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FROM EDITORS' DESK....

The genesis of subaltern emerged as a critical concept. The concept of subaltern studies prominence is derived from Marxism and Post-structuralism. One of the most recent sub divisions of post-colonial theory is the subaltern studies. It is also interdisciplinary subject. The Italian thinker Antonio Gramsci used the term 'Subaltern' and emphasized the significance of the word in terms of class, gender, caste, marginalization, race and culture of the society. The subaltern refers to any specific marginalized situation in any given cultural or social context. The advent of literary and cultural theories in the literary field has brought major changes in the way of rereading, reinterpreting and better understanding literature and culture. Subaltern consciousness is one of the characteristics of subalternity. The innovative, exciting, and intellectual discussion by the scholars of all domains will induce a high order to instigate and instil the aspirants and the experts of multifaceted disciplines to a considerable empowerment of the peak to achieve the best out of this Book which is of course literally one of the aims targeted too.

The editorial team appreciates all the contributors for their research novelty and innovative outcomes. We also appreciate all the readers who invest their time to cherish these ideas into practical steps. Language is to express and literature is to follow and live. We sincerely thank the publishers and the team who put their effort to bring out this edited volume.

At this Moment we make our Sincere thanks to Management and all faculty fraternity of English Department for this Successful Academic event backed by their wholehearted contributions and supports, which exhorted us at large that are really appreciably commendable.

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MARGARET ATWOOD'S *SURFACING* AS THE STORY ABOUT THE SUPPRESSED CONDITION OF WOMEN AND NATURE

K.S.Subajishakthi

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Abstract

Surfacing is the second published novel by Margaret Atwood. It was first published by McClelland and Stewart in 1972. It has been called a companion novel to Atwood's collection of poems, *Power Politics*, which was written the previous year and deals with complementary issues. The novel, grappling with notions of national and gendered identity. Atwood's second novel develops many of the thematic concerns of her poetry in evocative prose. *Surfacing* presents a woman disabled by the consequences of her "marital" experience, but the protagonist's journey from psychic and emotional paralysis to unified agency has a powerful mythic dimension that the earlier novel lacks. It is an experience that has left her anaesthetized, cut off from her emotions by a form of mind/body split, and her memories are so painful that she represses them in willful amnesia. The quest in search of her father, however, triggers a quest of self-discovery, as the narrator's history refuses to remain submerged; she is haunted by memories of her parents, a marriage that never was, and her complicity in the abortion of her child. Eventually, she is forced to confront here specters when a dive below the lake surface becomes a symbolic dive into her own unconscious. She ritualistically sheds all vestiges of a language and culture that has led her into self-betrayal and murder. Alone on the island, she undergoes a shamanistic cleansing madness, ultimately surfacing with a new-found sense of self. The novel's conclusion resonates with Atwood's contemporaneous thematic guide to Canadian literature, *Survival*. Poised to return to the world that she has left, the narrator's vision leaves her with a resolution that speaks to her experience as both a Canadian and as a woman: "This above all, to refuse to be a victim."

Keywords: *Physic paralysis, repression, self-discovery, visibility, gendered identity.*

Introduction

As a novel about human's relation with nature, *Surfacing* shows Atwood's unique insight into the suppressed condition of both women and nature. Even though it is published in the early 70's, it demonstrates her particular concern about the crisis of human intrusion in the wilderness and evokes the attention to the disequilibrium in the novel. According to Nathalie Cook's observation in *Margaret Atwood: A Biography*, Atwood shows her concern of the topic about nature in her early works: Atwood's earliest work reflects a number of concerns that have remained central to her oeuvre : a profound respect for the natural world, a commitment to Canadian culture, and a firm belief in the rights of the individual. In her work, such concerns can be traced in the themes of nature's triumph over civilization, Canadian nationalism, and feminism. In *Surfacing*, Atwood embraces many of the dichotomies that have long been

standards in Western thought. She connects women with nature and men with culture, which each in opposition to the other. Although these binary categories bring the nameless narrator numerous pains, she relieves herself from the burdens of dichotomy and returns to the city with hop at the end of the novel.

The anonymous narrator in *Surfacing* grows up in a remote island in northern Quebec. She goes back to her birthplace in search of her missing father. When she puts herself in the isolated nature, the narrator finds that she is captivated and summoned by the mysterious power of nature like many of the female characters in the fairy tales. She has a special sense as she dwells in the natural environment. She gets the experience in her lifetime to come into contact with and learn about nature. Unlike her unfeeling companions, she believes and senses nature with ease. As she stays in the rural environment, she feels a kind of safety. "How

have I been able to live so long in the city, it isn't safe," the narrator says, "I always [feel] safe here, even at night". (70) In comparison with the stifling city, the narrator lives and breathes at ease on the island. For the narrator, living in the city is as if bearing numerous kind of burdens. Everything in the city for her is a difficult task. Getting alone with so many people makes her uneasy. She cannot fit herself into the surrounding at all. Every time she recalls the nights she spent in the city, she suffers the tension of emotion. In the night I had wanted rescue, if my body could be made to sense respond, move strongly enough, some of the red light-bulb neurons, incandescent molecules might seep into my head through the closed throat, neck membrane. Pleasure and pain are side by side they said but most of the brain is neutral; nerveless, like fat. I rehearsed emotions, naming them : Joy, please, guilt, release, love and hate, react, relate; what to feel was like what to wear, you watched the others and memorized it.(112)

She is unaccustomed to the pressure of modern life. She cannot get used to the life in the civilization. Therefore, she confronts so many difficulties during the period she spends in the city. It's such a hard time in her life. The inside of my arms were stippled with tiny wounds, like an addict's. they slipped the needle into the vein and I was falling down, it was like diving, sinking from one layer of darkness to a deeper, deepest; when I rose up through the anaesthetic, pale green and then daylight, I would remember nothing.(112) The narrator's unaccommodated situation in civilization is displayed in her narration as well. Shoes for her "are a barrier between touch and the earth". David and Anna's car is nothing but "a lumbering monster." The "Americans" are intruders. As Hilde Steals notices in "Surfacing: Retracing the Paths of (Self-) Mutilation," the narrator disdains everything symbolizing civilization and never wants to change herself. These foreign signs signal the deterioration of the "original"

landscape, caused by the intervention of other human beings, an interference that she associates with violation. The environment that underwent a process as a result of changed context "betrays" her expectations. Therefore, when the narrator comes back to her birthplace, goes fishing with her friends, and eats artificial food on the natural land, she even has a sense of complicity. A sense of crime rises gradually in her mind because she is aware of her taking part in doing something bad to nature. After perceiving her own complicity, she then turns to despise what the "Americans" do to the natural island and even compares them with dogs. They should preserve the beauty of the environment rather than destroy it.

The "Americans" unscrupulously do things bad to nature in order to demonstrate their power. They repeatedly ravage and rob the landscape with their own will and disregard the reciprocal relationship between humans and the land. Human beings exist in the natural world. They should give thanks and preserve it with all efforts. Without the support of natural system, it's impossible for humans to sustain themselves well. Whether it died willingly, consented, whether Christ died willingly, anything that suffers and dies instead of us is Christ; if they didn't kill birds and fish they would have killed us. The animals die that way we may live, they are substitute people, hunters in the tall killing the deer, that is Christ also. And we eat them out of cans or otherwise; we are eaters of death, dead Christ-flesh resurrecting inside us, granting us life. Canned spam, canned Jesus, even the plants must be Christ. But we refuse to worship. (141) It's ironic that human beings worship Jesus Christ for his sacrificing life for them but denigrate animals' sacrificing their lives to provide them food. Birds and fish in the novel are victims that convey the embarrassing condition. The way of human's exploitation of nature is connected to the oppression of women through the narrator since she is a woman who suffers

painfully from the domination of men and civilization and has a special bond to nature. Both nature and women contribute to human society but are repressed under men's commanding power.

Women have no names in the rural town. Everyone is called "Madame." They are only objects that belong to men in the male-dominated society. They exist to satisfy the physical, domestic and sexual needs of their spouse or male companion. Names for them are not important at all because individuals are not significant. The narrator's abortion of her child is then portrayed as brutal as a butcher's slaughter of livestock in the novel although the narrator deliberately describes it as if she goes through a delivery: After the first I didn't ever want to have another child, it was too much to tie your hands down and they don't let you see, they don't want you to understand, they want you to believe it's their power, not yours. They stick needles into you so you won't hear anything, you might as well be a dead pig, your leg are up in a metal frame, they bend over you, technicians, mechanics, butchers, students clumsy or snickering practicing on your body, they take the baby out with a fork like a pickle out of a pickle jar. After that they fill your veins up with red plastic, I saw it running down through the tube. I won't let them do that to me again. (79)

The narrator is cut into two after the cruel and forced abortion. "I [am] emptied, amputated;" the narrator says, "I [stink] of salt and antiseptic, they [have] planted death in me like a seed". (145) This compelled even hurts her physically and mentally since how she feels is never the concern. Women are so humble that they can do nothing they really want to. The narrator's best female friend Anna provides the best example to present society that women are labelled subordinate to men. Within her marriage with David for nine years, she is submissive all the time. She does her best to please him from stem to stem. She is never in control of her life; instead, it's

David in control of her life. David symbolizes the authority of patriarchy that exploits women in all respects. "What's humiliating about your body, darling?" David said caressingly. "We all love it, you ashamed of it? That's pretty stingy of you, you should share the wealth; not that you don't." (136) By pressing a button, David easily captures Anna's naked images. It's a torture to Anna but a joy to David. Shooting films is an act of taking possession. David takes Anna as his personal property for consumption that he can film her as long as he can and he wants. For David, Anna becomes nothing but a pornographic object displaying in front of his eyes. The marriage between Anna and David is not admirable relationship; on the contrary, it gives the narrator a lesson to scrutinize her own carefully.

Contesting the myths of romantic love as the attraction of opposites or the balance of complements, Surfacing draws attention to the oppression of women in a male-defined order of hierarchical and oppositional roles that empower men at the expense of women. The narrator gradually realizes the imbalance of Anna's marriage and she decides to fight back. She wants to do something for Anna, but at this point, she is still afraid and feels that "the only defense was flight, invisibility": I wanted to run down to the dock and stop them, fighting was wrong, we aren't allow to, if we did both sides got punished as in a real war. So we battled in secret, undeclared, and after a while I no longer fought back because I never won. The only defense was flight, invisibility. I sat down in the top step. If the only two kinds of people are killers and victims, then although it may be morally preferable to be a victim, it is obviously preferable from the point of view of survival to be a killer. However, either alternative seems pretty hopeless; you can define yourself as innocent and get killed, or you can define yourself as a killer and kill others. The ideal would be somebody who would neither be a killer nor a victim, who could achieve some

kind of harmony with the world, which is a productive or creative harmony, rather than a destructive relationship towards the world. (16-17) Without doubt, Anna embodies the role of victim, a victim of patriarchy. However, the narrator doesn't. She resists being subordinate.

Images of victimization permeate *Surfacing*. The world of nature that surrounds the narrator and her companions is violated by technology, pollution and human lust. The protagonist, confronted by such evidence of victimization, is convinced that she herself is a victim. As a woman she feels handicapped in a men's world as a commission; Unlike Anna, the narrator asks for equilibrium in her "marriage". Her previous abnormal relationship with her ex-lover in the city leads her to try to break free from the established women's role in the society. Unlike Anna she strongly refuses to be a victim within the system of patriarchy. The narrator cares nothing about reason anymore. Eating roots, destroying her cloths and sleeping in the wilderness, she reverts to the original state of life. When she rejects culture and retreats into the wilderness to become a "natural" woman, she gives up eating processed food. Such food is contaminated in the same way that society is contaminated by patriarchal ideology. Both are unnatural, constructed, man-made, and both threaten to poison her. In this way, the narrator relieves completely from all of her burdens. She accepts nature's healing power.

Conclusion

The narrator puts herself in the entire natural world. She immerses herself in the lake and gets a redemptive power and then finally gets a totally new perspective toward life. The death of the narrator's father is a reunion to the earth, to nature. The narrator determines to accept the restrictions in the city and the obstruction of civilization. However, this time, she is different. She is

ready to try to fit herself into the world. She does know that as a human being, coming back to the city is inevitable. Eating food in the cabin, as Emma Parker illustrates in "You Are What You Eat," is the narrator's first step to compromise with the world.

There is no superiors or inferiors in the relationship. There is only a mutual corporation for the only universe. That is what Atwood wants to talk about in the book when she mentions it in her *Conversation*. There is an objective world out there; I'm far from being a solipsist. There are a lot of things out there, but toward any object in the world you can take a positive or negative attitude or, let us say, you can turn it into a positive or a negative symbol, and that goes for everything. You can see a tree as the embodiment of natural beauty or you can see it as something menacing that's going to get you, and that depends partly on your realistic position toward it; what you are doing with the tree, admiring it or cutting it down; but it's also a matter of your symbolic orientation toward everything. Now I'm not denying the reality, the existence of evil; some things are very hard to see in a positive light. Evil obviously exists in the world, right? But you have a choice of how you can see yourself in relation to that. And if you define yourself always as a harmless victim, there's nothing you can ever do about it. You can simply suffer. (212). Looking from a different angle, everything will be different. The borders between women and men and nature and civilization are not that hard to cross.

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TRADITION VERSUS MODERN – A STUDY ON MANJU KAPUR'S DIFFICULT DAUGHTERS

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Abstract

Our generation has seen two types of change in the society in which we live. It is the year-old tradition that have made life successful and the modernism that ruins our life in all the dynamics and vicissitudes of life. whatever we find, invent or discover should be passed to the next generation as we cannot take anything with us when our life ends. So it is very important what we pass to the next generation. It is the good things that are passed or bad is a very important thing to be noted because it is going to design the future of planet Earth. Ancient people lived in this planet and they gave the planet in its good condition and our fore fathers too handled the same beautiful earth to the present living generation. The question is, are we successfully protecting the anciently followed, well maintained, worshipped nature as it was in its birth or we deplete the quality of our planet? It is an important question to be taken in to consideration by each and every one of the human beings of Earth. In this paper the difference between Ancient and Modern is discussed in the light of Manju Kapur's Novel Difficult Daughters.

Keywords: Tradition, Modern, Ecological Imbalance, Conflict

People lived in the time from the beginning of the planet has never depleted nor damaged it unless some natural disasters like, draught, famine, fires, volcanic eruptions, earth quakes, tremors and the much like natural disasters affected the structure and the quality of the land. But the present century has seen much growth in the field of education, technology, inventions, discoveries and in science. A vast tremendous growth has been recorded since the 20th Century. People started to explore, discover and invent things as they have been blessed by divine wisdom. This was not the scenario before a couple of centuries back. Ancient people fought, learned, had all types of wisdom without the present modernity. They used battle weapons, they were treated for medicines, had sports of all kinds etc. they lived happily for many years mostly up to 120 and above. They knew why we are here in this planet. But the present generation with all its modernity is feared for the way it goes forward. People are after technology and fashion and are caught by unknown new diseases, while people of the past worked hard and have never seen belly fats etc., unless some disastrous disease washed them away.

They cultivated their fields without using artificial chemicals and their food was good but now it is full of poison. Are we going in the right path? Manju kapur's novel has in it the difference between the tradition and modern. It has neatly contrasted the two milestones and the reason for the change and the impact it would cause on our planet Earth.

The novel speaks about all the minute aspects of life from the birth to the grave. Virmati is the central character of the novel but when the novel opens we see the daughter of Virmati cremates her mother and goes to the village in which her mother lived to collect various memories of her as though of becoming nostalgic. Ida is a modern girl but not Virmati. Virmati is a girl who has seen both tradition and modern. It is through Ida and Virmati Manju Kapur compares and contrast the difference that makes the title. Many instances are there in the novel and some are briefed here for a good understanding.

Tradition is good always when followed, but modernity is always dangerous. We see Ida in a train enjoying the nature outside the train. People flocking in the river, green

fields, farmers cultivating the land and poor people enjoying each and every moment they have with their meagre amount of money. In the train the poor people offers Ida their eatables though they have not seen Ida before or will they see her again. In Virmati's house the entire thing is different. The air is pure and life giving. The water is fresh and chill. The place is like heaven to Ida who was always in a rush city life. She is taken to the house by a rickshaw where she sees all types of flowering and fruitful trees that makes her mind happy. When her blood relatives saw her they took her inside on a wave of accusations and explanations. Ida started to probe her mother and her village. The school fee is very much low and money was not a much important thing to them. Ida was given a cup of milk that had a thick layer of malai, yellow not white, like nowadays.

"I am without husband, child or Parents. I can see the ancient wheels of my divorce still grinding and clanking in their heads. The milk had thick layer of malai, yellow, not white like nowadays. And when the food was cooked, ah! The fragrance of the ghee." (4)

Ida had grown up in the mythology of pure ghee, milk, butter etc. but is now seeing them in her senses. People don't sit and talk in the city where Ida lived but she is overwhelmed by the laughter of people sitting together. Not like the modern girls who couldn't give child birth at least once, Kasthuri, Virmati's mother was in her eleventh childbirth. Ida's mother was attuned to the signs of her mother's pregnancies. Kasturi prayed for getting a miscarriage. In mornings the whole family used neem twigs to brush their teeth. During functions people also bring dal, rice, flour, ghee and other spices of good quality and they took necessary water from the pump in the centre of the village. Kasturi, Virmati's mother enjoys the hill station climate to get a relief from her continuous childbirth where at evenings it rains. Few dared to mention Shakuntala's unmarried state, a cousin of Virmati. Divorce

was a great insult to womanhood in the era of Kasturi. The favourite guest welcoming snacks of the day is milk, home-made jalebis, fragrant with saffron, crisp, hot and sweet.

In the novel a pleasant aspect of the old tradition and life style is portrayed. But everything is different in the place where Ida lived. Ancient people lived a very happy life filled all kind of natural luxury. They played in the lap of nature having nature as their mother. But the modern world is moving towards a dead end with all its developments. Today's world is filled with technologies and high improvement in all fields. By moving towards modern we are killing ourselves and depleting the quality of our planet. We are killing nature and the lives of future generation. Today the foods we take from morning to evening are like slow poison. The milk we drink is from hybrid cows grown by powerful and harmful injections. In order to get more quantity of milk many artificial methods and dangerous medicines are used in the growth of cows and in turn the milk we get contains all the negative side effects of the medicines. In the novel we see a term called 'malai' that is a thick layer of yellow colour spread on the top of milk after it is cooked which is said as original milk without any kind of adulteration. But the milk we drink nowadays are rarely original and this milk with added chemicals and medicines like steroids are the cause of extra fat and early puberty in girls. In the past it is difficult to see a girl to attend her puberty at an early age like 14 or below. But nowadays we could hear news of girls attaining very early puberty. It is because of the food habits that we follow. In the past people ate country chicken and lived a healthy long life. But it was slowly changed in to broiler chickens that are grown in a time of 2 months in a closed and contaminated area. More over broiler chickens are injected regularly with steroids that is highly harmful to humans. In the past there were rice of good natural breeds but now the rice is smoothed and the vitamins are

washed away and we eat rice that are fertilized with chemicals and disease killing pesticides. Moreover, the land is littered with plastic and other harmful things. Radiations from electronic devices and cell phone towers change the climatic conditions and make this uncongenial for small living birds and other organism. Because of Hydro carbon and Methane extraction Programmes the modern people are destroying the planet earth. Pollution is a powerful opponent the world is going to face. In the past there were place for emotions, sentiments, love, care but this society now has changed in to poverty with struggle for survival with mental unrest, stress etc. in the past people lived by eating homemade snacks that where made of naturally harvested flours and vegetables. But now we have found different flours added with chemicals and starting from a year-old child to the old eat this constantly. Death meant great lamentation to the people of the past but now it is happening as if no one has time to help others and wait for other's welfare. Adulteration is an another harmful thing that the tradition didn't had. They used neem twigs and their teeth were healthy. They used charcoal added it with salt and pepper which made them avoid dentals. But modernity has given us many doctors and they need patients for their survival. And they introduce chemical based tooth paste. Advertisements advertise various products and make frequent of them. They each time bring us each type of tooth paste like, one having salt, other one having neem and the other having pepper and so on. This makes them earn a lot of money but gradually people's health is completely changed. The modern world is longing for luxury and wealth while people of the past lived a simple and austere life and they lived a happy life. They had no divorce and certain traditional values in their married life. Modernism has multiple divorces, several marriages and the result is un happy life to the parents and to their children. The modern parents set a bad

example for their children in turn make their children's life miserable. Before democracy and independence people lived a clear life without depriving nature but modernism is going to end the world soon. People of the past were able to give double digit child birth normally but modern people couldn't bear a single child birth and caesarean has become a term for earning money. Drinking water is contaminated and not good. Many reasons contribute to the modern fashionable world. Because of radiations from cell phones, laptops and other electronic things disease like cancer are developed. New diseases unknown to the previous centuries has entered. Destroying forests and trees for the sake of buildings is another impact of modernity.

If modern people or the people of the 21st century didn't take steps to correct that mistakes to bring traditional way of life style the planet earth with all its living beings should be destroyed. Technologies are good, developments are good but all findings inventions are discoveries should be useful for the development of human race and not for destroying it. Life has become tough to live because of the computerised world. Through new technologies people are slowly destroying the planet. In the field of medicine human life is not seen as a valuable thing instead it is considered as money making machines. Money has become an important part. Because of this many people die. Because of fashionable foods people get disease and other complication and die very soon. Heart attacks have been increased in large scale. Diabetes have widespread. All these because of modernisation of human world. Transport was once lifesaving and time saving but now it has become a killing machine by accidents and pollution. Already ozone layer has big holes in it and global warming is becoming a huge issue. We should care about this but it has gone beyond. Because money loving politicians and authorities take care of themselves and not others. They do not care

for the life of other people or for the world's future. They live just for their life only. We have to move back otherwise we cannot save the planet from its harmful effects. Soon because of all our ambitious mistakes our planet is going to be destroyed. We may have a little relief in believing our scientists who are searching for new planets. We may believe that our human race can be shifted somewhere else but it is not sure. Our planet has all the congenial qualities suitable for human existence but we are destroying it. Once we destroy the good qualities we cannot rebuild our planet but certainly loose living. We are not sure whether human race will end or flourish. It is nature's decision. But in our hands is now our planet. We should certainly ensure the freshness and goodness of our planet for our future generations. The sad thing is we are doing the opposite. Unity is very important for any group to be successful. It is not unity between districts, states, or some countries but the unity of each and every country, every people need to change and protect this world. Surely we have change to the traditional life style of our Ancestors. Every technology is good but it is spoiling as in many ways they are deadly. We have to unite and make certain promises like safe guarding natural vegetation, reducing transports, like bikes and cars for individual, extraction of Methane beneath the land surface while methane can be extracted by

various other natural ways. Medicines and other technologies are for man but it is now changing as man for Technologies. Though many organisations are found for this unification for extending the lifespan of our planet they are not working in full-fledged manner. They act biased for various people who use the technologies towards the destruction of the planet. We can live without Mobile Phones, bikes, cars, methane petrol etc. but no one can survive without natural food and without the traditional life of living. This doesn't mean technologies are a waste completely but they should be used wisely.

We should take necessary precautions to save our planet from any kind of human disasters for ourselves and for our future generations.

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SHASHI DESPANDE'S WOMEN

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Abstract

Our Indian society is dominated by men since the ancient civilization to the present day. Women are stated as weaker sex and they are assigned domestic duties. So, they are not treated equally. Female critics also claimed that history not only narrated the stories but also silenced it. The situation has remained the same even today. Women have been suffering silently as they are marginalized with tradition and customs. Patriarchal society designed women as never fit for freedom. Women have been controlled by men and they have changed their attitudes suiting to them. Women as humans are not inferior to men but she is given a secondary status in the society. Feminism has brought awareness on the status of women.

This paper concentrates on Shashi Despande's women in her "The Binding Vine". In her work feminine characters reveal their anxious and ambitious frustrations. The personal tragedy of Urmi made her to focus on the lives of Mira and Kalpana. Kalpana, Shakutai and Urmi learn to choose their own life to be shaped at the end. The solutions were found by facing their problems with courage and without breaking the Indian tradition and culture.

Shashi Despande is a well known female feminist writer, who attained a prominent place in Indian writing in English. Shashi Despande is the second daughter of the famous Kannada dramatist in Karnataka and Sanskrit Shrivanga. She did her graduation in journalism at the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Mumbai. She worked for a couple of months as a Journalist for the magazine "On Looker" and became the winner of the Sahitya Academy Award. Some of her notable works are "The Dark Holds No Terrors", "That Long Silence", "Roots and Shadows", "The Binding Vine" etc

In Shashi Despande's writing, she is concerned about the oppressions, frustrations and longings of the middle class educated women. The realistic women characters made her as a mainstream writer among the contemporary writers. Her novels depict how women are caught between tradition and modern life. Shashi Despande's women characters struggle to find individuality and quest for identity. Though women undergo many difficult situations, solve problems on their own by adjusting themselves to the realities of life, they are responsible to examine their inner self. The life of a woman

has to be lived with great satisfaction in spite of the male dictatorship.

In Shashi Despande's works she explores and fulfills her psychological, emotional and physical needs. In her works feminism is the main theme which deals with gender bias, inequality and not having opportunity to prove women talents etc., Women are considered as low or weak and thus they are neglected. Anxiety makes her to feel as an inferior being, an unwanted child and a burden on the family. It is completely dealt about the inner world of Indian woman. According to Shashi Despande, woman performing the role of a daughter, a wife and a mother has not been lived to the utter satisfaction but a longing of psychological achievement to fulfill life.

The protagonist Urmi in Shashi Despande's novel "THE BINDING VINE" regrets about her gender bias during her childhood and upbringing of the girl child. The female characters haunted by the memories of past and feeling of worthless life; but at the end of the story they realize their mental strength by solving the problems on their own. Shashi Despande's female characters perceive their potentials in a positive way though they are restricted by

many social norms. As Anna Jameson points out "Surely it is dangerous, it is wicked in these days, to follow the old law, to bring up woman to be happy wives and mothers...as it for woman these existed only one destiny, one hope, one blessing, one object, one passion, in existence." [P-10] We know that hundreds and thousands of women are not happy wives and mothers at all.

Indian feminism is different from western feminism. Indian History was filled with Great emancipated women like Gargi, Mitreyi. Tara Bai, Ahalyabai, Razia Begum, Rani Durgaavathi, Jhansi Laxmi Bai, Kasturiba, Sarojini Naidu etc. In India male leaders like Bharathiyar, Periyar, Gandhiji and Raja Ram Mohan Roy struggled for women's freedom and rights. But still women are ill-treated by their family members and are suffering silently. According to Linda Gordon's "In the present context, the rise of women's awakening and of ripening consciousness causes the consequent battle against a tradition formed by the male dominated society. Yet the fact remains that feminism is essentially a movement of social basics and socio-political, in a proliferated dimension, and are primarily directed against the sufferings of a woman at the hands of wicked men." [P-8]

Women are the central part of human civilization, but they are registered as weaker than men. Indian tradition believes that a virtuous wife should be as Savitri or Sita. In Indian novels they are depicted as Boomadevi, a symbol of silent sufferer. At present the important issue of the modern woman is the need of mutual understanding and mental support of her family members. Especially, she wants her husband as the backbone in all her success.

Shashi Despande's "THE BINDING VINE" novel highlights the protagonist Urmila's conscience struggle and her journey from darkness to light which is enlightened through the lives of Mira, Shakutai and Kalpana. In this novel Despande has given

voice to the protagonist, Urmila as a protest. Normally, in her novels the protagonist plays an important role and the other characters are used to highlight the protagonist. But in this novel both the protagonist and the other women characters play significant roles. By this, the writer reflects the different dimensions of women suffering in various levels of society.

The central character Urmila is a college Lecturer. She has married Kishore for love. He is a naval officer and he is away for several months. Urmila expressed her yearning love as "Then he goes away and I'm left with that passion... pain lashed through me and I knew vulnerable I was, I tried after that to control the erotic fantasies in which I wave, in great detail, different patterns of love-making: but I soon realized the only way I could come to terms with my sexuality was recognize it" [P-160]

Urmila feels that marriage is a necessary one and it gives security for women from other men. Kishore, Urmila's husband is a choice of her but he is far from satisfaction. She has been attracted towards Dr. Baskar because of his response to her feelings. When Dr. Baskar asks her whether she loves him, she confesses

"I love my husband and therefore, I am an inviolate." "I was perilously close to responding to Dr. Baskar, to giving him what he wants, so much simpler, to just think of virtue and chastity and being a good wife. I see the point of it now." [P-165]

The long silence of the Indian woman is broken by the protagonist, Urmila. Urmila is a revolutionary female character who comes forward to help other women's sufferings apart from her own. She is a middle class working woman. She recently lost her one year girl child, Anu. She has become sensitive and despaired in her grief. This sensitivity leads her to be a friend with other helpless characters Shakutai and Kalpana. The mutual support and sympathy between Shakutai and Urmila is remarkable in terms of

their grief. The same sensibility made her to realize her long dead mother-in-law Mira's sufferings, who is raped by her husband. Urmila understands Mira's desire to become a good writer but silenced herself due to the contempt of others. Mira says

"Huddled in my cocoon, a somnolent silkworm

Will I emerge a beautiful being?

Or will I, suffocating, cease to exist?
[P-65]

Mira's writing reflects that she was subjected to rape and devoid of love in her married life. She felt "It is not rape of the body alone but, rape of the mind as well." [P-61] Urmila understands that Mira's marriage is a haunted one and she wants to be left alone. "I don't mind his anger, it makes him leave me to myself, it is bliss when he does that..Why can't he leave me alone? [P-67] In her home Mira feels as an alien and she was treated as a mad woman by her inmates. The only thing that makes her to be alive is her writings. Mira too realizes that she too was trapped like her mother.

"Whose face is this I see in the mirror, unsmiling, grave, bedewed with fear? [P-126]

The unfortunate Mira died after she gave birth to a child. She not even sensed the bond between her and the new born baby. Thus Mira forced into a loveless marriage and become a victim to the lust of her husband.

Kalpana was brutally raped. The Doctors confirm that she has been injured physically and mentally. But Shakutai, mother of Kalpana says hysterically that "It is not true, you people are trying to blacken my daughter's name." [P-58] Shakutai shocked by the word report and begged the doctors to mention it as a car accident. "Who'll marry the girl, we are decent people. Doctor" [p-58] She is relieved only after the report has changed. Shakutai has been abandoned by her husband and it makes her extremely anxious to get Kalpana settled. In this novel the female characters Mira, Shakutai and Kalpana are the victims and silent sufferers.

They don't have the courage to face the society. Even Shakutai blames Kalpana for her state of misery. But Urmila decides to fight for the justice and proved herself. Though Urmila has been warned as "It's none of her business" [P-171] she never minded to raise questions against the evils.

As a child Urmila accused her mother leaving with her grandparents. But now Urmila is aware that Indian women are subjected to domination by their husbands. Her mother says

"He didn't say anything to me, he just took me away...I begged him, Urmila, I cried, I promised him. I will never leave you alone, but he couldn't listen. Nothing could make him change his mind. You know your papa...I didn't want that, I wanted you with us, I never got used to the idea of your being in Ranidurg, I wanted you with me.." [P-199]

Urmila is furious to those who are submissive and obedient to their husband. It reflects at different levels whether they are educated or uneducated. It also irritates her. Urmila observes, that the very tradition role of mothers and wives still remain the same without any change. The lives of Shakutai, Kalpana and Mira's sufferings provide an opportunity to grasp the practical world to Urmila. She becomes conscious about the absence of security in marriage haunting them. Urmila understands how the self-confidence of a woman can be shattered by the Indian institution of marriage. At the end of the novel she was fully aware that women are not treated equally in marriage life. Even though Mira lived a generation ago Urmila get aware of her own identity through her diary. Urmila notices the difference between her life and others. Urmila feels that she was lucky and life is the most difficult one as to accept and live with. From the fates of those women she learns that she had enough freedom and blessings in her life. She decides to lead a content life with what she has. Her daughter has gone but she has her son, Karthick. However, Urmila hopes life is

whether a painful or burdened one should never give up. The novel ends with the words of Urmi "We struggle to find something with which we can anchor ourselves to this strange world of love in which we find ourselves." P-210

Urmila concludes that love prevents one from being cruel and binds the relationships of human beings. She strongly believes that women should have the courage to express themselves and question the evils of the society. While her predecessors finally emerge as individuals Urmila is an independent individual from the beginning.

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A VIEW TO FEMINISM IN ALICE WALKER'S *THE COLOR PURPLE*

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Abstract

Feminism is considered as one of the important areas in the world literature. Several long years ago, writers have created the women characters as in the traditional sense that how women should be and not to be. Most often they have given only the inferior roles to the women in the literature, as wives, daughters and mothers. These stereotypical images simply reflect only the traditional images of women both in the family and in the society. The writers are not involved themselves to project the self awareness and self realization of woman characters in the story. Thus this present paper takes this as its focal point to derive how the female author Alice Walker is engaged herself to portray the self realization and self awareness of her protagonist, Celie in her novel The Color Purple. Furthermore, the key steps and methods used by Alice Walker to derive the real awareness of her protagonist in her significant work The Color Purple is also discussed and brought to light.

Introduction

Elaine Showalter in *A Literature of Their Own* (1978) speaks about the contributions of female writers in literary history. As pointed out in *A Handbook of Critical Approaches to Literature*, Showalter identifies four models of differences which are as follows: The *biological model* is the most extreme; if the text somehow mirrors the body, this can reduce women merely to bodies. . . . Showalter's *linguistic model* of difference posits women speaking men's language as a foreign tongue; purging language of "sexism" is not going far enough. . . . Showalter's *psychological model* identifies gender difference as the basis of the psyche, focusing on the relation of gender to the artistic process. It stresses feminine difference as the free play of meaning outside the need for closure. Showalter's most important contribution has been to describe the cultural model that places feminist concerns in social contexts, acknowledging class, racial, national, and historical differences and determinants among women, but offering a collective experience that unites women over time and space a "binding force". (199-200)

Showalter uses the term "*gynocritics*" for feminist criticism which studies women as writers. The other feminist works which represent gynocriticism are Patricia Spack's

The Female Imagination (1975), Ellen Moers's *Literary Women* (1976), Nina Baym's *Woman's Fiction: A Guide to Novels by and about Women in America, 1820-1870* (1978), and Barbara Christian's *Black Women Novelists* (1980). Ellen Moers analyzes the 'feminine' metaphors in the nineteenth century fiction in her works. She finds women writers quite interesting as she reads them as a woman. Patricia Meyer Specks concentrates on sexuality in personal life. She addresses issues like adolescent development, self-perception, and passivity and independence in her discussions. Sandra Gilbert and Susan Guar in *The Madwoman in the Attic: The Women Writer and the Nineteenth-Century Imagination* (1979) focus on the existence of a female aesthetics.

Alice Walker's *The Color Purple* (1982) is the most celebrated novel which won both the Pulitzer Prize and the American Book Award for Fiction, struggles in life for survival. The novel depicts the life of a black girl, Celie who despite poverty, illiteracy, physical and mental exploitation transcends her plight through self-awareness to gain respectable place in the American society. Celie first writes letters to God to help her to survive the spiritual, emotional and physical abuse she suffers at the hands of her step father, Alphonso and later on her husband, Mr.____

The Color Purple depicts in an epistolary manner thirty years of a struggle in the life of Celie, a poor Southern black woman who is victimized physically and emotionally both by her stepfather and her husband, Albert. While in her teens, Celie is repeatedly raped by her stepfather, who sells her two children she bore of him. Celie is eventually placed into a loveless marriage with Albert, a widower who for the next three decades subjects her to beatings and psychological torment. Celie writes letters describing her ordeal to God and to her sister, Nettie, who escapes a similar fate by serving as a missionary in Africa. However, in the company of Albert's mistress Shug Avery, a charismatic singer, she gains self-esteem and the courage to leave her marriage. Shug is even responsible for Celie's reunion with her children sold by her stepfather, Alphonso and with Nettie at the end of the novel. She begins her journey from powerlessness to the state of full empowerment and from self-abnegation to self-recognition. Walker also chronicles the oppressed and miserable lives of the black women Shug and Sofia who valiantly to gain respectable position and place in society. All the women folk in the novel have to suffer at the hands of their men folk. It describes the ill treatment given to the black women by their men. At the same time the novel highlights the awareness among the black women about their self-status and rights.

The Color Purple tells us a story of two women in love with one man. The character of Shug Avery, a dynamic singer whose real name is Lillie but is called Shug, is a transforming force in Celie's life. Walker knows very well that she was writing a story of two women who marry to the same man that completes the love triangle in all its symmetry is Celie and Shug's love for each other. Womanist consciousness is clearly seen in the relationship between the Celie and Shug. Walker's idea of womanism is ingrained in the novels under discussion. For her the term involves, "in bonding of women as a

continuation of the struggle for self-definition and affirmation that is the essence of African American means." She portrays a galaxy of black women who love other women as being "whole" or "round women" and have concern in a culture that oppresses entire black community. Women in these novels--Margaret, Mem, Josie, Meridian, Celie, Nettie--stress the sense of solidarity and sharing, the sense of community, that brings about blossoming in self and society. They demonstrate consciousness of their continuous exploitation and slavery due to color and gender. Like Sula who quests for creating her own self and coming to terms with her identity as a black and female in Toni Morrison's *Sula*, they fight valiantly against their oppressors to quest their identity in sexist and classist society of America. Ruth, Meridian and Nettie believe in change which is essential for the survival and harmony in society. They show indomitable female spirit and vitality that help for their empowerment. As a result they become self-reliant and challenged their men that they can survive without them.

However, reversal of gender roles is seen in the couple Sofia and Harpo, a son of Albert whose face looks like a woman's face. He truly enjoys woman's works like cooking and washing dishes, while Sofia does a field work and traditional man's work. They fight constantly "like two men" getting Harpo the worst of beating. Perhaps Walker shows this kind of irony in order to predict the reversal of roles that is likely to take place in the near future. Some of these oppressive black men undergo a metamorphosis when they realized their follies in the course of time. Grange Copeland repents for what he has done to Margaret and determines to provide most facilities and security to his granddaughter Ruth, the child of the future. He even kills his son Brownfield and prefers to go in jail hoping that she will be free and happy in his absence. Brownfield compounds one of the greatest sins in Walker's fiction that is the refusal or

inability to change. Ironically, his death makes possible the completion of change in the life of Ruth, his daughter. Albert too changes in the end and gives utmost love to all. Albert discovers reflection which makes him a defined person who can accept the responsibility for his mistakes and the suffering he has caused to his wife. His apparent psychological return to roots, though inadequately motivated, is primarily a portent of a healing process. Truman, Meridian's husband in the novel *Meridian*, changes when he realizes his mistake of marrying a white marcher woman Robinowitz looking at her color. Being womanist Meridian wholeheartedly forgives him and allows him to stay with her. As a part of womanist strategy, Walker shows sexual and emotional bonding between black.

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BAMA'S SANGATI: A TALE OF DALIT SUPPRESSION, EXPLOITATION AND EMANCIPATION

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Abstract

The paper deals with the portrayal of suppression and exploitation and emancipation of Dalit women and how they tried to achieve a break though. The novel focuses the most vulnerable component of the social reality- the Dalit woman, bereft of freedom of choice and men take possession of their body and mind as a matter of right. In the novel there are multiple levels of marginalization that the woman puts up with- the untouchability factor that segregates her as a Dalit; the segregation as Dalit woman; the segregation as an uneducated person. Sangati makes a strong case for women's education as a necessary condition for empowerment that would truly liberate the Dalit woman from the bondage she silently suffers. Thus Sangati advances to emancipation of the individual from the zone of disillusionment through personal conviction to social respectability. The novel also examines the wounds caused by discord in marital relations. Dalit women are subjected to untold physical and mental harassment in their own homes. Bama intervenes in this inconvenient relationship and arbitrates on what can liberate the Dalit woman from the clutches of the male whose acts of violence do not appeal to abate. Bama suggests the idea of 'divorce' as a multidimensional form of release for the harassed woman: physical, legal, moral and social separation that is the result of the woman's own choosing. This idea seems to be the first voice of feminist rebellion. In the process, Bama reflects on the possibilities that lie before the Dalit woman for a new life.

Keywords: Tamil literature, Dalit, patriarchy, subjugation, emancipation and survival.

Introduction

Dalit literature has begun to bring about a change; to enable non-Dalits to deconstruct a traditional mindset which made them perceive Dalits as lower than themselves; instead to see Dalits as equals rather than pitiful victims; 'to awaken the Dalit who lies asleep within the conscience of all people of all castes. 'and subversive ethic which not only awakens the conscience of non-Dalits, but which also fills Dalits themselves with confidence and pride (Gauthaman xiii).

Dalit literature is a distinct literature, with the identity and respectability. It stands discretely from rest of the regional vernacular literatures in India. It emerged around 1970 in the state of Maharashtra. Today, Dalit studies in Tamil are at a nascent stage. A nuanced, theorized reading of Dalit discourse is imperative in a context of impressionistic responses and biased readings governed by caste identity of writers. The reason may be assigned to a late start in Tamil as compared to its counterpart in Marathi or Kannada. As a result, theorization of Dalit writing or a

systematic critical corpus has not been yet put in place. Such a critical exercise requires to be evolved at the earliest to keep pace with a multi-faceted, vibrant, articulate and radically innovative Dalit creative output in Tamil. The interrogative and self-reflexive nature of Tamil Dalit discourse renders it a significant pointer to contemporary social and political reality.

Bama also known as Bama Faustina Soosairaj is known widely as a Dalit writer and activist. She was born in 1958 in Puthupatti village in Viruthungar district in Southern Tamilnadu, Bama is the first Dalit female writer to invest hugely in the articulation of personal experience. She is also a committed teacher and novelist. She is well known for her novels like Karukku, Vanmam, Sangathi and Kusumbukkaran in Tamil. She rose to fame with her autobiographical novel Karukku, which chronicles the sorrows and joys experienced by Dalit Christian women in Tamil Nadu. This 1992 novel had to wait for eight years to reach a worldwide circle of readers when the

English translation of Lakshmi Holmstrom announced the view from the margins of society in the state of Tamilnadu. Her second novel *Sangathi* published in 2005 narrates the harassment meted out to the Dalit women by the upper caste men and also the men in the Dalit community. The solutions that remain at the level of suggestions in *Karukku* are further explored in *Sangati*. In the third novel, *Vanmam* published in 2008, Bama narrates the rift between two Dalit communities – Parayas and Pallars. These two Dalit communities had been victims of the politics of the upper-caste men. Here Bama faithfully captures the sufferings of the Dalit women and appreciates the efforts of the two communities to ensure peaceful life through negotiation.

Sangati is the story of a community, their suffering, pain, exploitation and resistance. Bama herself states in the Preface of the book:

In *Sangati*, many strong women had the courage to break the shackles of authority, to propel themselves upwards, to roar (their defiance) changed their difficult, problem-filled lives and quickly stanch their tears. *Sangati* is a look at a part of those women who dared to make fun of the class in power that oppressed them. And through this, they found the courage to revolt. (*Sangati* vi).

In the novel the exploitation of women works at two levels- gender and caste. Bama expounds the vulnerable condition of Dalit women. Owing to the social set up and their parents, they have to put up with disharmony in marriage and lead a dependent life. Their condition becomes more pathetic when they are deserted by their irresponsible husbands. They are compelled to lead a life of drudgery doing their household work, and other menial jobs. Apart from doing all the household chores, she has to feed her children and then rush to the fields to earn her daily bread. Though she is weary and exhausted, she is forced to satisfy the lust of her husband who

doesn't even care whether she is physically sound.

The lives of Dalit women is filled with hard work from morning till night and they have no entertainment. Bama says, "In our streets, there is any number of restrictions for women. For instance, even today, only men are allowed to go to the cinema. Never women" (*Sangati* 105). Bama recounts an instance where a Dalit women was blamed for witchcraft and was subjected to harsh punishments in the name of exorcism. Virayi, a Dalit woman, was said to have been possessed by the devil when she returned home alone from the field. Kodangi, a village priest, tried to exorcise the devil that possessed the woman. He dragged her, holding her hair and wrenched it off. The entire village gathered there to see how she reacted to the priest's treatment. She was a sympathetic object to the eyes of all on-lookers. "Why should a woman, said to have been possessed by the devil, be brought to the common place for such a gruesome treatment in the name of exorcism? Why is she exhibited as an object to the public? She is belittled and her status in the society is erased. Rosamma, a Dalit woman, jocosely says that even the devils do not have any respect for Dalit women." Whatever it is, look, it seems that we are slighted even by Peys" (*Sangati* 50). Bama admits that the mind of the Dalit woman is saturated with melancholy and anguish and she is led to a state of numbness and acts as if she is possessed by devils. She reads the psyche of her Dalit women thus. "[...] The stronger ones somehow manage to survive all this. The ones who don't have the mental strength are totally oppressed; they succumb to mental ill-health and act as if they are possessed by Peys" (*Sangati* 59).

Bama also draws attention to the precarious life teetering on fear and physical exploitation. The deep rooted psychological fear of molestation by the upper caste men drove most of the Dalit parents to marry off their daughter a little too early. Bama,

recollects her grandmother's warning, when she was thirteen. She was warned by her grandmother to be careful about the upper caste men. "Women should never come on their own to these parts. If upper castes fellows clap eyes on you, you're finished" (Sangati 8). In an interview Bama says, "We are willing to marry out of the community, but nobody is willing to marry us. Upper caste men look at Dalit women as polluting beings, except when they rape us" (Maheswari 2001). The duplicity of the upper caste male stands exposed by their own attitude of seeking the flesh of the Dalit woman and banishing all obligation towards the body. In this regard, commenting upon the cruelty of Dalit men towards their wives, the narrator's comments clearly show the fear of upper castes in the minds of Dalit men:

Even though they are male, they are Dalits, they have to be like dogs with their tails rolled up when they are in the fields, and dealing with their landlords. There is no way they can show their strength in those circumstances. So they show it at home on their wives and children. But then, is it the fate of our women to be tormented both outside their houses and within? (Bama 65).

Pachaiamma in Bama's Sangati is presented as a heroic woman. She sets an ideal example of how women should assert her freedom and thus becomes a source of hope to all Dalit women folk who undergo a similar fate at the hands of patriarchy. Pechiamma is a victim of domestic violence. Her husband is alcoholic and beats her mercilessly. The novel presents Pechiamma's reaction to the treatment meted out to her by her husband. She chooses to divorce him. Through this bold step, she tries to defy the patriarchal order which has assigned a subordinate position to the woman. The act of divorce, thus, becomes exemplary in its refusal to accept the values that society, at large, and the community, in particular, attaches to the institution of marriage. By

divorcing her husband, Pechiamma not only declares her defiance of the community, she is also impressing upon the collective consciousness of her community the value of the woman's choice as symbolized by the act of divorce. She makes a dual choice- the first is to divorce her husband and the second is to live with another man without the community sanction. Through her second choice, Pechiamma subverts the social order and the traditional right to choose which always lies in the hands of men. Pechiamma is an exceptional and an engaging case because she is being pushed into a most critical situation where she has to either completely surrender or defy the inimical the social order and she chooses the latter.

Pechiamma's acts of divorce and later, marriage are not impulsive choices. They are choices made after the individual had been pushed to the edge of suffering. Initially she tolerates her drunken husband and his violence which never abates. She is pushed to the limits of suffering when her husband takes on another woman. For Pechiamma suffering becomes an opportunity for understanding the life better and see the enormity of this threefold denial; of the mother; of the wife and of the woman. Her courage springs from her denial and she declares before the panchayat to leave her husband and thus reclaims all the lost territories-that of a woman, a mother and a wife and liberates herself.

On the whole, Sangati is a criticism of the caste-ridden patriarchal society as well as a powerful tool for Dalit women helping them to change their attitudes. While the first part deals with the suppression, exploitation, and pains of the Dalit women, the second celebrates the boldness of womenfolk to cope up with exploitation. They celebrate their newly found identity and inner strength and also celebrate their strong desire to fight against the injustice with determination to imprint their existence in a male-dominated, hierarchical society.

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THE ORIENTATION OF AFFECTIONS IN THE SELECT NOVELS OF CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN NOVELISTS

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Abstract

The novels of the present day are voluminous and fiction inspired. There are in certain respects domestic novels which seek to reverberate some of the issues pertaining to human health, especially that of the mind and heart and to cure its illness there is the remedies inspired by home treats -- the treats of love and affection. The novels of Tyler and writer Kingsbury are due to fulfill the essences of the title.

Introduction

The fictional character Josh in Kingsbury's novel *This Side of Heaven*, fervently seeks a reunion but his options having been exhausted have been put to the test. He wants to meet his daughter but there is a hindrance; his physical impairment threatens him and he is on the throes of finding mercy from the judge. As a person and member of the judicial system, the judge is less than sympathetic. It is only after Josh's death that the compensatory money is cleared. As a person Josh suffers intense, 'physical', 'psychological' and 'emotional' pain.

There is a character resemblance to Connor in Kingsbury's novel *Oceans Apart*. The choice of profession over family leaves him troubled resulting in an affair. His feelings of remorse, guides him to urgently seek out his son. As a person he is humane. Reverting to the past, Connor's profession however had pushed him to the extent of infidelity. Lack of closeness with his wife, children and father had excluded him from enjoying the joys of family life. The choice of profession over family leaves him troubled and thus, the illegal affair. Apart from establishing a profession, Connor after his wrongdoing and convicted by his guilt, feels the urgent need to reconcile with his wife. He loves his wife. However, the impact of the trouble he has somehow acquired results in his inquiring about Kiahna. He inquires about her at the airport and finds her name in the list of casualties. He invites tension into his married life, and his mind polluted by

thoughts and memories of Kiahna leads him to enquire about her. However, after understanding the need to move on, he progresses from the setback of memories. The problem rears its head when information of legal processes involving custody of Max is informed to Connor. Connor, affected by the news, pursues a new idea, the need for a boy child. As a husband Connor had failed, he had failed to recognize the needs of his wife and he sought out a new need, the need for a boy child.

The absence of a boy child in his family affected Connor and spurred by the thought of possessing the child, he tries to win their affections to secure Max as his son. Connor is an excellent character, representative of a man faced by a conflict in real life. Connor acknowledged the affair to his wife. The honest answer he had committed to her had affected their marital relationship for a brief time. As Lazarus states, revelation of particular events would lead to wife battering; in Connor's case – 'marital discontentment'. Connor understands the devastation he had unintentionally caused to his family. He realizes his foolishness and surrenders to the possibility of losing the boy. Once more he feels lost.

The sacrifices of a man who desperately wanted a boy child is reminiscent in the character sketch of Connor. He decides to let go of the child. He does not want to risk the affections, love and attachments of his marital life. This is a universal phenomenon;

not contrary to people belonging to different nationalities.

As a character Connor can be used as a character sketch for discussing marital relationships. There is another character worth for analysis and observation. Kiahna in the same novel *Oceans Apart* provides the readers with the example of sacrifice; by resisting the urge to start over a new life she relentlessly suffers herself to the duties of a single mother. With responsibilities, she seeks the guidance of Ramey and her friend's father in matters relating to the custody of her son. She loves the child she had given birth to and considering the seriousness of her role as stewardess in the airline industry, she strives to ensure her child's safety. She is a mother depending on God to solve her problem.

Another significant character portrait is Kiahna. Kiahna's devotion to the roles she carries, first as a single mother, and second as a full time worker at the work force is representative of working women and the scenario of the twenty-first century. Kingsbury pens her character with wonderful colors. Her readers love the character roles she invents for her fictional characters and produces tremendous insights on writing creatively about people and about choosing life filled with options, where there is joy and hope for her characters. In her novel *Where Yesterday Lives*, Kingsbury seeks to explore the characters' proximity with each other. This is unlike her other novels, for it provides remarkable insight on attachments with 'caregivers'. John Barrett is a remarkable character portrait. Though the novelist commits this character to a short life span, she gives him a voice. John lives in the memories of his children and wife.

In the descriptions given by his daughter Ellen, John is the ideal father. Her memories of him as a teacher in the area of sports, has enriched her experience in the workplace and has established her career. Prior to understanding John's influence on his daughter's career, it is essential to draw attention to his characteristics. As a father, he has supported his family financially and

has loved them; by spending quality time with them and being a wonderful role model. The Barrett siblings have learned from their father the need to show charity to the poor and needy. John Barrett is a man who lives in close proximity with his family. When he is financially stable he is able to live happily with his family. He does not want to dash the hope of his family. However, when he has been laid back from his job, he is disturbed and is unable to face his family. He leaves the family to recuperate from the blow. However, he returns to his family and finds another job. As a father he feels and as a father, he loves by understanding the need to return to his family he is examined to be a man of integrity.

Tyler's novel *The Amateur Marriage* also presents a unique father figure. Michael is a wonderful father. He loves his children but he is not presented in the same wave length as John Barrett in Kingsbury's novel *Where Yesterday Lives*. Kingsbury presents another character worth describing about; it is Kiahna in the novel *Oceans Apart*. Kiahna loves her child to the extent that she teaches him a song that reminds him of her when he is alone and in the 'care' of her friend Ramey. Kiahna too is an exemplary character. Another important aspect that requires inspiration to draw from is her firm decision to be a mother first and foremost. She loves her son and both of them spend time playing games during their spare time. This shows her heartfelt desire to be a mother first and then a flight attendant. She also teaches her son about God and gives him a Bible. Her inspiration having been taken from her love for God is divine. She allows this impact to touch her son's heart. With the ever present need to draw inspiration from God it is necessary to understand the scenario from which characters like Kiahna and John Barrett derive inspiration. Kiahna, for instance, is deeply rooted in hope. She had let down her guard when in her early twenties. Her hope of becoming a doctor had been crushed and with a baby to take care of, she decidedly lets go of her ambition and takes on the responsibility

of a mother. With little or no experience she has successfully mothered her child. Her responsibility reaches the utmost of defeated expectations when she is confronted with death. With the risks of her job as stewardess stirring her soul, she suffers herself to take the risk of writing her desires for the welfare of her son.

Kiahna's letters offer readers with keen insights on responsibility. Kiahna had insights on Max's supposed future in the event of her death and she knew that foster care would not give her child true love. In her will, Kiahna made it a point to mention her intentions clearly; that the biological father Connor, would be given the chance to know about his son before any decision could be made about his custody.

Kingsbury's insight gives readers glances to understanding maternal responsibility. Kiahna Siefert is a remarkable character portrait. She expounds her thoughts and concern for her child at a very young age. Despite the fact that there were very few chances of air crashes, she materialized her feelings into writing, and decided to take no risks concerning her child. It is her plan that helped her son find his father and increased his chances of getting a permanent home. She knew the need to grow up under biological parents. Her understanding of love, care and affection let her devise a plan which is directed by her faith in God. Her love for her son is based on her love for God. With her love for God increasing day by day and enriching her insights on life, she lived out her faith. This is evidently steered by their decision to live with integrity. This is true in the character's portraiture of Ezra in Tyler's novel *Dinner at the Homesick Restaurant*. Ezra is presented in the light of people presented in innocent and pure portraiture. In better words, with no intention of doing wrong; he is kind, gentle and lovable.

Ezra's physique attracts women and Ezra in his innocency does not find the attraction, the least bit tempting. When his brother's girlfriends visit their home, he does not give way to temptation, for in his heart is the

pureness of love. Ezra falls in love with a country girl, and both of them are very much in love with each other. The innocent Ezra is oblivious of the crush his brother has for his girlfriend. His ignorance and choice of permitting his brother's advances towards his fiancé Ruth ends in a break up. Ezra's fiancé too in disbelief falls into the trap laid by Ezra's brother. Ezra does not realize his fault but is stupefied when the duo leave for New York.

Ezra's mother could have enlightened him about Cody's plan but she does not do so. Soon enough the mother and son become the pair who look at the couple living a married life. It is clearly visible that the family suffers due to the miscalculated plans. However, the feeling of being at home is etched in Ezra's mind and after the truth sinks into his heart, he feels accustomed to the plans sought out for the character by the novelist. The reason for the trouble is the journey of rivalry Ezra is faced with since childhood. The incident of the misfiring of the arrow at the park, the splattering of adult magazines on the floor in Ezra's room and the disappearance of Ezra's friend's whistle which was later found in his friend's coat. Ezra never married. He had never found the ideal girl he had found in Ruth.

After marriage, Cody Tull visits his family home with his wife and son at Baltimore. The only time Cody has shown visible extent of his love and affections for his brother goes back to childhood when the three siblings were old enough to go shopping for Christmas. The beautiful memory of Cody pulling his brother's sleeve in protective gesture gives readers in depth analysis of the brother's feelings towards each other. Cody is the brother who is externally in conflict with Ezra. Ezra has feelings of brotherly affection and it permits him to move on without harboring 'threatening' feelings like jealousy, anger, bitterness, remorse, and guilt towards his brother Cody; whenever he drops in with his family at Baltimore.

Another insight that stupefies readers is Cody's audacity and self imposing nature. He

is also successful in his career. With this success he disregards the need to set aside negative emotions and feelings. He requires attention, and in regard to finding himself he is a disqualified man; for he does not reach out to his brother to seek reconciliation. In other words, he does not know how to do so. He justifies his actions every time he comes across his brother, and seeks less comfort and guidance. At the time of understanding, he refuses correction, and steers towards unsuccessful methods of recuperation; by harboring strife and discontentment, Cody hurts himself when his son steadfastly exposes his weakness. He resigns in silence. Gornick avers, "Pearl has always been angry: now she'll be in a rage until she dies. Her children traumatized by their need for her love, will flinch before that rage for the rest of their lives, but not one of them will walk away. Tyler makes this inability to leave seem moving and inevitable..." (433). There are positive traits, and Tyler does well in exploiting the characters to the greatest extent; by analyzing the need to remain steadfast, Tyler has allowed Luke, the son of Cody to resist the urge to take sides. He is not disappointed but sad; frustrated by the constant battle raging between his parents. Their wars leave him devastated, and at a particular instance he is compelled to leave home. The 'mental' and 'emotional' devastation helps him to realize the need for change.

At Baltimore, Luke's friendship with his uncle Ezra is heartwarming. Luke understands quite easily that his father and uncle were at poles with each other. Luke possesses a strong personality, capable of understanding the need to love and let love and also trust wholeheartedly. He is a wonderful son, misunderstood by his parents. His casual friendship with his uncle gives readers insight on the bond of friendship between close relatives; by considering the distressful events occurring in his home especially due to the conflict between his

parents, it is evident that his mother and father never understood the true meaning of quality time.

Mike, in Kingsbury's novel, *Where Yesterday Lives*, is an epitome of a man challenged by lifestyle. The present day calls him to be a man after his own heart, but values and godly principles have molded Mike to seek after that which is right. He could have married a girl who is after materialistic values but his focus was on Ellen Barrett, a girl who chooses to live her life with values. His preference for Ellen is also marked by his love for godly principles taught in the Holy Bible. It is his decision to stand by his preference and ardent love for God that is truly inspiring. With the news of his father-in-law's death, he is sad and he comforts his wife. His happiness is visited by his wife's desperate plea to be with him, and with an aversion towards death taking him personally he is compelled to live alone. He is 'emotionally' stable. He recalls the wonderful times he had with his wife and when in solitude, he realizes his mistake and leaves to reconcile with his wife. He is a happy man, able to understand his wife's 'emotional' needs and mends the relationship by booking a room to confess his feelings to his wife and to ensure that his wife's confidence in him is regained.

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VOICE OF THE VOICELESS IN J.M.COETZEE'S *WAITING FOR THE BARBARIANS* AND A.K.ARM AH'S *TWO THOUSAND SEASONS*

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Abstract

"We all should know that diversity makes for a rich tapestry, and we must understand that all the threads of the tapestry are equal in value no matter what their color" – Maya Angelou.

The maxim of Maya Angelou states clearly that all of us are equal despite the varied diversity. Believing themselves to be superior, the Caucasians were dismissive of the Africans because of their color and enslaved them in the name of civilization. They not only erased the tradition of the Africans but also created false notions about the blacks that they are uncivilized, primitive, barbaric, lazy, dull and fit for nothing. Since none was ready to hear their misery, blacks picked up writing as their medium through which they could express their turmoil.

*The article analyses J. M. Coetzee's *Waiting for the Barbarians* and A. K. Armah's *Two Thousand Seasons* from the postcolonial perspective in detail. The most renowned novelist to emerge in South Africa after Nadine Gordimer is John Maxwell Coetzee. His third novel *Waiting for the Barbarians* (1980) gained him international reputation. It is set in an unnamed empire and it represents the South African apartheid regime. People of the Empire are driven by paranoia, an unspecified fear about the existence of the barbarians. The Empire has a fixed notion that the "Barbarians are lazy, immoral, filthy, stupid." In the novel, the native inhabitants are falsely accused for all the crimes without any evidence. The existence of the barbarians remains a mystery till the end of the novel. Coetzee through this novel attacks the western preconceived notions about the natives.*

*The Ghanaian writer, Ayikwei Armah is an activist and one of the purveyors of Marxism. His writings are concerned with the problems of postcolonial Africa. He is the follower of Pan African movement and his works are filled with negritudinal thoughts. His fourth novel *Two Thousand Seasons* (1973) aims at decolonizing the mind of the oppressed. In this novel Armah portrays the cultural ruin caused by the "Arab predators and White destroyers" which is evident in the following lines:*

Two thousand seasons, a thousand going into it (slavery), a second thousand crawling maimed from it, will teach you everything about enslavement, the destruction of souls, killing the bodies, the infusion of violence into every breath, every drop, every morsel of sustaining air, your water, food (44).

Armah constantly insists his fellow Africans to liberate themselves from slavery by going back to their roots which Armah calls "the way."

*Though Coetzee voices out the stereotypical notions about the blacks, he does not give any importance to the positive qualities of the Africans. Armah in contrast highlights the values of the African culture and condemns the colonizers for demeaning their customs and rituals. The paper aims to explore J. M. Coetzee's *Waiting for the Barbarians* and A. K. Armah's *Two Thousand Seasons* from the postcolonial perspective of Edward Said and Franz Fanon respectively.*

Introduction

"All men are created equal, it is only men themselves who place themselves above equality"-David Allan Coe.

The maxim of David Allan Coe spells out clearly that all of us are born equal but some of us consider ourselves superior in terms of race, class, caste, gender and religion. The Europeans firmly believed that they are the most civilized and cultured people because of their white superiority and looked down upon the Africans just because their skin color is

black. They understood that the blacks are innocent and naïve and took them for granted. They slowly started to enslave the native inhabitants of Africa in the name of civilization. They also created false stereotypical images about the Africans that they are barbaric, uncivilized, primitive, lazy, dull, and fit for nothing. Since none was ready to help them, blacks picked up writing as their medium through which they could express their turmoil.

The renowned novelist in South Africa after Nadine Gordimer is John Maxwell Coetzee. His works highlight the strong link between colonial fictions, history, and exploitation. He was strongly against the concept of realism that dominated the South African fiction during the apartheid era. Having lived during the apartheid regime, he has witnessed its cruelties and atrocities. That made him condemn the evil of apartheid in his works.

David Attwell in his *J. M. Coetzee: South Africa and the Politics of Writing* states, "Coetzee's writing reconstructs and critiques some of the key discourses in the history of colonialism and apartheid from the eighteenth century to the present" (10).

Coetzee was the first writer to win the Booker Prize twice. Initially, he received the award for his novel *Life and Times of Michael K* in 1983, and once again he got it for his novel *Disgrace* in 1999. He won the prestigious Nobel Prize for Literature in 2003 which makes him the fifth African writer to win the award and the second South African writer after Nadine Gordimer.

Waiting for the Barbarians (1980) is Coetzee's third novel which gained him international reputation. It received both the James Tait Black Memorial Prize and the Geoffrey Faber Memorial Prize. The novel talks about the unknown barbarians who never arrive or exist. The novel is set in an unnamed Empire which is divided between its officers and the native inhabitants. The nameless Empire in the novel has striking parallels with the South African apartheid regime. The 1970's in apartheid South Africa was the time when torture was sanctioned by the state. South African police force acted with brutality and a person of colour could be imprisoned for an indefinite period of time and could be tortured under the laws.

The title of the novel is borrowed from the Greek poet Constantine P. Cavafy's poem with the same title where a decadent Roman Empire anticipates a barbarian invasion. The

barbarians do not appear till the end and the empire is left to face its deterioration all alone. The poem reads thus:

Because night has fallen and the barbarians have not come.

And some who have just returned from the border say

There are no barbarians any longer.

And now, what is going to happen to us without barbarians?

They were, those people a kind of solution (31-35).

The *Oxford Dictionary* defines the noun barbarian as "a member of people not belonging to one of the great civilizations." As an adjective it is used in a derogatory sense, relating to ancient barbarians who were seen as brutish and uncultured. The title therefore questions the identity of the true barbarian. Actually, the actions of the Empire are barbaric though it appears the opposite. The irony is that Colonel Joll, the defender of the Empire who accuses the 'other' to be barbaric, behaves like a barbarian himself.

The novel opens with the arrival of Colonel Joll with a band of soldiers from the Third Bureau to declare his superiority over the invisible barbarians. The issues of coloniser/colonised, torturer/tortured, 'self'/the 'other' are present in the novel. The major plot of the novel is related to the Empire's persistent efforts to construct a label such as barbarians, foe etc., for the "other" and hence the novel can be analyzed with the application of Edward Said's *Orientalism*. *Orientalism* is nothing but the strategy invented by the Europeans in order to dominate and have authority over the orient.

As the novel progresses, it becomes clear that the native folks of the area do not fit into the role of barbarians that the Empire has constructed for them. In order to prove its position as a superior and civilised culture, the Empire attempts to authenticate the existence of the native inhabitants of the settlement. A soldier talks about them as, "Barbarians. They cut away part of the

embankment over there and flooded the fields. No one saw them” (Coetzee 108). Though the barbarians are invisible in the area, the soldiers of the Empire torture and suppress the native inhabitants including the fisher folk, falsely believing them to be barbarians.

The Magistrate is a member of the Empire and he is the only authority until Colonel Joll from the Third Bureau arrives with a group of soldiers. He is not disturbed by the assimilation of the barbarian tribes. He says, “Show me a barbarian army and I will believe” (Coetzee 9). The colonisers always have a tendency to colonise the unknown believing that the unknown has no stabilized and defined culture. In *Orientalism*, Edward Said states:

There are Westerners, and there are Orientals. The former dominate; the latter must be dominated, which usually means having their land occupied, their internal affairs rigidly controlled, their blood and treasure put at the disposal of one or another Western power (36).

The Magistrate sympathises with the victims of torture. He associates himself with the so called enemies and he openly questions and rebels against the ways of the Empire, which finally ends him up in prison where he is isolated, tortured and accused of crimes against the Empire. He is not willing to become a part of the immorality and he tries to act according to his sense.

The native inhabitants have their own way of living which the Empire calls it barbaric. Barbarians “are mainly destitute tribespeople with tiny flocks of their own living along the river” (Coetzee 4). Said remarks that the native “lived in a different but thoroughly organized world of his own, a world with its own national, cultural, and epistemological boundaries and principles of internal coherence” (40).

Said comments that, “Psychologically, Oriental-ism is a form of paranoia” (72). Similarly in the novel paranoia, an

unspecified fear about the barbarians evolves in the capitol and it spreads in the frontier settlements. So, the Empire decides to begin a military campaign in order to prevent the territory from the attacks of the barbarians. The strategy behind the campaign is to torture the natives and the fisher folk.

The Empire is the embodiment of ultimate power in the novel where people of different social ranks and ethnicities are subordinate to it. Colonel Joll is the personification of imperial power. On behalf of the Empire, he is the executive power in command of interrogation about the barbarian attacks. Next in power is his Warrant Officer Mandel who is Joll’s right hand. His duty is to serve as the executor of state-approved torture. Below them is the Magistrate with his administrative responsibility and then the rest of the people in the frontier. Nomadic people, fisher folk and the barbarians occupy the bottom of the hierarchical system. The natives are low in rank because of their ethnic identity. This refers to one of the features of *Orientalism* called ‘power relations.’ The relationship between East and West is the relationship of power and of complicated dominance. It is the fueling force behind all the myths and suppositions which surround the oriental culture.

The Empire draws its own boundary. Said says, “A group of people living on a few acres of land will set up boundaries between their land and its immediate surroundings and the territory beyond, which they call “the land of the barbarians” (54). The Empire has itself created a stereotypical image about the barbarians. People have a fixed notion that the “Barbarians are lazy, immoral, filthy, stupid” (Coetzee 41). This represents a feature of *Orientalism* which refers to the ‘distinguishing occidental and oriental culture’ where the so called civilize exert their power over the uncivilised by creating false notions about the natives. Said states, “It is Europe that articulates the Orient; this

articulation is the prerogative, not of a puppet master, but of a genuine creator, whose life-giving power represents, animates, constitutes the otherwise silent and dangerous space beyond familiar boundaries”(57).

People of the Empire have a strong belief that if anything bad or disaster occurs it can be only because of the barbarians. In the last chapter of the novel, “...a little girl was raped.... Her friends claim a barbarian did it. They saw him running away into the reeds. They recognized him as a barbarian by his ugliness (Coetzee 134).”

The barbarians never directly speak to the readers. This is one of the characteristics of *Orientalism* which refers to the ‘textual construct of the orient.’ It refers to the European textual representation of the orient. Texts were entirely based upon the European assumptions. Native inhabitants were never given a chance to speak in the texts. Edward Said states, “the Orient studied was a textual universe by and large; the impact of the Orient was made through books and manuscripts.... (52)”. The barbarians are not allowed to speak so that they could be projected as inferior, dangerous, savages and nomads.

The Magistrate wants the barbarians to stand up against the Empire. He states, “I wish that these barbarians would rise up and teach us a lesson, so that we would learn to respect them” (Coetzee 55). He want the barbarians to overthrow the Empire. The presence of the barbarians is not revealed till the end of the novel. The readers do not know whether there exists a particular tribe called the barbarians. Coetzee through this novel shows how torture is employed to wound the soul of the ‘other’ by tormenting their bodies.

AyiKwei Armah, a Ghanaian writer, is an activist and one of the purveyors of Marxism in African literature whose writings address the problems of postcolonial Africa. The density of African history and culture finds its intense expression in the novels of Armah.

The first three novels of Armah *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*, *Fragments*, and *Why Are We So Blest?* portray corruption in postcolonial Ghana and the alienation of the individual minds. This paved way to label Armah as a pessimist and he proved it wrong with the publication of his next two novels of liberation *Two Thousand Seasons* and *The Healers* which are an attempt to recreate history. Bernth Lindfors asserts:

At a moment when other African writers were insisting that the creative artist come to terms with contemporary African realities, Armah appeared to be swimming against the tide by immersing himself in times gone by. Yet his was a Janus-like view, for it looked forward at the same time that it fixed its gaze on the past. In fact, these novels are really more concerned with tomorrow than with yesterday or today. They are visionary myths rather than historical chronicles (90).

Two Thousand Seasons “is a manifesto of a whole black race and a counter-blast to colonialism of all hues” (Rao 13). It aims to present the essence of the precolonial African society which was united and peaceful. “Because of its wide range, depth and profound human concerns, the novel becomes an epic in its presentation, mytho-poetic in its texture, historical in perspective and continental in bearings” (Rao 89). The novel pictures the annihilation caused by the Arab “predators” (Armah 47) and the white “destroyers” (Armah 126). The novel states:

Two thousand seasons, a thousand going into it (slavery), a second thousand crawling maimed from it, will teach you everything about enslavement, the destruction of souls, killing the bodies, the infusion of violence into every breath, every drop, every morsel of sustaining air, your water, food (17).

Armah in this novel aims at decolonizing the mind of the oppressed. The ideas of Franz Fanon can be applied to the study of the

novel. In his book *The Wretched of the Earth*, Fanon declares:

...decolonization is always a violent phenomenon...decolonization is quite simply the replacing of a certain 'species' of men by another 'species' of men.... Decolonization, which sets out to change the order of the world, is obviously, a programme of complete disorder....Decolonization... is a historical process (27-28).

The title of the novel is based on the prophesy made by the female visionary, Anoa. She utters, "a thousand seasons wasted wandering amazed along alien roads; another thousand spent finding paths to the living way" (Armah xvii).

The way of the invaders is a complete contrast to the way of the Africans. Violence and dishonesty are the characteristics of the way of the invaders whereas generosity and hospitality mark the way of the Africans. The following lines explain the way of the natives:

Our way is reciprocity. The way is wholeness. Our way knows no oppression. The way destroys oppression. Our way is hospitable to guests. The way repels destroyers. Our way produces before it consumes. The way produces far more than it consumes. Our way creates. The way destroys only destruction (Armah 76).

Arabs entered into the country as "parasitic beggars" (Armah 47). They made use of the generous nature of the blacks and slowly gained strength. After becoming powerful they started to enslave the native inhabitants. Armah puts forward the way of the Arabs thus:

...force is goodness. Fraud they call intelligence. Their road flies off opposite reciprocity.... With their surroundings they know but one manner of relationship, the use of violence. Against other peoples they recommend to each other the practice of robbery, cheating, at best a smiling dishonesty.... They plant

nothing. They know but one harvest: rape (76-77).

The blacks are too generous in nature and in return they expect nothing. This happens to be their tragic flaw. Anoa, the female visionary urged them not to be too generous, she instead exhorts them:

Turn from this generosity of fools. This giving that is split from receiving is no generosity but the hatred of the giving self, a preparation for the self's destruction. Turn

Return to the way, the way of reciprocity. This headlong generosity too proud to think of returns, it will be your destruction. Turn (Armah 43).

Armah comments on the Caucasian race as, "That race, it is a race of takers seeking offerers, predators hunting prey. It knows no giving, knows no receiving. It is a race that takes, imposes itself, and its victims make offerings to it" (44).

The Arabs and the whites wouldn't have been successful if there had been no divisions among the blacks. But greediness poisoned their minds and they are split into groups. The novel states, "...the fever of jealous ownership, turned our people into a confused competition of warring gangs, each gang under its red-eyed champion seeking force or ruse to force its will against the others. In the end it was this hot greed itself that destroyed the power of the men" (Armah 33).

The predators and the destroyers are convinced of their white superiority. They thought that the blacks are barbaric in nature and believed that it is their foremost duty to civilize them. But in the name of civilization they started to colonize and introduced slavery and plundered the land and the wealth of the natives. They forced the natives to leave the place. Isanusi, the best spokesman of the court of king Koranche announces:

The first wish of the white men is this: they have heard of our land, of the beauty of the mountains and the plains' fertility here, and of the metals our earth

contains-iron in abundance, gold, silver, and pure, red copper. These metals it is the white men's wish to take away from us, to take them to their home beyond the sea (Armah 137).

The same idea is expressed by Fanon in *The Wretched of the Earth*. He proclaims:

The colonized man is an envious man. And this the settler knows very well; when their glances meet he ascertains bitterly, always on the defensive 'They want to take our place.' It is true, for there is no native who does not dream at least once a day of setting himself up in the settler's place (30).

Isanusi elucidates the five crafty wishes of the whites to his own people. The third wish of the whites describes their longing for the natives' land:

There is a third wish the white men have made. Land they want from us, but not the way guests ask the use of land. The white men want land cut off from other land and set apart for them, as if land could ever be a thing belonging to any but the people as a whole. On this their cut-off land they would like to have crops grow. But the white men are not accustomed to doing their own planting...They would have the king give them men to work the land...ours would be planting and caring, theirs the harvest and its profit (Armah 138).

Fanon puts forth the greed of the whites thus:

For a colonized people the most essential value, because the most concrete, is first and foremost the land: the land which will bring them bread and, above all dignity. But this dignity has nothing to do with the dignity of the human individual: for that human individual has never heard tell of it (34).

In contrast the Africans never considered land as a possession. They never believed in monarchy. This surprised the whites:

At Enchi...the white destroyers had come from the sea thirty seasons earlier asking to be shown a king. The people laughed and indicated to the white destroyers they had enough respect for their souls not to need a king. The white destroyers asked for land. The people told them land was not a thing to be possessed (Armah 130).

The kings of Africa are ignorant and greedy. They are fooled by the predators and the destroyers with their worthless gifts. They are the reason behind the downfall of a continent. Incapable and ignorant natives are elevated as kings. King Koranche is referred to as, "He-whose-penis-is-hidden-from-himself" (Armah 168). He:

...was slowest. It was his habit to stay wherever he was left from morning till evening and sit staring straight ahead of his body.... The only expression he had was a constant dull, flat, ever-staring look from which diviners themselves would have been defeated trying to draw a meaning (Armah 114-115).

King Koranche betrays his own people. He invites the twenty young fundis for a feast and insists the whites to take them away to their land as captives. Koranche sarcastically comments, "Enjoy your feast, my children.... It is yours. It is in your honor, in celebration of your many-headed genius. This night we pay tribute to your intelligence, and to your courage too. This is your feast. Enjoy it" (Armah 178).

The essence of the African tradition is completely shattered by the whites. In the past people were united in spite of all the differences. They were not greedy, nor obsessed with the accumulation of material wealth and never practiced monarchy. Women were given due respect and all were treated equally. The past was completely distorted by the predators and the destroyers. The natives were separated from each other. In the words of Fanon:

...colonialism is not simply content to impose its rule upon the present and the

future of a dominated country. Colonialism is not satisfied merely with holding a people in its grip and emptying the native's brain of all form and content. By a kind of perverted logic, it turns to the past of the oppressed people, and distorts, disfigures and destroys it (169).

In order to escape from the harsh treatments of slavery some of the natives turn into "askaris" (Armah 48) and "zombis" (Armah 48) and they lead the destruction of their own race. It is their job to kill all those who try to oppress the whites. The novel states, "Outside stood the askaris, zombis kept to guard the predators, destroyers of our people" (Armah 48). "Of our women fifteen died that night, murdered by stupefied by askaris" (Armah 55). Fanon declares, "Believe me, the zombies are more terrifying than the settlers" (43).

The natives slowly felt the need to go back to their roots in order to break the fetters of bondage. Twenty young fundis under the guidance of the chief fundi Isanusi begin their journey. "There are twenty of us: eleven girls growing into women, nine boys growing into men...we wandered against the force of all unexplainable prohibitions into the forbidden grove, the grove of sources, intent not on destroying but on seeking" (Armah 148). Their greatest desire is to bring back the knowledge of their way. The succeeding lines paint their preparation:

Against the death brought by whiteness only the greatest connecting force will prevail: the working together of minds connected, souls connected, traveling along that one way, our way, the way. Connected thought, connected action: that is the beginning of our journey back to our self, to living again the connected life, traveling again along our way, the way (Armah 212).

Fanon presents the similar idea thus, "In order to ensure his salvation and to escape from the supremacy of the white man's culture the native feels the need to turn

backwards towards his unknown roots and to lose himself at whatever cost in his own barbarous people" (175).

However much the blacks are curbed and removed from their past, they always keep their spirits high. They never lose their hope and their strength lies in their positivity. They are indefatigable. Their attitude is highlighted in the following lines:

We, remainder of the slaughter of our people, our minds made up not to weary of seeking the way again, not to tire of searching for the way even after losing it, we would move again, move after so many thousand seasons of forgetfulness of danger, after so many thousand seasons in which our distances breathed peace, thousands of seasons when movement was about the desire for something to be found at the destination, not fear of destruction at the point of departure. We would move again (Armah 75).

Coetzee's novel attacks the preconceived notions and the stereotypical images about the blacks but it does not highlight the richness of the African culture and tradition. In contrast, Armah's novel highlights the values of the African culture and condemns the colonizers for demeaning their customs and rituals. It offers a message to all of us around the universe not to give up our spirit no matter what the circumstances may be and we should take necessary efforts to rise above all the difficulties. We should always be optimistic and hurdles are the stepping stones to success. Africans, the most oppressed people have proved themselves to the world that they are in no way inferior to the whites which aligns perfectly with the lines of Maya Angelou:

You may shoot me with your words,
You may cut me with your eyes,
You may kill me with your hatefulness,
But still, like air, I'll rise (20-24).

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THE CONCEPT OF REDEMPTION: AN ARCHETYPAL FRAMEWORK AND A PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

This paper entitled The Concept of Redemption: An Archetypal Framework and a Perspective tries to explore the concept from an archetypal perspective and see the universal pattern irrespective of religions and literature. In literary criticism, the term archetypes indicates narrative designs, patterns of action, character types, themes, and images that recur in a wide variety of works of literature, as well as in myths, dreams and social rituals. These are result of elemental and universal patterns in the human psyche, whose effective embodiment in a literary work evokes a profound response from the attentive reader because he or she shares the psychic archetypes expressed by the author. Redemption is a religious theme; it is a powerful and uplifting theme that acknowledges the human potential to succeed after having failed. Redemption is considered as an archetype because there is a universal pattern in all stories, events and experiences of redemption irrespective of religions. This paper infers the following pattern in all redemption stories or events in religions and literature and the following framework is useful tool to analyse of theme of redemption in literature. The question of redemption arises at a crisis, sin, captivity etc. The particular situation destroys the original beauty or status of his life. This points out to a need for redemption, a pre-redemptive process. When one is in a crisis, sin or captivity a voyage or an exile is essential to experience redemption. At the face of a crisis, sin or captivity, there are two options before any individual or a group and they are either to enter into the process of redemption by making a pro-redemptive response or the other is to counter the redemptive process through a counter-redemptive response. A pro-redemptive response will lead one to experience redemption. Those who make a pro-redemptive response will then be lead to a post-redemptive process. This will have set the person free of captivity to begin to enjoy peace and life in its fullness.

Keywords: *Literary Criticism, Archetypes, Redemption, Archetypal Pattern, Pre-Redemptive Process, Redemptive Process, Pro-redemptive response, counter-redemptive response and post-redemptive process.*

Introduction

The history of literature is the history of literary criticism. The latter as an ally of the former makes creative writing more complementary and helps to conceptualize the pedagogical import of texts of literature into ideological standpoints. Over the ages, literary theories have been the weapons for the realization of this crucial obligation of literary criticism.

Literary texts offer us aesthetic, intellectual and emotional pleasure and the writers often seek to explain their vision of human experience through a creative, imaginative and emotive use of language. As a result, it is only through a close contact with the text that reaction to the text, looking unique use of language and appreciation of literary works can be achieved. In sorting out the possible meanings of a literary work, one engages

in an exercise to make inferences, formulate ideas, and analyze a text closely for evidence and all these activities contribute to sharpening one's critical faculty. The basic reason that compels us to give criticism is for universal human values and the values of the culture from which they spring from literary materials contribute to our understanding of ourselves and our relations with our fellow beings. Besides, critics and readers will benefit from literary materials by exploiting the codes and preoccupations of the society they represent and see as the mirror to untie problems and to argue on controversies and to forward new overviews. Since critically analyzing literary works has immense uses, students of literature, language teachers and advanced readers need to use literary theories and philosophies to give critics to

different kinds of oral and written works of arts (Gessesse 4).

Literary analysis is a critical response to a literary text in the form of a critical essay or an oral commentary. It includes a thorough interpretation of the work. Such analysis may be based from a variety of critical approaches or movements, e.g. archetypal criticism, cultural criticism, feminist criticism, psychoanalytic criticism, Marxist Criticism, New Criticism (formalism/structuralism), New Historicism, post-structuralism, and reader-response criticism.

Archetypes in English Literature

An archetype, also known as universal symbol, may be a character, a theme, a symbol or even a setting. Many literary critics are of the opinion that archetypes, which have a common and recurring representation in a particular human culture or entire human race, shape the structure and function of a literary work. Carl Jung, Swiss psychologist, argued that the root of an archetype is in the “collective unconscious” of mankind. The phrase “collective unconscious” refers to experiences shared by a race or culture. This includes love, religion, death, birth, life, struggle, survival etc. These experiences exist in the subconscious of every individual and are recreated in literary works or in other forms of art. This has been illustrated by Northrop Frye the following way:

An archetype is not only a unifying category of criticism, but itself a part of a total form. It leads us at once to the question of what sort of total form criticism can be seen in literature. Our survey of critical techniques has taken us as far as literary history. Total literary history moves from the primitive to the sophisticated, and here we glimpse the possibility of seeing literature as a complication of a relatively restricted and simple group of formulas that can be studied in primitive culture. If so, then the search for archetypes is a kind of

literary anthropology, concerned with the way that literature is informed by pre-literary categories such as ritual, myth and folk tale. We next realize that the relation between these categories and literature is by no means purely one of descent, as we find them reappearing in the greatest classics—in fact there seems to be a general tendency on the part of great classics to revert to them. (Frye)

All he states is that the archetypes make the concepts of the universe better understandable for the human beings. The archetypes develop in accordance to human needs and concerns which makes them proper for human life:

Of the different approaches of literary criticism, Northrop Frye has established the validity of the archetypal approach and its relevance in the elucidation of a text. Like works of literature, criticism is also creative and an archetypal critic discovers the meaning of a text and the motives of a character. No human endeavor is independent and the work of an archetypal critic is inclusive of formalistic criticism (or structural criticism) and historical criticism. Both J.G. Frazer and C.G. Jung opened up new vistas in archetypal or mythical criticism and Frye has obviated the impediments in the appreciation of a text. In mythical criticism, both the inductive method and the deductive method are effective tools and neither can be dispensed with, according to Frye. If one method explains a text based on the derivation of a general truth from the particular, the other method does it the other way round. Both the methods are complementary, and if either of them is unexploited, archetypal criticism will be incomplete. Archetypal approach to a text has contributed to the establishment of a systematic and comprehensive concept of literary criticism. (Kazhungil)

Archetypal criticism is concerned with the way cycles and reiterating patterns of tradition, culture, inborn images, and beliefs affect literary works. It operates with the idea that certain symbols represent the same ideas no matter the time or place. Authors focus on symbols to utilize in literary works in order to strike readers' unconscious. Such symbols recur often enough in literature to be recognizable as an element of one's literary experience as a whole. It also deals with symbolism of nature and the cosmos. There is universality in literature, anthropology, psychology.

Northrop Frye working in the field of literature defined an archetype as a symbol, usually an image, which recurs often enough in literature to be recognizable as an element of one's literary experience as a whole. It is possible to plot the important aspects of a story on to a graph. If enough points from several stories were plotted, a pattern would start to appear.

If one then drew a line that approximated the pattern that emerged in the points that best fit line would be an archetype. No story perfectly matches the archetype, and some stories will diverge from the archetype more than others. Still, recognizing that a pattern exists can be a powerful tool in understanding and comparing literature. (Barad)

Origins

Anthropological and psychological studies of the late 19th and early 20th century sparked the beginning of the above criticism. Information provided from the findings of past cultures influenced many prominent writers. Also, myths from the Greek and Roman eras were thought of as profound and, as a result, the desire to incorporate such ideas in writing was instigated. Archetypal criticism came into prominence in the 1930's

and 1940's, continued to flourish in the 1950's and 1960's (Young, Bruce 2).

Strengths/Advantages of Archetypal Criticism

Archetypal criticism focuses on certain symbols and their meanings. Almost all literature is written to convey events which mean something. Archetypal criticism looks for these meanings, as well as what the symbols in the story stand for. It acts as a powerful tool in teaching and in expressing universal feelings, beliefs, and ideas. This is very closely linked with psychological theories and criticism: so also explains why literature touches deep inside the heart of the reader (2).

Weaknesses/Limitations of Archetypal Criticism

Many critics are apprehensive of the actual value of the archetypal approach; they seem to think it is reductionist and rigid. It generally excludes other sources or criticisms. Others believe that literary individuality is ignored with so much emphasis on cycles and patterns. Not all literature contains symbolism; some is simply written for enjoyment. Some critics argue the theory is unnecessary because archetypal approaches to literature can also be covered in psychology, anthropology, comparative religion, and other fields. Symbols can elicit multiple meanings; one might interpret a literary work that is entirely different from the author's intentions. This criticism has been used less frequently in recent years (2).

Concept of Redemption as an Archetype

The longing for redemption is an ancient, strange and impressive passion which dwells within even the most earthbound and prosaic of souls. Sometimes eloquent and sometimes mute, this aspiration toward some dimly sensed union with an all-seeing, all-loving, ineffable Other, in whose encircling embrace may be found ultimate solace for the harsh

limits of mortality and the frightening isolation of individuality which lie embedded somewhere, though unconscious, in every life. Even if we do not call the Other by any divine name, but instead direct our devotion and our yearning toward unrecognized surrogates such as humanity *as a whole*, family, nature, art, love, or admiration for a particular person or thing. The hallmarks of the longing for redemption are, first, that it is a longing; that it is compulsive and absolute, and often collides violently with individual values; and third, that its goal is not relationship, but rather, dissolution.

Jung speculated on the possibility that the longing for redemption is innate – an archetypal predisposition as primordial and irresistible as the urge to procreate. The main revelation of symbols of transformation is the unconscious psyche itself, which seeks to transform its own compulsive and doomed instinctuality through the mediating influence of the symbols which it creates. Not society or superego, but soul, in Jung's view, is ultimately responsible for the transformation of raw *libido* into the work of devotional art, the noble humanitarian ideal, the awesome dignity of the sacred rite, the profound and cruelly beautiful initiatory work of turning human lead into human gold. The divine is not out there but in here and one has to discover it in the self.

What is needed today is a psycho-spiritual processing because at the heart of psycho-spirituality are psychological affects and images demonstrating the psyche and the God – image representing one's spirituality, each in its own right and totality as part of a process. Psycho-spiritual processing addresses the inter-presence and inter-complementing between psychology and spirituality. It is like a steps of a dance – now psyche, now spirit – with the process of healing happening in the psyche and the transformation being experienced through a growing recognition of God within, and vice versa. We need to attend to both the streams (Mendonca 56).

The transcendent Spirit becomes incarnated in human form at conception. While retaining transcendence God becomes contained within the developing foetus. The embryo in the womb gradually through contact and communication with the containing mother begins to emerge developmentally out of that undisturbed unconscious Divine-human connection. Then with the birth, normal familial and individual development requires that the mother instinctually through her care and providing draws the infant out of its normal, inward, focused orbiting around God Within in a symbiotic orbit with herself. The initial developmental separation causes the infant to let go of the bliss of oneness with God Within of conception as it now begins to establish a relationship with the mother. The spiritual separation from God Within and refocusing onto mother becomes the first psycho-spiritual split in a person. Essentially the healing of this split is what the entire redemptive process is about – a return back to oneness with God Within (57).

As a result of the process of excessive or diminished mothering by a primary caregiver the child develops its primary psychic wound resulting from the experience of inappropriate love through loving disregard. The wounding experience might be caused by an instantaneous one-time hurt or the result of sustained hurts caused the ego. Whatever the kind of wound and its outcome as a fracture or a crippled condition, it begins to manifest itself in living-relationally, work-wise and in leisure as a cluster of self-images and fact-affect complexes. The now-wounded ego has to slow down its exuberant living as it begins to get covered by the emerging persona. As the persona begins to take shape because of the rejection of natural spontaneity by the caregiver and society the child begins to act out roles with masks to cover up what it unconsciously desired but had to throw into the unconscious as shadow. The relegating of rejected parts of oneself into the shadow is the psychological

split caused when the ego divides itself into what is acceptable to society as the persona and not acceptable to society as the shadow (74).

Affectually, the persona is formed out of the various fears that the growing child's ego experiences because of her or his over or under loved status. In order to receive its daily ration the child develops an anxiety or fear of punishment (1 Jn. 4.18), caused by loving disregard. This fear of losing the love of the loving and loved one causes the child to compromise the joyful richness and spontaneity of living the gift of the Spirit (Gal. 5.22). The ego now anxiously lives a life of role playing various personae. While living out the anxiety the child isolates into the deeper unconscious the positive affect of joy. Joy is the outcome of living out of the ego-Self axis or redemption while through early development the ego severs its conscious ties with the Self and tries to find happiness by maintaining the persona (75).

When a person's happiness is disturbed she or he unconsciously slips into one of the three basic negative outcome affects of anger, fear, or sadness in varying intensities. One of those affects becomes the individual's primary negative affect tied up to the primary wound. The other negative affects interplay with the primary negative affect to create the drama or life script of the cast of all the shadowy characters within who continue to live daily through a blend of appropriateness with other dysfunctional speech and behaviour patterns mingled the persona. These patterns are acted out through anything between quirks and addictions in relationships, work and leisure.

The childish speech and behaviour pattern is psychologically sculpted into habits, mannerisms, peculiarities, idiosyncrasies, arrogant aggression-passive or active, rigid inflexibilities and self or other abusing compulsions or addictions in relationships, work and leisure. These are the products of one's family dynamics the infantile contaminating the adult. As one begins to

understand clearly how one's various personae and their associated affects have their origin in one's family of origin and attends to the related negative affects, it will bring relief along with deeper and wider healing. A problem has its roots in the family and its multiple manifestations are perceived through issues historically and geographically, that is in time and space. Thus, we carry patterned problems from our family as issues into adult life. The source of problems might be even more intricate depths of one's collective psyche - the joint family, culture, tribe, caste, nation or even continent (77). It is through a pro-redemptive response one will be able to make an inner journey which takes on a forward looking, deepened, meaningfully healing and passionate adventure to the God Within which is redemption. With the ego-Self axis restored one is able to listen to the whispers and feel the nudges of the Spirit and recognize the presence of God in all that one perceives. Rather than remain under the influence of the ego's moody affects, negative or positive, one acquires the state of homiest as is peace within which is the result of the redemptive process that is post redemptive process (87-88).

Redemption is rediscovering the God Within by destroying the false images created through the past experiences, childhood upbringing, the animus and anima, shadow, ego, persona and projections. One has to go through an inward journey to discover the wounds of the past and it is known as pro-redemptive response. This process is a process of healing of wounds of one's past and acknowledgement of one's strength and weakness. It is a process of committing oneself to return to God Within. In this inward gazing one admits limitations from living out the persona, realising and integrating the shadow as a split off part of the ego in personal unconscious. The outcome of this process is joy and experience of peace and happiness. One can also make a counter-redemptive response where one is indifferent

or closed to the inward journey which is the redemptive response. Pro-redemptive response will enable the individual to move from issue to pattern and from pattern to problem and then from problem to understanding and deflating the ego until it is secure in the ego-Self relationship, which is the communion with the divine. This will empower one to see the suffering, pain and misery of the other and be helpful and passionate like Jesus, Buddha, Mahavira, Mohammad and John De Matha.

Conclusion

Archetype falls under structuralism. It was challenged by postmodernists. They don't admit of a reference point. When there is no reference point we end up in meaninglessness and postmodernist outlook is irresponsible inclinations to view that everything in life from pure relativism. Archetypal criticism is to bring back a sense to the critical world the necessity for reason and logic. Redemption is a religious concept that refers to the process through which a person is brought from a condition of captivity, distress or sin to eventual well-being. According to this pattern of redemption it is possible for a man to grow from being a sinner to a saint through awareness, acceptance of personality, forgiveness and repentance. When one grows in the awareness of the Divine instilled within each human being at the moment of conception, the voyage to redemption becomes easy. Any crisis is to overcome through personal decision. The ego impedes ones growth to a greater extent and therefore the ego which dominates one's life has to be annihilated.

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CASTE OPPRESSION IN K.A. GUNASEKARAN'S *THE SCAR*

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Abstract

K.A.Gunasekaran is a teacher, folk-artist, dramatist and researcher. He is also the director of the International Institute of Tamil studies. His autobiographical novel The Scar was originally written in Tamil and was translated into English by V. Kadambari, the professor of English at Ethiraj College, Chennai. The novel narrates the Dalits' socio- economic exploitations and the caste oppression prevalent in the villages of Tamil Nadu. The author is from Paraya caste. During his young days, he lived among Christian, Hindi and Muslim communities. He argues how low caste's oppression differs among these three religions. The term "Dalit" means oppressed deprived and exploited. They come from poor communities and are usually called as untouchables in some villages. The novel not only talks about caste oppression but also about the cultural values of Dalits. It also emphasizes the fact that the Muslim community treats Dalits as equal unlike Hindu community. The paper discusses the psychological pains and pangs of the author and the people of his caste. Though the novel was written in autobiographical form, it represents the whole Dalit community and their sufferings.

Keywords: Caste, oppression, indifference, insult, harassment

Introduction

The literal meaning of "Scar" is a mark that is left on the skin after a wound has healed. The word symbolically says that the caste oppression and harassment has the left the scar in author's heart even though he has crossed all those things. Caste system is a hierarchical system in which the status of the people is determined by their birth and not by their deeds. It is not only high caste people, but also the low caste people lower themselves. Once there was a celebration at the Valmel Nadantha Amman Temple in author's village. After the celebrations there came Pichamuthu Kumaran's troupe from Kallidathal. Most of them were from the author's mother's birthplace- Keeranoor. But none of them revealed that they knew his parents. It was because they did not want anyone to know that they belonged to the Paraya caste.

When the author was studying in school, the cross-eyed clerk would make the Pallars, Parayars and Chakkiliyars stand by saying "How many in this class are Parayars?" "Put up your hands! How many are Pallars? Stand up, I will count" and ask them to go and collect the scholarship forms. Gunasekaran would think that it was a great insult to him

and his community. He says "Even now it hurts to think about those times when he had to stand up in front of the others in the class, shrinking and cringing. They would reinforce caste identities by labeling us Pallars, Parayars and Chakkiliyars in front of our friends who never knew what caste was" (Gunasekaran 5). The headman of his school would sign the scholarship forms only if the students come to his house to tie up the cattle, pick up the cow dung and clean up the area. As the author had experienced some harassment in the name of caste, he would often think about converting into Islam where there was no caste indifference.

During his high school days, Gunasekaran's father enrolled him and his brother in the Harijan hostel due to his poverty. In the hostel, the author witnessed some exploitations laid upon Dalit children. The warden of the hostel would take soap, oil and other things given to the Harijan students. They were only given buttermilk, kanji, rasam and sundal to eat. They were not even given sambar and vegetables. In the school where Gunasekaran studied, treated Dalits in a low manner. Whether the Dalit children carried their books or not, but all of them would have either a dung cake or

firewood in their bags. They would be given their noon meal only if they gave these. Gunasekaran's parents believed that Christians were not as obsessed with caste as the Hindus were. So they would tell the author and his siblings to say that they were Christians if anyone asked them about their caste.

The Dalit people are not allowed to drink in a vessel. They live a life of poverty, ignorance, insult and unjust. Upper caste people consider them as polluted and dirty. Once Gunasekaran and his brother were going to their aunt's house in Thovoor. There were no buses in those days. So they had to walk the entire stretch. On the way to their aunt's house, they wanted to drink *pathaneer* (sweet palm wine). When they went to buy it, the *Pathaneer* seller enquired them which caste they belonged to. Once he knew that they were Parayars, he gave *Pathaneer* in palm leaf, not in the vessel which can be used only by upper caste people.

The caste indifference did not exist in author's village, Elayankudi- a place with a large Muslim population. The author had many Muslim friends and they treated him as equal. But the moment the author and his brother entered a village named Karunchutti, they found that even the Muslims showed caste indifference. It was because they were surrounded by many castes like Saanar, Konar, etc and they learned from them about the caste. When Gunasekaran and his brother asked for water in a Muslim house, they first asked about their caste and then gave water only in their cupped hands. In some villages, the cheri women were not even allowed to wear blouses as per the caste regulations. Author's aunt told him how she stopped wearing blouses from the day she came to Thovoor, after her marriage. When Gunasekaran was in his aunt's house in Thovoor, his aunt made mats, winnow and boxes and gave them to the upper caste people through Gunasekaran. In return, they would only give cooked rice in the old box. This is

one kind of exploitation laid upon Dalit people.

Once Gunasekaran bought a gift sheet from a wholesale shop to sell to the Thovoor school boys. The sheet had the numbers 1 to 100. One had to scratch a particular spot in the sheet to get the gifts like bowls, pencils, money, erasers and so on. For that they had to pay four annas or ten paise. If the person was lucky he would get a gift, otherwise there would be no number. One day an upper caste boy came and scratched up to fifteen spots without giving money. When Gunasekaran asked to give him money, he did not bother about it. He ran away from him to his street thinking that Gunasekaran would not come there as he was a Paraya. But Gunasekaran did not bother with the segregation of certain castes in the village. He chased after him and went to his street and even to his house. He gave him a few blows and returned to his aunt's house. At night, eight men came with that boy to his aunt's house. Gunasekaran hid himself in the house and his uncle and aunt asked the men to forgive him. What the men asked surprised Gunasekaran. He asked "How can a fellow from your caste enter the upper caste street? And worse, how dare he enter our house" (Gunasekaran 26). Nobody among them worried about the boy who had been beaten. They were only worried about a Paraya entering their street and their house, not caring for the rigidity of caste.

Another practice, Gunasekaran found in Thovoor is announcing deaths that was used to be referred to as carrying news to the villages. If anyone died in the upper caste people, the Dalits had to carry the news to their relatives in other villages. In those days, there were no bus facility and they had to walk a long distance. The messenger was not paid for this service. But the people who received the news would give them something. A boy named Minardas from the village would say "One can die pulling out one's tongue instead of going from place to

place carrying news of grief, to earn money for eating and seeing movies” (Gunasekaran 30).

The Konars are not usually treated well by Brahmins. They too face caste arrogance by them. In Thovoor, the Konars were the Brahmins. They faced oppression by the Brahmins and they could not do anything against them. So they showed their superiority over the cheri people. They would call the lower castes to work in their fields. On the other hand, the lower caste people also were happy to accept them as their master. According to Gunasekaran, this was a type of slavery.

Inter caste marriage is hardly accepted in Hinduism. The marriage between upper caste boy and the Dalit girl is looked as a crime. They would not be able to live peacefully unless they get out of their village and went away to town. Gunasekaran remembered one incident in his village about a Dalit girl named Michael Amma. She was from Pallar community. She loved a boy from Udayar community. They fell in love when they were at school. When Michael Amma’s family got her engaged to a person, she accepted with heavy heart. She feared that people from upper caste will not allow her to live if she gets married to that Udayar boy. She even hesitated to elope with him. She said to that boy, “Even if we elope, your people will destroy my parents and my entire clan. Forget me and marry a girl in your caste and live in peace” (Gunasekaran 37). The boy who loved her truly could not bear it and he killed her with a sickle.

The boys of all castes could be friendly with each other and play together only outside the village. Inside the village, the low caste boys had to address upper caste boys as, ‘Ayya’ and ‘Sami’. The women were referred to as ‘Nachiyar’ or ‘Aachi’. Even the boys of high caste were younger to them, the low caste boys had to refer or call them with these terms only. They did not have permission to call by their names. They had to stand at a distance from them. One day Gunasekaran

went to buy oil at south Keeranoor. When he returned, he found a man walking on the same bund in the opposite direction. When that man came near to him, Gunasekaran gave him space to walk past him. But that man suddenly slapped him on his cheek, saying “Look at the cheek of the Paraya boy!” and went on his way. Gunasekaran could not understand why he slapped him. When he returned to his home, he told the incident to his grandmother and asked her why he slapped him. What his grandmother said shocked him. She said “See we belong to a Paraya household, and they are Maravars. When men and women of the high caste come, we need to stand at least eight feet away from them. We ought to step aside to give them way. That is why the man has beaten you” (Gunasekaran 43).

Once the author’s machan saw a man from Konar caste fell down with an epileptic attack. He detached the plough from the ox and made him hold on to it as it was believed that iron would stop the fits. Then he lifted him up and laid him down under a tree. With lot of efforts, he brought back the man to his senses. When the man regained his consciousness, he was so angry that a Paraya touched him. He did not thank him for his help, instead he retorted saying “What would have happened? What if I die? Stand away! It is your arrogance due to education. You mean to say I got this fits only today? It has been with me ever since my birth. Let us talk about this in the Panchayat this evening” (Gunasekaran 60).

The novel unfolds the bitter experience of caste discrimination even at the holy place like temple. The low caste people were not allowed to enter the temple. They had to bow their heads from outside the temple. The author once had a chance to go to Tanjavur big temple. The moment he looked at the gopuram (Temple tower), he feared whether he would be allowed inside the temple. Then he came to know that it was only the low caste people beat the drums from outside the

temple and lead the procession of the deity. They could not go inside the sanctum sanctorum where the deity resided. But still Gunasekaran felt satisfied that the people allowed them to enter at least till the front yard. The lack of education is the main cause of the exploitation and oppression of Dalits. Though socio- political awakening have changed the plights of Dalits, it cannot be

denied that the Dalits are under suppression even today. It is the duty of every Dalit people to get education and awareness to bring the caste-ridden society.

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CHANGING INDIVIDUALITY TO ELUDE REALITY -A SUBALTERN PANORAMA IN BAMA'S *KARUKKU*

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*“Caste is the monster that crosses your path
You cannot have political reform,
You cannot have economic reform,
Unless you kill this Monster.”*

Abstract

Dalit Literature is associated with change and a new perspective, the ‘Subaltern speaks’ through this literature. In the South Indian context the term ‘Subaltern’ may be applied to some groups that have been subordinated in terms of class, caste, age, gender, office refers to person socially, politically and geographically outside of the hegemonic power structure. The term was first used by Antonio Gramsci, to refer to other group in society who are subject to the hegemony of the classes.

*This paper explores the changing of identity to escape from the reality and subaltern view in Bama's *Karukku* in the background of the norms established in power and imposed on the ‘other’ who has had no voice because of race, class and gender. Bama explore about her own experience as a dalit woman in her novel.*

Keywords: *subaltern, race, discrimination, injustice, violence, inequality.*

Introduction

Dalit writing indicates the needs to deconstruct the hegemonic structure which shuns the marginalized section to the ‘Other’. The dalit reality and experience is realistically narrated in dalit autobiographies like Bama's *Karukku*, which gives clear picture of the sufferings imposed on them. It conveys the very essence of ‘Dalitness’, and has been defined as “... writing about dalit by dalit writers with a dalit consciousness. The form of dalit literature is inherent of its slavery and narrate its pain and suffering...”.(Dangle, 18)

As Arjun Dangle points out, “Dalit literature is marked by revolt and negativism, since it is closely associated with the hopes for freedom by a group of people who as untouchables, are victims of social, economic and cultural inequality” (Dangle, 1). It questions the mainstream literary theories and upper caste ideologies, and explores the neglected aspects of life.

The marginalized existence of the ‘untouchables’ and, their periphery of society and the society's revulsion for them. The separate quarters for untouchables, squalid unhappy surroundings, anger, oppression, lust, sexual exploitation, and humiliation are all and inseparable part of the life and literature of the downtrodden. Resistance is rare/ feeble and they have no choice but to submit. The uncongenial surroundings in which the leather workers carriers and other untouchables live in indicative of their subhuman status (conveyed through the use of words like ‘dirty’, ‘dog’, ‘man eater’).

The emergence of Dalit Literature in language such as Marathi, Kannada, Telugu, Hindi, Gujarati, Punjabi, Malayalam and Tamil in recent decades is an importance and encouraging sign of our times. Once it launched itself, it spread like forest fire, gaining further momentum during the birth centenary celebrations of Dr. Ambedkar in 1991. Many of the works were translated into English and helped disseminate dalit voices

giving the genre a visibility it had lacked before. Though some literary critics viewed these dismissive, dalit literature went on to make an undeniable impact in all spheres.

There is little doubt that the appearance and rise of dalit writing is one of the most important developments in twentieth-century Indian literature. Although it belongs to the century we just left behind, the recovery of dalit history helps us trace the origins of 'Dalit Literature' to ancient Buddhist or Medieval anti-caste movements. In the history of political discourse, there are instances which show the prevalence of the thoughts even before they get a place in history. Similarly, numerous bits of evidence show that even before the birth of the word 'Dalti', there was a recorded history of the 'untouchables' fight against discrimination and literary expressions that spoke about it. A turn towards this recovered history of the regions may help alter our vision of Dalit literature.

While dalit autobiographies / works by dalit writers present dalit life from a 'Dalit perspective'. The Dalit cause appears as the theme, there are dalit suffering, and pity / sympathy for the downtrodden. These works form a part of 'Dalit Literature' in as far as they promote the dalit cause. The real suffering (a caste-specific experience) is alien to them. It is an inseparable part of the life of the dalit.

Bama's *Karukku* is an autobiographical novel in which Bama presents the miserable plight of a dalit by presenting her true life. It exposes the religious hypocrisy and the degeneration of institutionalized religion into an instrument of exploitation. The novelist portrays the injustice and exploitation to which one section of Hindu Society is subjected by the other enjoying a much higher status in the social hierarchy.

History of Dalit Identity

The history of untouchability in other parts of India is not the same as what is

obtained in Tamil Nadu; here, it is linked to the establishment of the Vedic-Brahmin religion. Unlike in other parts of India, since Buddhism and Jainism thrived for a longer time in Tamil Nadu- up to the fifteenth Century – the Vedic-Brahmin religion and the practice of untouchability that accompanied it could make only a belated entry.

According to some historians, untouchability existed even in the Sangam period, but it was not based on birth. Another group argues that such untouchability was based on profession. Both these schools of thought base their conclusions on classical literature, such as the *Ettuttokai* (Eight Anthologies) and the *Pattuppaattu* (The Ten Idylls), believed to have been written between second century and third century. Many scholars point to a verse in *Purananuru* which has a reference to 'Parayan', classified today as a Scheduled Caste.

Autobiographical writings, and scholarly articles relating to dalit history and culture in Tamil Nadu, and presents a clear picture of the century-long struggle of the erstwhile 'untouchables', portraying the historical continuity of the voices of dalits and the heterogeneous nature of the dalit question in the context of this region. In the history of Tamil culture, 'caste', as we know it today, is a result of the 'Hinduization' of the secular, or rather, Buddhist, state. Support for this point of view can be found in the native Buddhist literary culture invoked in the writings of Pundit Iyothee Thass as well as in the contemporary agitations conducted by the Dalits in Tamil Nadu.

The role of Ambedkar and his contribution to the dalit cause is interpreted within the regional context and also as an inseparable part of contemporary political and cultural evolution of the Dalits. Casteism is still prevalent in India, in spite of the many-sided efforts to obliterate it completely. It is a bitter pill to swallow that casteism has gone so deep into the society that even the mighty forces of government cannot uproot it.

It is interesting to note that most of the dalit literature is in the form of autobiographical writings. In fact, the pioneer of dalit literature, Ambedkar himself has preferred only autobiography as the powerful mode of expression. He avers: "The problem is how best to give an idea of the way the untouchables are treated by the caste Hindus. A general description, or a record of cases of the treatment accorded to them, by the two methods by which this purpose could be achieved. I have felt that the latter would be more effective than the former".

Subaltern View in Bama's *Karukku*

Karukku is an experience of dalit woman, a long ordeal, through which she could identify herself. Bama did not only create a space for her caste but also for women who were the victims of two-fold hierarchy. Dalit women were victims not only of caste but also patriarchy. In the novel she has shown the plight of a dalit woman, their sufferings and discrimination at the hands of their patriarchy, but through her own story she has evolved herself as a role model for the rest of dalit women.

Bama has written when the dalits were called low-castes because of their meat eating habits. A character called Michael-amma complains "So many people buy and eat beef on difficult for us to get any meat. All of them eat their fill, but see; it's only we people who are called low-caste" (Bama, 55). Although she was born in a Pariah Community, it was through her hard work and zealous interest that she could establish a place for herself in her community. In a society where women were paid lesser wages than men for the same amount of work, had to do the household chores, were beaten up their husbands and not allowed to go to school.

Bama was able to fight the odds. She carried on with her higher education, and also at time thought about the ways in which the dalit children could be educated and treated better. "In the face of such poverty, the girl

children cannot see the sense in schooling, and stay at home, collecting firewood, cooking after the house, caring for the babies, and doing household chores."

There were many dalit communities in India which converted to Christianity due to the humanitarian efforts of the missionaries. Many thought that conversion into Christianity would bring about liberation from the clutches of the caste system. The gospel was also preached and promised to dissolve inequality and oppression in society. And for the first time, by converting to Christianity they could acquire a holy book and read it, because so far, the Muslims had and the Sikhs had hold book of the Christians, the holy book of the Hindus could not accept the dalits.

Bama's *Karukku* also shows us the disillusionment of the Dalit Christians complaining against the church and its authorities. On joining the convent Bama also realizes that the nuns and the priests were biased and only treated those children who were from the uppercastes. On one occasion, when people in the locality goes to Reverend Mother to ask for pictures she chases them away saying "Have you give me some me some money in order to buy you holy pictures? Verywell, now, you may all go home quickly without leaning on the walls or touching anything" (Bama, 58). So, we can see the untouchables were disregarded not only by the Hindus but also by those people who converted them on the promise of a casteless system. Their touch which was cooked upon as defiling by the upper caste Hindu was also avoided by the Church authorities.

In *Karukku*, Bama focuses the vulnerable conditions of dalit people and how they are victims of circumstances due to their poor economic background. They remain landless agricultural labourers who are politically powerless. She focuses other major problems such as untouchability, discrimination in the new religion, Christianity. She painfully notes that their rich culture is robbed and they are

left with no culture. She appears to be as concerned about the survival of the dalit community as Horen Tadu is about the Blacks of East Bengal where her wonders 'whether, globally, the Black race will survive into the next millennium'.

In the novel *Karukku*, Bama focuses many problems the dalit people have to face in the caste-ridden society. Most dalit victims of abuse are landless agricultural labourers. Lack of access to land makes dalits economically vulnerable. Their dependence is exploited by the upper caste landlords, so there was impoverished condition of rural life. They are the sons of the soil, yet in the so-called democratic system, they have no hope of owning their share of the soil.

Ironically, the dalit Christians have been co-shares of the burden of oppression with the other dalits. The fate of a dalit is the same whether he is a Hindu or Christian or Muslim. In general, the social and economic condition of Dalit Christian is in no way better than that of a Hindu Dalit. Most of the dalits whether they are the Hindus or Christians, often live side by side, while the other caste people, the Hindu or the Christians live separately. Even the Caste Christians do not treat the dalit Christians as their equals.

The author wants to break all the barriers of social and cultural system and depicts her problems as a dalit and as a woman. A dalit woman is dalit among dalits. She is oppressed thrice. The writer is further oppressed by being a dalit Christian. Hence, she is oppressed by caste, gender and religion. It is a painful journey with open ending story, and many questions are left unanswered. The writer mainly concentrates on religion and education, and gives expression to her bitter

experience. It is the depiction of a journey from weakness to strength.

Conclusion

To be conclude, this paper highlights the problems of the dalit people, especially the dalit women who suffer more in the caste based society. The same amount of problems, if not, more than that is understood to be suffered by the Black people especially Black Women, who live in a society that is not free from racism. Having examined the miseries of dalit people as focused by Bama through her novel, *Karukku*. It becomes clear that Bama discards one religious community to join another 'religious' community.

In short Bama narrates in *Karukku* about her life experiences as a woman, a dalit woman and a Christian. All her experiences are related to caste hegemony, patriarchy and gender discrimination, which can give her readers a message to fight for their human rights. She gives voice to the experience of exploitation, humiliation and starvation of the dalits. She tries to change her identity by changing as a Christian but its fail in this dominating society.

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SELF-IDENTIFICATION OF CELIE IN THE NOVEL *THE COLOR PURPLE* BY ALICE WALKER

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Abstract

The Color Purple is one of the most representative novels by Alice Walker. This novel mainly focuses on gender bias, oppression of women, slavery, identity crisis, racism, etc. This paper clearly shows how a woman could suffer and how she identifies herself in an elaborate way. The novel weaves a complicated mosaic of women joined by their love for each other, the men who abuse them, and the children they care of. The novel is a series of letters, the protagonist Celie writes to God and to her sister Nettie. The first few letters in the novel explain Celie's letter to God. Celie tells God that she has been raped by her father and she is pregnant for the second time with his child. After her marriage with Mr__ who is a married man with four children. He too treats her badly by beating her. Even Mr__ hides the letters of Nettie to her sister Celie. He also loves Shug Avery, the blues singer. After the arrival of Shug Avery, Celie identifies herself. She finds her identity at the end of the novel. She is helped by Shug Avery to overcome her problems. Celie achieves self-actualization through Shug Avery's efforts. Thus *The Color Purple* proves that black women must develop their self-confidence through awareness and education. Only then will black women survive as strong confident personalities.

Alice Malsenior Walker is an American novelist, short story writer, poet, and activist. *The Color Purple* (1982) was written by Alice Walker, which she won the National Book Award and the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction. Her other works are *Meridian* (1976) and *The Third Life of Grange Copeland* (1970) and poems. Most of her works dealt with the theme of quest for identity through the central character, especially women. The novel *The Color Purple* talks about a young troubled black woman fighting for her own identity. The protagonist in *The Color Purple* who tells the story of her life of misery, abuse, and loneliness in the novel.

Developing a sense of self or an identity is an essential part of every individual becoming mature. It is not having a strong sense of self or struggling with identity issues may lead to depression, anxiety, and other psychological problems even for health problems. Identity crisis is a psychosocial state or condition of disorientation and role confusion occurring especially in adolescents as a result of conflicting internal and external experiences, pressures, and expectations and often producing acute anxiety. It is also an analogous state of confusion occurring in a

social structure, such as an institution or a corporation. Here in the novel *The Color Purple*, the protagonist tries to identify herself in the society as well as her family.

As black Womanist fiction, *The Color Purple* is a novel about a poor, uneducated, fourteen-year-old black girl Celie living in rural Georgia who is the protagonist and narrator of the novel. Celie's stepfather Alphonso or Pa beats and rapes her. So Celie is writing letters to God.

I am fourteen years old. ~~I am~~ I have always been a good girl.

Maybe you can give me a sign letting me know what is happening to me.

Celie is already pregnant once because of Alphonso. She gave birth to a girl child, whom her stepfather has stolen and said he killed the baby in the woods. Second Celie gave birth to a boy child which was also stolen by her stepfather. Celie's mother dies because of her illness. Alphonso marries another woman but even he abuses Celie. Celie has no identity and has been brain-washed by her Pa to believe she is ugly and worthless.

She ugly. He say. But she ain't no stranger to hard work.

And she clean. And God done fixed her.

After being raped by her father Celie becomes very submissive. Her father threatens her and so she tells God about her problems. Thus the novel has been written in epistolary form. Later on she and her sister Nettie comfort each other. Mr __ wants to marry Nettie but Pa refused it and offers the 'ugly' Celie to marry. Then he compels Celie to marry a man called Mr__ who has four children. She comes to know that Mr __ already had a lover named Shug Avery. Shug is a blues singer. Pa wants to abuse Nettie so she escapes from Pa and goes to live with her sister Celie. Even Mr__ married Celie he had an eye on Nettie. By escaping from Mr__, the protagonist Celie helped Nettie by sending her to Reverend Samuel and his wife Corrine. Nettie along with the couple went to Africa as a nanny to their children. Nettie wrote letters to Celie but she did not get reply from her. As Nettie's letters are stolen by Celie's husband. Thus Celie suffers from deprivation of sisterly love.

After Celie married Mr __, he treated her cruelly and beats violently. So Celie transforms herself into a tree.

I don't know how to fight..... he beats me like he beats the children.....

I make myself wood. I say to myself, Celie you a tree.

Harpo is the eldest stepson of Celie who also suffered both physically and mentally because of his father Mr__'s abuse. Harpo loves and marries Sofia. He also wanted his wife, Sofia to obey him like Celie obeys his father Mr__. Celie feels jealous on Sofia's boldness and fights back against Harpo's dominative attitude. On Celie's advice Harpo beats his wife Sofia but this affects Celie. She feels guilty as she understands that man and woman must be equal if they have to enjoy a successful relationship. Celie admires Sofia for her physical and mental courage. She enters into a sisterly relationship with Sofia as they engage in quilt-making.

Shug Avery, the lover of Mr__ becomes sick whom he took to his house and ordered his wife Celie to look after Shug. At first, Shug ill-treated Celie and later she wins the heart of Shug by her care and love. As a reward, Shug gives Celie recognition for the first time in Celie's life when she sings "Miss Celie's Song". Then Shug and Celie become friends forever.

Harpo's ill-treatment made Sofia to leave him from her life. One day in town Sofia met the Mayor and his wife. Mayor's wife Miss. Millie asked Sofia to work as a nanny to their children. Sofia's harsh rejection makes Miss. Millie got angry towards her and she slapped Sofia. In turn Sofia also slapped the Mayor. As a result, Sofia is imprisoned for twelve years and work as a nanny to the Mayor's children. With the effort made by Celia and her family members, Sofia would be freed before six months from her fixed punishment.

Harpo asked Shug to sing in his new started juke joint in his house. Shug also agreed his proposal. Shug informed Celie that she would leave the house and again started signing across the country. But Celie begged Shug not to leave because Celie is afraid of Mr__'s beating. Neglected and rejected Celie moves from a lack of identity to a state of gratitude. Shug and Celie also develop a lesbian relationship. One day Shug enquired Celie about her sister Nettie. Celie considered that Nettie was dead for the reason that Nettie vowed Celie to write a letter, but she could not get any letter from Nettie. Shug found out a bunch of letters from Mr__'s chest which was written by Nettie to her sister Celie. Shug handed over all the letters to Celie and read it. Through the letter Celie comes to know that Nettie helped the couple to do Ministry work. The couple adopted two children Olivia and Adam. Nettie become close to Corrine. Corrine suspected Nettie and Samuel had a secret past because their adopted children resembled Nettie. So Corrine limits Nettie's attraction towards the family.

After that Corrine is suffering from heavy fever. Nettie requests Samuel to reveal her that who they adopted the children, Olivia and Adam. On hearing Samuel's adopting story of the children, Nettie found they are the children of Celie and her stepfather. And Nettie also comes to know that Alphonso is only their stepfather and the real father. The real father of them was a storeowner. Alphonso wanted the property and the house of Celie and Nettie, so he pretends himself as their real father. Nettie told the couple that she is their biological aunt. But Corrine does not believe her. In her death bed, Corrine admits the story of Nettie and feels ashamed of her suspecting towards Samuel and Nettie only before her death.

In the meantime, Celie went to meet Alphonso for the confirmation of the story told by Nettie about their father. After that Celie lacks her faith in God, but Shug asks her to imagine God on her own way and not to lose faith. Gradually Celie becomes strong enough to reject Mr __ and leaves him to start a new life at Shug's home at Memphis. Celie discovers independence when she becomes a competent entrepreneur. Celie establishes Folks Pants, Unlimited.

Celie starts bonding with the other female characters like Squeak. All the women character learns to love each other and respect one another. They try to establish a fair and sound relationship with men which are based on equality. After her transformation, Celie is able to speak up for Sofia and Squeaky. Her self-confidence is restored. Then Celie turns her hobby in her business by designing and sewing the individually tailored pants. For a visit, she went to Georgia and knows that Alphonso is died and Mr__ changed his ways. The house and lands where Alphonso lived belongs to Celie and Nettie. Then Celie moves the house in Georgia.

At the same time, Nettie marries Samuel and preparing to come to Georgia. Before their return, Adam marries Tashi who is a native African girl. By the painful custom of African women, Tashi undertakes the rituals of facial marking and circumcision. At the end of the novel Celie is reunited with her sister Nettie, son Adam, daughter Olivia and daughter-in-law Tashi. She feels liberated from the sin of incest. Celie becomes an enterprising black woman and abandons herself from passiveness and submissiveness. She discovers herself as a real black woman and a Womanist. Celie finds her identity at the end of the novel. She is helped by Shug Avery to overcome her problems. Celie achieves self-actualization through Shug Avery efforts. Thus *The Color Purple* proves that black women must develop their self-confidence through awareness and education. Only then will women survive as strong confident personalities.

Through the novel *The Color Purple* by Alice Walker, the protagonist Celie identifies herself with the help of Shug Avery and emerges as a successful entrepreneur.

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SOCIO-CULTURAL STUDY OF INDIAN DIASPORA IN V.S.NAIPAUL'S THE MYSTIC MASSEUR

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Abstract

This paper presents, Naipaul's theme, of social cultural used by The Mystic Masseur. V.S.Naipaul is a great writer in his studies of society and culture of Indian diaspora. Among non-western twentieth century writers of English Naipaul has gained a wide and varied readership. Few writers have been as prolific as he has been in the genres of both fiction and non-fiction. Generally considered the leading novelist of the English speaking Caribbean, Naipaul is the winner of the Nobel Prize in literature. Naipaul's writings dealt with the cultural confusion of the Third world and the problem of an outsider, a feature of his own experience as an Indian in the west Indies, a west Indian in England and a nomadic intellectual in a postcolonial world.

Keywords: Creolization, Displacement, cultural, Postcolonial.

Introduction

Diaspora Theory with its various features has influenced the literary of every language of the world. This literature is widely known as Expatriate or Diasporic Literature. It would be proper to examine features and aspects of such literature in which Indian Writing in English not only contributed greatly but also received international recognition and admiration in the past few years.

V.S.Naipaul, being a Trinidad born Indian, articulates the predicament of East Indian immigrants who are uprooted and have gradually lost their Indianness due to a long exposure to the influences of the Creole culture as well as to the cultural colonization under the imperial powers. In his early novels that from the Trinidad terology- The Mystic Masseur (1957), The Suffrage of Elvira(1958), Miguel Street(1959), and A House for Mr.Biswas (1961) Naipaul deals with the East Indians experiences in the West Indies. These novels present a poignant picture of their struggle to preserve their past identity in an alien environment the inevitable disintegration and loss of their selfhood with no hope of some substitute identity any more.

Mystic Masseur's Socio-Culutral

The Mystic Masseur is set in Port of Spain and the rural areas of Trinidad amidst Indians. Its themes as 'The history of Ganesh is, in a way the history of our times'. It is a comic study of the Postcolonial political rise and expatriate Indians response which smacks of mutual self-deception. Ganesh, the hero of the novel, is a representative figure of East Indians in Trinidad in their move towards city life and their subsequent Creolization. The novel is an allegory of the history of the Hindu Community and Ganesh represents the first generation of the East Indians to come under the influence of the Western education which acted as a potent force for cultural colonization. It is the need for education that brings Ganesh to the Creole world where there is a different value system. Mr.RamSumair, Gannesh's father, makes special preparations for the day, Ganesh, inspite of all his awkwardness, is to be enrolled in Queen Royal College

"Mr.RamSumair made a lot of noise about sending his son to the town college and the week before the term began he took Ganesh all over the district, showing him off to friends and acquaintances. He had Ganesh dressed in a khaki suit and a khaki Toupee and many people said the boy looked like a Sahib."

The novel centers around the meteoric rise and metamorphosis of Ganesh, the protagonist, who represents the East Indians under the process of acculturation. Ganesh feels awkward and experiences a humiliation when the boys make a fun of his dress and country manners. He comes to realize the marginalized position of Indians and hide his Indian identity “Ganesh never lost his awkwardness. He was so ashamed of his Indian name that for a while he spread a story that he was really called Gareth.”

The narrator writes about “Ganesh with timely comments and humorous deflation to reveal the absurdity of the society. In ironic words he observes Ganesh gave up trying to teach the boys anything and was happy enough to note a week-to-week improvement in his record book” Through the mediums of the narrator within the novel demonstrates his own technique as a novelist since he remains detached and allows the characters to damn themselves. From the point of Ganesh return to Fourways until his final move to Port of Spain, the narrator oscillates between Fourways and Fluent Grove and traces the progress story of Ganesh up to his victory in election and his first appearance as an M.L.C and then his rise in position to M.B.E. thus the narrator makes it clear that political power is ultimately an embodiment of the dream of power, possession and self-realization of the colonized people. However the narrative identifies the destiny of the country with the personality of the gradually emerging political leaders like Ganesh.

Naipaul indubitably evinces his diasporic sensibility quite deftly in etching the character of Ganesh in the novel by the time he is twenty-one his circumstance conflate and conspire to make him an alien in both worlds. Almost a similar situation of displacement figures in a later distinguished novel, *A House for Mr. Biswas* but Naipaul does not, of course, analyse the displacement with the sympathy and insight He devotes to Mr. Biswas. Ganesh's aunt, who is nicknamed

as the Great Belcher is a constant presence in the novel and she is the first person to convince him that he has the potentials of a mystic. Apart from this she has great organizing funerals and marriage in her own community life of the East Indians culture have begun to collapse. The section of the novel also focuses on the scene of cultural upheaval already set in motion by the colonial education and how it got the momentum through the modernizing forces unleashed by the Second World War. The economic precipitated by the American presence in Trinidad, together with rapid urbanization, acted as a potent external force boosting this disintegration. The writer articulates the predicament of stagnant society that the East Indians had managed to recreate in Trinidad. It was an India in isolation and its insulator fell away and was shattered to pieces during the Second World War. In *The Mystic Masseur* (1957) Naipaul relates the story of Ganesh an ascent – infatuated individual in a non-holds barred rag to riches framework. Naipaul also brings forth the dichotomy in the lives of the East Indians in Trinidad. The biographical account of Ganesh is double edged as it takes the lid of the Trinidadian world of chicanery, betrayal and falsehood. The degradation in the religion of East Indians, which has been reduced merely to rites without philosophy, becomes evident during Ganesh's initiation ceremony, his practices as a mystic, his marriage and his behavior at the temple that is constructed in Founte Grove to attract the American soldiers. When Ganesh undergoes the initiation ceremony to become a real Brahmin as per Hindu custom his head is shaved and he is given a little saffron bundle and asked to go to Banaras to study. When Ganesh keeps on walking away and does not turn back his steps all are bewildered. These reactions make clear the mimicry and the limitations of the make-believe world of the East Indians who are adhering to distant traditions just for the sake of their illusionary Hinduism. The

narrator formal treatment of the history of Ganesh is really a carefully controlled piece of satiric inflation. The dichotomy is further exemplified during Ganesh's marriage. In a traditional Hindu marriage, the Groom is not supposed to see the bride before marriage. However Ganesh and Leela have already met each other. The *Mystic Masseur* (1957) illustrates Naipaul's stance on mimicry as a theme. In the words of the narrator the life of Ganesh a quack masseur, a false mystic, a phony author and a corrupt politician becomes an allegory of the history of the time and the novel as a whole, is an account of the apotheosis of one man who represents the whole community. It is also interesting to note that to highlight his mysticism and to deceive people he wears Indian dhoti and kurta, but he prefers to wear European dresses on other occasions. His house has a Hindu exterior but the interior has all of the modern European scientific gadgets. Thus hero in politics is also its villain. Hariher Rath and K.C.Mishra have also commented in their article "The Mystic Masseur: A Study in Third- world politics as: it is also seen that Naipaul is adopting similar technique of incorporating images and symbols to highlight Ganesh's imitation and fraudulence. His portrayal gives us an impression that even though he is victimized, he rise to be the master of all confusion. The cultural disintegration is wide spread among the East Indians and even his Political rivals also Anglicize their names as Beharry and Cyrus Stephen Narayan for similar acceptance. Naipaul dexterously works in to the novel a significant aspect of diasporic sensibility, as he underscores Ganesh 's attitude to religion, which is attributable to the tolerant stand of Hindu religion, as an immigrant, Ganesh is left with no option but to display his secular stance: "He could talk on almost any subject .. And he could discuss religion sensibly as well. He was no bigot. He took as much interest in Christianity and Islam as in Hinduism. In the shirne, the old bedroom, he

had pictures of Mary and Jesus next to Krishna and Vishnu a crescent and star represented iconoclastic Islam. All the same God he said. Christians liked him, Muslims liked him, and Hindus, willing as ever to prayers to new gods, didn't object." Ganesh like a typical immigrant, survives and succeeds by resorting to his intelligence, wit and subterfuge reminiscent of 'the sixteenth century Picaroon of Spanish literature". A significant dimension of diasporic sensibility which Naipaul focuses on tentatively in *The Mystic Masseur* and which he expatiates upon elaborately in his later novel titled *Half-a-Life* is the wobbly use of English as an alien language and the attrition of Hindi as a native language. What happens to Indian immigrants generally in the West has been focused on quite effectively in *The Mystic Masseur*. Most of the time the Indian immigrants use a poor version of English in the novel showing up a kind of duality in their lives. Ganesh speaks standard English rarely showing his utter self- consciousness. The theme of political decadence has been intensified by the choice of images and symbols. The setting of the novels, thus emphasizes the way Trinidadians have been alienated from their surroundings, suggesting that their identities have been disintegrated. The East Indians themselves are unable to see the contradiction because the process of cultural colonization has worked on them unconsciously. It is this aspect of the society of Trinidad that Naipaul has tried to capture in the novel. Champa Rao Mohan also agrees with this opinion when she writes: Naipaul draws attention to the inadequacies of colonial societies which are often characterized by a lack of acumen for specialization. Trinidad is portrayed as a society in upheaval, where the old order is giving way to new forces of modernity of which Ganesh as a representative is particularly vulnerable. Ganesh's success story is really the story of the disintegration of the Eastern Indian Community, which

under the conflicting pull of the Eastern and World, makes the final choice in favour of the civilization.

Conclusion

Most eminent critics are of the opinion that all the major protagonist of Naipaul's novels like Mohan Biswas in *A House for Mr. Biswas* (1961) and Ralph Singh in *The Mimic Men* (1967) and especially Ganesh Ramsumair in *The Mystic Masseur* (1957) present different aspects of the immigrant Indian's socio-cultural mindset and psychological implications. To say the separation from their land leads to inner conflict and split as the forlorn spirits wander in the wilderness of the rootless world and their epical search for order and authenticity

in life leads them nowhere to exist in limbo. The firsthand experience of this novelist expresses his own enigma and exploit to carve an authentic identity and to shape a relentless truthful writer in the same ambiance.

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DIASPORIC CONSCIOUSNESS IN CHITRA BANERJEE DIVAKARUNI'S "ARRANGED MARRIAGE"

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Abstract

Diasporic writing in novels, short stories, travelogues, poems, and essays has not been new to post colonial literature. The sense of yearning for the 'homeland' or 'root', a strange and unusual attachment to its traditions, religions, and languages gave birth to the so-called diasporic literature. Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, one of the foremost writers of the diasporic literature, in her American Book Award winning first collection of short stories, Arranged Marriage, beautifully presents inter alia the matrix of diasporic consciousness like alienation, loneliness, rootlessness, nostalgia, questioning, cultural conflict, etc. The present paper delves into these elements and highlights Divakaruni's concerns for racism, economic disparity, miscarriage, divorce, etc in her acclaimed collection of short stories, Arranged Marriage.

Keywords: Globalization, Postcolonial, Diaspora, Loneliness, Matrix.

Introduction

The phenomena of diaspora range from global diasporas such as Jewish, British, Chinese, African, Russians, Turkish, Greeks, Labanese, Koreans, and Iranians on the one hand, and South Asian diaspora on the other. Diasporic literature which comes under the broader realm of post colonial literature – the works produced from previously colonised countries such as India. Bharti Mukherjee, Jumpa Lahiri, Anita Desai, Meera Sayal, Sunetra Gupta, Anjana Appanchana, Padma Hejmadi, Meena Alexander – only to name a few female writers of Indian origin who have influenced the realm of Diasporic literature. Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni is one such writer who has secured a credible place in the genre of South Asian Diasporic Literature. People in Diaspora are caught physically between the two worlds, which negate their belongings to the either location.

Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, an Indian-American award winning author and poet who migrated to America in 1976 at the age of 19, witnessed the troubles faced by the so-called "black" in a country of the so-called "white". She is conscious about her own identity and hence her works reflect the sense of rootlessness and alienation, which are mostly relevant to the Indian Diaspora. *Arranged Marriage*, a work of art to narrate

the tale of abuses and bravery of immigrant women. Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni possesses a high rank in the contemporary circle of Indian Diaspora. Through the characters of her stories in *Arranged Marriage*, Divakaruni explores the problems of identity crisis, emotional isolation and non-communication, the experience of migration, etc. Her main area of focus is once again immigrant experience as Divakaruni says,

Expatriates have powerful and poignant experiences when they live away from their original culture – and this becomes home, and never quite, and then you can't really go back and be quite at home there either. (Divakaruni Profile by Arthur J. Pais)

Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, the author of several award-winning volumes of poetry and novels, in her debut collection of short stories, *Arranged Marriage* (1995) which has also won a PEN Josephine Miles Award and a Bay Area Book Reviewers Award, deals with the immigrant experiences, especially of women in general. Divakaruni, with her remarkable workmanships portrays Diasporic women protagonists, living in two cultures, struggling the insecurities of exile, and questioning their identities.

Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni belongs to the first generation of Indian immigrants in the United States who has spent a part of her

life in India and has carried the baggage of her native land offshore. She has keenly observed the postcolonial society of India as well the challenges of Diaspora abroad. *Arranged Marriage* is the problem of adjustment arising from cultural variation experienced by an Indian woman when she moves toward the west, which is an important theme in the mosaic of American Indian culture. When she moves from Calcutta (now Kolkata) to California just a week after her marriage, she understands more about the place and its culture mostly from her husband, Somesh, who works with his partner in a store called 7-Eleven, selling all kinds of amazing things- apple juice, American bread, potato chips, beer, and wine:

It stayed open twenty-four hours, yes, all night, every night, not like the Indian stores, which closed at dinnertime and sometimes in the hottest part of the afternoon. That is why his partner needed him back....A lot of Americans drink, you know. It's a part of their culture, not considered immoral, like it is here. And really, there's nothing wrong with it. (20-21)

People migrate to foreign lands with the expectations of liberty, gratification, and existence which clashes with the traditional values of their homelands. Caught in between two different worlds, they struggle to maintain their cultural values and adapt themselves in the new environment. Sumita, an Indian bride, living in America, has constantly been fed on traditional ideas that it is her moral duty to act like a good Indian wife...serving tea to her in-laws' friends...covering her head with her sari...not addressing her husband by his name, etc. The traditions Sumita follows are all signs of respect in India and are strictly maintained in her home in California. Such situations make her impatient and remind her of her homeland, India.

Sumita's life in America is not different from the life led by other daughter-in-laws in Indian society yet, she doesn't want to go back

to India, her motherland, even when her husband is murdered at his shop as now it would be much difficult for her to adapt herself to her roots than to live in a "dangerous land". The conflict of consciousness and sense of assimilation are quite evident.

Similarly, Jayanti in "Silver pavements, Golden Roofs" faces the dilemma of being an immigrant when she migrates from Calcutta to Chicago to live with her aunt Pratima and uncle Bikram. Jayanti, being the first generation Indian-American, cherishes her past and its memories as an indispensable, integral part of her root and being. The apartment, in which she has to live with her aunt and uncle, is no better than to the house Jayanti came from. Jayanti within the confines of home feels disoriented and caught in the same world:

My monogrammed leather cases are an embarrassment in this household. I push them under the bed in the tiny room I am to occupy – it is the same size as my bathroom at home. (41)

Like other diasporic writers, Divakaruni writes about "human predicament" and the crisis of identity in the alienated land of America though she has made it her homeland. Identity crisis, alienation, and nostalgia are the chief characteristics of her writings. It is the painful anguish of diasporic identity and the sense of alienation that Divakaruni focuses on in her collection of short stories, *Arranged Marriage*. In the story "Silver Pavements, Golden Roofs" Jayanti who came to America with bright dreams, expresses her bitter experience of being immigrant, recalls an incidence when a group of boys shouted at her and her Pratima aunt with racist slurs and attacked them with the "fistful of slush". Jayanti, who was proud to be an upper class Indian, questions her relation to American race categorization and her entire perception of her own race is thrown into question after this incidence.

Though this incidence made her to long for her home in Calcutta desperately, she can't stop thinking of the pink-tipped blond hand of the air-hostess "who offered her a warm towelette" and all American hands that she knew will keep coming back in her dreams. *Will I marry a prince from a far-off magic land Where the pavements are silver and the roofs all gold?* The sense of belonging to a particular place and culture and at the same time being an "outsider" to it creates an inner tension in the characters of Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni. An immigrant like Jayanti is compelled to live between two worlds: the imaginary and the real, the past and the present, and the virtual and the material. While standing on the balcony of her aunt's apartment in a snowy weather, Jayanti realises that the "excruciating pain" of chilly snow falling on her hands fades away when she dreams of her life in America and makes sense.

The clash between cultures and the conflict between family and career, which affects immigrant women largely, are interwoven with the other Diasporic consciousness in *Arranged Marriage*. Women in Diasporic situations struggle with the material and spiritual insecurities of exile on the one hand, and the demands of family and work with the claims of old and new patriarchies on the other. They experience the spatial, cultural, and emotional vacuum in their efforts to settle and adapt themselves in a new land. In "Perfect life", Meera, an Indian girl, rejects the traditional roles of a wife and a mother in favour of her career and education in America.

However, after meeting a six-year old orphan boy, Krishna, she begins to contemplate motherhood and even to adopt the child and raise him by herself. She envisages the child's first day of school, trip to Disneyland and baseball games, and could see herself as the actual mother of the orphan. Now she understands motherly love quite well. Caught up in her new role as a mother,

Meera after the disappearance of Krishna from the Foster Homes office, considered quitting her job and started distancing herself from her boyfriend, Richard, and even thought to inform her mother in India to consider her an arranged marriage with a widower. But she never posted the letter. Even though she was crazy with anger, sorrow and guilt, she knew that would have been a bigger mistake than the ones she'd made already.

Loneliness and disillusionment are the burning problems of the expatriate community in the nation of their choice. In the story "Affair", Abha recalls how Meena, her close friend, failed to adjust because she found herself lonely and isolated in the over-involvement of professional commitments of her husband, Srikant. Abha used to reveal her friend's loneliness:

"I hated being alone in the house. It was so deathly quiet, not like India, where somethings always going on – Street vendors, servants, people dropping into gossip..." (239).

Meena's loneliness intensifies after her first miscarriage. This loneliness brings her closer to Ashok, "that was another bond that held us close, unspoken sorrow of being childless" (ibid). Under the sway of emotions, now Meena had no fear to share her most intimate joys and fears even with Ashok, Abha's husband. Keeping aside the consequences and ignoring Abha's isolation and anguish unconsciously, Meena enjoys the company of Ashok just to overcome the frustration of her isolated life. Abha, on the other hand, suffers from uncompromising insecurity.

In "Meeting Mrinal", the last story of *Arranged Marriage*, Asha is envious to see her childhood friend, Mrinal enjoying freedom of movement, power, and economic security in England but soon is disillusioned of her „perfect life" when Mrinal admits: "I was going to pretend everything was fine". The disillusionment about „perfect life" of Mrinal and the pang of loneliness and dejection in

her own life made Asha cry who has been divorced by her husband, Mahesh and who is not getting along too well with her teenage son, Dinesh.

Asha laments on the disillusionment and the imperfection in the psyche of Indian mythology: *I think of how hard I always tried to be the perfect wife and mother, like the heroines of mythology I grew up on – patient, faithful Sita, selfless Kunti. For the first time it strikes me that perhaps Mahesh had a similar image in his head. Perhaps he fled from us because he wanted a last chance to be the virile Arjun, the mighty Bhim. And for a moment I feel a sadness for him, because he's going to realize it too, soon enough...that the perfect life is only an illusion.* (298-99)

The women of these short stories experience a conflict of consciousness and struggle to define themselves like those of several South Asians and Americans. In the private realm, the traditional Indian culture women have to perform some specific duties and follow strict norms of morality and are transgressed only by those considered daring and depraved. Sandra Ponzanesi in her essay "In My Mother's House" states:

As far as the condition of migration and diaspora is concerned, women are often called to preserve their nation through the restoration of a traditional home in the new country. The idea of home entails the preservation of traditions, heritage continuity; there is even an intense emotive politics of dress for some communities. (245)

Divakaruni's *Arranged Marriage* is set in both India and America and it presents Indian-born women who are torn between the values of Old and New World and who are struggling to carve out an identity of their own. Besides, the stories of the collection

Arranged Marriage, address the issues such as racism, interracial relationships, economic disparity, abortion, and divorce. In fact, Divakaruni's *Arranged Marriage* is stories about women – women in love, women in relationships, and women in difficulties. The stories elicit pathos of each woman's struggle while trying to adapt to alien culture. Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's writing affirms that diaspora is not merely scattering or dispersion but diasporic consciousness that encompasses various conflicting characteristics. Being an immigrant in USA, Divakaruni through the stories of this collection, seems to capture the experiences of the Indian immigrants with all its colours. Thus, *Arranged Marriage* is not only an assortment of short stories but also an assortment of immigrant experiences, especially those of Indian women.

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MARGINALIZATION IN THE CHARACTER OF RANI IN GIRISH KARNAD'S *NAGA-MANDALA*

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Abstract

Girish Karnad is a contemporary Indian playwright, actor and movie director in Kannada language. Girish Karnad wrote the play Naga-Mandala in 1987-88. The play was written based on the oral tales that Girish Karnad heard from his mentor, guru and friend Prof. A.K. Ramanujan. Naga-Mandala received the prestigious award of 'Karnataka Sahitya Akademi Award' for the most creative work of 1989. It is the story of a typical Indian bride who struggles to win the heart of her husband at any cost. On the advice of an elderly lady, Kurudavva, she was to administer the love potion, but decides against it due to emotional conflicts. She throws the curry mixed with potion on the ant-hill which was consumed by King Cobra-Naga which has the power to assume the human form (husband) and visits her at nights. She is so confused to see the dual personality of her husband who is arrogant at day and lover at night. She becomes pregnant. Her husband orders her to under-go the 'Snake Ordeal' to prove her chastity just like Sita in 'the Ramayana'. The ordeal transforms her being into a 'Goddess'. The 'denouement' is 'happy ending'. Through the character of Rani, Karnad has deployed traditional and modern material to voice female desires and aspirations. It seeks to examine the dynamics and dimensions of Rani's journey from the marginalized position to the central one in her marital life.

Girish Raghunath Karnad is a contemporary writer, playwright, screenwriter, actor and movie director in Kannada language. His rise as a playwright in 1960s, marked the coming of age of Modern Indian playwriting in Kannada, just as Badal Sarkar did in Bengali, Vijay Tendulkar in Marathi, and Mohan Rakesh in Hindi. He is a receiver of the 1998 Jnanpith Award, the highest literary honor conferred in India. Karnad has been composing plays, often using history and mythology to tackle contemporary issues. He has translated his plays into English and has received acclaim. He was conferred Padma Shri and Padma Bhushan by the Government of India and won four Filmfare Awards.

Marginalization is the process of pushing a particular group or groups of people to the edge of society by not allowing them an active voice, identity or place in it. Marginality is an experience affecting millions of people throughout the world. In post colonial dialectics the term 'Subaltern' or 'Marginalized' occupy an important place. The term 'Subaltern' or 'Marginalized' incorporates the entire people that are subordinate in terms of Class, Gender, and Caste or in any

other way. The lack and deprivation, loneliness and alienation, subjugation and subordination, the resignation and silence, the resilience and neglect, marks the lives of 'Marginalized' even when they resist and rise up, they feel bound and defeated by their subject positions.

In *Naga-Mandala*, Rani, the protagonist and Kurudavva the other female character suggest the extreme physical torture and mental trauma, struggle for their identity as a woman, as a wife and as a mother. Karnad's *Naga-Mandala* (1990) is a socio-psychological study of Indian women; Gender-bias, Subjection, Patriarchy and social milieu collectively conspire to 'Marginalize' them. Patriarchal dominance has prevented women from realizing their productive and creative possibilities. Ideological conflicts, power relations and the struggle for identity have been dramatized successfully in the play.

Rani and Kurudavva are common; represent the image of Indian woman. Four Flames, Story and the Man also reflect the sufferings and exploitations of women. Rani is treated in a slavish manner, imprisoned like a caged bird; she is not allowed to talk to the outsider. Despite her chastity and fidelity, she

is forced to face the Naga Ordeal. The Story narrates the modest origin of Rani, well known for her long tresses, her fond father finds her a suitable husband. The young man is, "rich and his parents were both dead" (27). Rani's parents are least concerned about the character and doings of Rani's husband; Appanna. She married a man who is a philanderer and of loose morals. Karnad calls Appanna "anyman"- the most powerful force to inflict physical and mental torture to Rani. When Appanna takes Rani to the village there is no welcome ceremony or bridal song for the couples. Rani is puzzled to hear:

Well, then, I will be back tomorrow at noon.

Keep my lunch ready.

I shall eat and go (27).

Appanna kept her inside and locked the door from outside. She doesn't know what is happening, stands puzzled. Even she can't able to express her loneliness she goes and sits in the corner of her room and talks to herself vaguely; weary and tired Rani falls asleep. In her sleep she had nightmares and she is longing to see her parents. Next morning when Appanna comes to the house, she wants to explain her loneliness to him but he doesn't give importance to her feelings. In return he violently asks:

What is there to be scared of...Look, I don't like idle chatter.

Do as you are told, you understand (28).

Appanna finishes his meal, goes out and locked her. Likewise the days passed by. Rani mechanically does her works. She becomes a caged bird whereas Appanna is a philanderer; who regularly visits his mistress. When Kurudavva, a blind woman asks Rani about her husband's treatment to her:

Kurudavva: Does he talk to you.?

Rani: Oh that he does. But not a syllable more than required

'Do this', 'Do that', 'Serve the food'. Apart from him,

you are the first person I have seen since coming here.

I am bored to death. There is no one to talk to (31).

Rani pleads Kurudavva to inform her sufferings to her parents but in vain. The mental condition of Rani brings tears in the eyes of the audience, but Appanna remains untouched. Kurudavva emerges as a savior and friend to Rani, she finds out, there is no physical relationship between Rani and Appanna and she decides to help Rani. She had three pieces of root given by a mendicant, having magical power; one she had already used to get a husband. She hands over the remaining to Rani so that she can get the love of Appanna. At first Rani mixed the root in the milk, Appanna drank it and falls down. Next she uses the bigger piece of root to mix it with the delicious curry and Kurudavva insists that will give her a better result. Then she is shocked by the colour transformation of the curry and worries about Appanna's life. So she pours the curry into the anthill. After she went inside the house, a king cobra comes out from the anthill and follows Rani. Cobra as Naga meets Rani at night in the disguise of Appanna and seduces her.

This drastic change of Appanna makes her unbelievable. She asks Naga that why he behaves cruel in the day and a sincere lover at night. But Naga tells not to reveal the mystery, with no other way she accepts it. Later she becomes pregnant which makes her feel happy and gets completion of womanhood. In contrast, Appanna behaves violently and suspects her chastity. Even he calls her as strumpet, whore and harlot; he feels disgusting to see her. This is how Rani is greeted for her pregnancy.

Appanna files a case in the Village Court and inquires her chastity in public. She is forced to prove her chastity by holding a red-hot iron rod in her hand and takes an oath, accusing to plunge the hand in the boiling oil. Instead of that punishment Rani suggest by holding a king cobra in her hand. The Village Elders agrees and considers it as an equal punishment. Then she takes the cobra from the anthill. The cobra surrounds her shoulder and spread its hood over her head like an umbrella. The people gathered the place was stunned.

The crowd praised her as a goddess and asks Appanna to do spiritual duties to her. One of the Village Elder says Appanna,

Appanna, your wife is not an ordinary woman. She is a goddess incarnate. Don't grieve that you her wrongly and treated her badly. This is how goddesses reveal themselves to the world. You were the chosen instrument for revealing her divinity (59).

Another Elder person orders him: "spend the rest your life in her service. You need merit in ten past lives to be chosen for such a holy duty" (59).

Thus Rani gets a devoted husband, lifelong servant and child. Later she finds that Appanna is different from the man who visits her at every night. She is puzzled by the cheat done to her at nights: "no two men make love alike. And that night of the village court, when her true husband climbed into bed with her, how could she fail to realize it was someone new? Even if she hadn't known earlier! When did the split take place? Every night this conundrum must have spread its hood out at her. Don't you thing she must have cried out in anguish to know the answer?" (60)

The love-triangle develops with the entry of Naga. He only gives her love and motherhood. Naga is appreciated for his honest service rendered to Rani. Naga is given rituals by her son every year on being killed. Again it incarnates and Rani gives shelter to Naga in her tresses:

Rani:come quick. Climb into it. Are you safely in there? Good.

Now stay there. And lie still, you don't know how heavy you are.

Let me get used to, will you? This hair is the symbol of my wedding bliss.

Live in there happily for ever (64).

Apart from Appanna and Naga, Dog, Mongoose, Village Elders and parents of Rani have also been the forces of the subjection of woman. They have been instrumental to carry out the wicked designs of the male dominated society. Appanna brings a dog to make Rani away from Kurudavva and Kappanna. It doesn't permit her to sleep and keeps on

barking day and night. Naga kills the dog and liberate her from the annoyance of the barking dog. The dog's death makes Appanna furious. Then he brings a Mongoose but it dies because of the fight between Naga and Mongoose. The village Elders enlarges the traditions in the society. They never object the cruel attitude of Appanna towards his wife. On the contrary, Rani is forced to prove her chastity by getting punishment while she is pregnant. Fortunately, Naga saved her; otherwise she must be died. Rani succeeds in Naga Ordeal. Everyone in the village thinks it as a miracle and declares her as "Divine Being...Goddess" (59).

The Village Elders remains severely to the traditional mode to test the chastity of women where there is no Ordeal for men. Even the parents of Rani think that Woman is a burden; her marriage is a burden for the whole family. For this reason they accept to marry Rani to Appanna who is a man of loose morals but a rich man. After her marriage she suffers both physically and mentally, because she is locked and not permitted to mingle with others. She wants to see her parents and tries to inform her pathetic condition to them but she doesn't get any reply. Rani's suffering is beyond all proportions- undeserved, unmerited; it arouses the emotions of pity and fear. She emerges as a tragic figure at the end. This paper highlights the marginalization in the character of Rani in Girish Karnad's *Naga-Mandala*.

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IMAGES OF WOMEN IN NGUGI WA THIONG'O'S NOVELS *WEEP NOT, CHILD, THE RIVER BETWEEN*

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Gender difference is the idea and situation that women and men are not equal. Gender difference refers to unequal treatment or sensitivity of individuals wholly or partly due to their gender. Gender difference stems from distinctions, whether empirically grounded or socially constructed. Women are always lag behind men in many domains, including education, labour market opportunities and political representations. Sexism and discrimination is prejudice or discrimination based on a person's sex or gender. Sexism can affect either gender, but it is particularly documented as affecting women or girls. The African people become slaves of the imperialistic Western World. They infused patriarchal ideologies into the educational system and encouraged the boy more to join school than the girls. Male domination made the African women powerless and disabled, socially, politically and economically and caused gender conflict which undermines the stability of Kenyan society. It is an impediment for the development of the country as a whole.

Kikuyu Community of Kenyan women were possible and occupied considerable position of leadership like Wangu Wa Makeri who the legendary Kikuyu leader and powerful matriarch. Ngugi views that Colonialism significantly and Post-Colonialism partially are accountable for oppressing African women. He clearly shows the problem of patriarchy and its impact on women in Pre-Colonial, Colonial and Post-Colonial Kenyan society through his novels. Even in Post-Colonial Kenya, women are marginalized and considered to be foolhardy. During Colonization, women became aware of

alert to their rights and started to dismantle inequality in gender relation.

In Ngugi's novel, women struggle to get rid of male domination- socially, politically and economically. Ngugi's aim like Achebe is to present the image of Africa realistically unlike the Western Writers who presented African as a backward continent. Ngugi also wants to reestablish the image of the African women in literature. Some of the African male writer is negatively presented in literature write about women from Eurocentric point of view. They explicitly present negative and positive aspects of the lives of women. They also challenge the social and political dominance of patriarchy and strongly support women's issues. They search alternate possibilities for self-actualization in addition to the sexual roles of their female characters.

Ngugi brings out women are sexually, physically and mentally exploited, oppressed and ill-treated. Rape and successive pregnancies, verbal and physical violence, low payment to the domestic labourers, attribution of taboos to women, sexual oppression and abuse and objectification of women are some illustrious examples of the facets of oppression. Women continuously experience in the African society. It is highly patriarchal and determines women's identity. Ngugi regard as women from feminist perspective. Most of the literary works concentrate on women's issues. Kikuyu culture to reveal women's major contribution is liberating the society from male domination in Pre-Colonial, Colonial and Post-Colonial periods. Ngugi's feministic perspective is show women characters and their significant roles in the patriarchal system. As the impact of Colonialism is the roles of female

characters and their relevant reaction to the same.

Weep Not, Child

Ngugi's first novel, *Weep not, Child* is a story of common oppressive relations in society. It is shown that the Kenyans are topic to oppression and exploitation. The wound of suffering is double in case of women because colonization estranged women from their traditional status. The roles of women are generally undermined in the entrepreneur society. This leads to the sensitivity of women as sexual objects. This is turning causes widespread prostitution and subjugation of women. During the colonial domination, they had to tolerate the oppressive and dominating treatment of their own people like husbands and sons. The only strategy women can adopt is to educate them. They believe that education can bring rescue to their oppressed life. They can equip them with power to combat oppression and demolish the oppressive system. The novel is village community of Mahua. The focus is on the family of Ngotho, the father of the protagonist of the novel, Njoroge. In spite of the fact that, Njoroge belongs to a poor family, he is sent to school by his parents.

Ngugi explicitly reveals women take care of the economic survival of the family and feel more responsible than men. Nyokabi as a mother is highly careful and worried about the future of her child. She works like a man and uses a part of her earnings to educate Njoroge. Her main aim is to make her son to be able to get education. Like Juliana, wife of a wealthy chief and an important landowner of the village, Jacobo. Juliana also has an educated daughter and son – Lucia and John respectively. Nyokabi believes that through the education of her son. Her husband will stop working for Mr.Howlands. He is the British Colonial Settler and district officer. Nyokabi is determined to educate all her children. She believes that education will bring happiness to the entire family.

If she (Nyokabi) had much money she would send her married daughters to school. All would then have a schooling that would at least enable them to speak English. (18)

Ngugi shows that the males get more opportunities to access education than female. Nyokabi ambition to educate her son, Njoroge proves the reality that the males get more benefitted from school education. It is believed that the male can save family from poverty and misery through education. They believe educating girls is not beneficial. Girls will not bring to change in the family. They get married and work for their husbands and inlaws.

Ngugi, through the narrator of the novel shows that women do not want to be obedient and inert any one. A woman can complain in front of her husband to show her unhappiness. Ngugi states that White Women also experience negligence by their husbands. They are the secondary status of the society. It means White Women also share the same position as that of Black women. Ngugi comprehensive feminist perspective is evident here. He strongly desire positive change in women's plight, white as well as black women.

Ngugi indicates that co-operation of the male and female is necessary for survival and continuity of the family and society. He presents the image of women who play important role in their families and society to fight with colonization. They bring positive changes in society.

The River Between

In his second novel, *The River Between*, Ngugi does not forget to draw the image of women as active agents in order to preserve the traditions and customs of their society alive. *The River Between* brings out the clash between westernism and African traditionalism. Kikuyu women are active

participants and play vital roles to keep the traditional Kikuyu culture alive. Women play important roles during circumcision ceremony. Ceremony is one of the most important ceremonies and traditional customs of Kenyan- Kikuyu society. During circumcision, women have a great influence on male character.

Ngugi bravely portrays Muthoni, the female protagonist of the novel as a forceful character. She needs to be independent and follow the rituals of her society. She does not want to be controlled by her circumstances. She is the symbol of reconciliation. She is a Christian. She wants to be circumcised in order to improve her feminist. She tells Nyambura, her sister:

Look, please, I – I want to be a woman. I want to be a real girl, a real woman, knowing all the ways of the hills and ridges. (32)

Ngugi shows colonialism had inculcated hatred among the members of family and society. The daughter is hatred to extent estranged from her father. All men Christian as well as non-Christian view women in a similar manner. Joshua is Christian and looks down upon Miriamu, his wife. Sometimes he says, ‘ I wish you had not gone through this rite {circumcision}(38). Joshua prays circumcised woman:

God, you known it was not my fault. God , I could not do otherwise, and she did this while she was in Egypt.(39)

Ngugi’s female protagonists are subject for the reconciliation of ethnicity and the nation, betrayal and hope, tradition and modernity. Their roles are to return to nationhood. They were portraying the tribe as an organic whole. Muthoni is Christian and accepts Jesus. She strongly desires to reconcile the traditional ways of the tribes and Christianity. Joshua’s wife, Miriamu is Christian by name only. She is essentially a true Kikuyu woman.

Thus, through the novel *The River Between*, Ngugi shows the important role of women in their society. They desire to be independent and fight against male-domination and colonialism. Ngugi portrays his female characters as courageous and brave. They are ready to take high risk and die for their cause. He strongly believes in women’s natural abilities and qualities. Ngugi shows that women in *Weep not, Child* and *The River Between* are exploited on racial basis. Ngugi maintains that colonial education has introduced gender discrimination and class conflicts in Kenya.

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GENDER DISCRIMINATION IN "CAN THE SUBALTERN SPEAK"?

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Abstract

Subaltern refers to a group of people who are oppressed for various reasons. They are denied of voice, they can't express. They consider being inferior because of race, gender, social, economic, educational backgrounds. Spivak includes women under subaltern. Spivak talks about the colonizers ulterior motives and how they slowly changed the law system in Indian soil. Spivak brings up two case studies to substantiate her points. She condemns the law, and patriarchal society for making the women to be silent sufferers. Spivak discusses the women's position in the world and how they are doubly marginalized by the society. Spivak vividly portray how colonizers used woman's body to empower themselves in the colonized nations. Spivak does not want others to voice out for the subalterns rather she needs others to create an atmosphere where the subalterns speak up for themselves. She states that the subalterns too can speak and they do speak.

Keywords: *subaltern, colonizers, gender discrimination, ulterior motives, silent sufferers, victimized women.*

Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak is a University Professor in Columbia University; she is the founding member of the school's Institute for Comparative Literature and Society. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak was born in Ballygunge, Kolkata on February 24, 1942. She graduated in St. John's Diocesan Girls High School in 1955. She received her Sangeet Visharad degree in North Indian Classical Music at Bhatkhande Academy in 1953. She graduated from the Presidency College, University of Calcutta, in 1959 with a first class first BA in English Honors. In 1959 she was the National Debating champion of India. In 1967 Spivak purchased a book, by an author unknown to her, entitled "De la grammatologie". She decided to translate book by an unknown author by writing a long translator's preface. This publication attains immediate success and the translator's Preface became popular and turns out to be an introduction to the philosophy of deconstruction launched by the author Jacques Derrida; whom Spivak met in 1971.

In 1975, Spivak became Director of the Program in Comparative Literature in University of Iowa. In 1978, she was National Humanities Professor at the University of Chicago. In 2013, she was awarded the

Padma Bhushan by the government of India. Her essay, *Can the Subaltern Speak?* (1983) established Spivak among the ranks of feminists who consider history, geography, and class when thinking about women. In all her work, Spivak's main effort has been to try to find ways of accessing the subjectivity of those who are being investigated.

She is hailed as a critic who has feminized and globalized the philosophy of deconstruction, considering the position of the subaltern, a word used by Antonio Gramsci as describing ungeneralizable fringe groups of society who lack access to citizenship. In the early eighties, she was also hailed as a co-founder of postcolonial theory, which she refused to accept fully, as has been demonstrated in her book *Critique of Postcolonial Reason: Towards a History of the Vanishing Present* (1999), which suggests that so-called postcolonial theory should be considered from the point of view of who uses it in what interest.

Spivak's other works are: *In Other Worlds* (1987), *Outside in the Teaching Machine* (1993), *Death of a Discipline* (2003), *Other Asias* (2008), and *An Aesthetic Education in the Age of Globalization* (2012). In "Can the Subaltern Speak?" Spivak discusses the lack

of an account of the Sati practice, leading her to reflect on whether the subaltern can even speak. Spivak writes about the process, the focus on the Eurocentric Subject as they disavow the problem of representation; and by invoking the Subject of Europe, these intellectuals constitute the subaltern Other of Europe as anonymous and mute.

Subaltern: Definition

'Subaltern' means 'inferior rank'. It means a person who belongs to the margins or periphery. Antonio Gramsci, the Italian Marxist thinker used the term 'subaltern' to refer the 'proletariat' or the labour class. It means the marginalized. There was a growing subaltern consciousness in the twentieth century as the question of the aboriginals, natives, and the marginated groups or oppressed ones are taken seriously. They were side-lined in history for many centuries and their role, status, dignity, rights, and identity are denied. The poor, slum – dwellers, dalits, tribes, victimized women, victimized children, transgenders, sex workers, fisher folk and the indigenous groups of people are the subalterns as they are oppressed. The subalterns are for a redemption or liberation from the dehumanization. The emancipation or empowerment is what they look for.

They are for their resources which are cultural and social. They also challenge the cultural economic and political oppressions of the neo – colonial forces. The subaltern, hermeneutics and theology have to consider spheres or phases of experience. First sphere is the experience of the oppressed past. Second sphere is the present experience of indignity, inhumanity and the liberative struggle for empowerment, and the third sphere is the vision of future where there is a state of dignity, rights, identity, empowerment or liberation. There should be also a focus on the continuing struggle to maintain their status against the oppressive forces. Pentecostalism was a protest movement as it challenges the structures of

domination which has a colonial spirit. The subalterns have a continuing struggle in Pentecostal movement as some dominant forces, as against its original ideology, deny their active participation, rights leadership and identity and dignity. To an extent, the colonial forces of disintegration, discrimination, and inequality at work in certain Pentecostal groups. It is important to recognize the liberating voice of the subalterns.

Gender discrimination in “*can a subaltern speak*”?

Spivak opens the essay with the new definition to the term “Epistemic Violence”, which is a forcible replacement of one structure of belief with another. This term is borrowed from French philosopher Michel Foucault. She goes back to pre – independence of India and throws light on Britishers' ulterior motive. Spivak shows how the Britishers used “epistemic violence” to control the minds of Indians. She portrays how the colonizers implied their structures on the Indians. In this work Spivak deals with an array of western writers and their philosophies starting from Marx to Foucault, Deleuze, and Derrida.

Spivak, Further moves to the term knowledge and Spivak holds that knowledge is never innocent and that it expresses the interests of its producers. For Spivak knowledge is like any other commodity that is exported from the west to the third world for financial and other types of gain. When Spivak examines the validity of the western representation of the other, she proposes that the discursive institutions which regulate writing about the other are shut off to postcolonial or feminist scrutiny.

In this work, Spivak includes women under the umbrella term “subaltern”. She presents two cases to flaunt the gender discrimination in the society. She starts the cases with the colonizers who codified the existing hindu laws to attain their benefits.

The colonizers modifies the Sanskrit language and the four texts in the hindulaws: Sruti (the heard), Smriti (the remembered), Sastra (the calculus), Vyavahara (the performance).

Spivak talks about the power dynamics involved in one of the Hindu Laws. She takes up "Sati" system as an example to prove her statement. Spivak sees hidden agenda of Britishers in abolishing the 'sati' practice. They plan to interfere in the religious emotions of people – weakness of Indians. They try to develop uneasy separation between disciplinary formation in Sanskrit studies and the native...tradition of Sanskrit "high culture".

Spivak states that Macaulay's "Minutes" on Indian education becomes base for the changes in Indian educational system. Slowly, Britishers involved in all the fields, and they started to rule the Indian people. Spivak talks about some snobbish Indians who lick the boots of the colonizers. These Indians were happy with the colonizers rule; they indirectly supported the colonizers to put down their own people. These people were Indian only by birth and colour, but they are much loyal to their masters. Through these snobbish people, the colonizers introduced their language with regional dialects and colonized not only the latitude of India but also the mind of Indians.

Spivak classifies Indians into two categories: Subalterns and Colonized Subjects. In this work, Spivak discusses the three groups of people who existed in colonized nations. The first group is known as the "Dominant Foreign group", the colonizers who in span of time became the ruler of the colonized country. The second group is "Dominant Indigenous Group" at the all – India and at regional and local levels representing the elite society, and the third is the "Social Group", representing the demographic difference between the total Indian population and all those whom have described as the 'elite'.

Spivak takes up two cases for a detailed study. In both the cases women were treated

as the subalterns. They denied of history, they can't speak, as a woman they are pushed into shadow. They are doubly marginalized – economically disadvantage and gender subordination. Freud calls women as "scape goat". Women are physically, psychologically, mentally and emotionally subjugated. Women belong to the third world. Spivak condemns the communities and the laws which make the women to be a subaltern and project as a victimized being in the society.

Spivak opposes the white men who are raising their voices for the brown women to abolish the practice of sati – self-immolation that was practiced widely in India. Spivak claims that the white men pretend to abolish 'sati' just to establish their power. Britishers use the body of the widow to establish their power, as widows are legally displaced and are considered to be weak, vulnerable, and a sign of ill omen. Spivak blames the religious codes that made Indian widows to be passive victims in the patriarchal violence.

Spivak delves deep into the case studies. In this case Spivak projects the hidden agenda of Britishers who support the Indian widows just to extend their territory. The first case discusses "Rani of Sirmur", who lost her husband. According to law, though Rani of Sirmur belongs to the elite layer of the society, she cannot rule as she is a woman. So the next ruler will be her son though he is a minor. Through this case study, Spivak vividly depicts the pattern of domination determined by gender rather than by class. In this crucial situation Britishers pretend to help her, because Sirmur is located in the hills of northern India that has direct link to Nepal. Britishers want to establish trade routes in Nepal and to annex Sirmur with their colonies. Rani possesses only two identities: wife of dead king, and the mother of minor king (son). Once Britishers take up the power to rule Sirmur, Rani disappears from the archives.

Spivak moves into the next case study which analyses the suicide of a young girl

named Bhubaneswari Bhaduri. She is a young woman of sixteen years old and she hanged herself in her father's apartment in Calcutta in 1926. She committed suicide during her menstruating time. By committing suicide during her periods, she proves that she is not pregnant, has no illicit affair. The real reason behind her suicide is revealed in a letter that she writes to her elder sister. Bhubaneswari was attached to rebel/ terrorist group to fight against British. The group has planned to execute an action, but Bhubaneswari was not able to complete the task. She has moral conflict and she considers herself as a betrayer. As Bhubaneswari could not give up her organization, she is not able to let out the reason for death. So she converted her body into a text and communicated. But her communication was ignored and misunderstood by others. Spivak is very angry; she raises two questions to Bengali women.

"Why, when her two sisters, Saileswari and Raseswari, led such full and wonderful lives, are you interested in hapless Bhubaneswari?" Spivak compares Self-immolation with Bhubaneswari's suicide. The Only difference is, Bhubaneswari is not a widow. And she tries to speak through her body. But it is deliberately ignored and misunderstood by others. In 'sati' practice too; a woman has to wait for her menstrual cycle to end. Spivak compares Bhubaneswari to Goddess Durga fighting mother for Independence. Bhubaneswari's voice was never heard, other women re-tell the story. And no one acknowledged her struggle. She made to be silenced by her own generation who do not understand and support her. she

was denied her 'Speech Act' that did not allow her to voice out for herself.

After fifty years, Bhubaneswari's elder sister's elder daughter's elder daughter is a U.S immigrant. She was promoted to executive position in U.S based transnational Asian market. Bhubaneswari who is a true Indian dies for her Nation. But her grandniece works for U.S and the entire family celebrates it. Spivak watches the promotion in T.V and she feels Bhubaneswar's death gone in vain. Spivak presents that though the young woman believes in natural child birth, and wears cotton saris, she is American in her ways.

Finally, Spivak concludes the work by stating that yes; subaltern can speak and do speak. But they are silenced intentionally. No one is needed to voice for them, let them speak on their own, and she asks society to give space for them to speak for themselves.

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SUBALTERN VOICES IN BHARATI MUKHERJEE'S SELECT WORKS

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Abstract

Bharathi Mukherjee is a Third World Feminist writer whose preoccupation is to deal with the problems and issues related with the South Asian Women particularly India. Her contemporary feminist writers, she upholds the cause of women, but she differs from them because her basic apprehension is to demarcate the problems of cross cultural conflicts faced by Indian women immigrants. This is apparent by Tara Banerjee in The Tiger's Daughter, Dimple in Wife, Jyothi in Jasmine. Mukherjee's heroines are bold and assertive. They have the strong potentiality for adaptability; they live in the compact ground of reality and accept the bitter truth of their live. This paper discusses about the subaltern voices in Bharati Mukherjee's select works.

Keywords: *apparent, demarcate, immigrant, adaptability.*

The abandonment of one's conventional thoughts and the subsequent adoption of Western thoughts are necessary in many postcolonial situations. Is it justified to say that a subordinated or marginalized individual can be heard by his oppressors only if he speaks 'their language'? The hard and bitter truth is that, the filters of 'consistency' confusion the true voice of the subaltern. These filters evident themselves in a multitude of ways. Postcolonial theory tries to understand the power and continued dominance of Western ways of thrusting change in the global situation. This paper aims to reappraise Mukherjee's three novels. *The Tiger's Daughter*, *Wife* and *Jasmine*, within the margin of the subalterns to abandon their habitual thoughts, and the subsequent adoption of Western thought as the only gateway essential in postcolonial situations, celebrating the 'melting pot theory' to the utmost.

In the contemporary world order, The Third World is evidently situated in an oppositional and hierarchical relationship to the West, wherein it is characterized as a homogenous and powerless group manifest by its common dependence on the West. More importantly, within the general hegemonic interpretation of the Third World as a defenseless group, the subaltern figure of the Third World woman suffers the epistemic

violence of perversion the most. The Third World diasporic women are portrayed as a group that is invested with difference and as victims who lack development and maturity to reveal any sense of society, let alone self-representation.

Furthermore, radical community changes in the twentieth century required America to acknowledge its shifting relationship to nations across the globe and to redefine itself culturally to accommodate its growing contact with peoples across the world. Advances in transportation and communication technology connected America to the world, not only by mounting American culture across the globe but also by bringing the world into America through relocation. But the question is: can immigration entail successful assimilation into the adopted land? Can women from the Third World exhibit any sense of resistance and agency against being portrayed in an essentialized manner? How different are the experiences of Third World women in resisting their marginalized identities imposed by patriarchy from that of their Western counterparts?

Mukherjee uses her literature as a means of imagining America as a liberty that joins, conflates, and complicates these discourses because of the individuals who cross and have crossed its borders. converse to her belief is the fact that the relationship between

immigrants and the 'American' is always in change. This relationship has become even more difficult as immigration has come to be represented in the political field as the arrival of non-white, non-European peoples - those who explicitly threaten the ethnic, cultural, and religious makeup of the United States. For the whites, all the non Europeans are 'Subaltern' and the political way to make them mute is the process of assimilation and adaptation.

Additionally, it takes for established that assimilation into a preconceived view of an 'American' way of life is the immigrant's ultimate goal; that 'Americanness' equals progress. While immigration has also been a foremost differentiating force... separate[ing] those who bear the marks of foreign origin of inheritance from others who do not,' the success of the immigrant in this discourse depends on his ability to moderate these differences by embracing these ideals.

Mukherjee's first novel *The Tiger's Daughter* is a manifestation of the diasporic community and therefore, alienated. Tara Banerjee, the main protagonist, is the 'Other', of a incoherent community, who struggles to clip-on to the nationalized community by entering into wedlock with an American, David Cartwright is totally Western; the more Tara becomes cognizant of this point of deviation between the Indian wife and the American husband, the more she is frightened of the reality that she is a removable entity from the nationalized community, Mukherjee's first manifestation of alienation in a country of immigration is through *The Tiger's Daughter*, Tara Banerjee, the key protagonist, is a Brahmin girl who travels to America for advance studies. In order to assimilate herself to her new surroundings, she marries an American, like Mukherjee herself did.

The authors argue that migrants like Tara Banerjee are level to assimilate to a common (American) model but at the same time they gradually more maintain their

society more than ever. Tara Banerjee evaluates her life and morals with that of her husband's. Contrary to the cultural belief, her traditions comes to direct blows when her marital life, which was supposed to be based on the standard code of 'union' identified by her right from her childhood, was actually based on the principle of 'contract' as identified by her husband. The wistful, passionate feeling of an immigrant for her mother country is dashed to pieces when it comes into direct contact with reality. The 'Americanization' of her higher sensibilities, her unruffled and frosty response to her nickname 'Tultul', her response to her relatives' house which seemed elegant and attractive to her shabbier looking dwelling, startle her. The character of Tara is shocked and horror-struck at this swing in response. Tara is an immigrant woman, 'sandwiched between personality' who suffers the 'duality and conflict' very conflicting to her American life. The moral quality of Tara's character, like that of the novelist's, suffers from the cultural dichotomy 'surrendering those thousands of years of pure culture just by being metamorphosed into a different stature of 'other' in an alien land'.

The equivalent duality and conflict 'within' can be witnessed in her novel *Wife*(1975), where, Mukherjee writes about a woman named Dimple who has been suppressed by men. She needs to be the idyllic Bengali wife, but out of foreboding fear and subtle volatility, she assassinates her husband and ultimately commits suicide. Mukherjee's characterization of Dimple lends a different an complicated perspective to the theme of immigration and subsequent alienation. Dimple is a middle class married woman migrates from Calcutta to New York with a hope that 'marriage would bring her freedom, cocktail parties on carpeted lawns, and fund-raising dinners for noble charities. Marriage would bring her love'. The novel is a perfect version of marginal confusions concerning American culture and

surroundings and internal commotion to choose between 'personal deliverance', on the one hand, and 'matrimonial bondage', on the other. In the end, Dimple shows signs of dilemma of cultures, which is a domino effect of her anxious condition. Two incidents from the novel, one, her enforced self-abortion and the other her frightful assassination of her husband are characteristic expression of her confusion flanked by the other and the self.

Interestingly, the struggle of Third World women in the West can be clearly witnessed in *Jasmine*, where the protagonist runs after her dreams and puts away her nativity and plunges into the more alien world. At the establishment of the novel, in the opening scene we are in the village of Hasnapur, where the astrologer discloses Jyoti's future widowhood and exile; the seven-year old girl strongly rejects the predictions, and manages to transform both the physical violence against her, as well as the image of a splintered future into a intensely personal gain. 'Chucked hard' on her head, the heroine fell:

"My teeth cut into my tongue. A twig sticking out of the bundle of firewood I'd scavenged punched a star shaped wound into my forehead. I lay still...I was nothing, a speck in the solar system. I was helpless, doomed. The star bled".(J1)

Though, she tells her sisters that the wound is in fact a 'third eye' which, beside with their mother's stories and her own appropriations of such tales, from now on will qualify her as a 'sage'. Jyoti rewrites her position from imprudent object to empowered theme. As if to wash away the lightness of the astrologer's cruelly well-defined chance of doom, she plunges into the water, swims furiously and abruptly (her) my fingers

scraped the soft waterlogged carcass of a small dog', whose 'body broke into two' letting a terrible 'stench' leak out. The stench will 'stay with her', even when 'at twenty-four years old she lives in 'Baden, Elsa Country, Iowa' and will forever remind her of' what she does not want to become'. The evocative image of the small dog, whose body broke into two, is a metaphor of annunciation, indicative for the self that the heroine needs to falsify, if she is to survive in her new atmosphere, permanently cut from her roots and her former life. Hence throughout her odyssey *Jasmine* will have to perform a positive kind of splitting, if her story is to be read as a relative success of immigrant assimilation.

Conclusion

When the immigrants uproot themselves from their countries and come here, either by choice or out of inevitability, then they are essentially fascinated forever isolating two distinctly different worlds. Expectations and self-expectations double and uncannily haunt the celebrating tone of the transformational process. Similar is the case with *Jasmine*, whose artificial multiple identities also conclude the inescapability of such a dilemma and the madness, by living past, present and future simultaneously.

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ECHOING SUBALTERN CONSCIOUSNESS FROM OPPRESSION TO OPTIMISM - A SPECIAL REFERENCE TO BAMA'S KARUKKU

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Abstract

Dalit Literature forms an important and distinct part of Indian Literature. In the Indian social ladder Dalit refers to on the lowest step. Dalit literature is the literature which is concerned with socially underprivileged, and which asserts the socio-political stature of the downtrodden and the oppressed. Dalit women's life is ever filled with hurdles. In the mean time the dreadful experiences of Dalit women in India are certainly a double marginality as their agony is more acute. Dalit feminism points out repeatedly that Dalit struggle has tended to forget a gender perspective. In this category, Bama one of the Dalit writers of India, expresses the double marginality in her works. As a woman and as a Dalit Christian, Bama's act of expression can be viewed as a subaltern expression.

Bama writes about her experiences locating them within the contexts that circumscribe her personal and professional life. Her identity as a Dalit, her marginalized position in the society is further shown to be accentuated by her gender, class and religious location. From such a position, she explores the multiple structures of oppression that operate in the lives of Dalits, and more specifically in the lives of Paraiyar women of Tamil Nadu. Bama experienced the discrimination in the village, bus, church, nun's convent, hostel, recruitment and work places. Bama foregrounds multi-layered oppression against Dalit women. She articulates the thoughts, aspirations and anxieties, hopes and fears, past and present of her society. While writing from the margins and writing about the marginalized, Bama seeks to explore modes of empowerment for her people. She urges for the upliftment of her people. Her writing celebrates dalit women's life, resilience and creativity.

Dalit Literature forms an important and distinct part of Indian Literature. It is the post colonial nativistic movement and at the cultivation of creative urges of the masses of numerous castes, tribes and communities. In the Indian social ladder Dalit refers to on the lowest step. Dalit literature is the literature which is concerned with socially underprivileged, and which asserts the socio-political stature of the downtrodden and the oppressed. Being Dalits, the certain community people are always oppressed and exploited doubly that really affects them for being poor and Dalit as well. The word 'Dalit' comes from the Sanskrit word and it means 'ground', 'suppressed', or 'broken to pieces'. It was first used by Jyotiari Phule in the nineteenth century in the context of the oppression faced by the erstwhile 'untouchable' castes of the twice born Hindus. Mohandas Gandhi coined the word Harijan to refer Dalit community.

In general, the oppression experienced by women folk expressed in literature can be considered as marginal literature. Still the issues of women's rights and their quintessential liberty is a debatable topic. In the recent past and at the present also, numerous women writers have given voice to the question of women injustice and their quest of identity in the patriarchal society. In Indian literature especially Indian English Literature, women writers have emerged victorious in highlighting the harsh attitude of families and society towards women as well as increasing autocracy of conservative mindsets. Patricia Waugh mentions in her work:

Women writers are beginning to construct an identity out of the recognition that women need to discover, and must fight for, a sense of unified self-hood, a rational, coherent, effective identity. As male writers lament its demise,

women have not yet experienced that subjectivity which will give them a sense of personal autonomy, continuous identity, a history, and agency in the world. (*Feminine Fictions: Revisiting the Postmodern Author* 6)

Moreover Dalit women's life is ever filled with hurdles. In the mean time the horrendous experiences of Dalit women in India are certainly a double marginality as their agony is more acute. Dalit feminism points out repeatedly that Dalit struggle has tended to forget a gender perspective. In Dalit society every woman live under the double power of caste and patriarchy. They are doubly oppressed. A study of dalit feminist writing reveals a tale of endless miseries, inhuman victimization and shocking gender discrimination.

In this category, Bama (1958-) one of the Dalit writers of India, expresses the double marginality in her works. Simone de Beauvoir says, "One is not born, but rather becomes woman. No biological, psychological or economic fate determines the figure that the female presents in a society, it is civilization as a whole that produces this creature which is described as feminine" (*The Second Sex* 64). The feminine quality of Bama with a tag 'Dalit' stimulates her to curse herself for being born as a female. And also she curses the Government for not giving her job, though she is qualified. According to Bama, both married and unmarried Dalit women are looked down upon by everyone. Bama lives with caste discrimination and negotiates with its oppressive facts.

As a woman and as a Dalit Christian, Bama's act of expression can be viewed as a subaltern expression. It has come out as a resistance against the ongoing caste and gender oppression. Also the book becomes the testimonio of a Dalit Christian woman's bitter experiences. Her act of witnessing turned out to be a source of inspiration to her fellow-beings.

Bama's way of writing her autobiography is quite different from the usual style. Bama uses folk language which is unfamiliar to the mainstream writers. She deconstructs the ideology of language as she prefers to write folk language throughout her work. Moreover she challenges the decorum and aesthetics of mainstream literature and breaks the rules of written grammar. Her deliberate attempts to deviate from the usual style of autobiographies resulted in a subaltern testimonial autobiography.

Writing from the margin, Bama's literary writing is a path-breaking intervention in Tamil Dalit fiction. Bama, a Dalit woman, a former Christian nun and a school teacher writes about her experiences locating them within the contexts that circumscribe her personal and professional life. Her identity as a Dalit, her marginalized position in the society is further shown to be accentuated by her gender, class and religious location. From such a position, she explores the multiple structures of oppression that operate in the lives of Dalits, and more specifically in the lives of Paraiyar women of Tamil Nadu.

Autobiography, a favourite literary form, makes the writer an authority on himself. The success of the autobiographies of Gandhi (*The Story of My Experiments with Truth*), Nehru (*Towards Freedom*), Nirad Chaudhuri (*My Hand, Great Anarch*) and Abdul Kalam (*The Wings of Fire*) have tempted many others to spread themselves on the private page. *My Dateless Diary* by R.K.Narayan achieved a vogue of its own. Justice M.C.Chugla's *Roses in December* (1973) is a fascinating self - portrait of a scholar, educationist, Jurist and statesman. Kamala Das's *My Story* exposes its uninhibited revelation of her feelings and experience in a sensational way. Similar to this, Bama's *Karukku* is the first autobiography of its kind to appear in Tamil, for Dalit writing in this language has not produced the spate of autobiographies which have appeared.

While writing from the margins and writing about the marginalized, Bama seeks to explore modes of empowerment for her people. Her novels *Karukku* (1992) and *Sangati* (1994) are autobiographical literary narratives which imaginatively conflate her lived experience with that of the experiences of the larger groups pertaining to her caste and gender. This aspect is explored further in an objective, social milieu in her third work *Vanmam* (2002) where she analyses the intra-community conflicts, caste hatred and resulting violence and mayhem among Dalit communities.

Dalit literary writing is a mode of activism that seeks to free Dalits from the clutches of dominant ideology and casteist oppression. Bama's fiction, as we shall discuss below, argues for an activist intervention in the context of Dalit empowerment in Tamil Nadu. She believes that Reading and writing are political practice, for a Dalit. She likes to foreground Dalits' resistance to oppression rather than merely record their victimisation on account of their caste. According to Bama, ...there are traces of the agony and ecstasy of the dalits, the direct and emotional outbursts, the collective identity, the mockery and caricature of the immediate oppressors, the supernatural powers of oracle and the mythical heroism: these are the several elements for the reconstruction of a conscious Dalit literature. ("Dalit Literature" 97-98)

Bama foregrounds multi-layered oppression against Dalit women. She focuses on the 'work' that is routinely done by Dalit women both at home and outside. She explores how violence against Dalit women is legitimised and institutionalised by state, family, church and upper caste communities. Bama's *Karukku* is the first Dalit autobiography written in Tamil. It focuses on two aspects namely caste and religion that caused great pain in Bama's life. The book describes Bama's life from childhood to

adulthood. The first person narrative expresses the traumatic experience of caste discrimination from the stand point of Dalit women. It explicates the narrator's spiritual development both through the nurturing of Bama's belief as a Catholic, and her gradual realization of herself as a Dalit.

Dalit women face a triple burden of caste, class and gender" in which she sums up the plight of Dalit women, highlighting the fact that Dalit women are a distinct social group and cannot be masked under the general categories of "Women" or "Dalit's". (qtd.in *Karukku: A Wounded Self* 288)

When Bama was studying in the third standard, she has seen the discriminations in her locality. She saw an elderly man carries a package without touching it.

He came along, holding out the packet by its string, without touching it. I stood there thinking to myself, if he holds it like that, won't the package come undone, and the vadai fall out? The elder went straight up to the Naicker, bowed low and extended the packet towards him, cupping the hand that held the string with his other hand. Naciker opened the parcel and began to eat the vadais. (*Karukku* 13)

Later, Bama understood that she and her communities were prohibited by Hinduism and were cursed to remain as poor, cloth washer, cobbler, the one who cleans dead animals, conveys death news, grave digging and drumbeat announcer. Bama remembers her experience as a farm worker. Even though Bama went to school, she worked as a labourer for daily wages to meet her expenses. There is also double vessels system. Dalits were asked to stand away from the vessels of the Nacikers when they give leftovers: "I knew I should not touch their goods or chattels; I should never come close to where they were, I should always stand away to one side. These were their rules. I often felt pained and ashamed" (46).

Bama experienced the discrimination in the village, bus, church, nun's convent, hostel, recruitment and work places. However, Bama brings out here the attitude of upper caste Indian to the world. Bama's suffering is the suffering of Dalits that remains unchanged throughout India. She comprehends that Dalits have been forced to live a life of humiliation, and degradation until death. The construction of subjectivity in her autobiography reflects her desire to re-establish the wounded Dalit population. One may not make a concrete resolution for the caste discriminations. There is a deep and underlying connection between Bama and the Dalit population. She converted her personal sufferings into words. Her personal experiences of poverty and discriminations are the saddest experiences that form the core of her autobiography *Karukku*.

Bama in *Karukku* details that Dalit women are compelled to go for hard labor, suffer discrimination of wages and are sexually abused frequently. At the economic exploitation, Bama pleads: "Even if they did the same work, men received one wage, women another. They always paid men more. I could never understand why" (*Karukku* 47). At one place, Bama also points out the discrimination based on gender. The girls of Dalit community do not get opportunity to get education and as they remain confined to the four walls of house doing household chores: "It was always the girl children who had to look after all the chores at home" (45).

Karukku is an evidence of social behaviour of upper caste people from the perspective of caste and converted religion and its faith. It is a voice of Dalits' trauma. Bama has recorded her wounded psyche and it is representing the people's psyche. She urges for the upliftment of her people. Bama's writing celebrates dalit women's life, resilience and creativity.

Bama's elder brother shows her the right path and tells her that education is the only

way to attain equality. Bama's elder brother opines:

Because we are born into the Paraiya jati, we are never given any honour or dignity or respect. We are stripped of all that. But if we study and make progress, we can throw away these indignities. So study with care, learn all you can. If you are always ahead in your lessons, people will come to you of their own accord and attach themselves to you. Work hard and learn. (15)

Bama articulates the thoughts, aspirations and anxieties, hopes and fears, past and present of her society. By explaining the existential predicament of the dalit women and the protagonist's struggle against patriarchy as depicted in Bama's *Karukku*, Bama assumes herself to be a bird whose wings have been clipped, yet she desires to live a meaningful life. She feels that for the better survival of women empowerment of women is necessary and it is possible only by irradiating inequality and untouchability, by empowering them through education and employment and by taking pride in their identity.

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DALIT LITERATURE AS A SAFETY-VALVE FOR THE PENT-UP TENSIONS OF THE INSULTED AND THE HUMILIATED

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Abstract

In this paper, I would like to argue that both the oral and written literature of the dalits reflect their endeavour to use it as a vehicle for the expression of their existential angst, without being overtly concerned about didacticism, aestheticism and commitment to social issues.

*The etymology of the word dalit points to the long history of oppression and humiliation that the lowest castes have suffered for centuries. Discriminations and entrenched prejudices breed evils like apartheid, ethnic cleansing, racial segregation and the caste system. Only the victims of caste discrimination can testify to the festering wounds it has inflicted on their souls and the deep scar it has left on their minds. It seems centuries of suffering have conditioned dalits to be at the receiving end of all shades of degradation. Naturally, when Dalits found their voice and were emboldened to speak out, their outpourings turned out to be tales of humiliation and degradation reminding one of W.Somerset Maugham's take on suffering that occurs in Chapter 14 of *The Moon and Sixpence*: "It is not true that suffering ennoble the character, happiness does that sometimes, but suffering for the most part, makes men petty and vindictive".*

But Dalit literature is not all about the dehumanizing effects of social ostracism and extreme suffering. Pre-literate culture of dalits points to a time when they celebrated memorable moments in their life with songs and stories of great lyrical beauty. Oral literature of dalits mirrors the society in which they lived. Their literature diverges a lot from the oral one since they have become literate.

Introduction

The etymology of the term dalit points to the long history of oppression and humiliation that the lowest castes have suffered for centuries. Entrenched prejudices with a voracious appetite for crass casteism have justly earned for Indian subcontinent the sobriquet 'a wounded civilization'. A general malaise has been there in Indian society for centuries and a good deal of it is traceable to the existential angst of dalits who have been brutally forced out of the mainstream of society and condemned to live on its periphery like beasts of burden. Statistics show that scheduled castes constitute more than 15.75 percent of the population of which 84 percent live in rural areas. Most of them are landless labourers destined to make both ends meet by sweating in the fields of upper-caste zamindars from dawn unto dusk. Even God Himself chose 'sweating' as one of the punishments inflicted on Adam and his progeny for eating the forbidden fruit: God decreed "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread". In this sense, dalits are the direct

descendants of Adam and Eve who were made in the image of God. Unlike Churchill's promise of blood, toil, tears and sweat to his countrymen, God's promise of sweat to Adam holds the seeds of defeatism and destruction and not the refreshing dewdrops of the ambrosia of redemption.

The fate of dalits forces us to take note of Anton Chekov's take on 'sweat' in act 1 of his play, *The Three Sisters*. "Man must work by the sweat of his brow whatever his class, and that should make up the whole meaning and purpose of his life and happiness and contentment". But the holy grail of happiness and contentment will become ever more elusive when Dalits sweat. Only the victims of caste discrimination can testify to the festering wounds it has inflicted on their souls and the deep scars it has left on their minds

Social system in India is made up of four classes or varnas and numerous castes or jatis. The Sanskrit word for caste, jati means "birth". Below the shudras are the so-called polluted castes and the tribals. According to Wendy Doniger -The Hindus, an Alternative

History- “the Mahabharata both challenges and justifies the entire class structure. The word for ‘class’(varna) here begins to draw upon its other meanings colour”. In the course of one of the long discussions of dharma, one sage says to another: Brahmins are fair(white) kshatriyas ruddy(red) Vaishyas sallow(yellow) and shudra dark (black).

The sage then proceeds to justify the caste system, though there is no scientific evidence to prove that one class is superior or inferior to the other. Sweat, urine, feces, phlegm, mucus and blood flow out of all our bodies. The sage replies: “Actually, there is no difference between the classes; this whole universe is made of Brahman. But when the creator emitted it long ago, actions/ karmas divided it into classes”. Ancient texts are scattered with shocking instances of gratuitous cruelty to the lowest castes. In the Gita, Krishna urges Arjuna to renounce not the actions, but their fruits, to live with “karma without kama”, actions without desires. This advice emboldens Arjuna to square his ascetic ideals with his actions. He kills his kinsmen in battle with the attitude of a renunciant.

The tribal Nishadas, epitomizing the mlechhas or the lowest castes have been indispensable for implementing the broader social agenda of the four classes. Treated as pawns and scapegoats, they have borne the brunt of all social evils for centuries. Let us briefly consider two examples of wanton cruelty to the Nishadas. When the Pandavas were tricked into staying in a highly combustible house made of lac which their enemies intended to burn, Yudhishtira decided that they should put six people in the house, set fire to it, and escape. Kunti invited a hungry Nishada woman and her five sons to a feast she held in the house of lac and when they were sleeping, the Pandavas set fire to the house and escaped. The Nishadas are merely sacrificial substitutes and expendable because they are regarded as subhuman beings.

The story of Ekalavya epitomizes the miasma of gross injustice and gratuitous cruelty that have hung over the lowest castes for centuries. Drone, the Pandavas’ archery tutor, demands and gets Ekalavya’s right thumb as his fee. He does this to privilege Arjuna, his star pupil and a kshathriya over Ekalavya, the son of a tribal Nishada chieftain because the guru wonders if Arjuna can ever be a match for Ekalavya who has shot seven arrows almost simultaneously into a dog’s mouth. The hidden agenda in all these varna-centred allegories seems to be to stunt the physical and mental growth of the untouchables and if not needed to eliminate them. In short, they are expendable and mere substitutes.

Naturally when Dalits found their voice and were emboldened to speak out, their outpourings turned out to be tales of humiliation and degradation reminding one of W.Somerset Maugham’s take on suffering that occurs in chapter 14 of *The Moon and the Six Pence*. It is not true that suffering ennoble the character, happiness does that sometimes, but suffering for the most part makes men petty and vindictive.

But Dalit literature is not all about the dehumanizing effects of social ostracism and extreme suffering. Pre –literate dalit culture points to a time when they celebrated memorable moments in their life with songs and narratives of great lyrical beauty. Oral literature of dalits mirrors the society in which they lived. But their literature has become more varied though less vibrant after they became literate.

My contention is that both the oral and written literature of the dalits reflect their endeavour to use it as a vehicle for the expression of their existential angst without being overtly concerned about the niceties and nuances of genre, aesthetics, didactic elements and commitment to social issues. I would also argue that Dalit literature has a separate identity of its own as it has steadfastly adhered to a realistic

representation of life, without being hampered by the intricacies of mainstream poetics and aesthetics. The trauma of being marginalised as untouchables and the awareness of human rights coupled with literacy have empowered the dalits and given them confidence to articulate their experiences.

Dalit aesthetics does not subscribe to the tenets and norms of canonical literature. Though traditional aesthetic ideals of Satya(truth), Shivam(goodness) and Sundharam(beauty) are central principles in the canon of traditional literature, the *raison d'être* of Dalit aesthetics is the unvarnished depiction of reality. This does not mean that dalit literature is a blow-by-blow account of the nuts and bolts of Dalit life, without exploring its psychological dimensions. W.B Yeats's lines in *Ego Dominus Thus* hits the nail on the head as only a great poet can do.

Dalit writers express themselves most impressively and intensely by using their native speech, stripped of all frills and filigree. Dr Mahesh Pandya's Gujarati poem, *Uttar Gujaratni Jivali* is a fine example of the force of Dalit poetry and its language.

What W.B Yeats calls *a vision of reality* seems to have galvanized the Dalits into expressing their anguish ever since B.R Ambedkar and Gandhiji appeared on the scene, championing their causes. Untouchable is the word used by Ambedkar for the lowest castes in the Hindu scale of pollution. Gandhiji called them Harijan, but all those who have been converted to Buddhism prefer to call themselves Bhudhist.

Though Dalit writers have been inspired by their own unique experiences, novelists like Mulkraj Anand and Arundhati Roy show a good measure of what Keats called 'negative capability' when they portray Dalits in their novels. Mulkraj Anand's novel *Untouchable* is called the creative manifesto of Dalits in India. It is about the life of an outcaste Bakha, a young sweeper living in the outcaste's colony of a cantonment set in North

India. His destiny is to remain faceless and voiceless, buffeted by the gales of religious determinism and caste equations. The novel narrates a day in the life of Bakha and the hardships he has to face. It is a powerful indictment of man's inhumanity to man. In this novella of just 158 pages, Anand raises issues the effects of which still reverberate today. Through Munoo in *Coolie*, he describes the traumatic experiences of those at the bottom rung of India's complex social hierarchy.

Though Anand and Arundhati Roy portrayed the life of the untouchables with empathy and understanding, the authentic voice of 'Dalitness' is heard only in the poetry and stories written by Dalits themselves. Dalit literature as such was born in Maharashtra and Gujarat. Arjum Dangle's poem *The Cantonment Has Begun to Shake* expresses the wretchedness of Dalit life in vivid images.

Dr B.R Ambedkar summed up the essence of Dalit literature: My final words of advice to you is to educate, agitate and organize; have faith in yourself. With justice on our side, I do not see how we can lose our battle. For ours is a battle for freedom. It is a battle for the reclamation of the human personality". Ambedkar's exhortation to assert oneself seems to have inspired and emboldened a clutch of Dalit women to voice their protests against injustice from all quarters. From Muktabai, an untouchable girl who red her essay on the problems and sufferings of untouchables in the school established by the great reformer Jotiba Phule in 1852 to the contemporary novelist, activist and poet Meena Kandasamy, the list includes a wide spectrum of feminist writers.

Regional languages have been vibrant with oral poetry and folk tales centred on Dalit identity for centuries. Njattu Pattu and Koythupattu associated with sowing and harvesting have a peculiar Dalit flavour in them. Outwardly they are songs of celebration, but they also reflect in a subdued

tone, the frustration and suffering of the dehumanized. It was Poykayil Yohannan or Kumara Guru who shaped the contours of Dalit Literature in Malayalam by composing songs and poems known as Suvrna Geethaangal in which he directed his ire at the entrenched caste discrimination that gripped the Orthodox Church.

After lying low for almost three decades, Dalit poetry has risen again in all its glory and power with K.K Govindan's Arukolakandam (The Killing Field).

K.C Kattakada's Kizhakkinte Karutha Sooryan ; V.K Narayan's Kara(Satin); Kallada Sasi's Indiyude Makal (Daughter of India) and a clutch of others like Kallara Sukumaran, K K S Das, Munthoor Krishnan and Vettiyyar Nannu.

The most prominent among the new generation Dalit poets is Raghavan Atholi. This sculptor, painter, poet, novelist and activist has a number of poems to his credit. According to Ayyapa Panicker, "The images and symbols used in his poems are an attempt to retrieve the beauty of blackness". The four

verse collections of Atholi published far are: Kandathi, Mozhimattom (translation), Mounassilakalude Pranayakurippukal(The Love Notes of Dumb Stones), and Kattunna Mazhakal(Burning Rains). The loud and clear message in all these poems is that Dalits can no more be taken for granted and they are capable of asserting themselves, fighting back to win. I hope this brief survey of Dalit Literature is enough to prove that the Dalits have used literature, especially poetry as a safety valve, relieving some pressure they feel from insults, humiliation and marginalization. The redemptive power of art is essential to keep up the spark of hope in the humn bosom. In the preface to his second volume of Autobiography *Ways of Escape*, Graham Greene has a revealing sentence: Writing is a form of therapy: Sometimes I wonder how all those who do not write, compose or paint an image to escape the madness, the melancholia, the panic, fear which is inherent in the human situation". The redemptive voice of Dalit literature is a form of therapy.

THE PROBLEMATICS OF EXPATRIATISM IN KHALED HOSSEINI'S NOVELS

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Abstract

*This paper intends to analyze the subalternity and subjugation faced by women in a war stricken community and the emergence of their ruptured souls victoriously by focusing on the works of the Afghan expatriate author Khaled Hosseini. His towering works of fiction with the debutant *The Kite Runner* (2003), *A Thousand Splendid Suns* (2007) and *And the Mountains Echoed* (2013) will be studied in depth to get an understanding of the marginalization and bias in the community. Since 2000, there has been a wave of expatriate narratives from Afghanistan and Iran-both memoirs and novels-and they pose challenges to postcolonial theory and transnational feminism. Fictional texts have been fewer in number- possibly due to the then current preference for memoir in the U.S publishing market-but Khaled Hosseini, an Afghan novelist is far and away the most successful Afghan novelist to have emerged. Iranian and Afghan expatriate writers, despite obvious differences in the recent histories of two countries, share a concern for the plight of women under intensely repressive Islamic regimes, and a disproportionate number of the published expatriates have been women. The three works under study is indeed a true image of the society thriving under the suffocation of a post-war community and explicitly caters to the psychology of the expatriate writer, whose struggle to beat the call of the nation against economic and political bonding is commendable.*

Life is an unending search for love, family, home, acceptance, a healthy society and a promising future. One can go home again even if home has evolved and transformed, but not if he is an expatriate. Its obvious to adapt and maintain as much as we could once home is transformed, but a few folks can never dream of home as that they found in the past. It evolves drastically that they can only hope for a better place for settlement, in future. Since 2000, there has been a wave of expatriate narratives from Afghanistan and Iran-both memoirs and novels-and they pose challenges to postcolonial theory and transnational feminism. Fictional texts have been fewer in number- possibly due to the then current preference for memoir in the U.S publishing market-but Khaled Hosseini, an Afghan novelist is far and away the most successful Afghan novelist to have emerged. Iranian and Afghan expatriate writers, despite obvious differences in the recent histories of two countries, share a concern for the plight of women under intensely repressive Islamic regimes, and a disproportionate number of the published expatriates have been women.

Khaled Hosseini is an Afghan born American writer who lives in the United States since he was fifteen years old and is an American citizen. Hosseini's father was a diplomat who lived much of his life in Paris. So, Hosseini grew up experiencing the subtleties of the political situation s in Afghanistan. Much like all the kids of the day, he was fascinated with the U.S and the freedom it offered. Hosseini grew up loving the treasures of classical Persian poetry. His imagination was also fired by movies from India and the United States and he enjoyed the sport of kite fighting, he portrayed so vividly in his novel *The Kite Runner*. In the early seventy's, Hosseini's father was posted to Afghanistan's embassy in Tehran, where young Hosseini deepened his knowledge of the classical Persian literary tradition that Iran and Afghanistan share. Although Afghan culture lacked a long tradition of the literary fiction, Hosseini enjoyed reading foreign novels in translation and began to compose stories on his own. He also made acquaintances of his family's cook, a member of the Hazara ethnic group, a minority that has long suffered discrimination in Afghanistan. Young Hosseini taught the

illiterate man to read and write and gained his first insight into the injustices of his own society. Little did he know it at that time that, it would be twenty-seven years before he would see his native country again. Only two years after their arrival in Paris, a communist faction overthrew the government of Afghanistan. Although the new government was purging the civil servants from the old regime, the Hosseini's still hoped that they might be able to return to Afghanistan. But infighting among the new leaders and armed resistance to the regime in the countryside plunged the country into chaos and they were still in France when the Soviet army entered Afghanistan. They attempted to reinstate their communist allies while numerous armed factions attempted to expel them. The Soviet occupation lasted nearly a decade, while five million Afghans had to flee from their country. A return to Afghanistan was out of the question for the Hosseini family so they applied for political asylum in the United States. Having lost everything, they survived for a long time on welfare and young Hosseini started his medical studies later, determined to make a better life for himself and his family. Throughout his medical studies, Hosseini continued to write short stories during his spare time. Happily, settled in his new country, he found his thoughts returning to the land he left behind. After the departure of the Soviets, the extremist Taliban faction had seized control of Afghanistan, imposing a brutal theocratic rule and providing a base for anti-western terrorists. Women's rights, which previous regimes had promoted, were completely eliminated along with all foreign art or culture. Hosseini felt compelled to tell the world something of the life he had known before his country was consumed by war and dictatorship.

With the eyes of the world turned on his country, he completed his tale of two Afghan boys, childhood friends separated by the calamities of war and the diverged paths their lives take. The novel was critically acclaimed worldwide and following the success of his work, he returned to Afghanistan for the first

time after twenty-seven years. The mere fact that the novel is written in English means that the author's experience as an expatriate already had a profound influence on the book. The author had lived outside Afghanistan for most of his life, going to the U.S as an exile from his native land. Interestingly, a book that had a strong influence on him after his arrival in the U.S (and after he learned English) was John Steinbeck's *Grapes of Wrath*. Steinbeck in that novel, dealt with a nation in turmoil and undergoing great social changes. The Taliban takeover was a huge step back for Afghanistan and its blossoming age, for women. At first, it was believed that Taliban were the saviours of the Afghan people, a lot of people assumed that all their problems would be solved once Taliban took control. The people had no idea what the Taliban were doing and they wholeheartedly supported them until the Taliban started imposing laws. Most of these laws were strictly against women. The Taliban went as far as forcing women to one Central hospital with limited doctors and supplies, which made child birth for many women to be a terrifying situation. Misogyny is the hatred, dislike or distrust of women and girls and Afghan probably is a terrible misogynistic country. Mainly because of the psychology of most men who are under the influence of the Taliban, who are a Muslim fundamentalist group. *The Kite Runner*, published with little publicity and spent more than two years on The New York Times bestseller list, tells the tale of two Afghan boys, childhood friends, separated by the calamities of war, and the divergent path their lives take. The novel focuses on fathers and sons and friendship between men. *The Kite Runner* is an enthralling tale of "family, forgiveness, and friendship" and the promise that indeed "there is a way to be good again. Though *The Kite Runner* is less obvious in its demonization of the Muslim world and glorification of the Western world than books like *Reading Lolita in Tehran*, these themes nevertheless clearly permeate the entire novel. Nevertheless, it is just a captivating

story of Amir and his recovery through the heroic rescue of his childhood friend Hassan's son, Sohrab. The entire plot is with toxic typecasts about Islam and the Islamic world. This story, read in isolation, may indeed just be inspiring and heart-warming, but the significance of its underlying message in the current geopolitical context cannot be ignored. The most malevolent element of this novel, however, is the most heart-warming and inspiring: the story of the redemption of Amir through his upsetting and daring rescue of Sohrab. In short, Amir, the successful western expatriate writer must leave his safe, idyllic existence in the U.S.; return to an Afghanistan that has been ravaged by the Soviet Union and the Taliban and rescue the innocent orphaned son of his childhood friend from the incarnation of evil itself, Assef. Amir's descent into this Other World, a veritable 'heart of darkness,' appears to be the only hope for its victims' salvation.

What happens to his country and its people after the defeat of the Taliban could find a solution in his next novel *A Thousand Splendid Suns*, written after Hosseini travelled back to his native Afghanistan to examine for himself the nation's situation in the aftermath of decades of turmoil. He had left Afghanistan before the Soviet takeover and this novel is an act towards his redemption for his family's choice not to return to the country. He obviously disdains the ultraconservative political situation there in which, religious beliefs dictate the law. Hosseini misses his homeland of old, but not the Taliban influences which tore the nation apart. Writing this novel as an expatriate surely influenced the author's attitude about some aspects of life in Afghanistan. The novel portrays the suffering experienced by women, focusing on mothers and daughters and friendships between women. Although the novel is not based on a true story, it exudes passion that is undeniably real. *The Kite Runner* got off to a gripping start and stumbled into contrivance and sentimentality in its second half, *A Thousand Splendid Suns* starts off programmatically and gains speed

and emotional power as it slowly unfurls. Like its predecessor the novel features a villain and a best friend whose sacrifice to aid the protagonist is commendable. It attempts to show the fall out that Afghanistan's violent history has had on a handful of individuals, ending in death at the hands of the Taliban for one character and the promise of a new life for another. The tale takes place in Afghanistan, mainly in Kabul, from the 1960s to 2003 during the Soviet invasion to the reign of the Taliban. It shows the struggles that women like Mariam and Laila (the protagonists) go through on a daily basis and also the social, cultural and ultimately political structures that support the devaluation, degradation and violence endured by Mariam and Laila. Hosseini gives a forceful but nuanced portrayal of a patriarchal despotism, where women are antagonizingly dependent on fathers, husbands and especially sons, the bearing of male children being their sole path to social status and acceptability. The novel is a powerful, harrowing depiction of Afghanistan, but also lyrical evocation of the lives and enduring hopes of its resilient characters. Though set in war torn Afghanistan in an era of oppression, the morals depicted revolves round the idea of friendship, love and sacrifice. *A Thousand Splendid Suns* gives us glimpses and insight into the daily life in Afghanistan through the eyes of two very different women who become the closest allies. It brings Hosseini's compassionate story telling and his sense of personal and national tragedy, to a tale of two women who are weighed down equally by despair and grave hope. The war-torn Kabul is pictured and Afghanistan is personalized into a beautiful work of fiction. At the most superficial level, the characters and their accompanying traits serve to advance a very specific agenda: everything from the conspicuous secularity of the great hero, Amir's father, Baba, to the pedophilic Taliban (i.e. Muslim) executioner and nemesis of Amir, Assef, clearly perpetuates the basic underlying theme: The West (and Western

values) as 'good,' while Islam as 'bad,' or even, 'evil.' The inherent goodness of Baba and evil of Assef is repeatedly reified for the reader in some of the most dramatic and graphic scenes of the entire book. Baba valiantly lays his life on the line to protect the woman who is about to be raped, while Assef brutally rapes children and performs gruesome public executions in the local soccer stadium. Yet, perhaps the most telling attribute of these two characters is the particular national ideologies that they express affinity for: Baba loves America, while Assef is an admirer of Hitler. Propelled by the same story-telling instinct that made *The Kite Runner*, a beloved classic *A Thousand Splendid Suns* is at once a remarkable chronicle of three decades of Afghan history and a deeply moving account of family and friendship; the most recurring in an expatriate writer. It is a striking, heart wrenching novel of an unforgiving time, an unlikely friendship and an indestructible love. And the Mountains Echoed grapples with many of the same themes that crisscross his early novels: the relationship between parents and children, and the ways the past can haunt the present. And it shares a similar penchant for mapping terrain midway between the boldly colored world of fable and the more shadowy, shaded world of realism. The novel ends with an intimate understanding of who his characters are and how they've defined themselves over the years through the choices they have made between duty and freedom, familial responsibilities and independence, loyalty to home and exile abroad. This indeed is a deeply moving work, a testament both to his intimate knowledge of their inner lives, and to his power as an old-fashioned storyteller.

The three works under study is indeed a true image of the society thriving under the suffocation of a post-war community and explicitly caters to the psychology of the expatriate writer, whose struggle to beat the call of the nation against economic and political bonding is commendable.

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EXPATRIATE WRITINGS

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Abstract

Literature deals with the number of sociological concepts, movements aesthetically. 'Diaspora' is one of the sociological concepts that find its reflection in today's literature. Diaspora Literature deals with expatriate sensibility. It focuses on the lives of immigrants and their inner and external conflicts in an alien land. To understand the expatriate sensibility it is necessary to understand the psychology of artists in the recently liberated Third World countries who are striving to find a new identity. The list of expatriate writers in India is extensive. In that Jhumpa Lahiri belongs to the internationally recognized second generation writer. Through her writings, Lahiri interprets the diasporic sensibility, of the immigrants. Lahiri has shown the need to go beyond the manmade boundaries like culture, religion, race and nation to acknowledge the universal aspect of human through her writings. This paper exhibits Lahiri's experiences of displacement and sense of alienation, nostalgia and cultural assimilation and identity crisis and family relationships through her writings.

Keywords: *Diaspora, Expatriate Sensibility, Displacement, Alienation, Cultural Assimilation.*

The word 'Diaspora' is derived from the Greek word 'Diasperio' which means to distribute, to scatter. The term originally associated with the Jewish historical experience but today the term has acquired a more expanded meaning and it refers to common ancestral homeland, voluntary or involuntary migration and a sense of marginality in the country of residence. The 'Expatriate' has simulated importance in modern times. An Expatriate focuses on the native country that has been left behind. The expatriate dwells on the 'Ex' status of the past, while the immigrant celebrates his present in the new country. Today in the commonwealth literature, the phrase 'the expatriate sensibility' is considered to be a legitimate literary term. Expatriation is a complex state of mind and emotion, which includes a desirous longing for the past. The expatriate writer endures the pain of homelessness. She struggles to maintain the difference between oneself and the new environment. She has to mingle with the unsociable milieu in the new country. She has the vibes of alienation and rootlessness because of the cultural dilemmas and the experienced hostility in the new country. Faced with rejection the newcomer clings to

his ethnic identity. The tremendous difference between two ways of life leads a person to feeling of depression and frustration. This can be called as cultural shock. When a person leaves his/her own culture and enters another, his/her old values come into conflict with the new ones he finds. Indians have made a substantial contribution to the expatriate sensibility in their works.

In recent times the aging immigrant generation of Indian origin in the West has been giving way to his children, the second generation, born and raised entirely away from India. The hyphenated ethnicity of the second generation writers naturally incorporated its own self-reflexive, interrogative critical discourse, forcing their evolution on their own terms. The second generation appears to reconfigure its hybridity in terms of what Homi Bhabha has called the 'third space of enunciation', a state in which the hybridized do not belong clearly to the world of either of the two cultures; they are rendered the "other".

Historically the emergence of the second - generation writers like Shauna Singh Baldwin, Mira Kamdar, Hari Kunzru, Amulya Malladi, Meera Syal and Jhumpa Lahiri has arguably marked the beginning of

a new phase of Indian writing in English. They have reshaped and redefined Indian writing with a marked shift in focus and concerns. Their perception of ethnicity is unique in their own. Their acceptance of their cultural givens is aggressively total as opposed to the cultural dislocation and resistance of the immigrant generation; their quest for a new cultural equilibrium of heterogeneity and hybridity within the host culture is different; hence their manifest defiance at being bracketed with the expatriate or NRI writers in critical discourse.

Jhumpa Lahiri is one among those writers who are all aware of the relatively of the concept of diaspora, its contradictions, numerous possibilities of alienation and assimilation. Her debut Pulitzer Prize winner short story collection *Interpreter of Maladies* deals not only about the contradictions, complexities, and ambivalences of Bengali diaspora in USA but also of diaspora prevalent within the nation and even in one's own house. Characters like Shobha, Mira, Mr Kapasi, Mrs Sen, Miranda, Boori Ma have experienced displacement and alienation in different contexts. All the stories illustrate the diasporic experience in cultural terms. Similarly, when her stories are read from the perspective of man-woman relationship, one understands Lahiri's attempt to re-defining womanhood in the expatriate context. Lahiri's fictional interpretation of the immigrant situation carries authenticity because it reflects her keen observation and understanding of the characters caught between their traditional past and the modern present. The cultural loss operates at various levels. The experience of a simultaneous existence in two cultures is a subtle one and invites the expatriate writer to express it in a variety of ways.

Jhumpa Lahiri faithfully depicted identity crisis of the first and second generation expatriates in her novel *The Namesake*. In this novel, the crisis dealt through immigrant's families and their internal and

socio-cultural relations with the people of the foreign country. The novel confronts the basic questions about identity in the second generation ethnicity. Lahiri dramatizes many of the problems of growing up in America in her novel. The protagonist of *The Namesake*, Gogol rejects the tag decisively because he "never thinks of India as desh". He thinks of it as Americans do, as India (118). The second generation Indians, Gogol and Moushumi, whose parallel situations the novel explores, struggle to break free from their foreignness and reshape themselves as Americans, which involved a complete makeover in habits, relationships, values and attitudes. They strive to blend, to fit in, and to assimilate. Their efforts at transformation can be first seen in their rejection of the ethnic ways, in the paths they take, and finally in their differently ordered relations.

Lahiri's second short story collection *Unaccustomed Earth* departs from the earlier one as Lahiri's characters embark on new stages of development. The novel focuses on the Indian immigrants and the ways in which they shuttle between cultural milieus, developing capabilities to negotiate alien world. Through the eight stories of this collection Lahiri carefully scrutinizes the minute details of all types of relationship such as father-daughter, brother-sister, and husband-wife. She also deals with the cultural division between American-born Indian children and their Bengali parents in this sections. In this novel, Lahiri mirrors the problems of familial relationships and interconnectedness between people resulted in the search of identity after going through the phases of alienation, nostalgia and assimilation.

Lahiri's latest novel *The Low land* offers a blend of history and family life. It is shortlisted for the Man Booker Prize in 2013. The novel depicts multigenerational story revolving around the personal choices and destiny. The novel reflects the twentieth century globalized, multicultural and

transnational diasporic culture. This culture is hybrid, heterogeneous and a plural one. The novel features the political history of naxalite movement and its effect on Shubash's family on the backdrop of diasporic predicament. Though *The Low land* cannot be considered as a diasporic literature as a whole, one can surely trace out diasporic intricacy in which the characters involved in multiple relationships negotiating their personal decisions and destiny.

Lahiri has expressed her experiences as an Expatriate writer, through her fine writings. She has portrayed the sense of alienation and displacement, the situation of women in the fast changing socio-cultural milieu of Diasporas, and the familial

relationships in her fictions. Also she highlights the inferior position of women and the subsequent degradation in a culturally dominated society. So one can easily understand the Expatriate Sensibility through the writings of Lahiri.

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AN ECOCRITICAL VIEW ON IRWIN ALLEN SEALY'S *THE EVEREST HOTEL*

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Abstract

This paper aims to bring out an Ecocritical view on Irwin Allen Sealy's The Everest Hotel. Nature and literature have always shared a close relationship as is evidenced in the works of poets and other writers down the ages in almost all cultures of the world. India is a country with variety of ecosystems which ranges from Himalayas in the north to plateaus of south and from the dynamic Sunderbans in the east to dry Thar of the West. Irwin Allan Sealy, born in 1951 in Allahbad.. His second novel The Everest Hotel: A Calendar(1998) is in totally different style where description finds at its best. This novel describes the background of Himalayan footsteps by showing all seasons. Ecocriticism designates the critical writings which explore the relations between literature and the biological and physical environment, conducted with an acute awareness of the devastation being wrought on that environment by human activities. Thus Sealy creates the environmental awareness amongst the readers thereby building a society where man's exploitative tendency is curbed by deep reflection on analyzing the possibility of abstinence.

Keywords: Ecocriticism, devastations, exploitative, milieu.

Nature and literature have always shared a close relationship as is evidenced in the works of poets and other writers down the ages in almost all cultures of the world. Today the intimate relationship between the natural and social world is being analyzed and emphasized in all departments of knowledge and development. The literary critic tries to study how this close relationship between nature and society has been textualized by the writers in their works. In this context two terms have become very important today – ecology and ecocriticism. India is a country with variety of ecosystems which ranges from Himalayas in the north to plateaus of south and from the dynamic Sunderbans in the east to dry Thar of the West. With time, however, these ecosystems have been adversely affected due to increasing population and avarice of mankind.

Irwin Allan Sealy, born in 1951 in Allahbad, Uttar Pradesh, School in Lucknow went to La Martiniere School in Lucknow and then to St. Stephen's college Delhi University for his further studies. He has worked in Canada, the USA, New Zealand and Australia. He is underrated writers in India. His creativity and his genius of detailing is

visible from his very first novel *The Trotter Nama: A Chronicle*(1988), which is magical account of seven generations of a dynasty. His second novel *The Everest Hotel: A Calendar*(1998) is in totally different style where description finds at its best. It appears as if the writer of this is not Sealy himself. He is the author of two other works *The Brain Fever Bird* (2003) and *Red: An Alphabet* (2006). Allan Sealy has bagged the Common wealth Best Book Award in 1989 and The Sahitya Akadami Award in 1991; and the Crossword Book Award in 1998. He likes to live away from publicity and in solitude in the Himalyan foothills of Dehradun.

“Allen Sealy is undoubtedly among the most gifted writers of Indo-Anglican fiction; he has the gift of words, and the gift of storytelling. Whatever he writes makes for compulsive reading”. - *Khushwant Singh*

In his second novel “ *The Everest Hotel*”, Sealy shows the background of the Himalayan hilly area with the interesting characters. In the small town of Drummondganj under the shadow of Himalayas stands the Everest, once an exclusive hotel now a home for the unwanted run by a small community of nuns.

The owner, Jed, sometime mountaineer and flower-hunter, ninety but still smouldering, lives on the roof from where he looks out across the cementry at his beloved snows. Obsessed with writing *Drummondganj Book of the Dead*, he sees no visitors except his neighbor and disciple, the footloose bodybuilder Brij.

The arrival of Ritu, a young botanizing nun assigned to look after Jed skews matters both on the roof and in the garden where Thapa a retired Gurkha soldier is mali and chwokidar. But it is the entry of another newcomer, Inge, a German neo-Nazi in search of her uncle's grave that strains the equilibrium of life at the Everest. One might think the balance tips when Thapa's razor-sharp kukri disappears from its nail on the wall. Set against a backdrop of social and political unease and measured by rhythmical changes of the seasons, *The Everest Hotel* is a rich, evocative work. In prose at once lyrical and wry, Allen Sealy has created a haunting array of characters whose lives and milieu will fascinate and enchant.

Ecocriticism was a term coined in the late 1970s by combining "criticism" with a shortened form of "ecology"—the science that investigates the interrelations of all forms of plant and animal life with each other and with their physical habitats. "Ecocriticism" (or by alternative names, environmental criticism and green studies) designates the critical writings which explore the relations between literature and the biological and physical environment, conducted with an acute awareness of the devastation being wrought on that environment by human activities. Representations of the natural environment are as old as recorded literature, and were prominent in the account of the Garden of Eden in the Hebrew Bible, as well as in the pastoral form inaugurated by the Greek Theocritus in the third century BC and later imitated by the Roman poet Virgil—an idealized depiction of rural life, viewed as survival of the simplicity, peace, and harmony

that had been lost by a complex and urban society.

The nostalgic view of a return to unspoiled nature in order to restore a lost simplicity and concord remained evident in James Thomson's long poem in blank verse *The Seasons* (1726–30), and in the widely practiced genre called nature writing: the intimate, realistic, and detailed description in prose of the natural environment, rendered as it appears to the distinctive sensibility of the author. This literary form was largely initiated in England by Gilbert White's enormously popular *Natural History and Antiquities of Selborne* (1789)—his close and affectionate observations of wildlife and the natural setting in a particular area of rural England.

"Asadh, June-July. The drop of the monsoon. Always the same fat sound, warm with shipwrecks, fastings, ululations, graneries. Exhaling Arabian salts, breath of a stranded oyster, a rock orchid opening in Bhutan, mist off a cardamom hill. Tasting of sweat, the sweat of finger that carries it to the tongue. Children hold out their tongues, and old men, but always it strikes the chest bone, one sharp rap, then the warm flat trickle, discharged so quickly so quickly of freight and obligation. Good heavy drops, half the rice crop's virtue, ecstasy in the lapwing's gullet, fear in the anthill". -*The Everest Hotel: A Calendar*

In America, an early instance of nature writing was William Bertram's *Travels through the Carolinas, Georgia, and Florida* (1791); among its successors was a classic of this genre, Henry David Thoreau's *Walden* (1854). By the mid-nineteenth century Thoreau and other writers in America and England were already drawing attention to the threats to the environment by urbanization and industrialization. Later in the century, increasing alarm at the rapidity and extent of the human despoliation of nature led to what came to be called "the

environmental movement” to preserve what remained of the American wilderness; the most noted advocates were the American writers John Burroughs (1837–1921) and John Muir (1838–1914).

Ecocriticism gives increased attention to literary representatives of nature and is sensitive to interdependencies that ground the author, character or work in the natural system. This approach shifts critical focus from social relations toward natural relationships and views the individual as a member of ecosystem. It values highly the ‘literary sense of place’ not as setting but as an essential expression of bonding with or alienation from a specific natural context. . From the beginning Sealy have shown interest towards nature, culture and landscape.

The biocentric spirit expressed by the author which regard all living an non-living

things on par with each other. It explains how much this novel contribute to the theory of Environmental justice. This paper brings out hoe Sealy uses this genre to bring about awareness on the integral and complex relationship between man and nature. Thus Sealy creates the environmental awareness amongst the readers thereby building a society where man’s exploitative tendency is curbed by deep reflection on analyzing the possibility of abstinence.

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A JOURNEY OF HOPE TOWARDS THE WARMTH OF LOVE -THE POEM 'HUMAN WINTER' BY JESSICA POWERS

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Abstract

The fundamental function of poetic language is to convert denotation into connotation: the language of reference into that of feeling and mood. It is this tendency of the poetic process that makes anthropomorphism in poetic language a central operation. Broadly, the operation consists in adding (human) features to non-human things and activities. The present paper is a venture to analyze the poem 'Human Winter' by a modern American religious poet Jessica Powers through thematic stylistic analysis, a technique of close reading. Stylistic analysis is the analysis of how style resources are put to work creatively. The qualitative research method is being followed in the study. As there is very few research works happened on the study of the poet, this can be considered as an explorative study too. The present paper brings out the thematic specialties of the poem as the poem speaks on the state of human beings where there is the lack of warmth of love. It discloses the beautiful stylistic features of the poet and sheds light to various universal truths. The background history of the poet as she belongs to a family migrated to America, and also as writing from the minority section along with the fact that she belongs to cloistered Carmel heightens the effect of the poem.

Keywords: *Poetic language, Jessica Powers, Thematic Stylistics, Close reading,*

Introduction

Art, to quote a modern view, is "the practice of creating perceptible forms, expressive of human feeling." (Langer: 76) Susanne K. Langer in her book, 'Feeling and Form', has developed a theory of art according to which all artistic form is an indirect expression of feeling (1953). We can therefore say that the meaning of a poem is in the feeling it embodies and the feeling is in the form. Halliday treat context as one of the three principal levels of language analysis: "The context is the relation of language, which is in fact a relation of its internal patterns, its 'form', to other features of the situations in which language operates." (1964:10) A piece of creative writing has two contexts: one external, (external to the work), and other internal. The internal context is the situation imaginatively created by the poet. The internal context itself is part of the message and emerges in the course of reading.

Poetic Language: In poetry symbolic arrangements are used "for the sake of the attitude which their acceptance will evoke." Poetry makes a creative use of metaphors,

and poetic transfer of meaning is an extension of a general ability rather than the introduction of a new one. The fundamental function of poetic language is to convert denotation into connotation: the language of reference into that of feeling and mood. According to Ezra Pound, poetry is condensed language, language 'charged' with a surplus of meaning, a super-abundance of meaning, language which does not simply denote its object. Similarly, poetic language is characterized for the poet and critic William Empson by ambiguity, by its ability to contain a multiplicity of meanings.

Jessica Powers (1905-1988) known as a modern American religious poet was born as the grandchild of two sets of pioneer grandparents settled in the Cat Tail Valley area of Wisconsin, America. She carried the genes complete with the complementary desires to seek new frontiers and to "settle", to create a home and to be at home. The geography of Wisconsin, the spaces, the bluffs, the marshes, the birds and especially the weather shaped her stance in the world. "I came to birth here in a month of snows, / and it is only winter my mind knows-," she wrote

in "The House of the Silver Spirit"(125). Winter in all its forms; spiritual, emotional, intellectual as well as meteorological; runs through her writing. She learned to live sparsely, esthetically, deliberately, daringly, deeply in Wisconsin. It was winter that vibrated through her being, like music.

Thematic Stylistics: Thematic analysis is one of the most common forms of analysis in qualitative research. Analysis of theme involves working the concept, thought, opinion or belief that the author expresses. Thematic Stylistics is a very old branch of literary study. Simply defined, it is the study of stylistic trends within works, necessitating both deep and broad study of a given text. Pretty much any dimension of an author's style can be studied thematically from syntax, to rhythm, to the nature of their metaphorical comparisons, to the structure etc. –the list is as long as literary study. Thematic stylistics is the study of style across a text; it is a method whereby the study of a particular moment in a text is informed and strengthened by the study of other stylistically related moments.

Close Reading is a thoughtful, disciplined reading of a text; also called close analysis. It remains a fundamental critical method practiced in diverse ways by a wide range of readers in different disciplines. One has to employ some mechanism for piercing the veil that covers the text so as to see how it works. "The principal object of close reading is to unpack the text. Close readers linger over words, verbal images, elements of style, sentences, argument patterns, and entire text to explore their significance on multiple levels." (James Jasinski, *Sourcebook on Rhetoric: Key Concepts in Contemporary Rhetorical Studies*. Sage, 2001) The close reading critic reveals meanings that are shared but not universally and also meanings that are known but not articulated. The benefit of revealing such meanings is to teach or enlighten those who hear or read the critique.

Theoretical Overview

Thematic stylistics is a methodology of close reading. The clear reference that we can find is in the essay of Ezra Pound 'How to Read' in the year 1929 and reprinted in 'Polite Essays' in 1937.

".....there are three kinds of poetry: *Melopoeia*, where in the words are charged, over and above their plain meaning....*Phanopoeia*, which is a casting of images upon the visual imagination.....*Logopoeia*, 'the dance of the intellect among words', that is to say, it employs words not only for their direct meaning, but it takes count in a special way of habits of usage, of the context we expect to find with the word, its usual concomitants, of its known acceptances, and of ironical play. It holds the aesthetic content which is peculiarly the domain of verbal manifestation, and cannot possibly be contained in plastic or in music. It is the latest come, and perhaps most tricky and undependable mode. (169-70)..."

In terms of logopoeia if we situate the stylistic phenomenon, the process is three fold. First, we observe that Powers has created a certain pattern in her use of particular word, such that it is associated with a sense of negativity. In Pound's terms, Powers' 'habits of usage' in the case of a particular word create a very specific context in which we expect to find it. Second point is to compare this with the 'habits of usage' we associate with this word more generally in order to find its 'usual concomitants' and its 'known acceptances' in ordinary English usage. Final stage of this process is to place this contrast in the context of the poem's overall emotional range.

Analyzing the Poem

Poets are artists who paint with words. Their pigments are diction, images, figures of speech, allusion, rhyme, and sound. Brushing these paints on the canvas of a white piece of paper in nuance blended tones, patterns, and depth with perspective creates for the reader

a picture that can be enjoyed, appreciated and evaluated. In the opening lines of the poem, the speaker desires fire, yet knows that “no fire [can] warm this place.” By the closing lines, the speaker is frozen, realizing that indeed “no fire can warm this place.” The vivid imagery of enough fire to cause the air to “hang in sultry shred” and “the roof [to] perspire” quickly gives way to images of cold, ice and snow. The words of the speakers in the room create an ice storm to “fall in slow icy rain” that will “freeze upon the heart’s sudden dismantled trees.” The heart and sensibilities of the speaker are damaged, wounded, broken by the cold words that buffet her. The speaker is left vulnerable to “the wind of inclement glances” unable to shield herself from their frost and cold. Rather than wanting to crawl into the cliché-filled hole, this speaker wants to respond with her own form of cold: “The snow of my own obscurity to cover me,” to obliterate her own form. Since the people gathered in the room have already frozen her- she is “frozen ground” she longs for snow to blank her out, to save her from “insufferable sound” so that she can “meet the angles of cold and obliterate them all.”

“Because she is metaphorically frozen, she cannot do what she longs to do:

I long to rise in this room and say, “You are not my people,

I come from a warm country; my country is love.

Nor did I wish to come here; I was misdirected.”

Their brittle cold has overpowered, iced over, and frozen her “warm country”, her country of love. The precise, creative use of images of cold in “Human Winter” is the vehicle for its theme that even love sometimes cannot thaw the cold of some human relationships. Again the poetic techniques in this poem are so sophisticated, controlled, and refined that its message is spoken through words and images that engage our emotions, intellects, hearts, and most of all, our imaginations. The specific room of the poem

becomes universal, becomes the place where we have all felt rejection and isolation so intense that we have been frozen. The poem hints the complexities of human nature and human relationships that can hunt the reader into frequent readings of the poem. The poem captures our emotions; its theme enriches us with new and felt knowledge.

This poem certainly raises the great metaphysical question of the relation of the spirit and the senses and, though it does not discuss it explicitly, it is in fact the subject of the poem. Powers’ Wisconsin youth is vividly present in her depiction of cold, and the crystal intensity of her description of icy rain, freezing branches, bitter wind, subtle frost, frozen ground, obliterating snow and chilling presence gathers momentum that culminates in its deathly metaphorical resolution: this is a ‘human winter’ that so chills her that she ‘cannot speak or move’. This is the point of relation between the ‘spirit and the senses’ in this poem: the wintry scene, that in nature could be austere beautiful, leads to catatonia when it is translated into the human spirit. The poem is in fact a delineation of the deadly effects of lovelessness. The ‘words’ of love ‘freeze’ in these stony hearts and are then paradoxically destructive in a climate that is icily inimical to them: the ‘branches break and fall’ from the heart’s ‘dismantled trees’, shattered by the cold which nothing can withstand. The spirit is paralyzed in this poem though it tries to ‘shield’ itself, to ‘wait’ for a numbing blanket of despair to ‘cover’ it, to ‘rise’ up and protest with the excuse that it ‘was misdirected’. Powers offers no hint of any chance of survival in this ‘human winter’. She simply says, by not saying, that, in her opinion, human relations, unleavened by Divine love, can chill utterly and terminally to the bone. Winter, normally considered as climate, is looked through a different view point and that is said to be the crucial point to make about Powers’ use of logopoeia, the contrast between

the associations she consistently develops round human nature and human life.

Conclusion

The present paper has analyzed the poem 'Human Winter' through the close reading technique of thematic stylistic analysis. It is a small venture to bring into light the stylistic features of the poet through the poem. As a modern religious poet Jessica, through her writings, reminds us of the various problems of the modern world, especially the one which is the utmost need of every human, the warmth of love. Thus the thematic stylistic study of the poem enlightens us with various insights too.

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MARGINAL VOICES IN GITHA HARIHARAN'S THE THOUSAND FACES OF NIGHT!

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Abstract

*Marginalization is the social disadvantage and relegation to the fringe of society. Githa Hariharan lends her writing in dealt with the Marginal Voices in most of her novels, especially in her debut novel *The Thousand Faces of Night!* She explores in her novel, the marriages, old traditional values, story and myth, passion and loneliness in the lives of Indian women. This novel is yet another version of female 'novel of marriage' in which the woman does not live happily even after on getting married. The experiences of Devi, Mayamma and other minor female characters show how disillusionment, springing from the absence of healthy communication and reciprocal care, results in the estrangement of individuals and creates bad marriage, which leads to depression in a woman. The stories of both of them are skillfully stitched together to throw light on the inner world of Indian women where most dreams are thwarted and the only constant is survival. For an Indian woman, her role is circumscribed within the emotive immersion of herself, which results in the negation of self and often leads to abuse and conflict. In this paper an attempt has been made to study how skillfully Hariharan explores the marginal voices in her novel.*

Keywords: *Marginal, Women, Marriage, Subjugation, Patriarchy.*

What is Marginalization?

Marginalization is the social disadvantage and relegation to the fringe of society. It is a term used widely in Europe and was first used in France. It is used across disciplines including education, sociology, psychology, politics and economics. It is when a person is pushed effect of discrimination because a person is made to stand out therefore feel like all alone and marginalized from the rest of society. Everyone else is thrown to the margins of society. This is what we call Marginalization, to be made disadvantaged in society because of something you can't help. That is to say your race, gender, medical history, heritage, accent, or your body. Who you are as a person is stigmatized and there's seemingly no way out.

Marginalization in Literature

In an era when issues relating to human rights have been under critical focus, literary depictions of the experiences of marginalized groups have acquired great significance. Literature as a mode of discursive articulation always endeavors to give voice to the Marginal. With the rise of Marginal discourse, women have been prominently

discussed in literature because they have been the most exploited, subjugated and oppressed class. Githa Hariharan lends her writing in dealt with the Marginal Voices in most of her novels, especially in her debut novel *The Thousand Faces of Night!*

Marginal Voices in the *Thousand Faces of Night!*

Since ages woman has been the victim of male domination and oppression. Women who constitute half of the world's population are paradoxically not treated with men in all spheres of human activities. They are oppressed, suppressed and marginalized in the matter of sharing the available opportunities for fulfillment of their lives, despite the fact that every woman slaves for the development of her family, her husband and children. She has always been treated like a commodity. Man has always looked down upon her as the weaker sex. This paper deals with the marginal voices who are all women through the post-colonial woman novelist Githa Hariharan's debut novel, *Thousand Faces of Night* which was published in 1992. The novel focuses on essential human condition in the specific context of women in

India. She explores in her novel, the marriages, old traditional values, story and myth, passion and loneliness in the lives of Indian women. Marriage becomes an instrument of female exploitation and oppression leading to the loneliness, hollowness and incapability. "There is no remedy to sexual politics in marriage" (Millett 147). This statement is explored by Hariharan in her novel *The Thousand Faces of Night*.

This novel is yet another version of female 'novel of marriage' in which the woman does not live happily even after on getting married. Simone de Beauvoir writes: "It is said that marriage diminishes man: it is often true; but it almost always annihilates women" (Beauvoir 530). Hariharan in her novel has focused on the inner life of woman through three generations – Devi, the daughter; mother Sita and Mayamma, each has her own life story to tell. The experiences of Devi, Mayamma and other minor female characters show how disillusionment, springing from the absence of healthy communication and reciprocal care, results in the estrangement of individuals and creates bad marriage, which leads to depression in a woman. Through the experiences of female characters of the novel *The Thousand Faces of Night*, it has been tried to find out how they suffer and struggle for their identity in life. Like other girls, Devi is prepared by her mother 'for show' to be viewed 'as a potential bride' for Mahesh who was no prince of her dreams which were settled in her psyche. When she confronts the stark and hard reality of life, she has to move away from the world of fantasy.

Devi is able to recognize the hypocrisy of the male world which seeks to impose stereotyped roles on women, as a mother, as a wife. The male view demands that a woman entering the wedlock should be bendable enough to play the roles of a good cook, a caring wife and a loving mother. In other words, a woman is identified by her virtues of patience, tolerance and silence. If a woman is bold enough to assert her freedom and

identity, the male society brands her as an unbridled horse. Devi recalls her grandmother narrating stories of mythical women who are all self-sacrificing, brave, courageous and bold. For centuries, the Hindu woman idealized the mythical models from Ramayana, Mahabharata and other Puranas. Indian women were asked to get inspired by the archetype women like Sita and Savitri. Githa Hariharan makes ingenious use of Indian myths for plot development and characterization in the novel. Embedded with the mythical stories, Devi's dream story in which she envisions herself as a superwoman, because her mind was filled with the account of heroic women who figured in grandmother's stories.

Devi reflects on the contingency of the institution of marriage which has settled deep into her psyche as a union of two souls and two bodies. Her inability to bear a child also adds to her disillusionment and disorientation. She finds herself torn between her dreams and the hard reality. Her father-in-law, define and illustrate her woman's role in the family and society. He also gives explanations of classical Indian music and its ragas. This made her divert from the wifhood into the lure of music and falls in love with a musician Gopal. Mahesh is practical and upwardly mobile, viewing marriage as a necessity. On the contrary, Devi considers the real aims of marriage are sharing, caring, and togetherness leading to fulfillment. But for her Mahesh who visits her occasionally because of his business tours looks like 'shadowy stranger' depriving Devi of her identity. She is reduced to a mere body then and finds her womanhood completely ignored. Marriage seems to be sacrificial knife to Devi and she has begun to feel its cuts and pricks.

Mahesh insisted on having a baby as soon as possible. Perhaps he realizes little that having a baby does not rest on one's choice. Things get worse to Devi; she finds the expectations of Mahesh a bit too demanding. Her misery is further compounded by the

loneliness which makes her fall in love with her neighbor who was a musician and singer, Gopal and thereby their relationship began to grow. However, this crucial turn in her life will be examined as the narrative unfolds itself revealing not only the thousand faces of night but several stands, aspects and dimensions of a woman's passion for a man.

Mayamma, the housekeeper at Mahesh's house too suffers psychological and physical violence. Her husband hits, slaps, kicks, beats and indulges in nonconsensual sexual activity. Unable to bear a child, her agony is enchanted by her indifferent husband who "woke her up every night, his large, hairy thighs toughs and heavy on her, pushing, pushing" (*Ibid*: 1932: 80). Mayamma's tale of woe is not much different from the tales of women in general. Her suffering "exemplify the inflexible constraints that identify a woman with the undesirable attributes of 'dependence', 'passivity' and 'masochism'" (Nair 77-78). She suffers by a tyrant husband who hurts her. Conditioned strongly in her feminine role she attributes her sufferings to her fate and bears the physical and emotional violence at the hands of her mother-in-law in union with her son, stoically. To understand Mayamma's mother-in-law, one needs to dive deeper into the Indian ethos where the son is regarded as a refuge in the old age. The old woman is annoyed because Mayamma cannot produce children. Again, Mayamma's failure to weave an emotional bond with her husband threatens her desire for security. Mayamma's grandmother curses Mayamma for many things: the birth of a stillborn baby, the abandonment by her husband and the crushing poverty. However, Mayamma cannot offer resistance because traditionally, a bride is not supposed to have a voice of her own.

At last, after a tortuous course of penance for ten years, the goddess Kali heard her and blessed Mayamma with a son. Eight years later, her husband disappeared, taking all the money in the house. She never saw him again. Now her only hope and support in life, her son

got spoiled at a very early age. After the ultimate loss which came in the guise of her son's death, Mayamma had nothing to lose. So she left her village soon after her son's body was cremated and came to Mahesh's house. Thus, Mayamma's experience of both wifehood and motherhood is soaked with pain and agony. Mayamma's story has a devastating impact on Devi who comes to learn through the narration about the futility of being a wife and a mother. When Devi finally decides to quit Mahesh and run away with Gopal for a life of liberty and joy.

Devi's search for an independent identity and her quest for womanhood are not only absolutely illusory and foolish but also degrading and defiling. She felt enchanted by Gopal's music but she was completely disillusioned with Gopal the man. Though she wishes to leave him, her fascination with Gopal's music keeps her in the company. There is a fierce struggle between her disenchantment and her desire to defy the society of men. After her disenchantment from Gopal, Devi feels intensively about her mother's years of sacrifice and unstinting devotion to the family.

Of the two women, Mayamma's story of her married life is an unbroken passage of suffering and endurance. Though she sulks and feels sad, she has no bitterness. And she had, from the very start, a strong desire to live, to survive. When Devi looks back at her own life, she finds it erratic and fed on with fantasy, dream and secretiveness which still haunted her as an obstinate ghost that was too hard to be exercised. It is obvious from Devi's reflection that she was not allowed to be her own self. So she was not able to make choices and when she finally made one to live with Gopal she floundered. The painful realization of her own lapse dawns upon and she candidly admits that she has run away from all her trials: America, Jacaranda Road, Mahesh and Gopal. She finally decides to go to her mother's house, her mother, to offer her love to her. As she reaches her mother's

house, she has steeled her determination to make a new beginning, rewrite the chapter of mother – daughter relationship through female bonding: “To stay and fight, to make sense of it all, she would have to start from the very beginning” (*Ibid*: 1992: 139).

Conclusion

It is evident from the foregoing analysis of *The Thousand Faces of Night* that it brings alive the underworld of Indian women’s lives through the stories of Devi and Mayamma. The stories of both of them are skillfully stitched together to throw light on the inner world of Indian women where most dreams are thwarted and the only constant is survival. For an Indian woman, her role is circumscribed within the emotive immersion of herself, which results in the negation of self and often leads to abuse and conflict. Mayamma fall victim to the patriarchal pressures to survive. On the other hand, there are other women, like Devi, who reject the hegemonic structure in their quest to be more than a mere housewife. Hariharan has tried to debunk the aura that surrounds mythical women, and shown clearly through the

personality of Devi how reality shatters the dreamy world of myths.

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GENDER DISCRIMINATION IN MAHESH DATTANI'S *TARA*: AN ANALYSIS

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Abstract

This paper presents Gender discrimination occurs when sexes are treated unequally. To emphasis this issue, an analysis of Mahesh Dattani's Tara is taken for presentation. In gender discrimination is not based solely on gender differences but on how people are treated differently because of their sex.

This analysis mainly focused on Discrimination against woman. It is a global issue as even in developed western nations women experience biasness on the basis of their gender. In this study explores the various issues Tara faced in her daily lives in education, healthcare, social relationship and decision making in context of gender discrimination.

Keywords: Patriarchal society, Gender Discrimination, Marginalized, Disappointment.

Introduction

The era of woman empowerment, it is sacrilegious, if not dangerous to speak of gender bias against woman. Gender bias, however, has been a fact of life since time immemorial and we cannot waste it away. In all tradition woman have always been considered inferior and incapable of any serious thinking; irrespective of religion, country, race, the period in which they live, more or less the same perception and sex-stereotyping is seen in language and literature.

Most of the Indian novels and plays that deal with woman's issues offer a peripheral treatment of the cruelties inflicted upon a woman by male. The most important aspect of Dattani's plays is that they address the "invisible issues" of contemporary Indian society. And dive deep into human heart and create character true to life situation.

Inequality of Women's Position in the World

Women are an integral part of human civilization. No society or country can ever progress without an active participation of women in its overall development. Although, the place of women in society has differed from culture to culture and from age to age, yet one fact common to almost all societies is that woman have never been considered equal to men. They have been treated like a beast of

burden and an object of pleasure, and denied full justice social, economic, political and constitutional and largely ignored as the "weaker sex".

However, with the increasing awareness of injustice done to them slowly made women raise their voice against inequality and oppression.

Marginality Exposed in Women's Life

Woman have been defined as marginalized creatures and viewed as appendages to men. Their status largely depends on the simple biological fact that they are the bearer of children whose care is their responsibility; thus their sphere is usually restricted to their familial roles.

The chief argument of Simone de Beauvoir' *The second sex* is also that in patriarchy women have been forced to occupy a secondary position in relation to men, a position comparable in many respects to that of racial minorities inspite of the fact that they constitute at least one half of the human race. She believes that this secondary position is not imposed by natural "feminine" characteristic but rather by strong environmental forces of social tradition and education, which have been under the control of men. This has resulted in the failure of women to take a place of human dignity as free and independent existents.

Gender Discrimination Take A Vital Role Play in *Tara*

As the title of the play indicates, Tara is the central character of this play. This play clearly shows the discrimination against girl child in the contemporary society. The conjoined twins Tara and Chandan had three legs between them but the major blood supply was from Tara's side. After operation Chandan got two legs and Tara one. But the second leg didn't suit Chandan and it had to be amputated. It was done at the behest of their mother. The girl child suffered and died. Though Chandan lived, he was haunted by guilt consciousness all through his life.

This play can be read as an example of how gender consciousness works both ways_ first, as discrimination against the girl Tara, and second, love and sympathy for her.

Chandan remembers that his father patel was angry when he saw Chandan helping his mother in unravelling the knitting since he thought that it was a girl's job, not boy's in any case. He asked his wife rudly,

How dare you do this to him?..... turning him a sissy __teaching him to knit!" And he told Chandan rather curtly, "I am disappointed in you from now on you are coming to the office with me. I can't see you rotting at home..... You will come to the office with me until your college starts."

Chandan was surprised to see that his father was anxious to take him to the office to save him from being effeminate. But Chandan thought he would not be effeminate merely by helping his mother in unravelling the knitting. The question that puzzled him was whether life is divided into male and female departments. Chandan declared that he would not go to the college without Tara, and would miss a year if Tara was going for surgery Chandan wanted to make it clear "that there was no difference between him and Tara. Both of them would go together. This point is further elaborated in a discussion between Tara and Chandan.

Chandan rubbished Tara's insinuation that he was scared of facing people alone. However he admitted, "Not everyone has your (Tara's) strength!" Both of them agreed that there was no difference between him and her, Chandan endorsed whole-heartedly, "That's the nicest thing you've ever said to me." Thus they clinched the issue. There should be no discrimination between boys and girls.

On another occasion patel says that he wishes to send Chandan to England for his education. He hopes that his brother will be able to get him admitted to a good college with a scholarship. Bharathi is hurt to see that he has no plan for Tara's education and career. Bharathi believes that woman have as much right to education as men. She says that the world will accept Chandan with are without a career, but it will not accept Tara. She is right to say that a girl should have education and career to get an honourable place in the men-dominated world. It is true about women all over the world. But the case of Indian society is worse. Roopa speaks about the evil custom of female foeticide still continues in several parts of India. In these conditions a woman needs have education and career to fight against the evil customs and injustice being done to them. But patel somehow refuse to see the blazing facts of life. The struggle for women's cause well last till the end.

The dramatist gives other hints also suggest there was an atmosphere of apathy with the girls. Tara's maternal grandfather had willed his entire property to Chandan. Tara was ignored by him. In this hostile atmosphere it was natural for bharathi to give her love to Tara and make all out effort to find a career for her daughter.

Conclusion

To conclude Bharathi lover her daughter not only because she is her mother but also because Tara has none else to support her in the world of gender discrimination. The feminism which seeks to bring gender

equality to society unwittingly discriminates against women. But a brother love for the sister transcends the gender bias.

Dan wants to forget his pain to function normally Dattani's closes the play with Dan seeking forgiveness from Tara. He says, "Forgive me Tara, Forgive me for making it my tragedy."

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