eight), the birth of Ogbanije Ezinma and the search for Ezinma's iyi-uwa, her life spirit (chapter nine) and about the nine egwugwu that constitute the jury of the village and traditional trial (chapter ten). In the following chapters we hear of Chielo, the priestesses of Agbala, the oracle of Hills and the caves and traditional marriage followed by a traditional funeral (chapter thirteen). In "Arrow Of God" also, Achebe devotes more than ten chapters out of a total of nineteen to the anthropological details about the Igbo life in Umuaro and Okperi.

Achebe's Igboized English captured the spirit and flavor of Igbo village life in his Igbo quartet. The native proverbs, metaphors and similes drawn from the Igbo tradition which are the life blood of Igbo rhetoric are employed to create images that are both ornamental and thematic in its effective communication.

In "Things Fall Apart", a villager says, " he who brings kola brings life", the first proverb in the novel. Achebe immediately gives an ethnological explanation for the use of kola linking it with an ancestral prayer- "Unoka prayed to their ancestors for life and health, and for protection against their enemies."

Achebe, with his positive commitment to the contemporary issues in Africa, as an insider and critic of his society, participates in future renovation via past. He has, in his 'tradition

novels'- "Things Fall Apart" and "Arrow Of God" which articulates the realities of Igbo 'tribal' life and refute the distorted accounts of life in Africa – glamorized the strength of Igbo society (kinship and corporate living) and its rich cultural heritage (communal experience and harmony).

Thus, Chinua Achebe, the doyen of modern African writing in English, too is an interpreter of men, society and literature and believes in art-literature that is in the service of man. His sensitive use of language, his historical perspective and his memorable characterization have made Achebe a leading African novelist.

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WAXING OF HOPE IN THE LIVES OF THE WRETCHED WITH REFERENCE TO IMAYAM'S *BEASTS OF BURDEN*

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Abstract

Literature measures the delight of diverse people and records the miseries of the wretched. Dalit literature signals the servitude and poverty of the dalits, the plight of women, their fight against discrimination and exploitation and also showcases the need of hope to free themselves from the fetters of slavery. The paper throws light upon the desperate lives of the destitute as portrayed by Imayam in Beasts of Burden. Discrimination, exploitation, casteism, slavery, diversification within dalits, women harassment are some of the social issues that are pressed upon. Change is inevitable for dalits to face their challenges is the ultimate idea that has been put forth by Imayam. Thus the paper also highlights that dalits have to emancipate themselves by having hope and changing for better.

Literature is the camera that captures not just moments but also the emotions. It reveals the reality in its true colours, immersing the people in nostalgic occurrences and also mocks at the repercussive episodes. Literature reverberates the melancholy of the marginalized, echoes the cries of women, demonstrates the plight of the destitute, marks the identity crisis of the anonymous people and records the revolution of the rebels. "Dalit literature uses the written word as a weapon against the inhuman oppression of Dalits by the Brahminical social order that denies them basic human rights and dignity", states the Marathi Writer, Sharankumar Limbale. Dalit literature showcases the solitude of the marginalized, portrays the poverty of the downtrodden and illustrates the ill-treatment of women.

The etymology of the term Dalit traces back to Sanskrit term 'dalita' meaning divided, split, broken or scattered. During the 19th Century the word has been repurposed to arrive at the meaning to refer a person who does not belong to the Brahminic castes. The British Raj Census has used this term for defining the Depressed Classes and has been later popularized by the father of Dalits, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar. The term 'Dalit Literature' came into use officially in 1958 at the first conference on Dalit Literature in Mumbai.

The hopes and aspirations of the exploited masses, the problem of untouchability, the

exploitation of Dalit women by higher caste men, are the themes of Dalit literature. The aim of Dalit writers is to write what they see, feel and think in the social environment. Dalit literature is neither an ideal representation of life nor an individual commitment, but it is a social commitment. Dalit literature has been influenced by Marxism and also by the American Black Movement. However, the roots of the Dalit literature and the dalit movement lie more profoundly in the Mahar Movement and the Buddhism revival.

The pioneers of the Dalit literature include Dr. Ambedkar, Mahatma Phule, Baburao Bagul, Bandhu Madhav and Shankarao Kharat. The important writers whose vibrating words find a place are; Mahasweta Devi, Namdeo Dhasal, Daya Pawar, Arjun Dangle, Sachi Rautry, Rabi Singh, Omprakash Valmiki, Basudev Sunani, Narendra Jadhav, Mulkraj Anand, Premchand, Arundhati Roy, Marku and Mangal Rathood. 'Imayam is one of the first Tamil writers to bring the dalits to life through his exquisite novels', remarks Sundara Ramaswamy. Imayam is a prolific writer who has thrown light upon the issues of gender through his novels.

Imayam is the pen name of V. Annamalai, an English teacher at a high school in Vridhachalam, Tamilnadu. He has made his mark on the Tamil literary scene with his very first novel, Koveru Kazhudaigal (1994), which has created heated

debates on issues like the role of a Dalit writer in the context of oppression seen within the Dalit community. The well – known translator, Lakshmi Holmstrom has brilliantly captured in English, his powerful and original voice. She has translated Koveru Kazhudaigal as *Beasts of Burden* (2001). The changing times of a village is unfolded with tiny details through the eyes of Arokkyam, a washerwoman who serves a dalit community of agricultural labourers. Rich in ethnographic detail and native idiom, the narrative throws sharp insights into the life style of dalits.

Imayam is the recipient of the Agni Akshara Award, the Tamil Nadu Progressive Writers' Association Award and The Amudham Adigal Award. Imayam's second novel, *Arumugam* (1999), explores the relationship between a mother and son, the difficult emotions that weave their stories into a single fabric of love. Imayam's third novel is *Sedal* (2006) and two short stories namely *Mannbaram* (2004) and *Mariamman* (2008). Some of his novels are prescribed as syllabus in many universities.

'Powerful and persuasive voice is Imayam's finest achievement', says Lakshmi Holmstrom. Imayam's *Beasts of Burden* carries within itself the grief and pain of the Dalits. Imayam has beautifully captured the ringing poignancy, the trials and tribulations of a washer woman, Arokkyam, who is trapped between the dilemmas of changing times. The vannaathi woman, Arokkyam washes the clothes and serves for the colony where the dalits live. The novel discloses the intra – dalit strife and the sorrows of the lowest of the low – born. Arokkyam's dilemma within changing systems of belief about the self and society captures the reader's interest.

The story revolves around the life of Arokkyam; depicting her sufferings and pains that are caused when her son, Josep who moves away with his wife Sahayam. Her grief intensifies when her daughter, Mary is seduced by Chadayan, the Kothukkaaran. As her first son, Josep is away from her, she doesn't want her second son to depart from her. Hence she denies her second son, Peter from becoming a Priest. But then Peter elopes, bringing in her more pain. The grief thickens by the death of Mary's husband,

Diraviyaraj. She fights for her rights within the old order and also for the happiness of her children; Mary, Peter and Josep. The climate of time and change are characterized by Josep's detachment from Arokkyam; by his wife, Sahayam to start a new laundry business; Peter's escape from the chains of the village customs; and also when Mary's devastated life turns a new leaf. The novel is constructed between two journeys: at the beginning, a pilgrimage of hope and towards the end, a routine trip of the washing pool in drudgery and despair.

When everyone is fortunate to frame his life to live and independently, but the dalit's alone are so unfortunate that they gift their life with great devotion and diligence, unaware of the fact that surrendering oneself is slavery. This dependence on the other people has paved way for the dalits to survive in a home without happiness, in a society without safety and security. This is evident when Arokkyam remarks, "One family had served this town; a vannaan family. Couldn't they understand that it was only by depending on the townsfolk that the vannaan and his family lit their kitchen fires? That it was through their generosity that they filled their bellies? How could they have the heart to betray the low – caste vannaan who lived by trusting them, who served them to the very end? Truly, people had changed". (Imayam 134)

Discrimination is a toxin that has contaminated the minds of the people, leading to the pollution of the society. Dalits are widely affected by this toxin and it has tainted their life. How much ever they attempt to socialize with the multitude, they fail miserably in every attempt and remain marooned. Even in *Beasts of Burden*, Arokkyam is treated like a scum of the earth. When the pigs are slaughtered for the Mariamman temple, Arokkyam has asked for the customary habit of giving her the head and entrails, she has been answered by Ramasaami, the Kothukkaaran of the village as, 'You need to be whipped with my slippers. Bitch of a vannaati, how much insolence must you carry in your heart that you dare to oppose me in public! Have you gone that far? You monster! You whore!' (Imayam 181).

A decent living and a fully clad look has always been denied to Dalits. The society prefers a

shabby look as their life is already tattered. When Dalits make an effort to change their life style, they are criticized and commented by people. Similarly, when Josep has returned to Chinnaselam, the people of the village have commented, 'Do you think he looks like a Vannaan's son anymore? He looks a deal well than a child from a well – off family' (Imayam 166, 167).

Caste has great influence in the life of the poor. The poverty of the poor is like an epidemic that has paralyzed the host. Caste has denied self – assertion and human dignity. Oppression and injustice are the gifts given by caste – discrimination to the untouchable's life. The touch of poverty and misery is so felt that the miserable are not able to make out a living without them. When Arokkyam has become old like a skeleton, with loose wrinkled skin like an empty bag; she has dreamt a bad dream about the death of a young person; she recalls her past life and is scared about the dream. Arokkyam wonders,

"All my life's struggle is to fill the belly
Like a donkey I carried bundle after bundle
Night and day I carried my vessel and stood
in front of every house.
It's all in aid of this stomach
All the abuse and bad words thrown at me
It's all for this belly
It's like an ocean that can never be filled
Even if I struggle all my life, I'll never fill it
All that I have suffered was for its sake
But my belly is never full
For fifty years I've walked between
thorapaadu and
Colony to earn my food
What am I but my stomach
The world is its stomach? (Imayam 295, 296)

The condition of Arokkyam is exactly the condition of most of the dalits. Dalits live mainly for their belly. In their quest for food, they lose their identity. Having concentrated more on belly they have forgotten the idea of betterment. Filling their belly doesn't fulfill their life. The life of the dalits can be witnessed through the words of Madhukant Kalpit's poem Amadavad, 'Crushed under the road roller / Of inhuman behaviour/

The ugly face of my tragic history . . .' (Prasad 159).

The women of Dalit community have always been a victim of sexual abuse and harassment. They are viewed as decorative toys to be played with, rather than a human with flesh and blood. Though dalit women are the victims of sexual abuse, they are the ones who are cursed and criticized. Men who abuse women are not questioned or censured, due to the fact that they belong to upper caste. They consider that dalit women have succumb to the desires of upper caste men. This is obvious when Mary has gone to collect clothes for washing, as Arokkyam is sick, she has been exploited and harassed by Chadayan, the Kothukkaaran. He is a long established resident of the colony and so he is able to do what he is pleased to do, nobody questions him. Mary, for whom the pain is unbearable, has been weeping ceaselessly and it has been a terrible weeping that has grown, out of helplessness, humiliation and extreme loss, shaking the hut. The men, who have committed a crime by harassing a woman, have no feeling of guilt. They conveniently blame women, making them worthless and pitiable.

Dalit women are considered weak and powerless. They are considered worthless and they are always dominated by men whom they serve. For instance, Arokkyam's life is purely dedicated to her husband and children; and she leads her life only for the sake of others and most often 'her life' is not lived at all. She has no room for her own wishes, desires, ambition and passion in her life.

The colony people and the upper – caste people are served by different vannaans, which is elucidated by Imayam in *Beasts of Burden*. He pictures how the Hindu vannaan serves the upper caste and the Christian vannaan serves the colony.

But in all the other towns, only one Chakkili serves both groups. Even the marginalized are conscious about religion. There is a wide range of demarcation and diversification even within the dalits. They in fact ill-treat those who are subordinate to them. For instance, when the village is devoid of sufficient water, the people of the village have decided to sacrifice a pig and to go for a procession. On the day of sacrifice, Arokkyam has

requested for the entrails but the request is rejected by the others mainly Chadayan, Mottayyan and Ramasaami. Mottayyan has managed to get the entrails for twenty rupees finally. Since Arokkyam has been demanding for the entrails, she is regarded as an unwanted person and has been avoided purposely by all, as she has raised her voice for her due to the village leaders. She is insulted by Ramasaami in public, “Flog her! Scavenging bitch, I’ll pull your teeth out!” “Has it come to this?” Several others in the crowd began to shout along with Ramasaami. They leapt about. Mottayyan shouted continually, without even seeming to draw breath” (Imayam 182). This episode portrays the inhuman nature of the people, who is reluctant to lend hands for their own people. Feeding their own people, kith and kin, seems to be a burden to them.

Imayam illustrates, in his novel *Beasts of Burden*, the inevitability of faith and hope to walk into the deserts of darkness, where the path is unknown and unseen. Though Chadayan’s exploitation of Mary has resulted in pain and agony; the death of her husband, Diraviyaraj causes despair and desperation to her; she turns a new leaf when the rays of hope touches her. This is obvious when Arokkyam states, ‘Say it’s all destiny, fate, and let it go / Even when our parents die, after we have had a bath, we eat, we have to go on living our lives’ (Imayam, 313). Even the novel opens with the note of faith,

wherever we go, we’ll still be beneath someone else. They’ll always treat us like that, because we do the lowest duties to the lowest communities . . . We just have to carry on somehow, in the same way that our people and our community always managed, even before our time. You have to have strength of mind and heart. Don’t ever let that go. It’s like your life breath. If the breath goes, then the life goes. If we lose heart, then that’s it; we’re finished. So make your heart as hard as stone (Imayam 6, 7).

The dalits have to sow the seed of hope and faith to fetch the fruit of freedom. Perseverance and faith are the two wheels that can ride them to a land of equality. In the *Beasts of Burden*, Arokkyam has ardent faith in God; it is only that faith which drives her all through the way of

thorns and stones. Though she loses her faith, when Mary’s life has been shattered by Chadayan, she regains it back with the same spirit. Once again her faith is dropped when Diraviyaraj expires, but then she again regains her strength and marches forward along with Mary. The despair and sorrow of Mary is healed only through the medicine of support and care that have been showered by Arokkyam. Time changes and only change has lessened the torments of Mary. Towards the end, of the novel, when both march, the author, Imayam states, ‘Like the bare sky, the horizon stretched, endless. Then just space. Empty space’ (Imayam 314).

The Dalits have to refurbish themselves to emancipate and elevate them. They should attempt to breathe the fresh air of liberty and freedom by freeing themselves from the fetters of slavery and discrimination. Shankar Painter, a Gujarat poet, roars with a heart – piercing cry,

Hey Brother Break the Begging bowl
Do not extend hands for begging
By begging the Rights can not achieved
Change the history

Brother Break the Begging bowl. (Prasad 147)

Thus the indomitable spirit of inculcating hope, faith and aspiration in the minds of the dalits has provoked Imayam to pen the novel as a torch bearer to the torpid people.

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MENTAL CONFLICTS AND EMOTIONS IN ANITA NAIR'S *MISTRESS*

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Introduction

Anita Nair is a popular Indian-English writer. She is considered as a bold and straightforward writer with roots in her home state Kerala. "I have very strong roots in Kerala. My family goes back at least by 400 years in the village where my parents still live. When I am away from there, there is a strange yearning I feel for the place. Yet I wouldn't really call it nostalgia as much as trying to put into words that uniquely composite feeling that Kerala evokes in me. I wish I could tell you why Kerala inspires me as it does. Perhaps it is the sum total of the colors, the scents, the landscape, the people, their cussedness and humor, the petty politics and the larger than life ideals just when you think you have understood some facet of Kerala, it contradicts itself. Perhaps that is what makes it so exciting for me as a writer. She further writes. I began writing at a very young age. However it was while working at an advertising agency that I decided to become a full time writer. My forays into creative writing began with short stories and slowly I moved on to writing novels. I think writing was initially an interest for me, but later it became a serious compulsion. My stint in advertising helped immensely. It helped me craft my writing to the extent that I learnt to edit the flab out".

Apart from it, advertising is a great apprenticeship for a writer. First, I got used to rejection. Out of every ten brilliant campaigns, one sees the light of the day. So what are a few rejection slips? Secondly, I learnt to curb my temper when someone mauled my precious lines, just about everyone in an ad agency from the client's grandmother to his daughter's dance teacher have a point of view about the campaign and specifically the copy. One can accept editing more easily than perhaps a writer who has been a

dog trainer. And finally, as an advertising writer has concocted enough rhetorical over statements for middling products he or she will seldom be a victim of any hype. Her novels depict the real life of her characters without hiding anything from her readers.

Mistress published in 2005 exhibits Nair's ability to extract varied themes and create dynamic characters.

In her interview with Aditi De published in 'The Hindustan Times', Nair admits, "I've never believed in heroic heroes. We only look at people when they achieve something. I know people who are extraordinary, but who lead quiet lives. So, whatever I write is not going to be larger-than-life characters. Probably they would have quirks that would make them misfits, but they are ordinary people".

The author's focus at sharp characterization is reinforced in all her works. Her interest in observing people from day-to-day life and highlighting them in her work is her forte. On her official website she has gone on record, "I aim at sharp characterization and it is this tension between characters that allows the movement of the narrative to progress at a brisk pace."

In Ladies coupe, Akhila represents the new Indian woman who is dissatisfied with the roles assigned to her by the patriarchal society and manages to reject the cultural and social background. She tries to express her views and opinions sometimes directly and sometimes indirectly, keeping in mind about the changes in modernity and the tradition. The slow, but firm assertive strides she takes in her pursuit of freedom from the age-old customs and the consciousness prevails throughout the novel in the form of all minor and major characters. For the protagonists in Nair's writings, it is the revolt against the family

traditions in search of freedom and quest for their selves. Akhila's extramarital adventure certainly indicates the move towards sexual emancipation. The novel also highlights the theme of freedom from bondage of culture, from the concepts of family, marriage and sex as defined by male chauvinism and is thrust upon women. The protagonist does urge to seek self-fulfillment through self-expression.

Plot of *Mistress*

The plot of the novel *Mistress* is the realistic portrayal of the kathakali world. To write the novel, Anita Nair underwent a short-term course at Kerala Kalamandalam. In one of her interviews Anita Nair said, "It was quite a challenge to structure my novel in a similar way. It takes a lot of craft and its very satisfying to be able to fulfill this challenge" (Bagchi Para).

Anita Nair is extraordinary in interviewing the navarasas within the plot of the novel. Anita Nair in *Mistress* tries to present the differing perspectives of the east and the west.

Relationship between Radha and Shyam

The novel explores the relationship between Radha and Shyam. Anita Nair finds the transformation in each and every woman that is described by her in difficult altitude. In the novel Radha has an affair but no sooner her father finds it and forces her for an arranged marriage. The bride approves by saying about her impure virginity and he feels the repercussion. Shyam had foolish dreams since childhood towards Radha. Eventhough he knows that she had pre-marital relationship with a married man, he thinks that it is an innocent relationship. Radha's marriage is a failure, as she could not build a bond with him. When shyam married Radha he expects a dutiful wife. Shyam and Radha do not have children though married for eight years. He suspects that he is attracted towards Chris. Shyam's attitude towards Radha is the reason to develop an illegal affair with Chris. Radha meets Chris secretly.

The character of Radha is bold and dominating. Being dissatisfied with her husband she opts for an extra marital affair with Chris her husband's friend. Shyam tries his level best to

bring her back to him, he is ready to forgive all her mistakes, he is ready to accept her at any cost "I think of the other Radha... to go back to him" (*Mistress* 2&7)

In many of her novels, Anita Nair has depicted the husband-wife relationship. Her female characters are bold enough to fulfill their desires by negating family bond and go up to the extent of establishing physical gratification with other men. "Shyam's call leaves me angrier than ever..." (*Mistress* 206).

In an interview she says, "To me, feminism in the Indian context is about recognizing the importance of the female self and to be able to nurture it. Very often, we Indian women tend to negate ourselves as something that is expected of us. In fact, there may be no pressure at all from extraneous sources for us to do. Perhaps it is conditioning or perhaps it is lack of self-esteem, we don't consider ourselves important enough and so we tend put our needs and desires on the back burner. This is what needs to be addressed. And this to me is what feminism ought to tackle".

The writer admits that in spite of being married some women are not satisfied with their marital life and they indulge in extra marital affairs. Radha, who has a pre-marital affair with a married man, has an abortion. She distrusts love as a form of male possessiveness. Later, her post-affair with Christopher, she grapples for the true sense of love, completely divorces from the sense of guilt. The characters revolve around each other as in similar situations in real life. They struggle with the balance of heart and mind, make mistakes, ask questions, search answers with hopes, dreams and despairs.

Conclusion

The nine rasas, or sentiments, are the earth of our emotional lives. For at all times, we are feeling with one or the other of these responses and we react in the emotional language of the rasas. Literally, rasa is essence, the juice of life. As we begin our journey into this world, one of the first things we do is populate our world with rasas. From a no rasa state of birth, to a baby's two or three rasas - distress (at hunger, discomfort), happiness, satisfaction, we grow to become a

complex of emotions. As we mature, our personality becomes more varied, intricate, and begins to display an entire range of rasas. The dominant emotion love leads to other minor emotions like contempt, sorrow, fury, valor, fear, disgust and wonder. These emotions have a deep influence in human life. When one of these emotions exceeds the limit, there springs out mental conflict, frustration and psychological torture.

The characters revolve through the cycle of changes from Kathakali to navarasas and navarasas to Kathakali. Navarasas like Srīngaraaram, Haasyam, Karunam, Raudram, Veeram, Bhayanakam, Bheebasyam, Adhbutam and Shantam. Nair's portrayal of women lacking moral values reflects the moral degradation present in the society. Radha commits adultery and sacrilege and by doing so breaks control of the social norms. Radha is portrayed as a different woman who has broken two hearts Shyam and Chris. Radha's irresponsible and callous attitude towards all her relations depicts the emergence of a woman with no moral values. Reality of life is transformed through dance as a medium in the novel.

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THE INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL NETWORKS ON THE APPROPRIATE USE IN CONDITIONAL CLAUSES

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Abstract

The focal point of this study is to investigate the influence of social networks on the production of certain select unreal conditional clauses in the medium of writing. Revolution of social media in the twenty first century help to learn, teach and assessment of performance. Situation based context are used to test the appropriate use of knowledge in unreal conditional clauses. Eighty four undergraduate students was selected in simple random sampling procedure. Questionnaire was the main instrument for the study. Grammaticality Judgment test was used to test the target structures involving hypothetical and counterfactual conditional clauses. After collecting data, the researcher used the t-test and ANOVA for analyzing the data. The findings of the study revealed that the usage of the social networks do not affect the production of unreal conditional clauses in the medium of writing.

Keywords: social networks, assessment of performance, unreal conditional clauses, and Grammaticality Judgment

Introduction

Social networks are part and parcel of using websites or applications in smartphones or in computer to communicate and share with each other by posting information, comments, messages, images, quotes etc. Rios-Aguilar (2012) noted that “social media is redefining how individuals create ties with other individuals as well as how individuals establish relationships with the organizations that serve them.” Also, social media connects to complete tasks in learning and identity formation (Subrahmanyam and Smahel, 2010).

Social networks have become an integral part in learning platform that could be tried to improve learning and performance. These tools offer many opportunity to access information, chat and research. Most of the learners use social media in belief of improving knowledge and gain an advantage in the competition. On the contrary, Al Sayigh (2013) reported that revolution of new communication afflicts the youth in poor performance at education.

This study has been conducted on the influence of social networking or social media on tertiary level education. This study examines the use of grammatical knowledge in the contextualised situation in the testing tool of

grammaticality judgement. The situations are related to daily life and also from familiar topics. The study explores the influence of respondents' gender, stream type and duration of using social networks.

Conditional clauses stand fifth after articles, prepositions, phrasal verbs, and verbals (Celce-Murcia & Larsen-Freeman 1999). Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman (1999) cite a survey conducted by Covitt (1976). Form, meaning, and time-tense relationships could be considered for the difficulties.

Conditional clauses consist of two clauses: a subordinate clause (if-clause or ‘protasis’) which states the condition of reasoning and a main clause (or ‘apodosis’) which features the outcome of inferences. Unreal conditionals can express present, past and future time. There are two types of unreal conditionals namely hypothetical conditionals and counterfactual conditionals. The unreal conditionals are used to express extremely unlikely or hypothetical situations and situations that are assumed to be contrary to known facts or counterfactual (Zhang, 2005).

A typical example of hypothetical conditional is shown as (1).

1. If he had the money, he would buy a new car.

In (1), the speaker imagines a hypothetical situation that could happen in the future, having the money, and declares what he would do in this case. The condition is one that is contrary to fact, or one that is impossible (e.g. if you were a bird), or one that is considered unlikely to be fulfilled or has not yet been fulfilled, or, for past time, one that was not fulfilled (Hornby, 1975). A typical example is shown in (2).

2. If Ram were here, he would know the answer. Here is a sentence expressing counterfactual conditionals in the past event that did not happen.
3. If Kanishka had seen the painting first, she would have bought it.

Literature review

A lot of studies have been conducted to know the effect of social media on academic performance of students. According to Ito (2009), young learners use technologies to actively participate in many activities to make better in their life.

Fishman (2005) pointed out that tertiary level learners share their views through many social media sites such as emails, blogs and social networks services. Students use desktop computers, laptops, E-readers, tablets, and cell phones to actively participate and busy in social networking, text messaging, blogging, content sharing, online learning, and much more in regular basis (Cassidy, Griffin, Manolovitz, Shen, & Turney, 2011). Reynol Junco (2012) found that that more time spent on checking up and sharing links with friends on Facebook was negatively related to academic performance.

Kirschner and Karpinski (2010) indicated that continuous use of Facebook was resulted a negative impact in academic performance. To support this study, Junco's analysis through Hierarchical linear regression analysis from five studies (2012) showed that more time spent on Facebook was significantly negative influence in academic performance.

Conversely, Banquill (2009), found a continuing drop of grades among students who use social networking sites. Ahn (2011) adds that

"Social Network Sites (SNS) provide a platform for the youth to participate in communities that help them to learn, and practice skills within a particular knowledge area".

By observing these studies, the results clearly showed that the influence of social media had not impacted on academic performance. Some studies attempted to focus on the aims of using social networking while other studies concentrated on overall performance of academic performance. No study focuses on appropriate use of conditional clauses in situational task, especially in grammaticality judgement test, mostly used the instrument in Student Learning Assessment.

Selection of target structures

The following structures selected involving in two types of unreal conditional clauses, hypothetical conditionals and counterfactual conditionals. The selected structures are:

1. If + simple past tense + would + bare infinitive
2. If + were + would + bare infinitive
3. If + past perfect + would have + past participle

Objectives

The main objectives of this study are as follows:

- To find out the influence of gender on hypothetical and counterfactual conditional clauses in the medium of writing.
- To identify the effect of stream on hypothetical and counterfactual conditional clauses in the medium of writing.
- To find out the impact of social networks usage on hypothetical and counterfactual conditional clauses in the medium of writing.

Research Questions

RQ₁. Do the different genders of the respondents have any influence on their production of the target structures in the medium of writing?

RQ₂. Do the different stream of the respondents have any influence on their production of the target structures in the medium of writing?

RQ₃. Do the different durations of social networks usages of the respondents have any

influence on their production of the target structures in the medium of writing?

Selection of sample

Simple random sampling was used to select eighty four undergraduate respondents from different stream. Men (32) and women (52) respondents from Arts and Science stream were participated in this study.

Tool used

Grammaticality Judgment test was used to test the target structures involving hypothetical and counterfactual conditional clauses. In Grammaticality Judgment test, respondents are asked to find out error and write appropriate answer for the given contextualised task. Situation based task were to be made to test each of the target structures twice in main clause and if-clause respectively.

Analysis and interpretation

Table 1 Mean, S.D and 't-' value of production in written test

Gender	N	Mean	S.D	df	t-value	Sig.
Male	32	2.47	1.78	82	1.131	Ns
Female	52	2.85	1.73			

Table 1 reveals that mean values of men and women in written test are 2.47 and 2.85 with S.D's 1.78 and 1.73 respectively. The calculated value of t-test 0.961 is less than the table value at 0.05 level of significance. It is inferred that men and women do not differ significantly in their performance in Grammaticality Judgment test.

Table 2 Mean, S.D and 't-' value of production in written test

Stream	N	Mean	S.D	df	t-value	Sig.
Arts	34	2.44	1.74	82	0.961	Ns
Science	50	2.88	1.75			

Ns – Not significant * - Significant at 5% level

** - Significant at 1% level

Table 2 indicates that mean values of Arts and Science stream respondents in written test are 2.44 and 2.88 with S.D's 1.74 and 1.75 respectively. The calculated value of t-test 0.961 is less than the table value at 0.05 level of significance. It is concluded that men and women do not differ

significantly in their performance in Grammaticality Judgment test.

Table 3 Respondents' usage of social networks

Duration	Social Networks	
	No.	Percent
Less than 1 hr	46	54.8
1-2 hrs	16	19.0
2-3 hrs	5	6.0
3-4 hrs	8	9.5
More than 4 hrs	9	10.7
Total	84	100.0

Table 3 shows the duration of usage the social networks in a day. 54.8 per cent of the respondents used the social networks less than an hour. 19.0 per cent of the respondents used the social networks for one hour to two hours. 6.0 per cent of the respondents used the social networks for two hour to three hours. 9.5 per cent of the respondents used the social networks three hours to four hours. 10.7 per cent of the respondents used the social networks for more than four hours.

Table 4 Results of ANOVA showing the impact of social networks usage duration on the respondents' production of the target structures in writing

Source of variation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	11.308	4	2.827	.922	Ns
Within Groups	242.252	79	3.066		
Total	253.560	83			

An attempt was made to find the relationship among the usages of the social networks in terms of duration. The respondents were categorized into five groups, according to their usage of social networks such as less than an hour, an hour to two hours, two to three hours, three to four hours and more than four hours. The analyses were carried out by one-way of ANOVA.

The obtained 'F' ratio (0.922) is significant at 0.05 level. This shows that the duration of usage of the social networks has no significant influence on the respondents' production of target structures.

Table 5 Mean writing scores of the respondents classified according to their usage of internet in terms of duration

Duration	Mean	S.D	No.
Less than 1 hr	2.80	1.85	46
1-2 hrs	2.06	1.44	16
2-3 hrs	2.40	1.52	5
3-4 hrs	2.88	2.17	8
More than 4 hrs	3.33	1.41	9
Total	2.70	1.75	84

From Table 5, it is revealed that the mean scores do not differ significantly among categories. So, the duration of the usage of social networks has not made any influence on the respondents' production of the target conditional clauses structures.

Conclusion

The study is revealed that men and women do not differ significantly in their production of the target structures in Grammaticality Judgment test. Neither do Arts and Science respondents. Also, the duration of the usage of social networks has not affected the respondents' production of the target structures. The results of the study supports with other studies mentioned above in the literature review of academic performance. As Kirschner and Karpinski's (2010) findings revealed that if time spending on social networks increases, the academic performance of students is decreased. Also Reynol Junco, (2012) found that time spent and checking on Facebook was negatively related to the academic performance.

The research results has clearly shown that the relations between the various significant dimensions related to using social networking had not influenced on appropriate use in language learning. The use of social media networks improves language skills and academic performance. If social networks are not used in proper way to develop knowledge and language, it would affect the academic performance and difficult to compete in the modern era. It is therefore the responsibility of the student, parents, and parents to make the right decision in relation to the use of social media networks.

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THE SOCIAL ISSUES IN TAMIL MOVIE *VELAIKKARAN (SERVANT)*

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Abstract

This paper brings out the social issues in latest Tamil film Velaikkaran (Servant). It tells how the MNC (Multi National Company) ruins the life of customers or people in the form of marketing. The protagonist of this movie realises his responsibilities to change his community and the poisonous things in the products when he joins as a Marketing Executive in a company. He makes revolutionaries in the society and the companies. Products should not be poisoned to the people is the main motif of this film. This modern society faces many challenges like public health, healthy food etc. He changes the minds of workers or servants to save the human race. People are attracted by product and ad because of this modern and readymade world. This movie deals with the care of public health. How a product is poisoned with over combination of materials is clearly discussed. Union is strength and everything is possible by the unity are also proved by protagonist.

Sub Theme: Literature and Films

Keywords: MNC, Velaikkaran (Servant), readymade world, human race

Introduction

Velaikkaran (Servant) is well reached and successfully running Tamil movie which is directed by well-known director Mohan Raja. Arivu is the protagonist of the movie, who is an ordinary slum man with extraordinary thought in the colony. His father is workless because of sickness, his mother is maid servant and he has a school going sister. He is the responsible youth, who wants to focus on the upliftment of his fellow beings. Arivu wants to free the people of the area from the atrocities of Kasi. He is purposely preventing them from becoming independent, so that he may continue to dominate the area. Arivu gets success in turning the people of the area against Kasi, thus destroying his support. Later Arivu joins a leading FMCG company, Saffron. He meets Aadhi, the Brand Manager of Saffron, who teaches him how to progress by doing smart work and Arivu considers him as his inspiration. Arivu brings his friend Bhagya out of Kasi's gang and gets him a job in Saffron. Bhagya regularly door delivers the product of Saffron like Chips, Biscuits and Bread to Kasthuri who lost her child by those poisonous products. Bhagya tries to help Kasthuri who files a case claiming Saffron's products. Arivu is told by Kasi as being a worse hitman than he himself is. Arivu then saves Kasi.

He is also told by Kasi that all the products manufactured by his company are adulterated. He takes up a mission to fight such malpractices not only in Saffron, but also in all the other five major food companies. This paper aims to focus these social issues literally.

Social Issues

As Wikipedia defines on Social issue;

A **social issue** is a problem that influences a considerable number of the individuals within a society. It is often the consequence of factors extending beyond an individual's social issue is the source of a conflicting opinion on the grounds of what is perceived as a morally just personal life or societal order¹ Social issues are distinguished from economic issues...social and economic aspects.

This movie is dealt with Economic and Public health, analysed as two major social issues in the movie. Arivu's slum people are affected economically so they defend Kasi, as a gangster. Kasi uses the slum people for his benefit. He spoils them for his selfishness. Arivu gets supports from slum people for developing them and also the workers of the companies when he reveals the problems of the products. He fights against food adulteration by leading food MNCs including the one that employs him. Here he is not a servant but

wonderful thinker. He is source of his slum and he makes the people to realise the existing thing. And he wants to bring out issues of public by using food products of MNC and how it ruins the life of the people. Kasthuri is one of the victims of poisonous food.

As the very old and great poetess Avaiyar says that to born as man, is great in the world, this life is a gift for all because nobody knows how long they can live in this world. But every one wishes to live happily without any troubles in physically and mentally. This movie gives awareness to the people to live healthy. In this modern and global world, living without disease is gift for all. But everyone is facing challenges through fertilized food, adulteration in medicine and eatable items etc. *Velaikkaran* explains the how the Slum people believe and support blindly Kasi and the products of MNC, are found poisonous. These two are related to Economic and Public health problems. Thus he rises against this injustice. This is the film which tells about the MNC which does not care about lives of customers. The servants of the company are indirectly killers the public.

An enterprising youngster in a slum wants his people to lead a life of dignity, but has to take on an ambitious capitalist. Even as he continues his fight against Kasi, Arivu realises that what he is doing at work is no different from what the gangster has been doing and decides to change the system.

The protagonist delivers;

“We are not selling things, we selling Lies”

“People are facing troubles to get need...”

Corporate is struggling to sell what they needed.”

He has intention that the company products to be truthful and genuine to the customers. Again he says often;

“Action is the best way in the world”

He lives in the statement. He is selfless, true achiever, revolutionary personality and the symbol of good for his society. Men are uncivilized before this marketing modern world. Packed eatable items, packed water, packed masala, packed fries and etc. are the poisonous and they are adulteration in this country. People need only fast food in this fast food culture. Their mind is pre

occupied that they are busy and they have no time to prepare. Especially people who are living urban, these packed items are gifted and they are blessed. They are unaware of the products. This movie gives awareness to the public. This paper also points out the all the workers are also customers, so they have to realise and know the loyalty or quality of the products. Workers are not bonded, they are also customers.

Conclusion

This movie reveals issues like economically and socially which are poisonous to the public. Movie is the social media which makes great impact among the public. *Velaikkaran* (Servant) plays a vital role to create awareness. Servant is not a bond man in the working place. The protagonist has a unique personality to bring the society in good manner. He is the servant to the public, customers, and his slum area. Though Arivu belongs to poor family, he takes care of his slum area. He organises and unites the workers or servants. He insists them to know the adulteration in the products. Arivu is not only symbol of good but also reformer of the society. We should not be quiet against the injustice of the society. This is the ultimate message to the human race. The workers can show their opposition to their owners without fighting against the management. True People can live, thus Truth triumphs alone.

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A QUEST FOR IDENTITY AND LIBERATION AN ANALYSIS OF JAISHREE MISRA'S *ANCIENT PROMISES*

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Jaishree Misra, an Indian author was born in 1961 to a Malayali family in New Delhi. She started her writing career in 2000. Misra's life is as dramatic as her books. Jaishree Misra's first novel *Ancient Promises* is a semi-autobiographical novel in which fate plays a vital role. Misra believes in 'Karma' which in Malayalam means ancient debt or that joy and sorrow follow each other in a cycle. In her very first novel, Jaishree Misra consciously sets out to blur the truth and fictionalise the story because she believes that is the real job of the novelist. The protagonist of *Ancient Promises*, Janaki bears close resemblance with Misra. They both have gone through the up and down of life. The novelist has attempted to write a semi-autobiographical novel where the facts have been interestingly mixed with fiction.

Jaishree Misra's *Ancient Promises* is the story of an affectionate and dutiful daughter, a compassionate but guilty lover, a restless and miserable wife, a helpless and despairing mother-a woman constantly in search of an identity, a woman pursuing her rightful share of happiness. It is the fascinating story of the protagonist Janaki's long journey traced through a happy childhood, an unexpected arranged match, a traumatic marriage ending in strife finally culminating with the finding of everlasting love in true fairytale fashion.

The pitiable plight of the women in marriage as wife, daughter-in-law or later widow as seen in Misra's novel makes the novel a realistic, contemporary, social document of the actual status of women in India today. Janu's journey though long and traumatic, makes her stronger and eventually brings her peace. The novel deals with marriage, divorce and motherhood.

The protagonist's life runs parallel to that of the writer. Many of the characters and of events bear close resemblance to the real-life characters and events. The novel is divided into three parts and eighteen chapters. Janu, the protagonist was born in Kerala and brought up in Delhi. So is Misra. Janu is a Malayali born and brought up in Delhi whose father was an air commodore in Delhi. Janu (Janaki) lived in Delhi for the first eighteen years of her life. The narration moves to her journey from innocence to experience. She is brought up in a very traditional Malayali family.

Her mother is a teacher. The western lifestyle gets deeply rooted in her mind during her childhood. At the age of seventeen she meets a young man named Arjun. He is a cricketer at the local school. At first Janu falls in love with Arjun. Their love blooms into romance. Events take a drastic change when her father's friend sees her on Arjun's bike when she should have been in her maths-tuition classes. Jaishree Misra says:

I am not Janu, just as no character is ever quite the one it is based on. It is true that I did fall in love at seventeen. I, too, lost my teenage sweetheart to an English university and an arranged marriage. We met again, after a ten-year period of silence, in circumstances not dissimilar to those described in the book, effectively ending my marriage. I do have a Riya, with a learning disability, and as dear to me as notwithstanding, all through the writing of the book I found I was quite consciously setting out to blur the truth and fictionalise the story, precisely because that was what I believed a novelist's real job was. (p.307)

Janu's love develops in her friend Leena's house. Janu's lover, leaves for England for his higher studies. He announces his plan of joining his mother in England. Janu is literally put

underhouse-arrest. Her parents take her to Kerala. She feels doubtful of her future with her lover, Arjun. She has little choice. She is sure that her long wait for him would be futile. She is with her grandparents. Her parents want to get her married off. Janu writes a letter to Arjun explaining this:

I'm sure we both knew this was coming, so here it finally is. I'm getting married in two weeks's time. To a businessman who lives in Kerala. I've met him once, he seems pleasant enough. I don't suppose you want to know much more about him, and there's little more I can add to that description anyway. (p.63)

Janu agrees to marry according to her parents' wishes. She marries into the Maraar family. The narrator says:

'The Maraars are an old and gracious family; half the families would have died for an alliance like this...' (p.66)

Janu wants to complete her B.A degree. The Maraars promise to allow her to complete her studies. Unwilling to hurt the feelings of her parents, Janu gets married to Suresh at the age of eighteen. Her husband belongs to a socially respected Maraar family. She makes a sacrifice for the sake of the family. Janu has to now ensure that she fits into the mould of the ideal wife.

The impact of patriarchy on the Indian society varies from the one on the west and therefore the Indian women novelists like Jasishree Misra have tried to evolve their own stream of feminism grounded in reality. They have their own concerns, priorities as well as their own ways of dealing with the predicament of their women protagonists. *Ancient Promises* is a novel which is a scathing denunciation of the secondary, subordinate position accorded to women even in a progressive matriarchal society like that of Kerala. The protagonist finds herself in a loveless marriage from where she makes a painful journey towards a discovery of her true potentiality. Janu's husband is a spineless one with probably no individuality of his own. He shows little interest in his wife. On many pretexts, he prolongs his stay outside the house. Janu tries to fit into the mould of a true, meek and submissive wife. The Maraar family never wholeheartedly accepts her. They expect her to follow the trodden path of a dutiful Hindu wife

and an obedient daughter-in-law. She finds herself isolated with no feeling of familial bonds. In course of time, Janu gives birth to a little baby girl, Riya. Unfortunately, Riya is mentally challenged girl. She needs a special care and attention than normal children do. Mishra says that she too has a Riya with learning disability. Suresh, Janu's husband, shows no interest in his daughter Riya. When Riya was born, Janu's sole hope for happiness got shattered. When Dr. Vijaya said:

'This child is definitely mentally handicapped. There is no doubt, see she has all the features, high arched plate, tongue-thrust' conducting with a flourish, 'in fact I think that she will never even speak.' Amma nodded her approval and Dr Sasi-the famous nephrologist congratulated his friend on her expert diagnosis. (p.127)

Suresh is indifferent to the feelings of his wife. When she complains about Gowri's rudeness towards her, he brushes aside her complaints. He says that Gowri wants to tease Janu. He says:

'Don't be so sensitive. Your problem is that you've been an only child, you're obviously not used to family life.' (p.97)

She wants to discuss the matter with him but he never gives her a chance to share her feelings with him. She understands that her husband is an escapist. In her in-laws' house, Janu becomes a laughing-stock. Her lack of proper Malayali knowledge is laughed upon. She never gets love and affection for which she longs from them. The loneliness that she experiences in her new surroundings is further compounded by the fact that Suresh never seems to notice or respond to his wife's moods or emotions:

He didn't seem to notice at all – as I didn't then – that there were hundreds of opportunities like that one, missed carelessly and without thought for the price we would have to pay later. Tiny little chances to ask each other how we were feeling. To take and share our thoughts and learn to become friends. (p.90)

Widows are relegated to a subordinate position in a progressive so-called matriarchal society like that of Kerala. In the house of widows like Ma and Ammumma, only a 40-watt „bulb' burns. Widows have nothing to look forward

because they have been deprived of their husbands. There's is a life in death. Janu says:

My grandmother's house was already a joyless place of prayer and old memories, without menfolk whose footsteps would be anticipated every evening and for whom special food could be cooked. Once the evening lamp had been lit, this was the sort of house that closed its doors. There was also nowhere that either Ma or Ammamma could go once the temple round had be done. Only women who had the good fortune still have lives with their men went out after dark, to the cinema and restaurants and other people's houses. These pleasures had passed for my mother and grandmother rand an unspoken sadness had descended over the house that had once joyfully received hordes of children when the schools closed. Now it looked with half shuttered windows, only dimly shining its forty-watt presence behind two huge mango trees. Despite the occasional temptation, I truly did not wish to add any moresorrow to that house.(pp.144-145)

Jaishree Misra opens for the readers a vista of real-life incidents and experiences which at times seems stranger than the fiction. She takes the liberty to narrate what she finds worth narrating, at times concealing facts and creating some fictional characters. In the novel, Janu's in-laws suggest her that she should leave the child, Riya to the care of their servants. Suresh leaves fortrips and tries to avoid the family as much as possible. In that family Riya seems to be an undesirable and unwelcomed one. The Maraars never care for Janu and their mentally retarded granddaughter Riya. Janu feels unhappy at their unkind and merciless attitude.

Janaki's love affair with Arjun in her teens, a forced arranged marriage with Suresh, an unhappy marital life, careless attitude of her husband, humiliations and insults from her in-laws and mentally challenged girl child Riya weighed down upon Janu. But she endured all these things with her overwhelming patience. It is only much later in life that Janu has mustered her courage to walk out of her home and marriage; but even that is only after she had been seen by a world famous and expert psychiatrist Dr. Krishnan Menon who had pronounced her suffering from delusions:

I have no idea, to this day, how long I lay there in my stupor. I had been taken to the mental patients wing at Trivandrum Medical College. Dr Krishnan Menon, another old crony of Dr Sasi's and, needless to say, a-world-famous-and expert-psychiatrist, had seen me and pronounced me manic and suffering from delusions.(p.227)

Janaki decides to take Riya to Arizona where she can admit her to a specialist school for children like Riya. She wants to continue her education by getting admission for M.A in special education. She needs much money for the treatment of Riya and for her education. She applies for scholarship. She leaves for Delhi to attend a scholarship-interview. Now she is eager to see her lover Arjun in Delhi. Old passions arise and she realises the need to meet him. She visits Leena, her friend in Delhi. At Leena's residence Janu meets Arjun. Janu tells her husband that she wants to file for divorce to end their miserable marriage. Their conversation reflects their mind:

'Suresh, I have to ask you . . . please, I don't want to hurt you . . . ' I knew I was sounding weak and pleading and not firm and assertive as I'd planned. 'Suresh . . . 'It was coming out now, all in a rush, nothing could stop it now, 'Suresh-I want a divorce. 'He looked at me with a kind of pretend surprise on his face. He wasn't shocked, but I could see he felt obliged to have shock, hurt, horror.... We're not happy together. That's the point. I'm not happy with you, I suppose I've never been. It's not you rfault, I suppose we are just different. We seem to need different things from life.'(p.217)

Suresh tries to persuade her to stay back. Janu takes it as an advantage and reveals her love affair with Arjun. She sticks on to her decision of going abroad. Suresh tries to pretend to Janu that he is ready to forget her past and forgive her because of after all, she is his wife. But Janu never forgets her husband. She is aware of the tricks played by her husband. She goes to Arjun's house and there she succumbs to her love for Arjun. Janu begins to respond to every move that her lover makes. The novelist recollects her own experiences which are similar to those of her heroine Janu:

We met again after ten-year period of silence in circumstances not dissimilar to those described in the book effectively ending my marriage. (p.307)

Janu made up her mind to leave for England. Her husband and her in-laws have created many obstacles to prevent her from going abroad. Her husband's ego got deflated as his wife was leaving him. No one in the Maraar family had gone through such kind of experience before. The Maraars admitted her to an asylum. Janu's mother helps to come out of that dungeon. Suresh played another trick by taking away Riya with him. He thinks that Janu cannot live without her daughter. Her life without Riya is incomplete. At last in the legal fight Janu wins. Suresh had to reconcile himself to the divorce and handed his daughter to her mother. He nods for divorce. Janu is not ready to suffer and sacrifice as the traditional Indian women do. She wants to project her image as an individual, free from all kinds of conservative thinking which seeks to overthrow. She is ready to fight her way against all odds coming in her way in fulfilling her aspirations. She rebels against the existing patriarchal quotes and social norms which either in theory or in practice tends to relegate the woman to a secondary place in society. Her rebellious craving for individuality and happiness cannot but result in the breakup of family and relationships within the family. Marriage becomes meaningful and enjoyable when mutual love and respect are part of the relationship. When Janu tries to love and establish good relations with her in-laws, she is neither accepted nor loved by them.

To protect herself and her daughter, she starts revolting against the snobbish conventions of the Hindu patriarchal society. In England Janu meets Arjun and they spend all most every weekend together. Her studies also progress. On her return Janu's mother informs her that Suresh is ready for the divorce and also to return Riya. In search of true love and self-preservation she takes an unconventional step to create her own space and make humaneness triumph over mere customs and traditions. Through her revolutionary decision Janu paves a path to emancipation and establish the right balance between duty and human dignity. Whether Arjun can adjust with Riya or not now no longer seems important. She would go to England with Riya and admit her to the special school for mentally retarded children like Riya. She would give Arjun a chance to accept Riya as

his daughter. If it works it is fine; if not she can take care of her child on her own. This is her promise to her Riya. It is an ancient promise every mother makes to her children. It is a kind of ancient dues that she pays. Janu says:

Somewhere in my distant past, perhaps even a thousand years ago I had done something that committed to dedicating this life to Riya's care. Had I been a thirsty traveller at her door and had she taken me in, washed my feet, fed and watered me? I would never know what ancient promise I had made to her, just as she would never what deed had robbed her of words in this life. (p.160)

Now Janu has made her mind up her mind to fulfil that promise. The novel ends on a happy note.

Ancient Promises is a novel which can be described as a sincere effort of Jaishree Misra. It depicts up and down, success and failures in her life as she strives to take the reins of her life in to her own hands. The novel holds the readers' attention and the curiosity mounts with every page. In her author's note Misra says:

While I had, obviously, a husband and in-laws in my first marriage, I wish to state quite clearly that they bear no resemblance what so ever to the corresponding characters in the book. For those of you looking for a sequel, here's one of sorts. I married my Arjun eventually and Riya, happily lives with us. The songs are deeper, certainly. Sometimes sweeter. I hope I remember always to be grateful I had another chance to rebuild that tower in the sky. (p.308)

The novelist believes in, Karma' which in Malayalam means ancient debt or joy and sorrow that follow each other in a cycle.

Finally, with her new-found awareness, Janu wonders why a state that boasts of the highest literacy rate in India, has not allowed the enlightenment and broadmindedness that education brings, to seep through the narrow and obdurate crevices of orthodoxy. She realises that education devoid of vision does not liberate the mind. But emboldened by Arjun's love, she finally fights the society's resistance to change, and hopes that she has at last paid for a debt incurred many lifetimes ago.

Ancient Promises, which received critical and popular acclaim, works at several levels. At one level, it delineates the inexorability and inevitability with which providence plays a complex game using human pawns. At another, it is a triumph of individual will – of not resigning oneself to one's fate and not succumbing easily to the dictum that there are forces much stronger and far more powerful than us, mere mortals.

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SMART PHONES FOR ELT

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Soft Skills are part of Communication Skills ,Soft skills comprises of the skills which an individual uses to inform, to persuade, to explain, to present, to understand, elicit information. One may hate soft skills as he / she does not possess the essential skills of persuading, explaining, understanding a spoken word. But today one cannot ignore the roll of soft skills in any learning process, more so in learning and teaching a language.

As English has turned into a universal language, its presence and value in the world has expanded enormously in the past decades. Many money-earning activities such as BPO, Medical Transcription and IT add to the importance and relevance of English in every walk of life. Prof. Jacob Tharu says, "English is no longer some remote but a powerful mystery, lying hidden in the world of textbooks and examination."

Conventional English Language Teaching

In the past, students were introduced to English only in their sixth standard. Students learned English just as another subject like Physics and Mathematics and got very little opportunity to using it within the school as well as outside the school. The above context was appropriate for the use of methods that did not focus much on communicative competence. Language teachers adopted and followed some or all of the different methodologies listed below to teach the language.

- Grammar Translation Method
- Bilingual Method
- Direct Method

In the Context of English as a Subject

All the above methods have their own advantages and disadvantages, where the students learned English only as a subject rather than as language. They were also unable to put their

learning into practice due to lack of a favorable environment. In addition to the above constraints, the teachers used to have very limited teaching hours, mostly from three to six hours per week which are not enough to teach the language elaborately giving emphasis for the basic elements of language.

Another limitation seen in Indian teachers is that some of the English teachers are not familiar with the latest developments in ELT pedagogy. The situation is no better even at the college level as Robert Bella mine observes, "The most serious problem in the teaching of English in our country is the appallingly small quantity and atrociously poor quality of English to which our learners are exposed." (Ref 1) . Teaching of English in India is examination-oriented only.

A Challenge in Teaching English Today

Challenges before the English Language teachers in India are enormous and apparent. They should be able to cater to the practical needs of learners, to make them competent enough to interact with one another and also to retrieve information all over the world. English has a base in several countries and is considered as the most suitable and convenient tool for International Communication. The people who have proficiency in this language could access large number of jobs and also were seen holding high positions in many National and International Organizations. In the earlier days English was just like a Library language, but now that notion has changed totally. At present the challenges visible before the English language teachers in India are diverse and it is necessary for them to shape up accordingly to meet the demands of the day.

Methods Adapted to Improve Spoken Skills

- Group Discussions
- Debates
- Role Plays
- Computer assisted Language Learning (CALL)

English for Specific Purposes

As English has emerged as a global language, it also plays a vital part in every profession with respect its importance and demand. Every profession has its own professional terminology which is used frequently in that particular profession. For example, certain terms used by the doctors, lawyers, et al. are quite different from those of other professionals. So, to benefit these professionals, English for specific purposes is introduced so that specific English words related to that particular profession can be taught by those professionals. Jargon related to one profession is different from the other. Hence every professional is taught in a particular manner that fits in well with his professional demands.

Teaching Language through Visual Aids

One of the innovative methods used by the teacher to teach language in class room is visual aids. The teacher distributes visual aids to students by dividing them into various groups. The students are then given stipulated time to extract relevant information on the given aids. After that, those learners are supposed to speak about the visual aids given to them. This method expands the analyzing capacity of the students. By looking at the picture, the learner should think and come out with innovative thoughts which also help in learning language by creating fun-filled environment around them. The teacher acts as facilitator who motivates the students to talk freely. As each person gets their own unique thinking it helps to sharpen their thinking process.

Language Games

In addition to the above mentioned methods teachers also use various language games to teach English language apart from the conventional ways of language teaching, which helps in

developing vocabulary from the language that is being learned.

- Crossword Puzzles
 - Games to teach basics of grammar to the students through various structures
- Can a Smartphone be a tool for learning?

In a classroom bright with autumn sunshine Amelie raises her wrist to repeat the teacher's question.

This is a class at IPACA School on the Isle of Portland

Amelia, in year four, is speaking calmly into her smart watch, using voice recognition software to search the web for the fact she needs. She might just as easily have reached for the Smartphone that she also uses during lessons. Media caption Pupils discusses the impact of the ban four years ago. Her Dorset school has embraced a bring-your-own-device philosophy for pupils from year one to sixth form. It puts them at the centre of a debate about smart phones in class, on which almost everyone has strong opinions. First the head of Ofsted, Michael Wilshaw, said they should be banned from lessons. Then the government said they would include smart phones in a review of measures to tackle poor behavior in English schools.

'Not distracted' Ministers pointed to research by the London School of Economics, which suggested a ban on phones could make a significant difference to the most disadvantaged children by reducing distraction from learning. The academics asked schools in four cities in England about their mobile phone policy and combined it with data about pupil achievement. The phone companies wouldn't release information from mobile records for reasons of confidentiality.

Richard Murphy, who carried out the research, says this meant they couldn't be sure what students were actually doing, but it was clear that having phones in class didn't have the Same effect on all pupils. "The fact we don't find anything for high achieving students implies that they're not being distracted by themselves, or being distracted by other pupils." And crucially he told me their research was focused on what

happened in schools which were considering a ban, possibly because they'd experienced difficulties, and then implemented one. So they didn't look at schools like IPACA which are using phones as a learning instrument.

"What we can say for sure is having phones in schools without any rules are bad for low achieving students. But what we can't say is that if mobile phones were being used in a proactive way this can't also be beneficial." This means the largest recent academic study into the use of phones in schools gives only part of the picture.

Using a Smartphone in Class

Smartphones are here to stay. For English teachers, that means we need to either ban iPhones, Androids, Blackberries and whatever next flavor arrives - or - we have to learn how to incorporate the use of smartphones into our routine. I've discovered that just ignoring their use in class doesn't help. After all, I am an English teacher trying to encourage my students to communicate in the English language. Students who sit in class and use their iPhone or Android are missing out. That's a simple fact. However, it's also true that students are going to use their smart phones if they haven't been taken away. At least that's the way it is where I teach English.

So, what's a dedicated English teacher to do? Here are ten tips on how to constructively allow the use of smartphones in class. Admittedly, some of the exercises are just variations on traditional classroom activities. However, encouraging students to use smart phones to complete these activities will help them learn to use these power-packed, hand-held computers to actively improve their English skills. Finally, it's important to insist that smart phone or tablet use is OK, but only as a tool during a specific activity. In this way, students can continue with their obsessive, addictive behavior. However, they won't be tempted to use their smartphones for other, non-English learning tasks during class.

1. Use smartphones for vocabulary exercises with Google image search.

A picture is worth a thousand words. I like to use my smartphone, or have students use their

smartphone to look up specific nouns on Google images or another search engine. You've all seen how a visual dictionary can greatly improve vocabulary retention. With smartphones, we have visual dictionaries on steroids.

2. Use smartphones for translation, but only at a specific time.

I try to encourage students to read using three phases. 1) Read for gist - no stopping! 2) Read for context - How can the words surrounding unknown words help with understanding? 3) Read for precision - explore new vocabulary using a smart phone or dictionary. Only in the third phase do I allow smartphone use. Students are pleased because they can look up words. However, they're developing good reading skills by not immediately translating every word they do not understand.

3. Use smartphones for communicative activities using apps.

We all communicate with our smartphones in different ways depending on different apps. In other words, texting with a messaging app is bound to be different than writing an email on your computer. Take advantage of this and promote activities that are specific to a given context. One example might be to have students text each other to complete a given task.

4. Use smartphones for help with pronunciation.

This is one of my favorite uses of smart phones in class. Model pronunciation for them. For example, focus on suggestions. Ask students to open a recording app.

Read five different ways to make a suggestion aloud. Pause between each suggestion. Have students go home and practice mimicking your pronunciation in the pause between each suggestion. There are many, many variations on this theme.

Another great use for pronunciation is to have students change the language to English and try to dictate an email. They'll have to work really hard at word level pronunciation in order to get the desired results.

5. Use smart phones instead of a thesaurus.

Have students search on the phrase "words like ..." and a host of online offerings will appear. Encourage students to use their smart phones

during writing class in this manner while focusing on developing a wider range of vocabulary. For example, take a simple sentence such as "The people spoke about politics." Ask students to come up with a number of versions using their smartphones to find substitutes for the verb "speak."

6. Use smartphones to play games.

Yes, yes, I know. This is something we shouldn't encourage in class. However, you might encourage students to write down phrases they experience while playing games to bring into class to discuss in more detail. There are also a number of word games such as Scrabble or word search puzzles that are actually instructive as well as fun. You can make room for this in your class as a "reward" for completing a task, just make sure to tie it to some sort of report back to the class.

7. Encourage students to use smartphones to keep track of vocabulary.

There are a wide variety of MindMapping apps available, as well as a myriad of flash card apps. You can even create your own flash cards and have students download your set of cards to practice in class.

8. Use smartphones for writing practice.

Have students write emails to each other in order to complete a specific task. Change up the tasks to practice different types of register. For example, one student might write a product inquiry with another student replying to the inquiry with a follow-up email. This is nothing new. However, just using their smartphones can help motivate the students to complete the task.

9. Use smartphones to create a narration.

This is a variation on writing emails. Have students choose photos they have taken and write a short story describing the photos they have chosen. I find that by making it personal in this manner, students engage more deeply with the task.

10. Use smartphones to keep a journal.

One more writing exercise for the smart phone. Have students keep a journal and share it with the class. Students can take photos, write descriptions in English, as well as describe their day.

How students can use mobiles to learn English Mobile technology is everywhere, but do you restrict or encourage it in your classroom? Educator, multimedia author and Editor Joanna Norton shares tip about how English language teachers can use technology to their learners' benefit.

Technology is transforming how we communicate, socialize, play, shop and conduct business. These profound changes place pressure on the traditional models of language learning, such as teaching in a formal classroom setting. They also present us with amazing opportunities to re-design the way we teach and learn English.

Cameras and microphones are useful for learning English

Camera phones provide a great way to ask learners to 'notice' grammar around them. You can encourage students to take photos of street signs, menus, advertisements, or other examples of written English that they see around them. Spotting the misuse of apostrophes ('s) or noticing incorrect spelling are my favorites.

Another useful tool is the recording function on mobile devices. Here are three examples:

- Learners can record themselves speaking English and share it with friends, who can offer feedback. This is a great opportunity to practice pronunciation.
- Learners can record conversations with native speakers on a range of topics and integrate them into projects.

Learners can use the microphone creatively, and incorporate voice recordings into edited videos.

Mobile technology turns the question 'What did you do last weekend?' into a personal story, as learners can share with the group photos or videos of what they did, where they went, and how they felt. They can also share their social media activity, providing an opportunity to explore what their friends thought of the weekend.

Seven tips for using mobile technology with success

Integrating technology into the classroom is a long-term strategy. If it's to be sustainable, the following points should be considered.

- As a teacher, you need to engage with mobile technology yourself, before you can start to implement it into classroom practice.
- To make sure students don't get distracted by social media, set clear learning objectives. Find creative ways to use social media within lesson plans. Consider how

Mobile technology can be used for extension activities. 'Why don't you post an image of your work on your Face book page?' is more engaging than 'We don't use Face book in this class'.

- If your school does not have a mobile learning policy, you need one for your class before you begin.
- Do some research. It takes a lot of time to find relevant, suitable apps. There is no moderation process in place, so even with paid apps, it is difficult to know whether or not they are suitable.
- Don't overwhelm your class with technology. Learners often fail to recognise the benefits of technology for language learning. So it helps to introduce apps and mobile learning activities one at a time. Then, as a group, you can reflect on whether they are useful.
- If you do not have enough time to use mobile devices in class, think how they could be used for informal learning outside the classroom. Your students will benefit from the results of this extra practice when they're back in the formal classroom.
- Read point number 1 again.

Mobile devices have helped me to create an inclusive, personalized learning environment. My learners are now active researchers, and my classes are more in tune with their needs. Mobile technology also helps me use my lesson planning time more effectively. It has Pushed the boundaries of my own professional development, and I continue to share these models of learning in class.

Some of the Twitter exercises below are a great way to begin to use social media for

language learning. You can provide hash tags to allow students to search for and follow the conversation.

Tweet a summary in pairs or small groups, ask students to summaries a piece of text in 140 characters or less. Provide students with a hash tag, so the whole class can follow the conversation on Twitter and discuss it at the end.

What did you did at the weekend?

Ask students to tweet photos of their weekend. Provide a hash tag for all the tweets. They could include photos of interesting people they met, a funny sign, or a meal they enjoyed. This will provide students plenty of material for discussion on a Monday morning.

Awesome apps for English teachers for teaching students how to present create and code

TED-Ed

More than 250,000 teachers use TED education tools to spark student curiosity and explore presentation literacy skills. "TED-Ed is an outstanding resource in my classroom," says TED-Ed Innovative Educator Jennifer Hesselstine. "I use the online platform to add engaging content to topics that we are studying. I have also given students the opportunities to help in the process of creating TED-Ed Lessons by choosing videos and creating questions to include."

Haikudeck

Students can create beautiful presentations with this app. "It's great for pairing short poems and images," says TED-Ed community member Jessica Dawn Kaiser.

Duolingo

If the benefits of a bilingual brain motivate your students, try this app. "Duolingo revolutionized the way people learn languages," says TED-Ed community member Dhruv G. Menon.

DrawandTell

This app can increase creative confidence in kids of all ages. Just draw something, tell a story about it and share your creation. For TED-Ed community member Ginie Harvin Pitler, this app is a classroom favorite. "I'm an elementary teacher and believe in creation apps over consumption apps," she says.

Animoto

Students can easily create and share their own beautiful videos with Animoto. "I'm a huge fan of this simple yet powerful digital storytelling tool for iPad and the web," writes TED-Ed Innovative Educator Jennifer L. Scheffer in an this ed tech roundup. "The app allows students to select a theme, music, images or videos, add captions and/or two lines of text, and within minutes a slick video is created. The finished product can be shared via social media, uploaded to YouTube, or embedded in a student's e-portfolio. For a great introduction to Animoto, with a built-in lesson in digital citizenship, have students create an 'About Me' or 'Year in Review' Animoto."

iMovie

This popular app is another teacher-recommended choice for student video creation. "My students enjoy using imovie for group projects," says TED-Ed community member Chris Gilley Callaway. Check out the Apple apps for educators, too.

Instructables

From science experiments to merit badges, this app offers instructions for more than 100,000 DIY projects. Looking for a classroom maker project? You'll find it here. Did your students create something awesome? Encourage them to upload their instructions and share their ideas.

Hopscotch

Students can learn computer science fundamentals — via game design — using this app. For more ways to teach core coding concepts, check out Scratch.

Tinkercad

After students get inspired by the open-source wonderland at Thingiverse, turn them loose to start designing their own 3D objects with this app.

Conclusion

To meet the present day challenges in teaching English, first of all, English should not be treated as a subject as it is to be used actively in interacting with one another throughout the world. By using conventional methods, maximum portion of class time will be wasted in exercises and drilling, dealing with grammar and

pronunciation which takes away a large portion of class time. These methods were mostly used to develop basic skills of language learning such as Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing, but by following these methods listening and speaking skills were neglected as students cannot put their language in practice.

In the era of competitive world, where the majority of the students are attempting GRE & TOEFL, good listening and speaking skills become an absolute necessity. Communicative approach has been totally neglected by teachers and learners which has become a global demand where students are supposed to communicate across the globe. Teachers should act as facilitators, and should observe how well students organize their thoughts while speaking with their fellow members. As language changes geographically due to dialectal variations, the teacher should take adequate steps to teach their student about neutral accent and their importance while communication. Clear pronunciation, not perfect pronunciation, is the goal. Students are also now facilitated by software to practice pronunciation through phonetics. To achieve the goals of language learning today every college should be provided with language lab, sophisticated equipment like computers, LCD Projectors.

In addition to these, our faculty too should update their knowledge, skills and should acquire thoroughness over their syllabus to meet the demands of globalization since English is seen as a key educational investment in this world. If provided with the latest language teaching tools and with the support of technology, one can teach the language effectively and motivate the students towards language learning.

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THEMES AND CHARACTERS IN ANITA NAIR'S *THE BETTER MAN*

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Abstract

A novel is a local, real, the present and the day-to-day experience of life. Place is an all-inclusive framework; it conditions a novelist's mode of characterization, his sense of direction - in brief, his entire point of view. Throughout Nair's writing the recurring themes of the paradox of human relationship, the importance of place and mythological influences help her shape the theme and character. The complexity involved in the relation between father-son and that of mother-daughter is highlighted in Nair's The Better Man and Ladies Coupe. Localisation is a practical matter of placing the characters in an environment within which they perform their roles.

Introduction

'The sense of the visual interaction between character and landscape can be a striking feature of fiction' (Raban 113). Place is vitally important. It makes fiction seem real, because with place comes customs, feelings, and associations. Similarly, for Nair place plays a significant role in her novels. Nair is also noted for using mythology to connect to her specific character and locations to universal truths and themes. It is the significance of place in a fiction that Nair has attempted in her first novel, *The Better Man*. Characterization constitutes the real essence of all her novels. The story is set in a sleepy village called Kaikurissi in Northern Kerala. This village conditions the novelist's mode of characterization. The novel begins with a monologue by Bhasi, who introduces a host of characters: Vishnu, the priest, Che Kutty the toddy seller, Shankar, the tea-wallah. These characters represent the essence of Kerala because temples, toddy-shops and tea-stalls form the life of Kerala. The names assigned to the characters and the towns are typical of Kerala. The characteristics of Kerala and the issues close to this state are highlighted in this novel. Kerala is depicted as a 'land of lottery' and 'toddy shop'.

Thus the author attempts to recreate the setting aptly.

The author shifts the novel from Bhasi's monologue into the third person narrative to introduce the Protagonist Mukundan. Nair's non-

belief in heroic heroes inspires her to create characters who are ordinary men and women, leading everyday lives. None of her characters are supremely faultless. The impact of an overpowering and dominating father is quite visible in Mukundan. When he turned 18, Mukundan secured a clerical job in an explosive factory in Trichy. His later plan of settling in Kerala with his friend Narendran was also foiled by the latter's sudden death, eight months prior to their retirement. Thus, left with no option Mukundan returns to his village, which he had tried to stay away from, all his adult life. At the age of fifty-two, Mukundan has no hopes of getting a bride, young enough, who could give him a progeny. When he found hope in twenty-seven year old village school teacher Anjana, he was unwilling to stake his reputation in the eyes of the villagers. Mukundan's indecisiveness is solely responsible for his state. The influence of his dominant father follows him as a shadow all his life. Moreover, his father constantly reminded and drummed into his ear day after day, "If you wish to survive, you need to think of yourself first." (TBM 71).

Mukundan was unable to free himself from his father's influence but all his acts are a mere duplication of what he detested in his father. Unconsciously, he tried being as ambitious and powerful as his father but failed to get rid of the fear and angst he had within him. Mukundan's

dealings with his mother Parukutty, beloved Anjana and dear friend Bhasi clearly exhibit his egocentricity. His desire for recognition and acceptance, importance and adulation blinded him to everything else. He realized that a survivor is someone who is selfish and there is no point in surviving when there is no one to share one's happiness or grief with. His insistence on not being just his father's son and his struggle to carve out his own identity in the village forced him to make some contribution to the betterment of his village. In his quest for identity, he betrayed Bhasi and joined the side of the all-powerful Ramakrishnan - the richest man in Kaikurrissi. Mukundan could not mourn his father's death as he always wished him dead and held him responsible for his crippled spirit. He hated his father for being a tyrant, who tormented him throughout his life. It was only his father's death that made him realize that despite his father's faults, callousness and brutality he was a man who had the courage for his conviction. Mukundan discovered that he was merely an extension of his father bereft of the much-needed valor. Mukundan hid his inadequacies by using his father's domineering methods as an excuse to explain his own weakness of character.

Mukundan is portrayed as a timid man, who used his integrity as a facade to deflect attention from the fact that he was a failed man in his life. He was as selfish, insensitive, brutal and incapable of loyalty or love as his father Achuthan Nair. Mukundan can be compared to Deven Sharma, the male protagonist in Anita Desai's *In Custody*. Deven too comes from a lower-middle class family and seeks to reach out into a wider world in the hope of self-fulfilment. He is portrayed as an average man completely lacking in initiative because of his timidity. However, he has literary aspirations and longs for distinction. The story revolves round his weakness and his trials and travails to become a success. Like Mukundan in *The Better Man*, Deven too, is portrayed as 'a diffident and awkward hero', who feels himself a victim of circumstances. Towards the end of the novel, when everyone deserts him, Deven suddenly finds his own strength and learns to accept his responsibility with fortitude. In *The*

Better Man too, Mukundan's decision to follow his conscience and stop chasing ephemeral dreams and to amend the wrong done to Bhasi makes him a reformed soul. His kind gesture of gifting a quarter of an acre land to Bhasi in order to resettle him in Kaikurrissi makes him acceptable to the readers. The climax of the novel helps him rise above his shallow nature that he exhibited in the beginning of the novel. Taking advantage of the *poor am* (a temple festival in Kerala) with *Vedikattu* (the ritual of bursting crackers) Mukundan stealthily procures gunpowder and decides to eliminate the Community Hall, a statement of his weakness, his cowardice and his lack of integrity. The new and transformed Mukundan did not want the remnants of his past staring at him. He becomes a man and 'a better man' in the true sense of the term. He is transformed from a coward to a self-righteous soul. Mukundan is portrayed as a failed lover in *The Better Man*.

All the intimate moments he shared with Meenakshi (his childhood soul-mate) were relegated into some corner of his mind after he left Kaikurrissi: Mukundan had Meenakshi - his first cousin once removed: companion and soul mate. They crawled together as babies. They paddled together in the pool and when they were a little older, they learned to swim together... They knew each other's bodies and minds as well as they knew their own. And then suddenly one day they were considered to be too old to spend so much time in each other's company... And because their meetings were so infrequent, they began to function as two separate beings. 'For the first time in their lives, they had secrets for each other. His dreams were no longer hers. Her plans no longer his, (TBM 53-54). When dumped by Mukundan, Meenakshi seeks solace with a *Kathakali* dancer Balan, whom she marries. Thus, Meenakshi dwindles into a memory Mukundan preferred not to dwell upon. Thinking of her aroused many emotions, chief among them guilt. When they met later, she too had dismissed their adolescent fumbling as apart of growing-up process. There was no bitterness, no references to the past, no dredging up of forgotten promises (TBM 55). Mukundan's second attempt to seek love in the form of Anjana also fails. His unwillingness to

stake his reputation in the eyes of the villages costs him dear. In *The Better Man* Mukundan is engulfed by his own loneliness. Mukundan did not receive any affection from his father, though he yearned for some token of affection, some proof of acceptance or praise. On the contrary, all that he got were harsh words and sticks of the cane that his father always kept handy. His mother Parukutty also failed to protect him from this harsh treatment. He too failed to stand by her when she needed him the most. These were the words that Parukutty spoke to her son pleadingly, "Take me with you, Son. I am unhappy here" (TBM 31). Mukundan's egocentricity, lack of integrity, his detachment from his loved ones and the loss of identity in his own native place and sense of rootlessness form the moral fiber of the society is reflected in the novel.

Mukundan's struggles to win the local bigwigs and grab the power once owned by his father Achutan Nair take the story forward. To establish his identity and toe-hold in the village he tries to organize *Pooram* (temple festival) — an important cultural event of Kerala. It is the tension between Mukundan and the other characters that allows the movement of the narrative to progress at a brisk pace. Bhasi, another prominent character in the novel, is armed with a college degree in botany and a post-graduate degree in English language and literature. Despite his degrees he is a house-painter by profession. He represents the educated, unemployed masses of the hundred percent literate Kerala. Nair voices her concern about unemployment, a major predicament of the educated youth in Kerala. Bhasi voices this distress of the author when he says:

I have a college degree in botany and a post-graduate degree in English language and Literature. I have a piece of paper that states I qualified with distinction in the study of plants. And a certificate of merit issued by the University honoring me as one of the ten rank-holders in mastering the intricacies of the English language. But it wasn't enough. There was a time when I knew that I wanted to cling to the last fragments of self-respect, I would have to leave (TBM 7).

Powerhouse Ramakrishnan represents Capitalist society. He is "a social climber, a status

seeker, a snob and opportunist" (TBM 206). The above quote from the novel describes every inch of the character of Power house Ramakrishna. He ventures into new businesses, invests and makes extra profits. Even in the name of community service he attempts to grab land. An ordinary man, transformed into the richest man in Kaikurrissi, wielding power and position is overnight seen as an immediate threat and arch rival to Mukundan. Mukundan feels Ramakrishnan has usurped his rightful place. Ramakrishnan operated on a simple theory: every man has his price. Based on this theory, he conspired to buy Mukundan's complicity in the building of his dream - The Powerhouse Ramakrishnan Community Hall. He represents the bourgeoisie with his acres of land, rubber plantation and a car-hire service. Being the richest man in Kaikurrissi he commanded a lot of respect. Nobody dared to protest against his decision to grab Bhasi's land for building the Community Hall. He symbolizes the 'moneyed mafia' of society. Bhasi, represents the working class who is exploited by the cultural elite of the village. Nair through these characters tries to highlight the inequities present in the society. Bhasi is shown subjected to wrongs by the powerful men and he is repeatedly exploited and defeated by the pressures of the economic system in which he lives.

Meenakshi and Anjana are the two living women characters in the novel. Child-hood soul mate of Mukundan, Meenakshi is relegated into some corner of Mukundan's mind after he leaves Kaikurrissi. Although she has been brought up in a world that teaches women to depend on men, she learns that she is ultimately alone.

Although the desertion she endures is not intentional, she must bear the brunt of circumstances that are not her choice but are rather imposed on her by the patriarchal society in which she lives. Usually women are depicted as the oppressed through the stereotypical representation of their being weak, vulnerable and sexual objects of the male's desire. Meenakshi and Mukundan had also shared some intimate moments before the latter left Kaikurrissi. But on

his return, Mukundan observes a transformed person. She had donned a new role in life.

With her impeccable representational realism and evocative descriptions of the idyllic setting of Kerala, Nair has perfected the art of writing fiction and extending the thematic range of Indian English fiction by not only working on the everyday reality like broken marriages, man-woman relationship in our society but also themes like dying art forms, national myths in contemporary situation. Love and sex are depicted in the Indian English novel with frankness and without any inhibitions. All her novels are culturally rooted and they emphasize the myths of the land.

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THE BUDDHA INCARNATION: A STUDY ON THE TRANSCENDENCE OF LORD BUDDHA'S LIFE IN THE CHARACTERS OF THE DALIT NOVEL 'PULAYAPPATTU'

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Abstract

As of the historical elements referred in Sangha Age, the Dalits were acclaimed rulers of ancient south India and they were called Dravidians during the first centuries of the Christian era. The Protagonist of the novel, the Dalit youngster Gautaman belongs to the caste Pulaya who were being undergone ruthless slavery for centuries. On the contrary, unlike the other Pulayas, he had a different name called Gautaman synonymous to that of Lord Gautama Buddha. His father Karappan gave him the name, but Karappan himself was quite unaware of the fact that from where he had got it. Gautaman was entirely different from other Pulaya youngsters of the time in all respects. Just like Gautama Buddha who set out in search of the real knowledge, Gautaman also goes to the premises of the school to learn something, but the effect was much bitter. The exact and characteristic parallelism between Lord Buddha and Gautaman is unravelled in the novel. The Research Paper deals with the analytical dissociation of the above mentioned parallelism delved in the characters concerned. The Dalit Buddha's intervention has played a crucial role in the resurrection of Pulayas from the miserable life under the Feudal system as narrated in the novel. The Dalit Buddha Gautaman's life has some resemblances with those of the former President of India, Late Dr. K.R. Narayanan.

Keywords: Feudal system, Dalit Buddha, Gautaman, pulayas, Dravidians

Introduction

Contemporary Dalit Literature has assumed a full – fledged form of any other literature. The term 'Dalit Literature' is defined as the narrations of the Dalit, for the Dalit and by the Dalit.¹ The post independent scenario rendered several prolific writings of the sort since the community was considered as the downtrodden, and they are to be uplifted. It was a fact that the relentless efforts and fights against the caste and creed system, with the sword of literature also had helped to solve the inequalities among the humanitarian concepts of the time. The famous Malayalam novelist M. Mukundan has been established in Dalit writings; being so powerful and pivotal in deciphering the past and future experiences of the Dalits through them. The novel *Pulayappattu*, is of the resurrection of a Dalit to the level of Lord Buddha surprisingly from the atrocious exploitations of the Feudal system of the time. An enthusiastic parallelism between the life of Lord Buddha and that of the protagonist Gautaman, who in the end gets enthroned as the President of India, is quite interesting. The characteristics of Gautaman have some close resemblances with those of the former

President of India, Late Dr. K.R. Narayanan. Mr. Mukundan has already stated in the introduction that he has assumed the method of 'Fictional History' in this novel, the technique being originally developed by the Latin- American Novelists which renders him ample freedom for creative interventions and developments in the original history.

The Dalits were acclaimed to be of Royal origin during the first centuries of the Christian era.² as far as the literary works of the Sangha Ages are concerned. They had later been suppressed as a result of the invaded so called feudal system and established slave system in ancient India. The Protagonist Gautaman being a *Pulaya* youngster suffered a lot of discrimination from his early childhood. Unlike the other *Pulayas** he possessed the unique name Gautaman synonymous to that of Lord Gautama Buddha. Even his father *Karappan* had no idea about the origin of it. According to him, the name might have been obtained from the Pulaya God '*Puli Maranja Thondachen*'.** From the very beginning, Gautaman traversed an entirely different path apart from other *Pulaya* youngsters of the time in

all respects. He had an ardent desire of getting educated even when a single thought of acquiring knowledge was absolutely forbidden to his caste. The writer refers to the story of Gautama Buddha who set out from Lumbini in search of knowledge. In a similar manner, imitating Gautama Buddha, Gautaman of Karikulam (One of the places where *Pulayas* resided) went to the school nearby and stood stealthily outside, near the window pane, desirous of learning something by overhearing the words of the teacher in the class. But his first experience was too bitter that he was being stoned at very cruelly by the teacher *Eesanan Wadhyar* and the other students belonged to the so called 'upper caste'³. But the incident could never dissuade him from attaining his goal of learning more and more like Sree Buddha. Gautaman parallels Lord Sree Buddha throughout the novel. The protagonist Gautaman is assumed to be an incarnation of Buddha or, can better be called as a 'Dalit Buddha'.

Pulayappattu

Lord Buddha had set out from home in search of real knowledge. He understood the tragic life of the poor while living as one among them. In the novel *Pulayappattu*, Gautaman the assumed incarnation of Lord Buddha leaves his little hut called 'chalakkudy' desirous of acquiring knowledge. Gautaman is depicted in the novel as, taking a 'contemporary Buddha' incarnation among the *Pulayas* to save them from their extremely miserable and dreaded life. The birth of Lord Buddha and that of Gautaman are compared by the novelist⁴ in this regard. The King Sudhodana and Queen Mayadevi were the parents of Sree Buddha where as Karuppan and Chirutha are the parents of 'The Dalit Buddha' Gautaman. The novelist finds only a difference that the birth of Sree Buddha was in royal race and that of Gautaman was in *Pulaya* race.

When Karappan was a youngster, he had also been a bit civilized in nature unlike other *Pulayas*. He had once taken the risk of entering into the 'Vettakoru makan' temple of the 'elevated caste' when no other person of his caste would dare to think so. Similarly, Karappan asks pregnant wife Chirutha, whether the child would be boy or a girl. The question is paralleled with the one asked

by the king Sudhodana to his queen. The answer of Chirutha was without the least doubt that it would be a boy. The chalakkudi*** thus uplifted as Kapilavasthu.⁵ Besides, Karappan demands Chirutha that he wanted a baby as white as a 'Thambran kunju' (Prince of the 'upper caste'). He assumes himself to be a King even when he drinks arrack. He says himself, "Karappa, drink thyself for the sake of the king and the slave since you are the king, you are the slave" [Karappa, Thampranum nee thanne, Adiyandum nee thane. Kudi, thampranu vendiyum Adiyanu vendiyum Kudi...]⁶

Karappan dared to enter the Vettakkorumakan temple of the upper caste for worship in his youth since had a thought that 'all Gods' are equal. A thought had never haunted him before or till the moment that his entry to the premises of the Vettakkorumakan temple would be considered as sinful. It was Paithal Nambiar who saved him some way from death that time. It was a fact that no other *pulaya* would dare even to think about such a fatal risk before. But writer points out that Karappan could not think why any other *pulaya* would never go to Vettakkorumakan temple.⁷ He did it since he had some unknown enlightenment from the socialist attitude of Lord Buddha.

Gautaman, son of Karappan is the real incarnation of Sree Buddha in the novel, *Pulayappattu*. From his birth he was grown with a different attitude and characteristic from an ordinary *pulaya* youngster of the time. He had always kept a soft corner and consideration towards his fellow beings. He always kept half of his food for his mother since he knew that she would be starved otherwise.

The novelist makes a reference to the life of Sree Buddha whenever he refers something about Gautaman of Karikulam and illustrates a parallelism. These references evidently enforce the reader to find a Buddha incarnation in Gautaman of Karikulam. For instance, Sree Buddha on his journey from home reached Magadha where Bimbisaran employed him as the head of one of his elephant regiment. In parallel, Gautaman also started his employment as ploughing in the field⁸ under the scorching sun, half- naked.

Chiyyayikkutty is a pulaya maiden who occupy certain elements of freedom and socialism of Buddhism. Unlike other pulaya ladies she minds her half-naked body. She doesn't like any *Alathar*^{****} staring at her half-naked body. Gautaman only realizes her embarrassment in this regard and tried to steal a blouse from the house of *Alathar*⁹ himself and gave it to Chiyyayikkutty who wore it fearlessly. The pulaya women would never dare to do so at that time since they had no privilege to wear cloth above the waist. Later, she had to commit suicide by cutting her breast with the scythe and throwing it at the face of *Alathar*, rather than getting suffocated by the vulnerable lecherous behaviour of *Alathar*.

After the death of Chiyyayikkutty, her daughter Gouri replaced her. Quite luckily she became the pet of Achuthan Nambiar, the son of Chirukandan Nambiar. Though he belonged to an elite class, he took care of her without showing least discrimination and tried to get her educated, for which he had to give up his own profession as a school teacher. Gouri became educated later and from among the positive reinforcement amassed from the words and deeds of Sree Narayana Guru and Gautaman and she could lead the revolution towards the evolution of her own society.

The realization of the realm of Sree Buddha among the downtrodden caste had been made feasible by the acts of Gautaman, Gouri, Achuthan Nambiar and other real time great historical figures like Mahatma Gandhiji, Sree Narayana Guru, Dr. Ambedkar, K. Kelappan etc. The Novelist has judiciously maintained the mysterious mixture of history and fiction to depict the picturesque view of the cause, he has dealt with. The incarnation of Sree Buddha is inherent as in different aspects and characteristics of the series of characters appear in the novel. For instance, as narrated in the novel, the journey of Gouri to the world of freedom and enlightenment commences with her first visit to Sree Narayana Guru with her father Kochuvelan when she had been a little girl.

The descending order of Nambairs as from Paithal Nambiar, his son Chirukandan Nambiar that follows to Achuthan Nambiar, son of Chirukandan Nambiar fluctuates in the order of their compassion to the down caste. From Paithal Nambiar, when the empathy reaches Achuthan Nambiar, absolute congruence is unambiguous.

He dedicates his entire life to uplift the Pulayas through Gouri. He is unable to discriminate Gouri because of her caste in any respect and considered her as his beloved daughter. Hence the Buddhist elements may be seen as worked out in Nambiar's in an ascending order from Paithal Nambiar.

Gouthaman went on his education with higher studies and finished even his doctoral research and becomes the President of India.¹¹ Gouri who had become a teacher by the time came to the leadership of the society, together with the other followers and began leading the fellow beings to the main stream of life. Sree Buddha who had acquired the real knowledge had been enlightening his followers. The same parallelism may be bestowed on the life and works of Gautaman, Gouri and other followers. To be precise, remnants of Buddha incarnation may easily be clarified in various characters of the novel, 'Pulayappattu'.

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6. Ibid, p.30.
7. Ibid, p.31.
8. Ibid, p.82 - 83.
9. Ibid, p.88 - 89, 130.
10. Ibid, p.88 - 89.
11. Ibid, p.429 - 430.
12. The word 'pulam' refers to paddy field and 'pulaya' is a person who works in 'pulam'.
13. The word 'Pulaya' later became the name of a caste in Kerala who were undergone Servitude from among the people of the 'upper caste' for a long time before Independence.
14. Puli Maranja Thondachen is an imaginary God of Pulayas. He is believed to be very
15. powerful and worshipped by the name because of his ability to change as a Leopard.
16. ('Puli' in Malayalam refers to leopard)
17. Chalakkudi : little hut of Pulayas of the time.
18. Alathar - a man from local authority and belonged to the 'alighted caste'

A PERSPECTIVE ON THE PRESENTATION OF COMPLEXITIES OF MIGRATION AND ITS EFFECTS IN THE LITERATURE OF INDIAN DIASPORA

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The New Oxford English Dictionary defines 'Diaspora' drawn from Greek, 'the dispersed Jews after the Babylonian captivity', carrying with them the fond hope of returning to the motherland one day (Shodhganga, 2008:8). Etymologically, the term Diaspora is coined from greek word 'Diaspeirein' where Dia means 'about, across' and Speirein means 'to scatter' hence meaning –to scatter about, disperse. It was used by the ancient Greeks to refer to citizens of a dominant city, state who emigrated to a conquered land with the purpose of colonization, to assimilate the territory into the empire (Bhatt, 2008:37). Nowadays the term Diaspora is a metaphor for 'expatriates, expellees, refugees, alien residents, immigrants, displaced communities and ethnic minorities living in exile'. Indian diaspora pertains to Indian migration, their socioeconomic and cultural experiences, experiences of adaptation and assimilation in the host societies .The push and pull combination worked best-inadequate opportunity in Asia pushed Indians out of country while bright prospects of west pulled them. Now Indian migration is largely a success story settled in U.K, USA and Europe.

"Creative or imaginative literature has a power to reflect complex and ambiguous realities that make it a far more plausible representation of human feelings and understandings than many of the artifacts used by academic researchers". Diasporic literature faithfully represents migrated sect's life. Alienation, schizophrenia, time lag, estrangement, racism, nostalgia, identity crisis, migration are major themes of diasporic literature. Majority of the diaspora writers write about their own experiences, the problems that they have to face while settling on the new land Salman Rushdie rightly observes, "The Indian writers who

write from outside India...is obliged to deal with broken mirrors, some of whose fragments have been irretrievably lost...create fiction, not actual cities or villages, but invisible Imaginary Homelands, Indias of the mind" The present paper is limited to the theme of migration and its effects as presented by diasporic writers in their writings.

The modern Diasporic Indian writers can be grouped under two categories. One category contains those writers who spent a part of their lives in India and then migrated to other countries. The second category comprises of those writers who were born on foreign land. Former category has a literal displacement but latter category writers find themselves rootless. These writers view India from "outside as an exotic place of their origin" Prominent writers of diaspora are Salman Rushdie, V.S. Naipaul, Amitav Ghosh, Anita Desai, Kiran Desai, Bharati Mukherjee, Vikram Seth, Jhumpa Lahiri, Kamala Markandaya, A.K. Ramanujan, Meena Alexander, Sujata Bhatt.

In its traditional usage, migration refers to very specific events- for example, the seasonal migration of birds or the (voluntary or involuntary) geographical uprooting of people. Etymologically the concept of migration originates from the latin 'migrare' meaning simply to 'wander' or 'to move'. The word migration nowadays possesses a wide range of complexities of meaning as Soren Frank refers to the modern application of this term in literary studies as "the oscillatory and inconclusive processes that manifest themselves on different levels in the literary work – for example, in relation to personal, nation-al and cultural identity, language, narrative form and enunciation" Migration and its

Effects as a Theme in Diasporic Literature Indian diasporic literature portrays a vivid picture of the ways “migrant characters cope with their new life places, the uncertainties and insecurities they suffer from and the communication problems”

Migration displaces an individual from his home country. Displacement, whether forced or self-imposed, is in many ways a calamity. The moment one steps in on a foreign land, the social ties and social roles he enjoys in his motherland are lost and he is alone to face the hardships welcoming him in new land. From having a home, family and comforts of life in India, migrant becomes homeless and lonely. Adjustments are hard causing migrants not only physical alienness but spiritual too. Salman Rushdie in *Satanic Verses* (1988) explores the theme of migration through the lives of two characters-namely Gibreel Frishta and Saladin Chamcha. He discloses the complex process of migration which not only dislocates a person physically from a geographical area but it also dislocates one spiritually and causes the feelings of rootlessness. Anita Desai's *Bye Bye Blackbird* (1971) describes Indian migrants' disillusionment in England. Dev migrates to England to pursue studies but silence and emptiness of London make adjustments a real difficulty. Homelessness is fatal curse that befalls human beings during the course of history Amitav Ghosh in his novel *The Glass Palace* (2000) narrates the sufferings of Indian soldiers of Empire in Malaya, Singapore and Burma and their tragic deaths and longingness for homes.

Cultural displacement involves the loss of vernacular language, family and social ties and a support system of friends. Emigrants, with similar ethnic background in small groups, try to recreate native culture on a foreign land. Ashima in Jhumpa Lahiri's novel *The Namesake* (2003) forms a close knit web of immigrant friends. This group practices Indian customs, speak the Bengali language and in many respects, becomes a substitute family for the vast collection of relatives back in India. Hence migration de-locates a person from his homeland physically but psychologically they cherish old memories and culture from which their living style has emerged.

In a cosmopolitan world, one cannot literally be a cultural and social outsider in a foreign land. Migrants “move between identities, experiencing the exile's desire to retain cultural roots, whilst at the same time, being drawn to the acceptance of and integration to the new culture” Jhumpa Lahiri's *The Namesake* (2003) uncovers the attempts of Ashima and Ashok to hold on to their Indianness. They adhere to Indian value system at home but outside they follow American code of conduct. Ashima feels that “previous life has been vanished, replaced by something more complicated and demanding” (Lahiri,). Arun in Anita Desai's *Fasting Feasting* (1999) has adjusted to new lifestyles and is happy of having double perspectives, Indian and American.

For second generation the question of identity is a complicated issue. Parents want them to follow Indian traditions and values as well as exploiting maximum benefits of foreign land. But children remain confuse, as Gogol in *The Namesake* (2003) finds it difficult to handle dual identity. “Genetically he is tied up to his traditions and has unique self, racially he is alien and a second class citizen in America”

Migration sometimes becomes an instrument in regaining one's identity. In Amitav Ghosh's *Sea of Poppies* (2008), the ship *Ibis* offers a platform for asserting one's true identity. In their homelands, Deeti and Kalua, were subject to deprivation but migration brings them at equal levels beyond caste and class bar: “It was on her lips to identify herself as Kabutari-ki-maa, the name by which she had been known ever since her daughter's birth...her proper name was the first to come to mind and since it had been used by anyone, it was as good as any. Aditi, she said softly, I am Aditi” The memories of their homelands, social life with social taboos and inherited lifestyles, customs, keep looming in the minds of migrants and make their loneliness more acute. Sujata Bhatt beautifully mirrors the relationship of home and its memory in migrant's mind in the poem:

I am the one
Who always goes
Away with my home
Which can only stay inside

In my blood—my home which does not fit
 With any geography. (Bhatt, 1997:54)
 Even they miss Indian weather in England.
 Jagdish Dave writes:
 The sun is half seen, unseen,
 Black sun, white sun
 Never seen the red sun
 Never there is that intoxicating sun
 Withdrawals, Empowerment and Violence.

Adjustment failures badly shatter a migrant's confidence of facing society and affect their sanity too. He withdraws himself from social life. Bharati Mukherjee's novel *Wife* (1975) is a saga of Dimple Das Gupta who fails miserably to adopt the ways of new US society. She suffers the pain of being alien to society. She becomes an introvert. She spends most of her time watching TV and sleeping. She becomes so frustrated that she intentionally aborts her child by skipping. Out of fear and personal instability, she becomes mentally unhinged. She murders her husband and commits suicide.

Sufferings of a migrant sometimes act as a power house for strengthening one's ability to perform an act contrary to their personality. Jasmine in Bharati Mukherjee's novel of same name (1989) migrates to US after her husband's death. Here she is brutally raped by a ship captain. But she does not lose her heart. She draws strength from her sufferings and takes her revenge by killing that devilish captain.

Discrimination, racial prejudice against migrants alienates them and aggravates their sense of displacement, and leaves them discontented and miserable. Jemu in Kiran Desai's *The Inheritance of Loss* (2006) becomes the target of despising as well as biased racial attitude of the whites. He feels hesitant and nervous to go out and talk with people. He is embarrassed by his peers. He sits in library in order to avoid the giggle of young girls. He develops an inferiority complex.

This creates a fissure in his personality he carries throughout his entire life.

Migration uproots a person from his home country. In trying to make 'home' alien country, migrant's real 'home' becomes alien. When these migrants travel back to their native country, they do not feel at home. Bharati Mukherjee in her novel *The Tiger's Daughter* (1971) narrates the story of Tara who gets married to an American and returns to India briefly but finds that she is unable to connect herself to her motherland. She

fails to adjust the things once she loved and admired in the past. She feels like an alien in her own city. Similarly *The Magic Seeds* (2004) portrays Willy Chandran's reverse journey from Berlin to India. However, all his hopes shatters as he is unable to feel home at places and cities in India.

V.S. Naipaul presents the actual case of immigrants that they become perpetual wanderers who are not at home anywhere but looking for home everywhere and finding it nowhere. Kamala Mar-kandaya's *Nowhere Man* (1972) too expresses Srinivas discovery of belonging neither to England nor to India. A.K. Ramanujan in 'Looking for a Centre' very well expresses this situation:

Looking for the centre these days
 Is like looking for the centre
 For missing children
 Which used to be here, but now
 Has moved.

Literature provides an excellent pattern to reveal the fragmentation of the self and generating of feelings that can be stirred up by migration. Diasporic writers have beautifully narrated the "destructive, agonizing and painful" (Frank, 2008:18) experience of migration in their works.

In a way "the experience of migration acts as a catalyst and conduit for nascent feelings, a reconception of our sense of self and our relationships with others. Indian diasporic literature uncovers a migrant's struggle between desires and opportunities- as a reflection of past circumstances and of expectations for the future.

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REDEFINING FEMINIST EPISTEME AND GENDER ROLES AN ANALYSIS OF CHIMAMANDA NGOZI ADICHIE'S *HALF OF A YELLOW SUN*

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Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, the black feminist writer who has garnered great fame recently can be considered as the 'voice of African-American women'. Adichie's desire to investigate the marginal and liminal position taken by women marks the birth of her narratives. Her works explore numerous societal structures through which women are oppressed. She reworks earlier images of African women projected by patriarchal order figures female characters as speaking subjects. Through her novel *Half of a Yellow Sun* she enquires how female characters grapple with their subjugation and the oppression stemming from patriarchy.

Patriarchy undervalues female experiences and knowledge and is a strong ideology that controls women in societies. Women being the muted group are compelled to follow and accept what the males devise and formulate. The basic pillar of the patriarchal power within the African context is the silencing and suppression of women including the control over their bodies.

Her second novel, *Half of a yellow sun* named after the flag of the short-lived nation of Biafra, is set before and during the Nigerian civil war. The novel takes place in Nigeria partly during the Nigerian civil war. The effect of the war is shown through the dynamic relationships of five people's lives including twin daughters of an influential businessman, a professor, a British citizen, and a houseboy. After Biafra's declaration of secession, the lives of the main characters drastically changed and were torn apart by the brutality of the civil war and decisions in their personal lives.

The book jumps between events that took place during the early 1960's when the war took place. In the early 1960's the main characters are introduced. Ugwu-a thirteen year old village boy

who moves in with Odenigbo, to work in as house boy. Odenigbo frequently entertains intellectuals to discuss the political turmoil in Nigeria. Life changes for Ugwu when Odenigbo's girlfriend, Olanna moves with them. Ugwu forms a strong bond with both of them, and is very loyal. Olanna has a twin sister Kainene, a woman with a dry sense of humour, tired by the pompous company she runs for her father. Her lover Richard is an English man who has come to Nigeria to explore Igbo-Ukwu art.

Jumping four years ahead, trouble is brewing between the house and the Igbo people and hundreds of people die in the massacre, including Olanna's beloved aunty and uncle. A new republic, celled Biafra, is created by the Igbo. As a result of the conflict Olanna, Odenigbo, Baby and Ugwu are forced to flee Nsukka. They finally end in the refugee town of Umuahia, where they suffer food shortages, air raids and paranoid atmosphere. There are also allusions to a conflict between Olanna and Kainene, Richard and Kainene and Olanna and Odenigbo.

When the novel jumps neck to the early 1960's we learn that Odenigbo slept with a village girl, who then had his baby. Olanna is furious at his betrayal, and sleeps with Richard in a moment of liberation. She goes back to Odenigbo and then later learns that Amala refused to keep the new born daughter, Olanna decides that they would keep her.

Back during the war Olanna, Odenigbo, Baby and Ugwu were living with Kainene and Richard. The situation is hopeless as they have no food or medicine. Kainene decides to trade across enemy lines, but does not return, even after the end of the war. The book ends ambiguously, with the reader not knowing if Kainene lives.

Gender theory has its application in this work and the feminist who deserves special mention is Judith Butler, the well known theorist of power, gender, sexuality and identity. In her most influential book *Gender Trouble* (1990), Butler argued that feminism had made mistakes by trying to assert that women were a group with common characteristics and interests. Butler is of the opinion that gender is not determined on the basis of 'birth', but on the basis of 'performance'. If a woman takes the role of a man she is of masculine gender. And if a man is hiding from his duties his gender is feminine.

This very idea is clearly seen in *Half of a Yellow Sun*. When Odenigbo, Richard and other male characters try to hide from their duties, their roles are undertaken by Olanna, Kainene, and other female characters.

In an effort to empower the African women, Adichie crafts stories with female subjects pursuing female interests. She also structures her narratives to contest the male power with its violent manifestations. Her exercise is an invention of gender power discourse that serves to inspire the female struggles against male domination. In the novel *Half of a Yellow Sun*, women are wives, mothers, daughters or mistresses and these positions allow them to use the domestic space and the prescribed female identity to contest male power.

For centuries, literature has depicted war through androcentric lens, reinforcing the myth that women are silent sufferers during war. Adichie's novel counters the assumption that war is predominately a male experience through the depiction of female characters as active participants in the Biafran war.

The performance of middle class Igbo womanhood in *Half of a Yellow Sun* can be analyzed using a gendered lens through the comparison of Kainene and Olanna's actions before and during the Biafran war. They undergo the struggles of Biafran war simultaneously as they encounter gender war. Kainene and Olanna's reaction to war challenge their previous role as women by illustrating their resilience in a life threatening and tiring situation. It is important to note that Adichie's primary focus within this novel

is on a middle class Igbo 'new women' who reject traditional values, who, for most part, are not controlled overtly or oppressed by the men in their lives.

Therefore the gender war that Kainene and Olanna participate in through their adoption of new gender performances is not fighting to destruct patriarchy; rather the gender war fights for a new definition of womanhood and negotiations of gender relations in order to deconstruct strict gender roles and create a new positionality for women after their encounter with the war.

Olanna assumes the role as the head of the family while Odenigbo reveals in his drunken stupor. Thus Olanna's placement as the head of the family emerges out of the necessity when Odenigbo fails to fulfill the expectations of his gender performance, which includes maintaining the position of provider within the familial unit. She recognizes her responsibility of providing for her family and her strength and courage illustrates her understanding that her former gender performance has become obsolete during war.

Like Olanna, Kainene emerges as a provider once crisis arises. She adopts the role of a communal provider than a provider for family. Kainene becomes a food supplier for a refugee camp. Both sisters stand for the victory of their nation. Kainene puts her life at risk by participating in an afia attack, which means crossing enemy lines to bring provision back to Biafra. Kainene no longer wants to be idle while Biafra suffers, so she draws on her own sense of agency to make the decision to travel for provisions. Both of them deviate from the former 'sanctioned gender code' and become empowered by their new found practice of dictating their own fate and their refusal to be controlled.

Adichie not only portrays the higher class women but also the poor low class women who were the ultimate sufferers of war. Women desperately and continuously search for food and medicine during the war and that way sustaining their communities. Kainene introduces the idea of growing crops to feed the refugees during the time when there is no food forthcoming to the Biafrans. Olanna tries to get an alternative job for her

husband who appears withdrawn as the war progresses. She also starts a school to teach the children so that there would be continuity after the war. She is assisted by Mrs. Muokelu, who teaches every woman during the war time to make soap out of ash and to overcome food shortage during the war. We can see a strong bond between females and the bond helps to ameliorate their situation as they tackle the problem of patriarchy. Although Kainene and Olanna have drifted apart considerably they come together during hard times and help each other to surmount the effects of war and starvation. Kainene welcomes her sister to Orlu and is ready to stay with Olanna and her family as the war ranges. The same friendship can be said of Mrs. Muokelu and Olanna. Mrs. Muokelu helps Olanna when she is in a crisis. She is ready to sacrifice some egg powder for Olanna's family when baby falls ill. She even teaches Olanna how to make soap when the commodity becomes scarce. Similarly there is a bond between Madam Ozobia and Olanna. Auntie Ifeka has a strong bond with Olanna since she is the woman whose breasts Olanna and Kainene suckled when her mother's died immediately after they were born. Women also come together for the sake of their communities such as when they supply food and singlet to the Biafran Army. The author projects women characters struggling to keep their families hopeful even when the country is going through a civil war. In *Half of a Yellow Sun* women are depicted as resolute and progressive. They give directions when and where necessary and guide their men and society in the time of difficulties. Women also come together for the sake of their communities such as when they supply food and singlet to the Biafran Army. Women supply things to the army in their win-the-war effort, "Madu says there is a group of women at the barracks every other day, from all sorts of backwater villages, bringing yams and plantains and fruits to the soldiers. These people who have nothing themselves" (183). In another episode Olanna joins a sewing group in Abba to make things for the army. Olanna creates a relationship with Alice and gives her salt when she gets some supplies, which makes life bearable for Alice during the unpleasant circumstances. When

Olanna exchanges with Alice sensible information about their men, the narrator observes that, "they laughed and she sensed, between them, a vulgar and delicious female bond" (336).

African women have always come together to pursue a way that is aimed at challenging domination and oppression. The case of women joining hands to pursue a common goal in the novels of Adichie is laudable since there is triumph in groups. She appears to suggest to women to come together because there is strength in numbers and there are higher chances of succeeding. The birth and struggle of nationhood is explored through families and the romantic experiences of the principal characters. The unequal and unfulfilling relationship between Nigeria and the former colonial masters is explored through the lives of Richard and Kainene. Nigeria which was fraudulently born by a hurriedly crafted independent constitution by Britain is captured in the birth of Baby-Chimaka. The twin sisters Olanna and Kainene represent North and South Nigeria respectively.

The male characters betray their spouses, girlfriends, or fiancées at different times. This maps well with how the leaders betray the citizens. Security and other basic utilities like water, electricity, and fuel are lacking, yet the leaders linger in power. Betrayal of women by men is explored through Odenigbo, Ugwu, father Marcel, chief Ozobia and chief Okonji. The analysis of how male characters betray their women maps with how post colonial leadership in Nigeria is let down to the people they purport to serve. Men who rape women are tropes of political establishments that impoverish the masses in the name of serving them.

Many men do not actually think about gender or notice gender. Many men say that things might have been bad in the past. But everything is fine now. And that many men do nothing to change it. Some people will say a woman is subordinate to men because it is our culture. But culture is constantly changing. Culture functions ultimately to ensure the preservation and continuity of people. People make culture. If it is true that the full humanity of women is not our culture, then we can and must make it our culture.

Women's impassioned struggles to free themselves from the shackles of male brutality and dominance are what hold us spellbound to Adichie's most alluring and extremely powerful novel *Half of a Yellow Sun*. she remarkably dramatizes women's determination to survive in the face of violence, sexual assault, extreme starvation, senseless brutality and careless threats to their lives and property.

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TRAUMA AND DREAMS: CONSTRUCTIVE ELEMENTS IN *GONE WITH THE WIND*

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"Someday I am going to do and say everything I want to do and say, if people don't like I don't care." (Mitchell)

The novel *Gone with the Wind*, published in the year 1936 comes under the genre, Historical Romance novel. The whole novel is set up in Clayton County, Georgia and Atlanta. Apart from calling it a historical romance novel, there are many ways in which this novel can be analyzed. Though the history of civil war dominates the fiction, this can also be called a psychological novel. Written in the 20th century, this novel has got the influence and style of modernism. The protagonist of the novel, Scarlett O' Hara dominates the novel. As the novel records all the events and incidents in Scarlett O' Hara's life, like the physical, mental and social growth, to an extent this novel can be called a bildungsroman. The above quote is the statement by Scarlett from which one gets the clear picture of the heroine's attitude towards things in the society, in this work discussion is made in the perspective of *Gone with the Wind* as a psychological novel. Apart from analysing the deep psychology of all the characters, the study of the psyche of Scarlett O' Hara is concentrated.

The word 'trauma' comes from the ancient Greek word meaning 'wound'. Although the precise definition of the modern concept of trauma varies according to content and discipline, there is a general consensus that if trauma is a wound, it is a very peculiar kind of wound. There is no specific set of physical manifestation identifying trauma, and it almost invariably produces repeated uncontrollable and incalculable effects that endure long after its ostensible precipitating cause (Marder, *Trauma and Literary Studies: Some Enabling Questions*, 1).

Before, Trauma emerged as a theory; the study of trauma was done initially in the physiology of a person. Trauma was treated as an illness and later was discovered as something which was related to a person's psychic and not his/ her physic. Thus the term 'trauma' came under the field of Psychoanalysis. Psychological trauma is a type of damage to the field of psyche that occurs as a result of a severely distressing event. Trauma is experienced by a person in many single event or series of hardships. These continuous effects of re-experiencing the distressful events affect the person's psyche and come out as trauma which can also be traced in physical changes as well. It is understood that initially trauma affects a person's psyche and then inner burden and pain in the psyche transfers to the physical thus creating evident symptoms. A person who undergoes trauma experiences frequent violation, putting the person in a state of extreme confusion and insecurity.

Experiencing trauma can be traced by various symptoms in an individual. It is varied from person to person. The primary symptom is re-experiencing the traumatic event. Re-experiencing will not be the original encounter instead the haunting memory can come in different ways. Upsetting memories such as images, thoughts, or flashbacks may haunt the person, and nightmares may be frequent. Lurking fears and insecurity keep the person vigilant. On the lookout for danger, both day and night persons who are adopting such symptoms adopt ways in order to get rid of the memory. Self-medications like use of drugs and alcohol are the remedies. This can be self-destructive. There are also persons who gain a positive energy, interpret their own self and get rid of the enigmatic terror they undergo.

As this issue rose as a great blight in the arena of psychoanalysis, famous psycho analysts and theoreticians started working in the area of psychology. French physician and neurologist Jean Martin Charcot was the first person to investigate the relationship with trauma and mental illness, while working with the traumatized women in the Salpetriere hospital. Charcot's theory was mainly focused on hysteria. He declared that the hysterical attacks are dissociative problems that results in having endured unbearable experiences. The term hysteria was later developed into trauma, and currently, theories were developed to be used in various interdisciplinary, most commonly in literature. Pierre Janet, a student of Charcot conducted further research on the topic dissociative phenomena and traumatic memories. He brought in a theory in which he introduced trauma as a building block in an individual. This is a different perspective and paved a way for new thinking regarding the subject trauma. Janet investigated the influence of patient's traumatic experiences on personality development and behavior. Janet found out that through hypnosis and abreactions or exposure to the traumatic memories, patients symptoms could be liberated.

In the year 1996, Cathy Caruth published a full length study of trauma *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative and History*. Since the publication she has been considered as the pioneer of trauma theory in literature. According to Cathy Caruth in her introductory essay to *Trauma: Exploration in Memory*, Caruth says that the impact of post-traumatic stress cannot be traced in a particular time instead they fracture the very experience of time for the person to whom they happen. The other term Caruth coined is "belatedness". Belatedness is the effect of trauma. The impact of traumatic experience comes to a person belatedly. No one ever experiences any kind of effect during the time of event instead it comes later like dreams, nightmares and hallucinations. Cathy Caruth states, "Trauma must itself be understood in terms of 'absence' the absence that failed to become located in time or place" (2). Like Pierre Janet, she finds a positive effect on the person who re-experiences their

traumatic event. Re-experiencing can make the victim undergo the experience once again and come out of the haunting.

Soshana Felman's contribution to the study of trauma was her book, *Testimony: Crisis of Witnessing Literature, Psychoanalysis and History* published in the year 1992. This book focuses on the topic 'testimony'. Through testimony one can be the witness of one's own traumatic experience, and also testimony make others overcome their trauma. Listening to traumatic experiences according to Felman is a vital source of getting knowing about the essence of event, with which others as well as the person who underwent trauma can get through it easily. This concept of testimony by Felman can be used for collective purpose in order to know the history so that it may be useful for the present trauma survivors.

"To be traumatized is precisely to be possessed by an image or event" Cathy Caruth.

True to the words of Cathy Caruth, Scarlett O Hara was possessed by an event, which was traumatic to her psyche. Fear turned to trauma and trauma later haunted her as a nightmare. By delving deep into the root cause of the dream it is understood from the novel that it was during the time of her struggle for survival that she underwent the trauma. To be most specific it was on the day when she stepped her feet on Tara, her hometown. It was during the time of crisis in Atlanta, she fled to Tara with great hope of safety. When she reached Tara and found everything been destroyed by the Yankee soldiers her hope, and dream of safe haven was shredded into irretrievable pieces. Fear about the survival crept into her soul and later turned into an incurable wound in her psyche and gradually took shape as a nightmare which completely drained her. Trauma took the shape of a nightmare because of her series of encounter with hunger, fear of insecurity, fright for survival and existence. Thus the root cause of the trauma is found to be the sense of fear of insecurity. The form of post-traumatic stress disorder which she experienced was her dream which elevated her stress.

The nightmare which she saw can be called as "belatedness as Cathy Caruth calls it. According to her the event when the trauma is experienced

does not affect a person but. It comes in the form of belatedness that is it affects the person after a certain period and can come in the form of dreams, flashbacks, images or events. Thus in Scarlett's case dream is her "belatedness". Unlike the other dreams, this dream gives a hope for Scarlett. Though the situation is very enigmatic, in the end of the dream she could only see a safe haven but could not reach there. This gives energy to Scarlett to believe that there is a safe place somewhere far, and if an attempt can be found out. This again goes in hand with Cathy Caruth's trauma theory that states "to the extent that trauma opens up a breach in experience and understanding, it also opens up a new possibility for experience and new modes of understanding". For Caruth, the very structure of repetition inherent to traumatic "belatedness" compels the traumatized to survive the trauma by finding ways of bearing witness to it-both belatedly and in relation to others(Marder, Trauma and Literary Studies: some "enabling questions"(Marder, trauma and literary studies, 2)

The positive fact of the dream can be understood from the description:

She was in a wild strange country so thick with swirling mist she could not see her hand before her face. There beneath her feet was uneasy. It was a haunted land, still with a terrible stillness, and she was lost in it, lost and terrified as a child in the night. She was bitterly cold and hungry and so fearful of what lurked in the mists about her that she tried to scream and could not. There were things in the fog reaching out fingers to pluck at her skirt, to drag her down into the uneasy quaking earth on which she stood, silent, relentless, spectral hands. Then, she knew that somewhere in the opaque gloom about her there was shelter, help, a heaven of refuge and warmth. But where was it? Could she reach it before the hands clutched her and dragged her down into the quick sands? (467)

The unseen haven in the dream was the only positive energy she derived from her nightmare. The dream drained her spirit but remained a driving force for her to seek the ways in which she can live a happy. Scarlett worked day and night and practiced all straight and cunning ways to stay

out of hunger. Since the night mare never changed and haunted her often. Scarlett was not aware that this is something to deal with her psyche. She adopted self-medication method in order to get rid of this ghostly fear.

The only person to whom Scarlett shared all her dream is Rhett. Rhett patiently explained to her about what her dream is all about. Thus Scarlett is the witness of her traumatic experience. This method of bearing witness and confessing everything to a person is another way of getting away from the fear of trauma. This is what is later discovered by the famous psycho analyst Shoshanna Felman.

Here the analyst mainly concentrates on the testimony of the survivors of great disasters, and also their testimonies in their different works of art. In this novel the author concentrates on Scarlett and this new form of narrating the testimony was adopted in lessening the traumatic pain. By narrating the dream to Rhett she penetrates deep into the dream and attempts to relate the dream in her practical life.

As Felman points out here, although the traumatic past remains radically unfinished and unknown, it continues to act on, in. and through present events in ways that elude or surpass conscious understanding. But the most urgent and essential claim of testimony is to show that even though we do not recover from our traumatic past, nor can be cure it. Overcome or even fully understand it. We can and we must listen to it and survive it by listening to its effects and they are transmitted to us through the voices of its witness and survivors.

It enables the reader to come to a conclusion that trauma can be possibly cured if not completely, at last to an extent. Cathy Caruth and Shoshanna Felman generally speak about trauma in terms of collective experience. In the novel trauma is dealt in a more constructive manner. Experiencing trauma due to hunger and fear remained in Scarlett's subconscious mind and later in belatedness came as a dream. Scarlett let herself free from the fear partly by confessing or by being a witness. The third way of completely getting rid of her trauma is to find out the true haven, the core reality of the dream.

The author does not treat Scarlett as a defeated personality. Though she is affected in her psyche, she is on the whole projected as a self-retrieving person. Being married to Rhett, made her feel comfortable, her fear for hunger and the fear for survival faded away. When Rhett started getting away from Scarlett the fear of insecurity crept into her. When Scarlett was not able to trace out what the true haven really is it came pass one day that she was in Atlanta in order to see Melanie in her death bed. After the death of Melanie she found that all her strength is going along with Melanie. Melanie was the only woman friend in her life. The fear once again started strangling her. When she did not get comfort from Ashely she wished to run back to Rhett with pure love in order to shed all her fears. She ran and ran in the darkness to find Rhett. While running in the darkness she remembered her dream and it was like a state of dream coming true. The current situation seemed similar to her dream for an instant, reality went out of her and she was lost. The old nightmare feeling was sweeping her, stronger than ever, and her heart began to rise. She was standing again amid death and stillness, even as she had once stood at Tara. Somewhere, somewhere in this wild land of moist stillness, there was a refuge! She sped gasping up the long hill. I was running-running like a crazy person!" she thought, her body shaking with lessening fear, her thudding heart making her sick. Home! That was where she wanted to go. That was where she was running. Home to Rhett!

At this realization it was as though changes fell away from her and with them the fear which had haunted dreams since the night she stumbled to Tara to find the world entered. (1008)

Now she knew the haven she had sought in dreams, the place of warm safety which had always been hidden from her in the mist. Thus at the end of the novel Scarlett is portrayed as a complete woman who is free from her trauma. The author has attempted a wonderful and a complete work of carving her character as a strong one both physically and mentally. As trauma the main concept of the dissertation, theories developed by authors beginning from Sigmund Freud to Shoshanna Felman have analyzed

various ways in which a trauma can be traced and cured. Taking Scarlett as an instance, her ignorance was the real cause of her fear. Scarlett adopted the method of self-interpretation and also sought help from selective people to get rid of it. Scarlett viewed trauma in a positive perspective. By using trauma and dream as her driving force she succeeded in her life. Thus trauma is never a destroying one. To conclude it would be apt to say that anything that alters our flow of life can never be a super natural element, instead it a self-constructed destruction which can be wiped away by self-understanding. Therefore dreams are not supernatural instead it is what the mind abandons and desire for, which takes the form of action by coherent events, thereby proving that trauma and dreams are the constructive element in the novel *Gone with the Wind*.

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GENDERED SUBALTERNITY IN MAHASWETA DEVI'S "DOULOTI THE BOUNTIFUL"

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The paper titled "Gendered Subalternity : An Analysis of Mahasweta Devi's "Douloti the Bountiful" tries to bring out the hardships and exploitations faced by the tribal women. The story moves from the story of an individual struggle to the perception of a community of Adivasiwomen. The paper focuses on the double disadvantage of caste and gender faced by the Tribal women.

In *A Vindication of the Rights of Women*, Wollstencraft rejected the established view that women are naturally inferior to men. The unequal nature of gender relations, she proposed, was because of lack of education. She was one of the first thinkers to propose that gender roles are not natural but social. Sex is biological but the values and meanings associated with the male and female body are socially ascribed. Judith Butler develops a post- structuralist analysis of gender when she proposes that gender can not be treated as an essence, but must be taken as performative construct. She writes in her *Gender Trouble*: 'there is no gender identity behind the expressions of gender; that identity is performatively constructed by the very "expressions" that are said to be its results.

"Subaltern" is a British word for someone of inferior military rank, and combines the Latin terms for "under"(sub) and "other" (alter). Subalternity is subordination, inferiority, exploitation, hegemony by the superior on the inferior which became inevitable in the present capitalist society.

Social oppression is a concept that describes a relationship between groups or categories of people in which a dominant group benefits from the systematic abuse, exploitation, and injustice directed toward a subordinate group. The relationship between whites and blacks in the US and South Africa, between social classes in many

industrial societies, between men and women in most societies-all have elements of social oppression in that the organization of social life enables those who dominate to oppress others.

Mahasweta Devi was a Bengali writer and activist who documented the struggles of marginalized Dalit and Adivasi community in Bengal. She dealt with the dehumanized and the exploited. Devi wrote over 100 novels and over 200 collections of short stories primarily written in Bengali but often translated to other languages. In her elaborate Bengali fiction, she often depicted the brutal oppression of tribal people and untouchable by potent, authoritarian upper-caste land lords, lenders and venal government officials. Devi's *Imaginary Maps* (1995) consists of three stories ; "The Hunt", "Douloti the Bountiful" and "Pterodactyl, Puran Sahay and Pritha". Weaving history, myth and current political realities, these stories explore troubling motifs in contemporary Indian life through the figures and narratives of indigenous tribes in India. These stories map the experiences of tribal community under decolonization.

A significant contribution to Tribal Literature in India, "Douloti, the bountiful" is a startling insight into the lives of Tribal women who face the double disadvantage of caste and gender discrimination. Devi weaves many incidents together to explore the pathetic conditions, social inequalities-compounded above all, by sexual harassment suffered by the Adivasi women. The word 'Adivasi' means, a member of any aboriginal tribal people living in India before the arrival of the Aryans in the second millennium BC.

"Douloti the Bountiful" was set in a village of Seora in Palamu in Bihar in post-independent India. The story portrays the plight of Ganori

Nagesia and his daughter Douloti. Nagesia borrowed money from Munabar, the landlord of the village and he was not able to pay back the debt. Nagesia became a "Kamiya" (a bonded laborer) of Munabar. When Nagesia was no longer useful to his master, he was freed from bondage to Munabar by Paramananda Misra, who was a relative of the local priest. He did it only to take over Douloti, the younger daughter of Nagesia with an offer of marriage. The thirteen year old Douloti, the new found bond-slave was thrown as a piece of meat in the flesh market-town of Madhpuraby her master Paramananda.

"Douloti" is a powerful indictment of socio-economic system of India. She became a "kamiya whore"(bonded sexlaborer) at the cost of her father's liberation from the landlord. It also comes as an attack on vestiges of feudalism in rural India. The story reveals the physical and mental traumas of the Tribal women. Douloti, the main character on whom the story concords around is a tribal woman. She is the representative of the 'gendered subaltern'.

The life of Douloti is used by the writer as metonymy to represent the life of community altogether which at the same time the reality in Indian villages. Douloti was promised marriage by Lord Paramanandain exchange for the cancellation of her father's 300 dollar doubt to Munabar. Devi highlights that Ganori's freedom came at the cost of his fourteen year old daughter. Fathers knowingly or unknowingly sell their wives and daughters into bonded sex labor to pay off their debts.

In the story, women are treated as 'objects' for men's whims and fancies. It is said that "women are just merchandise, commodities" and unquenchable male sexual desires have created a premium demand for fresh untouched hymen (Devi P xx). In social philosophy, objectification is the act of treating a person as an object or a thing. Sexual objectification is the act of treating a person as a mere object of sexual desire. Objectification more broadly means treating a person a commodity or an object without regard to their personality or dignity. It plays an important role in gender inequality.

The inherent paradox about Indian women is that, they are considered as 'Goddess', yet they are exploited and suppressed by the patriarchal and the caste system. Douloti became a prostitute, instead the bride of a so called 'Brahman God'. Her virginity and youth brought a high price for Munabar and Paramanand. She came to known as 'kamiya whore', the woman who is taken away to brothels by the upper class people to pay off the debts. She became the woman of many clienteles. It is the upper class people like lords and lenders create whores out of the low caste women. Both the body and mind of the gendered subaltern is the property of the caste lord who has the sovereign power over the subaltern bodies, minds and spirits. The fresh untouched virgin body is traded "until their bodies dry up"(79). One of the characters of Bama's *Sangati*, says that "if you are born into this world, it is best you were born a man. Born as a woman, what good do we get? We only toil in the fields and home until our very vaginas shrivel"(Bama 6). The subaltern women face oppression from the upper class men and men of the subaltern group. They are treated as an object for male pleasure. They have to undergo terrible physical and mental tortures.

The profound yearning of a wife, as a woman, for intimacy with the husband-as-a man- is an overwhelming issue in fiction in the lives of middle class patients seen in psychotherapy. Connecting the various stages of a woman's adulthood, from an expectant bride to a more sober grandmother, the intense wish to create a two-person universe with the husband where each finally 'recognizes' the other, is never far from her consciousness. It is a beacon of hope amidst the toil, drudgery, fights, disappointments and occasional joys of her stormy existence within the extended family. Douloti's marriage was a tragedy. She was sold to the brothel by her own husband. The upper class men were eagerly waiting for "unwounded hymen". They were the advocates of caste system, the irony is that the caste system or the class did not matter to them when they have to satisfy their sexual hunger.

The women in the brothel is even denied the right to become mothers. Devi's character, Jhalo concocts medicine to abort any offspring that

might be born into this factory warehouse of flesh. In Misra's brothel, women are forced to resume sexual duties immediately after abortion and in some instances, die from lack of care. Motherhood is the natural right of every woman. Douloti is the representative of every woman who denied the right of becoming mothers.

Munabar and Paramananda are the representatives of the upper class people who exploit the lower class people for their profit. Both of them earned huge profit through the exploitation of Tribal group. The economic and social status of an individual depends upon the caste and family they are born in. In this regard, tribal people are given values less than animals. They are considered to be the real inhabitants of nature, but they are humiliated by others. They are teased and mocked for what they are.

Devi highlights how the government officials exploit the poor through their belief system, as the people of Seora believe that they have been subjected to bonded labor "because of their sinfulness"(Devi 40). They believe, " Its fate's decree to become a kamiya. No one can evade what he (Lord Fate) writes down". The tribal group blindly swallow the belief system, no one is ready to question the system. As Wollsten craft points out, lack of education leads to exploitation and blind belief of their system. The government promised education and other basic facilities for the group. But they are not getting anything in reality, instead they are exploited in every possible ways. They become mere 'vote banks' for the government. They are not able to voice themselves in the society. Even if they try to voice, the high class people make them mute with mental and physical tortures.

It is important to note that the story is set in post-independent India. Even after the country attained freedom, the situation of the lower class people is that of slaves. They are still under the clutches of power. Douloti , a 14 year old girl with lots of hopes and passions became the prey of sexual hunger of the upper class men. She is traumatized by the insatiable sexual hunger of the male upper caste in which she is "bloodied many times all through the night" to the sound of "grunt, grunt"(58). She is the symbol of the lower

caste woman who has been turned into "land". The boss plows and plow their land and plow their bodies "land"(59) until it is abused and ravaged to "quench the hunger of male flesh"(61). Douloti died at the age of 27, her body ravaged from tuberculosis and venereal diseases. She died on the day of Indian Independence, "tormented corpse, putrefied with venereal disease" spread over the map of India's day of Independence"(93).She fell dead on the map of India. Devi's sublimity as a writer is evident here. She uses the image of "Indian map" to suggest that, 'Douloti is all over India'. Her body is the symbolization of Mother India dying on the day of Independence " filling the entire Indian peninsula from the oceans to the Himalayas" with the cruel effect of "bonded labor spread eagle" across the decolonial map of India.(92). Women were carrying the burden of the society with their bodies.

Even though India got freedom, Devi suggests that freedom has not reached the poor especially women. Majority of Indian population consist exploited people. The story can be read in connection with the present Indian scenario where low class people face multiple discriminations. Injustice is done to the outcaste of India. The situation of Tribals did not improve in post-independent India and instead continue to deteriorate under nation state.

The society inflicted constant abuse on Douloti and other women's bodies for profit. They are treated as merely 'others'. The 'norm' decides everything for them. Like her father, she was not able to repay her debt: she worked until her body is used up. For Douloti and other women, death is the only hope or liberation from the burdens of this nasty world. Devi explores the way in which Indian women have occupied a subaltern position that is oppressed by the traditional notion of patriarchy. She slashes at Indian society's hierarchical structure which is divided into two desolate and harsh categories. One is the dominator, nameless and monotonous and the other is the exploited, helpless and oppressed. Devi culminates tribal women's gender isolation and sexual exploitation besides the regular class and caste subjugation under the dominant class.

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SOCIAL REALISM IN ROHINTON MISTRY'S *A FINE BALANCE*

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Abstract

This paper intends to focus on the structure of human life in Rohinton mistry's A Fine Balance (1995). I wish to highlight the harsh reality of the suppression. And, Struggle and torture Dalits face every day of their miserable lives. This paper systematically set out to destabilize hegemonies based on cast, gender and class. I have an abiding interest in the use of the idea of tragedy in mistry's novel. The present journal travels in the humiliation, torture and problems of residence faced by untouchables. It presents how different, and often contradictory, discourses on dalits both incorporated and interrogated in Indian literature. I will analyse the position to which dalits are allocated, in both cultural and political discourses, in relation to the contested conception of the Indian nation, in civil society, and human sufferings in which Rohinton mistry's ultimately endless sufferings of the people.

Keywords: Suppression, Community, humiliation, Untouchable and issues of the suffering people.

Introduction

Rohinton Mistry was born into a Parsi family in 1952. He grew up in Bombay where he attended university, graduating in 1974 with a degree in Mathematics. He and his wife immigrated to Canada the subsequent year where he began an itinerary in English and Philosophy at the University of Toronto while functioning as a bank clerk for the duration of the day. After winning several awards for his short stories and a Canada Council grant, Mistry began to write full-time in 1985.

His first novel, *Such a Long Journey*, won both the Commonwealth Writers Prize for Best Book and the Governor General's Award, and was shortlisted for the Booker Prize. It was made into an attribute film in 1998. *A Fine Balance* won the Commonwealth Writers Prize for Best Book, the Los Angeles Times Book Prize for literature and the Giller Prize, and was also shortlisted for the Booker Prize, the International IMPAC Dublin mythical Award and the Irish Times International Fiction Prize.

Discussion

The narrative techniques of *A Fine Balance* and *Family Matters* is more intimate and more closely sorrowful with the inner life and composite experiences of the protagonists, while inconsistently. It is, also, more concerned with

existing Suppression, Community, humiliation, Indian society, Untouchable, social and political contexts. In Mistry's novels, we can easily find interconnectedness of various themes like idea of nationalism, alienation, oppression, human-relationship, fright and persuasion. The homelessness of Ishvar and Om in the city makes them victims of the essential government's plans for a city beautification-project endorsed by people of the middle class such as Nusswan Shroff and Mrs. Gupta, the manager of Au Revoir Exports-people who have enormously no proposal of the wretchedness of the complete poor, the dispossessed and the disempowered.

This novel had many characters of oppressed and the oppressor. An unchallengeable feature of mistry's humanism in a fine balance is the theme of condemnation of struggle for peace. Mistry shows the basic ambivalence of the common men, as a realist and humanist through his works.

"you cannot draw lines and compartments, and refuse to budge beyond them.

Sometimes you have to use your failures as stepping stones to success."

(A Fine Balance p.231)

When Dinna fights for her freedom and individuality, she, truly, faced many continuous failures and threats by society. At once she loses her flat and forced to her brother's home as a servant. At this stage the feminist may argue that

by creating the event of Dinna coming back to her brother's house. Mistry does some injustice to her. It shows that it is difficult for a woman to live indeendently without any sort of male protection. Even Beggarmaster's protection helped her to live safely for a few more years. Nut ere te fact is at dinna like other there three protagonist is disturbed considerably because of the prevailing political situation, national emergency proclaimed by the government of India, is why she loses her freedom.

After Mrs.shoroff's Death, despite of her keen desire to pursue her education. But, Dinna is not allowed even to matriculate. Nusswan, her brother Tries to impose his will on and suggests to her that she could marry a person of his choice. but, dinna protests and asserts her individuality. She marries Rustom dalal, whom she loves intensely. Dinna is the symbol of the "new women" who refuses to acquiescent and submissive and does not accept the the stereotypical feminine role assigned to her, even on that cruel night. When her husband dies, she behaves in a very dignified manner.

"No wailing, no beating the chest or tearing the hair like you might expect from a woman who had suffered such a shock, such a loss." (A Fine Balance p.46)

Unlike these two, Dina Dalal becomes prey and servant to her brother's family, and is left to fend for herself. Dina's relationship with the two tailors is at first one of be suspicious of and dictatorship as she forces them to work long hours without knowing that they go without food.Mistry's highlights crucial events in the country's chronicle by the background of each protagonist. The tailors and their forefathers life reflect the cruelty of the caste system in rural india where unbelievable horrors are committed on the lower caste.

"Shameful and horrible murders of Narayana and his companions are always the hapless victims at the hands of the heartless upperclass. Dukhi mochi's friend also fears for his family, with wide open eyes he is bringing destruction upon his household." (A Fine Balance p.95)

She forbids Maneck, a —nice Parsi boy from socializing with them. But the barriers steadily withdraw as they all get to know each other. The bond flanked by the four becomes stronger after their horrendous experiences at the edifice plant.

Dina Dalal allows the tailors to sleep on the porch of her tiny flat. But this promise of happiness is soon to be shattered.

Ishvar, who believes in the tradition of with marrying young, persuades his nephew, Om that regardless of their thorny substance circumstances, he be supposed to to marry a girl from their village. This return to the village marks the inception of their sorrows. Om's youthful confront of the ascendancy of the domineering Thakur, who had murdered his whole family leads to his castration by the politicians. Ishvar, who had earlier been untainted along with his nephew under the central government's Family Planning Program, loses his legs to gangrene.

"Lot of duplication in our country's laws....For politicians, passing laws is like passing water..... It all ends down the drain." (A Fine Balance p. 143)

Both Om and Ishvar make their way back to the city where Dina has lost the battle aligned with the landlord and finally permissible herself to be dispossessed from her flat. Dina's acquiescence is the effect of a delusion on her part. She believes that the tailors, who are in point of fact wedged up in the caste tumult in their village, have deserted her. She also believes that Maneck, who files away to Dubai, having botched his exams, has also isolated her.

She allows Nusswan's family to take over her providence and renovate her into an amateur family servant. When Maneck returns to Bombay eight years later, the city is in the throes of a new form of madness—the killing of Sikhs in the wake of the Prime Minister's assassination. Even though this corroboration of human madness saddens him, it does not splinter him as much as discovering the destiny of Dina and the tailors does. It is, for him, the last resistant of the chaos of the world. He had earlier described God thus:

"I prefer to think that God is a colossal coverlet maker.

With a never-ending variety of designs.

And the quilt has developed so big and confusing, the pattern is impossible to see,

the squares and diamonds and triangle

don't fit so well together anymore,

it's all develop into meaningless.

So He has abandoned it." (A Fine Balance. 418)

Mistry recognizes the consequence of religion and rite in the construction of human identity. He,

therefore, use religion, ritual and the responses to these as a central theme in his fiction. In fact, rituals and religious beliefs become the markers of ethnic, racial and communitarian identities; they highlight difference.

In *A Fine Balance* we can see the middle class and the unspecified, faceless working class meet commiserate with each other, and learn to overcome their prejudices and counterfeit bonds of friendship, affection and compassion. In fact, by depicting the struggles of the four main protagonists and numerous socio-economically challenged characters, during the Emergency, and how it dealt a blow to their already partial capacities and options of having a better future, the author succeeds in conveying his point of view.

"Living each day is to face one emergency or another."

(A Fine Balance. 571)

Conclusion

The novel of Rohinton mistry's *A Fine Balance* conclusion is more amply demonstrates the humanity among people, despite their distinctions in caste and class Rohinton Mistry has made it possible for Indian novel in English to explore into areas of human experience which were hitherto

only tangentially touched upon. And moreover, his novel rooted in the Indian reality helps us grapple with the multifarious problems confronting our society. This indeed is the secret of survival as Mistry magnificently demonstrates in *A Fine Balance*. Mistry's humour is gentle, subdued and occasionally quite amusing in his works.

India does not require unintentional economic growth and sacrificing the poor-man at the altar of "Common Good". What it needs is, to bring impartiality, justice and the basic amenities to its unfortunate and rundown.

"In the end, it's all a question of balance."

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MAGIC TO THE MULTICULTURE IN CHITRA BANERJEE'S MISTRESS OF SPICES

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Abstract

The Mistress of Spices, has been classified with the name of different spices. In the early part of the novel, Tilo reveals her own past and her history of migration from the world of magic to the multicultural society of America, with all sympathy she shares the anguish and experience of immigrants who had chosen America as a land of their dreams. She declares her mission of life.

Keywords: multicultural, immigrant, migration, multi-identity

The Mistress of Spices is a diasporic novel, about modern women's living condition in India. Novel is one of the type of a cultural multiplicity of India. Chitra Banerjee, an outstanding Indian English writer, articulates her deep concern over gender oppression in her novel. She is one of the female Indian- American writers to received wide recognition. She has written more than sixteen novels. Most of her novel, deal with the experience of immigrants to the united states.

Mistress of Spices is a diasporic fiction mix with myth and grace displaying the problem of the protagonist. This novel is no doubt about woman's struggle against patriarchical society and social construction. Chitra Banerjee reflects the everlasting reality of life. The portrayal of the position of woman in society is the important one. In present society, the status of women has been undergoing a rapid change in the world and also the portrayal of women is important in the study of literature. Among all the literary forms, fiction reflects in the contemporary social conditions.

Chitra Banerjee's Mistress of spices is a fiction of a girl born with magical property. The story is realistic and touching. She was born in a small village. Her parents were not happy because she was a girl. Later she was called Bhagyavati. Many of the event that take place in this historical story are probably happened to many girls in that period of time.

This novel about a small girl is born in a utterly poor family in India, her birth as a dowry-debt. This child grow up, and her parents realize that she is special gift to find lost things. She

explores issue of village life, gender equality, apathy and reactions to oppression. She started to predict coming dangers, find lost things, shows people the misbehaviour of the rich etc. Early age Tilo was named 'Nayantara' and kidnapped by pirates. After shipwreck she ends up in Island, where she is tutored by a mystical figure she calls the 'first mother'. Tilo is then trained to walk over fire, and control her sense. Transmigration, in an old woman's body, to an Indian grocery store in Oakland, California, there she is commanded to serve her community through her spices.

For Geeta, Tilo mixes several ingredients, ginger for deeper courage, fenugreek for healing breaks and 'amchur' for deciding right. Geeta's predicament stem from the fact that, she is part of a paradigmatic diasporic family, where as clash between first generation and second generation South Asians is inevitable. Her parents have given plenty of freedom, but they cannot accept her boy friend. Geeta, the second generation of South Asian. The relation between the generation is complex.

Tilo Mistress of spices is really a young women who is required by the dictates of the order to disguise herself as an old woman. She cannot be aware of her own body. She observes the people around her.

Tilo life changes when she falls in love for an American man named Raven, who is native American. She chooses to disregard the rules of her training in her pursuit of romance and her decision to seek out of customers outside her shop,

which results in the spices inflicting punishment on her and those she care about.

To save Raven from being another victim of the spices powerful magic, she decides to leave him after one last night where they make love. Afterwards, she accepts the punishment for disregarding the rules of her training, which results in the store being destroyed in an earthquake. She survives, and she and Raven reconcile and decide to help rebuild the city.

Chitra Banerjee argues for recognition of women's full control of their bodies. Once Tilo is in touch with her own sexuality, she can no longer assuage others pains or even see in to the future. At the end of the novel, Tilo becomes Maya, the young woman who has abandoned her special powers. Her new home through an act of cultural translation. She struggles with her own passions as she builds emotional relationship with Raven. She transforms herself into a woman, feeling guilty about her "self indulgence".

Writer of the Indian Diaspora have been at the centre stage in the last decade chiefly because of the theoretical formulation being generated by their work. Language and cultures are transformed when they come in contact with the others. These writers are often pre-occupied with the elements of nostalgia as they seek to locate themselves in new cultures. They write in relation with the culture of their homeland and at the same time adopt and negotiate with the culture space of the host land. However, looking at the diasporic literature in a broader perspective it is seen that such literature helps in understanding various cultures, breaking the barriers between different countries and even spreading universal peace.

Diasporic or expatriate writing occupies a place of great significance between countries and cultures. Theories are generated and positions defined in order to construct new identities which further negotiate boundaries and confines that relate to different temporary and spatial metaphors.

This movement causes the dislocation and location of cultures and individuals harp upon memories. Diasporic writers live on the margins of two countries and create cultural theories. Interestingly, the terms 'disapora', 'exile',

'alienation', 'expatriation', are synonymous and posses an ambiguous status of being both a refugee and an ambassador. The two roles being different, the diasporic writers attempt at doing justice to both. As a refugee, he seeks security and protection and as an ambassador projects his own culture and helps enhance its comprehensibility.

Migration takes place due to various reasons and in the Indian context the migratory movements were governed by historical, political, economic reasons including higher education, better prospects and marriage. However, the Indain community has shown greater sense of adjustments, adaptability, mobility and accessibility. The sense of homelessness which every immigrant suffers is genuine and intense; but in recent times it has been seen that this concept has been minimized and made less intense through their social networking and sense of solidarity.

The 'Mistress of Spices' adopts a more mature structural configuration in order to discuss the Diaspora. The stories are then braided together through the novel, the sublets shades caught and developments depicted. In the ways in which, the stories of lives are told and re-told, the text owes much too non-written cultural forms like story telling. A variety of cultural codes and icons are recognized as Tilo weaves her tapestry of different lives become implicated in the lives of Jaggi, Ahuja's wife, and Geeta.

The 'Mistress of Spices', is a more complex strategy for portraying diasporic identity. She makes use of fable in order to explore the variouuus kinds of problems encountered by immigrants who came to the promised land of silver pavements and golden roofs. Divakaruni has written in a spirit of play, collapsing the divisions between the realistic world of twentieth century America and the timeless one of myth and magic in her attempt to create a modern fable. In this novel the first person narrative has been adopted from the perspective of Tilo or Tilotama, who has trained to extract the essence of the spices and make them to alleviate pain, solve problems and help people live better lives.

She boasts of her store which attracts a large group of people for whom the place is reminiscent

of home, a little oasis in their diasporic lives with problems. The Mistress of spices feels that the Indians come to her store in quest of happiness. All those voices, Hindioriya Assamese, Urdu, Tamil, English, layered one on the other like notes from tanpura, asking for happiness.

The complexities of diasporic negotiations are underpinned by questions of identity, and Divakaruni's novel tries to capture the nuances that contest the stereotypical images of south Asians as model minorities and unobtrusive citizens. Divakaruni is fairly prolific as she written many books that will make her work available to a large, cosmopolitan audience. Readings of her work produce new meanings and new sites of contestation. Therefore she cannot claim to be outside of the power struggling that revolves around the authenticity of voice within the Indian community in the diaspora. However, Divakaruni's, *The Mistress of Spices* gives plenty of sources on diasporic grounds. It enhances the Indian glory, into the past and present world. The intermingling of both cultures reflects more on Indian immigrants, who are curious of Indian land. The magical realism of the east, the exotic land viewed by western eyes, glance the Indian beauty of spices and their magic.

The diasporic aspects which we come across in the *Mistress of spices* gives the sources of changing the names of characters, which the Indians all in alien shores, as Tilotama becomes Tilo, Jagjit becomes Jaggi, all these visions us the diasporic view, which we refer in this novel. Another basic and foremost aspect of diaspora is, Multiculturalism, as we have come across through the lives of Geeta, Jagjit and Mrs. Ahuja or Lalita.

Divakaruni's texts are powerful and significant; they are particularly effective in mapping the contours of the new south Asian community in the United States. They provide a lens with which to view the struggle for identity amongst women and to develop a critique a patriarchal structures that organized the life of

Indian diasporas. Divakaruni provides all the Indian vision of cultural, traditional and moreover magical realism. Her immigrant experiences spells in her writings and evokes the Americans to see the richness of India and Indian spices, how they create magic in solving the problems of Indian diasporas.

There are many other landmarks created by the diasporic literature. It has helped to understand and form potentials and core competencies. Access made available to educational, social, professional opportunities and political empowerment. It has amde possible the removal of all kinds of limitations and barriers-traditional, cultural, linguistic etc. It ignites and synergies common and shared values in addition to coalition building among the social and political diaspora. In addition to strengthening, it also enhances ties and bonds with other countries. To mention a few are the neighbouring countries including Pakistan, China, Bangladesh and other Asian Countries. Diasporic literature also helps countries to bring about a strategic partnership based on prosperity, security and commitment to freedom and peace.

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THE UNPOKEN IMMENSE STRENGTH OF VOICELESS WOMEN IN INDIAN MYTHOLOGIES

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Abstract

The stories of Indian mythologies constantly favor men. The best stories have always been men's stories. Women, to a greater extent, have been ignored in Indian mythologies. Women's tales too have been told by men. They tell women how should be and more importantly, not be. They focused indirectly on accusing women for breaking rules that are invariably man made. For example: Speaking out of turn (Amba), Laughing at wrong time (Draupadi), Keeping a great secret (kunti), Crossing the line (Sita). Women's stories are written in water and passed in silence. What would happen if women started telling their own stories? Would they change the shape of the story? Would truth then become something else? The objectives of this paper is to explore the unexplored area in Indian epics.

The stories of Indian mythologies constantly favor men. The best stories have always been men's stories. Women, to a greater extent, have been ignored in Indian mythologies. Women's tales too have been told by men. They tell women how should be and more importantly, not *be*. They focused indirectly on accusing women for breaking rules that are invariably man made. For example: Speaking out of turn (Amba), Laughing at wrong time (Draupadi), Keeping a great secret (kunti), and Crossing the line (Sita). Women's stories are written in water and passed in silence. What would happen if women started telling their own stories? Would they change the shape of the story? Would truth then become something else? The objective of this paper is to explore the unexplored area in Indian epics.

In contemporary Indian literature there are people like Chitra Banerjee Diwakaruni, Kavitha Kane, Mahaswetha Devi, Madhavi S.Mahadevan, Prathiba Ray arose our mythological memories towards the presence of the woman who came from the significant lineage but lay forgotten. Their works becomes a bravely re-present one of the world's most famous stories by letting a woman tell it. The books that I would like to quote as examples in this paper are Mahasweta Devi's 'After Kurukshetra' and Kavitha Kane's two novels, namely Sita's Sister and Karna's wife: an Outcast's queen.

These books are not about their plot and its pace, point of suspense and thrill, peaks of narration, twists or even climaxes. Perhaps, they stand distinct for their strong characterization. These works about unspoken women in Indian mythologies re-creates those women and honestly portrays their relationship with others. They honestly depict the various roles they lived and the roles are made to live. In doing so the stories of Indian mythologies are contemporized to be assimilated by modern mindsets that like to question gender discourse and patriarchal fabrics and they universalize these stories.

A lot has been written on the Mahabharata and the Ramayana from various perspectives. We remember Gauthama, Ravana, Shantanu, Bhima but are ignorant of Agalikai, Mandodhari, Sathyavati, Hidimba who were vibrant, strong-willed and strong-charactered. There are authors like Mahasweta Devi and Kavitha Kane who speaks of the lesser known women in the case of After Kurukshetra, Karna's wife: the outcast's queen and Sita's sister.

Through the characters of Uruvi, Karna's wife and Urmila, Lakshmana's wife the author locates the patriarchal idea of Loyalty. She examines the conflict between love and duty through their relationship with each other. She speaks about the socio-cultural ideas that move through the epics.

Kavitha Kane speaks about the women who chose to be blind in her novels Karna's wife and Sita's sister. Barring a few expectations, women find scant mention in both Mahabharata and Ramayana. Such woman who has been disregarded all along but worth knowing is Uruvi, Karna's Wife. The way in which Uruvi's story is blended with Mahabharata is remarkable. The author has done a laudable job in bringing out the emotions of wife who, despite knowing the future of her husband is helpless. The well known characters like Kunti, Arjuna, Duryodhana, Bhishma, especially Draupadi perfectly fit into the story. Every character is given space and voice which turns the event of the story accordingly. Sita's sister is a courageous re-creation of the mythology, which presents us with subaltern view point. Even the titles of those two novels are not given directly as Uruvi or Urmila but under reams of other person.

The function of myth in literature is to provide a background and familiar frame of reference so that the sensibilities of the reader and the author are oriented and brought together and a profound communication is established between them. That is what we probably find in the works of Mahasweta Devi. She succeeds in exposing the plight of the have-nots. The use of myth in her works makes it more vivid and striking.

Mahasweta Devi goes one step ahead and speaks about the life of tribal women who lived during the period of the epic Mahabharata. In compellingly powerful stories in After Kurukshetra, Mahasweta Devi speaks once again of women from a woman's point of view, in a woman's language, marked by thoughts and feelings that mainstream literature still seems to want to assign to the sidelines. Mahasweta Devi does not just move aside the curtains of mainstream perspectives to show readers the other side of the Kurukshetra war, the women's side but goes further into this shadow realm to show us the other women hidden away there were vibrant, strong-willed, strong-charactered, common women, alive with purpose and capable of doing, as the royal women are not.

Mahasweta Devi has made important contribution to literary and cultural studies in this

country. Her empirical research into oral history as it lives in the cultures and memories of tribal communication was a first of its kind. Her powerful, haunting tales of exploration and struggle have been seen as rich sites of feminist discourse by leading scholars. Her innovative use of language has expanded the conventional borders of Bengali literary expression. Standing as she does at the intersection of vital contemporary questions of politics, gender and class, she is significant figure in the field of society committed literature.

This collection of three stories is originally written in Bengali language and is translated into English by Anjum Katyal who is an editor, writer, translator, musician and critic. According to Anjum Katyal, the author weaves three stories in which a reader visit unexpected alleys and by-lanes of the traditional epic saga and look at events through the eyes of women – marginalized, dispossessed and dalit.

This Dharmayuddha of popular epic is just a cold-blooded power game that sacrificed countless human lives. Her quest for the following questions made her to translate the stories into English.

1. How does the women's quarters of palace appear to five peasant women whose life are as shattered by war but who are tougher in the face trauma?
2. How does Kunti, at the end of her life, come to terms with her guilt over her unacknowledged son Karna?
3. How does a lower caste serving women view her half-royal off spring and his decision to perform to last rites of king who never recognized him as son?

Uruvi's story begins with an archery contest where Karna openly challenges Arjuna and is in turn ridiculed for his low birth. Impressed by his charms and godly beauty, she fell in love with Karna. In spite of social humiliation, marries him. Her story runs parallel to the events of Mahabharata. How each of those events shape her and her peaceful life, forms the gist of the book.

Sita's sister is a bravely imaginative way to represent one of the world's famous epics by letting a woman tells it, not in first person but

through her thoughts and travails. This book stands distinct for its strong characterization and larger socio cultural ideas in it. The author re-creates Lakshmana's wife Urmila, portrays her relationship, show the mind behind her fourteen years long fortitude. Moreover, Urmila's life is more sufferable than that of Sita's which is ignored by the Indian society.

Whenever there is a chaos between duty and love, duty always triumphs. Love for their wives is also one of the duties which are not considered as duty by patriarchs of Indian myth. Urmila was left in Ayodhya and was not allowed to follow her husband during the time of exile. In Sita's sister the author not only discusses about Urmila but also about Kaikeyi. Ramayana that was told in the narration of Kaikeyi and Urmila changed the shape of the story and opened a different eye towards the epic.

The loyalty of Karna for Duryodhana led his life towards destruction. The pathetic thing was, that was known to him. The strongest decision that was made by Uruvi was to leave Karna for his action of accusing Draupadi at the Rajyasabha. This is a perfect twist made by the author that doesn't deviate from the flow of epical incidents. Uruvi preached Dharma to Karna in the novel. Emotions of an upset woman are shown clearly in the novel.

In the case of Mahasweta Devi's *After Kurukshetra* the story revolves around the tribal women whose lives had been victimized by Royal society. History favours royal society. In that case, Ramayana and Mahabharata are not exceptions. But Devi's *After Kurukshetra* explains the life of tribal women and their emotions. The usage of language by the translator made the story to fix under perfect narration.

Finally, the truth of the story changes if the perspective is changed. Men expect women to

support them in every situation. But there was no importance given to the emotions of women. Though these women are right they were ignored. Women were only as choices to men. What I would like to say here is, women have to be a men's priority but not choices. Priority of men would have been definitely helped these women to avoid their sufferings. The positions of women have not been changed yet. At least now we empower ourselves.

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USE OF SYMBOLS AND IMAGES IN MARGRET ATWOOD'S *SURFACING* – A REVIEW

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In any piece of literary work, symbolism and imagery can be used to add or represent meaning that goes beyond what is literally being said. The actions and events within the plot can be looked at on one level, while literary symbols and images within the writing can be considered on another level. Another slightly more difficult, but often more effective use of symbol and images in literature can be seen when the writer has made the symbol and image a vital part of the work, not just a quick addition. A symbol is an object representing, or used for, something else; frequently an emblem, token, or sign, which represents something deeper and more important. It might be a material object representing something immaterial. Imagery means to use figurative language to represent objects, actions, and ideas in such a way that it appeals to our physical senses. Usually it is thought that imagery makes use of particular words that create visual representation of ideas in our minds. The word “imagery” is associated with mental pictures. However, this idea is but partially correct. Imagery, to be realistic, turns out to be more complex than just a picture.

Surfacing is a novel written by great eco-feminist perspective writer Margret Atwood. This novel has been the object of a great deal of critical controversy on an almost unknown level in Canada. The narrative of *surfacing* follows a simple structural outline. The narrative is a highly subjective tale of stream of consciousness in which often the border between inner and outer reality, facts and fears, the present and the past fade and disappear. The symbols in *Surfacing* work to support the themes. Of the four main symbols in the novel, two are conventional, drawing their power from traditional associations, and two are private, drawing their power from the importance

they gain as the novel proceeds. All the four symbols are part of the story on a literal level, while working very strongly on a symbolic level.

Paul's wooden barometer is the symbol which features a wooden man and woman inside, becomes an unfortunately accurate emblem of marriage for the narrator. The narrator's shifting assessment of the barometer traces her shifting attitudes toward marriage. Initially, the narrator views the barometer couple as representative of a simplistic and even empty marriage, and she compares them to Paul and Madame. She mentions how Paul and Madame even look wooden. The narrator later compares the barometer couple to Anna and David in that the wooden couple like Anna and David's happiness, is not real. The narrator also thinks of the barometer in relation to her parents. She compares the image of the barometer with the image of her mother and father sawing a piece of birch. The image of the birch is evocative because the narrator associates birches with unspoiled nature. The implication is that the barometer represents an unattainable, unrealistic version of love, whereas her parents possess true love.

The hanged heron is the second symbol and it's at the portage represents the American destruction of nature. The narrator obsesses over the senselessness of its slaughter, especially that it was hanged and not buried. The heron's death emphasizes that the narrator defines someone as American based on his or her actions. She condemns any act of senseless violence or waste as distinctly American. That the bird is killed with a bullet and hanged using a nylon rope emphasizes the subversion of nature to technology. Also, the narrator thinks of the hanged bird as a Christ-like sacrifice, which reflects Christian ideology. By using Christian ideas to describe nature, the

narrator emphasizes her near-religious reverence for nature. The narrator also compares herself to the heron during her madness, when she worries that the search party will hang her by the feet. By associating the narrator with the hanged heron, Atwood associates the way Americans destroy nature with the way men control women.

Anna's makeup is the third image which David demands she wear at all times, represents the large-scale subjugation of women. The narrator compares Anna to a doll when she sees her putting on makeup, because Anna becomes David's sexual plaything. At the same time, makeup represents female deception. Anna uses makeup as a veneer of beauty, and the behavior is representative of the way she acts virtuous (but sleeps with other men) and happy (but feels miserable). Makeup goes completely against the narrator's ideal of a natural woman. The narrator calls herself a natural woman directly after her madness, when she looks in a mirror and sees herself naked and completely disheveled. The narrator comments that Anna uses makeup to emulate a corrupt womanly ideal.

The narrator's ring symbolizes marriage and its entrapping effects. The narrator describes wearing both her boyfriend's and her fake husband's rings around her neck. She compares her rings to a crucifix or a military decoration. The crucifix suggests that marriage is not only a sacrifice but a sacrifice towards a false ideal. The image of a military decoration implies that marriage forces women into becoming the spoils of war. Atwood uses the narrator's ring to foreshadow Joe's demand for marriage, as she mentions in Chapter 1 that Joe fiddles with the narrator's ring.

Surfacing has a large network of images that gain greater importance as the story proceeds. The imagery of *Surfacing* helps to develop the characterization, direct the plot and reinforces the main ideas and themes. Drowning or submersion is one of the most persistent images in Atwood's *surfacing*. It is used by Atwood to substantiate the heroine's transcendental self-illumination. The diving into the lake in search of the Indian paintings leads her to locate her father's corpse floating in water. This vision of the father's dead

body in the water enables her to confront the unpleasant reality of the abortion she underwent long back. After the confrontation becomes almost literally a rising form of death into life. The suppressed guilt has nearly made her lifeless person and when she gets the oppressive pangs of guilt out of her system she becomes a whole individual. She must realize that her parents are neither Gods nor super humans. For procuring a true image of her parents she effects a submersion into her past, her childhood days, the location and the situations of her early life. When the surfaces after the submersion into her past, she is able to see her parents in their true form. She gets rid of all her illusions about her parents and she ultimately gets almost ready to face life with its complexities.

Amputation image has been rhythmically repeated in the text to give a special force to the idea. One of the heroine's earliest memories is that of an old woman with only one hand, the other arm ending in a stump. She had married with all sincerity of emotions, only to find her "fake husband" an "average man" with proportionate cruelty. She leaves him, but a part of her also goes dead. She is amputated as a lover as well as a mother, because of the baby had been taken away. Her love, marriage, incomplete motherhood, divorce together made a traumatic experience for her which she recalls in terms of an amputation legend.

Images of death and decay also presented in the novel. The natural setting including rotting logs in the water de-composing leaves in the forest, and the cabin and the surrounding docks, sheds and garden are all in a story of decay. The narrator has memories of both her mother's death and the animals her brother allowed to die after capturing them. These images can be linked to the rediscovery of her child's death and rediscovery of her father's death. They also highlight the emotional death that has taken place within the narrator.

Finally, images of imprisonment are also found in *Surfacing*. This is one of the narrators strongest memories of her brother is his trapping frogs and gray fish and putting them in bottles and cans. Later, she discovers while looking through

the mother's photo album that pictures can freeze people and she feels herself as a child. Then, she reminds of her marriage that she had without her parents' permission, and the aborted child that she had under the compulsion of her husband. All these images can be linked to the problem of the narrator's imprisoned self.

The use of imagery and symbolism is Margaret Atwood's strong point, which is an internal aspect of the novels to give depth. They forecast the forthcoming disaster waiting in the womb of future. By using mirror images, she reveals that art is not a mirror or representation of nature but a reflection of process of writing, reading and interpretation. Margaret Atwood employs a large network of symbols and images in *Surfacing*. They take their meaning and significance from the protagonist's personal

associations with them. The imagery and symbols of *Surfacing* helps to develop characterization, direct the plot and reinforces the central ideas and themes of the novel.

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RE-READING INDIAN GENDER CONSTRUCTS FROM INDIAN CULTURAL PERSPECTIVE WITH REFERENCE TO SHASHI DESHPANDE'S SELECT NOVELS

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In her book, *The Second Sex*, Simone de Beauvoir's acerbic observation, "He is the Subject, he is the Absolute — she is the Other." (p.6) means that self is such an imperative issue for feminism. To be the Other is to be the non-subject, the non-person, the non-agent in short, the mere body. In deconstruction, a close reading of Orientalism emphasizes the relationship between day/night, good/bad, male/female and so on. In the Indian context, male/female is not oppositional but an interrelated or interdependent.

India remained patriarchal as far as their socio-economic structures were concerned, but its cultural values were such that a woman received her due recognition in the male-female partnership. Values are what human beings live by. The value-system of any given culture determines the sense of fulfillment and degree of happiness of its members. It is therefore not surprising that no record exists of any massive discontent of the women in India similar to that of the 'bra burning' incident that took place in the U.S.

Indian's culture is embedded in religion and Indian's ideal couple is derived from Shiva and Parvati as being half of the other, represented as Ardhanarisvara. This represents that both husband and wife are one-half of the other. Indian people who worship this idea of oneness is engrained in Indians's psyche.

In early days, both man and woman were one at mind Oneness is obliged to be considered as superior and inferior assumption due to westernisation. Loving husband have been viewed as serving the master. The notion of self spoiled the image and identity of Indian women. Indian women started searching 'what do I want?'. It results in agony Ultimately, she understands her

identity to be selfless self existent which means that life without anything to live for, thought without anything to think about, joy without anything to be joyful. (Reincourt, 70) This moral value has been inculcated worshipping the holy formless lord 'arthanadeswarar' instinctively.

The aim of this paper is an attempt that Indian gender constructs should be revised meticulously and accurately from Indian cultural perspective leaving behind western impact. The paper rides on a new pride, as a revival of inspiration, a recuperation from centuries of British domination of India when Hindu dignity was systematically undermined through the Macaulay's education system. Prior to that the invasion of India by the Moghuls had already moved the country to a patriarchal set up as far as their socio-cultural constructs were concerned. Macaulay's new education had been made not for the welfare of the Indians, but to make their colonization more flexible. His thought is reflected when Lord Macaulay addressed to the British Parliament in 2 February, 1835:

I have traveled across the length and breadth of India and I have not seen one person who is a beggar, who is a thief. Such wealth I have seen in this country, such high moral values, people of such caliber, that I do not think we would ever conquer this country, unless we break the very backbone of this nation, which is her spiritual and cultural heritage, and, therefore, I propose that we replace her old and ancient education system, her culture, for if the Indians think that all that is foreign and English is good...

This new education had an impact in all the social structure, culture, caste, family, myth, man and woman relationship and so on. Indian value system had been misinterpreted from the point of

view of the West and imposed on the psyche of Indian women through new education. The new education has gradually made her conscious of futility or emptiness of the various long-preserved notions and taboos about the woman, and she has started opposing and breaking them. And this crusade at times makes her feel lonely and alienated. Their consciousness had been colonized according to the impact of western. When their minds had been colonized many women felt compelled to alter their thinking and behaviour some of which never suited the cultural clime of Indian soil and therefore the sense of alienation in their own mother land. Nevertheless, it is high time that contemporary Indian women realize their roots, meaning of life and the great Indian value system.

Shashi Deshpande occupies a significant place among the contemporary women novelists who are concerned with the problems of women and their quest for identity. Her novels deal with the women who belong to the Indian middle class. They are brought up in a traditional environment from which they struggle to liberate themselves in order to seek their self-identity and independence. This leads to a confrontation with the family and the male-dominated society. As the woman is smothered in an oppressive male-dominated and tradition-bound society, she attempts to explore her inner self and assert her individuality. Ultimately unconsciously, she realizes that freedom and identity lies in the right perception of life.

Her heroines are the representatives of western education. In the transition or the post-colonial period, Indian parents struggled to make them to get new or westernized education through which their daughters can expose to western mode of thinking and living. She is uniquely Indian and presents the customs and traditions of the people of India. She is basically Indian and writes for the Indians. As an eminent novelist, she has emerged as a writer possessing deep insight into the female psyche. Focusing on the marital relationships she seeks to expose the tradition by which a woman is trained to play her subservient role in the family. Her novels reveal the patriarchal traditions and uneasiness of the modern Indian woman in being

a part of them. Shashi Deshpande uses this point of view of present social reality experienced by women. Shashi Deshpande says,

Shashi Deshpande is also the victim of Macaulay's new education and post colonial hybrid. As far as Shashi Deshpande is concerned the main issue is the degradation, the subordination, and the inequality. On the other hand, she says:

Feminism isn't a matter of theory; it is difficult to apply Kate Millet, or Simone de Beauvoir or whoever to the reality of our daily lives in India. And then there are such terrible misconceptions about feminism by people here. They often think it is about burning bras and walking out on your husband, children, or about not being married, not having children, etc, I always try to ski the point now about what feminism is not, and to say that we have to discover what am I? in our own lives, our experiences. (Holmstrom, 249-250)

The novel, *The Dark Holds No Terrors*, opens with the heroine, Saru returning home. The *Dark Holds No Terrors* revolves around Saru the heroine of this novel, who is indeed well-settled as a doctor and happily married with two children. On accidentally coming to know about the death of her estranged mother she decides to return after a gap of fifteen years. The narrative structure of homecoming enables the writer to manipulate the movement from the present to the past and vice-versa. Years ago, Saru forsook her parents in a pinnacle of anger to marry a man of her choice. But, now, standing in front of her parent's house she feels distressed.

It was not to comfort her father that she had come. It was for herself in order to escape from the sexual torture of her husband Manohar, a lecturer in a small college. On hearing the news of her mother's death she visits her parent's home, though emotionless. In the Western countries, the question of returning to one's marital home is something unheard. The western women leave their husbands and go for another man.

Of course, the Indian woman has also been used to this kind of behaviour. The father frowns and knits his brows in case the married daughter dares return to her parental house having quarreled or divorced her husband. A married

woman is thus supposed to stay in the house of her husband till death.

The father is indifferent and not supportive enough 'like an unwilling host entertaining an unwelcome guest.' That kind of behavior makes Saru retrospect who she is, "What gave me the idea I could come back? (*DHNT*, 19)" carelessly she said the words to herself that she does not want him. She herself admits that all these love marriages are love for a few days, after that Conflict arises. She introspects her mother's words,

Don't come crying to us then. To you? God, that's the one thing I'll never do. Never! No, theirs was not a case of love dying, or even of conflicts. Instead, it was as if a kind of disease had attacked their marriage. A disease like syphilis or leprosy, something that could by despicably depicting: not be admitted to others. (*DHNT*, 69)

Saru's father represents those Indian fathers who do not accept the daughters returning home seeking asylum. That's why, divorce rates are less rather than the West.

It is Saru who persuaded Manu to give up writing a magazine and journals. She is the one who made him to work in a local college for convenience. When her economic independence is reinforced with the fact that she earns more than Manohar, she still feels stripped of her independence by virtue of being assigned to the job of a house wife – bringing up children and sub serving the interest of her husband. Tired of both the duties, indoors and outdoors, she wants to leave the latter one, "Manu, I want to stop working, I want, to give it all up ... my practice, the hospital, everything" (*DHNT*, 79).

Unlike Promoth Kumar Singh says in his article, "Feminine Consciousness in the writings of Shashi Deshpande and Mahesh Dattani":

Modern Indian women are marching ahead in every field and they are no longer ... slaves to circumstances and patriarchal domination. Many women struggle against the age old slavery and suppression. In spite of their best efforts to break the age-old patriarchy, even today they are seen suffering from some certain weaknesses and complexes ... In her fiction *The DHNT*, she depicts the miseries suffered by Sarita in the hands

of tradition that does not give women their equal share. (162)

Unlike western woman, Sarita never wants equality when Sarita expresses her wish to be a housewife,

I suppose. Stay at home and look after the children. Cook and clean. What else?" I saw myself, the end of my sari tucked into my waist, hair tied into a neat knot, smiling at them all as I served them. And all of them smiled back at me. A mother in an ad, in a movie, dressed in a crisply starched, ironed sari. Wife and mother, loving and beloved. A picture of grace, harmony and happiness. Could I not achieve that? (*DHNT*, 80)

For an Indian woman, taking caring of house hold chores and bringing up children are a blissful task and not regarded as burden.

when Nalu invites Saru to speak to her students, Saru pours out her heart:

You noticed that the wife always walks a few steps behind her husband? That's important, very important, because it's symbolic of the truth. A wife must always be a few feet behind her husband. If he's an MA, you should be a BA. If he's 5' 4" tall, you shouldn't be more than 5' 3" tall. If he's earning five hundred rupees, you should never earn more than four hundred and ninety-nine rupees. (*DHNT*, 137)

A collection of magazines, *What is Hinduism? Stipulates*, "The wife walks a step or two behind her husband, or, if walking by his side, a step or two back, always giving him the lead. (In the West, the opposite is often true.)"(320)

In *Roots and Shadows*, *Modern educated Indian woman*, Indu is disgusted at the sight of strewn plates and littered remnants lying about after the meal. She becomes conscious of the exemplary patience and courage women have shown to clear up the mess after every meal. "And women like Kaki even ate off the same dirty plate their husbands had eaten in earlier." (RS 67)

In those days, cooking knitting, washing the dishes, cleaning the houses, taking care of the children and family members were allotted to women. For men, earning by doing outdoor jobs was being assigned. There was no record of discontent in female's psyche since time immemorial. The quality she lacks the quality he

gains. The feature he is not having the feature she obtains. Both of them joined together and pile up the space. Kaki like women never get tired of serving their husbands. They were expressing their immeasurable love by eating in a same plate in which their husbands had. New education makes modern woman think it as stupid without realizing the meaning behind it.

Bhavana Dwivedi in Feminist Vision in Shashi Deshpande's *The Roots and Shadows* affirms that in her work, one can come across a detachment between the male and the female world. This is true not only of the central character but of other characters of the novel as well. The one is domineering and the other is dominated. The dominant culture and the marginalized culture are displayed in the form of repression of the female by the male. Indeed, this goes into the psychology of unconsciousness that subject's woman to silence so as she does not identify herself with the masculine imagery.

Indu is always accused of questioning the established norms and of being cleverer, and more educated than her predecessors. There is a difference between intelligence and wisdom. Intelligence is acquired where as wisdom is arbitrary . Intelligence is reasoning, analyzing, deducing, and theorizing and so on. Wisdom stands for something beyond human knowledge and intelligence.

Old uncle said, "For a woman, intelligence is always a burden, Indu. We like our women not to think." Indu blindly, agrees his perception as if men are strong; women are weak. As a logical thinker she fails to view it in the Indian context rather than a western outlook. She must have observed her old uncle's married life to comprehend what he meant.

Her old uncle married a girl who was only 13, ignorant village girl. As a 'bookish solemn young man', he thought it was his duty to educate her. It is he who said that she taught him so much more herself. She knew how to reach across to any person, so easily getting over the barriers of age, class, caste or sex. He educated her he gains. She has taught him through her good qualities. In those days. Women were obliged to submit herself to her husband. There is no record that woman

had discontent against the patriarchal norms. Indian women have never been thinking man as oppressor and women as oppressed. Western academic intelligence only is making women to think in and a manner. This is what Old uncle means that a woman who has this kind of intelligence will be burden for her which would certainly dispel the domestic bliss. In the other words, opposite poles attract each other. The same poles repel.

She is independent, intelligent, logical and rational but after her marriage, she becomes a submissive woman whose identity is only an extension of her husband. She is shocked to realize that she is turning into an "ideal", Indian wife, obeying her husband's wishes and fancies. She lives up to the expectations of her husband:

Always what he wants, what he would like, what would please him? And I can't blame him. It is not he who has pressurized me into this. It is the way I want it to be . . . Have I become fluid with no shape, no form of my own. (RS, 54)

K.A.Kunjakkan in his book, *Feminism and Indian Realities* vividly narrates that a woman should always live in her husband's shadow. And he asserts:

"The belief is strong that men should lead and women should follow. That is the way god intended it to be: To run things smoothly someone has to give orders and others have to follow it Nature has intended that men give orders and women follow. Otherwise men would be bearing children and women would have been stronger There is a strong conviction of the natural order of things and that such an order should not be tampered with".(21)

Individualistic feminists give importance to individual self rather than the collective factors such as- socio-cultural ethos. In contrast, Indian feminism provides significance to Indian cultural values than self. In India, there was sexual discipline or other restrictions or control of life other for individual or for usual groups or for the community Even though so many reforms such as, reformations and renaissance, which brought changes in religious, cultural and other fields, there was no strict code of discipline governing healthy relations between men and women Since

physical and material enjoyment of life was the essence of western culture even at Thai time, every man and woman had their own will and pleasure to enjoy life without any social or ethical restriction. Consequently, social stability was sacrificed for individual freedom. Society did not play any part in the life of an individual there and hence the individual freedom was the "be all and end all" of life there. It is not a wonder, therefore, that this trend is being continued even now. Thus the background of Indian culture and tradition and that of the west are entirely different and divergent, beyond reconciliation. While our root is deep in the past, the western culture is only skin deep. While we have a stable standing, they tumble at every slight pretext. Their philosophy of life appears to be -yesterday is dead and gone, tomorrow is not yet born, why fret about it if today is sweet?" and hence the west is searching enjoyment of life everywhere. India with its glorious past cannot afford to it.

Shashi Deshpande clearly shows that individualism is impractical in India where collective unconsciousness pulls her back to the roots in which she is born and brought up. It even hinders her from falling on a wrong track and induces her lead a moral and meaningful life.

Hence, tradition is the best of the past that has been carried forward for the future.

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COMMODIFICATION OF WOMAN: A STUDY OF INDIAN MEDIA AND ADVERTISEMENTS IN ENGLISH

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Media has become one of the many arenas in which gender discriminations are set forth. Women writers and social critics claim that the world, language, media and all social attributes that are left to them are man-made. Men, as the dominating gender have produced domains like art, folklore, history, religion and politics, and women have all along played a vital part in validating this. Society reinforces the belief that men are the universal, the central and the important category and women are the dependents created to serve man. The language structure that has been devised and legitimized by the male grammarians only assigns ambiguity, uncertainty and anonymity for females. Even in the field of media and communication, the words – *he* and *man* – make males linguistically visible and females linguistically invisible.

Gender identity includes psychosexual development, learning social roles and shaping sexual preferences. Socialization begins with gender identity. The language, created by men deprives women of their identity and provides them with a depreciated gender identity. The classic exposition of alterity – of the Self and the Other explains how man is assumed as the Self, and the Other explains how man is assumed as the Self and woman, the Other. Women have to construct a domain of their own and self-expression in the form of writing or acting in the media is one of the most powerful weapons with which women can challenge patriarchy and explode its clutches effectively. Writers like Showalter make a study of the rise of women writers through the language, as the form of creative expression written by them.

In media also, advertisements serve as social products that determine the boundary for all human cognition. In women writers and actors, self expression in the form of language and advertisements, plays an important role in transmitting the self-realization that they acquire and language serves as a vehicle for the manifestation of their consciousness. This expression succeeds in rediscovering and reviving the female benumbed sensitivity. It is the product of the social construction of gender. Though women are considered to be inferior in terms of their biological weaknesses, which are termed as 'biological essentialism', they proceed to establish their identity in every great venture undertaken by them. Simone de Beauvoir, the feminist exponent asserts in her book, *The Second Sex*, "... humanity is male and man defines woman not in herself, but in relation to himself; she is not considered an autonomous being" (5). She declares the following in terms of the self and the other, "He is the Subject, he is the Absolute. She is the Other" (6).

Advertisements are one among the most influential factors of our society. They surpass their objective of selling the product and merge into the psyche of the viewers, perceivers and audience. Advertising plays a pivotal role in changes that take place in the society and pictures woman as a victim of manipulation made by the world of advertising. The patriarchal society finds expression in the field of advertisements also. Though advertisements are created only with the objective of selling the product, they generate an effect on the consumers. Socialization begins with gender identity, which is influenced by the media advertisements. The common commercials created by men deprive women of their identity

and provide them with a depreciated gender identity. The advertising industry is so powerful that it can mould men and women on how they think and feel, on even their relations with one another, on what women should look like and even their sexual attitudes. Advertising take up a unique space between the domains of culture, consumer world, economy, price and production.

In India, an average Indian is exposed to about 100 advertisements per day and an Indian spends about 1.5 years of his life time watching television commercials. In America, over one million dollars is spent every hour on cosmetics and over two million American women have silicone breast implants. Contemporary advertisements covertly cultivate the man-made trend of beauty in the minds of women, so as to cater to the expectations of man. Man, as the dominating gender, has created a patriarchal position in the advertising field too and, both the man and the woman have all along validated this.

Commodity is something that is recognized to be in demand – a product that is desired, often a mass produced object that can be purchased. Even the female body is treated as a commodity, as a material entity (a good or a product or a service). Contemporary advertising teaches us to consume not the product, but its sign – what it stands for. Hence woman serves to be a sign, a metaphor of abuse. Woman is treated as a commodity, an object, which will lure many more objects to buy the product, the advertiser produces. In order to trace the commodification of women, it is necessary to explore how women are portrayed in advertisements.

Historically women featured in advertisements have been depicted stereotypically as belonging mostly to the domesticity of home, being incapable of taking important decisions, dependent on men, and regarded or displayed as sex objects. In spite of the entry of women into work force and gaining increased economical and political power and scope, recent studies conclude that stereotypical portrayals of women in advertising continue to portray them as commodities. Roland Barthes' *The Rhetoric of the Image* first published in 1964 and Judith Williamson's *Decoding Advertisements* (1978)

pointed out how a consumer culture is created as a result of mass media advertisements based on principles such as stereotyping, fraudulent social status, and by creating a consumer Paradise.

Indian advertisements from the print and the electronic media focus on women and it is possible to decipher hidden messages about women. The status of women as revealed by the media is analyzed through advertisements for products that project women in them. For instance, the advertisements for products such as soft drinks, snacks, automobiles, health drinks, cosmetics and accessories, home appliances etc reveal the changeable nature of consumers, who are ready to spend their fortune over frivolous things of little utility. The effects of these fads on men and women audience at large, report that there is a momentous cultural change devised from the effects of advertisements.

A few of the findings already understood in totem from the present day advertisements show that watching advertisements often encourages women to let their looks and appearance problematize their lives. Undue and exaggerated importance is given to attire, appearance and glamour, rather than talent or good nature. Women judge themselves according to internalized standards of what is pleasing to men. Women are shown to be deceived easily by the peripheral and frail aspects of grandeur, glamour and affluence displayed in the world of advertising. Young girls and girl children are also misguided when they find women being seriously shown as 'sex objects' and men as 'success heroes'. Germaine Greer in *The Female Eunuch* says that a woman "is a doll; she is an idol formed of the concatenation of lines and masses, signifying the lineaments of satisfied impotence" (56).

Female beauty is not associated with strength and courage. But it is shown that an "ideal woman" is always thin, tall, young, fair, sexy and flawless. A false female image is promulgated. A woman's entire value is portrayed to depend solely on her appearance. Advertisements use women in the media clips as a way to make other women insecure. They manipulate the decision-making skills and sense of judgment of women

consumers. These socio-cultural changes that are observed are not positive indicators of growth in women.

A critical study of the following chosen advertisements proves how they influence the public viewers and readers, especially those at a vulnerable, young age. The findings from each of the selected advertisements will prove the toxic cultural environment around women. This can bring an awareness of the challenges in front of them, through their image revealed in the mass media and it requires enlightening women students on how to decode the connotations conveyed through the commercials.

This paper attempts to explore how advertising works as a representational system.

It makes a thematic study of the select Indian advertisements taken from the print media and scrutinizes the working of the visual advertisements that influence the cognitive processes and attitudinal variables of the society. This will enable the consumers to distinguish between the 'real' world and the 'ad' world. This analysis will also magnify the tactics of the advertising world. By making a study of the chosen commercials, this article seeks to trace the exploitation of women through the portrayal of various images or parts of a woman's body.

Women feature in advertisements that are shot to improve the sales of men's products, even when these products are not meant to be consumed by women. To cite a few of those products: Alcohol or Liquor, suiting and innerwear for men, cigarettes, condoms and contraceptives for men – all these have women as casts in their advertisements. Though these products are not directed to women customers, the advertisements include attractive women, portraying that men using such products can lure women. Women viewers should be able to decode such devices employed by men to subordinate and commodify women. The following print advertisements given below testify the exploitation of women.

The given three advertisements are meant for an insurance company, a jewellery and for a car. They give access to show how advertisements use women as a means to sell their products, even

when women are not the only direct consumers of those products. Undue focus is given to the body of a woman. Vocabulary issues, narrative techniques, imagery and stylistic features also prove that these print advertisements explicitly reveal the hidden oppression of women behind the screen.

As Virginia Woolf points out "killing the Angel in the House was part of the occupation of a woman" (5). Apart from finding out "a room of their own", women have to create a space of their own, so that they do not "experience their gender as a painful obstacle, or even a debilitating inadequacy" (Gubar and Gilbert 444). The social issues in the advertisements selected for study are momentous issues applicable for the contemporary society. They prove how the principles of globalization and westernization have dominated all the processes in India, including the domain of advertising. The sole purpose of advertising is to entice and persuade the individuals to buy products. But it performs more than that. Also, media should also share the social conflicts and solutions revealed in the advertisements to facilitate young girls to perceive and to realize the exploitation done by advertisements in the newspapers and also in television channels, web resources and in the electronic media. The socio-economic status of the learners should not stand as a hindrance to their knowledge acquisition and awareness about the consumer world and media pervasion.

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REVOLUTION OF NEW WOMAN IN MANJU KAPUR'S NOVEL *HOME*

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Manju kapur's Novel *Home* relates the story of woman in the joint family where they sacrifice things for the sake of the family members. Women of different families enter the joint family as a new bride with lots of hopes and dreams. The story revolves around the female protagonist Nisha who strives hard to gain an identity of her own in the society as well as the family. The novel deals with the themes like Longing for love, respect and the superstitious belief of the woman in the traditional family and the suppression of woman. Here the writer deals with the life of an independent woman Nisha, who wants to prove herself in the society without the support of her family. At the end, there is a complete change in the life of Nisha, as she presents herself as an entrepreneur in the society.

This paper focuses on the life of Nisha, a new woman who protests against all the suppressions and the obstacles from her own family and society. The female protagonist Nisha believes in her power of self and ignores all the woman in the family who suppress her in all ways. According to Merriam Webster Dictionary "New Woman" is defined as a woman especially of the late 19th century actively resisting traditional controls and seeking to fill a complete role in the world.

Manju Kapur's third novel *Home*, creates an impact on the society. The theme of the novel is different from her earlier novels. It is the story of three generations and clashes in the relations because of the generation gap. It closely relates the issues of a woman in a joint family where tradition and customs are strictly followed. The story starts with a conversation of two sisters Sona and Rupa who are childless, and they both share their difficulties in their family. Sona is the daughter-in-law of the Banwari Lal's joint family, while Rupa

is married to a government servant who is paid little and they fight with a tenant who is living upstairs and files a case against the tenant.

Sona is frustrated because of her childless condition which creates a problem between her and her mother-in-law. At last Sona is blessed with two kids Nisha and Raju. The story then focuses on Nisha who is happy studying in the college, she feels happy and peaceful after meeting her loved one. She changes her way of dressing and she even cuts down her hair for her lover's request. She does everything he wished for, but at last she is depressed of her love failure. Nisha faces lots of suffering because of her new way of life, her mother Sona scolds her for cutting down her hair which is against the family customs. Sona is always worried of her daughter whose marriage is delayed and also of her poor skin. Later on Nisha becomes an entrepreneur and equally manages both her family and as well her business.

Nisha faced many failures in her life as she was not allowed to get married to her loved one. Many times Nisha was compared to her brother Raju, where she was put in a cage called home, whereas her brother was let free. The comparisons, the superstitious beliefs, Discriminations all the issues brought a change in the life of Nisha. She ignored all these issues and started searching for a chance to prove her in the society and family. Nisha wanted to play as her brothers but the restriction of her mother made her feel isolated. Even the skin tone of her was a big problem for Sona. Nisha feeling frustrated questions her mother regarding the skin tone of her brother who is black. Being a typical traditional woman, Sona compares her son's skin tone to Lord Krishna.

Nisha: "so what? Raju is black".

Sona: "*Raju is the colour of Krishna*".

Nisha: "*I also want to be the color of Krishna. I am going to play cricket in the sun*".

Sona: "*Krishna is God. You will look like the sweeper woman in our house. You want to look like a kali bhanisi?*" (Home 52).

There is discrimination even between kids in the family. The comparison, the restrictions are all not same for both the gender. Boy is allowed to go anywhere and do things as his wish, but it is completely contrast when it comes to a girl child. From the childhood to a woman, A woman is always around the circle of restrictions were they cannot question the higher authority of the family. Nisha was assigned to do things told by her mother, even if she was not willing to accept it. Nisha as a child was forced by her mother to fast for her future husband, this clearly shows the typical character of an traditional woman who blindly follows the values. According to Sona, the marriage life of Nisha was very important than her education. Though Nisha's father Yashpal advices Sona to stop doing these superstitious beliefs, She ignores him. Yashpal advices Sona that education is also important as marriage in a girl's life. Sona being a traditional mother cares only about her daughters's marriage life.

This discrimination is seen throughout the novel. Nisha feels irritated of her mother who keeps controlling her only for the sake of the marriage. Sona criticizes nisha for her higher education and says that being educated brings nothing to the family then problems and misunderstandings between people. Sona says that a woman is respected only when she obeys her elders and do all the household works by herself. Sona doesn't accept the fact that education leads an woman in a successful path. Being an traditional woman, she strongly believes in customs and makes sure her daughter is in the right path. She uses her power of tradition and controls her daughter and makes her do what is good for the family and not for herself.

Sona states that, "*People are suspicious of brides who are very educated. Too many ideas make it difficult to adjust*" (Home 140).

The character of Nisha's father is totally different from sona, he is very hardworking and he

takes care of the family business by the guidance of his father. When sona forces nisha to follow the fast of karva chauth, pream nath shouts at sona for compelling his daughter who is just a kid to follow the fast for her future husband. He really sounds like an modern man who thinks of his daughter's studies and not the marriage. He tries to make sona understand that their daughter is more precious than all these fasts. He supports his daughter in starting a new business after her failure to prove her own identity.

Yashpal being the elder son of the family, he takes up the responsibility of guiding his family after the death of his father Banwari lal. Nisha is the centre focus to her mother and being a manglik girl, her marriage was an big question and an issue for her mother. Nisha being interested in studying, she fights for her higher education but her mother's only wish is to get her daughter married and not to send her to higher studies, which might affect her marriage proposal. Rupa insists her sisiter to send Nisha to continue her studies which might help her in the future. There is lot of different thoughts in minds of two sisters, sona being so traditional that she wants everything to be followed by the traditional way whereas rupa wants a woman to be independent in all way.

"*If anything happens in girl's later life, she is not completely dependent*", (Home 140). She continues in a careful emotional manner: "*It would be shame not to educate her further. Let her do English Honour, not too much work reading story books*", (Home 141).

Nisha's college life was filled with happiness as she met her love Suresh. Nisha becomes a bold girl to wander and roam the university and spends time with her love suresh at coffee houses, which became a routine for her. She even cuts her hair forgetting all the restrictions back home, the dressing style also changes as she changes herself for the wish for her love. The life of nisha was full of changes as, she was converting herself from a traditional girl to a modern girl. She started wearing clothes of her choice instead of her mother's decision. She became a forwarded girl in her appearance as well as her Attitude.

Nisha's love affair with Suresh creates an big problem in the life of Nisha, as she has to face many questions. Nisha was restricted to meet

Suresh, but then she pleaded to meet him. Nisha couldn't accept the words of her brother Raju regarding her love Suresh. She shouts boldly at her brother for accusing him as a crude fucker and not accepting her point of view. She emerges as a modern woman who reflects the modernity in her by protesting for her life. She clearly says that men and women are equal at all ways.

She rebels: "who are you to decide whether I am trustworthy"... (Home 199).

Nisha's love life comes to an end as a failure. She cannot accept things that have been done to her love life. She then decides to study Fashion designing, which may give her an hope in life to have an identity. The decision of Nisha creates an issues with the opinion of the woman in the family. The loneliness kills her as she sits at home all day alone doing nothing. She didn't want to be like her mother's and aunt's who sits at home without any identity.

The longing for identity makes Nisha plead her father that she would work in shops as her brother's. She even quotes girls from other family to work in shops like our brother. Nisha was again suppressed by her own mother, because of her idea of working in a shop. This idea brought controversy among the family members especially woman in the family were against this idea. Sushila was the first person who said that if a woman from our family is allowed to work, it will be a partial if we don't allow our daughter-in-law's.

Yashpal ignored all the suggestions from the woman, and supported her daughter to work in a school instead of working in a shop. Nisha was not happy but then she agreed to work. Meantime Nisha gets an idea to start business of salwar suits. Her thirst for identity makes her bold enough to again ask permission to her father to start a business of her own. She just asks for a chance to prove her strength and asks for a year to prove her ability with her innovative ideas.

"Give me a chance to show you what I can do", (Home 287)

The journey of Nisha's life Starts as an Business woman with Self-assured and confident in her appearance. The New woman in her made her pronounce her violation and conviction.

Nisha's business was accepted by her family and her father arranges a place for her work. Her father lends her some money to start a business, Nisha assures to return the money in a month. The confidence in her make her feel the power Nisha names it as " Nisha Creations".

Her Business was as successful as she thought, She was honest and the quality Nisha selected for her clothes was of great quality. These things made her shop Famous among the people in the market. She was known for her quality and to her credit Nisha earned lots of customers. She even returned half of the money to her father as debt. When she leaves to market for shopping, Nisha's mother is left at the shop for supervising the workers. Nisha was not comfortable with her mother, as she was controlling the workers. She was good in tackling the problems in a easy way without hurting others point of view. She proves her to be the new woman in the society as an Business woman.

Nisha's life was smooth as she planned, but her mother was worried about her marriage life. Nisha's marriage proposals were also been discussed in other side. She was shown a picture of a widower in his early thirties. Nisha again proved her modernity, she told her parents that she don't want anyone interfering in my business even after marriage. She told her mother clearly that she was ready to marry anyone, if you and father is happy. This Shows that Nisha doesn't want to be an object for anyone in any situation.

"If I am going to marry him I should be able to say what I like"(Home 300).

Her meeting with the future husband was smooth, as she clearly told all her suggestions regarding her business rules after her marriage. She proved herself to be new woman, by boldly telling her desire towards her business. She even tells the groom that she needs freedom to run her own business even after marriage without any restrictions. This brought her sense of achievement in life helping her to create her own identity and Power in the home and Society.

Nisha's business became a popular shop in the market which brought her credit for her own creations of hardwork. She felt proud when her brother Raju , appreciated her work of quality and

the response she had from the customers. Yashpal felt proud of her daughter Nisha being an independent woman achieved her goal with her own effort. He was more proud of his daughter than his son. This made Nisha a perfect independent woman who can boldly show what her power is in the society. The life of Nisha was peaceful, but then her marriage was arranged, she was worried about her business. Meanwhile, she made Pooja and her mother to take the in-charge of her shop in her absence.

Nisha a Entrepreneur, achieved her life time goal as an business woman in the society. She had a chance to prove herself to the family that she is equal to her brothers in all way. The change in her brought the right path in her life. She was not dependent on anyone for her work. Nisha with all her effort started a business boldly without any support. This shows the Modern thinking in Nisha, who comes out of the cage as colorful butterfly to prove its Strength.

At the end Nisha delivers a twin baby after months of marriage. Now in the midst of her family in her own home, she was a perfect mother,

daughter-in-law and wife. Nisha was happy that as an individual, she could create a separate space for herself in her home and society. As an educated and spirited new woman, she refused to be at home instead tried to establish her own identity.

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JOURNEY OF THE 'SELF' IN CHITRA BANERJEE DIVAKARUNI'S *OLEANDER GIRL*

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Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's latest novel 'The Oleander Girl' is an amalgamation of love, loss, discovery and the ultimate search of self. It revolves round the theme of quest for the lost self. *Oleander Girl* proves to be a fine example of traditional values as well as identity crisis in a foreign land. It narrates the story of Korobi, a young girl being lovingly brought up by her grandparents after the death of her parents. Her grandfather, the advocate Bimal Prasad Roy, sends her to a boarding school to provide a proper education and a disciplined upbringing. He is the embodiment of the patriarchal principle, always imposing his decisions and choices on his wife, daughter and granddaughter. However, Korobi is deeply attached to her grandfather, and always holds him in high esteem, admiring him for his high principles. That is why she never complained when he arranged for extra tuitions during her vacations as she says: "I want grandfather to be proud of me." Growing up among convent nuns and visiting her grandparents during vacations offers her little scope for socialising. Thus, she remains ignorant of the harsh realities of life. Being brought up by her grandfather very strictly and making her to follow the conventionalized system she is dissuaded from mixing freely with other boys and girls. She was hesitant to pursue her friendship with Rajat whom she met at the birthday party of one of her friend's birthday party. The following line illustrates her conformity to restrictions imposed on her:

"Rajat asked for my phone number. I didn't give it. Grandfather had informed me a long time back that the daughters of the Roy family did not have boyfriends" (18).

It is true that a challenging attitude does not keep her passive also. The burning fire inside her

and the self-will puffs out occasional sparks. This is clearly shown off when she argues with her grandfather about attending Mimi's birthday party. Similarly, she firmly reacts when she comes to know that Grandfather had already finalized the date of her marriage. It surprises her that a vital decision concerning her has been taken without even consulting her:

"I stare at him in shock. He wants us to get married in three months?... I stare at them all, outraged. Do they think they can pick up my life like a ball of dough and roll it into whatever shape they fancy?... As soon as the Mercedes backs out of the driveway, I confront Grandfather, "How could you do this without checking with me!" (22-23)

Soon after her engagement Bimal Roy, who had been taking all decisions – right or wrong passes away. Korobi is shocked, when she comes to know the secret of her parents that her grandfather had kept from her all her life. On learning that her father is still alive in America, she is determined to find him out before her marriage to Rajat Bose. Thus, she decides to travel all alone across the world in search of her unknown father even though being dissuaded by Rajat. She becomes brave, smart and adventurous when she goes to America.

Nina Sankovitch, in her article, *Oleander Girl: Coming of Age*, has said that, **"Korobi starts out young and sure of herself, but it is the confidence of youth and not of experience. Once she commits herself to finding out who her father was, experience comes fast and furious and Korobi is forced to grow up"**.

In America, she is received from the airport by Mithra an employee of Bose family and after stepping in an alien land, she starts observing him

closely. She comes to know that Mitra is a malevolent on her in-laws and from then onwards she takes extra caution. She does not want to reveal the reason for her short visit in USA. She considers him as the first challenge in America.

Korobi meets Desai, the private detective and his nephew Vic, who are going to help her find her father. As her search starts she is disheartened many times. The first horrible experience she encounters is being let alone by Mitra, when a stranger with shaven head and tatoo approached her with hands out stretched. Mitra just stays back without defending her. But Korobi acts like a damsel in danger, she just raises her voice and shouts at him "Go away! Stop harassing me!" she clasps her hands and it works! The man stops advancing. This little victory makes her feel so powerful and now she learns of how to stand on her own, fearless and confident.

Apart from Mitra, there rises many odd factors which acts as an instrument in transforming Korobi into a strong person. The more she faces failures and disappointments the more she becomes brave and strong. Her quest for her father and as well as identity makes her to challenge with certain reality that forces her to know herself better.

The initial step taken to find out her father named Rob Evaston who doesn't turn out to be father. Secondly all the money she had with her gets completely spent. She doesn't have anybody to help her financially.

The short period of time left in search of her father, exhausting all her energy and money in the process and above all the destruction which she experiences at her stay in America makes her sting bitterly – **"Failure has carved a pit in my stomach.; I can't gauge how deep it goes."** (154)

But all this failures and disappointment faced by her is only taken as a step to gain will power. There is a very significant example which shows that Korobi has developed a sense of confidence at the time of need of money she finds a place where human hair is used for scientific instruments. Even though she knows that her conventionalized family will not accept this kind of act, but she still feels that she alone has the ultimate right over her

body. This act makes her more liberated and confident.

The next meet with a person named Rob Marnier assuming him to be her father also turns out to be a disaster. When he suddenly approaches her with a negative notion, she protects herself from the clutches of Mariner, catches him off guard and he is made to accept his defeat. But Mariner is not an ordinary person to accept his defeat easily, he destroys Korobi's chance to meet her next probable father who is a writer.

After a frantic search, she finds her father Mr. Rob Lacey, a History Professor but is shocked to know two hidden secrets that her father is Black American and she is an illegitimate child of a mixed-race parentage. She knows very well that this if this reality is known to her in-laws, there will be no wedding in India. As the world around her changes by revealing her true identity, a sense of 'self' begins to grow in her. She does not feel bad or guilty of her being born out of wedlock but rather rehearses herself of how to reveal the truth to her fiancé. The way she takes this matter, highlights her to be a girl of mettle:

"If he isn't willing to listen when I tell him the truth, if his love can't overcome the mistrust Mitra has ignited in him, if he's unable to accept me as I am, there's no future for us." (271)

She progresses a strong sense of individualism. From an innocent, meek and sensitive girl she changes into a bold, courageous, confident and responsible woman.

After returning to India she first wants to reveal the truth to Rajat, but it had already been spilled by Mitra. She is not welcomed in her in-laws' place and even comes to know that Rajat has no faith in her. So, she firmly breaks off her engagement by returning back her ring with dignity. **"I pull the engagement ring from my finger, set it on the table. Goodbye Rajat. I walk, one precise foot after another, to the door. When I reach it, I say, without turning, Call Desai. He'll tell you."** (275). Her body language and the boldness in her tone lucidly depicts that she is free from all the constraints.

There after she starts her new life by shedding out the ignorance and developing knowledge. To keep herself busy she even joins the college and

starts leading a matured life. Her search for identity is not vain. From a sensitive and meek woman, she transforms into a bold, strong and independent woman, ready to face any challenges in her life. Her fiancé, Rajat realizes that Korobi has grown stronger and this makes their love even more stronger. They so marry in spite of many ups and downs in their relationship. Unlike other protagonists portrayed by Divakaruni, Korobi is invested with a positive energy, inner strength and intelligence that makes her to gain herself.

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DEMYSTIFYING THE MYTHS: A STUDY ON CHITRA BANERJEE DIVAKARUNI'S *SISTER OF MY HEART*

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In recent years, Fiction has become the most powerful form of literary expression. It has acquired a prestigious position in Indian English literature. Indian English fiction occupies its proper place in the field of literature because the writers have chosen Novel as their easy outlet than the other genres like Drama, Poetry and Prose. Especially, the modern Indian women novelists take the Novel form as a device to express their emotions and create female consciousness. In the long line of women novelists in Indian writing in English, Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni is an award-winning and bestselling author, poet, activist and teacher of writing.

Myths are used to establish a parallel between contemporaneity and antiquity. Myths provide a new attempt to interpret contemporaneity with the same set of symbols to induce hope in a world of decay and decadence. Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni in her novel *Sister of My Heart* has created women characters who succeed in rising above the stereotyped female subjugation and disillusionment to prove to the world that it is spontaneous for a woman to create a dynamic whole dissolving boundaries. Her energy of oneness could be role modelled.

Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's writings have resonance in today's world. She writes about women who are caught between two worlds, the familiar and the exotic. It is true women have been playing stereotype roles both in the myths and in the social environment resulting in positive or problematic attributes. Some cautiously mind their territories and a few dissolve boundaries to reach out to those who are on the other side of the hedge.

Divakaruni has used the myth of widowhood in *Sister of My Heart*. Gouri Ma, Nalini and Pishi are all widows. The patriarchal society deplores women whose husbands are dead. The society never sees whether the woman is young or old. She has to follow the social norms and conditions which are man-made. She is considered as ill-omen. She is not allowed to take part in family functions. The remaining life, she has to lead in wearing "austere white" (16). Sudha describes: "There's Pishi our widow aunt, who threw herself heart-first into her younger brother's household when she lost her husband at the age of eighteen. Dressed in austere white, her graying hair, cut close to her scalp in the orthodox style . . ." (16)

It is true that Divakaruni portrays the tradition of widowhood. At the same time, she has also questioned the social taboos. Therefore, the writer creates a contrasting character, Nalini of whom Sudha says: "Her skin is still golden, for though she's a widow my mother is careful to apply turmeric paste to her face each day" (17). In Hindu mythology turmeric is considered to be the symbol of marital happiness and a representation of women who are blessed with their husbands. But Nalini uses this as a mere beauty tool. Hafiza Nilofar Khan comments on this novel: "And in spite of the mild allegorical overtones concerning the inscrutability of the human heart, this modern *bildungsroman* is in fact a scathing critique of the patriarchal and religious institutions of Bengali Brahmins and the sociocultural traditions of Post-colonial India" (103).

Through the women characters in the novel, Divakaruni brings out the impact of British Colonialism on the Bengali psyche. Women are denied their freedom, humanity and right to life.

Through Nalini, Divakaruni criticises the superstitious and planet gazing beliefs. Sudha and Anju go to the English-medium convents, and Anju looks forward to join at Lady Barbourne College's English Honours program.

Since the writer presents images of the East and the West, the readers conclude that one has to always take into account the best features of both the cultures. The nostalgia of the colonial rule is again exposed by the mothers in choosing the bridegrooms for their daughters. They select one from Zamindar family like them, and the other one from the family who had received a title fifty years ago from the British.

According to Meenakshi Mukherjee, there are two distinct ways in using myth in novels, digressional techniques and structural parallels. In structural parallels, the mythical situation underlies the whole or part of a novel. In the digressional method of story-telling, we have the stories "within a story or pausing to narrate a parable to drive home a point" (138). Divakaruni's gift as a story teller and as a myth-maker are once again seen in the way in which she 'mythologises' contemporary events and legends to achieve a peculiar native colour and resonance.

For instance, Pishi's brother Bijoy asks her "to keep a lamp lit in front of the gods in a Puja room" (51) before going to the ruby hunting adventure. Pishi, who is a strong believer of Gods, says "I kept that lamp lit every day, I prayed each morning and night to Ganesh, remover of obstacles, and Kali, Protectors against evil." (51). The Hindu mythology is used by Divakaruni for comparison and reference. When Sudha who is the believer of demons, Gods and magic, yearns to meet her lover Ashok, Anju compares it with the myths of great lovers about whom Pishi told them. Anju wonders: "Sudha's already at the open window, her hands extended and Ashok hurries over to take them. . . . Shakuntala and Dushmanta, Nala and Damayanti, Radha and Krishna, how they would appear to each other in dreams and share their deepest secrets" (96).

The myth of "BidhataPurush" occupies an elevated position throughout the novel. Pishi, the childless widow makes Sudha believe that the BidhataPurush is the one who predestines all the

events in the life of humans. So she cannot do anything against it except accepting what is written on their head. Pishi says that the BidhataPurush has blessed her, the experience of mother through Anju and Sudha. Divakaruni gives prominence to mythological metaphors to point out the liveliness of encounters faced by her characters. Sudha voices the glorious stories of Rani of Jhansi to take out Anju from her depression after her miscarriage.

The first book in the novel *Sister of My Heart* is titled "The Princess in the Palace of Snakes". Pishi tells them the stories like "Princess in the Palace of Snakes", the tale of Bidhata Purush and many stories from Hindu mythology. Both Sudha and Anju are much influenced by the tales told by Pishi. They even act out the tale. Sudha always takes up the character of princess and Anju, the prince whose duty is to rescue the princess. In this part, the protagonists listen to the traditions and make themselves submissive for the man-made rules. They wait for the prince to rescue them.

But in the second book which is titled "The Queen of Swords", Divakaruni creates a new myth which is the opposite of the conventional myth. That is, in the absence of the prince, the princess should know how to protect themselves. The princesses or women should be self-dependent. Pishi tells the traditional tales, but Sudha creates a new one to the old. Anju says about the storytelling skill of Sudha as, "She can take the old tales and make them new by putting us in them" (30). Sudha can be paralleled with Divakaruni. Sudha's fascination for stories is compared to the author herself. When Anju becomes traumatic due to the miscarriage, Sudha tells her a tale about the Queen of swords over phone and through the tale Anju recovers. When Sudha pauses in her story about the queen who wants to protect her baby but nobody to help her; Anju slowly continues the tale:

Then very softly, I hear Anju's voice. But suddenly the queen heard someone say, Don't worry, dear one. Reach for my hand. And looking up she saw a rainbow that extended all the way from the other side of the earth to her. You see, in all this turmoil, the queen had forgotten that she

had a twin sister who lived in the land across the ocean. (310)

Stories often have symbolic and psychological significance. The inner story is used to reveal the truth in the outer story. Stories make humans to relate them to one of their existing experiences. Through her writing Divakaruni remembers her own childhood. She cherishes her memories and cherishes the relationship among her characters

through cultural myths, sight, sounds, smells and textures.

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